CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Agricultural Land Use Policy Review: Sustaining Agricultural Lands by Improving Economic Vitality

Direction from Board of Supervisors

- December 20, 2016 - Board approval authorized the Department of Conservation and Development (DCD) in consultation with the Contra Costa County Agriculture Advisory Task Force and local agricultural stakeholders to:
  - Review existing land use regulations
  - Identify specific actions the County could take to further promote and incentivize agricultural sustainability and economic vitality

- February 13, 2018 – Board authorized DCD to convene a series of public meetings with people and parties interested in agricultural sustainability and economic vitality in Contra Costa County to:
  - Review existing land use regulations
  - Provide input on potential modifications to these policies
  - In-lieu of the Contra Costa County Agriculture Advisory Task Force (Ag Task Force) – currently dormant

History of Existing Land Use Regulations

- 1947: Original County Zoning Code was adopted. The agricultural zoning districts have evolved over time, but some original regulations remain.

- 1978: Board of Supervisors (BoS) adopted the *East County Area General Plan*, which included the new Agricultural Core (Ag Core) land use designation. This was the first time the County adopted land use policies specifically directed toward preserving and protecting East County's prime agricultural soils.

- 1990: County voters approved Measure C, establishing the 65/35 Land Preservation Plan and Urban Limit Line (ULL). The 65/35 Standard requires at least 65 percent of all land in the county to be preserved for "non-urban" uses such as agriculture, open space, wetlands, and parks. Measure C also required a 40-acre minimum parcel size for prime agricultural lands.

- 1991: BoS adopted the County General Plan, which incorporates the 65/35 Plan, ULL, Ag Core and Agricultural Lands land use designations, and additional policies aimed at preserving agricultural land and enhancing the agricultural economy.

History of Existing Land Use Regulations (con't)

- 2004: BoS adopted a General Plan Amendment that changed the text of the Ag Core designation to explicitly allow wineries, olive oil mills, and other agricultural value-added processing activities through issuance of a land use permit.

- 2006: County voters approved Measure L, which extended the 65/35 Plan and ULL though 2026.

- 2007: BoS amended all agricultural zoning districts and the General Plan to expand a farmer's ability to directly market agricultural products. Before this, direct sale of agricultural products was permitted but limited to stands of 200 square feet and the sale of products only grown on-site. The 2007 changes established new regulations for farm stands (up to 1,500 square feet in size) and farm markets (up to 3,500 square feet) and significantly expanded the range of products that could be sold in farm stands and farm markets.

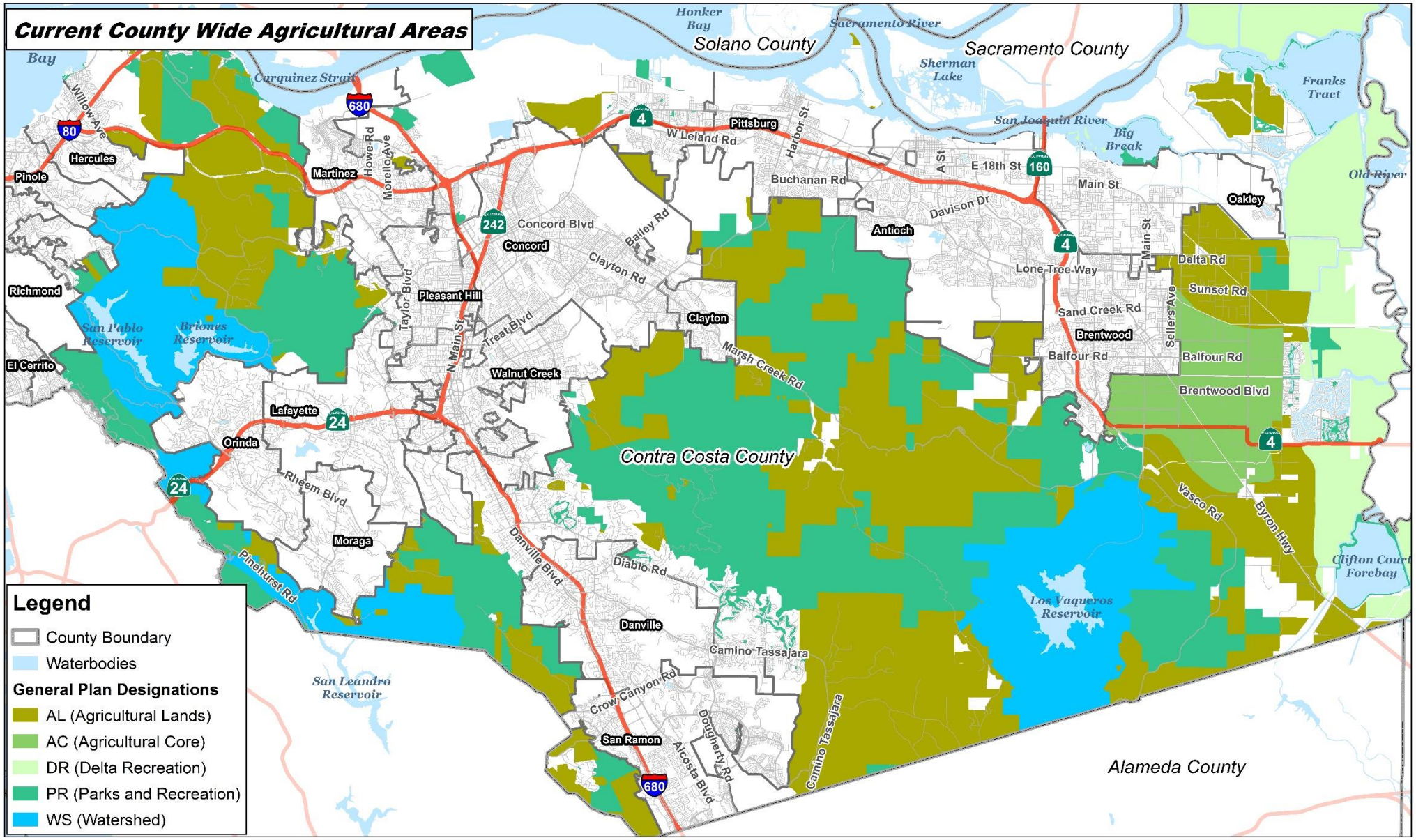
The Agricultural Infrastructure Report and the Key Findings Report Published by Lon Hatamiya in March 2015

