

2025

SUTTER COUNTY CROP & LIVESTOCK REPORT



MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to serve the public's interest by ensuring equity in the marketplace, promoting and protecting agriculture, assuring environmental quality and protecting the health, safety and welfare of Sutter County's citizens.

We fulfill our mission through the following programs: Pest Exclusion, Pesticide Use Enforcement, Pest Detection, Fruit and Vegetable Standardization, Egg Quality Control, Pest Management, Nursery Inspection, Pest Eradication, Seed Inspection, Weights and Measures Enforcement, Predatory Animal Control and other non-regulatory and special services programs.

PHOTO CREDITS:

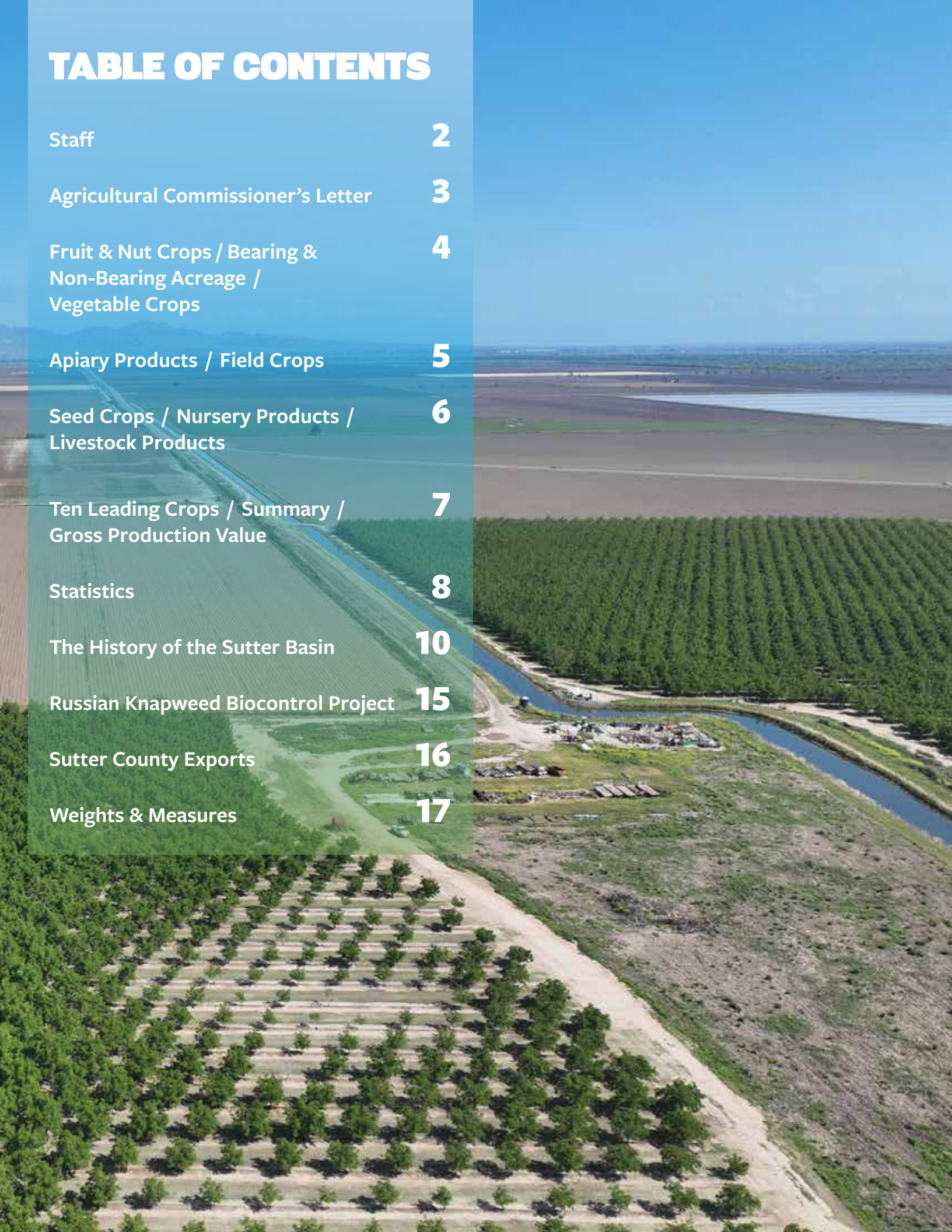
Nicolas Oliver, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer: FRONT and BACK COVER, INSIDE COVER and PAGES 1, 4, 5, 8, & 9

Kenzie Garramore, Extra Help Staff: FRONT COVER, PAGES 2, 6, and 7

Jacqueline Araujo and Courtney Krause, Agriculture and Standards Biologists III: PAGE 17

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OFFICE OF THE
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES

LISA D. HERBERT
Agricultural Commissioner
Sealer of Weights and Measures

August 2026

Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
and
The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Sutter County
Mike Ziegenmeyer, District 3, Chair
Jeff Boone, District 1
Dan Flores, District 2
Karm Bains, District 4
Jeff Stephens, District 5

I am pleased to present the 2025 Crop and Livestock Report for Sutter County. The report is prepared pursuant to Section 2279 of the California Food and Agricultural Code and is a summary representing estimated acreage, yield, and gross values. The gross value of Sutter County agricultural production for 2025 was \$744,236,000. This is an increase of \$60,744,000 or 8.9% from the 2024 total value.

In 2025 rice is once again the top-ranking crop with a total value of \$220,170,000 which is a 9.37% increase from 2024. Despite a decrease in acres harvested, both production and price increased. Second is walnuts, with a total value of \$115,634,000, which is an 8.6% increase from 2024 due to an increase in yield. Processing tomatoes remain third, with a total value of \$78,672,000, which is a 4.92% increase from 2024 due to increases in yield and price. Almonds remain fourth with a total value of \$68,182,000, which is a 3.22% decrease from 2024 due to a decline in production per acre. Clingstone peaches continued fifth, with a total value of \$65,448,000.

This edition explores the rich history of the Sutter Basin and its remarkable transformation. In the early 1900s, frequent flooding made farming a risky and uncertain venture. Through decades of reclamation, flood control, and perseverance, the basin evolved into one of Sutter County's most fertile and productive agricultural areas.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the growers, organizations, and individuals who provided us with the data that enabled this report to be compiled. Thank you to all my staff, especially Becky Mendonza, for compiling and analyzing the data. This report represents gross values only and does not reflect net profits or losses to the producers.

To learn more about the Agricultural Commissioner's Office and the services we provide, including crop reports dating back to 1940, please visit our website at <http://www.co.sutter.ca.us/doc/government/depts/ag/aghome>.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Lisa D. Herbert".

