



# Salton Sea Authority



About the Sea

About the Authority

Recreation

Education

Agriculture

Environment

Economic Development

Talk to Us!



Help



Site Map



Home

## Agriculture and the Sea



With year round growing seasons, rich soils, and dependable water supplies, the agricultural valleys around the Salton Sea are among the most productive agricultural areas in the world.

Agriculture is the most important industry in the Imperial and Coachella valleys that adjoin the Salton Sea, both in economic and environmental terms. In 1999, over \$1.5 billion in agricultural goods were produced in the Imperial and Coachella valleys. Over half of this production value comes from the



wide variety of vegetables and fruits – particularly melons – grown in these desert valleys. The remaining portion of the production value comes from livestock, dairy, and field crops such as hay and sugar beets.

*An ACRE-FOOT of water equals about 326,000 gallons of water or enough to cover the size of a regulation football field one foot deep.*



*A typical California household of 4 uses between 1/2 and 1 acre-foot per year.*

Direct employment in agriculture is 15% in the Imperial County and 5% in Riverside County. In the area of the Salton Sea itself, about one half of all jobs are tied directly to agriculture.

With over 460,000 acres of irrigated agricultural land in the Imperial Valley, and 70,000 acres of irrigated agricultural land in the Coachella Valley, extensive and valuable habitats are available to a large number, and a wide variety, of wildlife species. The most visible use of this habitat by wildlife is the resident and migrating birds that forage, breed, and roost in the fields and along the ditches, drains, and storage reservoirs in both valleys. The Salton Sea and surrounding valleys are a critical link in the Pacific Flyway as birds find their habitat reduced throughout California.



The Salton Sea is officially designated as a drainage reservoir by Presidential Executive Order, and, as such, has been sustained for almost 100 years by agricultural drainage flows. Today, approximately 1.3 million acre-feet of water flows into the Salton Sea from agricultural lands. This inflow is about the same as the amount of annual evaporation at the Salton Sea, thus maintaining the necessary volume to preserve the fishery, wildlife, and recreational resources for hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.



The following is a **harvest schedule** for some of the crops grown in the valleys around the Salton Sea:

**January - March**

Alfalfa, asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, citrus, lettuce, onions, romaine, summer squash

**April - June**

Alfalfa, artichokes, asparagus, cantaloupes, eggplant, flax, garlic, grapes, honeydew, okra, onions, peppers, sudan grass, sugar beets, summer squash, sweet corn, tomatoes, watermelon, wheat

**July - September**

Alfalfa, banana squash, casaba, flax, okra, onions, sugar beets, sesbania, sorghums, tomatoes, watermelon, wheat

**October - December**

Broccoli, cabbage, cantaloupes, carrots, casaba, cucumbers, dates, honeydew, lettuce, okra, onions, rapine, romaine, summer squash, sorghums

[Back to [Top of Page](#)]

Copyright 2000 Salton Sea Authority - All Rights Reserved  
Site Design and Hosting by [KG WebWorks](#)