

2006 WINTER PRODUCTION

FLORIDA: Mostly mild conditions during December and the first half of January allowed growers to prepare ground for planting. The crop received no significant damage from temperatures in the 30s around mid-December and during the last half of January. Temperatures remained cool during February. Dry weather during March allowed planting and field preparation activities to remain on schedule. In the Hastings area, most producers started planting around mid-January and all acreage is currently irrigated by seep systems that control the water table. In late March, Hastings potato growers continued to make double crop plantings following cabbage harvest. Potato digging is expected to begin by mid-April in the Hastings area and is underway in the other spring potato areas.

WINTER: Planted acreage at 5,700 acres was down 300 acres or 5 percent from last year. Harvested acreage totaled 5,500 acres, down 300 acres or about 5 percent from last year. Yield averaged 250 cwt per acre, up 10 cwt from last year's average. Production totaled 1,375,000 cwt, down 1 percent from last year's production.

UNITED STATES: The 2006 U.S. winter potato crop in California and Florida combined is forecast at 4.62 million cwt, 4 percent above the January forecast but 6 percent below last year. Area for harvest, at 17,500 acres, is unchanged from January but down 2 percent from a year ago. The average yield of 264 cwt per acre is up 10 cwt from January and 17 cwt above a year ago.

California's average yield is forecast at 270 cwt per acre, 10 cwt per acre above the January forecast. Harvest continues with good quality. There was little damage caused by freezing temperatures in March. Yields in Florida are forecasted at 250 cwt per acre, 10 cwt per acre above the January forecast. Mild weather during December aided in crop development and dry conditions have kept harvest on schedule.

2006 SPRING PRODUCTION

FLORIDA: Florida producers planted 24,100 acres, up 500 acres from the 23,600 acres planted in 2005. Acreage for harvest was set at 23,700 acres, up 500 acres or 2 percent from a year ago. Average yield is expected to be 294 hundredweight (cwt) per acre, up 13 cwt per acre from the previous year. Production is anticipated to total 6,962,000 cwt, up 7 percent or 435,000 cwt from the 2005 production. Potato growers in the Hastings area planted 18,000 acres and hope to dig 17,700 acres compared with 17,300 acres planted and 17,000 acres dug in 2005. The Hastings area yield is expected to average 295 cwt per acre, up 15 cwt or 5 percent from the 280 per acre averaged in 2005. The Hastings' spring potato production is set at 5,222,000 cwt, up 462,000 cwt or 10 percent from the 4,760,000 cwt dug last year. Spring production from other areas is expected to total 1,740,000 cwt, down 27,000 cwt or 2 percent from the 1,767,000 cwt dug a year ago.

UNITED STATES: Spring production in 2006 is forecast at 20.0 million cwt, up 7 percent from last year. Area for harvest is forecast at 68,000 acres, 2 percent above 2005. The average yield is forecast at 294 cwt per acre, up 13 cwt from a year ago.

North Carolina's spring potato crop is forecast at 3.14 million cwt, up 10 percent from last year. Area for harvest is expected to be up 5 percent from a year ago and average yield is expected to increase 10 cwt per acre from last year. Planting is winding down and crop condition is good.

California's spring potato production forecast, at 5.76 million cwt, is 6 percent below last year. Area for harvest is down 5 percent and yield is down 5 cwt per acre from a year ago. Planting proceeded normally but weather conditions have been wet and cool. Overall condition of the crop is lower than the previous year and a few potato fields were damaged by frost. Harvest is underway in Kern County but some growers anticipate a late harvest due to the wet conditions. Texas spring potato production is forecast at 3.06 million cwt, 49 percent above last season. Acreage for harvest increased 12 percent and the average yield forecast is up 75 cwt per acre from a year ago. Producers report good growing conditions with near perfect weather. Arizona's production is forecast at 1.10 million cwt, down 7 percent from last year. Growers report a 7 percent decrease in acreage for harvest but expect yield to be unchanged from last year.

POTATOES

Seasonal Group and State	Area				Yield per acre		Production		
	Planted		Harvested		2005	Indicated 2006	2004	2005	Indicated 2006
	2005	Indicated 2006	2005	Indicated 2006					
	1,000 acres				Cwt		1,000 cwt		
Winter									
California	14.0	12.0	14.0	12.0	250	270	3,250	3,500	3,240
Florida	6.0	5.7	5.8	5.5	240	250	1,568	1,392	1,375
Total	20.0	17.7	19.8	17.5	247	264	4,818	4,892	4,615
Spring									
Arizona	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.0	275	275	1,767	1,183	1,100
California	15.1	14.4	15.1	14.4	405	400	8,313	6,116	5,760
Florida	23.6	24.1	23.2	23.7	281	294	7,678	6,527	6,962
Hastings	17.3	18.0	17.0	17.7	280	295	5,760	4,760	5,222
Other	6.3	6.1	6.2	6.0	285	290	1,918	1,767	1,740
North Carolina	15.5	16.5	15.0	15.7	190	200	2,700	2,850	3,140
Texas	9.5	10.7	9.1	10.2	225	300	2,205	2,048	3,060
Total	68.0	69.7	66.7	68.0	281	294	22,663	18,724	20,022

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POTATO STOCKS, DOWN 11 PERCENT

The 13 major potato States held 114 million cwt of potatoes in storage April 1, 2006, down 11 percent from last year and 9 percent below April 1, 2004, for comparable States. Ohio and Pennsylvania were dropped from the potato stocks program starting with the 2005 storage season. Potatoes in storage account for 31 percent of the 2005 fall storage States' production, down 1 percentage point from last year.

