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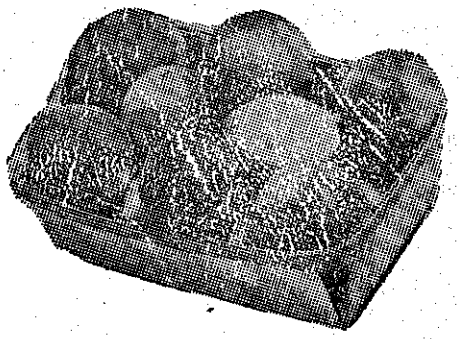
AGRICULTURAL CROP REPORT



1955

San Benito County Department of Agriculture

WARD B. SAUNDERS, Agricultural Commissioner
H. C. DOAN, Agricultural Inspector
J. H. EDMONDSON, Agricultural Inspector
HOLLISTER, CALIFORNIA

A N N U A L R E P O R T

For the

Year Ending December 31, 1955

Agricultural Code: Duties of the Commissioner

SECTION 65.6 STATISTICS--The Commissioner shall compile reports of the condition, acreage, production and value of the agricultural products in his county. The commissioner may publish such reports, and shall transmit a copy to the Director.

In accordance with this provision of the Agricultural Code of the State of California, this report is

Respectfully submitted,

Ward B. Saunders
Agricultural Commissioner

H. C. Doan
Agricultural Inspector

J. H. Edmondson
Agricultural Inspector

1955 REPORT ON CROPS

The office wishes to thank the producers, packers and buyers for furnishing the figures contained in this report.

However this report is only an estimate. Some changes may be necessary when complete returns are available. This is the story as we found it.

1951----------$17,230,490.00

1952----------$19,005,389.00

1953----------$16,852,304.00

1954----------$16,113,207.00

1955----------$16,914,097.00

The gross income for 1955 by crops follows. Remember these are gross figures and only represent sales and not net profit. In fact some crops were produced at a very small profit or none at all.

FRUIT & NUT CROPS

CROP	ACRES	UNITS		PRICE PER UNIT	GROSS VALUE
Apricots-Canned	11,500	tons		$ 90.00	$1,035,000.00
Apricots-Fresh	100	tons		90.00	9,000.00
Apricots-Dried	2,280	tons		750.00	1,710,000.00
Apricots-Baby Food & Juice	1,560	tons		70.00	109,200.00
Apricots-Total	4,139	26,750	tons	Fresh Basis	2,863,200.00
Apples	183	3,015	tons	40.00	120,600.00
Grapes-Wine	905	2,845	tons	36.00	102,420.00
Pears-Bartlett-Canned	253	3,146	tons	68.00	213,928.00
Pears-Bartlett-Processed		176	tons	45.00	7,920.00
Pears-Other	488	7,074	tons	58.50	413,829.00
Prunes-French	2,678	4,152	tons	250.00	1,038,000.00
Prunes-Other	557	708	tons	300.00	212,400.00
Prunes-Sub Standard		598	tons	40.00 & 150.00	66,820.00
Walnuts	1,947	1,743	tons	600.00	1,045,800.00
Peaches-Canned Peaches-Dried Cherries Almonds					37,425.00
TOTAL					$6,122,342.00

Ink figures 1956 Crop.

ROW CROPS

CROP	ACRES	UNITS		PRICE PER UNIT	GROSS VALUE
	2374	47,377		13.50	592,413.00
Sugar Beets	3,349	64,720	tons	$ 13.00	$ 841,360.00
Garlic	500 800	72,000	sacks	11.00	792,000.00
Potatoes	1,700	323,000	sacks	2.35	759,050.00
Spinach	127	1,204	tons	23.00	27,692.00
Onions	90	54,000	sacks	1.10	59,400.00
Tomatoes-Canned	1,600	27,910	tons	22.50	627,975.00
Tomatoes-Green	-----	2,210	tons	44.00	97,240.00
Lettuce-Spring	362	45,240	crates	2.45	110,838.00
Lettuce-Summer	311	104,185	crates	3.65	380,275.00
Lettuce-Fall	449	89,800	crates	3.20	287,360.00
Seed Crops	2,356			250.00	589,000.00
Strawberries	15	22,500	crates	2.30	51,750.00
Carrots	216	75,600	crates	3.20	241,920.00
Misc. Crops					230,202.00
TOTAL					$5,096,062.00

Miscellaneous crops are peas, lima beans, table beets, bell peppers, green onions, sweet corn, bush berries, broccoli, cauliflower, cotton, squash and honey.

