

Maine Wild Blueberries



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A field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service
United States Department of Agriculture

53 Pleasant Street
Room 2100
Concord, NH 03301

Gary R. Keough, Director

Phone: 603-224-9639

Fax: 603-225-1434

www.nass.usda.gov/nh

nass-nh@nass.usda.gov

A special "THANK YOU" goes to Maine wild blueberry growers and processors who have helped us by completing surveys throughout the year.

2008 WILD BLUEBERRY PRODUCTION INCREASES FOR FOURTH STRAIGHT YEAR, BUT VALUE AT A THREE-YEAR LOW

2008 Final Price and Production: Maine's 2008 wild blueberry crop weighed in at 90 million pounds, an increase of 16 percent above 2007 output, and the largest crop harvested in the state since 2000. The price growers received for processing berries in 2008 averaged \$0.60 per pound, a decrease of \$0.47 per pound from 2007 and the lowest since 2004. Lower prices placed the processing value at \$53.6 million in 2008, compared with \$82.2 million the previous year.

2009 Wild Blueberry Crop: During the beginning of May, growers were active pruning fields and applying fertilizer and herbicides. Average to above average rainfall during the month of May kept growers busy monitoring for mummyberry and applying fungicides as necessary. Mummyberry blight symptoms were apparent, however very little infection was seen on fields treated with fungicide. Bees were brought into fields during the middle of May and average temperatures accompanied by dry weather provided good pollinating conditions. Cool weather during the first week in June delayed and extended the bloom, however pollination was completed in good time and light moisture mid-month provided for good plant and fruit growth. Cooler temperatures and rain showers in June and throughout most of July delayed crop maturation. Prolonged wet conditions kept

growers on high alert for *Valdensinia* leaf spot disease, and growers are adhering to a new sanitation protocol to control its spread. Although disease pressure has been high, insect pressure has been low this year with few outbreaks. Harvest is expected to begin the first week in August in the mid-coast region, about one week behind schedule. Despite the anticipated late harvest and lack of prolonged sunshine, growers in the mid-coast area indicated the crop was better than average, while those in the downeast region indicated a less than average crop. As of late July, Maine's wild blueberry crop was rated in good condition by crop specialist Dr. David Yarbrough with an above average set and mostly average berry size.

The July wild blueberry production forecast for the current year will no longer be published by NASS on an annual basis. Preliminary 2009 production numbers and price will be published in January 2010, with final numbers released in July of 2010.

Current information about the 2009 wild blueberry crop can be found in the Weekly Crop Progress and Condition report by visiting our website at www.nass.usda.gov or by calling the New England office at 1-800-642-9571.

MAINE WILD BLUEBERRIES: Production and Value, 1999 – 2008

Year	Total Production 1,000 Lbs	All Price Per Pound Dollars	Total Value of Production 1,000 Dollars	Fresh Wild Blueberries			Wild Blueberries for Processing		
				Production 1,000 Lbs	Price per Pound Dollars	Value of Production 1,000 Dollars	Production 1,000 Lbs	Price per Pound Dollars	Value of Production 1,000 Dollars
1999	66,102	0.513	33,889	300	1.100	330	65,802	0.510	33,559
2000	110,990	0.403	44,732	420	1.200	504	110,570	0.400	44,228
2001	75,200	0.305	22,945	350	1.400	490	74,850	0.300	22,455
2002	62,400	0.286	17,860	400	1.250	500	62,000	0.280	17,360
2003	80,400	0.334	26,880	400	1.200	480	80,000	0.330	26,400
2004	46,000	0.456	20,970	300	1.350	405	45,700	0.450	20,565
2005	60,150	0.656	39,430	350	1.600	560	59,800	0.650	38,870
2006	74,600	0.805	60,040	400	1.700	680	74,200	0.800	59,360
2007	77,250	1.070	83,031	450	1.900	855	76,800	1.070	82,176
2008	89,950	0.610	54,850	550	2.200	1,210	89,400	0.600	53,640

SOURCE: *Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts – 2008 Summary*, July 8, 2009, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

Blueberries: Price and Value by Crop, Selected States and United States, 2008 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
2008	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars
Wild Blueberries									
Maine	89,950	0.610	54,850	550	2.200	1,210	89,400	0.600	53,640
Cultivated Blueberries									
Alabama	360	1.330	479	360	1.330	479	D	D	D
Arkansas	800	1.610	1,288	800	1.610	1,288	D	D	D
California	14,000	3.510	49,140	14,000	3.510	49,140	D	D	D
Florida	9,800	5.300	51,940	9,800	5.300	51,940	D	D	D
Georgia	41,000	1.710	70,180	24,000	2.230	53,520	17,000	0.980	16,660
Indiana	3,800	1.530	5,824	2,200	2.000	4,400	1,600	0.890	1,424
Michigan	110,000	1.130	124,000	40,000	1.700	68,000	70,000	0.800	56,000
Mississippi	4,000	1.980	7,920	2,600	2.400	6,240	1,400	1.200	1,680
New Jersey	59,000	1.390	81,990	46,000	1.480	68,080	13,000	1.070	13,910
New York	2,300	1.790	4,107	2,200	1.820	4,004	100	1.030	103
North Carolina	28,500	1.680	47,950	20,000	2.100	42,000	8,500	0.700	5,950
Oregon	43,100	1.150	49,374	19,600	1.440	28,224	23,500	0.900	21,150
Washington	32,000	1.360	43,360	12,000	2.280	27,360	20,000	0.800	16,000
UNITED STATES	348,660	1.540	537,552	193,560	2.090	404,675	155,100	0.857	132,877

D Small quantities of processed blueberries are included in fresh to avoid disclosure of individual operations.
 SOURCE: *Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts – 2008 Summary*, July 8, 2009, 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 January 2010. It will contain the preliminary production and price statistics for the 2009 crop as collected by the Maine Department of Agriculture.

Gary R. Keough, Director
Jennifer M. Zaleski, Statistician

Alexander I. Slosman, Office Automation
Kathy Schmitt, Statistical Assistant

