

Maine Wild Blueberries



NEW ENGLAND
Agricultural
Statistics



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January 26, 2007

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A special "THANK YOU" goes to all the Maine Wild Blueberry growers and processors who helped us by completing the wild blueberry surveys during 2006.

2006 WILD BLUEBERRY PRODUCTION ABOVE AVERAGE, RECORD VALUE EXPECTED

MAINE WILD BLUEBERRY CROP: Maine's 2006 wild blueberry crop totaled 74.6 million pounds, an increase of 24 percent above 2005 output, and 62 percent higher than 2004 production. The price for processing berries in 2006 is expected to average 80 cents per pound, an increase of 15 cents from 2005. If realized, this would place the 2006 processing value at a record \$59.4 million, compared with \$38.9 million the previous year.

Although snow cover was below normal across much of Maine in the winter of 2006, mild temperatures prevented significant winter injury to wild blueberry fields. The majority of growers who completed July crop forecast survey indicated this year's bloom was above average. However, heavy rain showers in May and June impeded pollination and probably reduced the potential size of this year's crop. Timely rain showers in July helped increase berry size. A number of growers reported finding mummyberry disease in their fields, and there were a few reports of hail storm damage in some fields during July.

Improved marketing strategies touting the fruit's high anti-oxidant levels helped increase demand for wild blueberries over the last

few years; however, two below average crop years nearly depleted Maine's wild blueberry supply in storage. Growers reported receiving record high price incentives and volume bonuses to fill the increasing demand.

NORTH AMERICAN WILD BLUEBERRY CROP: According to David Yarborough, Extension Blueberry Specialist, "The wild blueberry crop in Canada was 130 million pounds; which was above the previous five year average of 108 million pounds. Quebec had its largest crop ever at 69.1 million pounds, well above the five year average of 43 million pounds. Good pollination weather an adequate supply of bees and ample summer rainfall all contributed to the bumper crop. In contrast, the crop in Nova Scotia was well below average at 30.6 million pounds compared to the five year average of 39 million pounds. Cold and wet weather during pollination reduced the crop set and increased losses from monilinia and botrytis disease. The crop in New Brunswick was 20.4 million pounds and in Prince Edward Island was 8.4 million pounds which are both slightly above average. Newfoundland had an average crop of 1 million pounds."

MAINE WILD BLUEBERRIES: Production and Value, 1997 – 2006

Year	Total Production	All Price Per Pound ^{1/}	Total Value of Production ^{1/}	Fresh Blueberries ^{2/}			Blueberries for Processing		
				Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production	Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production
	1,000 Lbs	Cents	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Lbs	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Lbs	Cents	1,000 Dollars
1997	73,816	43	31,622	276	—	—	73,540	43	31,622
1998	62,981	46	29,166	360	1.00	360	62,621	46	28,806
1999	66,102	51	33,889	300	1.10	330	65,802	51	33,559
2000	110,990	40	44,732	420	1.20	504	110,570	40	44,228
2001	75,200	31	22,945	350	1.40	490	74,850	30	22,455
2002	62,400	29	17,860	400	1.25	500	62,000	28	17,360
2003	80,400	33	26,880	400	1.20	480	80,000	33	26,400
2004	46,000	46	20,970	300	1.35	405	45,700	45	20,565
2005	60,150	66	39,430	350	1.60	560	59,800	65	38,870
2006 ^{3/}	74,600	81	60,020	400	1.65	660	74,200	80	59,360

^{1/} All Price per Pound and Total Value of Production for 1997 do not include fresh market blueberries.

^{2/} Fresh Blueberry Price per Pound and Value of Production are not available before 1998.

^{3/} Preliminary Price per Pound and Value of Production. Final price statistics to be published in July, 2007.

Source: **Non-Citrus Fruits and Nuts – Preliminary**, 3:00 p.m. January 23, 2007, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

The wild blueberry estimating program is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources as a service to growers and others in the industry. The next Maine Wild Blueberries report will be published and available on the Internet at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/nh/> in late July 2007. It will contain the final price statistics for the 2006 crop and the production forecast for the 2007 crop.

Blueberries: Preliminary Price and Value by Crop, Selected States and United States, 2006 Crop

Crop and State	Total Utilized Production	All Price per Pound	Total Value of Production	Fresh Blueberries			Blueberries for Processing		
				Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production	Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production
2006	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars
Wild Blueberries									
Maine	74,600	0.805	60,020	400	1.65	660	74,200	.80	59,360
Cultivated Blueberries									
Alabama ^{1/}	320	1.38	442	320	1.38	442			
Arkansas ^{1/}	1,600	1.55	2,486	1,600	1.55	2,486			
California ^{1/}	10,000	3.28	32,800	10,000	3.28	32,800			
Florida ^{1/}	7,000	4.70	32,900	7,000	4.70	32,900			
Georgia	31,500	1.90	59,775	16,000	2.37	37,920	15,500	1.41	21,855
Indiana	3,400	1.48	5,020	1,900	1.60	3,040	1,500	1.32	1,980
Michigan	83,000	1.68	139,747	29,000	2.15	62,350	54,000	1.43	77,397
Mississippi	4,600	1.31	6,040	2,600	1.40	3,640	2,000	1.20	2,400
New Jersey	52,000	1.61	83,720	40,000	1.64	65,600	12,000	1.51	18,120
New York	2,000	1.40	2,796	1,950	1.41	2,750	50	0.92	46
North Carolina	25,500	1.91	48,745	17,900	2.15	38,485	7,600	1.35	10,260
Oregon	35,600	1.49	53,091	13,900	1.79	24,881	21,700	1.30	28,210
Washington	19,000	1.59	30,140	4,500	2.38	10,710	14,500	1.34	19,430
UNITED STATES	275,520	1.81	497,702	146,130	2.17	316,690	129,390	1.40	181,012

^{1/} Small quantities of processed blueberries are included in fresh to avoid disclosure of individual operations.
 SOURCE: *Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts – Preliminary*, 3:00 pm January 23, 2007 National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

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