Lisa D. Herbert
Agricultural Commissioner

FRUIT & NUT CROPS

CROP	YEAR	ACRES HARVESTED	PRODUCTION PER ACRE	TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Almonds, Meats	2025	23,100	0.63	14,600	Ton	\$4,670	\$68,182,000
	2024	21,500	0.72	15,500	Ton	\$4,545	\$70,448,000
Olives	2025	646	3.68	2,380	Ton	969	2,306,000
	2024	1,100	2.16	2,380	Ton	1,079	2,568,000
Peaches, Clingstone	2025	7,840	13.82	108,000	Ton	606	65,448,000
	2024	7,140	14.86	106,000	Ton	626	66,356,000
Prunes, Dried	2025	12,200	2.42	29,500	Ton	2,020	59,590,000
	2024	12,800	2.29	29,300	Ton	2,060	60,358,000
Walnuts, English	2025	36,700	1.95	71,600	Ton	1,615	115,634,000
	2024	36,400	1.74	63,300	Ton	1,682	106,471,000
Miscellaneous ¹	2025	1,800		4,840	Ton	2,660	12,874,000
	2024	584		1,130	Ton	4,017	4,539,000
Orchard By-Product	2025						6,868,000
	2024						7,244,000
TOTAL	2025				Ton		\$330,902,000
	2024				Ton		\$317,984,000

¹ Includes Apples, Apricots, Berries (Blackberries, Boysenberries & Raspberries), Cherries, Chestnuts, Citrus (Grapefruit, Kumquat, Lemons, Limes, Mandarins, Oranges, Tangerines), Feijoa, Figs, Grapes, Jujubes (Chinese Date), Kiwifruit, Nectarines, Nectarplums, Peaches (Freestone), Peacotum, Pears, Pecans, Persimmons, Pistachio Nuts, Plums, Pluots, Pomegranates, Quince, Strawberries, Walnuts (Black) and other miscellaneous fruit and nut crops of a limited number of growers/processors in Sutter County.

2025
\$330,902,000

2024
\$317,984,000

BEARING & NON-BEARING ACREAGE

CROP	BEARING ACRES		NON-BEARING ACRES	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Almonds	23,100	21,500	2,850	3,220
Olives	646	1,100	88	58
Peaches, Clingstone	7,840	7,140	871	1,070
Prunes, Dried	12,200	12,800	1,340	673
Walnuts, English	36,700	36,400	3,060	4,500
Miscellaneous ^{1,2}	1,800	584		
TOTAL	82,286	79,524	8,209	9,521

¹ Includes Apples, Apricots, Berries (Blackberries, Boysenberries & Raspberries), Cherries, Chestnuts, Citrus (Grapefruit, Kumquat, Lemons, Limes, Mandarins, Oranges, Tangerines), Feijoa, Figs, Grapes, Jujubes (Chinese Date), Kiwifruit, Nectarines, Nectarplums, Peaches (Freestone), Peacotum, Pears, Pecans, Persimmons, Pistachio Nuts, Plums, Pluots, Pomegranates, Quince, Strawberries, Walnuts (Black) and other miscellaneous fruit and nut crops of a limited number of growers/processors in Sutter County.

² Miscellaneous Non-Bearing Acres not surveyed for 2024.

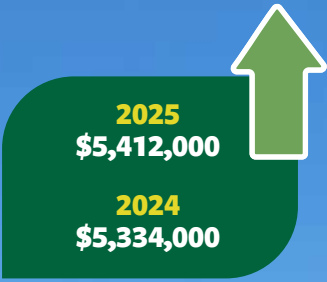
2025
\$87,514,000

2024
\$83,015,000

VEGETABLE CROPS

CROP	YEAR	ACRES HARVESTED	PRODUCTION PER ACRE	TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Tomatoes, Processing	2025	13,400	44.45	596,000	Tons	\$132	\$78,672,000
	2024	14,900	43.76	652,000	Tons	\$115	\$74,980,000
Miscellaneous ¹	2025	1,020		11,000	Tons		8,842,000
	2024	1,200		16,100	Ton		8,035,000
TOTAL	2025	14,420					\$87,514,000
	2024	16,100					\$83,015,000

¹ Includes Artichoke, Asparagus, Basil, Beets, Bitter Melons, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cantaloupe, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chard, Cilantro, Collards, Corn (sweet), Cucumbers, Eggplant, Garlic, Gourds, Greens (incl. micro) Green Beans, Herbs, Honeydew, Jicama, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Melons (Mixed), Mustard, Okra, Onions, Parsnips, Peas, Peanuts, Peppers, Potatoes, Pumpkins, Radishes, Rhubarb, Rutabagas, Shallots, Spinach, Sprouts, Squash, Sweet Potatoes, Tomatillos, Tomatoes (Fresh), Turnips, Watermelons, Winter Squash, Zucchini and other miscellaneous vegetables of a limited number of growers/processors in Sutter County.



APIARY PRODUCTS					
ITEM	YEAR	PRODUCTION	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Pollination	2025	18,500	Colony	\$157	\$2,905,000
	2024	22,000	Colony	\$148	\$3,256,000
Miscellaneous ¹	2025				2,507,000
	2024				2,078,000
TOTAL	2025				\$5,412,000
	2024				\$5,334,000

¹ Includes Package Bees, Queen Bees, Honey and Wax.



FIELD CROPS							
CROP	YEAR	ACRES HARVESTED	PRODUCTION PER ACRE	TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Bean, Dried, Edible ^{1,2}	2025	3,710	1.37	5,080	Ton	\$1,300	\$6,604,000
	2024	3,120	0.79	2,460	Ton	\$1,611	\$3,963,000
Corn, Field Grain	2025	8,970	6.87	61,600	Ton	168	10,349,000
	2024	9,200	6.43	59,200	Ton	199	11,781,000
Hay, Alfalfa	2025	3,620	6.88	24,900	Ton	195	4,856,000
	2024	3,850	5.79	22,300	Ton	221	4,928,000
Hay, Grain	2025	519	3.43	1,780	Ton	184	328,000
	2024	2,830	3.47	9,820	Ton	149	1,463,000
Rice ³	2025	112,000	4.75	532,000	Ton	394	209,608,000
	2024	119,000	4.36	519,000	Ton	370	192,030,000
Safflower	2025	2,210	1.10	2,431	Ton	422	1,026,000
	2024	3,380	2.98	10,100	Ton	428	4,323,000
Wheat, Grain	2025	7,820	2.84	22,200	Ton	179	3,974,000
	2024	7,290	2.83	20,600	Ton	238	4,903,000
Miscellaneous ⁴	2025	71,900					15,089,000
	2024	70,100					7,407,000
TOTAL	2025	210,749					\$251,834,000
	2024	218,770					\$230,798,000

¹ Includes all varieties of edible Dried Bean, including Lima, Blackeye, Garbanzo, Light and Dark Red Kidney Bean and other miscellaneous beans of a limited number of growers/processors in Sutter County.

