

SAN DIEGO COUNTY FARM BUREAU **AGRICULTURE IMPACT REPORT**

LET'S GROW SAN DIEGO



20
25



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SAN DIEGO COUNTY FARM BUREAU

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dana Groot, 5th Generation Nurseryman, Founder
of FlorAbunda Nursery, SDCFB Volunteer President



Welcome to the inaugural San Diego County Farm Bureau (SDCFB) Impact Report on Agriculture. It is our honor to present to you the significance of farming as an important economic activity in the county, as well as the unique charm of our small family farms and the diverse range of commodities they produce.

The San Diego County Farm Bureau was founded in 1914 to promote and protect agriculture. It was a time of rapid technological advancement in the industry, and there was an urgent need for a conduit to deliver the latest research and information for improved farming methods from the Land Grant research Universities to farmers.

Today, 110 years later, in addition to this education, SDCFB promotes and advocates for farmers while also addressing policy issues that affect farming in the county, the state of California and the entire nation.

Since 1914, the character of farming in the county has changed dramatically. You will see that most San Diego farms are smaller than those in other counties with such a similarly robust farming industry. While San Diego is the 9th largest county in California, it boasts the second largest population. Land is expensive, so these small farms must produce high value crops. Fortunately, San Diego County also possesses very large rural areas that provide a multitude of microclimates. Specialty crops from all over the world can be grown right here, and in some cases, rarely grown anywhere else in the United States.

These specialty crops comprise some 200 commodities, the most grown by any county in California. San Diego County is proud to lead the state and the nation with the largest production of nursery and floriculture crops, as well as the highest percentage of certified organic growers in

the country. In aggregate, agriculture in San Diego County provides food security for its residents, with sufficient production to allow for a robust export trade with other states.

Throughout human history, farming has never been without its challenges, and there is no shortage of issues today's San Diego County farmers face. Although the County has an adequate water supply, it is the most expensive in the country.

In addition to the high cost of water, input costs for fuel, labor, insurance, and packaging materials are currently at record levels. Imported invasive pests continue to pose a threat, compounding the risks of crop loss already presented by more extreme swings in climate and weather. These risks, when coupled with compressed margins from commodity pricing, can create financial stress that threaten the economic sustainability of farming in the county. Finally, farmers in the county are deeply concerned about securing fair public policies and addressing over-regulation. Because of the small nature of our mostly family-owned farms, it is rare that any single farm has the administrative staff or financial resources to fully navigate the complex web of regulations that apply to farming in San Diego.

Please enjoy the information presented and discover the rich diversity of the commodities grown and the people behind the farms. As a top economic driver in the county, San Diego farming has not only a rich history, but a promising future thanks to the county's abundant resources.



DANA GROOT
SDCFB Volunteer President

SUPPORT FARMING.
FOLLOW US.





WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO THE VOICE OF LOCAL FARMERS.



A common misconception is that the San Diego County Farm Bureau is a government organization, but it is a grass-roots, non-profit organization supported solely by more than 1,200 dues-paying members. Members include San Diego county farmers, San Diegans who make a living contingent upon a thriving agriculture industry, and other associations and individuals interested in the prosperity of farms here in San Diego.



Established in 1914, the San Diego County Farm Bureau serves the needs of the San Diego farming and agriculture community. Our mission is to foster San Diego County agriculture through education, public relations, and public policy advocacy in order to promote the economic viability, sustainability, and community building of agriculture.



We work to bring awareness to the more than 4,000 farms in San Diego County; what they grow, what makes them unique, what it is like to farm in our county, what they add to our economy and our community, and why they are worth fighting for.

We hope to make you proud of what we have here in San Diego so you too will join the fight to save farming.

THE THREE PILLARS OF SUPPORT



THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY FARM BUREAU ADVOCATES FOR SAN DIEGO FARMING IN THREE MAIN WAYS.



