



What's Happening to California Farmland?

Photo by Clint Musgrove

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LAFCO
AGRICULTURAL & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION WORKSHOP
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California Farmland 1984 - 2014

- 1.4 million acres have been removed from farming uses
- 79 % of farmland conversions were to urban
- 47% of conversion were from PRIME Farmland

Bay Area Agriculture Today

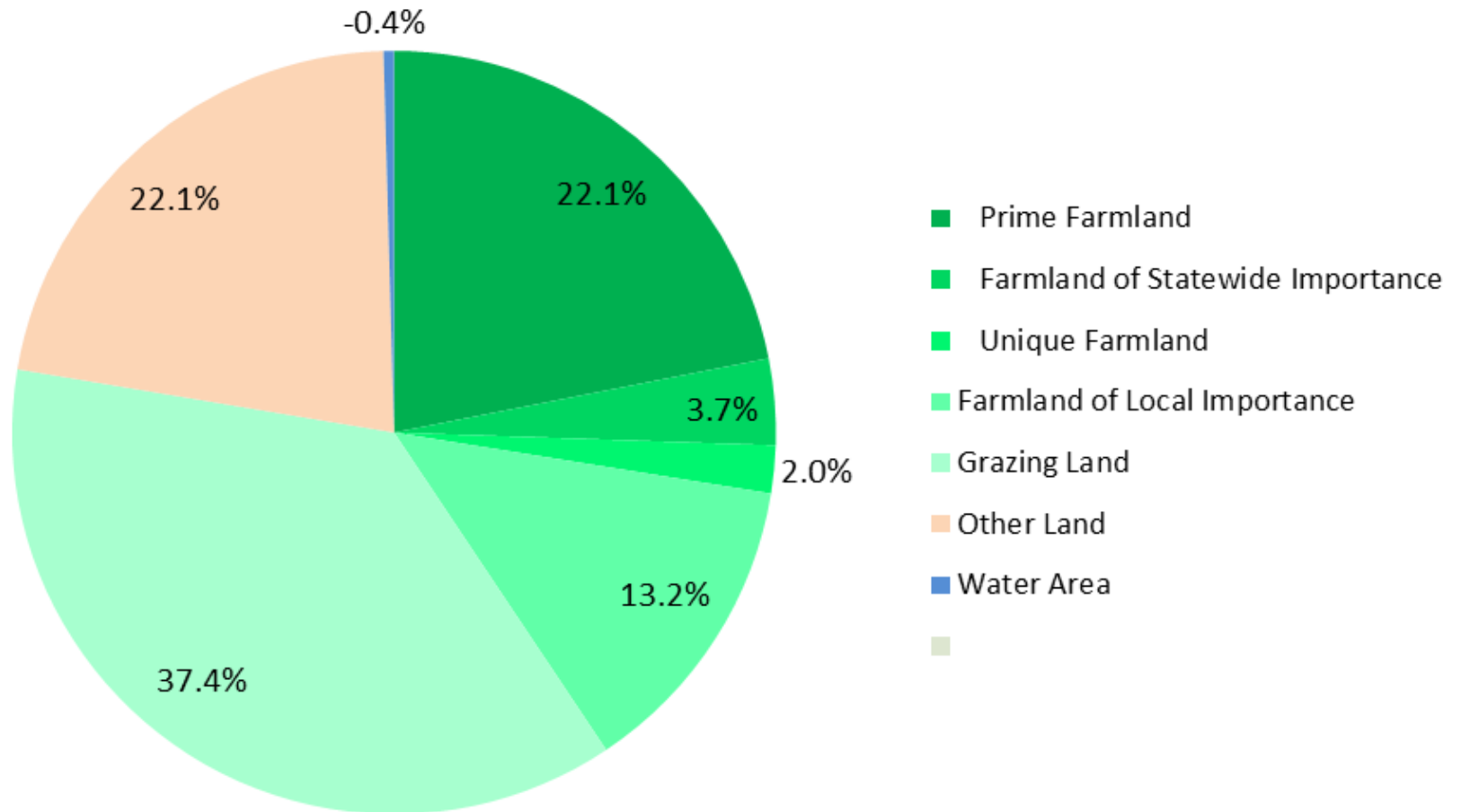
Photo by by walkersplanet

Table 1.1 Bay Area Regional Agriculture Trends

	Agricultural Value		Change in Cropland Acres		Direct Sales	Population Growth	
	2008	2000-2008 % Change	All Cropland 1990-2008	Prime Cropland 1990-2008	As % of Total 2007	% Increase by 2035	Share of Growth by 2035
Alameda	\$41,185,000	10%	-35%	-53%	1%	23%	23%
→ Contra Costa	\$71,962,340	-22%	-19%	-37%	4%	22%	15%
Marin	\$63,311,293	6%	-4%	-96%	3%	10%	2%
Napa	\$409,122,900	-4%	5%	12%	0.3%	12%	1%
San Francisco	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	18%	9%
San Mateo	\$160,925,000	-33%	-40%	-7%	6%	16%	7%
Santa Clara	\$247,950,400	-18%	-39%	-47%	2%	27%	32%
Solano	\$292,840,200	28%	-14%	-11%	1%	29%	8%
Sonoma	\$593,407,000	-18%	-6%	-9%	1%	12%	4%
Bay Area Region	\$1,880,704,133	-11%	-12%	-18%	1%	22%	100%