Disappearance of 259 million cwt from the start of harvest to April 1, is down 5 percent from last year for comparable States. Shrink and loss, at 21.6 million cwt, is down 20 percent from last year for comparable States.

Processors have used 133 million cwt of 2005 crop potatoes so far this season, down 2 percent from a year ago and 3 percent below 2 years ago. Idaho and Malheur County, Oregon, total processing decreased 2 percent from a year ago and Washington and the rest of Oregon total processing dropped 3 percent from last season. Dehydrating usage accounts for 27.2 million cwt of the total processing, down 9 percent from last year and 10 percent below the same date in 2004.

Western States held 85.7 million cwt of potatoes in storage on April 1, down 7 percent from last year. Idaho's potato stocks are down 18 percent from last year, Colorado's potato sheds held 13 percent less than last year, Montana's stocks dropped 11 percent from last season, and stocks in California decreased 22 percent from 2005. Washington's potato stocks are up 11 percent from last year and Oregon's stocks increased 37 percent from last season.

Central States accounted for 20.9 million cwt of potato stocks on April 1, down 27 percent from last year for comparable States. North Dakota's potato stocks decreased 53 percent from last year and Minnesota's stocks are down 31 percent from 2005. Michigan and Wisconsin potato stocks are unchanged from the same date in 2005.

Eastern States stored 7.30 million cwt of potatoes on April 1, down 6 percent from last year for comparable States. Maine's potato sheds held 9 percent less than last year, while New York's potato stocks increased 67 percent from a year ago.

POTATOES: Quantity used for processing, nine States, 2003-2005^{1/}

State	Crop year	To Dec 1	To Jan 1	To Feb 1	To Mar 1	To Apr 1	To May 1	To Jun 1	Entire season
<i>1,000 cwt</i>									
Idaho & Malheur County, Oregon	2003	24,310	30,730	36,260	43,640	49,570	56,380	63,770	77,530
	2004	24,360	30,840	36,820	44,610	51,000	58,090	65,800	84,600
	2005	22,590	28,960	35,570	42,800	50,220			
Maine ^{2/}	2003	1,590	2,085	2,720	3,420	4,095	4,740	5,400	7,270
	2004	1,540	1,970	2,600	3,135	3,700	4,340	4,910	6,590
	2005	1,290	1,805	2,405	3,015	3,740			
Washington and Other areas, Oregon ^{3/}	2003	32,670	38,520	43,610	51,210	58,500	64,160	72,350	79,800
	2004	32,305	38,130	43,570	50,730	57,140	63,855	71,355	78,680
	2005	30,310	35,895	40,545	48,290	55,320			
Other States ^{3/ 4/}	2003	13,835	16,505	19,590	22,685	25,920	29,480	32,845	42,160
	2004	12,490	15,000	17,965	20,910	24,150	27,480	30,945	41,175
	2005	11,820	15,030	17,980	21,230	24,055			
Total ^{3/}	2003	72,405	87,840	102,180	120,955	138,085	154,760	174,365	206,760
	2004	70,695	85,940	100,955	119,385	135,990	153,765	173,010	211,045
	2005	66,010	81,690	96,500	115,335	133,335			
Dehydrated ^{5/}	2003	14,250	18,440	22,050	26,090	30,290	34,630	39,070	47,750
	2004	14,525	18,540	21,875	25,970	30,020	33,685	38,505	47,805
	2005	12,180	15,920	19,515	23,210	27,180			

^{1/} Total quantity received and used for processing regardless of the State in which the potatoes were produced. Amount excludes quantities used for potato chips in ME, MI, and WI.

^{2/} Includes Maine grown potatoes only.

^{3/} March 2005 revised

^{4/} CO, MN, NV, ND, and WI.

^{5/} Dehydrated products except starch and flour. Included in above totals. Includes CO, ID, NV, ND, OR, WA, and WI.

FALL POTATOES: Production and Stocks, 15 Major States, 1996 through 2005

Crop Year	Production	Dec 1	Jan 1	Feb 1	Mar 1	Apr 1	May 1	Jun 1 ^{1/}
<i>1,000 Cwt</i>								
1996	443,704	295,100	261,320	226,080	189,210	147,635	103,210	
1997	413,513	278,830	246,550	212,562	175,870	134,190	92,840	
1998	423,170	280,910	246,230	209,640	173,650	131,220	87,895	50,270
1999	420,567	275,100	239,910	207,150	169,620	128,410	86,915	47,220
2000	458,827	310,300	275,270	234,260	197,670	153,520	109,160	61,270
2001	387,033	258,750	224,680	192,090	158,590	119,950	81,200	42,990
2002	407,085	264,485	231,490	199,020	165,210	125,770	83,040	45,880
2003	403,181	267,900	233,590	200,230	166,280	126,110	85,000	46,020
2004	403,587	271,100	236,700	203,490	168,020	128,900	88,550	51,700
2005 ^{2/}	372,581	251,800	218,900	187,600	153,700	113,900		

^{1/} Data not available prior to 1998.

^{2/} 13 major States for the 2005 crop.