**WE EDUCATE GROWERS AND THE
PUBLIC ABOUT OUR FAST-EVOLVING
INDUSTRY.**

In this photo: SDCFB at the San Diego
County Fair.



**WE COMMUNICATE THE ECONOMIC,
ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SOCIAL VALUE
OF LOCAL AGRICULTURE.**

In this photo: San Diego farmer speaking
with fellow county residents.



**WE REPRESENT LOCAL FARMERS
NAVIGATING NUANCED FARMING
BUSINESS PRACTICES AND
REGULATORY RULES.**

In this photo: SDCFB members meeting with
a legislator.

MEET ANDY LYALL - 4TH GENERATION FARMER AND OPERATOR AT RANCHO MONTE VISTA



“When you buy local produce, you are directly supporting a family operation like mine.”

Rancho Monte Vista grows Valencia, Late navel and Cara Cara navel oranges, Gold Nugget tangerines and Hass and Gem avocados. Andy's great grandpa and grandma came from Montana as cattle ranchers. They drove through Pauma Valley and, because it reminded them of their home in Montana, decided to settle there. In the early 1930s, the first farmers in Pauma Valley were starting to grow oranges, so the Lyalls learned and began growing oranges too. Decades later, the family continues to grow fresh, safe and affordable produce. The Lyall's family mission is to pass the farm down to the 5th generation, should they want to

do it. Andy says, “This lifestyle isn't for everybody and it has such ups and downs. It's a genuine family operation, it's personal. Our employees have been with us for a long time. When we lose a crop, it hurts all of us personally.” Like many local farms, Rancho Monte Vista is challenged by cheaper imports from foreign farms that don't have the same pesticide regulations and worker protections. Andy encourages people to continue to support local agriculture by buying local produce, so local farms, like his, can stay in business.



THE ROOTS OF OUR INDUSTRY

OUR HISTORY

SAN DIEGO COUNTY



FARM BUREAU

The San Diego County Farm Bureau (SDCFB) is a non-profit membership organization founded to promote and protect agriculture.

Did you know? **The first formal meeting was held on February 20, 1914 at the Spreckels Theater in San Diego.**

IN EVERY DECADE
SAN DIEGO FARMERS HAVE
FACED THE SAME ISSUES.

- Weather
- Market Prices
- Rising Costs
- Government Regulation
- Land Use
- Energy
- Water
- Pests
- Labor

MEET NEIL NAGATA - 3RD GENERATION OF NAGATA BROTHERS FARMS

"I am a farmer. I love this business, I love this industry, and I hope that as this county continues to grow, it doesn't lose its rich agricultural history."

Neil's grandfather first came to the United States from Japan in 1902 and attended UC Berkeley. After a return trip to his homeland, his newly married grandfather started farming strawberries, blackberries, and some vegetables in 1920. They migrated to Oceanside in 1939 to farm alongside a group of Japanese farmers. Unfortunately, during World War II, the United States forcibly relocated roughly 120,000 people of Japanese descent to internment camps. Neil's family spent four years in a camp in Poston, Arizona. Upon their return in 1946, they realized they had lost everything

and had to start over from scratch. Living temporarily in a chicken coop of a farmer friend, they got back to farming in 1947. Neil grew up helping his father on the family farm. In the 1980s, he graduated from UC Davis with a degree in entomology and a plan to run the farm. He is the only one left farming. According to Neil, "The economics related to water and regulations have been devastating." In its heyday, Nagata Brothers grew on 500 acres; today Neil farms strawberries, blueberries, and cherimoyas on 30 acres and passionately advocates for farmers and agriculture.





