

Glossary Info

Definitions for the glossary under the heading Important Agricultural Soils of SLO County:

Prime Farmland is defined by the USDA NRCS in the Code of Federal Regulations for Agriculture (http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_00/7cfr657_00.html), and referenced in the California Coastal Act of 1976. Prime Farmland designation is based on soil physical and chemical criteria, whether or not land is actually irrigated (provided that irrigation is feasible). Prime Farmland is identified and mapped as per the Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>). Soil map units mapped as Prime Farmland may be found in Appendix SL-?? and Figure SL-??.

Soil of Statewide Importance is defined by the USDA NRCS in the Code of Federal Regulations for Agriculture (http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_00/7cfr657_00.html). Soil of Statewide Importance designation is based on soil physical and chemical criteria, whether or not land is actually irrigated (provided that irrigation is feasible). Soil of Statewide Importance is identified and mapped as per the Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>). Soil map units mapped as Soil of Statewide Importance may be found in Appendix SL-?? and Figure SL-??.

Other Productive Soils meet the definition of Unique Farmland, as defined by the USDA NRCS in the Code of Federal Regulations for Agriculture (http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_00/7cfr657_00.html), has a soil slope of 30% or less (except Paso Soil 198, 15-50% slope), and meets at least two of the following three criteria:

- 1) California Revised Storie Index is fair, good or excellent;
- 2) Irrigated Capability Class is one through six;
- 3) More than 3% of the soil type is in irrigated/permanent crop use as of 2008.

Criteria 1 and 2 are based upon information from the Web Soil Survey. Criterion 3 is based upon GIS cropland mapping by the San Luis Obispo County Agriculture Department. Soil map units designated as Other Productive Soils may be found in Appendix SL-?? and Figure SL-??.

Highly Productive Rangeland Soils meet all of the following criteria as identified on the Web Soil Survey:

- 1) Produces forage that is equivalent to 60% or more of the maximum normal year forage production for that soil survey area;
- 2) Majority of the forage produced is herbaceous;
- 3) Slope is less than 30% (except soil types Coastal 133 and 168 and Carizzo 130, each 15-50% slope).

The best source of information for rangeland soil are the USDA NRCS soil surveys, of which there are three primary survey areas in San Luis Obispo County. These surveys closely follow rainfall patterns, which have an impact on forage production (Weitkamp 1975; USDA FSA County Office Committee 2009). Rangeland soils vary widely in production capability, and within any individual operation the majority of forage production is from the most productive soils. Cattle prefer grazing in areas with palatable herbaceous growth and slopes less than 30%. Highly Productive Rangeland Soils were not identified for the San Luis Obispo County portion of the Northern Santa Barbara soil survey area. Soil map units designated as Highly Productive Rangeland Soils may be found in Appendix SL-?? and Figure SL-??.

Citation:

O'Geen, A.T., S.B. Southard, R.J. Southard.2008. A revised Storie Index for use with digital soil information. Regents of the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Publication 8335. <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8335.pdf> (accessed 3/06/09).

Bill Weitkamp. 1975. The Influence of Climate on Range Forage Production in San Luis Obispo County. Farm Advisor Facts. 2156 Sierra Way, Suite C. San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

USDA Farm Service Agency, County Office Committee. 2009. USDA FSA office. 65 S. Main Street, Suite 106. Templeton, CA 93465