



# California Farm News

Cooperating with the California Department of Food and Agriculture

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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 797 thousand bearing acres is 6.18 million tons, up 7 percent from last year's crop. Specifically, the wine grape forecast on 480 thousand bearing acres is 3.30 million tons, up 4 percent from last season. The expected table grape production on 83.0 thousand acres is 780 thousand tons, 7 percent higher than 2006, while the raisin grape production on 234 thousand bearing acres is forecast at 2.10 million tons, an increase of 13 percent from last year's crop. The 2007 California grape crop is shaping up to be an average crop. Some areas experienced some cane die-back due to the cold temperatures during January. Water was also a concern for many growers in the southern San Joaquin Valley. Winter rainfall was below average, and growers who did not sufficiently irrigate had delayed bud break and shoot growth. The bloom period for table grapes in the Coachella Valley was dry, resulting in an even, extended bloom. Overall, bloom occurred about a week ahead of normal for white varieties and up to a week and a half ahead for red varieties. Raisin and table-type grapes for fresh use continued to be harvested in the Coachella Valley. Harvest began for fresh use in the San Joaquin Valley the last week in June, primarily in the Kern District. Fruit quality has been very good and consistent.

**Almonds** - California's almond production is forecast at a record high 1.33 billion meat pounds, an increase of 19 percent from last year's crop. The average nut set per tree is up 10 percent from 2006. Bearing acreage is estimated at 615 thousand, up 5 percent from 2006. The California 2007 almond set is very strong. There was no difficulty accumulating chill hours over the winter, and there was a sufficient bee presence in orchards during pollination. In general, California weather cooperated during pollination. Almond tree limbs are reported to be bowing and splitting under the weight of the heavy crop.

**Peaches** - The 2007 California Freestone peach crop forecast is 390 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, but 10 percent above the 2006 crop. Bearing acres are estimated at 36.0 thousand. California experienced an adequate number of chilling hours, thus benefiting the Freestone crop. The bloom period was fairly quick, with above average temperatures and no rain. The crop is reported to be of excellent quality, with good sizes. Harvest continued during June with Brittany Lane, Honey Sweet, Ice Princess, Crimson Lady, and Super Rich the major varieties picked. The 2007 California Clingstone peach crop forecast is 450 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, but 25 percent higher than the 2006 crop. Bearing acres are estimated at 26.3 thousand. The Clingstone crop also benefited from an adequate number of chilling hours. Overall, the bloom was reported to be good on all varieties. Thinning progressed slowly due to labor shortages and heavy fruit sets. Harvest began in Kingsburg on June 14, eight days earlier than last year. Fruit sizes are reported to be small, but quality is reported to be excellent.

**Apricots** - California's apricot production is forecast at 80.0 thousand tons, down 11 percent from the June forecast, but more than double the 2006 crop of 39.0 thousand tons. Bearing acres are estimated to be 13.8 thousand. California's apricot production bounced back this year after last year's record low crop. The industry continues to struggle with high production costs, a dwindling labor supply, and foreign competition both in the domestic and foreign markets. Favorable weather conditions during bloom and the growing season coupled with sufficient chill contributed to the welcome rebound in production. Fruit set and quality were reported to be good. The heavier crop had sizing concerns in some orchards. Harvesting will be finished by early July.

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**Oranges** - The 2006-2007 California Navel orange forecast is 68.0 million cartons, up 26 percent from the April forecast, but down 28 percent from the 2005-2006 production. Navel harvest was essentially complete. Yields were higher than previously forecast. Due to the January freeze, a higher proportion of the Navel crop was harvested for juice rather than the fresh market. The Valencia orange forecast is 22.0 million cartons, a 10 percent increase from April, but down 19 percent from last season's crop. With the completion of the Navel season, the Valencia harvest was gaining momentum. Fruit size was reported to be above average. Affected by the January freeze, the season's production was still expected to be lower than last year.

**Lemons** - The 2006-2007 California lemon forecast is 33.0 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, but down 21 from last season's crop. Harvest remained active in the south coastal region. Storage levels were low, with demand exceeding supply at times. Remaining fruit on trees was estimated to be lower than on-tree fruit at this time last season.

**Grapefruit** - The 2006-2007 California grapefruit forecast is 9.60 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, but 20 percent below last season. The grapefruit crop was affected by the January freeze. The extent of the damage varied widely by variety and location. Star Ruby variety grapefruit was harvested for both domestic and export use. Grades were mostly Fancy, with some Choice fruit.

**Other Crops** - Barley production is forecast at 101 thousand tons, 17 percent more than the previous year. Oat production is forecast to be 28.4 thousand tons, 3 percent above 2006. Winter wheat production is expected to be 648 thousand tons, up 49 percent from 2006. Durum wheat production is forecast at 242 thousand tons, 25 percent above 2006.

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 10, 2007.

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