

Primary reasons for these periods of decline can be attributed to sharp periodic price reductions in farmer returns, greatly increased production costs, sky-rocketing land values, urbanization pressure and, most important, sizeable tonnages of low priced foreign fig paste entering the United States Market. To further illustrate the adverse effect these conditions have had upon the Dried Fig Industry in California, the number of active farmers, according to Dried Fig Advisory Board Records, declined 61% between 1954 and 1967 and within this period the decline in the past 10 years was 52%. This illustrates that it is no longer economically feasible for the so-called "small farmer" to depend upon the production of Dried Figs for his livelihood.

Although the final figures for the 1967 season are not available at this time, it is estimated that the yield per bearing acre will be near .57 tons, a decline of .59 tons per acre from 1966 (Table 2) and lower than any year since 1933.

Although there is information available to indicate that fig trees have been known to produce for up to 100 years, there is general agreement in the California Dried Fig Industry that after approximately 35-40 years, production begins to decline at an accelerated pace. This indicates that a sizeable percentage of the present bearing acreage is approaching this critical period and unless there is some indication of higher grower returns, this acreage will be removed and replaced with more profitable crops.

In view of the surplus conditions present in numerous other agricultural commodities, we do not believe it is in keeping with the American way of thinking to sacrifice an entire industry, which would be the case should a tariff reduction on Dried Figs or Fig Paste occur and, thereby, further contribute to these surpluses.

TABLE 2.—CALIFORNIA DRIED FIGS: BEARING ACREAGE, PRODUCTION YIELD AND FARM VALUE, 1937 TO 1966

Crop year	Bearing acreage	Total fig production dry basis (tons,)	Yield per bearing acre (tons)	Total dried fig product (tons)	Average farm price	Total farm value
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1937-----	37,441	32,000	0.85	28,000	\$68.00	\$1,904,000
1938-----	37,022	34,417	.93	30,750	65.10	2,001,825
1939-----	36,492	29,320	.80	26,220	78.00	2,045,160
1940-----	34,893	36,800	1.05	31,800	70.00	2,226,000
1941-----	34,082	39,483	1.16	33,150	114.00	3,779,100
1942-----	33,592	33,667	1.00	28,000	171.00	4,788,000
1943-----	33,259	44,367	1.33	36,700	292.00	10,716,400
1944-----	33,249	41,336	1.24	35,003	253.00	8,855,759
1945-----	32,878	35,807	1.09	31,140	273.00	8,501,220
1946-----	32,751	42,440	1.30	36,440	278.00	10,130,320
1947-----	33,862	42,583	1.26	37,250	123.00	4,581,750
1948-----	33,349	32,818	.98	28,818	139.00	4,005,702
1949-----	30,841	30,372	.98	27,705	170.00	4,709,850
1950-----	28,918	27,821	.96	24,154	283.00	6,835,582
1951-----	26,406	33,534	1.27	28,867	196.00	5,657,932
1952-----	25,515	33,278	1.30	28,278	142.00	4,015,476
1953-----	25,101	27,512	1.10	24,179	156.00	3,771,924
1954-----	24,820	29,238	1.18	25,571	166.00	4,244,786
1955-----	23,971	28,991	1.21	24,991	205.00	5,123,155
1956-----	23,191	28,774	1.24	24,774	139.00	3,443,586
1957-----	21,331	25,981	1.22	22,648	169.00	3,827,512
1958-----	21,109	27,513	1.30	23,846	194.00	4,626,124
1959-----	20,918	20,834	.99	18,634	217.00	4,043,578
1960-----	20,382	19,950	.98	17,117	230.00	3,936,910
1961-----	20,064	20,943	1.04	18,376	196.00	3,601,696
1962-----	19,275	23,751	1.23	20,418	204.00	4,165,272
1963-----	19,327	21,060	1.09	18,527	192.00	3,557,184
1964-----	19,697	22,349	1.13	19,016	237.00	4,506,792
1965-----	19,583	21,098	1.08	19,098	186.00	3,552,228
1966-----	19,263	22,405	1.16	20,405	189.00	3,856,545

¹ Preliminary.

Sources: Col. 1, Federal-State Reporting Service; cols. 2 and 4, records of the Dried Fig Advisory Board; cols. 3 and 6, computed.