The following are the economic opportunities identified in the reports:

- The demand for locally grown, source-identified, healthy, and sustainably-produced food is growing rapidly.
- Demand for organic products is increasing each year, reaching over $35 billion in sales in 2013.
- Value-added food processing, manufacturing, co-processing, and co-packing can be further developed across the county.
- Agricultural tourism can be expanded.

Recommendations of the Hatamiya Report

- Reduce barriers to development of necessary agricultural infrastructure.
- Support agricultural tourism activities through additional funding, agricultural tourism-friendly zoning changes, and better public outreach and marketing.
- Create a “Farmbudsman” program to act as a liaison between the agricultural sector and local government.
- Adopt additional policies to preserve the County’s agricultural lands and fund agricultural easement programs.


Current County Wide Agricultural Areas
Solano County
Sacramento County
Contra Costa County
Alameda County
Honker Bay
Sacramento River
Sherman Lake
San Joaquin River
Big Break
Franks Tract
Old River
Clifton Court Forebay
Los Vaqueros Reservoir
San Leandro Reservoir
San Pablo Reservoir
Briones Reservoir
Carquinez Strait
Bay
Pittsburg
Antioch
Oakley
Brentwood
Clayton
Concord
Martinez
Pleasant Hill
Walnut Creek
Lafayette
Orinda
Moraga
Danville
San Ramon
Pinole
Hercules
Richmond
El Cerrito
Legend
County Boundary
Waterbodies
General Plan Designations
AL (Agricultural Lands)
AC (Agricultural Core)
DR (Delta Recreation)
PR (Parks and Recreation)
WS (Watershed)
Miles
0 1 2 4
Map Created 6/19/2018
by Contra Costa County Department of
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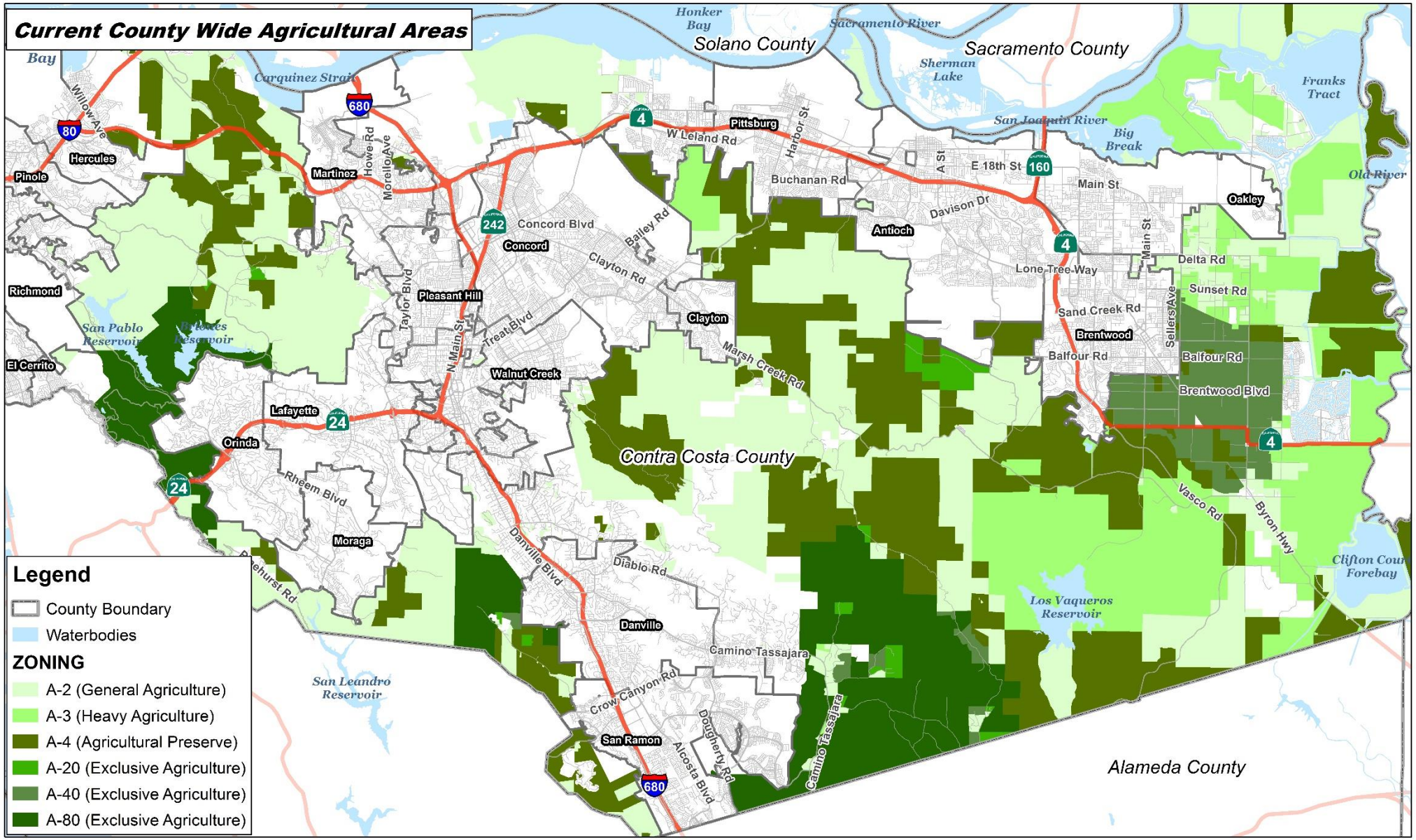

