

1998-99 LIMES FORECAST AT 920,000 BUSHELS

Florida's 1998-99 lime crop, which began harvest April 1, is forecast at 920,000 55-pound bushels (575,000 88-pound boxes). This is 31 percent more than the 704,000 bushels (440,000 boxes) produced in the just completed 1997-98 season. Production has increased each season since the low of 320,000 bushels produced in the season following hurricane Andrew.

Trees planted in Dade County since the storm are producing good quantities of fruit. Bearing acreage statewide is estimated to be 2,700 acres, the same as last season but up from 1,900 acres following the storm in 1992. All of the newly planted acreage is in Dade County with other counties losing some acreage to cold weather in January 1997.

FLORIDA LIMES: Utilization in bushels, 1988-89 through 1997-98 season, and total forecast for 1998-99 season

Season	Fresh use			Sold for processing	Total production
	Certified shipments	Local sales	Total fresh		
	Bushels				
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
1997-98	510,400	17,600	528,000	176,000	704,000
FORECAST					
1998-99	--	--	--	--	920,000

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CITRUS

**APRIL FORECAST
 MATURITY TEST RESULTS AND FRUIT SIZE
 LIME UTILIZATION AND 1998-99 FORECAST**

FILE COPY

**FLORIDA
 AGRICULTURE**



April 9, 1998

TOTAL ORANGES NOW 248.0 MILLION BOXES

The 1997-98 Florida all orange forecast (excluding Temples), released today by the USDA Agricultural Statistics Board is 248.0 million boxes, 3.0 million less than last month. The reduction is entirely in the early and midseason portion of the crop. The early-mid final estimate is 140.0 million boxes. The late type (Valencia) forecast remains at 108.0 million boxes.

The all orange forecast is two percent below the 254.0 million box forecast made in October 1997. If realized, this crop will surpass last season's record high utilization of 226.2 million boxes by nearly 10 percent and the 1995-96 crop by 22 percent.

EARLY AND MIDSEASONS FINAL AT 140.0 MILLION BOXES

The estimate of the 1997-98 early and midseason orange crop (including Navels and a pre-season allocation for gift and unrecorded uses) is 140.0 million boxes, four percent less than projected in October. This is 3.0 million boxes less than last month's forecast of 143.0 million boxes. Navels constitute 6.3 million boxes of the estimate, down 16 percent from the 7.5 million boxes projected in October.

This crop is a record high, exceeding last season's record by four percent. The Navel portion is the second largest on record, within two percent of last season's record 6.4 million boxes.

Citrus production, April 1, 1998
 forecasts by varieties and states, with comparisons

Crop and State	Production		Forecast	
	1995-96	1996-97	Mar 12, 1998	Apr 9, 1998
Early, Midseason, and Navel Oranges:	--- 1,000 boxes ---			
FLORIDA	121,200	134,200	143,000	140,000
California	38,000	40,000	44,000	44,000
Texas	830	1,300	1,400	1,400
Arizona	700	400	450	450
Total Above Varieties	160,730	175,900	188,850	185,850
Valencias:				
FLORIDA	82,100	92,000	108,000	108,000
California	20,000	^{1/} 24,000	30,000	30,000
Texas	110	120	150	150
Arizona	950	600	550	550
Total Valencias	103,160	116,720	138,700	138,700
All Oranges:				
FLORIDA	203,300	226,200	251,000	248,000
California	58,000	64,000	74,000	74,000
Texas	940	1,420	1,550	1,550
Arizona	1,650	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total All Oranges	263,890	292,620	327,550	324,550

^{1/} Revised.

FORECAST DATES 1997-98 SEASON

May 12, 1998 June 12, 1998
 July 10, 1998

VALENCIAS STAY AT 108.0 MILLION BOXES

The late type (Valencia) orange forecast is continued at a record 108.0 million boxes. This harvest, if realized, is 17 percent above last season's record of 92.0 million boxes and over 31 percent greater than the 1995-96 crop.

The March final size and drop survey indicated that the average fruit size was slightly less than projected in October. The accumulated loss from droppage was virtually unchanged from the October projection. The row count survey of April 1 indicated almost 27 percent harvested. Although this survey indication (rows harvested vs. utilization to date) is not considered a prime indicator until near 50 percent harvest, the computation supports the forecast.

FCOJ REMAINS AT 1.56 GALLONS PER BOX

The estimated final yield for all fruit going into FCOJ is unchanged from last month at 1.56 gallons per box of 42.0 degrees Brix concentrate. In report No. 22 by the Florida Citrus Processors, the early and midseason portion of the crop was final at 1.492548 gallons per box. The yield for late season oranges has increased and is now projected at 1.67 gallons per box.