² 2024 Bean, Dried, Edible total value changed due to rounding error.

³ Includes USDA Support Price.

⁴ Includes Barley, Corn (Silage), Cotton, Grass Hay, Industrial Hemp, Oats (Silage), Pasture (Irrigated), Pasture (Range Dry), Popcorn, Triticale, Vetch, Sorghum and other miscellaneous field crops of a limited number of growers/processors in Sutter County.

2025
\$29,637,000

2024
\$20,239,000

SEED CROPS

CROP	YEAR	ACRES HARVESTED	PRODUCTION PER ACRE	TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Cucumbers	2025	61	516	31,500	Lb	\$7.21	\$227,000
	2024	426	389	166,000	Lb	\$7.55	\$1,253,000
Pumpkins & Squash	2025	197	586	115,000	Lb	9.45	1,087,000
	2024	261	250	65,300	Lb	8.08	528,000
Rice	2025	4,410	9,580	42,248,000	Lb	0.25	10,562,000
	2024	3,990	9,690	38,663,000	Lb	0.24	9,279,000
Sunflower	2025	1,880	735	1,382,000	Lb	1.50	2,073,000
	2024	2,440	908	2,216,000	Lb	1.20	2,659,000
Watermelons	2025	886	250	222,000	Lb	30.98	6,878,000
	2024	819	290	238,000	Lb	18.94	4,508,000
Miscellaneous ¹	2025	2,570		9,656,000	Lb		8,846,000
	2024	1,620		5,610,000	Lb		2,012,000
TOTAL	2025	10,004					\$29,673,000
	2024	9,556					\$20,239,000

¹ Includes Alfalfa, Arugula, Basil, Fresh Beans, Dried Beans (Blackeye, Cowpea, Cranberry, Lima, Dark Red Kidney, Light Red Kidney), Broccoli, Cabbage, Cantaloupe, Carrots, Cauliflower, Coriander, Gourds, Kale, Lettuce, Onion, Peppers, Mixed Melons, Okra, Radish, Safflower, Sugar Peas, Swiss Chard, Tomato, Tomatillo, Triticale, Wheat, Wild Rice and other miscellaneous seed crops of a limited growers/processors in Sutter County.

NURSERY PRODUCTS

ITEM	YEAR	FIELD ACRES	QUANTITY SOLD	TOTAL
Trees and Vines (Fruit and Nut, Bareroot and Potted)	2025	241	5,363,000	\$30,545,000
	2024	260	2,881,000	\$18,702,000
TOTAL	2025	241	30,545,000	\$30,545,000
	2024	260	2,881,000	\$18,702,000

2025
\$30,545,000

2024
\$18,702,000

2025
\$8,356,000

2024
\$7,420,000

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS

ITEM	YEAR	NUMBER	LIVE WEIGHT	UNIT	UNIT VALUE	TOTAL
Cattle & Calves ¹	2025	2,720	22,800	Cwt.	\$258	\$5,882,000
	2024	2,720	22,800	Cwt.	\$205	\$4,674,000
Miscellaneous ^{2,3}	2025					2,474,000
	2024					2,746,000
TOTAL	2025					\$8,356,000
	2024					\$7,420,000

¹ Includes USDA Support Price.

² Includes Alpaca & Angora Fur, Aquaculture, Chickens, Chicken Eggs, Ducks, Fish Bait, Geese, Goats, Hogs, Milk (Market), Game Birds, Musk Oxen, Pheasants, Pigeons, Rabbits, Rabbit Hides, Turkeys, Water Buffalo, Wool and other miscellaneous livestock and poultry of a limited number of growers/processors in Sutter County.

³ Livestock By-Products is now included in Miscellaneous.

TEN LEADING CROPS

CROP	2025	CROP	2024
RICE ¹	\$220,170,000	RICE ¹	\$201,309,000
WALNUTS	\$115,634,000	WALNUTS	\$106,471,000
TOMATOES, PROCESSING	\$78,672,000	TOMATOES, PROCESSING	\$74,980,000
ALMOND, MEATS	\$68,182,000	ALMOND, MEATS	\$70,448,000
PEACHES, CLINGSTONE	\$65,448,000	PEACHES, CLINGSTONE	\$66,356,000
PRUNES, DRIED	\$59,590,000	PRUNES, DRIED	\$60,358,000
NURSERY PRODUCTS	\$30,545,000	NURSERY PRODUCTS	\$18,702,000
CORN, FIELD GRAIN	\$10,349,000	CORN, FIELD GRAIN	\$11,781,000
WATERMELON SEED	\$6,878,000	HAY, ALFALFA	\$4,928,000
BEAN, DRIED, EDIBLE	\$6,604,000	WHEAT, GRAIN	\$4,903,000

¹ Includes Seed, does not include Wild Rice.

SUMMARY

CATEGORIES	2025	2024
FRUIT & NUT CROPS	\$330,902,000	\$317,984,000
FIELD CROPS	\$251,834,000	\$230,798,000
SEED CROPS	\$29,673,000	\$20,239,000
VEGETABLE CROPS	\$87,514,000	\$83,015,000
NURSERY PRODUCTS	\$30,545,000	\$18,702,000
LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS	\$8,356,000	\$7,420,000
APIARY PRODUCTS	\$5,412,000	\$5,334,000
TOTAL	\$744,236,000	\$683,492,000

GROSS PRODUCTION VALUE

YEAR	VALUE	YEAR	VALUE	YEAR	VALUE	YEAR	VALUE	YEAR	VALUE
1959	\$50,707,000	1973	\$159,204,000	1987	\$216,183,600	2001	\$264,673,000	2015	\$538,147,000
1960	\$50,536,000	1974	\$179,719,000	1988	\$201,345,800	2002	\$291,061,100	2016	\$514,408,000
1961	\$55,585,000	1975	\$187,517,000	1989	\$243,940,200	2003	\$307,322,300	2017	\$583,996,000
1962	\$57,322,000	1976	\$178,554,000	1990	\$217,400,000	2004	\$299,219,300	2018 ¹	\$609,058,000
1963	\$55,155,000	1977	\$200,878,000	1991	\$268,941,900	2005	\$305,190,190	2019	\$698,680,000
1964	\$66,740,000	1978	\$220,502,000	1992	\$285,622,700	2006	\$358,845,200	2020	\$568,857,000
1965	\$64,564,000	1979	\$258,666,900	1993	\$292,108,300	2007	\$377,940,800	2021	\$621,366,000
1966	\$71,627,000	1980	\$299,014,700	1994	\$340,171,300	2008	\$498,195,200	2022 ²	\$568,572,000
1967	\$69,313,000	1981	\$316,465,900	1995	\$330,170,500	2009	\$475,691,100	2023	\$771,820,000
1968	\$80,275,000	1982	\$247,784,100	1996	\$302,706,400	2010	\$521,640,570	2024 ³	\$683,492,000
1969	\$74,006,000	1983	\$205,335,300	1997	\$277,169,700	2011	\$518,198,460	2025	\$744,236,000
1970	\$77,238,000	1984	\$262,285,500	1998	\$268,323,100	2012	\$528,253,000		
1971	\$82,209,000	1985	\$255,449,600	1999	\$347,939,000	2013	\$597,530,000		
1972	\$95,118,000	1986	\$229,364,800	2000	\$340,176,000	2014	\$726,066,000		

¹ 2018 Total Value revised.

