

# Annual Report 1987

*San Luis Obispo County  
Department of Agriculture and Measurement Standards*





# County Department of Agriculture/Measurement Standards

2156 Sierra Way, Suite A  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
(805) 549-5910

Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures  
Richard D. Greek

Assistant Agricultural Commissioner  
Robert F. Lilley

Chief Deputy Sealer of Weights and Measures  
Stephen F. Morrison

Deputy Agricultural Commissioner  
Christine E. Crump

Deputy Agricultural Commissioner  
Steve Hajik

Deputy Agricultural Commissioner  
Robert Hopkins

Supervising Administrative Clerk  
Judy A. Noble

## *Agricultural Inspector/Biologists*

Charles B. Alender  
Chris Browning  
Janice M. Campbell  
Beverly Delwiche  
Alicia Doran  
P. Kim Frank  
Judy Fraser  
Rusty Hall  
Catherine Krause  
Rick Landon  
Brenda W. Ouwerkerk  
Brenda D. Protopapas  
John Schmitz  
Tamara Tranbarger  
Jennifer Voss

## *Weights and Measures Inspection Staff*

Bernarr M. Boaz (Technical Deputy)  
Jan G. Hendrix  
Lance C. Millspaugh

## *Administrative Services Staff*

Charlean Bogan  
Linda U. Leos  
Erin Myers  
Troy L. Wolverton-Duque

## *Temporary Employees*

Jackie Crabb  
Carol L. Smithback  
Toni Tabbert

## *Agricultural/Measurement Standard Aides*

Sandy Jordan  
Suzanne McCaslin  
Gail E. Perez  
Karen Wellman

## *1986/1987 Fiscal Year Contributors*

Debbie Barker, Temporary Inspector  
Edward Ingram, Agricultural Inspector/Biologist III  
Joseph Oliva, Temporary Aide  
Clem Parkins, Temporary Trainee  
Stella Schmidt, Administrative Services Staff  
Jennifer Weaver, Agricultural Inspector/Biologist I



*To Honorable Board of Supervisors:*

Jerry Diefenderfer

District One

William Coy, Chairman

District Two

Evelyn Delany

District Three

James Johnson

District Four

Carl Hysen

District Five

*Director*

Jack Parnell

California Department of Food and Agriculture

*Administrative Officer*

William Briam

Agricultural commodities produced in San Luis Obispo County were valued at an estimated \$247,811,000 during calendar year 1987.

This figure represents "gross receipts" and does not intend to reflect profit to the farmer nor account for any expenses incurred by agri-business.

The 1987 crop values set an all time record for the second year in a row in San Luis Obispo County. A brief overview of each major commodity group follows:

*Vegetable Crops*

Vegetable crop production continued to grow with a modest increase over the bumper crop of 1986. Various fluctuations occurred within this group with the most notable being substantial increases in iceberg lettuce and broccoli values as well as a large reduction in the value of the carrot crop.

*Fruit and Nut Crop*

Total value for the various fruit and nut crops grown in the county showed a slight increase. This was mostly due to improved prices for wine grapes and fresh market strawberries. The avocado crop dropped substantially due to severe winter frosts, sunburn and poor prices.

*Nursery and Seed*

Producers of ornamental nursery stock enjoyed their best year ever in the county led by a three fold increase in the value of cut flower production. The only significant segment of the industry which showed a decrease was the production of fruit and nut tree nursery stock. Crop seed production also fell slightly.

*Field Crops*

This is the only crop category that showed an overall reduction in value for 1987. The majority of the decline was due to sharply reduced barley acreage resulting from the Federal Government's Conservation Reserve Program. Prices for field crops continue to be depressed.

*Animal Industry*

Overall value of the animal industry was up in 1987 due to substantially improved prices for cattle and calves. The horse industry moved up modestly as sales increased due to adjustments in breeds, quality, and the tax structure.

This information would not have been possible without the cooperation of the agricultural industry and the superior efforts of staff who helped to compile this report. Significant accomplishments of our team are included later in the report along with a financial summary.

