

California Seed Association Fact Sheet Series



Q Why California?

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Background

Seeds are the foundation of human and animal life on earth—the foods we eat, the fibers we wear, and most of the products we use in our daily lives are created from a seed. As the delivery mechanism for new plant technologies and varieties, seed is also the crux of agriculture. California is a proud leader in the global seed industry representing nearly 13% of the U.S. annual sales, which in dollars puts us in the billion-dollar category.

California is known throughout the world as a premier location for crop breeding, variety development and seed production, particularly of horticultural crops and agronomic crops other than soybeans. Many companies, both large and small, maintain research and production facilities in California and contract for seed production in the state. More than 200 seed-labeling firms are headquartered in California and licensed to sell seed in this agriculturally rich state.

California's seed industry is a major provider of specialty seed products, and the industry has evolved to fill an important niche in the global seed industry. California is an ideal location for seed production due to its favorable climate and sophisticated infrastructure for growing, harvesting, processing and marketing high quality seeds. These attributes have contributed to California's position as a leader in a highly interconnected and complex global seed industry that includes growers, processing facilities, distribution networks, and research institutions.

Annual Sales

According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, seeds sales in California topped \$475 million in 2008 - \$295 in sales from in-state firms and \$180 from out-of-state firms. United States seed sales reached \$8.5 billion in 2008 and California's share of that market is 12.6 percent, or \$1.08 billion, according to the International Seed Federation (http://www.worldseed.org/en-us/international_seed).

More Information

California Seed Association (<http://www.calseed.org>)

American Seed Trade Association (<http://www.amseed.com>)

California Department of Food & Agriculture (<http://www.cdffa.ca.gov>)