SAN DIEGO COUNTY FARMING AT A GLANCE

San Diego County is home to 4,031 farms and contributes \$1.65 Billion in economic value. That makes agriculture the 4th largest economic driver in the county. As technology booms and busts, the military grows and shrinks, and sports teams come and go, people will always need food, fiber and plants for landscaping, public spaces, and beauty. Do we want farming to thrive in San Diego County? California regulations are driving farms out of business.



| | |
|---------------|--|
| \$396,623,341 | Cacti & Succulents, House Plants, & Bedding Plants |
| \$383,114,393 | Ornamental Trees & Shrubs |
| \$316,855,338 | Indoor Flowering & Foliage Plants (including Poinsettia) |
| \$99,945,728 | Avocados |
| \$89,280,971 | Lemons |
| \$74,797,771 | Vegetables |
| \$66,637,466 | Livestock & Poultry Products |
| \$27,676,024 | Oranges |
| \$26,584,165 | Other Cut Flowers & Bulbs |
| \$21,991,331 | Citrus, Avocado & Subtropical Fruit Trees |

HIGHLIGHTS

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Total Value of Production | \$1,656,337,261 (\$1.66B) |
| Total Acreage | 210,732 |
| Most Valuable Crop (Total Dollars) | Cacti & Succulents, House Plants, & Bedding Plants |
| Highest Value Crop (Dollars/Acre) | Indoor Flowering & Foliage Plants (including Poinsettia) |
| Greatest % Increase (Total Dollars) | Honey & Bees Wax |
| Greatest Amount of Planted Acres | Avocados |

WHAT MAKES SAN DIEGO FARMING UNIQUE



MAJORITY
SMALL FARMS **68%**

68% of farms in our county are small at just 1 to 9 acres.



HERITAGE
FAMILY FARMS **94%**

94% of our farms are family farms.

FARM SIZE AVERAGE

44 ACRES

The average size of a farm in San Diego County is **44 acres**—compared to the average size of a farm in the United States which is **463 acres**.

JUST BETTER

RANKS 13TH

SAN DIEGO BALANCES URBAN AND RURAL BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE.

- San Diego's ag market value of products sold ranks 13th in California and 46th in the US.
- Our “nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod” value of sales ranks 1st in California and 2nd in the US.

SAN DIEGO GROWS OVER **200 DIFFERENT CROPS**, MANY OF WHICH ARE SPECIALTY CROPS THAT CAN ONLY BE GROWN IN UNIQUE CLIMATES LIKE SAN DIEGO COUNTY.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| — Manzanitas | — Dragon fruit |
| — Cherimoyas | — Avocados |
| — Anaheim peppers | — Macadamia nuts |
| — Strawberries | — Wine grapes |
| — Select succulents | — Protea flowers |



DID YOU KNOW?

FARM PRESERVATION

San Diego County Farm Bureau strives to keep farmers farming. With a 20% decrease in San Diego County farms over a 5-year period, the Farm Bureau aims to draw attention to the **210,000 acres fighting to stay in production and the nearly 13,000 jobs** this industry creates for our county. From 2022 to 2023 San Diego County lost 4,000 farm acres. That is equal to 3,587 football fields.



WE HAVE CATTLE FARMS IN SAN DIEGO.

13,300 in total cattle reside here.

IN GROSS VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, SAN DIEGO RANKS:

- **1st** in the state for Nursery Plants
- **2nd** in the state for Avocados
- **2nd** in the state for Chickens
- **4th** in the state for Lemons
- **4th** in the state for Grapefruit

SAN DIEGO IS HOME TO THE GREATEST NUMBER OF ORGANIC PRODUCERS IN THE COUNTRY.



#1

- Number of Female producers
- Number of American Indian or Alaska Native producers
- Number of Black or African American producers
- Number of Military Service producers (Active duty now or in the past)
- Number of Family or Individual farms
- Number of New and Beginning producers

#2

- Number of Asian producers
- Number of Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander producers

#3

- Number of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin producers

MEET MEL RESENDIZ - FARMER, FOUNDER AND OWNER OF RESENDIZ BROTHERS PROTEA GROWERS



"People ask me if I realize what I have done? I just get up and work. I am proud that somebody is enjoying my flowers. Makes me feel in my heart that what I've been doing is good."