Sincerely,

*Richard Greek*

Richard Greek

Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer

*The Cover and Theme:*

Our cover depicts a friendly transaction between two locals at one of the San Luis Obispo County's Farmers' Market. This year's Farmer's Market theme is illustrated by pictures as well as a lighthearted description found on pages eight and nine.

*Design and Production:*

Kim Frank, Agricultural Inspector/Biologist II

*Photographs:*

Catherine Krause, Agricultural Inspector/Biologist III



# Vegetable Crops

Crop	Year	Harvested	PRODUCTION		Unit	VALUE	
		Acreage	Per Acre	Total		Per Unit	Total
Beans (Green)...	1987	355	408.00	144,840	30#	\$ 9.54	\$ 1,382,000
	1986	389	464.00	180,496	30#	\$ 7.80	\$ 1,408,000
Broccoli..... (Fresh)	1987	5,783	603.00	3,487,149	23#	4.77	16,634,000
	1986	5,510	531.00	2,925,810	23#	4.74	13,868,000
+Broccoli..... (Freezer)	1987	875	3.77	3,299	Ton	370.00	1,221,000
+Brussel Sprouts.	1987	165	610.00	100,650	25#	6.75	679,000
Cabbage.....	1987	457	736.00	336,352	45#	4.53	1,524,000
	1986	468	747.00	349,596	45#	4.47	1,563,000
Carrots.....	1987	3,209	23.00	73,807	Ton	120.00	8,857,000
	1986	2,218	38.50	85,393	Ton	171.53	14,647,000
Cauliflower.....	1987	2,547	547.00	1,393,209	25#	5.73	7,983,000
	1986	2,643	570.00	1,506,510	25#	5.28	7,954,000
Celery.....	1987	796	1160.00	923,360	60#	4.82	4,451,000
	1986	767	1140.00	874,380	60#	6.65	5,815,000
Chinese..... Vegetables	1987	868	691.00	599,788	80#	5.46	3,275,000
	1986	724	792.00	573,408	80#	6.92	3,968,000
Lettuce..... Iceburg	1987	7,856	692.00	5,436,352	50#	6.71	36,478,000
	1986	7,992	730.00	5,834,160	50#	5.20	30,338,000
Lettuce..... Leaf	1987	960	863.00	828,480	50#	5.86	4,855,000
	1986	1,105	646.00	713,830	50#	4.07	2,905,000
Peas..... Edible Pod	1987	4,050	495.00	2,004,750	10#	11.04	22,132,000
	1986	4,500	570.00	2,565,000	10#	8.93	22,905,000
Peppers..... Bell	1987	1,020	557.00	568,140	30#	6.97	3,960,000
	1986	585	575.00	336,375	30#	6.61	2,223,000
*Miscellaneous...	1987	1,510					5,018,000
	1986	1,920					6,720,000
TOTAL VEGETABLE		1987	30,451				\$118,449,000
CROPS		1986	28,821				\$114,314,000

\*Anise, Artichokes, Chili Peppers, Garlic, Onions, Parsley, Parsnips, Rudabagas, Radishes, Spinach, Squash, Sweet Corn, Tomatoes, Tomatillos, Turnips, Watermelon  
+New Categories





## Fruit and Nut Crops

Crop	Year	Bearing Acreage	PRODUCTION		Unit	Per Unit	VALUE	
			Per Acre	Total			Per Unit	Total
Almonds.....	1987	4,911	0.025	122	Ton	\$2,820.00	\$	344,000
	1986	5,000	0.001	5	Ton	\$5,000.00	\$	25,000
Apples.....	1987	430++	10.500	4,515	Ton	240.00		1,084,000
	1986	356	6.300	2,243	Ton	338.00		758,000
Avocados.....	1987	1,300++	1.700	2,210	Ton	525.00		1,160,000
	1986	1,340	2.590	3,471	Ton	1,045.00		3,627,000
+Bushberries.....	1987	44	2.150	95	Ton	2,768.00		263,000
Grapes (Wine)....	1987	6,459	4.120	26,611	Ton	479.00		12,747,000
	1986	6,084	3.800	23,119	Ton	412.00		9,525,000
Kiwi Fruit.....	1987	117++	1.800	211	Ton	1,771.00		373,000
	1986	114	0.560	64	Ton	2,000.00		128,000
Lemons.....	1987	866++	15.700	13,596	Ton	232.00		3,154,000
	1986	830	14.450	11,994	Ton	193.00		2,315,000
+Valencia Oranges.	1987	68++	20.000	1,360	Ton	252.00		343,000
+Pistachios.....	1987	78	0.300	23	Ton	3,137.00		73,000
English.....	1987	3,150++	0.360	1,134	Ton	774.00		878,000
	Walnuts**	1986	3,054	0.500	1,527	Ton	1,200.00	
Strawberries.....	1987	349	24.000	8,376	Ton	789.00		6,609,000
	1986	246	26.500	6,519	Ton	655.00		4,270,000
*Miscellaneous....	1987	250						97,500
	1986	420						1,260,000
TOTAL FRUIT & NUT CROPS	1987	18,000++						\$27,126,000
	1986	17,444						\$23,740,000

