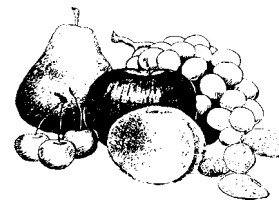


California Fruit & Nut Review



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STATISTICS SERVICE

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DECEMBER CROP COMMENTS

California growers were busy with normal winter cultural activities during December such as weed control, fertilizing, and pruning. Preparation for replanting of some trees was also active. Pecan, kiwifruit, and persimmon harvests continued. Picking of fresh grapes and apples was completed. The four nights from December 20 through 23 were devastating to citrus growers in the San Joaquin Valley. Temperatures in the low 20's caused extensive freeze damage. Growers were still evaluating the fruit left on the trees to see how much is salvageable. With the slow maturity of the citrus crop last summer and fall, a below normal amount was picked before the freeze. Many growers are optimistic that some may be pickable, but the quality may only be good enough for juice. Temperatures in Southern California dipped below freezing the same week, but did not stay long enough to do damage. More than 80 percent of the lemons and grapefruit are in Southern California, where good quality fruit is reported. The freeze destroyed virtually all the lemons still on the trees in the San Joaquin Valley.

Grapefruit is a heartier fruit and did not suffer as much damage. Approximately 90 percent of the Navel oranges are in the San Joaquin Valley and were severely hurt. About 15 percent (behind the normal 25 percent) of the crop was picked before the freeze. The Valencia crop in the San Joaquin Valley (60 percent of California's acres) was green and immature, and therefore, suffered considerably. Picking of any available fruit would not begin until late spring or early summer.

FLORIDA CITRUS: December was a very mild and dry month. Most areas of the citrus belt received below average rainfall, which necessitated a lot of irrigation usage. Growers generally do not like to irrigate during the winter months because the addition of regulated moisture produces new growth, which is vulnerable to frost or freezing weather should either arrive. The current crop of early and mid-season fruit is showing very good color on the tree. Some fresh fruit packing houses have been packing fruit directly after washing, which adds shelf-life to the fruit. Most of this State's processing plants have been open and running long hours to try to move a lot of the low-acid early and mid-season oranges. Most processors are utilizing the excellent color of the early tangerines and tangelos, which have been rejected by the packing houses due to exterior blemishes. Caretakers were kept busy during the month irrigating, spot spraying, and pushing dead trees.

FRUIT AND NUT STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

Crop	Bearing Acreage		Yield Per Acre		Estimated Production		Production Percent Change	Next Crop Forecast
	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998		
NUT CROPS	Acres		Pounds		1,000 Pounds			
Almonds (Shelled)	410,000	425,000	1,850	1,270	757,000	540,000	-29	January 21, 1999
Pecans	2,600	2,600	962	620	2,500	1,600	-36	January 21, 1999
Pistachio (In-Shell)								
Marketable In-Shell	---	---	---	---	137,000	---		
Shelling Stock	---	---	---	---	43,000	---		
Total	65,000	65,900	2,750	2,960	180,000	195,000	8	January 21, 1999
Walnuts (In-Shell)	177,200	177,200	-- Tons --		-- 1,000 Tons --		-18	February 1999
			1.52	1.24	269.0	220.0		
FRUIT CROPS	-- Acres --		-- Tons --		-- 1,000 Tons --			
Apples	38,500	35,700	12.80	12.80	481.0	458.0	-5	January 21, 1999
Apricots	19,100	18,900	6.91	6.61	132.0	125.0	-5	January 21, 1999
Cherries	13,700	13,800	3.59	1.09	49.2	15.0	-70	January 21, 1999
Grapes, Raisin 1/	270,000	270,000	10.66	7.78	2,877.0	2,100.0	-27	January 21, 1999
Grapes, Table	76,700	80,000	10.76	9.38	825.0	750.0	-9	January 21, 1999
Grapes, Wine	329,000	350,000	8.94	7.43	2,940.0	2,600.0	-12	January 21, 1999
Grapes, All	675,700	700,000	9.83	7.79	6,642.0	5,450.0	-18	January 21, 1999
Olives	35,300	35,300	2.95	2.69	104.0	95.0	-9	January 21, 1999
Peaches, Clingstone	31,000	30,300	18.50	17.30	574.0	525.0	-9	January 21, 1999
Peaches, Freestone	35,200	32,400	10.50	10.03	369.5	325.0	-12	January 21, 1999
Pears, Bartlett	18,200	18,000	15.50	15.00	282.0	270.0	-4	January 21, 1999
Pears, Other	4,600	4,400	6.25	6.82	30.0	30.0		January 21, 1999
Prunes (Dried Weight)	79,500	80,100	2.69	2.12	214.0	170.0	-21	January 21, 1999
BERRIES	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998		
	-- Acres --		-- Cwt. --		-- 1,000 Cwt. --			
Strawberries	22,600	24,300	590	514	13,334	12,490	-6	January 21, 1999
CITRUS CROPS 2/	1997-98	1998-99	1997-98	1998-99	1997-98	1998-99		
	-- Acres --		-- Cartons --		-- 1,000 Cartons --			
Grapefruit	16,800	16,600	1,072	964	18,000	16,000	-11	April 9, 1999
Lemons	48,700	48,500	904	742	44,000	36,000	-18	April 9, 1999
Oranges, Navel	123,000	125,000	716	304	88,000	38,000	-57	April 9, 1999
Oranges, Valencia	73,200	72,000	820	528	60,000	38,000	-37	April 9, 1999
Tangerines 3/	8,800	8,600	546	372	4,800	3,200	-33	April 9, 1999