² 2022 Total Value revised.

³ 2024 Total Value revised.

STATISTICS

CROP STATISTICS

As required by the California Food & Agricultural Code, the gross production and value of the county's commodities are compiled and recorded in the annual crop report. This valuable information helps associated businesses while promoting the production and prosperity of agriculture in California.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 307

SEED LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CERTIFICATION

County staff perform seed inspections at both the retail and wholesale levels. This program protects not only retail and wholesale establishments but also urban and rural landscapers in the seed buying or selling business. Samples are drawn for germination and purity testing, and labeling is inspected for compliance with state requirements. Inspectors also attest to the "cleanliness" of harvesters, mills, warehouses, and other seed and grain companies for certification and quality standards. This program also provides certification services for growers and processors in cooperation with the California Crop Improvement Association.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 276

APIARY INSPECTION

This program emphasizes the registration and site location of honeybee colonies in the county. At the request of beekeepers or growers, the County Agricultural Commissioner inspects colonies for strength and health to ensure effective pollination.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 66

AGRICULTURE PESTICIDE CONTAINER RECYCLING PROGRAM

Funded by a grant from the Feather River Air Quality Management District, this program is operated by the Sutter County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, which contributed 188 hours of in-kind service in 2025. Multiple collection events are set up annually across Sutter County and are a cost-free way for growers and pest control businesses to recycle their clean pesticide containers in an environmentally friendly manner. In 2025, we recycled 104,550 pounds of pesticide container plastic. Since the inception of this program in 2007, a total of 1,702,903 pounds has been recycled.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 188

PESTICIDE USE ENFORCEMENT

This is a complex legislatively mandated program that provides for the proper, safe and effective use of pesticides essential for production of food and fiber and for protection of the public health and safety. It also protects the environment from potentially harmful pesticides by prohibiting, regulating or ensuring proper stewardship of pesticides. An important component of the program focuses on agricultural and pest control workers, ensuring safe working conditions, use of proper protective equipment and training for employees who work with or around pesticides. Other components of the program include pesticide use reporting, incident investigations, outreach activities promoting best management practices and monitoring applications in the field.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 11,302

FRUIT, NUT, AND VEGETABLE STANDARDIZATION

This program ensures compliance with California's minimum standards regarding quality and marketing of all produce commercially grown and/or marketed in the state. Staff are responsible for enforcing Direct Marketing and Organic laws and regulations that provide local protection to growers, marketers, and consumers. Program tasks involve inspecting and regulating over 17 certified producers and 2 certified markets, ensuring organic producers are registered with California Department of Food and Agriculture, and local farm stands comply with laws and regulations enforced by the Development Services Department. Melons grown for fresh market are also inspected for maturity requirements, defects and tolerances, and that all containers are properly marked and packed accordingly.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 422

MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

County Weights and Measures officials ensure the accuracy of commercial weighing and measuring devices; verify the quantity of both bulk and packaged commodities and enforce the quality advertising and labeling standards for most petroleum products.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 2,360

PEST MANAGEMENT

The County Agricultural Commissioner is responsible for the management of nuisance pests in agriculture to protect crops. Despite the county's best efforts, pests can be introduced and established. This program also works to track, monitor, and control noxious weed populations within the county. Chemical, biological, and mechanical control methods are also used by staff to help control or eradicate noxious weed populations. In 2025, the County Agricultural Commissioner

continued efforts under a State weed grant to survey for and treat noxious weeds and weeds of concern. Staff surveyed 521 acres in the county looking for A, B, and C rated noxious weed species. Recently found noxious weeds that are of concern to the region include Russian knapweed, hoary cress, white horsenettle, artichoke thistle, and stinkwort. Treatments were applied to 19 acres of Russian knapweed.

When appropriate, biological control methods are used as part of an integrated approach to pest suppression. These efforts involve the use of natural enemies to reduce pest populations in an environmentally responsible manner, often leading to long-term, self-sustaining control and reduced reliance on chemical treatments.

To prevent the spread of glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS), Sutter County inspected 118 shipments of nursery stock arriving from infested areas in California. There were zero shipments of plant material rejected for the presence of GWSS egg masses or other life stages. There were 88 traps placed in nurseries and urban areas for the detection of GWSS, which were serviced a total of 848 times.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 932

ORGANIC FARMING

23 farms, totaling approximately 16,634 acres of cropland were registered as organic in Sutter County in 2025. These farms produce a wide array of commodities such as almonds, other nut crops, stone fruit, other fruit crops, broccoli, tomatoes, seed crops, beef, carrots, celery, lettuce, spinach, and citrus. The total estimated organic production value in Sutter County in 2025 was \$16,330,920.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 24

NURSERY INSPECTION/ NURSERY SERVICES PROGRAM

Our mission is to prevent the introduction and spread of agricultural pests in nursery stock and to protect producers and consumers from losses due to the sale or purchase of inferior, defective, or pest-infested plants.

To operate in Sutter County, production, wholesale, or retail nurseries, and landscape contractors selling nursery stock must secure licensure from the California Department of Food and Agriculture CDFA. As part of our regulatory oversight, production nurseries undergo annual inspections to verify adherence to basic cleanliness standards and sound nursery management practices. While retail nurseries are not inspected yearly, they are still required to meet the same standards.

To ensure quality and compliance, the Sutter County Nursery program conducts multiple inspections throughout the year at wholesale nurseries. These inspections include pre-planting nematode certification, in-season disease monitoring, post-harvest grading, and overall nursery cleanliness inspections. In 2025, Sutter County inspections were carried out at 28 locations covering 156 acres and requiring a total of 34 hours.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 175

PEST DETECTION

The Pest Detection Program plays a critical role in protecting local agriculture and the environment by monitoring for invasive pests that could threaten California's crops and natural resources. To support early detection, traps are strategically placed throughout Sutter County in both urban and commercial areas ranging from outdoor retail areas to the front yards of local residents.

