

California Crop Production Report

Released: July 12, 2004

Today the California Agricultural Statistics Service released crop production forecasts on selected crops for July.

Grapes - The California all *grape* forecast on 800 thousand bearing acres is 5.70 million tons, down 2 percent from last year. Specifically, the *wine grape* forecast on 473 thousand bearing acres is 2.90 million tons, down slightly from last season's crop. The expected *table grape* production on 83.0 thousand acres is 750 thousand tons, up 2 percent from 2003, while the *raisin grape* production on 244 thousand bearing acres is forecast at 2.05 million tons, down 5 percent from last year. A colder than average winter, combined with record-breaking high temperatures in March provided a normal season for table grapes. The warm spring weather also got raisin and wine grapes off to a fast start. A normal, average size crop is expected for table grapes, whereas average to below average crops are expected for most varieties of wine and raisin grapes due to low bunch counts.

Almonds - California's *almond* production is forecast at 1.08 billion meat pounds, up 4 percent from last year's crop. The average nut set per tree is up 2 percent from 2003. Bearing acreage is estimated at 550 thousand, unchanged from 2003.

Apricots - California's *apricot* production is forecast at 90.0 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, but down 3 percent from the 2003 crop. Bearing acres are estimated to be 16.0 thousand. Weather during bloom was excellent with warm temperatures experienced throughout the apricot producing areas of the state. Cool temperatures during harvest resulted in good size. Harvesting will be finished by mid-July.

Peaches - The 2004 California *Freestone peach* crop forecast is 390 thousand tons, down 2 percent from both the June forecast and the 2003 crop. Bearing acres are estimated at 37.0 thousand. Freestone peach harvest is progressing well with approximately 40 percent of the harvest completed as of July 1. Flavor is reported to be excellent. The 2004 California *Clingstone peach* crop forecast is 575 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, but up 7 percent from the 2003 crop. Bearing acres are estimated at 32.5 thousand. Picking began in the Kingsburg area on June 9, ten days earlier than last year's starting date. Quality is reported to be very good.

Grapefruit - The 2003-2004 California *grapefruit* forecast is estimated at 10.8 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, but down 4 percent from last season. Marsh Ruby grapefruit harvest continued in the desert area. Overall fruit quality is generally fair to good. Texture is smooth, and color is fair to good. The Star Ruby variety was harvested in the southern coastal counties. Exterior quality is excellent, with good color and flavor. Texture is smooth in the smaller sizes, but slightly pebbly in the larger sizes.

Lemons - The 2003-2004 California *lemon* forecast is 36.0 million cartons, down 22 percent from the April forecast, and down 25 percent from the 2002-2003 production. Harvest remains active in southern coastal region. A heat wave in April lowered earlier production forecasts.

Oranges - The 2003-04 California *Navel orange* forecast is 76.0 million cartons, down 7 percent from the 2002-2003 production. Harvesting of the 2003-04 crop is essentially complete. The crop's size profile appears larger than last season, but fruit set was reported to be significantly lower. During the spring, higher demand prompted growers to pick under wet conditions, leading to rind breakdown and other quality problems. The *Valencia orange* forecast is 26.0 million cartons, down 37 percent from last season's crop. Valencia harvesting continued at a slow but steady pace. Puff and re-greening were among the quality problems noted in recent weeks.

Other Crops - *Barley* production is forecast at 121 thousand tons, up 30 percent from the previous year. *Oat* production is forecast at 36.0 thousand tons, down 14 percent from 2003. *Winter wheat* production is expected to be 675 thousand tons, down slightly from 2003. *Durum wheat* production is 281 thousand tons, 11 percent below 2003.

The next production report will be issued August 12, 2004.

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