

BAK. CA.

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California crops in spotlight

It started in Bakersfield

Thank you for bringing attention to the California Grown program in your recent editorial. This effort got its legs right here in Bakersfield in June 2001. At his Central Valley Economic Summit at Bakersfield College, Gov. Gray Davis announced his support for a voluntary campaign to promote agricultural products raised in California. It invites the state's farmers and ranchers to join together with retailers to highlight California Grown foods as the best choice for California consumers.

Retailers and commodity groups rolled up their sleeves to develop the program. I know because I was there.

We want to promote the quality, freshness, seasonality, pricing and food safety of our products. We want Californians to know where their food comes from, and that California products are the very best. This is a horse race, and with the recent launch of the advertising campaign, the horse has just left the gate. California Agriculture has thrown its full support behind California Grown. I think it's going to be a winner!

JIM CRETTOL
Wasco-Shafter farmer

Indicates high quality

This is regarding your recent editorial, "Ag program faces perils." Agriculture in

California is a \$27.6 billion business. It is the gold standard for agriculture worldwide. This market is intensely competitive and we cannot lose any opportunity to publicize the fact that California's agricultural products have a higher degree of safety and quality than ever before.

That's the goal of Gov. Davis' "California Grown" campaign. This program has the potential to benefit every single one of *The Californian's* readers.

Our message to Californians is to buy here at home — for the quality, for the value and for the tremendous benefits to the state's economy.

I am confident that California Grown will have a long-term impact on agriculture's bottom line. Research conducted prior to the development of the campaign indicates that consumers are, in fact, anxious to purchase a commodity from right here in California. Similar campaigns in states such as Texas and New Jersey suggest that this type of campaign is very effective.

We can share in that success by continuing to point out that when you buy California Grown, you're getting the highest-quality products in the world, you're investing in California's economy and you're potentially creating new jobs that help keep our communities vital.

WILLIAM J. LYONS JR.
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