

**California Department of Conservation
FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM**

2010 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Merced

FIELD MAPPER(S): Amy Klug

IMAGE DATA USED:

Source	National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP)
Acquisition date	Summer 2009 and 2010
Data description	1 meter resolution, true color mosaic
Coverage gaps	
Additional imagery used	Google Maps

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES:

The following entities and individuals provided information used to conduct 2010 mapping.

Local Review Comments (submitted by cities, counties, & others on 2008 maps)
Personal Contacts
Websites Used for Reference
GIS Data Used for Reference

2008-2010 CHANGE SUMMARY:

Changes made during the map update are summarized by type and location. Particular attention is paid to large or unusual changes and their estimated acreages. Please note that land use type, size of land use unit, soil quality, and Farmland of Local Importance definition (if any) determines the final Important Farmland (IFL) category. [See definitions](#) at bottom of table.

Conversions to Urban Land	
Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land	22 changes
In the Atwater, Merced and Hilmar area, approximately 180 acres converted to Urban and included additions such as new homes, retail shops, water treatment plants, and freeway interchanges. Gustine added a sports field (≈10 acres), an expansion of a water control structure (≈40 acres) and housing development (≈5 acres). Lastly, approximately 55 acres were added near Los Banos; the majority due to new homes.	

Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Urban Land	70 changes
<p>Spanning from Delhi south through Merced and Atwater to Le Grand was where the majority of changes occurred (≈ 458 acres total). Additions in these areas included new homes (including additions to established housing developments such as “Moraga Homes” near Merced, and “Lafferty” near Livingston) but also the “Winfield” elementary school, truck stops, solar facilities, Lake Yosemite County Park, freeway interchanges, and business offices. Conversions near Los Banos included K. Hovnanian’s Four Seasons at Los Banos (adult community), Los Banos High School, new homes and office buildings (≈210 acres total). Lastly, new homes were added in the vicinity of Dos Palos (≈10 acres) and Santa Nella Village (≈10 acres) and the San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery (≈10 acres) was expanded.</p>	
<p align="center">Conversions from Irrigated Farmland aside from urbanization</p>	
Irrigated Farmland to Nonirrigated Land Uses	75 changes
<p>The majority of changes were due to land left fallow for three or more update cycles and were noted near Delhi, Livingston and Atwater (≈695 acres), Merced, Planada and Le Grand (≈665 acres), Hopeton (≈90 acres), Stevinson, Gustine and Volta (≈620 acres), Gustine and Ingomar (≈260 acres), Los Banos (≈165 acres), and Dos Palos (≈240 acres).</p>	
<p>There were also land that had been dry farmed for three or more update cycles (Farmland of Local Importance) close to Delhi (≈75 acres), Amsterdam (≈55 acres), Gustine (≈45 acres), Dos Palos (≈20 acres), and Planada (≈5 acres).</p>	
Irrigated Farmland to Other Land	95 changes
<p>Low-density housing (ranchettes), farmsteads, rural commercial, agricultural equipment storage areas, disturbed land and expansions to confined livestock in the form of dairies, feedlots, and poultry facilities accounted for the majority of the changes. There were a few changes over 50 acres which included gravel mines expanded near Hopeton (≈110 acres), fallow land that had been graded for development close to Los Banos (≈100 acres), El Nido (≈ 90acres), and Atwater (≈60 acres), and a canal with adjacent riparian area in the vicinity of Stevinson (≈ acres). Confined livestock expansions and to a lesser degree new dairies and poultry facilities were added close to Hopeton (≈40 acres), Hilmar and Atwater (≈185 acres), Merced (≈145 acres), Dos Palos (≈90 acres), and Gustine (≈25 acres).</p>	
<p align="center">Conversions to Irrigated Farmland</p>	
Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Irrigated Farmland	257 changes
<p>The majority of these changes were due to the addition of row crops, orchards and vineyards scattered throughout the county. A few large changes over 100 acres were noted near Snelling (4 changes, ≈2,630 acres total), Merced (1 change, ≈115 acres), Plainsburg (4 changes, ≈985 acres total), El Nido (6 changes, ≈985 acres total), Stevinson (1 change, ≈145 acres), Los Banos (1 change, ≈200 acres), and Gustine (1 change, ≈100 acres).</p>	
<p align="center">Unusual Changes (Types of change not already described or special circumstances during the 2010 update.)</p>	

Farmland of Local Importance converted to Other Land (18 changes total) largely due to the addition of low-density housing (ranchettes), farmsteads, rural commercial, agricultural equipment storage areas, and disturbed land in the vicinity of Snelling (≈10 acres), Delhi (≈40 acres), Atwater (≈65 acres), and Los Banos and Gustine (≈65 acres).

Areas of Concern for Future Updates

(Locations or map categories noted as needing careful checking during 2012 update, and reasons.)

Definitions:

Irrigated Farmland includes most irrigated crops grown in California. When combined with soil data, these farmed areas become the Important Farmland (IFL) categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance & Unique Farmland. Because of the nature of the IFL definitions, some irrigated uses, such as irrigated pastures or nurseries, may not be eligible for all three IFL categories.

Nonirrigated land uses include grazing areas, land used for dryland crop farming, and formerly irrigated land that has been left idle for three or more update cycles. These uses are frequently incorporated into county Farmland of Local Importance definitions.

Other Land includes a variety of miscellaneous uses, such as low density rural residential development, mining areas, vacant areas and nonagricultural vegetation. Confined animal agriculture facilities are mapped as Other Land unless incorporated into a county Farmland of Local Importance definition.

Urban Land includes residential, industrial, recreational, infrastructure and institutional uses.

For more on map categories, including Farmland of Local Importance definitions, visit the [FMMP web site](#).

LABOR ESTIMATE:

Time estimates for conducting the 2010 update.

Image interpretation, start date	July 7, 2011
Image interpretation, number of days	18 days
Ground truth dates	November 7-9, 2011
Number of days for post-ground truth clean up	2 days

Further information on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program can be found at:
<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx>