

1997-98 LIMES 600,000 BUSHELS

Florida's 1997-98 lime crop, which began harvest April 1, is forecast at 600,000 55-pound bushels (375,000 88-pound boxes). This is 17 percent more than the 512,000 bushels (320,000 boxes) harvested in the just completed 1996-97 season. Production is increasing from the low of 320,000 bushels produced in the 1993-94 season after hurricane Andrew in August 1992.

Trees in Dade County are suffering from the affects of cold weather on January 19, 1997, and the lack of rainfall all winter. Bloom has been variable through the winter months.

Increasing production will come from new trees planted since 1992. Bearing acreage is estimated at 2,700, up from last season's revised 2,100 acres.

FLORIDA LIMES: Utilization in bushels, 1987-88 through 1996-97 season, and total forecast for 1997-98 season

Season	Fresh use			Sold for processing	Total production
	Certified shipments	Local sales	Total fresh		
	Bushels				
1987-88	1,352,800	23,200	1,376,000	704,000	2,080,000
1988-89	1,492,900	27,100	1,520,000	480,000	2,000,000
1989-90	1,590,900	25,100	1,616,000	1,024,000	2,640,000
1990-91	1,459,700	28,300	1,488,000	832,000	2,320,000
1991-92	1,680,800	31,200	1,712,000	848,000	2,560,000
1992-93	1,146,100	21,900	1,168,000	432,000	1,600,000
1993-94	228,500	11,500	240,000	80,000	320,000
1994-95	289,300	14,700	304,000	64,000	368,000
1995-96	371,400	12,600	384,000	96,000	480,000
1996-97	398,300	9,700	408,000	104,000	512,000

FORECAST

1997-98	--	--	--	--	600,000
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After five days return to
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 National Agricultural Statistics Service
 1222 Woodward Street, Orlando, Florida 32803

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CITRUS

**APRIL FORECAST
 MATURITY TEST RESULTS AND FRUIT SIZE
 LIME UTILIZATION AND 1997-98 FORECAST**

**FLORIDA
 AGRICULTURE**



April 11, 1997

TOTAL ORANGES AT 221.2 MILLION BOXES

The 1996-97 Florida all orange forecast, released today by the USDA Agricultural Statistics Board, is 221.2 million boxes. This is 0.8 million boxes less than last month. The reduction is entirely in the early and midseason portion (including Navels). The early-mid final estimate is 134.2 million boxes. The late type (Valencia) forecast is maintained at 87.0 million boxes.

The total forecast is less than one percent above the 220.0 million box forecast made in October 1996. If realized, the total will be a record high crop for Florida, surpassing the 206.7 million boxes in 1979-80 by seven percent and last season's 203.2 million boxes by almost nine percent.

EARLY AND MIDSEASONS FINAL AT 134.2 MILLION BOXES

The estimate of the 1996-97 early and midseason orange crop (including Navels and a pre-season allocation of 1.0 million boxes for gift and unrecorded uses) is 134.2 million boxes, three percent more than projected in October. This is 0.8 million boxes less than last months' forecast of 135.0 million boxes. Navels constitute 6.4 million boxes of the estimate, down slightly from the 6.5 million boxes projected in October.

This crop is a record high, exceeding last season by almost 11 percent. The crop this season was characterized by record low fruit droppage and an excellent fruit size/weight relationship.

Citrus production, April 1, 1997
 forecasts by varieties and states, with comparisons

Crop and State	Production		Forecast	
	1994-95	1995-96	Mar 11, 1997	Apr 11, 1997
Early, Midseason, and Navel Oranges:	--- 1,000 boxes ---			
FLORIDA	119,700	121,200	135,000	134,200
California	35,000	38,000	39,000	43,000
Texas	950	830	1,300	1,300
Arizona	400	700	550	500
Total Above Varieties	156,050	160,730	175,850	179,000
Valencias:				
FLORIDA	85,800	82,000	87,000	87,000
California	21,000	28,000	26,000	28,000
Texas	105	110	150	120
Arizona	650	950	850	800
Total Valencias	107,555	111,060	114,000	115,920
All Oranges:				
FLORIDA	205,500	203,200	222,000	221,200
California	56,000	66,000	65,000	71,000
Texas	1,055	940	1,450	1,420
Arizona	1,050	1,650	1,400	1,300
Total All Oranges	263,605	271,790	289,850	294,920

FORECAST DATES 1996-97 SEASON

May 12, 1997 June 12, 1997
 July 11, 1997

VALENCIAS STAY AT 87.0 MILLION BOXES

The late type (Valencia) orange forecast is continued at 87.0 million boxes. The March fruit size survey indicated that the average size, converted to fruit per 90 pound box, required only three fruit more than projected in October. The accumulated loss from droppage was only a rounded one percent more than the October projection.

The row count survey (survey rows harvested vs. utilization to date) of April 1, 1997, indicated over 24 percent harvest. Although this survey is not considered a primary indicator until close to 50 percent harvest, the computation is almost identical with the forecast.

