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Drought Update

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It's Time to Fix California's Broken Water System

California's Future Agricultural And Global Food Production Is At Risk

California Needs to Modernize its Water Infrastructure to Grow, Not Shrink, our Agricultural Output

California's agricultural industry provides jobs and economic activity and plays a crucial role in global food production. But this position is at risk due to the drought and unreliable water infrastructure.

The California Agriculture Industry Matters for:



THE STATE
ECONOMY



NATIONAL
TRADE AND
REVENUE



GLOBAL
FOOD
SUPPLY



A Strong Agriculture Sector is a Critical Component of the State Economy

Karen Ross, Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources, said in a joint statement:

“Over 150 years later, agriculture and food production remains a significant contributor to California's economy and has a vital role in preserving our natural resources. As our economy continues to expand, we must preserve our pastures, orchards, and fields to ensure they don't become a chapter in a history book.”¹

- **Agriculture is a Foundation for Many California Communities:** California's agricultural production and processing accounts for **7.3% of the state's jobs, 5.6% of the state labor income, and 6.5% of the state value added.**² The lack of adequate water is severely impacting the state's Central Valley communities where unemployment and poverty levels are already too high. The 2014 drought means **a loss of 17,100 seasonal and part-time jobs** related to agriculture.²
- **Industry Jobs and Revenue Benefit the State:** Agriculture provides an economic base for a diversified statewide economy. But this is diminished by the drought which is estimated to result in a statewide economic **cost of \$2.2 billion.**²
- **Agriculture Cannot Be Overlooked as Key Economic Driver:** “Every dollar of value added – labor and property income and indirect business taxes – in farming and agricultural-related industries generates an additional **\$1.27** in the state economy. For every **100 jobs** in agriculture, including the food industry, there are **94 additional jobs** created throughout the state.”³



California Agriculture is a Major Export on the National and International Stage

- **Ag Trade is the Backbone of Exports:** California is the highest agriculture producing state in the nation and the **world's fifth largest supplier** of agricultural products. The state "produces nearly half of U.S.-grown fruits, nuts, and vegetables and nearly a quarter of the nation's milk and cream."⁴ California exports to almost **150 countries** – 2/3rds go to four main destinations: Canada, the EU, Mexico and Japan.³
- **Need to Preserve the Ag Land Footprint to Continue as a Top Producer:** Unreliable water supplies are resulting in lost irrigated farmland, which lowers productivity and increases food prices. River water supplies for Central Valley farms have been **cut by about 1/3** due to the drought, and **428,000 acres** of irrigated cropland are being taken out of production.² This is in addition to a growing trend of converting farm land to residential, industrial and commercial uses to meet growing population needs. From 1988 to 2000, about **549,000 acres** were converted to urban and built-up uses.³



Food Security for California and the Nation Depends on Sustained Production, and California Farmers Can Play a Crucial Role in Meeting Growing Global Food Demand

“Water for agriculture is critical for future global food security.”⁵

- **California Agriculture Supports the Global Food Supply:** California agriculture will need to play a role in increasing food supply at a time when climate change and international crises are impacting the ability of other nations to provide adequate resources. The U.S. is the world's largest producer, exporter and donor of food, so we must help meet the challenge of increased food demand as the global population grows to 9 billion by 2050.⁶
- **California Agriculture Must Keep Pace as the Most Productive Region in the World:** California has the most efficient agricultural production and the most innovative and technologically advanced approaches – but farmers need sufficient water to meet food production needs and to keep pace with growing demand. California must continue to provide food exports, along with agricultural knowledge, innovation, and assistance.

SOURCES

1. Battle lines form - farms vs. solar vs. high-speed rail, E&E Publishing, 7-15-14
2. UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences "Economic Analysis of the 2014 Drought for California Agriculture"
3. The Measure of CA Agriculture, Univ. of CA Agricultural Issues Center, 2009
4. UC Davis News and Information, 7-16-14, http://www.news.ucdavis.edu/search/news_detail.lasso?id=10978
5. Global water crisis and future food security in an era of climate change, Hanjra and Qureshi, 2010
6. AGree: Facing the Future: Critical Challenges to Food and Agriculture, 2012

To meet future demand for food, California must:

- Modernize our water infrastructure
- Invest in its future as a leading global food producer
- Grow, not shrink, our agricultural footprint
- Develop adaptation strategies to handle scarce water supplies, drought and threats from climate change