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News Release

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NEW YORK APPLE PRODUCTION UP AND GRAPE PRODUCTION DOWN

Total apple production in New York is forecast at 1.27 billion pounds based on conditions as of August 1, according to Stephen Ropel, Director of the USDA'S National Agricultural Statistics Service, New York Field Office. This is 2 percent above the 1.25 billion pounds produced last year. Across the state, growers were experiencing a better growing season than last year. However, above average rain and spotty hail have impacted some growers.

In the Lake Ontario fruit region, it has been a very wet year. Growers are hoping for some sunshine. The apples are sizing nicely. A few spotty reports of hail resulted in some damage, but it was not widespread. Orleans and Niagara Counties were hit with frost this spring that damaged a portion of the crop. In the Hudson Valley fruit region, growers reported excessive rain. Many of the storms also contained hail. Those that escaped the hail storms expect a good crop that is sizing nicely. Growers in the Lake Champlain fruit region also experienced frost, hail, and too much rain.

The first U.S. apple production forecast for the 2009 crop year is 10.1 billion pounds, 4 percent above the 2008 crop.

Grape production in New York is expected to total 140 thousand tons, according to growers' reports. This represents a 19 percent decrease from a year ago. The Chautauqua-Lake Erie grape belt experienced a hard frost on May 18-19. Freezing temperatures killed primary buds and caused leaf damage. Secondary buds have not progressed as well as initially thought. Cool temperatures and rainy conditions have slowed the progress of the remaining grapes and contributed to disease, especially mildew. Growers in the Finger Lakes region escaped frost, but are dealing with a very wet and cool year. This is delaying ripening and causing some disease problems. Long Island growers experienced very wet and cool conditions. This has led to a poor fruit set and some disease problems. Sunlight and warmer temperatures are needed.

U.S. grape production is forecast at 7.03 million tons, down 4 percent from 2008. California leads the U.S. in grape production with 89 percent of the total. Washington and New York are the next largest producing States, with 6 percent and 2 percent, respectively. California's all grape forecast, at 6.25 million tons, is unchanged from the July forecast. Washington growers expect to harvest 395,000 tons, up 13 percent from a year ago.

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