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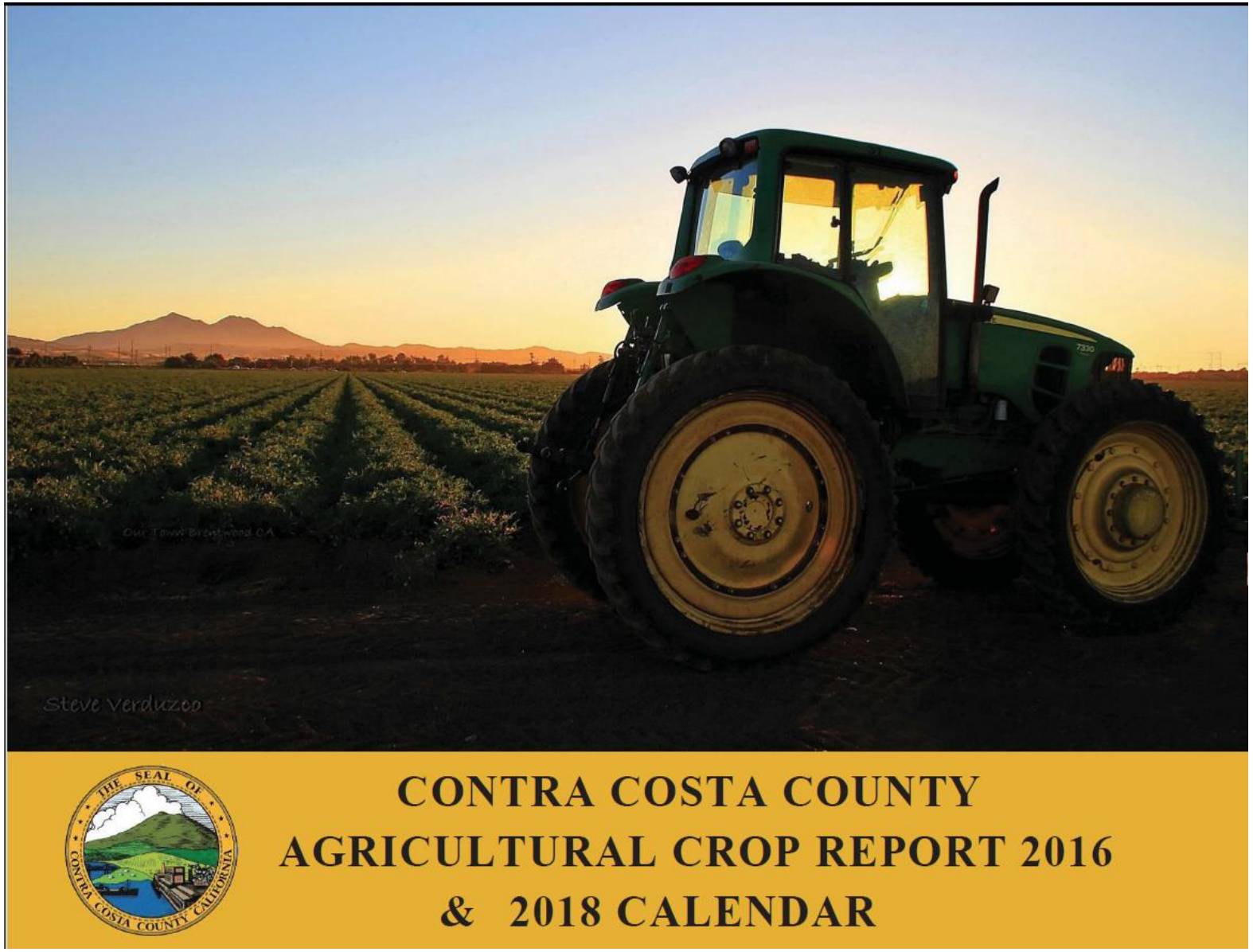
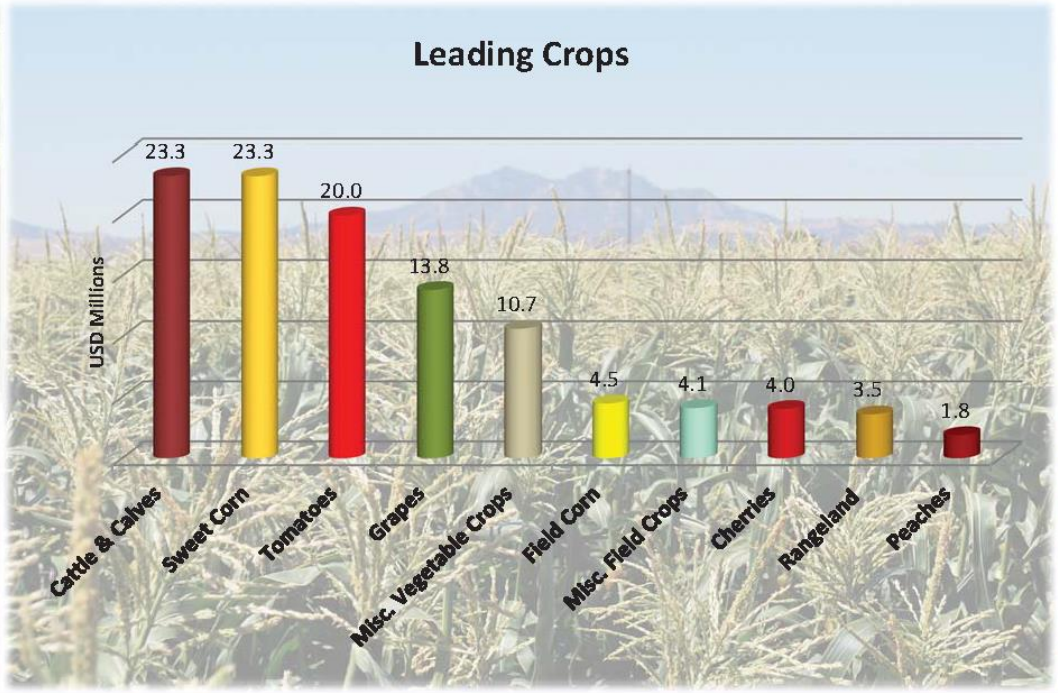
As reported in the 2016 Agricultural Crop Report prepared by the County Department of Agriculture, the total gross value of agricultural crops in Contra Costa County in 2016 was $128,100,000.





