

ALAMEDA COUNTY

2020 CROP REPORT



**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WEIGHTS & MEASURES**



ALAMEDA COUNTY
Community Development Agency



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Community Development Agency**

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Sealer of Weights & Measures
CATHY ROACHE

**Alameda County Community Development Agency
Agriculture/Weights & Measures**

CDA Deputy Director

Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures

Cathy Roache

CDA - Assistant Deputy Director

Assistant Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures

Vacant

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Lisa Sampson and Zenna

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ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

AGRICULTURE / WEIGHTS & MEASURES DEPARTMENT

September 16, 2021

Chris Bazar
Agency Director

Cathy Roache
Deputy Director
Agricultural Commissioner/
Sealer of Weights
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Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
- and -
The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Alameda, California

In accordance with the provisions of Section 2279 of the California Food and Agricultural Code, it is my pleasure to present the 2020 Alameda County Crop Report. This publication is presented annually and reports statistical information on acreage, yield, and gross value of all agricultural products produced in Alameda County.

The 2020 estimated total gross value of Alameda County's agricultural production was \$43,895,000.00 a slight increase over the 2019 estimated value of \$43,655,000.00.

Fruit and Nut Crops once again led the county in Agricultural production in 2020. Winegrapes, despite challenges such as fieldworker COVID-19 safety measures, lack of water to some vineyard blocks, and the threat of smoke taint, remained our highest valued commodity.

Livestock Production is our second highest valued commodity group. Cattle and calves are the perennial leader in this group. Continued drought and the loss of rangelands to wildfire led to slightly increased value this year, as many ranchers sold cattle to reduce herd size or moved cattle to counties with more available feed.

Nursery Products is our third most valued commodity group. As communities and families sheltered in place, gardening became a favorite way for many to enjoy socially distanced time outside. The value of local and self-sourced foods was brought to the forefront as supply chain issues and a desire to limit time spent in crowded grocery stores led many to explore the fun experience of growing your own food and flowers.

It is important to emphasize that the numbers in this report are gross values only and do not reflect costs related to production, harvesting, marketing or transportation. These production costs and other farm related services have a significant overall local economic benefit generally thought to be about three times the gross production value.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Roache
Agricultural Commissioner/
Sealer of Weights and Measures





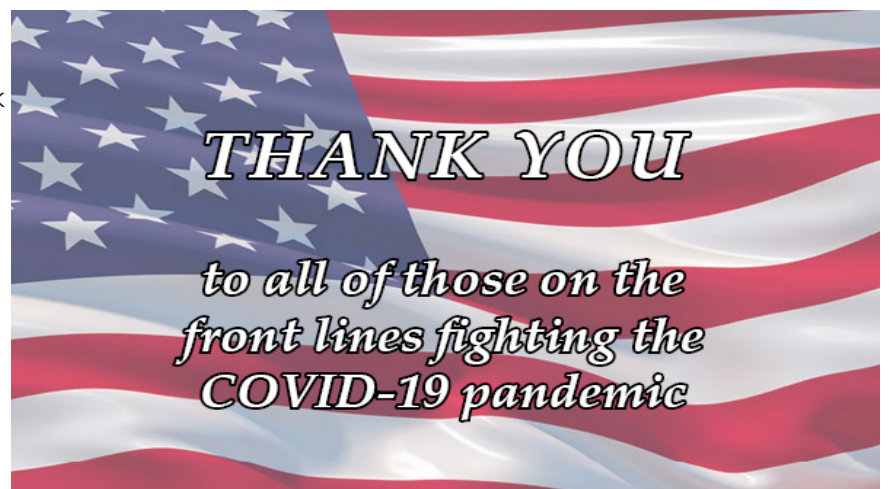
Alameda County. Working together to flourish together.

