

Crop Production

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UNITED STATES CROP SUMMARY AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 1969

CITRUS FRUITS, PRODUCTION 1/

Crop	1966-67		1967-68		Indicated
					1968-69
	- - - 1,000 boxes - - -				
Oranges	183,610		124,820		172,200
Grapefruit	55,880		44,060		58,500
Lemons	17,910		16,550		15,200

1/ Season begins with the bloom of the year shown and ends with the completion of harvest the following year.

POTATOES, IRISH

Seasonal group	Acreage		Yield per harv. acre:			Production			
	Harvested	For	Indi-	Indi-	Indi-	1967	1968	Indi-	
	1967	1968	harvest:	1967	1968	cated:	1967	1968	cated
		1969	1969		1969	1969		1969	1969
	- - 1,000 acres - -			- - Cwt. - -			- - 1,000 cwt. - -		
Winter	24.7	21.9	20.5	198	177	195	4,894	3,885	3,998
	Acreage planted:		Indi-	Yield per planted acre:		Production			
			cated:						
Early Spring	37.0	34.4	32.6	79	146	---	2,940	5,019	Apr. 10
Late Spring..	104.7	84.2	88.5	227	244	---	23,734	20,520	May 9
Early Summer:	88.3	84.9	84.3	158	162	---	13,980	13,728	June 10

MILK AND EGG PRODUCTION

Month	MILK			EGGS		
	1967	1968	1969	1967	1968	1969
	- - Million pounds - -			- - Millions - -		
January	9,802	9,546	9,407	5,908	5,983	5,716

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Statistical Reporting Service

CrPr 2-2 (2-69)

Crop Reporting Board

Washington, D. C. 20250

GENERAL CROP REPORT AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 1969

Soil moisture is adequate to surplus in much of the Nation, according to the Crop Reporting Board. Precipitation was general during January with heavy snow accumulations in the North Central and Northwest Regions. Parts of the western Great Plains, where soil moisture was short a month ago, received very little precipitation during January. Shortages of soil moisture intensified, in western Kansas, eastern Colorado, the Oklahoma Panhandle and western Texas.

The eastern half of the Nation received considerable precipitation, primarily as rain after midmonth. This precipitation was especially welcome in the Atlantic Coast States, since surface moisture was becoming short in much of the area from Georgia to Pennsylvania. Excessive amounts of rain and snow were dumped in California, Oregon, and Washington causing considerable damage, but improving soil moisture and long range irrigation prospects.

Production of winter potatoes is expected to be 3 percent above the 1968 output, but 18 percent less than the 1967 crop. Winter fresh vegetable production is expected to be 9 percent more than last year. January milk production was 1 percent less than a year earlier and 4 percent below 1967. Egg production was down 4 percent from a year earlier.

Citrus Crop Above a Year Earlier

The February 1 forecast of the Nation's citrus crop is down 2 percent from last month. Current prospects are for a crop about 30 percent larger than last season. Most of the decline from last month centered in Florida where oranges, tangerines, temples and limes are picking out below expectation. Orange production for the Nation is expected to be 38 percent above last year but 6 percent below the 1966-67 crop.

January Weather Limits Farm Activities

Cold, and blowing snow made January a trying month for farmers and ranchers -- especially from Minnesota and Iowa to the Pacific Northwest. Temperatures averaged well below normal and precipitation was generally above normal. Montana had extreme cold throughout January with temperatures averaging 25° below normal in the north central part of the State. In many North Central States drifting snow plugged roads and yards, making feeding livestock and movement of agricultural products very difficult. Central areas of the Nation warmed at midmonth. The thawing snow plus rain in many areas caused extremely muddy feed yards. Freezing rain and considerable icing in the Corn Belt during January caused concern over possible smothering damage to alfalfa and other legumes.