\*Apricots, Black Walnuts, Cherry, Feijoa, Lime, Navel Oranges, Peach, Pear, Pomegranate, Prune, Table Grapes, Raisin Grapes

\*Revised +New Category ++Does not meet CA requirements for bearing acres



## Nursery Stock

Crop	Year	Harvested Acreage	Greenhouse Production (sq ft)	Value
Cut Flowers.....	1987		2,635,152	\$ 6,665,000
	1986		635,000	\$ 2,223,000
Woody Ornamentals.....	1987	65.4		1,806,000
	1986	58.0		1,199,000
+Fruit & Nut Trees.....	1987	27.5		1,055,000
Fruit & Nut Trees.....	1986	73.0		4,214,000
Vegetable Transplants				
+Vegetable Transplants.....	1987	72.6		2,832,000
Indoor Decoratives.....	1987		1,017,080	3,524,000
	1986		1,022,460	2,870,000
Christmas Trees, Cut.....	1987	69.5		237,200
	1986	79.0		157,000
*Miscellaneous.....	1987	25.0	85,000	1,485,000
	1986	10.0	85,000	675,000
TOTAL NURSERY STOCK	1987	260.0	3,737,232	\$17,604,000
	1986	218.0	1,742,460	\$11,338,000

\*Dried Flowers, Herbaceous Perennials

+Category split in 1987



## Crop Seed

Crop	Year	Harvested Acreage	Value
Vegetable.....	1987	97.0	\$142,900
	1986	205.0	\$222,000
Barley.....	1987	933.6	196,100
	1986	879.0	174,000
Oats.....	1987	364.4	127,500
	1986	1,712.0	377,000
Wheat.....	1986	357.0	64,300
	1986	118.0	18,200
*Miscellaneous.....	1987	8.0	8,190
	1986	115.0	19,000
TOTAL SEED CROP	1987	1,760.0	\$539,000
	1986	3,029.0	\$810,200

\*Flower Seed



## Field Crops

Crop	Year	Harvested Acreage	PRODUCTION		Unit	VALUE	
			Per Ac	Total		Per Unit	Total
Alfalfa Hay.....	1987	5,263	6.50	34,210	Ton	\$ 93.00	\$ 3,182,000
	1986	6,775	6.40	43,360	Ton	\$ 94.00	\$ 4,076,000
Barley.....	1987	65,000	1.10	71,500	Ton	80.00	5,720,000
	1986	83,000	1.10	91,300	Ton	85.00	7,761,000
Garbanzo.....	1987	1,515	6.00	9,090	Cwt	21.00	191,000
	1986	2,500	7.50	18,750	Cwt	30.00	563,000
Grain Hay.....	1987	36,000	2.00	72,000	Ton	68.00	4,896,000
	1986	41,000	2.16	88,560	Ton	49.00	4,339,000
Grain Stubble..... (Grazing)	1987	95,000			Acre	4.00	380,000
	1986	117,000			Acre	4.00	468,000
Irrigated Pasture..	1987	5,600			Acre	200.00	1,120,000
	1986	5,800			Acre	200.00	1,160,000
Range/Dryland.....	1987	1,070,000			Acre	5.50	5,885,000
	1986	1,075,000			Acre	5.50	5,913,000
Safflower.....	1987	2,722	0.26	708	Ton	224.00	159,000
	1986	4,225	0.46	1,944	Ton	248.00	482,000
Wheat.....	1987	25,000	1.00	25,000	Ton	90.00	2,250,000
	1986	32,000	0.98	31,360	Ton	92.00	2,885,000
*Miscellaneous.....	1987	2,795					540,000
	1986	3,730					720,000
TOTAL FIELD CROPS	1987	1,308,895					\$24,323,000
	1986	1,371,030					\$28,367,000