2020 was a year that presented challenges for all Americans, including those of us in Alameda County. We entered the year under continued drought conditions. Ranchers and others depending on rural water availability and forage grasses pulled together as the lack of feed, compounded with wells and springs going dry led to increased costs for purchasing supplemental feed, and hauling water. Many were forced to sell their livestock during a time when prices were low. Family ranchers are no stranger to hardship, and working together, they planned for the uncertain future.

As the global COVID-19 pandemic began to affect our lives, we all experienced the impacts of social distancing, and supply shortages. Many, for the first time in their lives, were awakened to the reality of food supply uncertainties. Renewed interest in home gardening, amateur beekeeping and reliance on locally sourced foods grew, as communities banded together to take care of each other during these unforgiving times. Through all this, essential workers kept at their jobs. First responders, agriculturalists, food stores, hospitals and others adapted to new requirements to maintain their safety as they maintained ours. Vaccination teams sprung up around the State as communities stepped up to protect themselves and others from infection, hoping for a quick end to this global crisis.

The SCU Lightning Complex fires were the next complication to face agriculturalists in Alameda and surrounding Counties. As rangelands burned so did wildlife, livestock and infrastructure. Soil was blackened, water ponds essential for wildlife and livestock alike were turned unusable. Again, Alameda County residents began to work alongside County, State and Federal partners to rebuild.

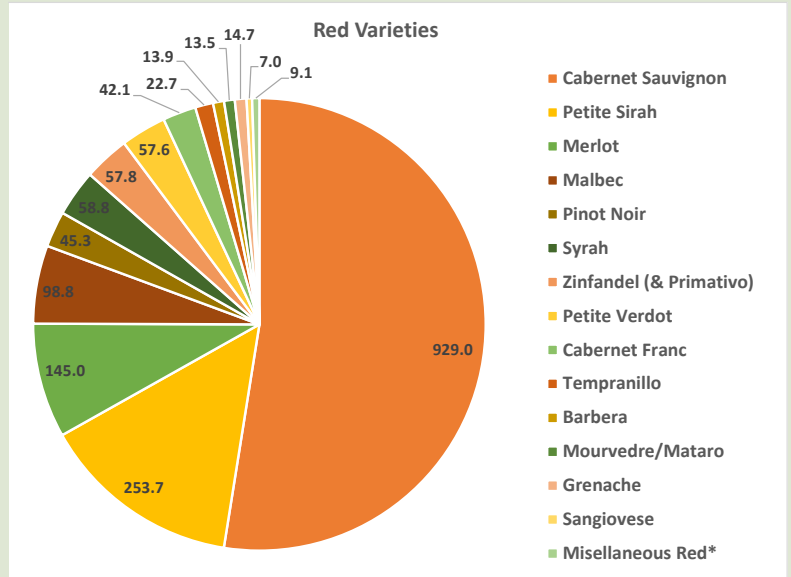
Alameda County residents can be proud of how we all worked together to adapt and overcome the challenges of 2020. Through it all, we can join together to revel in the wonderful, community-based, flourishing lifestyle we have here in Alameda County.



Winegrape Varieties

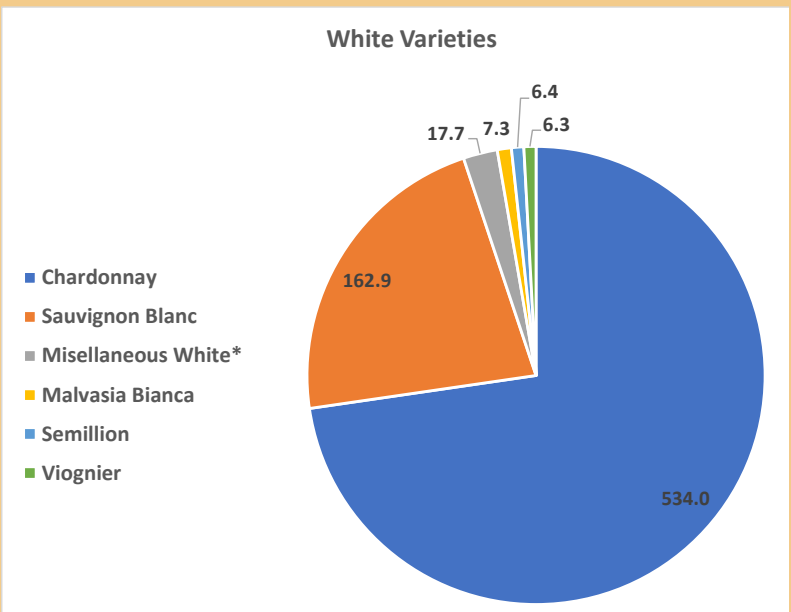
We thank our Alameda County Grape Producers and the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association for their support in gathering crop production information on winegrape varieties. Ongoing support and participation is greatly appreciated.