Heavy rains at the end of the month resulted in some flooding of low-lying fields in the South Central Region. Damage from mud and washing is not believed extensive. Fieldwork has been slow, but considerable land has been prepared in extreme southern areas. A limited amount of spring grains has been seeded. Unseasonably mild weather in Louisiana at the end of the month could cause some prema-

ture blooming of strawberries and other fruits. Accumulated chilling hours for peaches were above average in Georgia and South Carolina. Tobacco farmers are busy preparing and seeding plantbeds. Stripping and selling of tobacco was active in Kentucky during January. Fieldwork has been at a standstill in California, because it was the wettest January since 1916.

Fall Seeded Grains Mostly in Satisfactory Condition

The Kansas winter wheat crop was mostly dormant on February 1 but in good to excellent condition in central and eastern areas where soil moisture has been ample to excessive. In western Kansas, soil moisture continues short. The dry area extends into eastern Colorado, the Oklahoma Panhandle, the northern High Plains of Texas, and the dryland areas of New Mexico. Except for the Panhandle, the Oklahoma crop is in good condition. The important central area has good stands and adequate moisture. Grazing has been somewhat limited because fields were too wet to support cattle much of the time. The Texas crop needs moisture, especially in the High Plains.

Nebraska wheat was generally snow covered around February 1, but most of the acreage was exposed to low temperature and strong winds early in the month. Some Southeastern areas were covered with heavy ice for a time but damage, if any, is as yet undetermined. In South Dakota, adequate snowcover was available around February 1 except in the Southwest where wind was eroding dry soils. The crop is in generally good condition in the Central Corn Belt except for some areas where ponding or ice covering is causing concern.

In the Southeast, below normal temperatures retarded development of wheat. Rains the latter half of January were welcome. Winter wheat in the Pacific Northwest and in Montana was in good condition and was protected from unusually cold temperatures by good snowcover. January precipitation was well above normal, and some areas are concerned about damage from ice, ponding, or erosion.

Livestock and Feed Supplies

Livestock were plagued by cold and heavy snow during January with winter conditions most severe in the Upper Midwest, Montana, and the Northwest. Demands were heavy for supplemental feed, but, except for local areas, feed supplies are expected to be adequate for the rest of the winter feeding season. Feeding and caring for livestock have been arduous because drifting snow made movement of hay and other feed supplies very difficult. Considerable shrinkage occurred, but death losses were not extensive. The precipitation has brightened spring and summer grazing prospects.

Livestock are wintering well in the Corn Belt. However, feeding conditions were miserable the latter half of the month, because yards and feedlots were extremely muddy. Weather was disagreeable for early calving, lambing, and farrowing with some pneumonia and other losses.

Wheat pasture and other small grains furnished only minimal grazing during January. Most of the Kansas wheat was dormant, and fields in eastern Kansas and parts of Oklahoma were too soft to support grazing. Dry range forage was available in Oklahoma and Texas but quality is poor. Pastures are poor to fair in most South Central and Southeastern States, but recent rains improved future prospects. Stored feed supplies are low in a number of areas, but no acute shortages are expected. Livestock are in satisfactory condition.

CITRUS: The Nation's 1968-69 orange crop is forecast at 172.2 million boxes, 38 percent above last year but 6 percent below the 1966-67 crop. The forecast is down slightly from last month largely because Florida's early and mid-season oranges are picking out below expectation. Production prospects for Valencia oranges in Florida, Texas and California are unchanged from last month. Arizona's Valencia oranges are growing well, and February 1 prospects are for a crop 7 percent larger than forecast January 1.

Grapefruit production is forecast at 58.5 million boxes, 33 percent above last season and 5 percent above the 1966-67 crop. Production prospects edged upward in Florida more than offsetting a decline in California's "Other Areas."

Lemon production is expected to be 8 percent below last year because December freeze damage continues to reduce usable fruit in California and Arizona. Florida citrus trees generally are in good to excellent condition.

