



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



California Farm News

Cooperating with the California Department of Food and Agriculture

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Media Contact: Jack Rutz, 1-800-851-1127 · August 10, 2007

CALIFORNIA CROP PRODUCTION REPORT

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

Apples - California's 2007 apple crop forecast is 170 thousand tons, down 4 percent from 2006. Acreage is estimated at 22.5 thousand acres, resulting in a yield of 7.56 tons per acre. California growers are expecting a good apple crop for the 2007 crop year. The crop received adequate chilling hours over the winter and good weather at bloom time. Harvest began of the Gala variety in late July, slightly earlier than last year.

Cotton - Upland cotton production in California is forecast at 530 thousand bales, a decrease of 32 percent from last year. Harvested acreage is estimated at 184 thousand acres, resulting in a yield of 1,383 pounds per acre. California's American Pima cotton production forecast is 750 thousand bales, up 9 percent from last year. Harvested acreage is estimated at 261 thousand acres, for a yield of 1,379 pounds per acre.

Grapes - Wine-type variety grape production for California is forecast at 3.20 million tons, down 3 percent from the July forecast, but up 1 percent from 2006. The table-type grape production is expected to total 780 thousand tons, unchanged from the July forecast, but up 7 percent from last year. The California raisin-type variety grape forecast is 2.20 million tons, up 5 percent from the July forecast, and up 18 percent from 2006. Harvest of raisin and table-type grapes for fresh market was complete in the Coachella Valley. Harvest continued for fresh use in the San Joaquin Valley and Kern District. Black Seedless, Flame Seedless, Perlette, Princess, Sugraone, Thompson Seedless and White Seedless were the primary varieties harvested in these two areas. Fruit quality was reported as excellent, although berry size was not as large as in some seasons. Grape growers across the State continued to fertilize, irrigate and apply treatments for weeds, diseases and insects.

Olives - California's 2007 olive crop forecast is 110.0 thousand tons, more than 4 times larger than last year's crop. The bearing acres are estimated to be 31.0 thousand acres, resulting in a yield of 3.55 tons per acre. Although the 2007 California olive crop seems to be turning out lighter than originally expected, it is shaping up better than last year's disastrous crop. Lack of rain during the winter and spring months, coupled with erratic temperature swings from hot to cold during bloom, left many trees with a spotty set. The bloom period stretched out over four weeks, leaving many groves with multiple olive sets. The January freeze also had an effect on many of the State's olive trees. Freeze damage became apparent when the trees began the new growth. There were also reports of tip burn in the tops of older trees, and younger trees in many of the colder areas were showing severe leaf loss, cracked bark and little to no crop. Since there is no carryover from last year's crop, strong prices for the 2007 crop are expected.

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Pears - The forecast of the 2007 Bartlett pear crop in California is 220 thousand tons, up 11 percent from 2006. The 2007 other pear forecast for California is 42.0 thousand tons, up 5 percent from last year. During bloom, the Bartlett pear crop had favorable weather conditions that were described as perfect. Growers in all pear-growing districts reported that trees were full of evenly ripening fruit. Harvesting of other pears continued.

Others - The rice production forecast is 41.5 million cwt., up 4 percent from 2006; alfalfa hay is 6.84 million tons, down 4 percent; other hay is 2.23 million tons, up 17 percent; corn for grain is 904 thousand tons, up 78 percent; sugar beets are 1.38 million tons, down 11 percent; dry beans are 1.19 million cwt., down 2 percent from 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 September 12, 2007.

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