Red Variety	Acres	Est. Tons
Cabernet Sauvignon	929.0	4667.6
Petite Sirah	253.7	1199.4
Merlot	145.0	652.5
Malbec	98.8	865.4
Pinot Noir	45.3	181.3
Syrah	58.8	274.3
Zinfandel (& Primativo)	57.8	263.2
Petite Verdot	57.6	244.7
Cabernet Franc	42.1	144.9
Tempranillo	22.7	71.1
Barbera	13.9	41.8
Mourvedre/Mataro	13.5	62.3
Grenache	14.7	63.5
Sangiovese	7.0	48.9
Miscellaneous Red*	9.1	29.5



*Miscellaneous varieties are varieties with fewer than 5 reported acres. Miscellaneous Reds include: Counoise, Graciano, Souzao, Tinta Amarela, Tinta Cao, Touriga Nacional. Miscellaneous Whites include: Albarino, Muscat Orange, Pinot Blanc, Rousanne, Verdehlo, Pinot Grigio, Muscat Canelli.

White Variety	Acres	Est. Tons
Chardonnay	534.0	3009.7
Sauvignon Blanc	162.9	965.0
Miscellaneous White*	17.7	74.1
Malvasia Bianca	7.3	11.14
Semillion	6.4	59.2
Viognier	6.3	37.0



A total of 32 grape varieties were reported. 20 red varieties were reported, 14 with over 5 planted acres and 6 with fewer than 5 planted acres. 12 white varieties were reported, 5 of those with over 5 planted acres and 7 with under 5 planted acres.

Weights and Measures during COVID-19

While much of the economy ground to a halt to prevent the spread of COVID-19, select essential industries risked increased exposure to ensure people had access to food, fuel, and utilities while they sheltered in place. Because many of these industries require an implicit promise of accuracy in a transaction, the Weights and Measures inspectors of Alameda County also stayed at work.

In a year transformed in many ways by our interaction with the virus, Weights and Measures ensured that people continued to pump gas from verified dispensers, buy their groceries over accurate scales, and paid fair prices for their goods. Because a state of emergency was declared, price gouging protection laws came into effect, stipulating the maximum amount a price can be raised. During early days of panic buying, bad actors often raised their prices by more than 50%. Subsequent inspections by Weights and Measures led to price corrections, and in one particularly egregious case of price gouging, a referral to the Alameda County District Attorney for further prosecution.



As decreasing COVID-19 case rates and increasing vaccination begin to allow us to return to normalcy, Alameda County Weights and Measures inspectors look forward to continuing their mission of protecting the marketplace and ensuring the public can participate in our reopened economy with confidence.