October 2017						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

10/9: Columbus Day
10/31: Halloween

November 2017						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

11/5: End Daylight Saving Time
11/11:Veterans Day
11/23: Thanksgiving Day

December 2017						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

12/6 + 12/9: Grower CE Classes
12/25: Christmas Day
12/31: New Year's Eve

Some Ideas / Suggestions We Have Heard Over the Years from the Community

Ag Policy Ideas

- Farm to Fork: growing crops for specific restaurants
- Ag Tourism potential in the County
  - Farm-to –Table (restaurant): must be supplying from farm
  - Bed and Breakfast
  - Farm Tours
  - Wineries
  - Distilleries
  - Cheese
  - Connecting with culinary institutes
  - Equestrian bike trail connecting farms
  - Farm to school
  - Vertical farming
- Tiny houses
- Winery, distillery, brewery incubators

Other Ideas

- Creative options for wastewater: composting toilets; grey water (see properties on coast for examples)
- Be creative to address water and septic
- Streamline the processing to allow value-added products
  - What is the process, including cost? Prepare a How-To brochure
  - Business process to be user-friendly
- Farmbudsman/Ombudsman for County
- Create a vision and look at how we define agri-tourism
- Santa Cruz County certifies commercial kitchen facility, not state Making Contra Costa County different – not like Napa, Livermore
- Marketing: How and who?

Concerns Raised

- Farm to table is not an urban use based on Urban Limit Line
- Farming labor is difficult to find
- Allow more than 1 house on the property to help with farming
- Conflicting uses (i.e. packaging vs. cold-storage)
- Health permitting constraints (invite Environmental Health in future meetings)
- Processing handled outside of Contra Costa County
- Lands non-compliant with Ag Core (e.g. 19 acres instead of the required 40 acres), which causes restriction to uses on property
- Having a buffer of land for farm-to table use and other agri-tourism use to avoid “tragedy of the commons” (i.e. big enough parcel or buy some buffer or offset land from another parcel)
- Trails: concern is increase in vandalism and trespassing
- Occurrence of illegal events
- Code Enforcement

Schedule for Agricultural Policy Review

- 1st Meeting: June 21st - East Contra Costa County
  - ❖ Goal: To determine the stakeholders vision for improving agriculture.

- 2nd Meeting: July 19th – Central County
  - ❖ Goal: Confirm / expand vision for agriculture (including for this region of the County) and begin to define practical tools / policy reforms to achieve the vision.

- 3rd Meeting: August (Date TBD) – South County
  - ❖Goal: Confirm / expand vision for agriculture (including for this region of the County) and begin to define practical tools / policy reforms to achieve the vision.

- 4th Meeting: Date TBD - East Contra Costa County
  - ❖Goal: Confirm / expand vision for agriculture and begin to define practical tools / policy reforms to achieve the vision.

- 5th Meeting: Date TBD - East Contra Costa County
  - ❖Goal: Craft broad outline of policy recommendations.

Schedule for Agricultural Policy Review(con't).

- 6th Meeting: Date TBD - East Contra Costa County
  - ❖Goal: Complete final discussion on policy recommendations.
- December 2018: Present ag policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors (BOS)
- Winter 2019: Prepare a DRAFT Ordinance
- Spring 2019: Public review of DRAFT Ordinance at Planning Commission
- Summer 2019: BOS consideration of DRAFT Ordinance
- Countywide General Plan update is underway and concluding in 2020.
  This process will provide an opportunity for additional review related to agriculture.

Today's focus: Vision for Future of Agriculture in Contra Costa County

LIVERMORE VALLEY
Wine Country

Gilroy, California is the “Garlic Capital of the World” and a great place for a getaway any time of year!

