

Publié le 03 mars 2013 à 06h00 | Mis à jour le 03 mars 2013 à 10h06

## Climate Change: California garden feared the worst



California is known for the variety and abundance of food that grow there, but politicians and experts fear more the effects of climate change on crops.  
Photo: Bloomberg archives



[Nicolas Bérubé](#)

Press

(Los Angeles) California is the garden of North America. The state produces nearly half of the fruits and vegetables consumed in the United States and its main export customer is Canada. However, more and more researchers believe that climate change endangers the agricultural motor 43 billion, says our correspondent.

One of the largest gardens in the world stretches to the horizon of more than 600 kilometers along Highway 5, which connects Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Panels invite people to come and enjoy local harvests. Peaches, blueberries,

nectarines, almonds, avocados, chicory, olives, kiwi: everything seems to grow in California.

In 2011, the 41,500 farms in the state sold \$ 43 billion in agricultural products from sheep's milk wines of the Napa Valley, a record. However, the balance that allows this abundance could soon be upset and threaten the very existence of agriculture in the state.

"I think many people underestimate the dangers we face," says Renata Brillinger, director general of the foundation California Climate and Agriculture Network (Calcan).

Calcan the just concluded its annual summit on climate, where farmers and scientists shared their latest findings.

In February, the federal Department of Agriculture released an alarming report on the effect of climate change on agriculture, in which the government describes the risks of "unprecedented."

For Ms. Brillinger, farmers and government are ill-equipped to cope. "We like to solve problems visible: the exhausts of cars or factory emissions. But agriculture is based on the biological world that is rich and complex. '

In 2009, the Secretary of Energy at the time, Steven Chu, said: "I do not think the American public understands, visceral level that could happen [because of climate change].

We are facing a scenario where there is more agriculture in California. "For the state, the main concern is the water used by farmers, which comes mainly from snowmelt in the mountains of the Sierra Nevada.

A study by the independent group Union of Concerned Scientists has shown that in 2050, reserves seasonal snow in the mountains could be halved. In 2100, scientists believe they could be reduced by 90% compared to 1990

measurements.

Winters too hot also damage crops. "We have farmers who tell us that their production is down because it has not been cold enough this winter, says Brillinger. We are entering an era where there is no manual. '