\*Silage Corn, Dry Beans, Sugar Beets, Sudangrass



# Animal Industry

Commodity	Year	Number of		Unit	Per Unit	VALUE	
		Head	Production			Total	
Cattle and Calves	1987	75,000	423,800	Cwt	\$ 67.00	\$28,395,000	
	1986	80,000	460,000	Cwt	\$ 53.00	\$24,380,000	
Hogs	1987	3,937	8,200	Cwt	60.00	492,000	
	1986	4,900	10,600	Cwt	47.00	498,000	
Horse Work/Pleasure	1987	1,700		Each	1,000.00	1,700,000	
	1986	1,000		Each	1,700.00	1,700,000	
Race/Show Investment	1987	1300		Each	18,000.00	23,400,000	
	1986	1200		Each	18,000.00	21,600,000	
Market Milk	1987		198,500	Cwt	11.52	2,287,000	
	1986		227,010	Cwt	11.94	2,710,000	
Sheep and Lambs	1987	12,345	12,654	Cwt	81.00	1,025,000	
	1986	7,213	7,573	Cwt	68.50	519,000	
Wool	1987		103,838	Lbs	0.98	102,000	
	1986		83,200	Lbs	0.66	55,000	
Honey	1987		131,323	Lbs	0.68	89,000	
	1986		160,420	Lbs	0.70	112,000	
*Miscellaneous	1987					2,280,000	
	1986					2,450,000	
TOTAL ANIMAL INDUSTRY	1987					\$59,770,000	
	1986					\$54,024,000	

\*Eggs, Poultry, Goats, Game Birds

## Total Production Acreage

1987: 1,359,344  
1986: 1,420,544

## Ten Year Value Comparison

YEAR	ANIMAL INDUSTRY	FIELD CROPS	FRUIT & NUT CROPS	VEGETABLE CROPS	NURSERY & SEED	TOTAL VALUATIONS
1978	31,400,000	20,646,000	10,255,000	60,664,000	5,195,000	128,160,000
1979	47,242,600	25,026,000	22,875,000	45,700,000	7,006,000	147,849,600
1980	40,012,300	41,775,000	18,921,000	51,499,000	7,846,000	160,053,300
1981	41,945,500	36,842,000	18,109,000	84,789,000	8,982,000	190,667,500
1982	58,998,000	39,825,000	21,317,000	78,510,000	9,509,000	208,159,000
1983	60,383,000	45,091,000	18,933,000	97,139,000	7,871,000	229,407,000
1984	58,229,400	33,712,000	19,433,000	87,403,000	10,396,000	209,173,400
1985	59,326,600	28,244,600	23,191,500	90,268,000	14,673,400	215,704,100
1986	54,024,000	28,367,000	23,740,000	114,314,000	12,148,000	232,593,000
1987	59,770,000	24,323,000	27,126,000	118,449,000	18,143,000	247,811,000



# Major Accomplishments of Agricultural Commissioner

July 1986 - June 1987

## Administration and Special Services

The Agency made significant strides over the past year in office automation, budget management, nuclear response, and agricultural statistics and mapping. Many administrative services functions are now fully computerized. Financial management is the most recent addition, with notable improvements in efficiency and accuracy. Efforts are underway now to computerize many of the service programs.

The Department entered into a new area of emergency nuclear response preparedness. This activity would be initiated after the emergency response to assist various governmental agencies in the identification of any contaminated crops before they went to market. A system of gathering, indexing, and mapping agricultural data is now in place to help prepare the department for this new role.