There continues to be no correlation of volume loss between this season and any season when freezing weather occurred in January.

FCOJ YIELD INCREASED TO 1.57

The yield projection for all fruit going into FCOJ is increased from 1.54 to 1.57 gallons per box at 42.0 degrees Brix concentrate. The average yield through March 29, 1997, on report number 26 from the Florida Citrus Processors is 1.531947 utilizing a little over 110 million boxes of all oranges.

Projected yield for the late (Valencia) portion of the crop is increased from 1.60 to 1.66 gallons per box. Seasonal yield to date for the late oranges is currently 1.644954 gallons per box. The current recovery rates are running as high as 105 percent per week. The early and midseason portion is final at 1.52360 gallons per box, exceeded only by the 1992-93 record season when the early-mid yield was 1.52480 gallons.

1997-98 LIMES 600,000 BUSHELS

The 1997-98 lime crop is forecast at 600,000 bushels (375,000 88-lb. boxes). The just completed 1996-97 season total estimate of utilization is 512,000 bushels (320,000 boxes). See page 4 for additional information.

SEEDLESS GRAPEFRUIT STAY 58.0 MILLION BOXES

The all seedless grapefruit forecast is maintained at 58.0 million boxes. The varietal breakdown is unchanged. White seedless remain at 26.5 million boxes and the colored varieties at 31.5 million boxes.

The March fruit size and loss surveys on the remaining portion of the crops showed no appreciable changes in the expansions. Fruit size still averages below the historical mean and much smaller than last season. Loss from droppage continues to be less than the series mean.

The April 1 Row Count survey, conducted March 31 and April 1, 1997, showed the smallest percent of rows harvested for both the white and colored seedless grapefruit in the past 13 non-freeze seasons. The analyses, weighted by the difference in productivity by age groups and areas of the State, indicate the forecast level.

Utilization to April 1, including a season-to-date allocation for gift and unrecorded use, is lagging behind last season to the same date by 2.5 million boxes for whites but only 1.2 million boxes for colored. Recent weekly harvest has been averaging about 2.0 million boxes of whites and slightly over 1.0 million boxes of colored.

SEEDY GRAPEFRUIT 1.0 MILLION BOXES

The seedy (Duncan) grapefruit forecast of 1.0 million boxes is continued. The Row Count survey showed about 40 percent of the crop remaining. The final certifications of this entirely processed crop is dependent on processing plant records. Last season, slightly over 1.0 million boxes were certified.

ALL TANGERINES STAY 6.3 MILLION BOXES

The all tangerine forecast remains 6.3 million boxes. The early portion (Robinson, Fallglo, Dancy, and Sunburst) is final at 4.6 million boxes, 4.5 percent above the October forecast of 4.4 million boxes. Sunburst, the major variety, accounted for over three-quarters of the early tangerine fresh utilization, with some fruit going direct to processing plants.

The Honey tangerine forecast is maintained at 1.7 million boxes. The April 1 Row Count indicated that about 75 percent of the crop had been harvested with most of the remaining volume in the Indian River District. Utilization as of April 1 is estimated at 1.5 million boxes.

TEMPLES 2.5 MILLION BOXES

The Temple forecast is held at 2.5 million boxes. The Row Count survey indicated about 92 percent of the rows harvested with almost 2.38 million boxes recorded. Last season only 2.15 million boxes were recorded. Both east and west coasts have rows remaining to be harvested.

TANGELOS 3.95 MILLION BOXES

The 1996-97 tangelo crop is final at 3.95 million boxes, including a 0.2 million box allocation for unrecorded gift and other use fruit. This is less than four percent above the October forecast of 3.8 million boxes. Although the route survey indicated a few rows remaining, use in the past month had only been about 10,000 boxes. This is the largest recorded tangelo crop since the 1987-88 season, when 4.2 million boxes were harvested. Last season only 2.45 million boxes were recorded.

K-EARLY 150,000 BOXES

The K-Early Citrus Fruit estimate of recorded use is 150,000 boxes, slightly less than last season.

Unadjusted maturity tests: Average of regular bloom fruit from sample groves, 1995-96 and 1996-97 seasons

Fruit type (No. groves) test date	Acid		Solids (Brix)		Ratio		Unfinished juice per box		Solids per box	
	1995-96	1996-97	1995-96	1996-97	1995-96	1996-97	1995-96	1996-97	1995-96	1996-97
	Percent		Percent				Pounds		Pounds	
Juice and solids per box are unadjusted and not comparable to plant test results.										
ORANGES:										
Late (127-123)										
Oct 1	2.42	2.43	8.65	8.97	3.62	3.73	47.77	46.08	4.13	4.13
Nov 1	1.81	2.02	8.71	9.35	4.92	4.69	52.73	49.55	4.60	4.63
Dec 1	1.59	1.66	9.55	10.32	6.10	6.28	53.44	53.16	5.11	5.49
Jan 1	1.40	1.45	10.47	11.13	7.58	7.75	54.33	53.88	5.69	6.00
Feb 1	1.23	1.31	11.39	11.92	9.39	9.27	54.82	54.15	6.25	6.46
Mar 1	1.14	1.13	11.85	12.35	10.56	11.14	54.31	54.19	6.45	6.70
Apr 1	1.02	0.96	12.24	12.73	12.12	13.39	51.54	54.16	6.32	6.91

NOTICE: All samples were run through an FMC 091 machine using mechanical pressure only. This machine utilizes a .040 short strainer and standard 5/8-inch orifice tube. The beam settings are also identical to past tests and no restrictors are used.