FIELD CROPS

CROP	YEAR	HARVESTED ACERAGE	PER ACRE	TOTAL	TOTAL PER UNIT	TOTAL
Hay, Alfalfa	2020	340	5.50	1,870	\$220/ton	\$411,000
	2019	181.5	2.24	407	\$250/ton	\$102,000
Hay, Other	2020	2,789	1.65	4,602	\$140/ton	\$644,000
	2019	1,495	1.75	2,613	\$173.59/ton	\$454,000
Range & Pasture	2020	135,000			\$21/acre	\$3,675,000
	2019	134,476			\$19.28/acre	\$2,593,000
Miscellaneous	2020	105	Includes triticale, wheat, sorghum, etc. 2019 excludes industrial hemp			\$255,000
	2019	346				\$200,000
Total	2020	138,234				\$4,986,000
	2019	136,499				\$3,349,000

FRUIT & NUT CROPS

CROP	YEAR	BEARING ACERAGE	PER ACRE	TOTAL	TOTAL PER UNIT	TOTAL
Grapes, Wine Red	2020	1,798	4.93	8864	\$1,562/ton	\$13,846,000
	2019	1,856	4.74	8,793	\$1,688/ton	\$14,843,000
Grapes, Wine White	2020	735	5.66	4156	\$1,353/ton	\$5,624,000
	2019	838	4.8	4,015	\$1,400/ton	\$5,621,000
Miscellaneous Fruit & Nut	2020	1,786	Includes olives, walnuts, pistachios, pomegranates, almonds, avocados, etc.			\$5,646,000
	2019	1,827				\$2,035,000
Total	2020	4,319				\$21,624,000
	2019	4,521				\$22,499,000

Nursery Industry

The story of Alameda County nurseries is a story of hardships, perseverance, and adaptation. Some nurseries lost significant income to the difficulties of COVID-19, related shut down, social distancing restrictions and supply chain issues. Even with all these obstacles many nurseries found new ways to thrive.

An increase in sales above normal numbers reflects an increased interest in gardening and plant care. Sheltering in place offered time for people to pursue gardening activities and fostered their curiosity in plant care. Social media encouraged the growing of house plants, refreshing landscaping and planting your own food as people shared how plants were helping them cope, enjoy nature, and save money.

For those without outdoor spaces, house plants brought the natural world inside and boosted morale by providing beauty and an opportunity to learn plant care basics. 2020 was a year filled with yardwork that is often at the bottom of the to-do list. Growing fruits and vegetables at home had a resurgence similar to earlier times of conflict when victory gardens thrived. Gardening provided outdoor lessons for children learning from home and gave people newfound self-sufficiency. Community members looked to nurseries to help get them through tough times by providing plants and supplies.

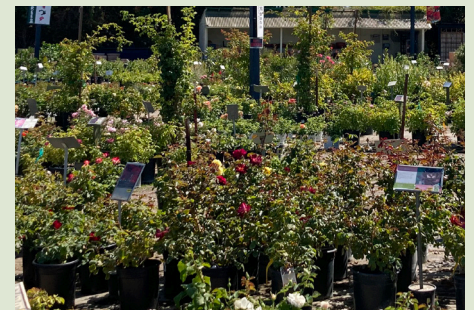
Nurseries tackled obstacles to bring people joy. With the ability to sell online, via email or over the phone, they continued to conduct business in a world of social distancing and contactless transactions. These sales were coupled with home deliveries, and curbside pickup. A few nurseries limited hours and capacity to allow for in person transactions, which provided places for people to have face to face interactions that were outdoor and at safe distances. Throughout the turmoil of 2020 the nurseries in Alameda County showed determination and flexibility. Community engrossment in plants will hopefully endure and multiply in 2021 and beyond. Nurseries will likely continue using these new business models far into the future.

NURSERY PRODUCTS			
CROP	YEAR	HARVESTED ACERAGE	TOTAL
Ornamental Trees & Shrubs	2020	63	\$3,851,000
	2019	65	\$3,466,000
Misc. Nursery Products*	2020	60	\$732,000
	2019	62	\$880,000
Total	2020	123	\$4,583,000
	2019	127	\$4,347,000

*Includes bedding plants, cut flowers, indoor decoratives, vegetable starts, Christmas trees, etc.

