

# California Fruit & Nut Review



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## APRIL CROP COMMENTS

Cultivation, irrigation, and fruit thinning continued in orchards and vineyards across the State. April was a wet month as California experienced a series of storms that brought both rain and hail to many areas of the State. Tree fruit orchards were treated to control fungal and microbial disease problems caused by the wet weather. Hail caused some fruit damage in many areas. Ground was prepared for the planting of new tree fruits. Vigorous shoot growth and cluster development occurred in raisin, wine and table grape vineyards; flower clusters were evident in many varieties. Table grape vineyards were thinned and suckered. A few grape growers were removing vineyards and piling the brush for chipping and burning. Pear and apple orchards were leafing out. Codling moth treatments were underway in pear orchards. Strawberry harvest in Fresno and Tulare counties commenced at the beginning of April and continued throughout the month. Some strawberry rot damage was reported due to rains. Picking and packing of cherries commenced in the Reedley district by month's end. Some rain and hail damage was observed. Early picking of peaches began in late April in a few orchards in the San Joaquin Valley. Figs were sizing well despite the cool weather. Avocado and olive bloom continued to develop on schedule. By mid-month, bloom in early walnut varieties was ending, while late-season varieties were just beginning their bloom period. Blight sprays continued in walnut orchards. Bloom in orange orchards was well underway in most areas. Rind staining or skin breakdown continued to be a problem, especially on the higher color and smaller sized fruit. Harvest of the

late Navel varieties continued, but was slowed at times due to rain. Good quality and demand were noted. Valencia orange harvest continued in the Central and Coachella valleys. Some packers observed a higher percentage of rougher skinned fruit. Picking of lemons in the Central Valley slowed, while harvesting activity increased in Ventura County. Marsh Ruby and Rio Red variety grapefruit were picked and packed in the Coachella Valley during April. Hail was reported in many areas, but caused little damage to citrus crops.

## ALMOND PRODUCTION

The initial forecast for the 2003 California almond production is 920 million pounds. This is down 15 percent from last year's revised record production of 1,085 million pounds. Estimated bearing acreage for 2003 is 530 thousand. This forecast is based on calls made April 23 - May 2 to a sample of almond growers. Of the 415 growers sampled, 249 reports were usable. Acreage from the usable reports accounted for 15 percent of the total bearing acreage.

The almond crop got off to an uneven start this year. Weather conditions during the bloom were less than ideal due to continued instances of rain and cool temperatures. Despite the weather-related problems, the sets for most almond varieties are generally reported to be in good condition. However, the Nonpareil variety has displayed one of the weakest blooms in years, with spotty and uneven sets throughout the State. In addition, numerous orchards displayed early petal fall, which normally signals a weaker bloom. Crop progress appears to be near normal despite the cool, wet weather this spring.

## FRUIT AND NUT STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

Crop	Bearing Acreage		Yield Per Acre		Estimated Production		Production Percent Change	Next Crop Update
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003		
<b>NUT CROPS</b>	Acres		Pounds		1,000 Pounds			
Almonds (Shelled) 1/	530,000	530,000	2,050	1,740	1,085,000	920,000	-15	June 26, 2003
Pecans	2,600	---	1,380	---	3,600	---		October 10, 2003
Pistachio (In-Shell)	---	---	---	---	240,000	---		
Marketable In-Shell	---	---	---	---	60,000	---		
Shelling Stock	---	---	---	---	---	---		
Total 2/	83,000	---	3,610	---	300,000	---		July 31, 2003
Walnuts (In-Shell) 3/	200,000	---	1.41	---	282.0	---		September 3, 2003
<b>FRUIT CROPS</b>								
Apples	26,000	---	8.08	---	210.0	---		August 12, 2003
Apricots	17,000	---	5.00	---	85.0	---		June 11, 2003
Cherries	26,000	---	2.13	---	55.5	---		June 11, 2003
Grapes, Raisin 4/	246,000	---	10.77	---	2,650.0	---		July 11, 2003
Grapes, Table	88,000	---	8.52	---	750.0	---		July 11, 2003
Grapes, Wine	491,000	---	6.31	---	3,100.0	---		July 11, 2003
Grapes, All 4/	825,000	---	7.88	---	6,500.0	---		July 11, 2003
Olives	36,000	---	2.75	---	99.0	---		August 12, 2003
Peaches, Clingstone	31,000	32,100	18.10	17.80	562.0	570.0	1	June 11, 2003
Peaches, Freestone	39,000	39,000	10.21	9.87	398.0	385.0	-3	June 11, 2003
Pears, Bartlett	13,500	---	19.60	---	264.0	---		June 11, 2003
Pears, Other	4,300	---	6.98	---	30.0	---		August 12, 2003
Prunes (Dried Weight) 5/	73,000	---	2.16	---	158.0	---		May 30, 2003
<b>BERRIES</b>			Cwt.		1,000 Cwt.			
Strawberries	28,500	29,600	595	600	16,957	17,760	5	July 10, 2003
<b>CITRUS CROPS 6/</b>	2001-02	2002-03	2001-02	2002-03	2001-02	2002-03		
			Cartons		1,000 Cartons			
Grapefruit	14,000	13,000	857	862	12,000	11,200	-7	July 11, 2003
Lemons	49,500	49,000	768	939	38,000	46,000	21	July 11, 2003
Oranges, Navel	128,000	127,500	531	627	68,000	80,000	18	July 11, 2003
Oranges, Valencia	66,500	64,000	617	688	41,000	44,000	7	July 11, 2003
Tangerines 7/	9,000	9,200	489	543	4,400	5,000	14	July 11, 2003

1/ Almond Objective Measurement Report will be released June 26, 2003 at 12:00 p.m.