There were 385 traps placed for detection of exotic insect pests, including Mediterranean, Oriental and Melon Fruit

Flies, Spongy Moth, Japanese beetle, European Pine Shoot Moth, Khapra Beetle, Vine Mealybug, European Grapevine Moth, European Corn Borer, and False Codling Moth. Staff use common host plants favored by these pests to get optimal results. These hosts include citrus, pome and stone fruits, ornamental landscape, nursery stock, and backyard vegetable gardens. Additionally, surveys were conducted for Spotted Lanternfly which is a disease spread by insects such as the plum psyllid, ultimately causing lower yields and host death. Over the course of the season, a cumulative total of 4,183 trap servicings were performed and 100 disease sites were surveyed.

Total Hours Expended 2025: 1,180

PEST EXCLUSION

This program serves as the primary defense mechanism for California agriculture and the environment, protecting against the invasion of exotic pests. Inspections protect from the introduction of plant, animal, insect, and disease pests that may be introduced into the state through the movement of legal and illegal trade.

Additionally, this program involves the inspection of plant material being transported to other states and countries, along with the issuance of certificates that document adherence to entry requirements. Throughout 2025, 364 premises visits were conducted. Inspectors examined a total of 2,653 shipments of plant material during these visits. The inspections took place at express carriers, nurseries, and other farms. There were 5 shipments of plant material that were found to be in violation and were rejected. Rejected plant material may be returned to the shipper, reconditioned, and then released, or destroyed. As a service to the industry, 1,241 federal phytosanitary certificates for international shipments and 16 state phytosanitary certificates for interstate shipments were issued.

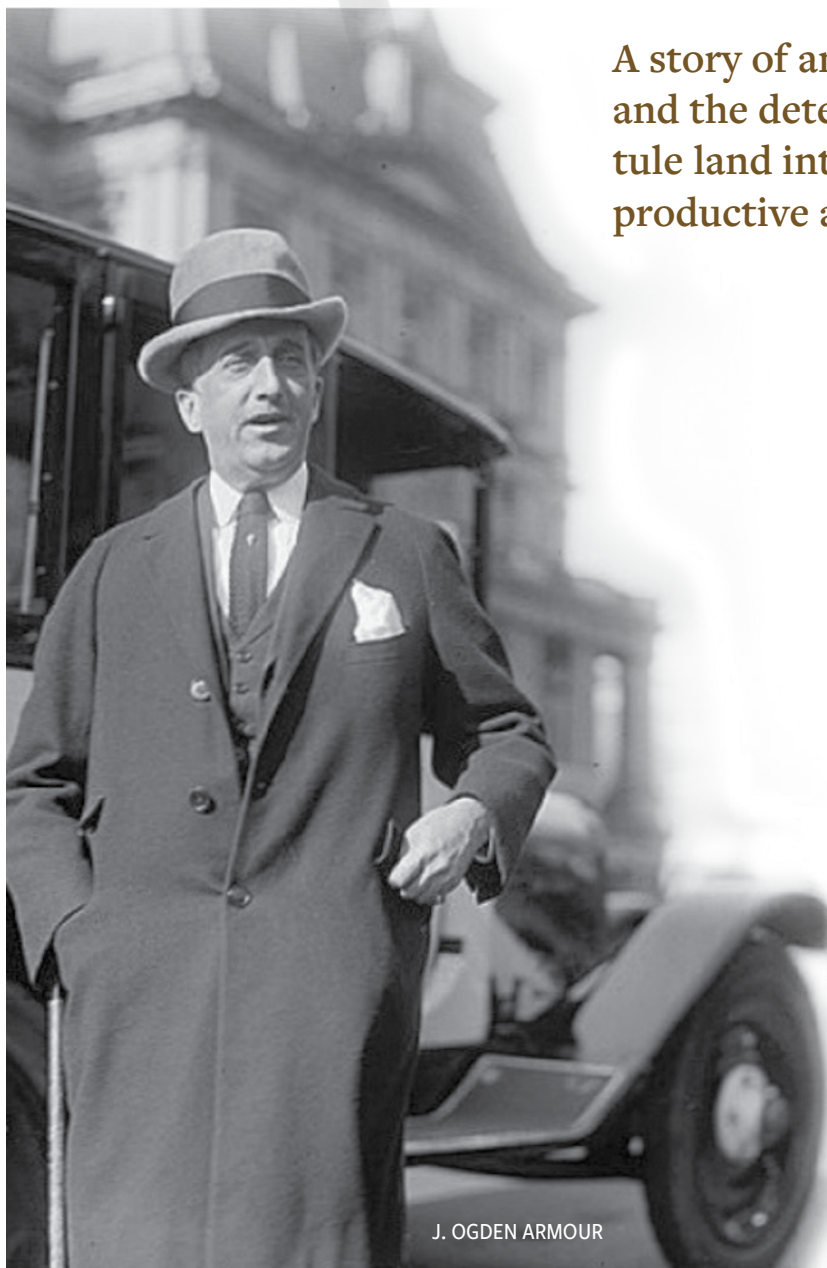
Total Hours Expended 2025: 5,020

THE HISTORY OF THE

Written by Kevin Putman,
Agricultural and Standards Biologist III

SUTTER BASIN

A story of ambition, floodwater, reclamation, and the determined attempt to transform tule land into one of Sutter County's most productive agricultural regions.



J. OGDEN ARMOUR

In his book, *The Sutter Basin and Its People*, Wm. J. Duffy Jr. recounted a memory from December 1914. A student at the University Farm School at Davis at the time, Duffy stood on high ground by the Sacramento River at Knight's Landing and "gazed out upon a sea of muddy water. As far as one could see, to the north, south, and east, was a vast, swiftly moving body of water." Heavy rains had driven the rivers to flood stage, and only the high ground situated along the river, the so-called Rim Lands, escaped inundation in such flood events. Duffy described a group of men driving 24 horses and mules, with 6 wagons fleeing the floodwaters, arriving on the high ground that evening. The leader—an Arbuckle farmer named Charlie Meyers—had just lost his entire season's barley crop prospects in the lowlands, or "Tule," as it was called. Meyers, no doubt pained by his losses, was nonetheless upbeat and philosophical: "When you farm in the Tule, you have to take those chances. We won't have a crop this year, but the Tule is such a productive area that one good crop is worth two anywhere else." And so it was that farmers like Meyers recognized the potential of these lowlands for agricultural production. In the coming decade, ambitious plans would be launched to control the floodwaters, to drain the lowland, to tap the full agricultural potential of the Sutter Basin, and tame The Tule.

