



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 has released the crop production forecast for July. The latest survey, which was conducted during the last week of June and the first week of July, included the following commodities.

Grapes - The California all grape forecast is 6.70 million tons, down less than 1 percent from last year's crop. Specifically, the wine grape forecast is 3.40 million tons, down 6 percent from last season. The expected table grape production is 1.10 million tons, up 9 percent from 2010, while the raisin grape production is forecast at 2.20 million tons, an increase of 6 percent from last year's crop. The 2011 California grape crop is one to two weeks behind normal, due to the cool and wet spring. Bunch counts were reported to be down significantly from last year for wine grapes, but were up for Thompsons. Frost damage in the spring affected some areas of the state, but the extent of the damage is still unknown. Mildew and fungus have been a problem for many growers, due to the wet weather. European Grapevine Moth remains a concern, mainly because of quarantines.

Almonds - California's almond production is forecast at 1.95 billion meat pounds, up 19 percent from last year's crop. The forecast is based on 750 thousand bearing acres. After a good winter with excellent chilling hours, the 2011 almond crop bloom began. A cold spring lengthened the bloom, causing more overlap between varieties. Cold weather can affect bee activity, but the bees came through this year and the 2011 California almonds set an excellent crop. Freezing temperatures did affect the northern regions more heavily than the south, but frost damage was insignificant. Older plantings suffered some damage from the strong winds that accompanied the spring storms, but overall damage was minimal. Spotty damage from hail was also noted. Low disease and insect pressure have been reported and, with all the precipitation California has seen this winter, lack of water for irrigation is not the problem it was a few years ago. Normal levels of shed have been reported. The crop in general is said to be good with heavy sets noted on several varieties.

Peaches - The 2011 California Freestone peach crop forecast is 385 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, and unchanged from the 2010 crop. California experienced an adequate number of chilling hours, thus benefiting the Freestone crop. Weather during the bloom period was very accommodating, resulting in a good set. Growers are expecting to have to thin more this year due to the good set. There have been some reports of hail damage on the early varieties, but overall the crop is looking good. The early variety peach harvest began during May. Harvest continued during June with the major varieties harvested, including Brittney Lane, Crimson Lady, Ivory Princess, and Snow Brite. The 2011 California Clingstone peach crop forecast is 430 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, and less than 1 percent below the 2010 crop. The 2011 Clingstone Peach crop development has been slowed due to spring rains and cooler than normal April temperatures. This year's statewide full bloom date was three days later than last year. The Extra Early and Early varieties are reported to have a heavy set, while the Late and Extra Late varieties are reported to have an average set.

Apricots - California's apricot production is forecast at 55.0 thousand tons, unchanged from the June forecast, but down 7 percent from the 2010 crop. The California apricot harvest continued throughout the Central and San Joaquin Valleys in July. The 2011 apricot harvest is expected to conclude in late July.

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Oranges - The 2010-2011 California Navel orange forecast is 96.0 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, and up 13 percent from last season. The navel orange harvest reached its end as final picking was completed in early July. While poor quality was an issue for regular varieties throughout the season, late navel varieties have had excellent quality. The 2010-11 season is expected to be a record navel crop for California. The Valencia orange forecast is 26.0 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, and down 13 percent from last season's crop. The California Valencia orange harvest continued to pick up as the domestic fresh market shifted from navels to Valencias. There were good supplies of smaller sized fruit and cool weather improved quality.

Lemons - The 2010-2011 California lemon forecast is 42.0 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, and unchanged from last season. The California lemon harvest was completed in the San Joaquin Valley as picking along the southern coastal region was ongoing. Fruit quality remained good as lemons preserved well in both groves and storage.

Grapefruit - The 2010-2011 California grapefruit forecast is 7.00 million cartons, unchanged from the April forecast, and down 22 percent from last season's crop. Harvest for the 2010-2011 grapefruit crop came to an end around the first of May. California growers were able to produce a good crop this season, due to the longer period of cool/wet weather.

Tangerines -- The 2010-11 tangerine forecast is 19.8 million cartons, up 3 percent from the April forecast, and unchanged from last season. Tangerine harvest for the 2010-2011 crop year was completed in late May. California growers were able to produce a good crop this season, due to the longer period of cool wet weather.

Other Crops - Barley production is forecast at 108 thousand tons, up 3 percent from the previous year. Oat production is forecast to be 27.2 thousand tons, 28 percent below 2010. Wheat other than Durum production is expected to be 1.01 million tons, up 17 percent from 2010. Durum wheat production is forecast at 378 thousand tons, 9 percent above 2010.

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 August 11, 2011.

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