The San Francisco Bay Metropolitan Area is composed of a number of industrial, residential, and educational communities adjoining San Francisco Bay. San Francisco occupies a densely populated area of approximately 42 square miles, located on the peninsula which encloses the southern arm of the Bay. It is the metropolitan center of this region.

Across the Golden Gate, to the north of San Francisco, is Marin County, which is principally mountainous in character, but contains a number of residential communities, the largest of which is San Rafael, the county seat. Beyond Marin County, to the north, are the Sonoma and Napa Valleys, noted for their orchards, vineyards, wineries, and poultry farms.

Extending along the Bay shore to the south of San Francisco is the industrial town of South San Francisco and a number of residential and educational communities, the largest of which are Burlingame, San Mateo, Redwood City, Palo Alto, and Santa Clara. The area to the west of these communities is largely mountainous in topography, but contains many fertile valleys which are devoted to truck gardening.

South of the Bay is the highly developed fruit producing region of the Santa Clara Valley, for which the City of San Jose acts as a business and fruit processing center.

Ranged along the foothills, on the east shore of San Francisco Bay, are the cities of Richmond, Berkeley, Oakland,