Supervisory and management assignments were more equitably distributed among team members. A capital project reorganizing the San Luis Obispo office space was completed which facilitated improved departmental operations.

The department head continued to work on issues for two state associations and served as President of the Board of Trustees for the San Luis Obispo County Pension Trust.

## Measurement Standards

Measurement Standards, as mandated by California state law, is responsible for guaranteeing that equity prevails in all commercial transactions involving weight, measure, or count.

Significant areas of change in San Luis Obispo County Weights and Measures are as follows:

Device fees were implemented which involved all commercial weighing and measuring devices with the exception of heavy capacity agricultural devices.

A 100 gallon prover was designed by staff, built by an outside contractor and placed in service increasing our capacity to test meters with a flow rate of up to 100 gallons per minute.

In cooperation with the state, the Weighmaster program has been enlarged and additional inspector time allocated to investigations.

The first full year of gasoline station inspections were conducted using a prover designed by staff, unique in the state, that eliminated 90% of all lifting in the program and increased total inspection efficiency allowing more inspection time for other programs.

In an increasingly complex marketplace, the Department is staying in tune with new technologies and is in the process of introducing computers to track inspection records and maintain a history of enforcement actions on commercial establishments.

We are proud of the overall accomplishments of Weights and Measures at our local level and are working to become more involved in influencing the laws and regulations on a statewide basis.

## Pest Management

With a continued focus on protecting resident rare and endangered species, the department again used care in its supervision over the use of vertebrate pest control materials. Several program uncertainties surfaced as a result of the changing requirements of the Endangered Species Act. These uncertainties were vigorously addressed in order to maintain program continuity. Surveying for endangered species and other safeguards afforded an effective and problem free program in which 80 properties, representing 73,753 gross acres, were treated.

Weed control efforts involved surveying and treating 2,443 miles of noxious weeds on state highway right-of-ways within the county. The Western Grapeleaf Skeletonizer Biological Control program has been a success with increased parasite releases.

## Product Quality Control

The Department's Product Quality Control program has as its major goal the reasonable guarantee that a commodity, when it reaches the marketplace, meets legal standards. Quality is assured through periodic inspections. Major efforts were directed in the inspection of lettuce, nursery stock, seeds and eggs. Approximately 4,154 cartons of iceberg lettuce were inspected representing a statistical sampling of more than 4.9 million cartons. Also, 120 nurseries were inspected for conformity to standards of pest cleanliness and compliance with labeling requirements, whereas 46 lots of seed were inspected for proper labeling. Egg inspections were carried out at 30 wholesale and retail outlets using a sampling method similar in principle to that used for lettuce.

(continued on page eight)