Soil moisture was adequate in the first part of January but short in the latter part of the month. Fruit droppage has been very light except in younger groves where major defoliation took place. Movement of oranges to February 1, 1969 is ahead of last year. About 67 percent of the early and mid-season oranges were harvested by February 1. Only a few Valencias have been picked. Grapefruit harvest has been running below last season's volume. Small sizes and lack of labor have slowed grapefruit harvest. Temples are moving similarly to last season, while tangerine movement is considerably ahead of last February 1. Tangerine production prospects were reduced because much fruit failed to reach marketable size and some was lost in the mid-December freeze.

The February 5 frost did not cause any additional damage to Florida citrus. Some injury to new growth has been observed in cold and frost pocket locations where trees were defoliated by the mid-December freeze. The most significant effect of the February 5 frost was to delay new growth and bloom which had been stimulated by spring-like weather during the preceding ten days.

Harvest of California's navel oranges proceeded under difficult conditions in January because of December freeze damaged fruits and heavy January rains. Shipment schedules were maintained by picking borders and rows near driveways. About 38 percent of the navel crop had been moved by February 1. In the last week of January, two hail storms struck large areas of navel oranges damaging fruit and foliage. Damage is expected to cause increased cullage, lowering of grade and loss of some fruit.

Valencia oranges developed slowly due to cold, rainy weather, and in some districts sizes are small for this time of year. Also, heavy crops in some groves may be causing small size fruit. The December freeze severely damaged fruit in some Southern California districts, where the late season Valencia shipments originate. Damage varied depending on grove location, the amount of heating, and use of wind machines. Groves on hillsides are expected to show little or no frost damage at harvest time. The small volume of Valencia oranges located in desert areas is maturing, and shipments are expected to begin shortly. Some of the fruit has been seriously damaged by frost and some lots are expected to move directly to product plants.

Harvest of California Desert Valley's grapefruit continued heavy through January, and about 20 percent of the expected production had been shipped by the end of January. Fruit maturity was earlier than normal, but sizes are below normal. Most of the fruit has been ring picked with only the large fruit being harvested. The grapefruit set in "Other Areas" is heavy but sizes are small. Light picking began in some districts during December, but activity has been limited.

Flood waters carried heavy amounts of mud and silt into some lemon groves from Tulare to the Los Angeles Basin. However, trees are expected to suffer only minor damage. Many lemons were knocked off the trees by high winds and heavy rains and fruit damaged during the December freeze continued to drop. Harvest has nearly ceased until groves dry out.

Citrus harvest in Texas was active in January. Both grapefruit and early and mid-season oranges were moving in good volume. Harvest of grapefruit is expected to continue active in February. Early and mid-season oranges should be available until February 15. Harvest of Valencia oranges started in late January, but movement into fresh market channels is expected to be light until the early and mid-season crop is sold.

In Arizona navel and miscellaneous orange harvest is nearly complete. Some of the fruit normally packed as fresh is being used for juice because of freeze damage. Harvest of Valencia oranges is expected to reach volume proportions by the end of February. Grapefruit harvest has not reached volume proportions.

AVOCADOS: California's production of fall and winter variety avocados is forecast at 32,000 tons, almost double last year's small crop. Harvest was slowed by the December freeze and January rains. Some

lots continue to show effects of the frost, but most damaged fruits have been cleared up. Harvest of Fuertes will remain active with supplies available into May.

POTATOES: Production of winter potatoes is estimated at 3,998,000 hundred-weight, 3 percent above 1968 production but 18 percent less than the 1967 crop.

Harvest is underway on "reds" in the Ft. Myers-Immokalee area of Florida and "white" varieties are growing well. The Dade County crop is generally developing satisfactorily although heavy rains have damaged plants in poorly drained spots in some fields. Vine killing of "reds" is expected to start about February 10. Harvesting of the winter crop in the Everglades was generally completed by February 1.

