



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

OFFICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER

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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY 2015 CROP REPORT RELEASED

The Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner on Monday released the 2015 Crop Report, showing overall increases in production values but impacts from a warmer-than-usual weather.

The total gross production value of Santa Cruz County agricultural commodities for 2015 was \$625,438,000, an increase of \$8,982,000 from the 2014 production value. The highest-valued crop in Santa Cruz County remains strawberries, followed by raspberries. Nursery crops, vegetables (led by lettuce and Brussels sprouts), and blackberries are also highly valued.

“Santa Cruz County’s agricultural industry remains strong,” Agricultural Commissioner Juan Hidalgo said. “When you include jobs provided by processing, transportation, marketing and other farm-related services, agriculture continues to play a leading role in our local economy.”

Exceptionally fertile soil, a climate that allows for the productions of high-quality crops and consumer demand for fresh fruits and vegetables contribute to the high production values of Santa Cruz County agriculture. In addition, many value-added and organically produced commodities are grown in our county, with a gross production value for organically grown crops of over \$113 million dollars, supported by more than 100 growers and 4,000 acres.

As is typical, prices fluctuate from year to year. Some crops command higher prices than the previous year, while other crops receive lower prices. In 2015, an unseasonably warm winter severely impacted apple and wine grape production, resulting in approximately 50% yield reductions as compared to 2014.

The report provides estimated acreage, yield, and gross value of agricultural products in the county, which are influenced by many factors including weather, labor, market demand and accessibility. Gross values do not include production costs, such as expenditures associated with insect pests and disease, labor, fuel, feed, fertilizer, land, and regulatory requirements.

The 2015 crop report is attached. It is also available on the Agricultural Commissioner webpage: <http://www.agdept.com>.