RTC

2018 Farm Trail Map

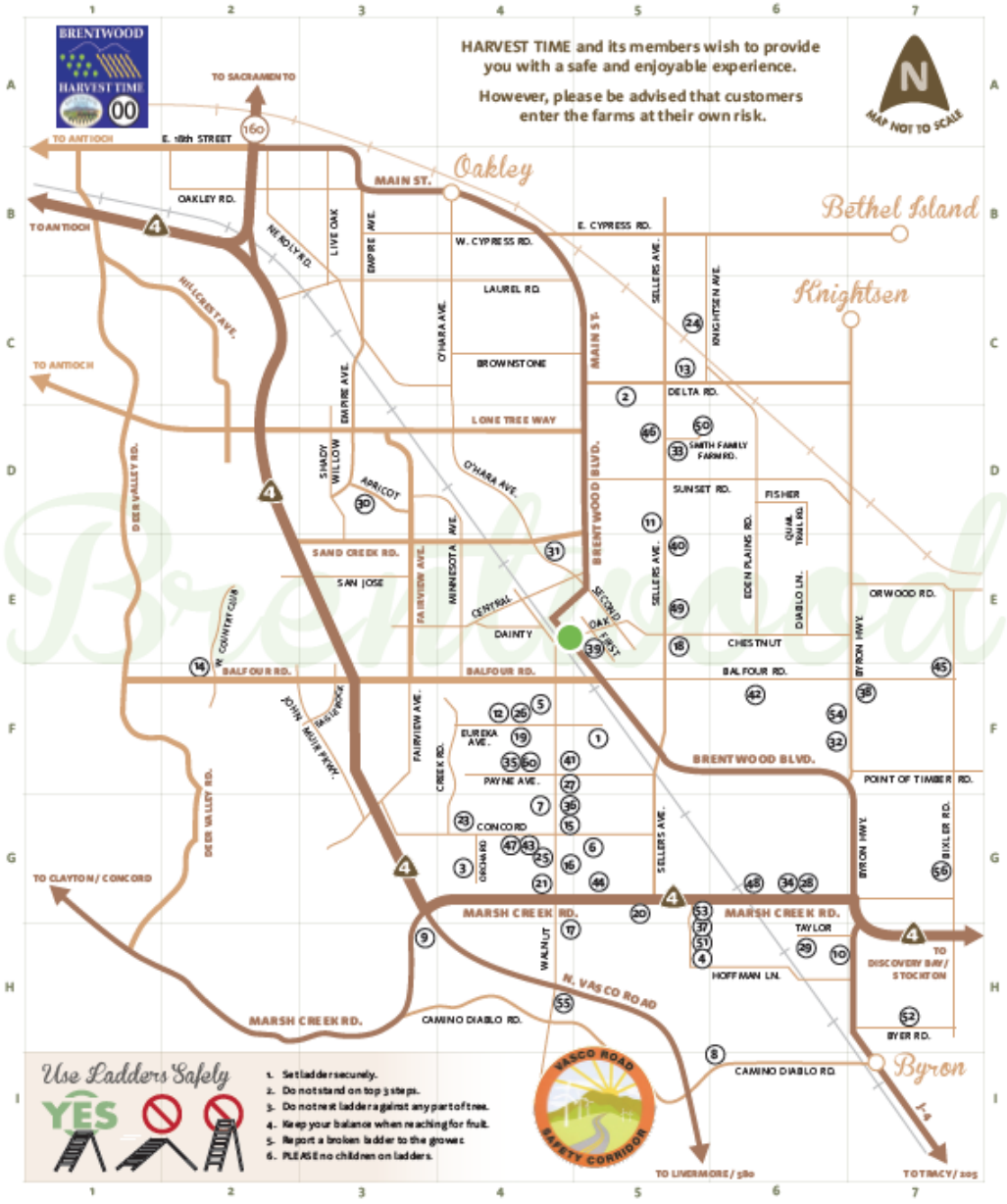
Visit our website: www.harvest4you.com /HarvestTimeFarms @harvesttimebw @harvesttimebw

Farm-fresh & Delicious. Direct to You!

HARVEST TIME and its members wish to provide you with a safe and enjoyable experience.

However, please be advised that customers enter the farms at their own risk.

