

Water

One study found that 88 percent of water in 17 Western states was used by agriculture. Only 7 percent was consumed by homes. Alfalfa fields single-handedly drank up almost three times as much as all households.

California produces a bounty of almonds, which gulp about 3.2 gallons of water for each almond, according to a 2019 study.

Researchers say that the Southwest is experiencing a megadrought that is the worst in at least 1,200 years. Wells have been drying up as far north as Oregon, and the Great Salt Lake in Utah has shrunk by two-thirds.

Nicholas Kristof,
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