

Who pays the cost of CALIFORNIA'S DROUGHT

California is in the midst of a serious drought, increasing the competition between coastal cities and the central agricultural corridor for access to scarce water.

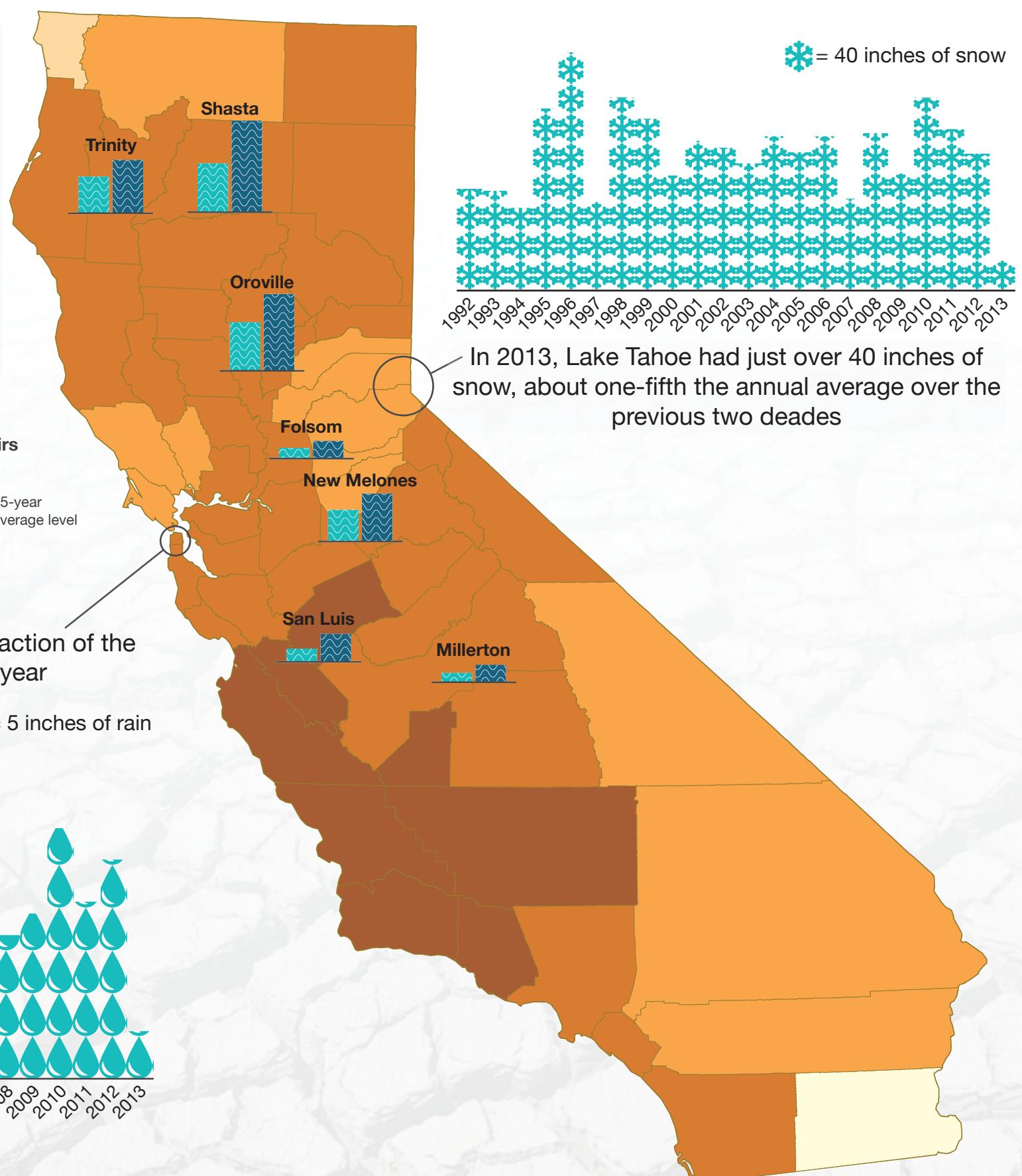
2013 was an exceptionally dry year in California, and major reservoirs that supply the Central Valley with water for irrigation and other agricultural purposes are 30% to 55% below their long-run average levels.