In early 1977, Ismael ("Mel") Resendiz and his brothers Porfirio, Raul and Ramon immigrated to California and began their careers in the floral industry. Mel took a position working as a farmhand at Zorro Protea Farms in the hills east of Rancho Santa Fe and soon realized his passion for flowers and plants - particularly South African and Australian varieties. Mel eventually became Zorro's Farm Manager. When Zorro Protea Farms went out of business in 1991, Mel and his family struck out on their own and established Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers LLC. Today, they are

proud to offer an extensive selection of Protea, Pincushions, Banksia, Kangaroo Paws, Leucadendron, Filler Flowers and Foliage, as well as plants. Many varieties are hybrids - grown only by Resendiz Brothers. Mel starts work between 3-4am during season (or at 7am when he is being "lazy" out of season) and works "until I'm done," which generally means 7-9pm. Mel enjoys "making a living by giving people what they want." Even during the pandemic, his business flourished, which he explains as, "People always want beauty in their lives."



FARMERS ARE THE ORIGINAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS

AGRICULTURE & COMMUNITY

Despite a relatively low water consumption by San Diego County's agriculture and a 20% decrease in statewide water use over the past two decades, there is ongoing demand for even greater water conservation improvements. And though greenhouse emissions (CHGs) from agriculture account for just 5% of our county total, San Diego's Climate Action Plan (CAP) aims to achieve net zero greenhouse emissions by 2035.

San Diego County farmers are making strides in cutting water use and greenhouse emissions. Local county farmers are committed to building climate resilience on their farms and employ many sustainable practices.

— Sustainable water management

Local farmers use various climate-resilient irrigation methods, leveraging tailored approaches that allow calibration of water amounts based on an array of data, such as evapotranspiration rates, effective precipitation, soil moisture, irrigation amounts received, and sensitivity of the crop being grown.

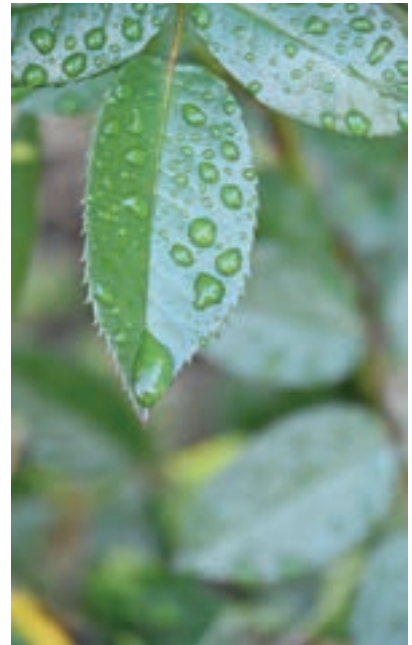
— Boosting soil health and carbon sequestration

Plants sequester carbon when they take in carbon dioxide and convert it into wood, roots, and other plants parts. An increase in soil carbon helps plants to grow, sequester more carbon, and feed more soil microorganisms. This, in turn, causes even more carbon to be sequestered in the soil, and so on.

San Diego County is home to 3 million fruit trees, and other agricultural bushes and vines that sequester carbon from the atmosphere – the equivalent of 192,000 cars off the road each year.

— Promoting biodiversity and preserving local ecosystems

San Diego County farmers support biodiversity and provide habitats for native species and habitats for pollinators. Through integrated pest and weed management practices, growers have reduced the environmental footprint of pesticides and herbicides.



San Diego's Climate Action Plan has a goal to plant 100,000 trees by 2035.

What if, instead of investing in purchasing, planting, and maintaining new trees, we preserved our food, floral, and fiber-producing agricultural orchards and acres of plants and vines?





AGRITOURISM

Photo: Carlsbad Flower Fields

Agricultural tourism (also known as agritourism and agrotourism) is the agricultural-urban interface for rural and metropolitan San Diego. Tourism and agriculture are big business in San Diego County, with tourism ranking second and agriculture ranking high as some of the county's largest industries. Current trends show increasing demand for experiential, hands-on, nonconventional tourism activities.