A project of such scope required forward-thinking, energetic, and most importantly, monied people. In 1911, William Gerber, President of California National Bank led a group of Sacramento businessmen who were amongst the first willing to invest in the idea. Soon thereafter, this group was joined by Gerber's friend George Robbins—Vice President of the Chicago-based

OVERFLOW CROWD ATTENDS CITIZENS' BIG MASS MEETING

STRONG OPPOSITION TO EASTERN BYPASS VOICED BY MANY ABLE SPEAKERS

SENATOR DUNCAN WILL
GO TO BAT FOR SUT-
TER COUNTY

Resolution Adopted at Mass Meeting Yesterday

The following resolution was another river (the Feather), to the adopted yesterday by the citizens of great detriment of all the property Sutter and Yuba counties in mass owners along the latter river whose meeting assembled: investments have been made in the

STORES CLOSE AND FOR
ESTERS' HALL WAS
CROWDED

Armour Meat Packing Company. At this time, this group petitioned the State legislature for the formation of Reclamation District 1500, which was subsequently established in 1913. The stage was set for land development, drainage, and levee construction. All that was needed was money, and it was through George Robbins that Sutter Basin Company found its most important financial ally—the meat-packing mogul himself—J. Ogden Armour.

At the time, J. Ogden Armour was estimated to be the second wealthiest man alive. He had inherited his father's meat-packing business in 1901 and expanded it into a worldwide, billion-dollar colossus. He also expanded into other sidelines: Armour Grain Company—then the world's largest; Armour Leather—world's second largest; in addition, his fertilizer manufacturing company was one of the largest in the United States. When approached by George Robbins about land development of the Sutter Basin, and the formation of the Sutter Basin Company, Armour added this venture to his long list of investments. With Armour's enthusiastic financial influence and backing, including \$11,450,000 that he had personally advanced for capital expenditures, the Sutter Basin Company was poised for land acquisition and construction. Armour then persuaded many of his midwestern friends to buy bonds in the district, and he gave his personal assurances for these investments—a detail that would turn out to be of great importance later.

It is impossible to embark upon a project of this size and scope without opposition. One of the first points of contention was the path of the

proposed Sutter Bypass and where its levees would be constructed. At issue was whether it should run right down the middle of the basin or be placed along the eastern edge of the basin. Landowners closer to Yuba City opposed the eastern shift. With Armour's financing, and while these details were under debate, the Sutter Basin Company & RD 1500 had already commenced with construction, including the pumping plant to drain the basin, and levee construction—along the path of the eastern location. A major public battle ensued. Sutter County Supervisors called for an injunction that halted construction. In March 1915, a large meeting took place in Marysville, attended by over 1000 people, most of whom expressed fierce opposition to the "Armour project."

Local Sutter County landowners also generally opposed the assessments that were to be levied by the State Reclamation Board. Among those opposed were the "rim land farmers,"

"...the Tule is such a productive area that one good crop is worth two anywhere else."

already long-time inhabitants of the high ground along the Sacramento River at the west edge of the Basin. None of these established farmers were enthusiastic about being drawn into a reclamation district. The plans included improvements and setbacks of existing levees on their property. In 1914, H.S. Hunter, a Right of Way agent acting on behalf of Reclamation District 1500 and the Sutter Basin Company, negotiated with many of these landowners, offering \$200 per acre to acquire portions of their farms along the existing levee. An example of the sort of greeting that Hunter received in these dealings came from one H. Poffenberger, who farmed about 600 acres at Steiner Bend, just south of the Tisdale Weir. On his visit, Mr. Hunter said that he "found Mr. Poffenberger in an ugly mood toward District #1500, Sutter Basin Co., Mr. Gerber (president of Sutter Basin Co.), Mr. Randle (engineer), all attorneys, and even the surveyors that recently surveyed his premises for yardage and acreage."

Another farmer, H. Hanschild, was "opposed to reclamation for the fact that he is afraid of the assessments." Then there was a visit with one Miss Prather, of whom Hunter wrote, "I found her a very hard person to keep on the subject of right of way or reclamation, she apparently having an insane desire to talk on family matters and her musical accomplishments. During our conversation no mention was made of her having driven a Company's survey crew from the county road at the point of a shotgun and that a warrant was out for her arrest."

And so it went for Mr. Hunter, who went from farm to farm amongst these rim farmers



Maddock Station—the precursor to the Town of Robbins, December, 1920. A group of prospective settlers/buyers from the Midwest, brought in by the Sutter Basin Company to view farmland.



PROMISING LAND, HARD LESSONS

negotiating prices for their acreage, cubic yardage for the section of existing levee on their property, movement and/or destruction of existing buildings, and loss of fruit, nut, and ornamental trees. His job was not an easy one.

The debate over the location of the bypass would bring five years of legal battles. The project stalled in a quagmire; and a decision in 1916 upheld the injunction. It wasn't until 1917 that the California Supreme Court reversed that decision, finally permitting construction to resume along the proposed eastern path. Armour, Sutter Basin Company, and Reclamation District 1500 had won the war. To add yet more acrimony, in 1919, the bypass' west levee was completed, but the eastern levee was not. With no eastern levee, heavy rains in February of that year caused flood water from Butte Slough to surge

out onto the farms of the very landowners who had been fighting the project all along. It was estimated that losses of crops and property were over \$1,000,000.

The next year, the east levee was finished; the bypass was complete. The next phase of the project was to supply a complete irrigation and drainage system with hundreds of miles of supply canals, and drainage ditches. For drainage, a pumping plant was constructed at the south end of the basin, at Karnak. At the time, this pumping plant was rated as the 2nd largest in the world and could move 540,000 gallons of water per minute. When operated for the first time in 1917, it drained the entire basin dry in 25 days. For irrigation, the Sutter Mutual Water Company was formed for the purpose of supplying water to farmers at cost. A massive 310,000 gallon per minute pumping plant was

constructed to pull water from the Sacramento River at the northern extreme of the district, with water then distributed throughout the basin via gravity flow.