1/ The Raisin Industry Diversion Program (RID) was not used in 1997 or 1998.

2/ Grapefruit -- 33.5 lbs. per carton; Lemons -- 38.0 lbs. per carton; Oranges and Tangerines -- 37.5 lbs. per carton.

3/ Includes tangelos, tangerines and tangors.

ORANGES: The 1998-99 California Navel orange forecast is 38.0 million cartons, down 44 percent from October and down 57 percent from last season. December's hard freeze caused extensive damage in the San Joaquin Valley where only 15 percent of the crop had been picked prior to the freeze. Some of the fruit may be salvageable for the juice market. About 90 percent of the Navel orange acreage is grown in the San Joaquin Valley. In southern California, the duration of the sub-freezing weather was insufficient to cause damage. The 1998-99 Valencia orange forecast is 38.0 million cartons, down 32 percent from October and down 37 percent from last season. Much of the San Joaquin Valley crop was very green and immature prior to the December freeze. Therefore, damage was expected to be quite extensive in that area. Southern California Valencias survived the freeze with no damage due to the shorter duration of sub-freezing temperatures.

GRAPEFRUIT: The 1998-99 all grapefruit crop is estimated at 16.0 million cartons, down 11 percent from last season. This number is down 5 percent from the initial October 1998 forecast. The yield is 964 cartons per acre which is based on the 1998-99 acreage of 16,600 acres. A hard freeze from December 20-23 destroyed most of the crop in Fresno, Kern, and Tulare counties. However, the majority of the State's production (86 percent) is from southern California where the weather has been manageable using normal frost protection measures.

LEMONS: The 1998-99 California lemon forecast is 36.0 million cartons. This is down 14 percent from the October forecast and down 18 percent from the 1997-98 production level of 44.0 million cartons. In the Central Valley, most of the unpicked fruit was expected to be a total loss due to the hard freeze in late December. In the South Coast and Desert regions, the crop looked good with a light green color reported. Defects included botrytis bumps, flat sides, tip injuries, and wind scar.

TANGERINES: The 1998-99 California tangerine forecast is 3.2 million cartons. This is down 36 percent from the October forecast and down 33 percent from the 1997-98 season. Freeze damage in the Central Valley was severe with most growers in that area expecting a total loss. Fruit in the Southern California area suffered minimal freeze damage. Color is excellent and eating quality is very good. Grade defects include wind scar, picking injury, and puff.

CITRUS FRUIT PRODUCTION BY STATE AND U.S.

Crop & State	1996-97	1997-98	Forecast 1998-99
ORANGES: 1/	--- 1,000 Cartons ---		
California, All	128,000	148,000	76,000
Navel & Misc.	80,000	88,000	38,000
Valencia	48,000	60,000	38,000
Florida	452,400	488,000	380,000
Texas	2,840	3,050	2,880
Arizona	2,000	2,000	2,000
ALL U.S. ORANGES	585,240	641,050	460,880
GRAPEFRUIT: 2/			
California	16,400	18,000	16,000
Florida	111,600	99,100	100,000
Texas	10,600	9,600	10,000
Arizona	1,800	1,600	1,400
ALL U.S. GRAPEFRUIT	140,400	128,300	127,400
LEMONS: 3/			
California	45,200	44,000	36,000
Arizona	5,200	5,200	6,400
ALL U.S. LEMONS	50,400	49,200	42,400
TANGERINES: 4/			
California 5/	5,200	4,800	3,200
Florida	12,600	10,400	9,000
Arizona	1,100	1,200	1,400
ALL U.S. TANGERINES	18,900	16,400	13,600

1/ ORANGES: California and Arizona, 1 carton = 37.5 lbs.; Florida, 1 carton = 45 lbs.; Texas, 1 carton = 42.5 lbs.

2/ GRAPEFRUIT: California and Arizona, 1 carton = 33.5 lbs.; Florida, 1 carton = 42.5 lbs.; Texas, 1 carton = 40 lbs.

3/ LEMONS: All, 1 carton = 38 lbs.

4/ TANGERINES: California and Arizona, 1 carton = 37.5 lbs.; Florida, 1 carton = 47.5 lbs.

5/ Includes tangelos, tangerines, and tangors.