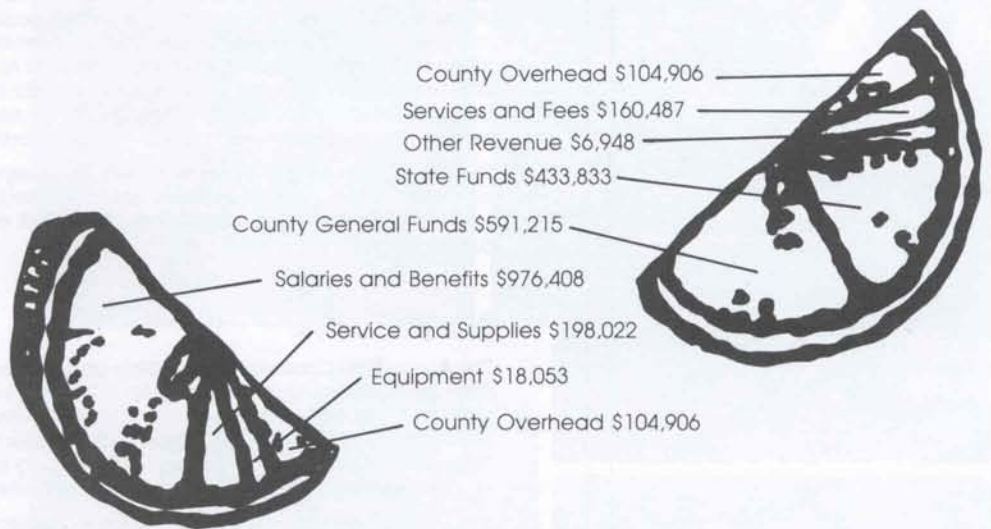
## Top Twenty Crops and Values

1. Lettuce, Iceberg	\$ 36,478,000
2. Cattle and Calves	\$ 28,395,000
3. Horses, Race/Show/ Investment	\$ 23,400,000
4. Peas, Edible Pod	\$ 22,132,000
5. Broccoli	\$ 17,855,000
6. Grapes, Wine	\$ 12,747,000
7. Carrots	\$ 8,857,000
8. Cauliflower	\$ 7,983,000
9. Cut Flowers	\$ 6,665,000
10. Strawberries	\$ 6,609,000
11. Range/Dryland	\$ 5,885,000
12. Barley	\$ 5,720,000
13. Grain Hay	\$ 4,896,000
14. Lettuce, Leaf	\$ 4,855,000
15. Celery	\$ 4,451,000
16. Peppers, Bell	\$ 3,960,000
17. Indoor Decoratives	\$ 3,524,000
18. Chinese Vegetables	\$ 3,275,000
19. Alfalfa Hay	\$ 3,182,000
20. Lemons	\$ 3,154,000



