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The San Joaquin Valley offers ideal soil for farming

By

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The San Joaquin Valley is home to some of the premier agricultural land in the United States, with the region producing a wide variety of agriculture products that are exported around the world.

The San Joaquin Valley is approximately 27,478 square miles in area. Of this area, 7,948 square miles are considered prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or “unique farmland based upon research done by the California Department of Conservation.

The combination of climate, soil and water availability allows the San Joaquin Valley to support a diverse range of crops. California’s Central Valley is perfect for a lot of commodities and it’s why it’s often referred to as the “breadbasket of the world.” The top ten crops of the region are almonds, grapes, alfalfa, wheat, pistachios, tomatoes, oranges, walnuts, cotton and corn, which combine to be approximately 50 percent of all that’s grown there.

“You can grow pretty much any type of crop during certain times of the year because of the soil we have here,” said Rob Spinelli of Anthony Vineyards. “It’s the ultimate climate for grapes. It’s perfect. Tree fruit and cherries have been grown here. There are potatoes, almonds.... the weather is just great for so many different things.”

The valley has rich, fertile soil — known as alluvial soil — deposited over time by rivers and streams. This soil is deep, well-drained and high in nutrients, making it excellent for agriculture.

When it comes to grapes, weather is the main reason that the San Joaquin Valley produces approximately 99 percent of all table grapes in the U.S. Because the climate is dry, it keeps out mold and other problems that impact grapes in other growing regions.

“The San Joaquin Valley has very fertile soil and there’s different areas that are heavier and lighter; you’ll find some sandier ground out in Arvin and heavier ground in the Tulare County,” said Jared Lane, CEO of Grapeco Farms. “That allows fruit to ripen faster because roots become more active.”

Louie Galvan, managing partner at Delano, CA-based Fruit Royale, noted many new varieties come out of the San Joaquin Valley and once growers learn to adjust to the climate these have historically become some of the most popular at the stores.

The region has well-developed agricultural infrastructure, including advanced irrigation systems, storage facilities, transportation networks and access to agricultural technology and research institutions. This support system helps farmers optimize production and manage resources effectively.

The San Joaquin Valley has a long history of farming, with generations of farmers who possess extensive knowledge and experience in agriculture. This expertise contributes to efficient and effective farming practices.

Overall, these factors combine to make the San Joaquin Valley one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world, capable of growing a wide variety of high-quality produce year-round.

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About Keith Loria |

A graduate of the University of Miami, Keith Loria is a D.C.-based award-winning journalist who has been writing for major publications for close to 20 years on topics as diverse as real estate, food and sports. He started his career with the Associated Press and has held high editorial positions at magazines aimed at healthcare, sports and technology. When not busy writing, he can be found enjoying time with his wife, Patricia, and two daughters, Jordan and Cassidy.

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