



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 June. The latest survey, which was conducted during the last week of May and the first week of June, includes the following commodities:

Apricots - The 2010 California apricot crop forecast is 60.0 thousand tons, up 1 percent from the 2009 crop. The California apricot harvest started in mid-May in the San Joaquin Valley. Cool temperatures in the spring slowed the maturity of the crop. The lower than normal temperatures and above average precipitation has not been an issue because of the lag in ripeness. Larger fruit is expected, due to the delayed harvest. At the current pace, Patterson variety harvest is expected to begin in mid-June.

Cherries - The 2010 California sweet cherry crop forecast is 90.0 thousand tons, up 15 percent from the 2009 crop. A strong cherry bloom was underway in March. Spring weather generated occasional rain and cool temperatures during the critical development of California's sweet cherry crop. The cool spring weather delayed the harvest by about a week. Rain in the later part of May caused damage to the cherry crop. Brooks and Bing cherry harvested continued.

Peaches - The 2010 California Freestone peach crop forecast is 365 thousand tons, unchanged from the May forecast, but up 5 percent from the 2009 crop. California experienced an adequate number of chilling hours, thus benefiting the Freestone crop. Bloom started out quick, but then was slowed due to cool spring temperatures. Lack of warm weather resulted in pollination problems. Hail damage hit various growing areas throughout the spring. Although the crop has experienced these problems, growers are still expecting a larger crop than last year's freeze damaged crop. Harvest continued during May with Spring Flame, Super Rich, May Saturn, and Spring Snow the major varieties harvested. The 2010 California Clingstone peach crop forecast is 410 thousand tons, up 3 percent from the May forecast and 13 percent below the 2009 crop. California experienced a more than adequate number of chilling hours for peach tree chilling requirements. Full bloom, on a statewide basis, was declared on March 9, six days later than the 2009 full bloom timing. The 2010 bloom was not as strong as last year's bloom and occurred over a longer period. Rain, and colder than normal spring temperatures, have slowed crop development. The Late and Extra Late varieties are reported to be lighter than normal. Cooler temperatures have allowed peaches to grow larger than normal for mid-May. The cool rainy weather has required growers to spray more to control diseases.

Pears, Bartlett - The 2010 California Bartlett pear crop forecast is 195 thousand tons, down 2 percent from the 2009 crop. The California Bartlett's began blooming in March. Some areas reported minor issues with the bloom due to rain. Cool spring temperatures were expected to delay the harvest by one to two weeks. Minimal pest pressure was reported.

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Dried Plums (Prunes) - The 2010 California prune crop forecast is 150 thousand dried tons, down 10 percent from the revised 166,000 tons in 2009, but 16 percent above the 2008 crop. Cooler weather and lighter fruit sets this year contributed to lower production compared with the previous year. Growers reported that they were not thinning as much or skipping thinning altogether. Pest pressures are a concern this year because of increased rain and cooler temperatures.

Wheat - California's 2010 Durum wheat harvested acreage is estimated at 105 thousand acres. The yield is forecast to be 3.15 tons per acre, resulting in total production of 331 thousand tons. Durum wheat is progressing normally this season, with no major quality or disease issues reported. Cooler weather did delay the harvest of Durum wheat by about 10 days. So far, the harvest is about half complete in the Imperial Valley. Good yields are being reported from harvested acres. California's wheat other than Durum harvested acreage is estimated at 380 thousand acres for 2010. The forecast yield is 2.10 tons per acre, bringing the total production to 798 thousand tons. The wheat growing season in California has been cool, with higher than average precipitation. Growers in southern California have started harvesting. The cool weather has put the harvest about a week behind normal. The southern Sacramento Valley is expected to begin harvest in coming weeks. Disease pressure is slightly higher this year, due in large part to wetter conditions.

Production forecasts are released on a monthly basis and do not reflect final production estimates. Late summer and fall harvests may change these estimates considerably. The next production forecast will be issued July 9, 2010.

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