Majority of county is experiencing

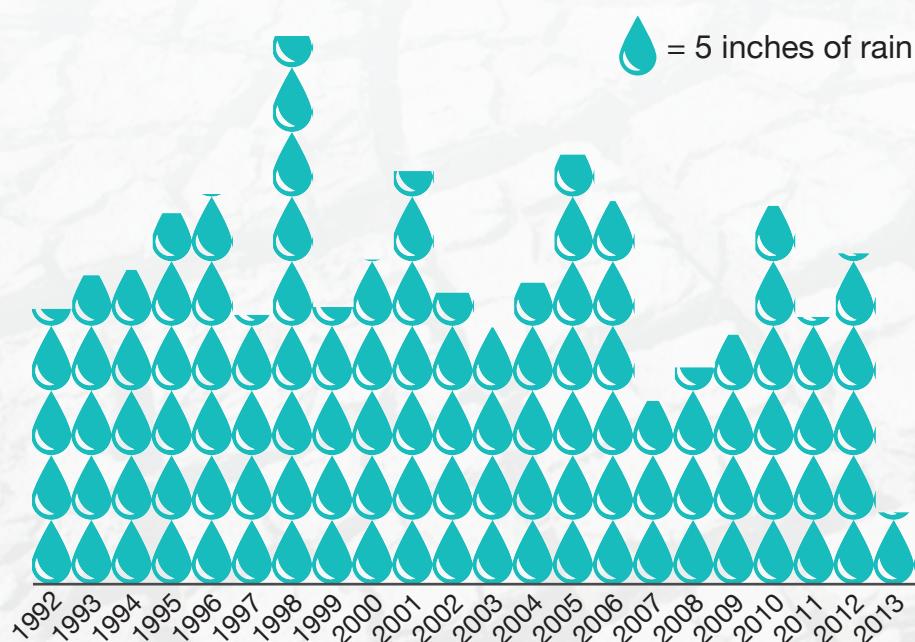


Major Reservoirs

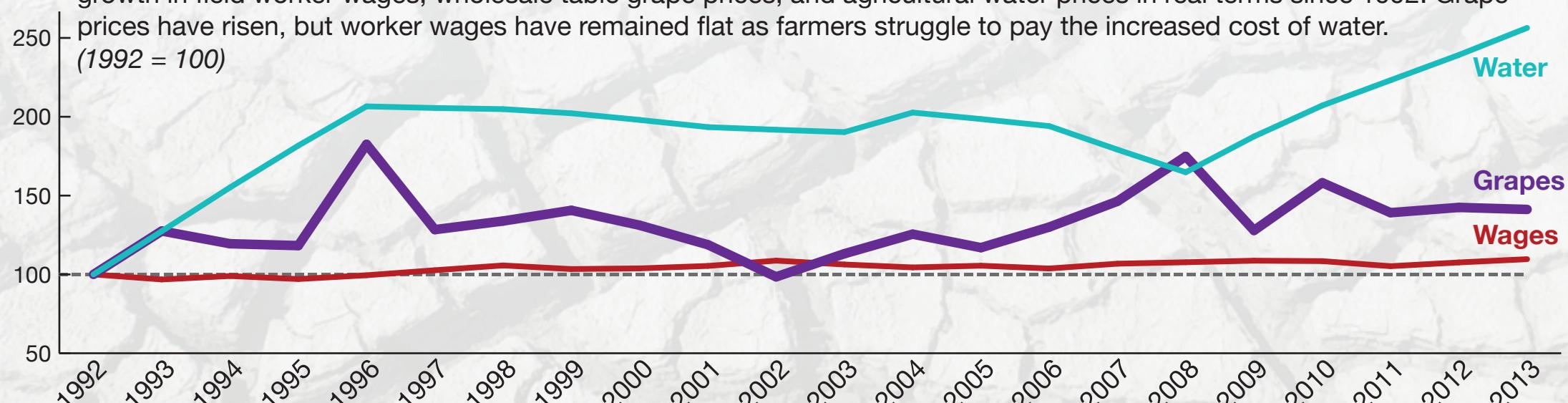
Current level 15-year average level



In 2013, San Francisco had just a fraction of the rainfall it normally sees in a year



Ultimately, farmers and agriculture workers end up bearing much of the cost of scarce water. This chart shows the growth in field worker wages, wholesale table grape prices, and agricultural water prices in real terms since 1992. Grape prices have risen, but worker wages have remained flat as farmers struggle to pay the increased cost of water.



Sources: U.S. Drought Monitor; U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Central Valley Project; National Climatic Data Center; Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index; National Agriculture Statistics Service Farm Labor Reports; Westlands Water District

Credits: Vinod Panicker (cracked earth photo); Alex AS from The Noun Project (raindrop icon); Benni from The Noun Project (snowflake icon)