MAP NOT TO SCALE

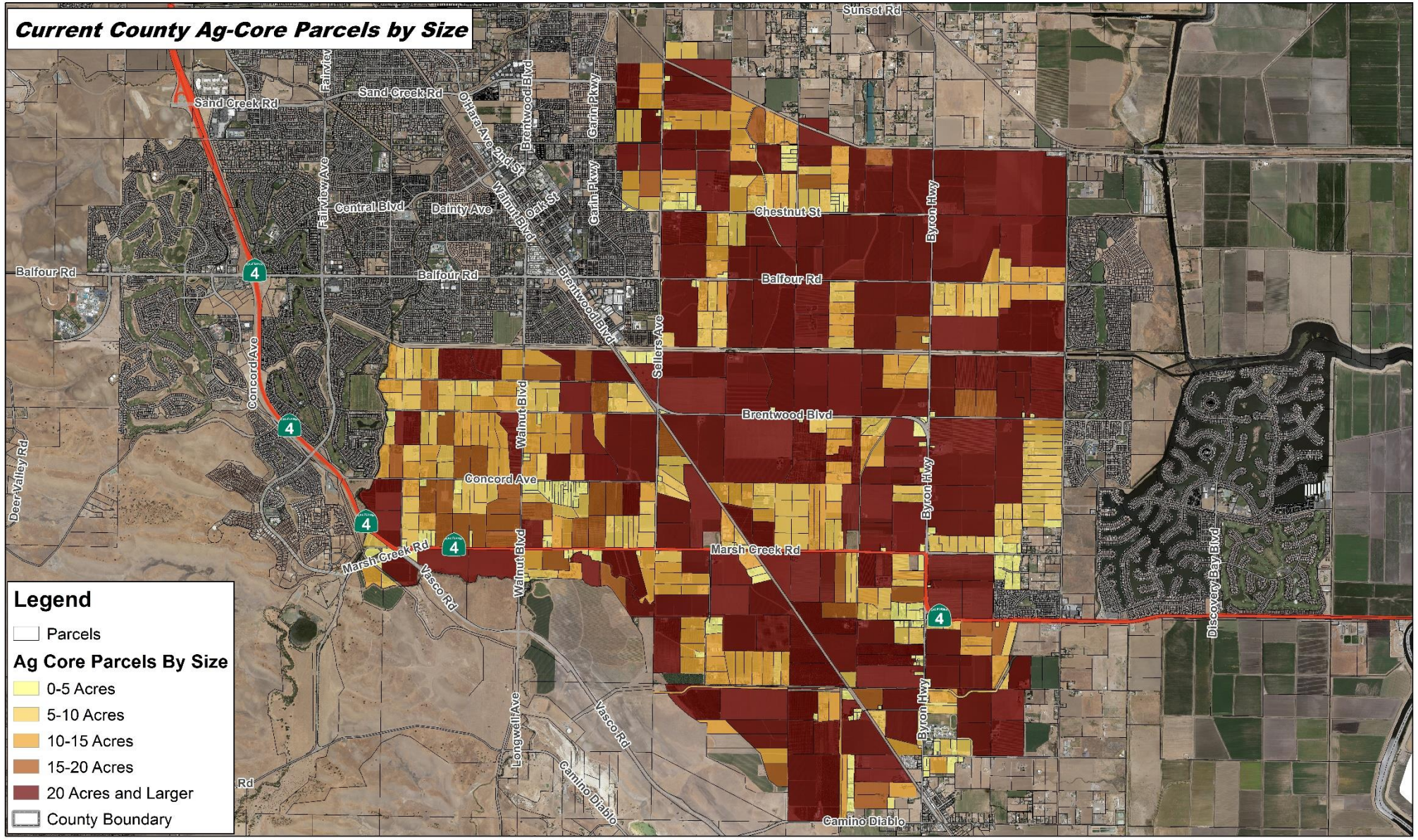


Use Ladders Safely

YES

1. Set ladder securely.
2. Do not stand on top 3 steps.
3. Do not rest ladder against any part of tree.
4. Keep your balance when reaching for fruit.
5. Report a broken ladder to the grower.
6. PLEASE no children on ladders.

Information is subject to change. Please contact the individual growers before visiting.


