



# California Farm News

Cooperating with the California Department of Food and Agriculture

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## CALIFORNIA CROP PRODUCTION REPORT

**SACRAMENTO** -- The USDA-NASS, California Field Office today released the crop production forecast for April. The latest survey, conducted during the last week of March and the first week of April, included the following commodities:

**Navel Oranges** -- The 2009-10 Navel orange forecast is 84.0 million cartons, a 5 percent increase from January, and up 22 percent from last season. Average fruit set per tree is below average, but significantly improved over last year's record low. Average fruit size is normal, and quality has consistently been excellent. Freezing temperatures in December do not appear to have impacted the crop. Movement continued to increase, as fresh utilization remained at high levels. Harvest is expected to continue through June.

**Valencia Oranges** -- The 2009-10 Valencia orange forecast is 34.0 million cartons, unchanged from March. The crop is expected to be up 42 percent from last season. Harvest began on schedule during March. Fruit quality was good and fruit set per tree increased significantly from last year. Average fruit size did not stand apart from previous year sizes. Mild spring and summer weather in 2009, as well as increased rains during the winter months, have led to good growing conditions.

**Grapefruit** -- The 2009-10 California grapefruit forecast is 8.40 million cartons, unchanged from the January forecast, and down 13 percent from last season's crop. Harvest slowed in late January as storm systems moved through the desert region and Central Valley, but picked back up again in February and March. Desert Rio Red harvest continued with good blush and excellent interior color. Pummelo movement increased in preparation for the Chinese New Year. Desert Rio Reds were moved from the Desert Region in late March.

**Lemons** -- The 2009-10 lemon forecast is 40.0 million cartons, unchanged from the January forecast, but down 5 percent from last season. Harvest continued in the Central Valley as well as beginning in the coastal region, as the desert region harvest was completed. Freezing temperatures in December have not appeared to significantly affect the lemon crop.

**Tangerines** -- The 2009-10 tangerine forecast is 18.2 million cartons, up 11 percent from the January forecast and up 36 percent from last season. As Minneola harvest is winding down in the Desert Region, harvest is expected to shift to the Central Region soon. Honey, Tahoe Gold, and Yosemite Gold mandarin harvest is nearly complete. Shasta Golds, Gold Nuggets, and Pixies are expected to begin harvest in early April.

**Strawberries** -- The 2010 strawberry production is expected to be 23.1 million cwt., down 7 percent from last year. Harvested acreage is estimated at 37,500, with a yield of 615 cwt. per acre. Heavy rains in February set the 2010 strawberry harvest back, but volume is recovering as temperatures rise. There were some reports of mold issues, but overall yields and quality are expected to be at least normal.

Production forecasts are released on a monthly basis and do not reflect final production estimates. The next production forecast will be issued May 11, 2010.

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