VEGETABLE CROPS			
CROP	YEAR	HARVESTED ACERAGE	TOTAL
Miscellaneous Vegetables*	2020	40	\$316,000
	2019	136	\$896,000

*Includes broccoli, cabbage, corn, leaf lettuce, greens, pumpkins, tomatoes, squash, etc.



Apiary

Beekeepers faced many challenges in 2020. Beekeepers with colonies staged in rural parts of the county were impacted by the encroaching SCU Lightning Complex fires and smoky conditions. Many were unable to access their rural apiaries to manage and supplement their colonies with food and water. Stressed colonies also produced significantly less honey due to the harsh conditions and loss of water and forage sources.

With COVID-19 restrictions keeping many folks at home, newfound interest in urban farming and self-sufficiency resulted in an uptick in beekeeping hobbyists. As a result, these new urban farmers gained a new awareness in maintaining the health and vitality of honeybees and their importance as pollinators and honey producers. Members of the Alameda County Beekeepers Association and others used technology, such as Zoom hosted meetings, to educate and support their members.

Livestock Industry

Alameda County's cattle industry was greatly impacted in 2020 as fire, drought and COVID-19 created challenges for our ranchers. In August of 2020 the SCU Lightning Complex fires began. These fires affected substantial rangeland acreage in Alameda County. These fires damaged or destroyed forage, fencing, corrals, stock ponds and water systems as well as roads, barns and other buildings. Ranchers had to evacuate their livestock during the fires and often had no rangeland to return them to. This left many with the difficult decision of whether to buy supplemental feed, find land to lease elsewhere or sell their cattle.

Alameda County also continued to be impacted by drought conditions. Overall rangeland loss for the year due to drought alone was 73%! This created additional hardships and production costs for ranchers who had to find supplemental grazing ground or purchase feed. COVID-19 also changed the way that beef was consumed. With most restaurants either closed or only providing take-out meals, beef consumption in the food service industry decreased. The closures of packing plants and slaughterhouses because of COVID-19 coupled with the decrease in demand for beef created a surplus of beef and lower prices for ranchers.

A new niche market has gained traction during the pandemic as more people are cooking at home. People have found it convenient and often cheaper to purchase beef directly from the producer. The farm to table movement has been gaining popularity throughout the county as there are more options available to purchase local beef either online or at certified farmers markets. The cattle industry is resilient. They have been through hard times before. As stewards of the land, ranchers do an amazing job of using the available resources and finding new ways to manage their range and pastures for the benefit of their livestock and wildlife. Many have had to reduce herd size and practice rotational grazing to get the most out of the feed that they have on available pastures.

LIVESTOCK & POULTRY						
ITEM	YEAR	# OF HEAD	TOTAL WEIGHT	UNIT	PER UNIT	TOTAL
Cattle & Calves	2020	14,012	104,537	Cwt	Various	\$12,183,000
	2019	13,624	101,334	Cwt	Various	\$11,809,000
Misc. Livestock & Poultry Products	2020	Includes sheep, goats, pigs, bee pollination & apiary products.				\$520,000
	2019					\$618,000
Total	2020					\$12,703,000
	2019					\$12,427,000



PROGRAM REPORTS

PEST MANAGEMENT & ERADICATION

Regulatory noxious weed control work is conducted in partnership with regional land management agencies and organizations. Other weeds of concern in this region include Hoary Cresses, Rush Skeletonweed, White Horsenettle, Golden Thistle, Puna Grass and new invasive noxious weeds.