Current County Ag-Core Parcels by Size
Legend
Parcels
Ag Core Parcels By Size
0-5 Acres
5-10 Acres
10-15 Acres
15-20 Acres
20 Acres and Larger
County Boundary
Sand Creek Rd
Fairview
Sand Creek Rd
O'Hara Ave
2nd St
Brentwood Blvd
Garin Pkwy
Sunset Rd
Central Blvd
Dainty Ave
Walnut Blvd
Oak St
Garin Pkwy
Chestnut St
Byron Hwy
Balfour Rd
Balfour Rd
Balfour Rd
Brentwood Blvd
Sellers Ave
Fairview Ave
Concord Ave
Walnut Blvd
Brentwood Blvd
Deer Valley Rd
Concord Ave
Byron Hwy
Marsh Creek Rd
Marsh Creek Rd
Vasco Rd
Walnut Blvd
Discovery Bay Blvd
Longwell Ave
Vasco Rd
Camino Diablo
Camino Diablo
Byron Hwy
4
Miles
0
0.3
0.6
1.2
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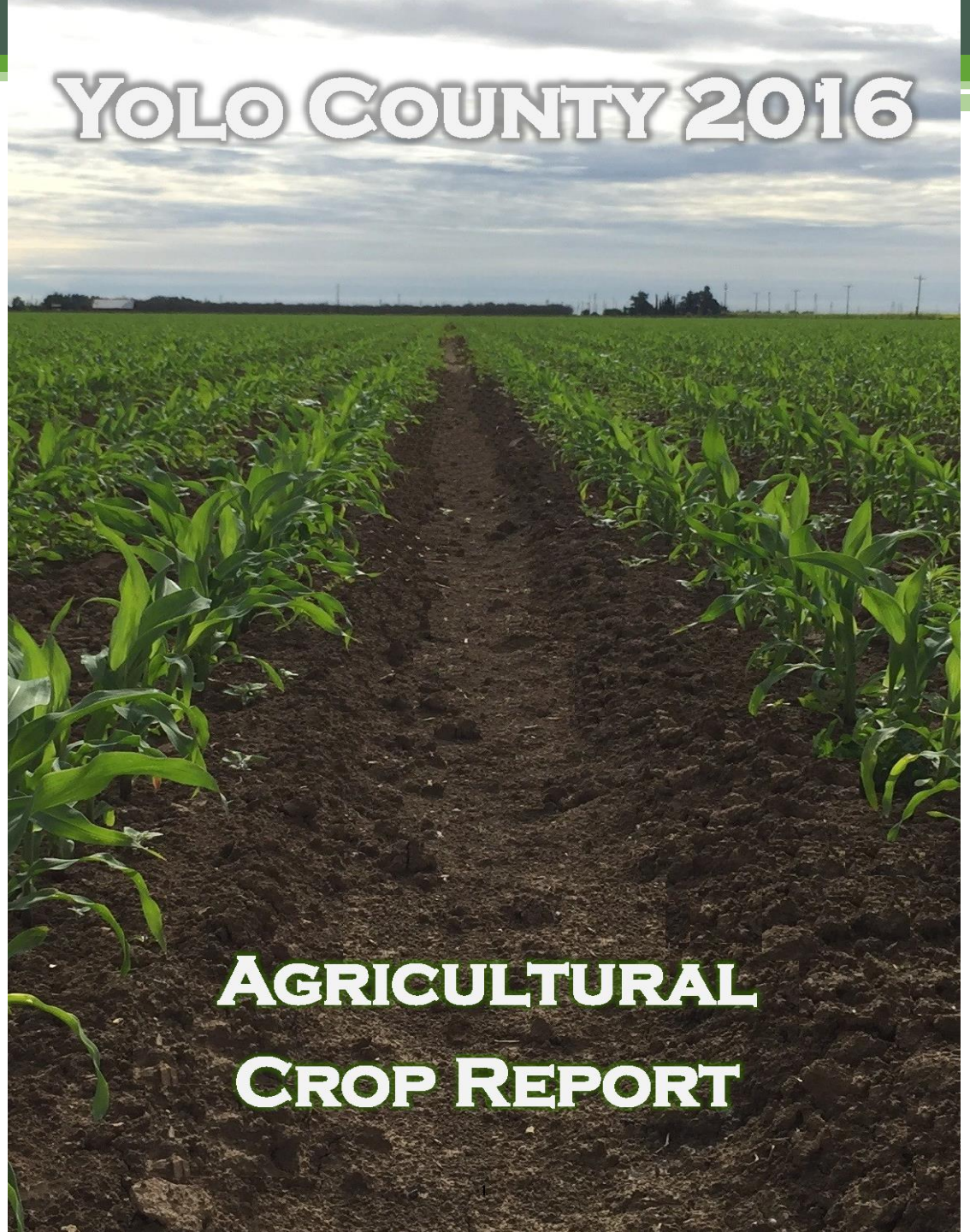
Photos of Field Trip to V. Sattui Winery

Solano County

Sacramento County

Yolo County 2016



Agricultural Crop Report

Guest Speaker at June 21, 2018 meeting

- Presenter Stephanie Cormier, Farmbudsperson and Principal Planner from Yolo County
  - Role as a farmbudsperson helped farmers navigate through regulatory process (i.e. permitting liaison)
  - She discussed unique features on Yolo's zoning policy including Ag Commercial Zoning districts, minimum parcel sizes and subdivision prohibitions, verifiable farming metric as a pre-condition for certain use
  - Agri-tourism in Yolo County and how to balance concerns such as: noise, traffic, limited water/septic system, etc.

Breakout Group Questions from June 21, 2018

1. What makes agriculture in Contra Costa County unique?

2. Can you think of any examples of agricultural communities in other counties that could be a good model for Contra Costa County? If so, where? What is it that makes these communities a good model? Please think in terms of both agricultural policies and thriving agricultural economies.

3. What are the obstacles to having a healthier agricultural economy?

4. What aspect of agriculture in the County would you most like to keep/change?

Breakout Group Questions from June 21, 2018

5. County land use policies have generally been successful in preserving agricultural land. Now what can be done, from a policy perspective, to support the agricultural community and promote a healthy agricultural economy?

6. What upcoming changes (e.g. technological or economical changes, trends, crops) in the agricultural economy do you need to prepare for?

7. What are the opportunities and constraints of agritourism?

8. What do you see as the vision for agriculture in Contra Costa County?