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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SAN BENITO COUNTY
HOLLISTER, CALIFORNIA

W. B. SAUNDERS
COMMISSIONER
AND
QUARANTINE OFFICER

COURT HOUSE

1948 Report on Crops

Farm and ranch crops in San Benito county grossed \$18,160,623 for its farmers last year.

This gross income, more than a million dollars below 1947 and farther below the 1946 all-time high of \$19,940,640, came from a total of 32 fruit, truck crop and general farm products.

These facts and figures were contained in the 1948 annual crop report of Ward B. Saunders, county agricultural commissioner.

Nine fruit and nut crops gross receipts totaled \$4,012,075. Thirteen truck and field crops grossed \$6,319,689 while 10 general farm yields, including livestock, brought in the highest amount—\$7,828,859.

This general produce income showed a climb of \$324,317 above 1947. Other crops slumped, however. Fruit crops dropped \$422,322 below the previous year. Truck yields made the biggest dive—\$1,130,823.

The following table shows total returns to farms in this county since 1938, and indicates that the 1948 receipts were more than four times the dollar value of ten years ago:

| | |
|------|--------------|
| 1938 | \$ 4,882,275 |
| 1939 | 5,650,200 |
| 1940 | 6,047,490 |
| 1941 | 6,633,546 |
| 1942 | 11,354,355 |
| 1943 | 13,156,903 |
| 1944 | 16,181,847 |
| 1945 | 16,860,236 |
| 1946 | 19,940,640 |
| 1947 | 19,389,454 |
| 1948 | 18,160,623 |

Last year was the second in a decade that agricultural income in San Benito county declined since the start of a steady increase, year by year, in 1939.

Despite the altitude of the sums of money involved, to Saunders the report amounted to little more than glamorous statistics.

"The crop year of 1948," he said, "will be remembered by most farmers as a very poor growing season. Fruits, including grapes, generally were of very low sugar content. Little sugar and poor tonnage reduced profits from sugar beets."

And the money that actually went into farmers' bank accounts was not shown in the report, Saunders pointed out.

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"The reduction in gross returns of farm crops does not properly represent the reduction in net returns to farmers," he declared.

"Gross receipts of 1948 compare with the \$16,860,623 of 1945 but profits, due to high production costs, were very much lower last year and did not exist in many crops.

"Of the fruit crops, walnuts, pears and cherries were high enough to produce some profit. Other fruit crops were not above the break-even level.

"Of the truck yields, garlic, seed, beans, peas and potatoes made money. All other crops in this classification were probably produced at a loss."

In the general crop picture, the agricultural official said, grains, with reduced yields, sold lower but managed to eke out a profit.

Beef prices were good, he summarized, but a sharp drop from early peak prices did not do the industry any good and feed and range conditions were below normal.

"Hog prices were favorable and sheep prices were good," he continued. "Butterfat returns dropped. The grain-egg ratio was better than in 1947. Heavy meat chickens were a disappointment, profit-wise, to raisers, while turkey growers had one of the best years in the history of the business."

With an eye on the current year, Saunders predicted "crops which have government support are still the ones that have the brightest future for 1949.

"It appears that crops grown in the Deep South will continue to be supported by the general taxpayer; other crops only if growers have votes enough to influence legislation."

Complete breakdown of last year's gross incomes, as compiled by Saunders, follows:

FRUIT AND NUT CROPS

| CROP | ACRES | 1949 | GROSS VALUE | 1949 |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------------|--------------|
| Apricots | 5100 | 5259 | \$1,655,640 | 1,560,717.00 |
| Apples | 182 | | 91,000 | |
| Almonds | 23 | | 2,000 | |
| Cherries | 54 | | 24,480 | |
| Grapes | 1765 | | 90,860 | |
| Peaches | 96 | | 10,945 | |
| Pears | 795 | | 582,950 | |
| Prunes | 4356 | | 878,400 | |
| Walnuts | 1392 | | 675,800 | |
| | | | <hr/> | |
| | | TOTAL | \$4,012,075 | |

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TRUCK CROPS

| CROP | ACRES | GROSS VALUE |
|---------------------------|-------|-------------|
| Celery and Broccoli | | |
| Sugar Beets | 7794 | 1,383,464 |
| Garlic | 557 | 668,400 |
| Cauiflower | 510 | 450,000 |
| Lettuce | 5543 | 2,771,500 |
| Beans | 1,831 | 298,895 |
| Peas | 290 | 87,000 |
| Seeds | 1500 | 450,000 |
| Tomatoes | 1,470 | 73,080 |
| Carrots | 223 | 33,450 |
| Miscellaneous Crops | 500 | 100,000 |
| Corn, Squash, etc. | | |
| Cotton | 50 | 3,900 |
| | | |
| | TOTAL | \$6,419,689 |

GENERAL FARM PRODUCE

| CROP | ACRES | GROSS VALUE |
|--------------------------|-------|-------------|
| Barley | 34080 | 1,075,660 |
| Wheat | 3850 | 187,069 |
| Oats | 3630 | 204,300 |
| Hay | 14115 | 731,630 |
| Beef | | 2,400,000 |
| Hogs | | 92,000 |
| Sheep | | 105,000 |
| Dairy | | 343,200 |
| Poultry, eggs-meat | | 572,000 |
| Turkeys | | 2,118,000 |
| | | |
| | TOTAL | \$7,828,859 |

SUMMARY

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Fruit Crops | \$4,012,075 |
| Truck Crops | 6,419,689 |
| General Crops | 7,828,859 |
| | |
| TOTAL | \$18,160,623 |