



**PACIFIC COAST
FARMERS' MARKET
ASSOCIATION**

PCFMA.ORG

HISPANIC FARMERS' ROLE IN CA AGRICULTURE



As we enter Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct.15), we would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to the contributions that the Hispanic community has made to California's agricultural sector and our state's economic growth.

The California agriculture industry is more diverse than most people realize. It is enriched by the contributions of many cultures with farmers and ranchers coming from all over the world attracted by our state's vast acres of prime farmland, mild climate, and hungry consumers. With differing backgrounds, commonality is found in their love of working the land and raising food for communities big and small. For generations, people of Hispanic heritage have brought passion and skill in farming to California, while also passing along their diverse culture and food traditions.

California has more than 14,700 Hispanic farm owners. Between 2017 and the previous Census of Agriculture in 2012, the total number of U.S. producers increased by 7%, while the number of Hispanic farmers increased by 13%.* This increase includes Hispanic farm owners, managers, tenants, renters, and sharecroppers. In addition to their contributions we must also acknowledge Hispanic farmworkers, whose labors are essential to every successful harvest.

Hispanic-owned farms and ranchers grow everything from tomatoes, greens, and fruit, to peppers, squash,

and citrus. They raise cattle, chickens for eggs, and sheep. They also grow traditional products like chayote squash, limes, nopales (cactus) avocados, jicama, tomatillos, prickly pear, and hot peppers that are key to many of their traditional recipes.

With the increase in the Hispanic population statewide, there has also been an increase in demand for these products. As a result traditional Hispanic cuisines have seen a boost in popularity over the years, a delicious side effect of having access to their culture and traditions.

The work of farming in California continues to evolve and adjust to climate change, drought, changing consumer sentiments, and federal and state regulations. It has often been difficult but the continued persistence of our state's farmers is to be admired and supported.

We thank California's Hispanic farmers for their essential contributions to the agricultural industry in California, sharing their rich culture and cuisine, and their determination to bring fresh fruits and vegetables to communities everywhere. The hard work and entrepreneurial spirit of Hispanic farm owners has shaped the landscape of California's agriculture production and has expanded the possibilities of what this state is capable of growing.

*USDA.gov