Some young tree Valencia oranges may have been included in the early portion of the FCOJ, possibly depressing that yield slightly. Valencias did not follow the historic pattern of a early season dip in the yield. Instead, weekly reports show the yield continuing to rise possibly reflecting the inclusion of more than normal very old, high yielding, midseason seedling oranges going into the late juice reports.

Report No. 26 from the Processors shows 116.3 million boxes used for all oranges, yielding 1.514888 gallons per box. Through report No. 4, the processors have used a record 16.7 million boxes of Valencias, yielding an average of 1.648279 gallons per box.

1998-99 LIMES 920,000 BUSHELS

The 1998-99 lime crop is forecast at 920,000 bushels (575,000 88-lb. boxes). The just completed 1997-98 season total estimate of utilization is 704,000 bushels (440,000 boxes). Page 4 contains additional information.

SEEDLESS GRAPEFRUIT CONTINUES AT 49.5 MILLION BOXES

The all seedless grapefruit forecast remains at 49.5 million boxes. White seedless is forecast at 21.0 million boxes and the colored varieties remain at 28.5 million boxes. Both fresh and processed utilization of the white variety is lagging behind last season to the same date. Weather and weak market conditions for export have contributed to reduced movement in the fresh area. High winds have also accelerated droppage in some of the older interior area white groves. Final recorded utilization of this variety will be dependent on the amount processors are willing to accept into inventory. Last season processors took 17.8 million boxes on a total white utilization of 23.5 million boxes, or over 75 percent of the crop.

The white forecast is now over 10 percent less than last season's crop. If realized, it will be the smallest crop recorded since the 1991-92 season and the third smallest in a twenty year series.

Colored seedless varieties are forecast at 28.5 million boxes, unchanged from last month. This forecast is nine percent less than the record crop utilized last season, but at the level of utilization in the 1994-95 and 1995-96 seasons. Estimated utilization of colored as of April 1, 1998, is about 1.3 million boxes ahead of last season to the same date.

Citrus production, April 1, 1998 forecasts by varieties and states, with comparisons

Crop and State	Production		Forecast	
	1995-96 ^{1/}	1996-97 ^{2/}	Mar 12, 1998	Apr 9, 1998
--- 1,000 boxes ---				
Grapefruit:				
FLORIDA-All	52,350	55,800	50,000	50,000
Seedless	51,300	54,900	49,500	49,500
White	23,200	23,500	21,000	21,000
Colored	28,100	31,400	28,500	28,500
Seedy (Other)	1,050	900	500	500
Texas	4,550	5,300	4,600	4,600
Arizona	1,200	900	800	800
California	8,100	8,200	9,000	9,000
Total Grapefruit	66,200	70,200	64,400	64,400
Lemons:				
California	21,000	20,000	22,000	22,000
Arizona	5,100	2,600	2,600	2,600
Total Lemons	26,100	22,600	24,600	24,600
Limes: Florida	300	320	375	(Final) 440
Temples: Florida	2,150	2,400	2,300	2,300
Tangelos: Florida	2,450	3,950	2,850	2,850
K-Early: Florida	160	150	40	40
Tangerines:				
FLORIDA-All	4,500	6,300	5,000	5,100
Early ^{3/}	2,900	4,500	3,200	3,200
Honey	1,600	1,800	1,800	1,900
California	2,600	2,600	2,400	2,400
Arizona	1,000	550	500	500
Total Tangerines	8,100	9,450	7,900	8,000

^{1/} Excludes 3.0 million boxes of economic abandonment of Florida colored seedless varieties. ^{2/} Excludes 6.0 million boxes of economic abandonment in Florida: 3.0 million white seedless and 3.0 million colored varieties. ^{3/} Robinson, Fallglo, Sunburst, and Dancy.

These forecasts are based on objective fruit count and measurement surveys in relation to the harvest patterns and utilization of the past six seasons. All citrus forecasts project certified utilization and include a preseason allocation of less than two percent for unrecorded usage. Certifications include only fruit actually shipped in fresh pack or recorded at a processing plant.

SEEDY GRAPEFRUIT FORECAST HELD

The seedy (Duncan) grapefruit forecast is continued at 500,000 boxes. As of April 1, 1998, almost 500,000 boxes are estimated to have been utilized. Loss from droppage accelerated last month, possibly the result of wind and rain. All seedy grapefruit is certified in processed form and the total amount depends on load ticket classification.

**EARLY TANGERINES FINAL AT 3.2 MILLION BOXES
HONEY TANGERINES INCREASED**

The early portion of the tangerine forecast (Robinson, Fallglo, Sunburst, and Dancy) is final at 3.2 million boxes. This is almost 30 percent less than was utilized last season.

