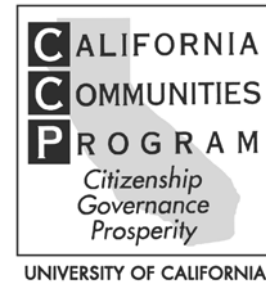


Quick Facts about Rural California¹



California is the most populous state in the nation, but it's population is highly concentrated and unevenly distributed.

- about 50% of the population reside in 4 counties
(Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Bernadino)
- an additional 30% of the population live in 9 counties
(Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, San Francisco, Contra Costa, Sacramento, Ventura, Riverside, Fresno)

California is highly urbanized.

- 94% of the population live in urban areas, while just 6% of the population (1.8 million) live in rural areas

California's rural population is not highly concentrated but distributed throughout many counties.

- 4 counties can be defined as entirely rural – containing no urban population
(Alpine, Mariposa, Sierra, Trinity)
- Another 7 counties can be defined as predominantly “rural”– where 50% or more of the county population live in a rural area (Plumas, Calaveras, Modoc, Siskiyou, Amador, Lassen, Mono)

These 11 counties account for less than 10% of the total population in rural areas however. Because of their large size, some of the most urbanized counties in the state contain significant numbers of rural residents.

- 21% of the rural population live in counties that are between 30% and 49% rural
(Tehama, Colusa, Tuolumne, Mendocino, Lake, Glenn, Nevada, Inyo, El Dorado, Madera, Del Norte, Shasta, Humboldt, Yuba)
- 32% of the rural population live in counties that are at least 91% urban.

¹ Rural is defined by the US Census Bureau as all territory, population, and housing units that are located outside of urban areas and urban clusters. Urban areas and clusters are determined by population density and size.

Characteristics of California's Predominantly Rural Counties

- 1) Sparsely populated. Just under 1% of the total California population live in these "rural" counties.
- 2) Population tends to be older with 60% of the population above 35 compared to 49% for the state as a whole.
- 3) A higher percentage are married (61% compared to 52%).
- 4) A higher percentage are veterans (18.6% compared to 11%).
- 5) Ethnically homogenous. 82% of the population is white, compared to 47%. Latinos comprise the next highest group (9%), followed by American Indians (3%).
- 6) 91% speak English at home (compared to 61%).
- 7) Higher percent graduate from high school (84%) compared to state (77%), but fewer complete college (17% compared to 27%).
- 8) Fewer residents are in labor force (53% compared to 62%), but unemployment rates are about the same as the state average (4.7% compared to 4.3%).
- 9) A higher percentage are employed in the service occupations, construction and farming than for the state as a whole.
- 10) The top 4 industries (employing 54% of the population) are:
 - a. Educational, health, social services
 - b. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services
 - c. Retail trade
 - d. Public administration.
- 11) A substantially higher number are employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining (6.0% compared to 1.9%).
- 12) Median household income is \$36,582 compared to \$47,493. As expected, a higher percentage receive social security (34%) and retirement income (24%).
- 13) Although incomes are lower, the percentage of families with incomes below the poverty level is the same (10%).
- 14) 85% of the housing units in rural counties are 1 unit detached dwellings (71%) or mobile homes (14%). This compares to 56% and 4% respectively.
- 15) 31% of housing units use wood for heating fuel compared to 1.8% statewide.
- 16) 3% of housing units have no telephones (2% statewide).
- 17) Federal lands comprise 64% of the total surface area.
- 18) The remaining non-federal lands are predominantly rural, comprising 33%. Only 1% of non-federal lands is developed.
- 19) Only 10% of the total land area is in agriculture.