Seed crops include seed beans, hybrid seed corn, mustard, turnip, radish, broccoli, celery, squash, peppers, brussel sprouts, sweet peas, salisfy, onions, cabbage, tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, stock, verbena, calendula, zinnia, aster, larkspur and centaurea.

LIVESTOCK & POULTRY

CROP	UNITS	PRICE PER UNIT	GROSS VALUE
Beef & Calves	15,000 head	$170.00	$2,550,000.00
Lambs	6,500 head	16.00	104,000.00
Wool	55,000 lbs.	.42	23,100.00
Butterfat-Manufactured	205,000 lbs.	.81	166,050.00
Butterfat-Market	46,000 lbs.	1.23	56,580.00
Broilers	396,000 head	.75	297,000.00
Hens for Meat	40,000 head	.63	25,200.00
Eggs	1,516,575 doz.	.45	682,458.00
Turkeys	113,000 head	.30 lb.	678,000.00
Hogs	1,800 head	30.00	54,000.00
TOTAL			$4,636,388.00

FIELD CROPS

CROP	ACRES	UNITS	PRICE PER UNIT	GROSS VALUE
Barley	20,311	345,287-100# sks.	$ 2.20	$ 759,631.00
Wheat & Oats	1,500	22,000-100# sks.	3.00 & 3.40	74,400.00
Hay-All	10,200	8,500 tons	26.50	225,250.00
TOTAL				$1,059,281.00

SUMMARY

CROPS	GROSS VALUE
Row Crops	5,096,062.00
Fruit and Nut Crops	6,122,342.00
Livestock and Poultry	4,636,388.00
Grain and Hay	1,059,281.00
TOTAL	$16,914,073.00

1955 CROP REVIEW

Apricots - The crop was one of the larger ones for San Benito County. Orchard heating costs to prevent frost damage were high. Thinning was costly as the crop was very heavy in most orchards. Good growth of the trees and a favorable weather situation during harvest resulted in better sizes than had been anticipated. Both the cannery and dried prices were down from 1954, reflecting the heavier state supply which was well above the 1954 crop.

Apple prices were down again apparently the result of a bigger national crop.

Bartlett pear prices were the same as in 1954 in spite of a smaller state crop. A larger supply of canning pears in Oregon and Washington was given as a reason for keeping prices at 1954 levels. In San Benito County the total crop was smaller than the 1954 crop, but sizes were more satisfactory. Hardy pears failed to size and resulted in a considerable tonnage being wasted. Possible frost injury and poor growing conditions were thought responsible for the small sizes.

Winter Nelis pears were difficult to move as baby food manufacturers reduced their buying. There was a big loss of these pears due to premature dropping of the fruit.

Prune yields were down, but sizes were better as were prices. Offers for larger sized prunes were at record levels. A short state crop was the main reason for the higher prices.

Walnut yields were less, and a considerable damage was caused by the high temperatures during early September. Again the reduced yields brought prices up. Also competing nuts such as pecans and filberts were in short supply, and helped walnut growers obtain better prices.

The small national and state peach crop resulted in higher prices for canning dried peaches.

ROW CROPS

Sugar Beet returns per ton were somewhat lower due to the lower sugar content of the beets this year. Poor growing conditions apparently brought this about.

Potato planting was about the same, but prices were lower for mid season sales but were up on late sales.

Tomato acreage and tonnages were up. A long harvest season resulted in generally favorable yields. Weather conditions reduced the crop in other states, which benefited California producers.

Onion yields were good but acreage was small.

Lettuce acreage was about the same and growers who could market lettuce during the whole season had a fairly satisfactory year.

Strawberry acreage about the same with a slight increase in prices for freezer berries.

Seed bean acreage increased, but yields varied from good to poor. A few beans were spoiled by late November rains.

The weather for the winter of 1954-1955 was characterized by a long cold dry period which delayed winter plant growth. Grain and range growth was below normal and only the late spring rains saved the crops from being a failure.

The summer was relatively cool except for the early September hot period which was damaging to walnuts, prunes, beans, Sugar beets, lettuce and tomatoes. Harvest dates were from 10 days to two weeks later than normal, but rainfall and frost did not occur until late November, making the harvest of fall maturing crops the most favorable one growers have had in many years.

1955 PEST CONDITIONS

Oriental Fruit Moth was found in a home orchard for the first time in the county. This pest has been known in the state for a number of years but has not been of major importance except in a few instances. How important it may become only time will tell. It is primarily a peach pest, but attacks other fruits as well.