The Honey tangerine (late portion) is increased to 1.9 million boxes. Estimated utilization is over 200,000 boxes ahead of last season, when 1.8 million boxes were recorded, reflecting slightly advanced maturity. The row count survey on March 30-31 showed over 20 percent of the rows remain to be harvested.

TEMPLES HELD AT 2.3 MILLION BOXES

The Temple forecast is continued at 2.3 million boxes which is 100,000 boxes less than utilized last season. Although harvest of this crop started earlier than last season, estimated certifications as of April 1, 1998, are less than last season's level to the same date. The row count survey supports this forecast.

TANGELOS FINAL

The estimate of tangelo utilization is final at 2.85 million boxes. Weekly utilizations have declined steadily. The route survey indicated some rows still remaining, mostly in small blocks or as pollinators. Last season's recorded crop of 3.95 million boxes was the largest since 1987-88.

K-EARLY'S FINAL AT 40,000 BOXES

Original survey indications were for 130,000 boxes but only 40,000 boxes have been certified. There has been very limited demand for this fruit and virtually none for processing.

Unadjusted maturity tests: Average of regular bloom fruit from sample groves, 1996-97 and 1997-98 seasons

Fruit type (No. groves) test date	Acid		Solids (Brix)		Ratio		Unfinished juice per box		Solids per box	
	1996-97	1997-98	1996-97	1997-98	1996-97	1997-98	1996-97	1997-98	1996-97	1997-98
	Percent		Percent				Pounds		Pounds	
Juice and solids per box are unadjusted and not comparable to plant test results.										
ORANGES:										
Late (123-109)										
Sep 1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Oct 1	2.43	2.15	8.97	8.87	3.73	4.20	46.08	47.73	4.13	4.24
Nov 1	2.02	1.85	9.35	9.44	4.69	5.20	49.55	50.68	4.63	4.79
Dec 1	1.66	1.49	10.32	10.22	6.28	7.01	53.16	52.95	5.49	5.42
Jan 1	1.45	1.27	11.13	11.03	7.75	8.80	53.88	53.90	6.00	5.95
Feb 1	1.31	1.13	11.92	11.84	9.27	10.60	54.15	55.00	6.46	6.51
Mar 1	1.13	1.06	12.35	12.64	11.14	12.12	54.19	54.15	6.70	6.85
Apr 1	0.96	0.99	12.73	12.86	13.39	13.24	54.16	53.86	6.91	6.94

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, 1998

Fruit type	Groves sampled	Acid	Solids (Brix)	Ratio	Unfinished juice per box	Solids per box
ORANGES:						
Late						
Indian River Dist.	20	1.07	13.32	12.49	55.17	7.35
Other Areas	89	0.97	12.76	13.41	53.56	6.84

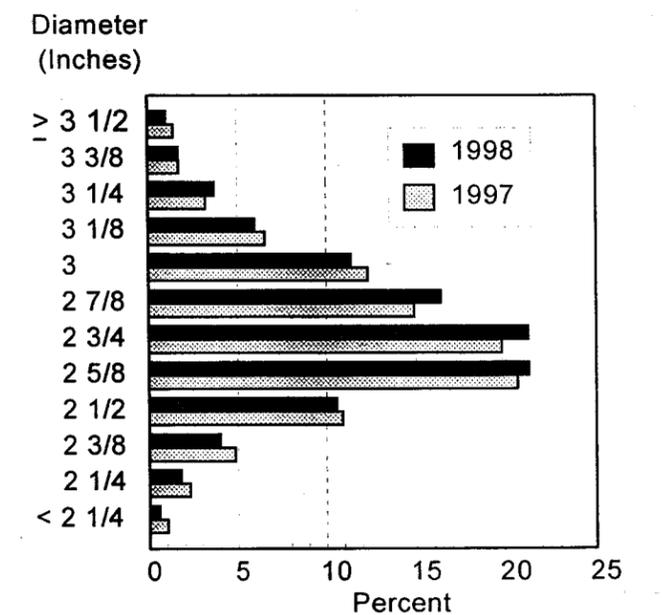
FRUIT SIZE COMPARISONS BY TYPES TO PREVIOUS SEASONS

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 27, 1998. Comparable sizes for 1996 and 1997 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	1996	1997	1998
--- Percent ---			
Valencia oranges:			
64 and larger	10.0	8.6	8.9
80	31.1	24.3	23.3
100	39.6	36.5	39.1
125	15.7	22.3	22.3
163 and smaller	3.6	8.3	6.4

CHART: Valencia size frequency by diameter from March measurements.



The chart to the right compares the relationship of the March 1998 Valencia orange fruit size measurements with those taken in March 1997. The diameter measurements shown are the minimum values of each eighth inch range except for the smallest values.