A number of agricultural businesses in the San Diego County region are open to the public to visit and purchase produce and products directly from the grower.

Many offer:

- educational classes, workshops or demonstrations
- farm stands or U-pick opportunities
- farm visits or tours
- garden centers featuring horticulture, floriculture and landscape products
- festivals, special events, and celebratory venues
- public recreational experiences, such as camping/glamping, horseback riding, bird watching, nature walks, shooting sports and ATV trails
- winery and cidery site visits and tastings



EXPLORE farms during different seasons and experience locally grown foods, goods and events.

MEET JIMMY UKEGAWA - 3RD GENERATION FARMER AND OWNER/OPERATOR AT CARLSBAD STRAWBERRY COMPANY



Jimmy's daughter Robyn represents the 4th generation and now helps to run the family business. Their goal is to have a viable farm to hand down to Robyn's son, the 5th generation.

The Ukegawa family's farming journey began in the early 1900s, when Jimmy's grandparents, Fukutaro and Tomoye Ukegawa, emigrated from Japan and established a vegetable farm in Tustin, Orange County. During World War II, the Ukegawa family was interned in Poston, Arizona. During World War II the Ukegawa family was interned in Poston, Arizona. After being released in 1946, the family found that they had lost everything. They relocated to Oceanside and began cultivating tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, bell peppers and other vegetables. Competition from imports, high water and labor costs, and increased regulations pushed the family to specialize in direct-to-consumer operations.

Jimmy helped the family business transition to selling at local farmers markets and produce stands. He introduced the now iconic "U-pick" experience. Today, thousands visit the Carlsbad Strawberry Company fields during strawberry season from February to July and pumpkin patch season from September to November. Jimmy says, "We are known for the TASTE of our strawberries! We grow an older variety of strawberry called Albion. Our farm is unique in that we are a quarter mile from the Pacific Ocean, where we enjoy a mild climate. It is rare for our weather to get over 85+ degrees in the summer, and we never freeze."



SAN DIEGO'S WINE COUNTRY

As of this writing, there are 166 wineries in San Diego County and the industry is continuing to grow. A wide selection of varieties (more than 60 distinct vinifera varieties) can be found across our topography throughout the county. Grapes are grown on our coastline, in canyons, on mesas and mountains; from sea level up to 4,200 feet (which is one of the highest vineyards in the state). France's Rhone varieties (Syrah, Petite Sirah, Marsanne, Roussane) as well as Southern Italian varieties (Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Barbera) are being recognized to prosper in the county.

San Diego is home to three recognized American Viticultural Areas (AVAs): San Pasqual Valley, Ramona Valley, and the larger multi-county San Luis Rey AVA. San Pasqual Valley, recognized in 1981, is one of the oldest AVA designations in the nation. Ramona Valley, established in 2006, now boasts the densest population of wineries in the county. Both San Pasqual and Ramona Valley AVAs are situated within the broader San Luis Rey AVA.

In San Diego, you can often meet winemakers on-site at their wineries, stroll through 70-year-old Zinfandel vines, taste Spanish Albariño in a hacienda-style tasting room, or casually enjoy live music on dog-friendly winery patios. San Diego wineries offer an authentic, unique, and personal experience.



**Did you know that the first
wine grapes in California
were planted in San Diego?**

FIND your local
wineries and
tasting rooms.



THE CROSSROADS OF **AG + COMMUNITY**

GRAZE AT THE FIELDS



An event like no other, the annual Graze at the Fields is held each spring at the world-renowned Carlsbad Flower Fields while they are in bloom. Graze is an agriculture insider event that is open to the public. “Grazers” eat, drink, and connect with local farmers, vintners, brewers, and chefs—tasting locally grown and curated bites and beverages while learning more about what it’s like to farm in our county. Put on by the San Diego County Farm Bureau, Graze supports our local agriculture community.

