

# California Farm News



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## CALIFORNIA CROP PRODUCTION REPORT

**SACRAMENTO** -- The USDA, NASS, California Field Office today released the crop production forecast for August. The latest survey, which was conducted during the last week of July and the first week of August, included the following commodities:

**Apples** - California's 2005 apple crop forecast is 205 thousand tons, up 5 percent from 2004. Acreage is estimated at 25.0 thousand acres, resulting in a yield of 8.20 tons per acre. Growers are expecting a promising 2005 California apple crop. A wet, cool spring brought some hail damage to the crop and raised some concerns about the long-term extent of the damage. However, cool temperatures during June heartened growers and helped enhance fruit color. Growers began harvesting the Gala variety the last week of July, and the fruit quality has been very good so far.

**Cotton** - Upland cotton production in California is forecast at 1.35 million bales, a decrease of 25 percent from last year. Harvested acreage is estimated at 497 thousand acres, resulting in a yield of 1,304 pounds per acre. California's American Pima cotton production forecast is 650 thousand bales, 5 percent below last year. Harvested acreage is estimated at 226 thousand acres, with a yield of 1,381 pounds per acre.

**Grapes** - Wine-type variety grape production for California is forecast at 2.95 million tons, unchanged from the July forecast, but up 5 percent from 2004. The table-type grape production is expected to total 790 thousand tons, down 2 percent from the July forecast, but up 3 percent from last year. The California raisin-type variety grape forecast is 2.30 million tons, down 6 percent from the July forecast, but up 13 percent from 2004. Bud break occurred in March for raisin and wine-type grapes, 1-2 weeks early, due to an early heat wave. The hot weather was followed by unusually cool and wet weather. Bunch counts were reported to be up statewide on most varieties. The wine and table-type grapes are reported to be in good condition for most varieties. The raisin crop looked promising early in the season, but the cool and wet spring brought on powdery mildew. To combat the mildew, sulfur was applied by many growers. Mite activity increased as temperatures once again soared, resulting in drying leaves and some sulfured grapes being burned. Harvest of the raisin and table type varieties for fresh use was active in Kern and Fresno counties; Thompson Seedless was the primary raisin-type variety harvested. Flame Seedless, Red Globe, and Black Seedless were the primary table-type varieties being harvested. Overall, good size and quality were reported. Lighter exterior color of some harvested grapes was reported, however, as a result of the continued high temperatures.

**Olives** - California's 2005 olive crop forecast is 125.0 thousand tons, up 20 percent from last year. The bearing acres are estimated to be 32.0 thousand acres, resulting in a yield of 3.91 tons per acre. Olives are an alternate bearing crop, and this year represents the higher year of production. The crop in northern areas of the State, however, was hit by bad weather during bloom resulting in a light and spotty fruit set. Rains, accompanied by hail and strong winds, burdened much of the area and knocked blossoms off the trees, leaving the area with a light, inconsistent crop. The olive crop in southern areas was also hampered by rain during bloom, but was not damaged to the extent of the northern crop. Bloom was heavy and the rain affected the fruit set to some extent, but overall, the crop looks good.

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**Pears** - The forecast of the 2005 Bartlett pear crop in California is 180 thousand tons, down 19 percent from 2004. The rains and cool temperatures that plagued much of the State during the spring destroyed a substantial portion of the Bartlett pear blossoms. As the season progressed, additional rain and hail damaged more fruit, making it unmarketable. The 2005 other pear forecast for California is 45.0 thousand tons, down 6 percent from 2004. Non-Bartlett pears continued to be harvested. Spring rains had a detrimental affect on the blooms, leaving the crop lighter than average. For those pears that were not affected by the rains and hail, overall crop quality was reported to be good.

**Others** - The rice production forecast is 40.4 million cwt., down 20 percent from 2004; alfalfa hay is 6.94 million tons, down 6 percent; other hay is 1.77 million tons, up 7 percent; corn for grain is 739.2 thousand tons, up 1 percent; sugar beets are 1.77 million tons, down 8 percent from 2004; dry beans are 1.28 million cwt., up 10 percent.

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 September 12, 2005.

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