

## FEBRUARY FARMER OF THE MONTH:

# Ventura County Agriculture



Meet Your Local Farmer →

**CHRIS SAYER**

**Who:** Chris Sayer

**Where:** Saticoy & Santa Paula, California

**Crops:** Avocados, Meyer Lemons and other specialty citrus - blood oranges, mandarins, grapefruit, and caracara navels. And figs and pomegranates

**How long have you been involved in Agriculture?**

My family has been farming in Saticoy Ranch for 130 years, but I just returned 10 years ago. I enjoy sustaining a family tradition, running a small business, and having the freshest fruit available anywhere.

**How many pounds of fruit do you produce?** In 2010, 1.2 million pounds of conventional lemons, 200,000 pounds of avocados, about 11,000 pounds of Meyer lemons, and a few hundred pounds each of the specialty citrus varieties and figs. Pomegranates are young trees, not yet in production. All the specialty fruit trees are 5 years old or less, so in the next few years their production will rise, while conventional lemons and avocados will decline.

**Do you have any concerns about the future of Ag in Ventura County?** Ventura agriculture faces many challenges: pests, water, urban encroachment, global competition and more. But we have a climate that is ideally suited to a wide variety of different crops, great soil, and a tradition of experimenting with and adopting new crops to stay ahead of the competition. It won't be easy, but I think Ventura Ag will be here for a long time.