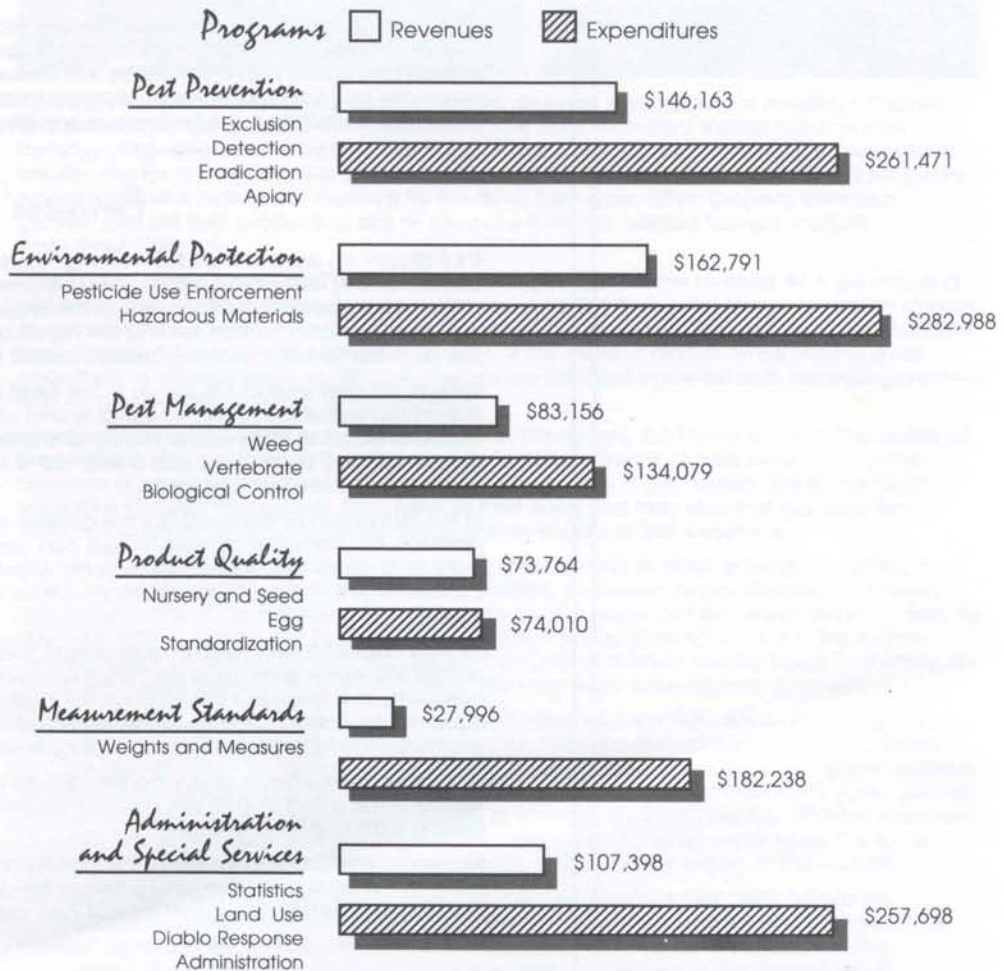
# Financial Report 1986-1987 FY

Funding Sources \$1,297,389



Expenditures \$1,297,389

## Total Expenditures by Program 1986-1987 FY





## *Environmental Protection*

The Pesticide Use Enforcement program continued to have a significant role within the Department, with an emphasis on field monitoring activities and public protection. Agricultural Inspector/Biologists were involved in the following activities: issuance of 837 restricted materials permits with 10 denials, review of 6,400 Notices of Intent to apply restricted pesticides including 29 denials, 1,725 field inspections, 103 record audits, and completion of 31 investigations involving pesticide related incidents. Various levels of corrective enforcement actions were taken in 329 cases. The Department continued its comprehensive preharvest sampling program of a wide variety of crops which were tested for illegal pesticide residues. Additionally, the Department addressed other pesticide use related violations collecting fines from two structural pest control businesses, two agricultural pest control businesses and one private citizen.

Our efforts over several years to modify state regulations regarding drift control were finally successful. State regulations now provide for the use of smaller, low pressure nozzles which substantially reduce the potential of off-site drift of herbicides during ground weed control applications.

## *Pest Prevention*

The Agricultural Commissioner's Office uses a three part program to keep invading pests out of San Luis Obispo County. The first step is the Pest Exclusion program, which involves inspecting plant material as it enters the county to guarantee it is free from quarantine pests. Staff inspected 10,909 shipments of plant material resulting in the rejection of 87 shipments for various quarantine violations. Additionally, 587 outgoing shipments were certified to meet the import requirements of other counties, states and countries.

The Department's second line of defense against unwanted pests is the Pest Detection program. Ten different types of insect traps are used to attract specific target insects. Biologists strategically located 1,254 traps throughout the county, and conducted nearly 30,000 trap servings at these locations.

Woolly Whitefly and Purple Scale, both pests of citrus, were detected for the first time in San Luis Obispo County. In addition to the regular highway, high hazard and cropland surveys, special backyard surveys were initiated to determine the area of infestation for these two pests. This resulted in the inspection of 1,285 properties.

The third component is the Pest Eradication program. An eradication effort was initiated against artichoke thistle by the Agricultural Commissioner. Over 60 sites were treated for this pest. Significant population reductions were observed in the ongoing eradication projects for oblong spurge and skeleton weed.

Under the Agricultural Commissioner's leadership and with valuable input from the apary industry, the Board of Supervisors adopted a new bee ordinance. The improved ordinance provides increased public protection with streamlined procedures for resolving public nuisances, and yet does not impact professionally operated apiaries. In all, 12 complaints were investigated resulting in the issuance of one abatement notice.

## *Farmers' Markets*

It's 6:30 p.m. on a warm Thursday evening. Hundreds of people are milling about the street in excited activity. The smoky aroma of barbeques drift through the air. Occasionally, snatches of music can be heard over the bustle of the crowd. People toting bags bulging with produce rush from vendor to vendor seeking the night's best buys in fresh fruits and vegetables. Where are you? The Thursday evening farmer's market in San Luis Obispo, where else?

Spread out over several city blocks in the heart of San Luis Obispo, the Thursday night farmer's market represents the largest and best known of the nine weekly markets in the county. A variety of activities surround the buying and selling of produce including late night shopping, street musicians, puppeteers and a wide bill of fare. These activities contribute to the market's irresistible 'street affair' like charm.

