

# 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 July. The latest survey, which was conducted during the last week of June and the first week of July, included the following commodities.

**Grapes** - The California all grape forecast on 800 thousand bearing acres is 6.00 million tons, down 14 percent from last year's large crop. Specifically, the wine grape forecast on 477 thousand bearing acres is 3.20 million tons, 16 percent below last season's record large crop. The expected table grape production on 83.0 thousand acres is 750 thousand tons, 13 percent less than 2005, while the raisin grape production on 240 thousand bearing acres is forecast at 2.05 million tons, down 11 percent from last year. Raisin and table-type grape harvests continued for fresh use in the Coachella Valley. Harvest began a couple weeks later than normal due to mild winter temperatures, which affected crop development. The mild winter advanced the San Joaquin Valley grape crop, but the cool temperatures in March and April brought vine growth and development to a standstill. Warmer temperatures in late May and June allowed the vines to rapidly catch up. As of early July, crop development was a couple of weeks behind in the northern coastal wine grape growing region, but was only a few days behind in the San Joaquin Valley.

**Almonds** - California's almond production forecast is 1.05 billion meat pounds, 15 percent more than last year's crop. The average nut set per tree is 23 percent above 2005. Bearing acreage is estimated at 580 thousand, unchanged from 2005.

**Apricots** - California's apricot production is forecast at 39.0 thousand tons, up 5 percent from the June forecast, but 48 percent less than the 2005 crop. Bearing acres are estimated to be 13.8 thousand. Detrimental weather negatively affected this year's crop, resulting in the lowest expected crop size on record. An unseasonably warm winter initially threatened chilling requirements, and in some locales bloom was extended over a long period as the mild winter temperatures forced some orchards to bud early. Freezing temperatures arrived in mid-February affecting some early blooming orchards. The weak and staggered bloom was then impacted by rain and hail storms. Despite the poor bloom, the thin crop was sizing out exceptionally well. Harvest began about a week later than normal, and was expected to be complete by mid-July.

**Peaches** - The 2006 California Freestone peach crop forecast is 380 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, but 1 percent below the 2005 crop. Bearing acres are estimated at 36.0 thousand. Wet and cool weather during the spring delayed progression of the Freestone peach crop. Set in the early varieties was reported to be fairly normal, but set in the mid to late season varieties was reported to be lighter and inconsistent. The 2006 California Clingstone peach crop forecast is also 380 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, but 21 percent less than the 2005 crop. Bearing acres are estimated at 26.3 thousand. Rain during March and April along with below average temperatures raised concerns about the Clingstone peach crop. Set in Yuba and Sutter counties was reported to be down from last year, while the set in the Modesto area was reported as normal. Harvest began in Kingsburg on June 22, 11 days later than last year. Harvest was expected to begin in the Yuba and Sutter areas around July 15. Fruit sizes were reported to be excellent, but quality was expected to be less than average due to gum and split pits.

**Grapefruit** - The 2005-2006 California grapefruit forecast is 12.0 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, but 3 percent above last season. Star Ruby variety grapefruit was harvested in Riverside County. Overall quality was reported as good with smooth texture. Sizes were reported to be small.

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**Lemons** - The 2005-2006 California lemon forecast is 38.0 million cartons, unchanged from both the April forecast and last season's crop. Commercial harvest of lemons ended in May for the Central Valley. Harvest was still active in the southern coastal region. Fruit quality was reportedly good and demand was increasing.

**Oranges** - The 2005-06 California Navel orange forecast is 84.0 million cartons, down 2 percent from the 2004-2005 production. Harvesting of the 2005-06 crop was essentially complete. Fruit size was generally very small and, in some cases, the cost of picking the fruit was more than the price received; therefore, more fruit than usual was left unharvested. The Valencia orange forecast is 22.0 million cartons, down 46 percent from last season's crop. Harvest continued throughout the growing regions of the State, but harvest was slow early in the season due to inclement weather and light demand. Demand began to increase as the Navel season came to an end. Fruit set was erratic, but fruit was generally of good quality.

**Other Crops** - Barley production is forecast at 76.6 thousand tons, 16 percent less than the previous year. Oat production is forecast to be 33.0 thousand tons, 38 percent above 2005. Winter wheat production is expected to be 488 thousand tons, down 25 percent from 2005. Durum wheat production is 236 thousand tons, 20 percent above 2005.

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 August 11, 2006.

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