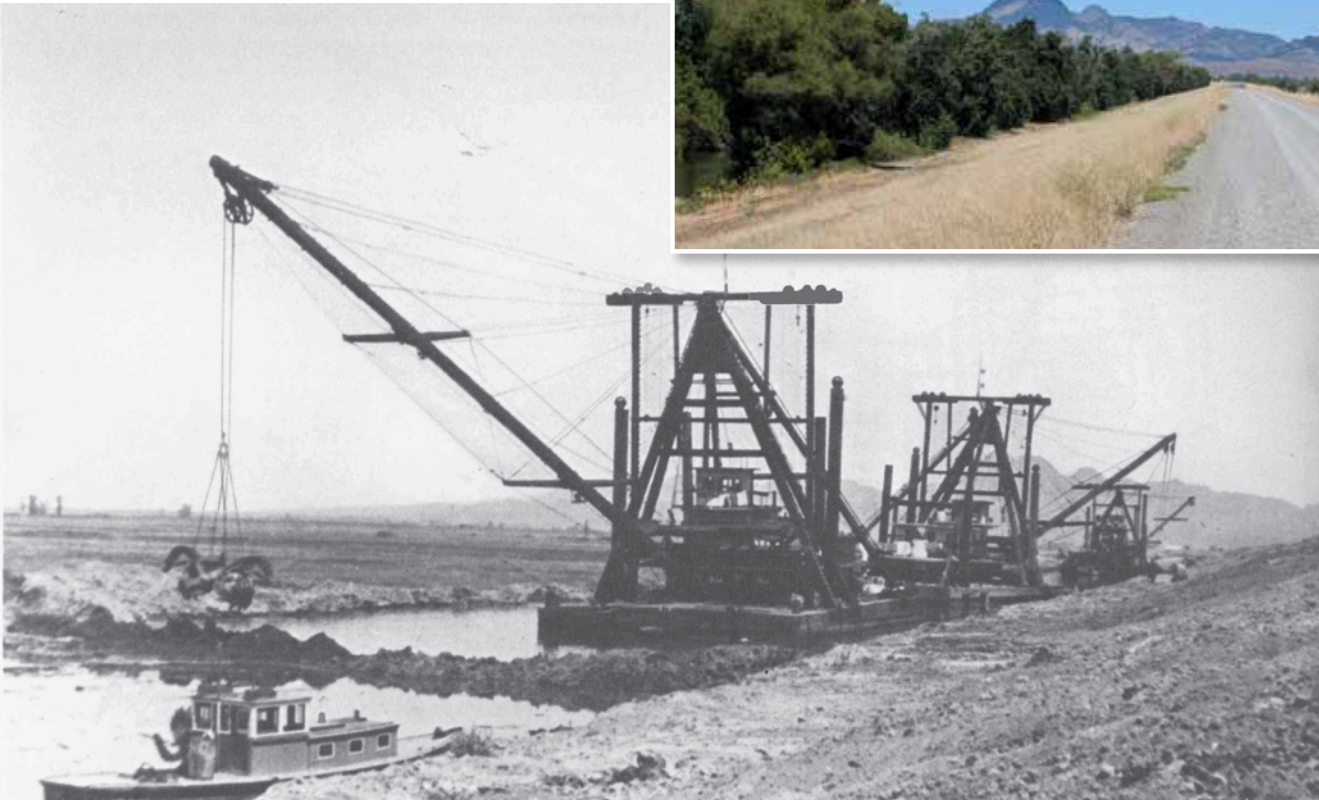
The Sutter Basin Company owned about 70 percent of the reclaimed acreage in RD 1500. They sought to sell subdivided tracts of twenty to eighty acres to prospective farmers who would farm and establish homes in the basin. Work began to market these tracts with elaborate advertising and salesmanship. Sales offices were established in Sacramento and Chicago, and prospective buyers were transported by train from the Midwest and throughout the western US and Canada. Unfortunately, the early 1920s were not optimal years for anyone to be entering into farming, much less establishing farms and homesteads from scratch. The economy was in a slump after World War I, and commodity prices plummeted. Many of those who bought acreage became disillusioned at costs and losses and felt that they had been misled by the Company's salesmen. Some simply did not have the expertise or adequate financing to

take on such an endeavor, and many failed. The growing numbers of these unfortunate people derisively termed the area "Sucker Basin." But they weren't the only losers in the recession years of the early 1920s. All of J. Ogden Armour's business interests, including the Sutter Basin Company, were financially bleeding to death during these same years. In just a few years, Armour went from being the 2nd wealthiest man alive—with holdings in everything from railroads to part ownership of the Chicago Cubs—to near bankruptcy. His heavy investments in wheat were particularly disastrous. He lost over \$1 million per day for 130 days. The Chicago Journal of Commerce noted that, "He probably had the distinction of having lost more money than any man that ever lived," and that he was "the most unfortunate person who ever attained greatness in business." These events took a toll on his health, and he died in 1927 of heart failure. His friends, whom he had persuaded to invest in the Sutter Basin Company early on, appeared to be losers as well. However, Armour had given his personal assurance to these investors at

the time. His widow, Lolita, was aware of this fact, and she saw to it that this promise was kept. Fortunately for Lolita, one of Armour's "worthless stock" investments later paid off: Universal Oil Products Company. With the advent of the automobile, these stocks skyrocketed, making her tremendously wealthy.

Today, State Highway 113 slices right through the Sutter Basin, and through the town of Robbins—named for George Robbins. At the north end, at the junction with Highway 99, this highway starts south at an elevation of approximately 45 feet above sea level. Heading south, the elevation drops to 23 feet at the town of Robbins, then climbs back up to 36 feet at Knights Landing. The casual motorist will not even notice this imperceptible dip in elevation or realize that they are driving through what was once the bottom of a lakebed, surrounded by rivers that are 15-25 feet higher. Nor will most begin to fathom the colossal achievement of engineering, political persuasion, and sheer determination that went into taming the Tule for modern agriculture.

1911	1913	March 1915	1915	1917	1919	Feb 1919	1920s	1920	1927	Today
William Gerber gathers investors	Formation of Reclamation District 1500	Marysville public meeting draws 1000's in opposition	Sutter Board of Supervisor injunction	CA Supreme Court reverses injunction	West levee complete East levee incomplete	Major flood	J. Ogden Armour loses millions in great recession	East levee completed	J. Ogden Armour dies of heart failure	Highway 113 slices through the Sutter Basin



Three dredges building the east levee of the Sutter Bypass in the vicinity of Bogue Road, 1919 (Sutter Buttes in background). The levees were built from south to north. The dredge in foreground is building a dam across the channel, and water is then pumped into this higher lock. Dredges then float higher and continue digging into higher ground to the north, depositing material for the levee as they go.



Russian Knapweed Biocontrol Project

Written by Monica Torres, Agricultural and Standards Biologist II

Biological pest control, or biocontrol, is an ecologically focused method of managing pest populations by introducing or encouraging their natural enemies. This strategy harnesses natural ecosystem relationships to reduce the density of unwanted organisms like insects, mites, weeds, and plant pathogens. This approach is a fundamental component of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs, utilizing sustainable solutions to crop protection with minimal dependence on synthetic pesticides. Organisms utilized as biocontrol agents fall into three primary categories based on their mode of action: predators, parasitoids, and pathogens. Parasitoids are insects which lay their eggs in, on, or near a single host organism. The larva then develops inside or outside the host, ultimately causing the host's death as the parasitoid completes its life cycle.



Russian knapweed is listed as a B rated noxious weed and can be spotted along roadsides, empty fields, near canals and on vacant lots. This noxious weed can rapidly colonize disturbed areas and is often extremely long-lived due to extensive root systems. The gall wasp (*Aulacidea acroptilonica*) is one (of two) approved biological control agents in California for Russian knapweed. Females deposit eggs in the young growing stems, larvae hatch causing the formation of a stem gall, remain inside the gall all winter, adults then emerge from exit holes the following spring. Galled plants produce fewer flowers and fewer seeds.