Each year, Graze hosts over three hundred guests as they enjoy small plates made with Rio Del Rey’s organic dry heirloom beans, sip farm-to-table juices from Flametree Farms, and taste wild recipes like beef brownies from Flying F Ranch. Guests “talk chickens” with farmer Frank Hilliker and take home some of his ranch fresh cage-free eggs. Cideries pour samples of cider and mead, produced from fruit grown locally using regenerative farming methods. More than 50 farms, breweries, wineries, chefs, and other agriculture related entities participate in the event.



MEET ALEX JEFFERS - 3RD GENERATION GENERAL MANAGER AT SORENSEN GREENHOUSES

With the surging popularity of succulents, many people don't realize that cacti are considered endangered species.

After growing up during the Great Depression and living through World War II, Alex's grandparents discovered that something as simple as a plant could bring people joy. With that insight, they started a family farm that would eventually grow into Sorensen Greenhouses.

Today, the business specializes in small pots of cacti and succulents, with a mission to share high-quality indoor plants with people who appreciate unique flora—while preserving as many varieties as possible. Their plants now appear in national retailers like CVS, Trader Joe's, and other

grocery chains. "I'll see one of our plants in the background of someone's social media post, and I feel a sense of joy and pride knowing they're enjoying something we worked hard to grow," Alex shares. Looking ahead, Alex is excited about the future. One of her key areas of focus is seed production, especially for long-lived plants. Some species take 15 to 20 years before they begin producing seed, and others—like the iconic Saguaro cactus—can take 70 to 80 years. Alex passionately affirms that their family business isn't just about growing plants—it's about nurturing botanical beauty and joy.





SD GROWN



THE “SD GROWN” BRAND WAS CREATED TO INCREASE RECOGNITION AND AWARENESS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY’S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY.

Only products whose components are 85% grown or harvested in San Diego County or its surface or coastal waters are able to display the San Diego Grown 365 Certification Mark.

The brand distinguishes San Diego County grown products in the marketplace. When retailers stock and consumers purchase products with the SD Grown certified brand mark they are signaling support of and loyalty to San Diego county farmers.

Look for it and buy local!

FARMERS MARKETS

Farmers Markets provide venues for farmers to sell directly to consumers and supports small farming operations. Many of our county's growers operate small family farms. They have developed reputations for quality, high-value specialty crops. Buying local is simply the concept of buying food and floral products produced, grown, or raised as close to your home as possible. Visiting one of the 40 Certified Farmers Markets (CFM) in San Diego County allows you to experience agriculture.

Find fresh produce and open-air shopping countywide on almost any day of the week!

With a year-round growing season and plenty of sunshine, San Diego produces a wealth of farm fresh goods. Area Farmers Markets are also a great place to find local artisan crafts and mix and mingle with the locals.

Farmers Markets bring communities together, improve health, and strengthen our local food systems. San Diego County Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures supports these markets throughout the county by certifying and inspecting each market and its producers. This makes sure that you can buy fresh, local produce grown by Certified Producers at your local Certified Farmers Market.



**FIND YOUR
LOCAL
FARMERS
MARKET**

MEET MICHAEL CLARK - 4TH GENERATION FARMER, FARM MANAGER AND PART OWNER OF J.R. ORGANICS

WHAT ARE CSA BOXES?

Regular deliveries (weekly, monthly or some other duration) of seasonal produce direct from a farm to member subscribers who pick up their boxes or have them delivered. Included produce is picked at its peak of freshness. CSA members support local agriculture and help to reduce the environmental footprint.



Michael's great-grandfather, Joe Rodriguez ("J.R."), started farming in Buena Park near Knott's Berry Farm but was eventually pushed out to make way for housing developments. The family farm that was to become J.R. Organics relocated to Escondido in 1960. The farm persevered through the generations and today, on 130 acres, J.R. Organics grows over 70 different seasonal organic fruits, vegetables and flowers and distributes through CSA boxes (community supported agriculture).

