

California Crop Production Report

Released: September 10, 2004

SACRAMENTO - California Agricultural Statistics Service today released the latest crop production forecasts for September. The latest survey, conducted during the first week of September 2004, includes the following commodities:

Corn - The *corn* acreage harvested for grain remains unchanged from August at 190,000 acres. The yield per acre also is unchanged from August at 4.48 tons. Compared to the 2003 crop year, the acreage is 12 percent higher, while the yield is unchanged. The resulting production is 851,200 tons, 12 percent more than in 2003.

Cotton - *Upland cotton* production in California is forecast at 1.70 million bales, up 14 percent from 2003 and up 3 percent from the August 1 forecast. Harvested acreage is estimated to be 557,000 acres, resulting in a yield of 1,465 pounds per acre. The forecast for *American Pima* cotton production is 640,000 bales, up 73 percent from the 2003 crop, but unchanged from the August 1 estimate. Harvested acreage is estimated at 219,000, resulting in a yield of 1,403 pounds per acre.

Oranges, Navel - The initial 2004-05 California Navel *orange* forecast is 92.0 million (37.5-pound) cartons, up 21 percent from last season's crop. Of this total, 90.0 million cartons are estimated to be produced in the Central Valley. Bearing acreage is estimated at 130,500, resulting in a yield of 704 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 392 oranges per tree, with a September 1 diameter of 2.50 inches. The Navel orange crop has developed rapidly due to ideal weather conditions. Fruit sizes were reported to be up significantly from last year, with increases of up to 15 percent reported in some areas. Fruit set was highly variable in some areas, but is showing an overall increase this season.

Rice - All *rice* production in California for 2004 is forecast at a record 47.4 million cwt., up 23 percent from last year. The yield forecast is 7,900 pounds per acre. Planted and harvested acreages are estimated at a record 605,000 and 600,000 acres, respectively. Rice producers in California were expected to increase planted acres this year since there were not any sales of water rights for the 2004 season from the rice growing regions in northern California to the Metropolitan Water District in southern California. Farmers have planted rice on fields that have not produced the crop for many years. A warm dry spring created ideal planting conditions. Rice harvest had just begun on a limited basis on September 1 with approximately 5 percent of the harvest complete.

Sugar Beets - The 2004 California *sugar beet* production forecast is 1.83 million tons, unchanged from the August forecast, but down slightly from last season. Harvested acreage remains unchanged from last month with 49,000 acres, resulting in a yield of 37.3 tons per acre.

Walnuts - The 2004 California *walnut* production forecast is 325,000 tons, down slightly from the 2003 record crop of 326,000 tons. Bearing acreage is estimated to be 217,000. The forecast is based on the Walnut Objective Measurement Survey conducted during August. The survey indicated a state-average nut set of 1,526, down 5 percent from 2003. The San Joaquin Valley set is 1,168, down 18 percent from last year; the coastal area set is 924, up 44 percent from 2003; the Sacramento Valley set is 1,943, up 5 percent from last year. The percentage of sound kernels in-shell was 98.2 percent 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 November 12, 2004.

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California Agricultural Statistics Service
P.O. Box 1258
Sacramento, CA 95812
Phone: (916) 498-5161
Fax: (916) 498-5186
E-mail: nass-ca@nass.usda.gov