Since 2023, Sutter County Agricultural Biologists have mapped over 60 Russian knapweed sites, the majority of which are located in the southern part of the county. During the spring while plants were still young, Agricultural Biologists released 2,400 gall wasps across four sites. The plants must be monitored 4-6 weeks after the initial release to determine if the gall wasps established themselves in the stems.

Biological control may be used alongside traditional weed management methods, including chemical, mechanical, preventative, and cultural approaches, as part of a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management program. Biocontrol offers several advantages, particularly for long-term, sustainable suppression of invasive species like Russian knapweed. Once established, biocontrol agents can provide ongoing control with minimal additional input, making them a cost-effective option over time. Their host-specific nature also helps protect non-target plant species that may be impacted by herbicide applications. In addition, biocontrol can be especially valuable in areas where herbicide use is limited or restricted, such as near organic production sites or sensitive habitats. Incorporating biocontrol into management strategies can also help reduce reliance on herbicides and support efforts to prevent or manage herbicide resistance in weed populations.

▲ Galls forming in the stem five weeks after initial release.

◀ Initial release of gall wasps.

SUTTER COUNTY EXPORTS

Sutter County exported Agricultural Commodities to 79 countries in 2025, the top five being The Republic of Türkiye, Japan, Republic of Korea, India, and China.

2025 FEDERAL PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES

Total of 1,241 issued
to 79 countries

NUMBER OF CERTIFICATES ISSUED

The Republic of Türkiye - 169

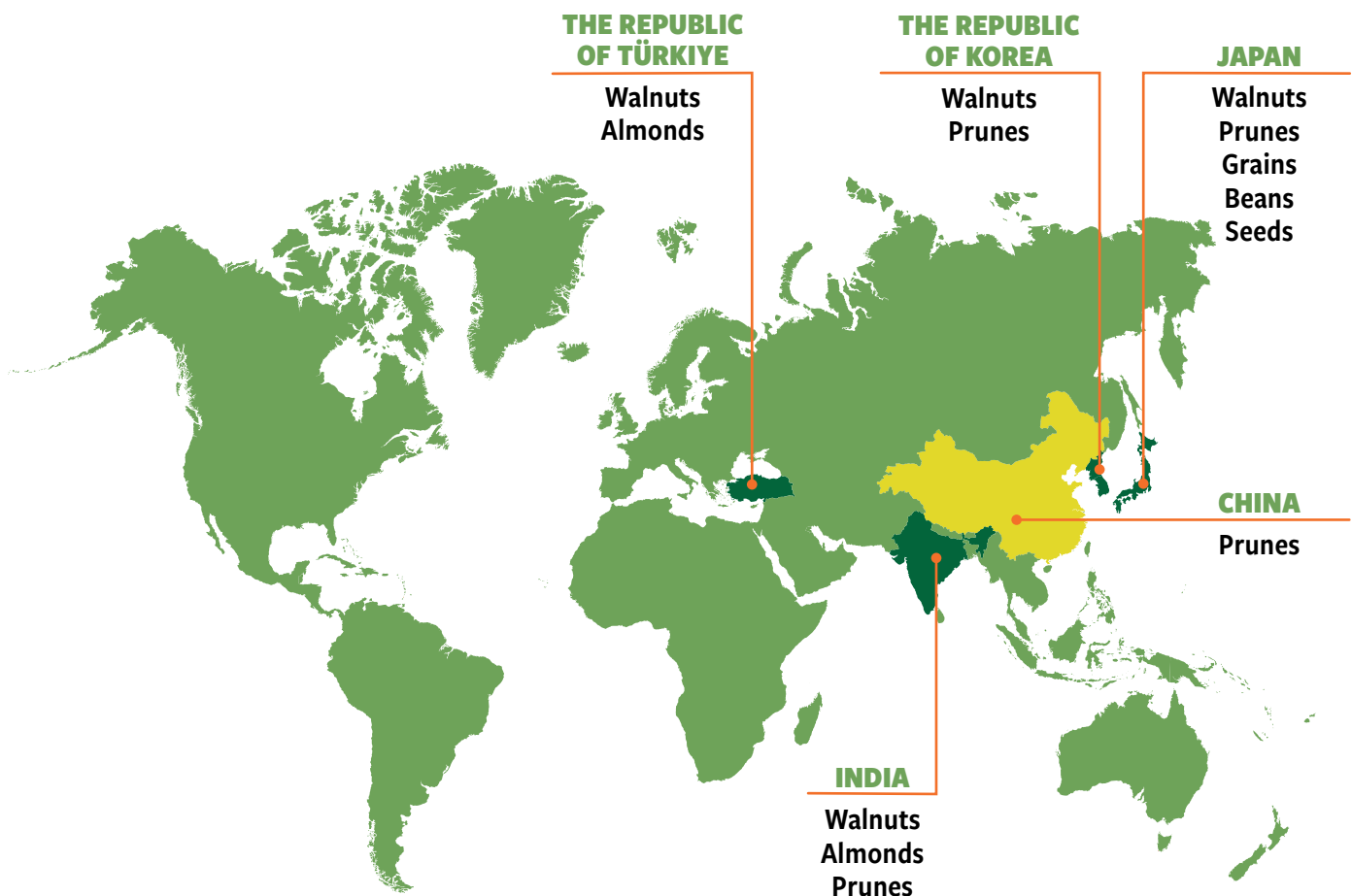
Japan - 107

The Republic of Korea - 92

India - 68

China - 57

TOP FIVE EXPORT COUNTRIES



PETROLEUM SIGNS & LABELING INSPECTION

Number of Inspections Completed	56
Consumer Complaints	4
Notices of Violations Issued	68

QUALITY CONTROL INSPECTIONS

PRICE VERIFICATION

Locations Tested	5
Number of Inspections	176
OVERALL COMPLIANCE	96%

WEIGHTS & MEASURES



MEASURING DEVICE INSPECTIONS

DEVICE TYPE	INSPECTIONS COMPLETED
Electric Submeters	49
EV Charging Meters	14
Fabric, Cord, Wire Meters	11
Liquid Propane Gas Meters	27
Retail Motor Fuel Meters	1313
Retail Meters	13
Retail Water Meters	23
Gas Vapor Meters	30
Vehicle Meters	7
Water Submeters	53
Wholesale Meters	6
Misc. Measuring Devices	62
TOTAL MEASURING DEVICES INSPECTED	1,608
Compliance Rate:	86%

WEIGHING DEVICE INSPECTIONS

DEVICE TYPE	INSPECTIONS COMPLETED
Computing Scales	250
Counter Scales	44
Dormant/Platform Scales	146
Hanging Scales	5
Hopper Scales	4
Livestock Scales	7
Misc. Weighing Device	1
Monorail & Meatbeam	1
Prescription/Jewelry	6
Vehicle Scale	68
TOTAL MEASURING DEVICES INSPECTED	532
Compliance Rate:	97%



COUNTY OF SUTTER

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER SEALER OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

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