

# California Crop Production Report

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California Agricultural Statistics Service today released the latest crop production forecasts for September. The latest survey, conducted during the first week of September 2003, includes the following commodities:

**Corn** - The *corn* acreage harvested for grain remains unchanged from August at 110,000 acres. The yield per acre also is unchanged from August at 4.76 tons. Compared to the 2002 crop year, the acreage is 26% lower, while the yield is unchanged. The resulting production is 523,600 tons, 27% less than in 2002.

**Cotton** - *Upland cotton* production in California is forecast at 1.5 million bales, up 3% from 2002 and the August 1 forecast. Harvested acreage is estimated to be 555,000 acres, resulting in a yield of 1,297 pounds per acre. The forecast for *American Pima* cotton production is 370,000 bales, down 39% from the 2002 crop and down 5% from the August 1 estimate. Harvested acreage is estimated at 139,000, resulting in a yield of 1,278 pounds per acre.

**Oranges, Navel** - The initial 2003-04 California Navel *orange* forecast is 78.0 million (37.5-pound) cartons, down 5% from last season's crop. Of this total, 76.0 million cartons are estimated to be produced in the Central Valley. Bearing acreage is estimated at 128,000, resulting in a yield of 609 cartons per acre. The forecast is based on the Navel Orange Objective Measurement Survey conducted in the Central Valley. Survey data indicated an average set of 358 oranges per tree, with a September 1 diameter of 2.41 inches. Weather-related crop damage has resulted in reduced fruit sets in many areas. Fruit sizing is highly variable, but sizes appear to be larger overall than last year.

**Pistachios** - The 2003 California *pistachio* production forecast is 180 million pounds, down 41% from last year. Bearing acreage is estimated to be 88,000, 6% greater than in 2002. The resulting yield of 2,050 pounds per acre is 44% less than last year. The forecast is based on the Pistachio Objective Measurement Survey conducted during July. Pistachios are an alternate bearing crop, with this year representing a low production year. Following the record 2002 crop, the 2003 season got off to a wet start. Rains during key bloom periods resulted in a bad bloom and spotty set. The arrival of warm weather in late May and early June, however, promoted good growth and development. To date, the overall crop is looking better than originally expected.

**Rice** - All *rice* production in California for 2003 is forecast at 39.6 million cwt., down 8% from last year. The yield forecast is 8,000 pounds per acre. Planted and harvested acreages are estimated at 498,000 and 495,000 acres, respectively. California rice growers have generally overcome the wet weather problems they faced early in the season. There was concern that late plantings would have a negative affect on yields, but the hot weather that hit California during July has resulted in normal levels of heat units that are necessary for rice. Rice harvest had just begun on a limited basis on September 1st.

**Sugar Beets** - The 2003 California *sugar beet* production forecast is 1.90 million tons, unchanged from the August forecast, but down slightly from last season. Harvested acreage

remains unchanged from last month with 50,000 acres, resulting in a yield of 38.0 tons per acre.

**Walnuts** - The 2003 California *walnut* production forecast is 315,000 tons, up 12% from the 2002 crop of 282,000 tons. Bearing acreage is estimated to be 205,000. The forecast is based on the Walnut Objective Measurement Survey conducted during August. The survey indicated a state-average nut set of 1,599, up 2% from 2002. The San Joaquin Valley set is 1,429, up 25% from last year; the coastal area set is 640, down 49% from 2002; the Sacramento Valley set is 1,846, down 7% from last year. The percentage of sound kernels in-shell was 97% statewide.

Production forecasts are released on a monthly basis and do not reflect final production estimates. Late summer and fall harvests may change these estimates considerably. The next production forecast will be issued October 10, 2003.

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