

ENERGY:

A Crucial Need for Farms, Ranches and Food



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California AGRICULTURE



- With \$35 billion in agricultural receipts, California is the nation's leading farm state.
- California farms produce nearly one half of U.S.-grown fruits, vegetables and nuts.
- California leads the nation in production of more than 75 different crops and commodities, including milk, grapes, lettuce, peaches, broccoli and carrots.
- For 14 crops, California is the only domestic source. Those crops include almonds, artichokes, raisins, olives and walnuts.
- For every \$1 billion in sales of California farm products, there are 18,000 jobs created: 11,000 within the farm sector and 7,000 in other, related businesses.
- More than 90 percent of California farms are owned by families, individuals or partnerships. Fewer than 1.5 percent of California farms are owned by non-family corporations.

Energy ON THE FARM

- Production of food and farm products depends on reliable, affordable energy.
- Farmers and ranchers rely on many forms of energy:
 - Fuel and electricity for farm equipment, trucks and irrigation pumps;
 - Fuel stock for production of fertilizers and agricultural chemicals;
 - Electricity for product handling, refrigeration, drying and frost protection;
 - A vast transportation network for moving crops from the field to consumers.
- Energy costs represent a significant share of farm costs and are often the most difficult to manage.
- Farmers and ranchers continually look for ways to improve energy use efficiency.
- More farmers and ranchers have become energy producers. According to the U.S. Census of Agriculture, almost 2,000 California farmers report installing solar panels, wind turbines or methane digesters.



Smart Energy POLICY



- Energy policy must balance renewable and conventional energy sources and must be based on greater self-sufficiency.
- The United States must pursue the safe development of available domestic energy sources. That includes renewable sources, but also development of offshore oil supplies, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other domestic supplies.
- Fully developing domestic energy sources will leave the U.S. less vulnerable to erratic price swings and foreign political unrest.
- More farmers and ranchers can integrate small-scale, renewable generation into their operations if provided the proper tools, such as better mechanisms to offset electric load against on-site generation.
- The California renewable energy mandate is affecting agriculture:
 - Pressure to maximize solar energy development has touched off a new land rush.
 - Solar developers look for flat land with good solar exposure—and that often means farmland.
 - Productive farmland is a crucial environmental resource. Solar development should be limited to marginally productive or physically impaired lands.
- There is no better source of renewable and peaking electrical power than hydroelectricity. Beyond being a renewable energy resource, hydroelectric facilities create multipurpose benefits that include flood control, water supply and recreation.



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