Spotted Alfalfa Aphid that has been causing a lot of trouble in parts of California has not been found in the Hollister area, but a few aphids were picked up in the Panoche Valley.

Pear Blight was more abundant on ornamentals in home

gardens and might indicate that the disease would become more important in our pear and apple orchards next year. The last epidemic year for this disease was in 1930. This disease is very expensive to control and in that year resulted in the removal of a considerable acreage of pear trees. We will try to get rid of the disease in the home gardens before spring blossom time.

Walnut Blight was the cause of some losses but in general was not as damaging as it was in 1954.

A survey was made, by the use of bait traps, to determine whether or not there was any Walnut Husk Fly in the county. None was found. The pest has been found in one northern California county and its spread to San Benito County is likely unless eradication measures are undertaken. The cost of controlling this pest to San Benito County growers could very well amount to over $50,000.00 per year. It is hoped successful eradication measures will be undertaken.

An increasing amount of Malathion was used for aphis, leaf hopper and spider control this season.

Walnut growers reported that Parathion was not giving satisfactory control of Walnut Aphis after several years of good results. A few growers used Systox and OMPA and were well pleased with this spray. A great deal of the acreage this year was treated with Malathion.

Regulations have been tightened regarding the use of the organic phosphates such as Parathion, Systox, OMPA and TEPP. There were a number of deaths caused by the careless use of

these materials and a stricter control was deemed advisable.

The Prune Aphid was very troublesome on prunes this year and in many orchards it required two sprays to keep this pest in check.

The control of ground squirrels was continued and some new areas were poisoned for the first time this year. Generally effective results were accomplished.

Gophers continue to be a problem causing damage to crops, particularly in those farming areas adjacent to range land.

This office continued the control of Noxious Weeds along county, state and railroad rights of way. Small infestations of Hoary Cress, Canadian Thistle, Russian Knapweed, Purple Star Thistle, Puncture Vine, White Horse Nettle and Loco Weed have been eradicated by the use of soil sterilizing agents. Control of the seeding of these weeds to prevent seeds from being carried to new locations has been carried out.

The road department of the state, and the county supervisors have been very cooperative in making this work effective by providing the money for this very important activity. The Southern Pacific railroad has been very helpful in providing funds to control noxious weeds on their property.

The eradication of small areas of Canadian Thistle by the injection of Carbon Bisulphide looks promising. This material is expensive where large acreages are involved, the cost being about $300.00 per acre. However, for small infestations, if eradication can be accomplished the cost

would not be unreasonable. At the present time we are trying to reduce the number of plants per acre by the use of low cost sprays, so that an eradication can be accomplished by using Carbon Bisulphide or other soil sterilants to complete the job.

Some growers on land infested with Canadian Thistle have developed a cropping program which enables them to grow crops without excessive control costs. Deep plowing followed by planting such relatively quick maturing crops as lettuce, spinach, potatoes in summer and such winter growing crops as broccoli, garlic, green onions and cauliflower.

Yellow Star Thistle infests a considerable acreage in the county, and the office is attempting to expand a control program for this weed. A large acreage was sprayed with county equipment this year with the cooperation of the growers and progress in preventing the further spread of this weed is encouraging.

The Russian Thistle is not only a weed pest in grain fields but acts as an alternate host of the leaf hoppers, the carriers of the curly top disease of beets, and the western blight disease of tomatoes. These crops are important in San Benito County. For several years attempts have been made to reduce the growth and seeding of this thistle. State agencies spray Russian Thistle to kill the hoppers after surveys show the numbers and the amount of disease the hoppers are carrying. This year some time was spent in burning these weeds. These are the weeds which after they are mature, become the much publicized "tumble weed." After the wind rolls them along, their course can be traced next spring by the path-

way of seedling thistles that develop. This weed will take time and much effort to control. However it is thought that the seed is not a long lived one, and that one seeding in this case will not need the proverbial "ten years of weeding."