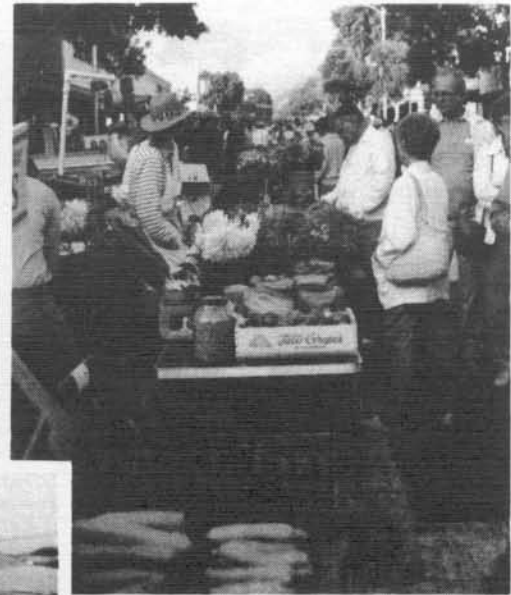
At the foundation of this event are the growers, displaying and selling a cornucopia of produce. The attractive displays of fruits, nuts and vegetables of all varieties along with herbs, eggs, and honey are enjoyed by both the browser and serious shopper alike. As many as 60 producers and 10,000 people crowd the streets of San Luis Obispo during the peak summer months.

So, how did this phenomenon come about? It wasn't until the 1970's when the economy started putting the squeeze on the small farm that growers began thinking of alternatives to wholesale marketing. In response to this problem the California Department of Food and Agriculture adopted regulations opening the door for Direct Marketing. These regulations provided for the certification of farmers' markets by local Agricultural Commissioners.

With these regulations in effect, the first farmer's market in San Luis Obispo County was planned. Started in the spring of 1978, the Saturday morning market on South Broad Street in San Luis Obispo is still in existence today.

By the early 1980's the concept of the farmer's market had gained such popularity that four additional market sites were established in the county. The continued interest in direct marketing has led to the current total of nine market sites, with over \$1,000,000 in gross sales during 1987.





Although the atmosphere of the farmers' markets suggests a spontaneous meeting of buyers and sellers, they are in fact a well-organized event. Each individual market has a market manager who enforces the by-laws specific to that market. The market manager also obtains certification for the market as a whole from the Agricultural Commissioner's Office. Additionally, each producer is individually certified for the items they grow. When properly endorsed, growers can sell their produce at any of the more than 100 certified farmers' markets throughout California.

Many factors have contributed to the overwhelming success of the markets. Both growers and consumers benefit from direct marketing. Growers increase their profit margin by selling directly to consumers, thus eliminating the middle person. In addition, seasonal slumps at the wholesale level can be supplemented through cash sales at the farmers' market. Small volume is not necessarily a disadvantage, as farmers' markets are an ideal place for both hobbyist gardeners and family operated ranches to sell produce.

Direct marketing also holds many advantages for consumers, the foremost being the quality of the products. There is nothing like vine ripened tomatoes, freshly picked sweet corn or the crispness of newly picked apples to make shoppers delight in the market place. The health conscious shopper can choose fresh items of their liking and may also find specialty items, exotic produce or organically grown produce they might not find elsewhere.

The variety of market locations and the varying atmospheres of each provide something for everyone. For those who enjoy small low-key markets, downtown Arroyo Grande, Templeton and Baywood/Los Osos markets are the place to be. For larger, but still casual street markets, try the Paso Robles, Atascadero and Cambria markets. For busy parking lot affairs, the Arroyo Grande Oak Park, Morro Bay and original San Luis Obispo markets are the ticket. And finally, for those with festive desires, the San Luis Obispo Thursday night extravaganza is a must!

Farmers' markets give rise to a rural community feeling. It is here that otherwise busy growers can visit and exchange ideas. Also, consumers can become acquainted with local growers and the tremendous variety of commodities available. Inquisitive shoppers may glean valuable information on new varieties and even pick up some preparation tips from enthusiastic growers. In each market there is a relaxed atmosphere in which to conduct business. Whether producer or buyer, the entire family can get involved and enjoy the shopping experience. It is fun to leisurely shop, engage in conversation or just soak in the outdoor setting of the markets.

The direct marketing concept and in particular the nine local markets demonstrate the cooperative achievements of many individuals. Applying common sense and innovation the markets open up new avenues for both producer and consumer to mutually share the abundance. They uniquely contribute to the enviable rural lifestyle of the central coast.

County Department of Agriculture/Measurement Standards  
2156 Sierra Way, Suite A  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401