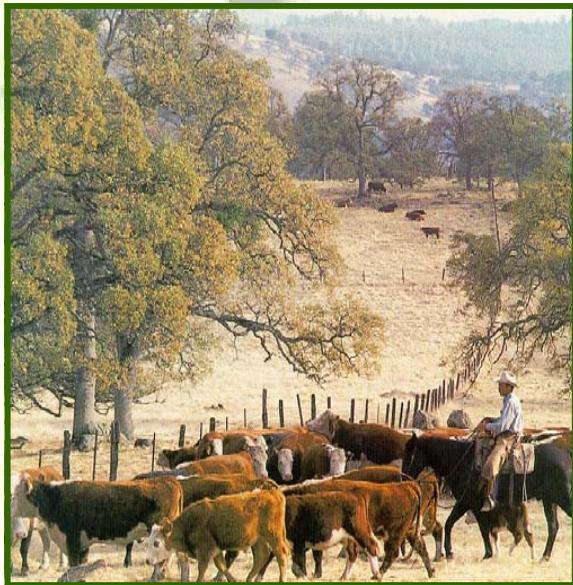


As a landowner, how am I affected by agricultural activities?

Ranch Marketing

Ranchers and farmers have the right to sell agricultural products directly to consumers at on-site locations and at Certified Farmer's Markets. Product marketing activities include packaging, processing, and on-site sale of agricultural products produced in the County. Other ranch marketing activities include tours, riding and biking access, fishing, and picnicking. Even with the impacts caused by normal farming practices and on-site marketing (traffic congestion, evening activity/noise, etc.), area residents continue to strongly support agriculture in El Dorado County. This support acknowledges the value of the rural qualities of life and economic vitality that agriculture brings to the community.



Ag/Urban Interface

Conflicts can arise when urban/residential parcels encroach upon or abut agricultural lands. Examples of routine agricultural activities that can be perceived as annoyances by residential neighbors include timber harvesting and transport, early morning or evening farming activities, and the associated noise and activities related to raising livestock. El Dorado County has implemented many sound land use planning strategies to help prevent these ag/urban conflicts. In addition, farmers and ranchers are also protected by the Right to Farm Ordinance that ensures continuation of normal operations without the threat of being declared a nuisance.

One of the land use planning mechanisms is the designation of Agricultural Districts which are intended to maintain viable agricultural-based communities and encourage the expansion of agricultural activities and production.

Other land use/zoning elements have been designed to protect agricultural lands including setbacks and buffers. Good land use planning is always the best approach to avoiding land use conflicts. When problems do arise, the Agricultural Commission reviews issues concerning agricultural lands and makes recommendations to the Planning Commission and/or the Board of Supervisors.

Right to Farm Ordinance

In 1988, El Dorado County approved an ordinance to protect ranchers and farmers from nuisance complaints by adjoining property owners. The Right to Farm Ordinance protects producers when conducting normal agricultural operations including cultivation, burning, spraying, fertilizing, irrigation, harvesting, processing, and activities associated with raising livestock (e.g. noise, flies, manure). Prior to the implementation of the Ordinance, producers were sometimes forced to curtail or cease operations, or were discouraged from making investments in farm improvements because of nuisance complaints. The Ordinance helps to protect the economic viability of individual farms and of the County's agricultural industry as a whole. For more information on the Right to Farm Ordinance, contact the Agricultural Commission office: (530) 621-5520.



Water Quality

Water quality issues related to agriculture are regulated by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Board). As a result of the Board's adoption of the Conditional Waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands, agricultural landowners and operators are required to obtain regulatory coverage for their waste discharges.



By joining the El Dorado County Agricultural Watershed Group, landowners and operators will receive the benefit of being covered under the Conditional Waiver without having to obtain an individual discharge permit. The Group also provides Conservation Planning Technical Assistance such as erosion control, integrated pest management, and irrigation management to ensure continued protection of water quality in El Dorado County watersheds.

For questions or additional information:
- Dept. of Agriculture 530-621-5520.
- Resource Conservation District 530-295-5630, www.eldoradorcd.org.
- Irrigated Lands Program 916-464-4611, IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov.

El Dorado County Rural Quality of Life

Many residents of El Dorado County moved to the area because of the rural lifestyle. These rural features provide a haven from the hectic pace of urban life. The wildlife habitat, open space and rural qualities provided by privately-owned agricultural lands add to the quality of life that we treasure in El Dorado County. In addition, over one-half of our lands are publicly owned forest and wilderness areas. These lands provide us with recreational opportunities and timber products, which are vital to the local economy and quality of life.



All photos courtesy El Dorado County photo library.

With the increase in County population, agricultural lands have been lost. From 1960 to 2005, agricultural production acreage has decreased by 58%. To protect the remaining agricultural lands and support their economic viability, land use planning and ordinances have been employed to recognize and enhance the quality of life that agriculture brings to El Dorado County.

Top Agricultural Crops

- Timber
- Apples
- Winegrapes
- Rangeland / Pasture
- Nursery Products
- Christmas Trees
- Cattle / Calves
- Other Tree Fruit

El Dorado Alpine Counties 2005 Agricultural Crop & Livestock Report

Links:

El Dorado County Department of Agriculture website : www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/ag/links.html

El Dorado County Resource Conservation District website: www.eldoradorcd.org

Agricultural Information

Agricultural Products

- Apple Hill Growers.....(530) 644-7692
El Dorado County Christmas Tree Growers
P.O. Box 423, Placerville, CA 95667
EDC Farm Trails.....www.edc-farmtrails.org
Certified Farmer's Markets.....(530) 622-1900
CA Certified Organic Farmers.....(831) 423-2263
CA Cattleman's Association.....(916) 444-0845
El Dorado Wine Grape Growers.....www.edwggg.org
El Dorado Winery Association.....(800) 306-3956

General Information

- EDC Agricultural Watershed Group..(530) 295-5630
Agriculture Department.....(530) 621-5520
UC Cooperative Extension:
Farm Advisor.....(530) 621-5502
Master Gardeners.....(530) 621-5512
4-H Youth Program.....(530) 621-5503
Farm Bureau El Dorado County.....(530) 622-7773
Natural Resources
Conservation Service.....(530) 295-5630
EDC & Georgetown Resource Conservation Districts
Voice.....(530) 295-5630

AGRICULTURAL LAND USE IN EL DORADO COUNTY



A Guide for Landowners Living in a Rural Community

Brochure Developed By:

El Dorado County Water Agency

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

El Dorado County & Georgetown Divide

Resource Conservation Districts

El Dorado County Agriculture Department

University of California Cooperative Extension

El Dorado County Farm Bureau