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER

ANNUAL WORK REPORT FOR 1955

NURSERY INSPECTION

Number of complete nursery inspections	5

INSECT PEST SURVEYS

Properties inspected in insect pest surveys	55
Man hours spent in insect pest surveys	80

PLANT QUARANTINE INTERSTATE SHIPMENTS

Shipments passed	83
Plants passed	180,705
Shipments rejected	3
Plants rejected	3,104

PLANT QUARANTINE INTRASTATE SHIPMENTS

Shipments passed	105
Plants passed	205,828
Shipments rejected	11
Plants rejected	24

WEED CONTROL

Acres sprayed	623
Miles of road patrolled for weeds	11,203

Gallons of Diesel Oil used	14,278
Gallons of Sinox used	72
Quarts of 2-4-D used	1,567
Pounds of Telvar W used	374
Pounds of Amazol used	72
Pounds of Amate used	1,340
Pounds of Sodium TCA used	68
Man hours spent in weed control work	3,957
Cost of Operation	$14,684.18

RODENT AND PEST ANIMAL CONTROL

Acres treated	286,043
Pounds of Poisoned bait used	27,598
Gallons of Carbon Bisulphide used	202
Number of 20 c.c. ampoules Methyl Bromide used	730
Hours of County labor	3,617
Hours of Ranch labor	2,716
Hours of Horse hire	4,145
Cost of Operation	$14,559.74

CONTROL OF RODENT BORN DISEASE (PLAGUE)

Acres treated	45,338
Pounds of Poisoned baits used	1,903
Gallons of Carbon Bisulphide used	25
Number of 20 c.c. ampoules Methyl Bromide used	2,399
Hours of County labor	424
Hours of Ranch Labor	176
Hours of Horse hire	192
Cost of Operation	$ 1,527.44

APIARY INSPECTION

Apiaries registered in county	6
Colonies registered in county	117
Apiaries entering county	28
Colonies entering county	2,842
Apiaries leaving county	23
Colonies leaving county	1,851

FRUIT, NUT AND VEGETABLE STANDARDIZATION

Man hours spent in inspection	182
Number of containers for which clearances were issued	33,203

FIELD & ORCHARD INSPECTION AND PEST CONTROL

Man hours spent in Field & Orchard Inspection and Pest Control	800
Permits issued for the use of injurious materials	196
Acres treated by Aircraft in county	21,953
Acres treated by Licensed ground pest control operators in county	7,219
Estimated total acreage treated by other than Licensed Pest Control Operators	27,930

SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES

ANNUAL WORK REPORT FOR 1955

SCALES	
Sealed without correction	157
Sealed after correction	58
Found "Out of Order"	24
WEIGHTS	
Sealed without correction	224
Sealed after correction	26
Found "Out of Order"	2
Condemned and Confiscated	2
LIQUID PUMPS AND METERS	
Sealed without correction	91
Sealed after correction	17
Found "Out of Order"	5
LIQUID CAPACITY MEASURES	
Sealed without correction	194
Sealed after correction	5
FARM HOLDING MILK TANKS	
Sealed without correction	5
Sealed after correction	4
Found "Out of Order"	4
PACKAGES INSPECTED	
Found light	3
Found correct	79
Found heavy	22
TOTAL WEIGHTS & MEASURES	940

of pears stopped during World War Two and the market has not yet been regained.

The acreage of peaches has decreased during the past years from a total of 928 acres in 1923 to the present figure of a total in 1955 of 40 acres. The almond acreage was 126 acres in 1923 and now is listed as 24.

The acreage and production of wine grapes has gone down and is only one half of the acreage that was grown thirty years ago. Low price and a low production per acre of unirrigated vineyards has been the cause of this reduction. However, a wine company has started what has been reported to be a 1000 acre planting in the Paicines area this year.

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The acreage in row crops shifts, depending on price structures. The sugar beet acreage under acreage allotments will remain about stable. Garlic acreage is not likely to increase, although it is about one-half the acreage that was once planted. Potato acreage has been increasing slightly and the trend will probably continue. Onion acreage is down, but never was very large in the county. The broccoli and cauliflower acreage has varied a great deal. The broccoli acreage will increase in 1956.

The tomato plantings will probably increase as yields have improved since the introduction of improved varieties.

The lettuce acreage may increase slightly, but no large increase is anticipated.

Seed crop acreage is fairly stable. Some seed bean acreage increase may develop as bean seed companies are reported to want a large supply.

Strawberry plantings have been going down and any large increase is not probable.

Cotton plantings in the county are limited by allotments.

Other crops that may increase in 1956 are sweet corn, bush berries and peppers.

Cattle numbers in the county are mostly dependent on rainfall. At this date (January) indications for plant range growth are good.

No material change in the number of sheep raised in the county is likely.

Hog production will likely go down as a result of the sharp break in hog prices this fall.

Milk production will do well to maintain its volume.

Egg production may increase in 1956 as a result of better feed-egg ratios. It has been reported that there will be an increase in the number of chicken fryers produced in the county in 1956.

The grain acreage may increase slightly although most of the available grain land is now planted. Some grain may have to be replanted due to flooding conditions. Late December and January heavy rains delayed planting.