The beginning of agriculture in California dates back to 1760's, when Spanish missionaries extended their activities to the Alta California. In order to develop a string of missions from San Diego to Sonoma from 1769 to 1823, their strategy was to introduce livestock, field crops, and horticulture. They produced mainly grains, specially wheat and maize, and cattle. They also invested in irrigation schemes and brought some primitive process, for example, producing wine from grapes and flour from the wheat, with the only purpose of feeding the settlers and natives in the area. The Gold Rush era commercialized the agriculture in California and farmers started to sell their products to non-natives miners that arrived from all over the country. It was necessary because without railroads in the state, it was very difficult to bring stocks from others parts of the country. When the Gold Rush era was over and railroads had been constructed, many workers transitioned to agriculture. Today, agriculture is very important to California’s economy, employing over 17.5 million people and generating about $40 billion in revenue. The state is the number 1 producer of diary in the country. California has 81.700 farms distributed on 25.4 million acres, which represents less the 4% of the U.S. farms. However, it is the world 5th largest supplier of agricultural commodities and the largest producer of food in the U.S. The unique climate allows farmers to grow over 450 different crops, some exclusive to the state: almonds, of which California is the largest exporter in the world, artichokes, dates, figs, kiwifruit, olives, which production equals 70 – 80% of all the ripe olives in the U.S, persimmons, pomegranates, pistachios, prunes, raisins, cloves and walnuts. California produces about 80 - 90% of lemons, processed tomatoes, and fresh and frozen strawberries, half of green onions, and a quarter of onions of the country.

Chia-Ling

Natalia

Vicky

Tamila