Maturity test averages by areas, April 1, 1997

Fruit type	Groves sampled	Acid	Solids (Brix)	Ratio	Unfinished juice per box	Solids per box
	Number	Percent	Percent		Pounds	Pounds
ORANGES:						
Late						
Indian River Dist.	23	1.01	13.36	13.36	57.37	7.68
Other Areas	100	0.95	12.59	13.40	53.42	6.74

FRUIT SIZE COMPARISONS BY TYPES TO PREVIOUS SEASONS

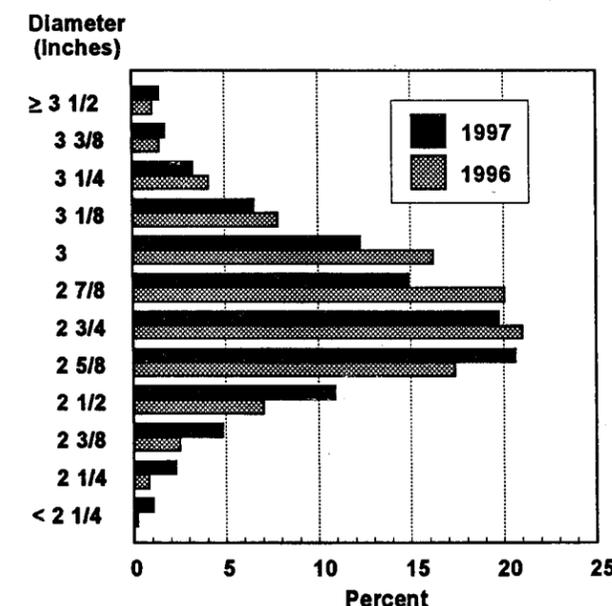
Size frequency distributions from the March size survey are shown in the table below. The distributions are by percent of fruit falling within the size range of each 4/5-bushel container. Fruit sizes were measured on trees in sample groves during the period March 17 through 28, 1997. Comparable sizes for 1995 and 1996 are also shown. These measurements are of fruit from spring bloom and exclude summer bloom in all seasons.

FLORIDA CITRUS: Size frequency distributions from March measurements

Type of fruit and size in 4/5-bushel containers	1995	1996	1997
	--- Percent ---		
Valencia oranges:			
64 and larger	11.1	10.0	8.6
80	29.4	31.1	24.3
100	38.8	39.6	36.5
125	16.9	15.7	22.3
163 and smaller	3.8	3.6	8.3

The chart to the right compares the relationship of the March 1997 Valencia orange fruit size measurements with those taken in March 1996. The diameter measurements shown are the minimum values of each eighth inch range except for the smallest values.

CHART: Valencia size frequency by diameter from March measurements.



Citrus production, April 1, 1997 forecasts by varieties and states, with comparisons

Crop and State	Production		Forecast	
	1994-95	1995-96	Mar 11, 1997	Apr 11, 1997
--- 1,000 boxes ---				
Grapefruit:				
FLORIDA-All	55,700	52,350	59,000	59,000
Seedless	54,400	51,300	58,000	58,000
White	25,700	23,200	26,500	26,500
Colored	28,700	28,100	31,500	31,500
Seedy (Other)	1,300	1,050	1,000	1,000
Texas	4,650	4,550	5,300	5,300
Arizona	1,400	1,200	1,000	1,000
California	9,300	8,100	9,000	9,200
Total Grapefruit	71,050	66,200	74,300	74,500
Lemons:				
California	20,000	21,000	22,000	22,000
Arizona	3,600	5,100	4,000	3,000
Total Lemons	23,600	26,100	26,000	25,000
Limes: Florida	230	300	300	(Final) 320
Temples: Florida	2,550	2,150	2,500	2,500
Tangelos: Florida	3,150	2,450	4,000	3,950
K-Early: Florida	120	160	150	150
Tangerines:				
FLORIDA-All	3,550	4,500	6,300	6,300
Early ¹	2,350	2,900	4,600	4,600
Honey	1,200	1,600	1,700	1,700
California	2,500	2,600	2,700	2,900
Arizona	650	1,000	750	650
Total Tangerines	6,700	8,100	9,750	9,850

¹ Robinson, Fallglo, Sunburst, and Dancy.