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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SAN BENITO COUNTY

HOLLISTER, CALIFORNIA

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COURT HOUSE

San Benito County Estimated Farm Income - 1946

The Agricultural Commissioners office has issued an annual report for many years showing the gross farm income. This report was made possible by the cooperation of growers, buyers and processors of farm crops.

The report for 1946 shows a greater gross return from farm crops than for any year we have been making up these estimates. The report shows a gross income of nineteen and one-half million dollars, up about two and one-half million above last year's figure. The general opinion prevails that this return will not be exceeded for some years.

The returns from fruit crops were good and apricots brought the most total money, nearly three million dollars, followed by prunes with a return of almost two million. Pear prices were twenty-five per cent higher than in 1945, and the grape prices were double the figure of last year.

Returns were lower from fewer turkeys, due to high feed prices and feed shortages, and late season marketings were sold on a disappointing market. The lettuce market was poor, and while the gross sales amounted to a considerable amount, there was little if any profit in the deal. Carrot acreage dropped due to the smaller dryer demand. Onion acreage was down, and prices for both onions and broccolli were so low that some plantings of both these crops were plowed under because selling prices were below harvesting costs.

The year of 1946 was one of fair growing conditions. The quality of the apricot crop was below normal, but this lack of quality was due mostly to the heavy crop, and the fact that a good many orchards ran out of moisture during the ripening period. Apparently the very low relative humidity conditions required more water than normal and growers underestimated the amount of irrigation water that would be required to mature the crop.

Prune size and quality was good and pear sizes were better than in 1945.

Fruit workers were more plentiful and while wages and costs continued high, workers generally did a better job. More field workers were available and with the help of the sugar beet digging machines the beet harvest was completed before the rainy season began.

The tomato yields per acre were poor. Too low temperatures during the blossoming period, virus diseases and soils that have grown tomatoes for too many years were the main causes of the low tonnages.

The lima bean crop was increased this year to 640 acres. This crop has only been grown for three years in this county, and its use as an alternate, soil building crop, may increase in future years.

The first tonnages from recent Boysen berry plantings were harvested this year and amounted to about 110 tons.

San Benito County has produced vegetable seed crops for many years. Except for sweet pea seed, the growing of flower seed is relatively new. This year the acreage devoted to flower seed production was increased, nearly 150 acres were planted to Zinnia seed alone.

One of the companies that freeze vegetables, has planted some 900 acres to garden peas for the spring harvest. This acreage was mostly on grain land, and if successful, may mean another crop to add to the county's total.

The grain production showed an increase in acreage planted and with high prices, returns to growers were good. A further increase in acreage for 1947 is indicated from the amount of seed sold and cleaned. The total crop for 1947 will depend on the amount and time our spring rains occur.

Cattlemen enjoyed one of the best years in the history of the industry. Feed conditions were fair and prices the highest on record. Hog production dropped due to poor feed and supply conditions, and sheep population was lower, although prices for lambs were good.

San Benito county grows a diversity of crops and this fact has prevented the county from becoming a boom and bust community. The farmers have shown sound judgment in their selection of farm crops and have followed good farming practise.

Agriculture has been said to be the foundation upon which the whole economy of the nation rests. San Benito county farms form a very sound part of that foundation.

On the next page will be found an estimated gross returns from the 1946 harvests:

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

FRUIT AND NUT CROPS

CROP	ACRES	GROSS VALUE
Apricots	5085	\$3,284,150.00
Almonds	53	32,000.00
Apples	182	163,800.00
Grapes	1709	410,160.00
Peaches	97	41,720.00
Pears	795	954,000.00
Prunes	4395	1,935,360.00
Walnuts	1282	769,200.00
Berries	100	48,500.00
TOTAL		\$7,638,890.00

TRUCK CROPS

CROP	ACRES	GROSS VALUE
Sugar Beets	6012	\$1,195,875.00
Lima Beans	640	105,000.00
Broccoli	200	20,200.00
Cauliflower	645	97,280.00
Celery	81	58,000.00
Carrots	119	47,600.00
Lettuce	5829	958,400.00
Onions	328	90,000.00
Garlic	584	590,000.00
Peas	120	360,000.00
Potatoes	884	407,312.00
Spinach	600	24,000.00
Seeds	1500	750,000.00
Other Crops		
Squash, beans, corn, etc.	600	50,000.00
TOTAL		\$4,753,667.00

LIVESTOCK AND FIELD CROPS

CROP	ACRES	GROSS VALUE
Barley	28,175	\$1,393,562.00
Wheat	3,029	166,037.00
Oats	3,000	210,000.00
Milk and butter fat		631,046.00
Beef and calves		2,722,160.00
Hay	11,500	390,000.00
Turkeys		934,000.00
Eggs and Poultry Meat		342,500.00
Hogs		72,000.00
Sheep and Lambs		169,278.00
TOTAL		\$7,030,583.00

TOTAL ALL CROPS **\$19,433,140.00**