WEEDS COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	CONTROL METHOD
Japanese Dodder	<i>Cuscuta japonica</i>	Chemical & Mechanical
Iberian Thistle	<i>Centaurea iberica</i>	
Purple Star Thistle	<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>	
Artichoke Thistle	<i>Cynara cardunculus</i>	
Stinkwort	<i>Dittrichia graveolens</i>	
Barb Goatgrass	<i>Aegilops triuncialis</i>	
Medusahead	<i>Taeniatherum caput-medusae</i>	

PEST EXCLUSION

Exclusion is the first line of defense in preventing non-native invasive pests and diseases detrimental to agriculture and the environment from entering the county. Incoming shipments of plant products and other high-risk articles are inspected daily at various shipping terminals to enforce quarantines intended to prevent the introduction of harmful pests.

TYPE OF SHIPMENT	SHIPMENTS INSPECTED	SHIPMENTS REJECTED
Parcel Carrier	7,920	434 (80 pests)
Trucks	492	2 (1 pest)
Household Goods	42	1 (0 pests)
Nursery	2,749	1 (0 pests)
Airfreight	221	9 (19 pests)

CANINE INSPECTION PROGRAM

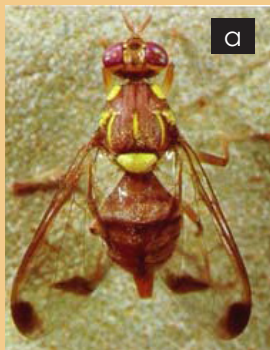
Our Canine Inspection Team works at various parcel terminals to detect and inspect unmarked parcels containing unprocessed agricultural commodities to prevent the introduction of pests and diseases. Detection dogs have been shown to be highly effective in finding pests in parcels and are used throughout the state to help protect California agriculture. This data reflects work performed by our new dog, Zenna, in training and on board for only 8 months of 2020.

TYPE OF SHIPMENT	SHIPMENTS REJECTED	ACTIONABLE PEST FINDS
Parcel Carrier	134	58 Pests Found



PROGRAM REPORTS CONTINUED

PEST DETECTION		
Pest Detection is the last line of defense against invasive non-native pests becoming established in areas so vast that it is impossible to control or eradicate infestation. Insect traps are placed and monitored throughout the county to detect exotic pests that are known to be detrimental to agriculture and the environment.		
TARGET PEST	INSECT HOSTS	TRAP SERVICINGS
Mediterranean Fruit Fly	Fruit Trees	92,248
Mexican Fruit Fly	Fruit Trees	
Melon Fruit Fly (a)	Vegetable Gardens	
Oriental Fruit Fly	Fruit Trees	
Miscellaneous Fruit Flies	Fruit Trees and Vegetables	
Gypsy Moth (b)	Shade Trees	
Japanese Beetle (c)	Turf, Roses	
European Pine Shoot Moth	Pine Trees	
Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter	Landscape/Nursery Plants	10,553
Asian Citrus Psyllid	Citrus/Nursery Plants	6,684
European Grapevine Moth	Vineyards	700



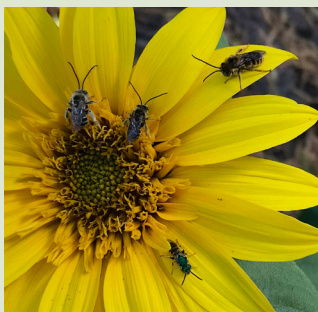
SUDDEN OAK DEATH	
Compliance Inspections	135
Sudden Oak Death Positives	0
Businesses Under Compliance Agreement	
Shipping Nurseries	5
Green Waste Facilities	16

LIGHT BROWN APPLE MOTH PROGRAM	
Compliance Inspections	140
Moths Detected in Regulatory Inspections	0
Businesses Under Compliance Agreement	
Crop Producers	0
Community Gardens/Direct Markets	0
Retail and Production Nurseries	9
Green Waste Facilities	16

ORGANIC FARMING		
CROP	REGISTERED PRODUCERS	ESTIMATED ACERAGE
Miscellaneous	10	128

URBAN FARMING		
TYPE	NUMBER	ESTIMATED ACREAGE
Community Gardens	36	52
School Gardens	269	92
Certified Farmers Markets	26	585
Certified Producers	17	

