



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 May. The latest survey, conducted during the last week of April and the first week of May, included the following commodities:

Almonds – The initial subjective forecast for the 2012 California almond production is 2.00 billion pounds. This is 1 percent below last year's production of 2.03 billion pounds. Estimated bearing acreage for 2012 is 780 thousand. This forecast is based on a telephone survey conducted April 20 - 30 from a sample of almond growers. Of the 458 growers sampled, 283 reported. Acreage from these reports accounted for 27 percent of the total bearing acreage.

The 2012 almond crop is shaping up nicely. February was warm and dry across the State, creating favorable bloom conditions for almond trees. While the bloom period was shorter than last year, the excellent weather made up for the shorter overlap and bloom load was high. Chilling hours were plentiful. An early March frost resulted in some spotty damage in southern San Joaquin Valley and an early April hailstorm affected orchards in Merced County. Weather in the Sacramento Valley has been near ideal. A heavier than normal drop was reported in the San Joaquin Valley. Low disease and insect pressure were reported.

Wheat - The 2012 Winter wheat production forecast is 840 thousand tons, down 22 percent from last year. Harvested acres are estimated at 350 thousand, resulting in a yield of 2.4 tons per acre. The wheat growing season in California began with a lack of significant precipitation. This held true until March, when much needed precipitation was received. To compensate, some growers began their irrigation schedules earlier than usual. Dryland wheat was impacted the most by the lack of moisture, with stunting and maturation problems reported. The 2012 Durum wheat production forecast is 449 thousand tons, up 19 percent from 2011. Harvested acres are estimated at 130 thousand, with a yield of 3.45 tons per acre. Good quality and few disease issues were reported for California's 2012 Durum wheat crop. The dry beginning to the year had little impact on the Durum wheat crop since irrigation is the norm. The early Durum wheat harvest had begun, with harvest expected to begin in earnest by mid-May and run through mid-June.

Production forecasts are released on a monthly basis and do not reflect final production estimates. The next production forecast will be issued June 12, 2012.

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