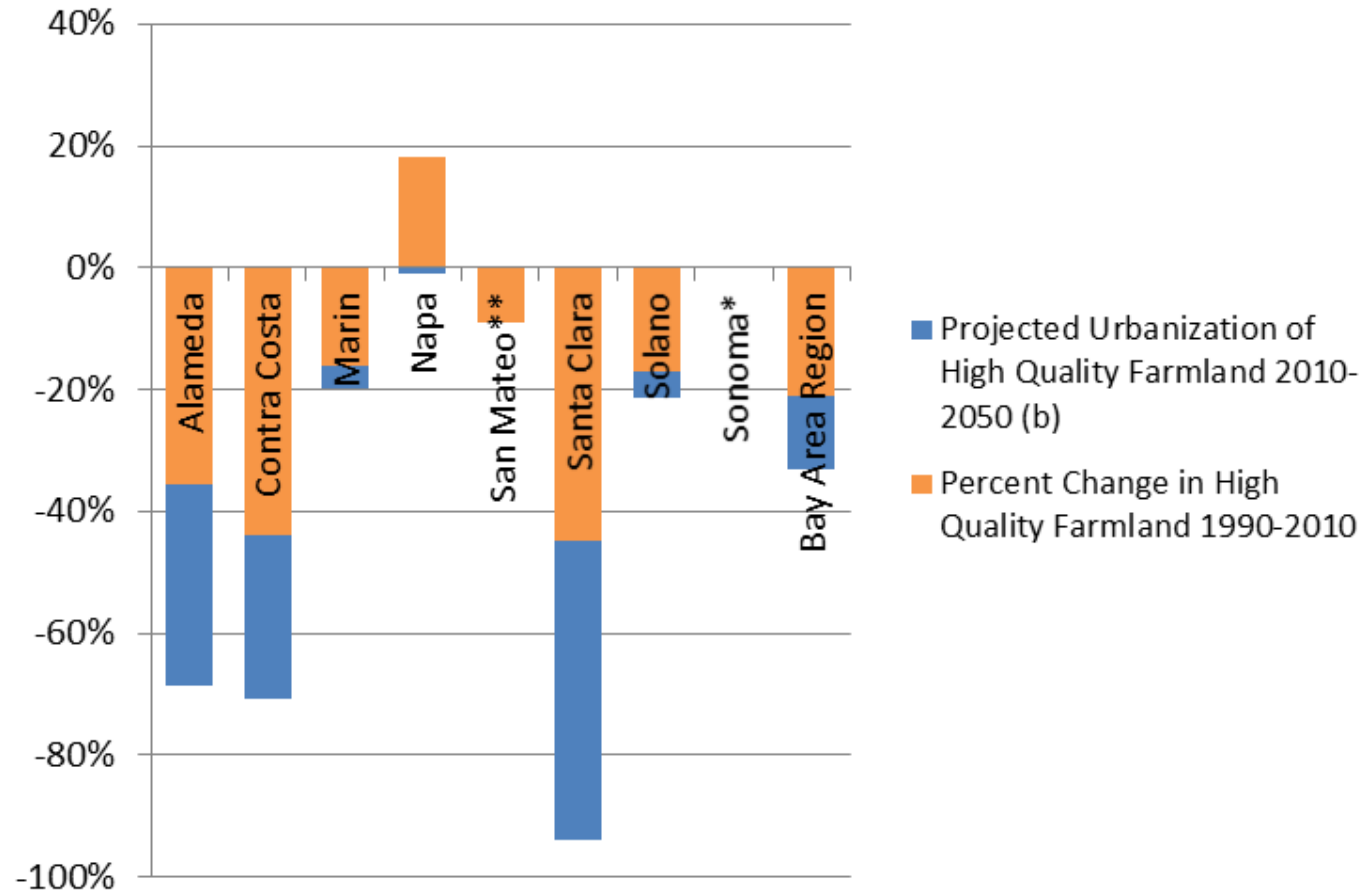
Sources: County Agricultural Commissioners' Crop Reports, 2008; California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2008; USDA Census of Agriculture, 2007; Association of Bay Area Governments, 2008.

Acres Converted to Urban, Bay Area Land 1990-2010



Source: CA Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), 2012.

Urbanization of High Quality Farmland (a), Bay Area 1990-2010 & 2010-2050



Notes:

(a) HQF = High Quality Farmland (Prime, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique)

(b) As percentage of existing High Quality Farmland (2010).

Sources: US Census, 1990, 2000, 2010; CA Department of Finance, Projections 2011; CA Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) 2012.

* At the time of the publishing of this data, the FMMP had not completed data on Sonoma County and so it is excluded.

** In San Mateo, loss of farmland occurs but its not as much due to urbanization as it is to fallowing (estate properties taking irrigated land and not farming it).

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Are LAFCO's Doing Their Job?

In areas where farmland surrounds cities, how can LAFCOs fulfill their mandate to conserve farmland without considering the amount of land needed for growth based on types of land use and densities?

“Despite the policies and procedures of the Cortese-Knox Act, the loss of prime agricultural and open space lands continues to occur at an alarming pace.”

- ***Growth Within Bounds***

Report of the the Commission on
Local Governance for the 21st Century

“The Commission recommends that policies to protect agricultural and open space lands and other resources be strengthened.

When making a decision, LAFCO must consider urban limit lines, densities, in-fill opportunities, and regional growth goals and policies.”

LAFCO Leadership

- Mitigation
- Buffers
- Reducing size of spheres
- Consideration of needs & densities

What are the consequences?

- Uncertainty
- Land speculation & price inflation
- Disinvestment in agriculture
- Decline in Williamson participation
- Decreased regional resiliency to climate change
- Decrease in ecosystem services
- Missed opportunities to invest in our great cities and towns



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No Food**

