

2006 California Prune (Dried Plum) Post-Harvest Estimate

Released: September 29, 2006
12:00 p.m. PDT



USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service,
California Field Office

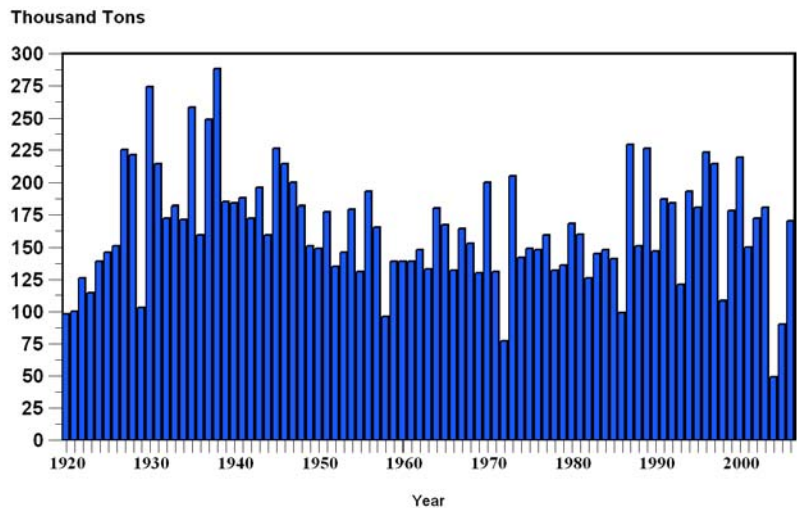
The 2006 California prune (dried plum) crop is forecast to be 170 thousand tons (dried basis), up 89 percent from the 90 thousand tons produced in 2005. Total 2006 bearing acreage is estimated at 67,000. The French prune variety accounts for 97 percent of all prune acreage grown in California. The production forecast is based on a survey of prune growers conducted by the USDA, NASS, California Field Office from August 21-September 13, 2006.

The survey used a random sampling design based on total prune acreage for each operator. The sample is designed to provide a State estimate of production for all growers.

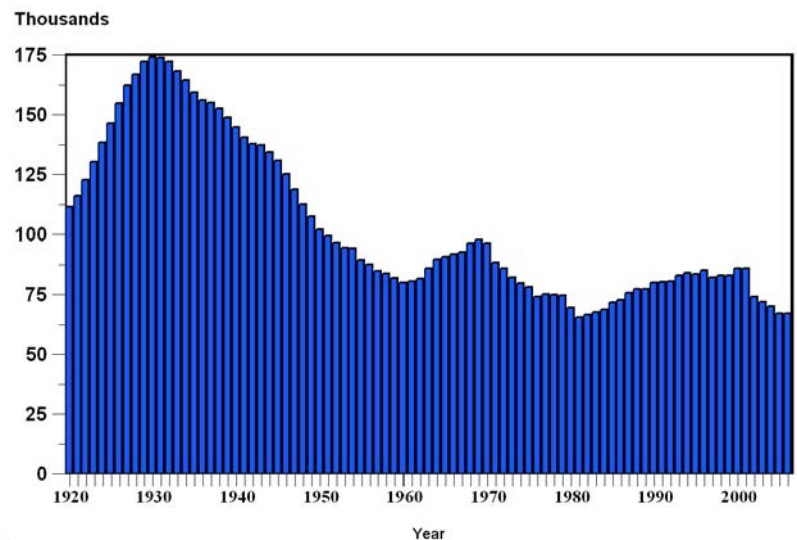
Questionnaires were mailed to growers on August 21, 2006 with return requested by September 13. Non-respondents were telephoned. Responses were received from 204 growers representing 50 percent of the total bearing acreage.

The 2006 prune crop experienced an unseasonably rainy period during bloom. A small set occurred statewide, as several growers reported loss of fruit due to the rainy weather conditions that hampered bee pollination activities. At harvest, many growers indicated that the fruit was reluctant to fall off the tree during shaking operations. Due to labor shortages, some fruit was being left on the trees. Despite the weather-related challenges, the crop rebounded significantly from expectations earlier this season, as well as from the small 2005 and 2004 crops. Production during those years was set back by excessive heat during the March bloom.

California Prune Production - 1920-2006 (Dried Basis)



California Prune Bearing Acres - 1920-2006



California Prune (Dried Plum) Acreage, Production, and Value, 1992-2006

Year	Bearing	Non-Bearing	Production	Yield Per Acre	Price Per Ton	Value of Production
	<i>Acres</i>		<i>Tons (Dried Basis)</i>		<i>Dollars</i>	<i>1,000 Dollars</i>
1992	80,400	8,000	184,000	2.29	1,030.00	189,520
1993	83,000	11,000	121,000	1.46	1,120.00	135,520
1994	84,000	18,800	193,000	2.30	1,090.00	210,370
1995	83,500	23,200	181,000	2.17	1,040.00	188,240
1996	85,000	23,700	223,000	2.62	839.00	187,097
1997	82,000	21,300	214,000	2.61	883.00	181,015
1998	83,000	26,000	108,000	1.30	764.00	78,692
1999	83,000	22,000	178,000	2.14	861.00	142,065
2000	86,000	15,000	219,000	2.55	770.00	154,770
2001	86,000	11,000	150,000	1.74	726.00	98,010
2002	74,000	9,000	172,000	2.32	810.00	132,030
2003	72,000	8,000	181,000	2.51	772.00	129,696
2004	70,000	N/A	49,000	0.70	1,500.00	72,000
2005	67,000	7,500	90,000	1.34	1,500.00	130,500
2006 <i>a/</i>	67,000	N/A	170,000	2.54	N/A	N/A

a/ Forecast

Source: USDA, NASS, California Field Office

VIC TOLOMEO
Director

JACK RUTZ -- SARAH HOFFMAN
Deputy Directors

DOUG FLOHR -- JACKIE BROWN
Estimates Group Statisticians

Comments or questions should be directed to:
USDA, NASS, California Field Office
P.O. Box 1258
Sacramento, CA 95812
(916) 498-5161
(916) 498-5186 (Fax)

USDA, NASS, California Field Office publications are available free-of-charge on the Internet at:
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/ca>