Michael says, "If the public wants organic, fresh food, they are proud to provide it." J.R. Organics is a family-driven community, and their goal is to keep the family legacy going. The cost of doing business (higher costs for water, labor, materials, etc.) has made it hard to farm, provide a good product, and stay above water. To keep costs low, they go direct to the consumer. Their hope is to continue to, hopefully, be profitable, despite increasing restrictions and guidelines being imposed on farming.



INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION

Ag In The Classroom

San Diego Ag in the Classroom (SDAITC) is dedicated to educating young students about the importance of agriculture in daily life and inspiring future careers in the field. By nurturing children's natural curiosity about soil, plants, water, and animals, we help them understand that their food and flowers originate from farmers and farming practices, not their supermarkets.

In collaboration with K-12 teachers, we offer programs that bring agriculture to life for students. Our initiatives include funding school gardens, providing agricultural education curriculum, hosting school garden conferences to connect teachers with local farmers, and creating the San Diego Agriculture Video Project series. These virtual farm tours, combined with tailored curriculum, bring the world of agriculture directly into classrooms, bridging the gap between farms and students in a meaningful way.

Who will grow our food in the future? According to the most recent data from the USDA, the average age of a farmer in the United States is 58.1 years old. The average age of farmers has been steadily increasing over time. This trend indicates an aging farmer population.



SCHOLARSHIPS

In San Diego, our community values the fresh flowers, fruits and vegetables they obtain from local farms. Yet, for farmers devoted to the rigorous demands of tending their land, there's often little opportunity to think about who will take on the responsibility of managing and sustaining their farms in the future.

Recognizing these challenges, the San Diego County Farm Bureau established the Farm Bureau Scholarship Program. This initiative invests in the future of San Diego agriculture by empowering the next generation of farmers. Each spring, scholarships are awarded to outstanding agricultural students. **Since its inception in 1999, the program has supported 378 talented students from San Diego County with close to half a million dollars in scholarships, fostering their academic and professional growth in agriculture and related fields.**



Tribal Farming in San Diego

DID YOU KNOW?

San Diego County has more federally-recognized tribes and reservations than any other county in the United States.

The Pala Indian Reservation is located in the heart of the San Luis Rey River Valley. Its members are descended from both the Cupeño and Luiseño peoples, who have shared this territory since 1903. It is the most populated reservation in San Diego County.

In the late 1970s, the tribe began growing corn and alfalfa, which they sold to local dairies. Today, they cultivate avocados, Valencia oranges, grapefruit, and wine grapes—agriculture that provides employment for many individuals. In 2024, they processed more than 14,000 pounds of grapes, though two varieties were lost due to extreme heat. This serves as a reminder that even with fertile soil, water, and

proper care, Mother Nature still has the final say. Price and demand also play significant roles in shaping the market.

Tribal Chairman Robert Smith has led the Pala Band of Mission Indians since 1990. He negotiated California's first Tribal-State compact with Governor Pete Wilson in 1996 and oversaw the opening of Pala Casino. The casino and resort have created thousands of jobs for both tribal members and local residents. The tribe uses proceeds to fund social services and education for its members, as well as infrastructure improvements on the reservation.



HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT **WHY LEMON GROVE WAS NAMED LEMON GROVE?**

FACT

It was named after the large citrus groves that were planted in the early 1900s. Most of the groves were replaced by housing and development. Progress is good but balance is better. There are mutual benefits for rural-urban development. The local resource provision that our farming community provides equals county health, wealth, and sovereignty.



FOLLOW US to get alerts and learn local farmers' perspectives on laws, regulations, and policies that affect agriculture.



**SAVE FARMING IN
SAN DIEGO COUNTY.**

THANK YOU.

Sources: San Diego County 2023 Crop Statistic and Annual Report, 2022 USDA Census of Agriculture San Diego County Profile, 2023 CDFA California Agricultural Production Statistics