2/ Pistachio Acreage and Pistachio Objective Measurement reports will be released July 31, 2003 at 12:00 p.m.

3/ Walnut Objective Measurement Report will be released September 3, 2003 at 12:00 p.m.

4/ The Raisin Industry Diversion Program (RID) had 27,000 acres for 2002. These acres were deducted from the bearing acreage.

5/ Prune Forecast Report will be released May 30, 2003 at 12:00 p.m.

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

7/ Includes tangelos, tangerines and tangors.

**AVOCADOS:** The 2002-03 avocado crop production forecast is 187,000 tons, down 6 percent from the previous year. Bearing acreage is estimated at 58,000 acres with a yield of 3.22 tons per acre. Generally favorable weather conditions greeted the beginning of the avocado harvest in late 2002. However, windstorms struck Southern California in early January, blowing several million pounds of avocados off of their trees, though about half of the fallen fruit was expected to be salvageable. In San Diego County, the presence of Mexican fruit flies led to the establishment of a large quarantine zone in the fall of 2002, enclosing more than 8,000 acres of avocados. Growers in the outer parts of the zone were cleared for harvesting in mid-February, but for those in the core of the quarantine area, harvesting has been delayed until the summer.

**PEACHES:** The 2003 Freestone peach crop is forecast at 385,000 tons, down 3 percent from the 2002 crop. Bearing acreage is estimated at 39,000 acres resulting in a yield of 9.87 tons per acre. The 2003 Clingstone peach crop forecast is 570,000 tons, up 1 percent from the previous year. Bearing acreage is estimated at 32,100 with a yield of 17.80 tons per acre. California peach growers experienced fewer than adequate chilling hours during the winter. Set looks good in early Freestone varieties, while set in middle-to-late season varieties is down slightly from last season. Harvest of Freestone peaches began during the first week of April. For the Clingstone peaches, set is reported to be lighter in the Modesto area than in the northern area of the State. Clingstone growers reported some hail damage in the southern Modesto area. Harvest is expected to begin around the middle of June.

**FLORIDA CITRUS:** Rainfall during the month of April was about average. However, most of that rain fell on three to five days and the rest of the month was warm and dry. Growers in all areas used irrigation during the month to maintain good tree condition during the all important fruit set period. During April and May citrus trees generally shed a large percentage of the little green fruit they cannot carry for the next fruit season. This is a normal process. The bloom this year was generally completed by the end of March with some older trees still showing bloom flowers into the first week of April. The abundant winter moisture provided ideal conditions for this year's prolific bloom. Most trees also produced a tremendous amount of new growth that may have competed with the bloom for the trees' nutrition. Valencia harvest was very active during April. Picking crews averaged around 6.75 million boxes per week of the late oranges during the month. Grapefruit movement slowed weekly in April as supplies were running out in some areas. Some grapefruit packing houses started closing around mid-month due to the shortage of good packable fruit. Several of the processing plants have started closing for the weekends so that they might more efficiently handle their remaining fruit supplies. Temple harvest was completed by the end of April. Movement of Honey tangerines slowed during the month as few crops remain to be harvested. Caretakers were very active during April cutting cover crops prior to harvest and for fire protection. Hedging and topping continued in harvested groves. Dead and dying trees were pushed out and burned. Some young

trees are being planted. Most post bloom nutritional sprays have been completed, with some second sprays now underway. Spring herbicides are being applied in all areas.

**CITRUS FRUIT PRODUCTION**

Crop and State	2000-01	2001-02	Forecast 2002-03
	1,000 Cartons		
<b>ORANGES: 1/</b>			
California, All 2/	109,000	109,000	124,000
Navel & Misc. 2/	71,000	68,000	80,000
Valencia 2/	38,000	41,000	44,000
Florida	446,600	460,000	400,000
Texas 2/	4,470	3,480	3,160
Arizona 2/	1,800	1,040	800
<b>UNITED STATES TOTAL</b>	<b>561,870</b>	<b>573,520</b>	<b>527,960</b>
<b>GRAPEFRUIT: 3/</b>			
California 2/	12,600	12,000	11,200
Florida	92,000	93,400	78,000
Texas 2/	14,400	11,800	11,000
Arizona 2/	500	320	200
<b>UNITED STATES TOTAL</b>	<b>119,500</b>	<b>117,520</b>	<b>100,400</b>
<b>LEMONS: 2/ 4/</b>			
California	45,200	38,000	46,000
Arizona	7,200	5,600	5,800
<b>UNITED STATES TOTAL</b>	<b>52,400</b>	<b>43,600</b>	<b>51,800</b>
<b>TANGERINES: 5/</b>			
California 2/ 6/	4,400	4,400	5,000
Florida 7/	11,200	13,200	10,800
Arizona 2/ 6/	1,300	1,240	800
<b>UNITED STATES TOTAL</b>	<b>16,900</b>	<b>18,840</b>	<b>16,600</b>

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

2/ Estimate for current year carried forward from earlier forecast.

3/ GRAPEFRUIT: Arizona, 1 carton=32 lbs.; California, 1 carton = 33.5 lbs.; Florida, 1 carton = 42.5 lbs.; Texas, 1 carton = 40 lbs.

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

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

6/ Includes tangelos, tangerines, and tangors.

7/ Data for 2000-01 through 2001-02 includes Robinson, Fallglo, Sunburst, Dancy, and Honey varieties. Data for 2002-03 includes Fallglo, Sunburst, and Honey varieties only.