COUNTY BIOLOGICAL CONTROL		
PEST	AGENTS	SCOPE OF PROGRAM
Yello Star-Thistle <i>Centaurea Solstitialis</i>	Bud Weevil <i>Bangasternus orientalis</i>	Found in most areas of the County
	Seed-head Gall Fly <i>Urophora sirunaseva</i>	
	Seed-head Fly <i>Chaetorellia spp.</i>	
	Hairy Weevil <i>Eustenopus villosus</i>	
	Rust Fungus <i>Puccinia jaceae var. solstitialis</i>	



Community Gardens

Community gardens faced a unique set of challenges in 2020. There's no way to virtually plant, tend and harvest a garden and social distance in a tightly packed community garden. City Slicker Farms, in the West Oakland Farm Park, developed tools that allowed them to continue to reach the vulnerable senior communities they serve, including online mentorships and gardening kits. Self-service areas making 17,000 new plant starts available for garden members and food donations through Town Fridge helped the community to meet the need for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Other gardens had to alter volunteer events and hours, which impacted the ability of the community to participate. Plots were removed to allow more space for social distancing, further limiting access. Still, community gardens provided a refuge from the hustle and bustle of urban living and a chance for people to grow their own food and flowers.

COMPARISON SUMMARY					
ITEM	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Field Crops	\$4,986,000	\$3,349,000	\$4,736,000	\$4,030,000	\$4,367,000
Vegetable Crops	\$316,400	\$896,000	\$899,000	\$1,084,000	\$1,052,000
Fruit & Nut Crops	\$21,624,000	\$22,499,000	\$29,215,000	\$18,284,000	\$18,959,000
Nursery products	\$4,583,000	\$4,484,000	\$4,686,000	\$7,256,000	\$7,262,000
Livestock & Poultry	\$12,703,000	\$12,427,000	\$15,314,000	\$17,048,000	\$16,383,000
Total	\$43,895,000	\$43,655,000	\$54,850,000	\$47,702,000	\$48,023,000

GENERAL ALAMEDA COUNTY INFORMATION

Mission

To enrich the lives of Alameda County residents through visionary policies and accessible, responsive, and effective services

Vision

Alameda County is recognized as one of the best counties in which to live, work and do business.

Values

Integrity, honesty and respect fostering mutual trust.

Transparency and accountability achieved through open communications and involvement of diverse community voices.

Fiscal stewardship reflecting the responsible management of resources.

Customer service built on commitment, accessibility and responsiveness.

Excellence in performance based on strong leadership, teamwork and a willingness to take risks.

Diversity recognizing the unique qualities of every individual and his or her perspective.

Environmental stewardship to preserve, protect and restore our natural resources.

Social responsibility promoting self-sufficiency, economic independence and an interdependent system of care and support.

Compassion ensuring all people are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

County Seat..... Oakland
 County Population, 2020.....1,510,271
 Land Area (Square Miles).....738
 Water Area (Square Miles).....83.8
 Persons per Square Mile, 2020.....2,046

Total Assessed Property (Local Roll 2018-19)

\$300.1 Billion

Total Harvested Crop Acreage (2020)

182,488

Major Roads

Interstate 80, Interstate 580, Interstate 680, Interstate 880, Highway 238, Highway 84, Highway 92, Highway 13

Elevation

Sea level to 3,817 ft. at Rose Peak in the southern part of the County.

Average Climate

Mild winters and cool summers near the Bay. The eastern portion of the County is moderately warmer; high temperatures in the Livermore Amador Valley average 90°F in July.

14 Incorporated Cities

Alameda • Albany • Berkeley • Dublin • Emeryville • Fremont • Hayward • Livermore • Newark • Oakland • Piedmont • Pleasanton • San Leandro • Union City

6 Unincorporated Areas

Ashland • Castro Valley • Cherryland • Fairview • San Lorenzo • Sunol