

Yolo County farmers continue to increase production at a record-setting pace, despite reduced farm acreage.

Don Villarejo, Ph.D.

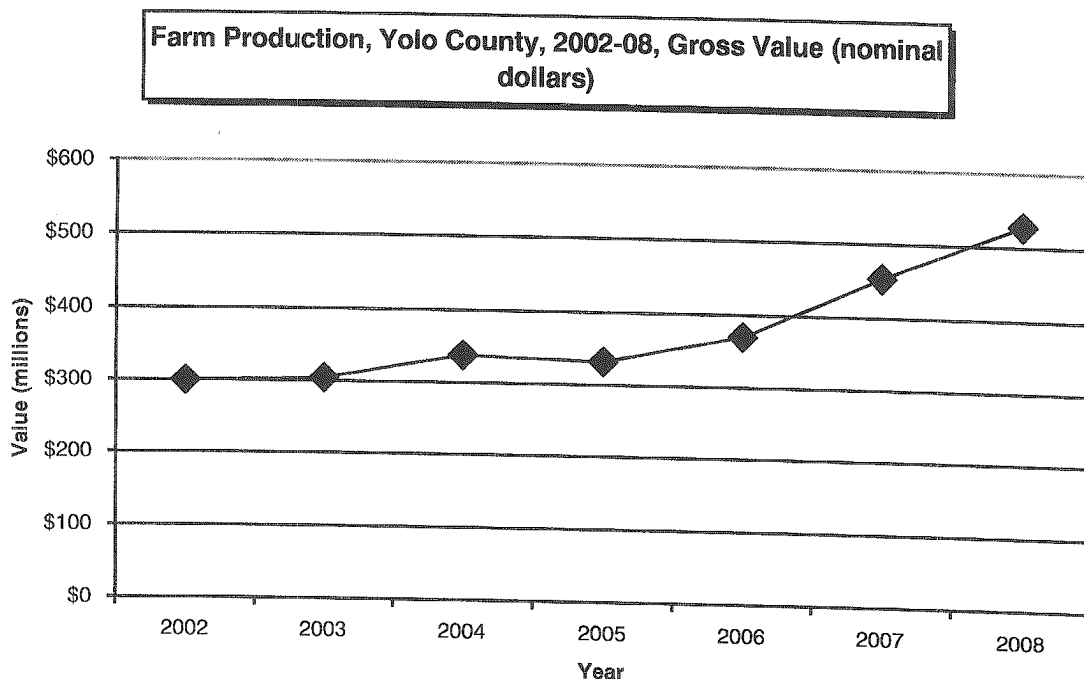
July 5, 2009

Abstract: Despite the loss of some farmland to urban growth, Yolo County farmers have continued to increase production at a record-setting pace. In a just released report from Rick Landon, Yolo County Agriculture Commissioner, county farm output in 2008 totaled \$527.3 million, a 42% increase over the corresponding figure just two years earlier.

Many Yolo County residents are concerned about the loss of agricultural land owing to urban growth, especially in the urban fringe. But reports from farmers demonstrate there has been no measurable adverse impact on either farm output or net farm income. To the contrary, both measures of economic performance indicate a strong and expanding agricultural industry in the county.

The *Yolo County 2008 Agricultural Crop Report*, just released on June 26, 2009, demonstrates that countywide farm production continues to increase at a record-setting pace. According to Rick Landon, Yolo County Agricultural Commissioner, "2008 was another good year for Yolo County agriculture with a record total gross valuation for all agricultural commodities produced of \$527,330,803. This represents an increase of 16% from the 2007 gross production value of \$453,539,019."

Shown in Figure 1 (below) is a graphical record of Yolo County farm production in the period 2002-08. Note especially the steep increase after 2005.



Farm production value, of course, represents cash receipts that farmers receive from the sale of commodities produced on their farms. Net production income, gross value minus production expenses, is much smaller and is not disclosed in the annual crop reports from county agricultural commissioners.

There is, however, a record of net income, as reported directly by farmers, in the quinquennial Census of Agriculture. The two most recent years for which data is available from this source are 2002 and 2007. These reports show that average net production income of Yolo County farmers more than doubled in the five-year period 2002-07, from a countywide average of \$48,204 in 2002 to \$99,897 in 2007.