



# PRESS RELEASE

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United States Department of Agriculture • Washington, DC 20250  
Washington Field Office • Olympia, WA 98507  
Ag Statistics Hotline: 1-800-727-9540 • [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov)



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Contact: David Knopf (360)902-1940  
[nass-wa@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass-wa@nass.usda.gov)

## **U.S. PEACH PRODUCTION DOWN 3 PERCENT FROM 2007 APRICOTS DOWN 2 PERCENT FROM LAST YEAR**

OLYMPIA, WA, July 11, 2008--**Peaches:** The U.S. peach production forecast is 1.10 million tons, down 3 percent from 2007 but 9 percent above the 2006 crop. Nineteen of the 28 Freestone peach estimating States expect increases in production from last year, while eight States decreased their production from the previous season, and one State showed no change. Freestone production, at 717,150 tons, is up 15 percent from last season.

In Washington and Oregon, a late, cold spring lowered production expectations. Washington's production is expected to decrease 8 percent from a year ago, while Oregon producers are expecting a 27 percent decline.

The California Clingstone crop is forecast at 380,000 tons, equal to the June 1 forecast but 24 percent below the 2007 crop. California experienced an adequate number of chilling hours, thus benefitting the Clingstone crop. Weather during the bloom period was also favorable; however, unusually cold temperatures on April 19 and 20 resulted in significant frost damage. The largest impact was reported in the northern growing areas with some growers reporting 100 percent damage. There were also a large number of growers reporting losses in the Modesto area. However, fruit in the southern growing areas was not affected. The 2008 peach harvest began in Kingsburg on June 18, four days later than last year. Quality was reported to be very good.

The California Freestone crop is forecast at 430,000 tons, equal to the June 1 forecast but 4 percent below the 2007 crop. Weather during the bloom period was very accommodating, although cooler spring temperatures slowed maturity. The crop was reported to be of excellent quality, with good sizes. Harvest continued during June with July Flame, Sierra Rich, Ice Princess, Rich Lady, and Galaxy varieties being picked.

**Apricots:** The final forecast for the 2008 apricot crop is 86,840 tons, down 2 percent from the 2007 crop but up 95 percent from the 2006 crop. California's 2008 apricot production, which represents 94 percent of the total 2008 U.S. apricot production, is projected to be 82,000 tons, down 6 percent from the June forecast but up 1 percent from 2007. Growers experienced near perfect weather during the bloom period. Frost damage in late April ruined some orchards, however, most were spared. Harvest began in mid-May and continued into early July. Fruit was expected to be high quality but small in size. Washington's 2008 apricot production is forecast at 4,500 tons, down 38 percent from 2007 and 13 percent below 2006. Devastating April frosts and poor pollination resulted in heavy crop losses for many producers. The 2008 production for Utah is 340 tons, up 31 percent from 2007 and up 21 percent from 2006. While frost from a mid-April freeze damaged trees in the State, most of the orchards received optimal weather during growth.

To access the entire release, including the complete narrative and tables, point to:

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