



# New England Agricultural Statistics



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United States Department of Agriculture*

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## USDA TO FORECAST 2005 WILD BLUEBERRY CROP

New England Agricultural Statistics will be contacting Maine wild blueberry growers in July to participate in the 2005 wild blueberry survey. The results of this survey help promote industry growth by supplying important data to all involved in production and marketing. Maine is the number one producer of wild blueberries nationally and is the only state which publishes wild blueberry statistics in the USDA's *Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts Release*. This study was requested and funded by the Maine State Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, and administered by the New England field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Last year, Maine's wild blueberry crop totaled 46 million pounds, a decrease of 43 percent from the 2003 output, and the smallest crop produced since 1991. Extreme cold temperatures and inadequate snow cover the previous winter led to significant winter kill on the 2004 wild blueberry crop. In addition, cool, rainy weather during the spring of 2004 caused poor, spotty pollination in many areas.

**The Wild Blueberry Growers Survey is the only chance to officially forecast production for the 2005 crop.** Approximately 500 Maine growers will be asked for their help in this effort to forecast production. The survey is mailed in mid-June with a phone follow-up in early July. As with all our survey work, individual operator information is kept strictly confidential and is exempted from requests under the Freedom of Information Act. Individual reports are used in combination with other grower reports to generate state level wild blueberry statistics for Maine.

Final production and value estimates for the 2004 Maine wild blueberry crop will be available in the **Noncitrus Fruit and Nut Report** from Washington, D.C. on July 6, 2005 at 3:00 p.m.. All reports from Washington, D.C. are available on the Internet at [www.usda.gov/nass/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/) within minutes of the scheduled release time. The wild blueberry production forecast for the 2005 crop will be released in the **Maine Wild Blueberries** report from New England Agricultural Statistics at the end of July. This report will be available on the Internet ([www.nass.usda.gov/nh/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/nh/)). Complimentary copies will be mailed to survey participants upon request.

[New England Agricultural Statistics is a field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Located in Concord, New Hampshire, it is responsible for agricultural statistics in all six states in the region. The office can be reached at 1-800-642-9571 or through e-mail at [nass-nh@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass-nh@nass.usda.gov). All national statistics and state level publications are available through free e-mail subscriptions and on the Internet at [www.usda.gov/nass/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/).]

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