Heavy rains virtually halted potato harvest in California during the last half of January. Riverside County growers used extra power to mud-out a few fields, but there was little activity in San Joaquin Valley fields. Harvesting will resume as fields dry out, but only light to moderate supplies are expected during February.

Prospective plantings of early summer potatoes are estimated at 84,300 acres, 1 percent less than the 84,900 acres planted a year ago and 5 percent less than 1967 plantings of 88,300 acres. The intended acreage for 1969 is above the planted acreage last year for the Eastern Shore of Virginia, Tennessee, and Alabama, while Delaware and Maryland show no change. All other States, including the important producing States of California and Texas, are indicating a lower planted acreage than last year.

POULTRY AND EGGS: The Nation's laying flock produced 5,716 million eggs in January, down 4 percent from January 1968 and fractionally lower than last month. Layers on farms in January averaged 316.7 million birds, down 1 percent from last month and 3 percent below a year earlier. Rate of lay averaged 18.05 eggs per layer compared with 17.96 a month earlier and 18.31 a year earlier.

January egg production declined from a year earlier in all regions. Regional decreases were: West North Central, 13 percent; East North Central 7 percent; South Central, 5 percent; and West, 3 percent. The North Atlantic and South Atlantic were down a fraction of 1 percent.

Rate of lay per 100 layers on February 1 averaged 58.6 eggs compared with 57.9 a month earlier and 59.5 a year earlier. Rates were below a year earlier in all regions except the North Atlantic which was up 2 percent and the South Central which was up fractionally. Layers on February 1 totaled 316.3 million, down 2 percent from a year earlier. Regional declines were: West North Central, 9 percent; East North Central, 4 percent; South Central, 3 percent; West, 1 percent; and North Atlantic, less than 1 percent. The South Atlantic was up 2 percent.

Egg producers on February 1 reported plans to buy 4 percent fewer replacement chicks and started pullets than in 1968. Declines were reported for all regions except the West North Central which reported 100 percent. Regional declines were: North Atlantic, 6 percent; East North Central, South Atlantic, and South Central, 5 percent; and West, 2 percent.

Some differences between these intentions and actual purchases can be expected. Differences depend on the egg-feed price relationship, other developments in the rest of the hatching season, and producers' reactions to this report.

HENS AND PULLETS OF LAYING AGE AND EGGS LAID PER 100 LAYERS

Year	North Atlantic	E. North Central	W. North Central	South Atlantic	South Central	Western	48 States	United States ^{1/}
HENS AND PULLETS OF LAYING AGE FEBRUARY 1								
	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.
1967	46,153	45,158	53,075	59,260	66,526	49,219	319,391	320,320
1968 ^{2/}	45,093	44,286	49,387	62,383	69,404	52,519	323,072	324,054
1969	44,847	42,552	44,701	63,842	67,500	51,931	315,373	316,324
EGGS LAID PER 100 LAYERS								
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
1967	60.0	60.0	62.9	60.5	58.0	58.8	60.0	60.0
1968 ^{2/}	59.9	60.6	60.5	60.2	57.8	58.5	59.5	59.5
1969	60.8	59.4	58.0	59.0	58.0	56.6	58.6	58.6
HENS AND PULLETS OF LAYING AGE JANUARY 1								
	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.
1967	47,096	45,458	54,214	60,388	67,578	49,129	323,863	324,809
1968 ^{2/}	45,879	45,179	50,445	63,594	70,669	52,573	328,339	329,298
1969	45,018	42,682	45,648	64,132	67,493	51,109	316,082	317,053

^{1/} Includes Alaska and Hawaii.

^{2/} Revised.

MILK PRODUCTION: Milk production in January is estimated at 9,407 million pounds. This is one percent less than a year earlier and the smallest January production since 1955. January production was up 2 percent from December 1968, compared with a 3 percent increase during the same period a year earlier.

The revised estimate of 1968 milk production totals 117,281 million pounds, compared with 118,769 million pounds for 1967.

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STATISTICAL REPORTING SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

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