

Crop Production

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HIGHLIGHTS OF U.S. CROP REPORT AS OF MARCH 1, 1970

Citrus production is down 1 percent from last month, but is expected to be 1 percent more than last season. Prospects declined during February for lemons, California and Texas oranges and Florida grapefruit.

Orange production is forecast at 186.6 million boxes, down 1.2 million boxes (0.6 percent) from February 1, but 1.5 percent above last season's production. Prospects remain unchanged from February 1 in Florida and Arizona but are down in California and Texas.

Grapefruit production is placed at 51.8 million boxes, down 1 million boxes (1.9 percent) from last month and 4 percent below the 1968-69 crop. All of the reduction occurred in Florida white seedless grapefruit.

Lemon production, at 16.8 million boxes, is down 0.7 million boxes (4 percent) from February 1, but almost 7 percent above last season. Prospects declined in both California and Arizona.

Winter potato production is forecast at 3.6 million cwt., unchanged from a month ago, but 6 percent less than last year.

Early spring potato acreage for harvest at 29,600, is down 9 percent from 1969.

Winter wheat condition is mostly fair to good, but moisture is urgently needed in the Great Plains.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Statistical Reporting Service

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Crop Reporting Board

Washington, D. C. 20250

CITRUS FRUITS PRODUCTION 1/

Crop	1967-68	1968-69	Indicated 1969-70	
			February 1, 1970	March 1, 1970
----- 1,000 boxes -----				
Oranges	124,570	183,880	187,800	186,600
Grapefruit	44,058	54,170	52,800	51,800
Lemons	16,850	15,810	17,500	16,850

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

POTATOES, IRISH

Seasonal group	Acreage		Yield per harv. acre			Production				
	Harv. 1969	For harv. 1970	1968	1969	Indicated 1970	1968	1969	Indicated 1970	1970	
----- 1,000 acres ----- Cwt. ----- 1,000 cwt. -----										
Winter	19.8	19.3	177	193	186	3,885	3,828	3,598	3,598	
Early spring ..	32.5	29.6	152	175	Apr 10	5,019	5,687	---	Apr. 10	

CROP REPORT SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 1, 1970

Topsoil moisture was becoming critically short in parts of the Central and Southern Great Plains following four months of generally below normal precipitation. Subsoil moisture was adequate throughout much of this area but additional moisture is badly needed for winter wheat. Elsewhere moisture supplies were mostly adequate to surplus. Field work was delayed in the East as temperatures averaged below normal and precipitation was near to above normal.

In general, livestock are in good condition, and were favored by above normal temperatures in the West and the absence of widespread severe storms during February.

Production of winter fresh vegetables is expected to be 6 percent below last year but slightly above 1968. Prospective planted acreage for green peas and tomatoes for processing, plus planted acreage of winter spinach for processing, is 6 percent less than last year and 23 percent below 1968.

February Cold in the East

February temperatures averaged below normal in the East; and above normal in the West. This was the fourth consecutive month averaging below normal for much of the East, but the fourth consecutive month for above normal temperatures in much of the West.

Freezing temperatures pushed as far South as northern Florida and the Gulf Coast each week during the past month, delaying growth of small grains and winter pastures. Alternate freezing and thawing in the South helped keep top soils wet.

Warmer weather in late February reduced snow cover across the North but melting was not rapid enough to cause flooding.

February Precipitation Below Normal

February precipitation was below normal over much of the country. It was less than half normal in the western Corn Belt, the central and northern Great Plains, and much of the West except parts of Montana, California, and the Pacific Northwest. But, precipitation was above normal during the month in parts of Montana and California, much of Texas, the Florida Peninsula, and a strip along the Atlantic Coast from North Carolina to Maine.

The dry February in the Central Great Plains followed three months of generally below normal precipitation. Thus, topsoils are very dry over a large area: Most of Kansas, western Oklahoma, the Northern Plains of Texas, eastern Colorado, most of Nebraska and parts of South Dakota.

Generally, soil moisture is adequate to surplus east of the Mississippi River. Precipitation near the Great Lakes was well below normal, but melting snow coupled with little run-off helped maintain moisture supplies. Cool temperatures and wet soils delayed field work in most of the South Atlantic and South Central States. Rainfall was near to above normal in much of this area during February, but precipitation was below normal over much of the West.

Moisture supplies in the Pacific Northwest were generally adequate. As of February 1 irrigation water outlook was satisfactory for most major areas, although some shortages were in prospect for parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

Winter Wheat Prospects

Winter wheat is in mostly fair to good condition, but precipitation is urgently needed in the Great Plains. February was extremely dry with little or no precipitation in western Kansas, western Oklahoma, eastern Colorado and the northern plains of Texas. Precipitation was also minimal during January and surface moisture is becoming critically short. Moisture requirements have been light during the winter months, and wheat is holding up well despite the limited precipitation. By March 1, Kansas wheat was greening and showing some growth in response to above normal temperatures. Development was satisfactory on acres which had a good start last fall; but, late planted and replanted fields were showing effects of dry surface soil. Oklahoma wheat declined slightly in February and is sharply below a year earlier. Favorable growing conditions prevailed in Texas, except in the Northern Plains where dryland wheat suffered from lack of moisture.

Wheat and rye remained largely dormant in the Northern Plains. Dry soil prevails in southwest and south central South Dakota and parts of western Nebraska. Strong winds caused soil blowing on light soils and fields with little growth. Precipitation late in the month benefited Montana small grains, and mild temperatures dominated February. Fall seeded grains have wintered well in the Pacific Northwest and by March 1 were showing signs of spring growth. In this region soil moisture is ample and prospects favorable.

In the Corn Belt, early seeded wheat is in good to excellent condition, but some later plantings have suffered winter damage. However, winter loss is not believed to be extensive. On March 1 most of the area was free of snow cover. Precipitation and average temperature during February were both below normal in the eastern portion of the Corn Belt. Small grains are in good condition in most of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and Maryland. Low temperatures in the Southeast have limited growth, but soil moisture is ample and rapid development can be expected as temperatures rise.

Some Delays in Land Preparation in the South

Below normal temperatures and wet soils delayed early field work in the South Atlantic and eastern South Central States during much of February. In Mississippi land preparation was 28 percent complete, but was well ahead of last year's slow pace. Seeding of tobacco plant beds had advanced northward to Maryland by March 1.

Spring grain seeding was off to a good start in Central and Southern Great Plains. Nearly half of the acreage for spring oats had been seeded in Oklahoma--slightly ahead of a year earlier. In Kansas 17 percent of the spring oats and 9 percent of the spring barley had been planted, well ahead of last year. Cotton, corn and grain sorghum planting was underway in south Texas. Flax in Texas was blooming and making good growth.

Farm work in the North Atlantic and North Central States was largely limited to care of livestock and other winter chores. During periods of favorable weather, however, farmers were busy top-dressing small grains, spreading lime and fertilizers, and pruning fruit trees. Little plowing was done as soils were either frozen or too wet.

Very little field work was possible in the central and northern Rocky Mountain States during February. Limited planting started in the Southwest. In California field preparation and planting of spring crops continued at a normal pace in February. First cutting of alfalfa started in desert areas and some central valley districts. Field work for cotton was underway. Wet soils tended to delay land preparation in Oregon although planting of spring crops got underway the last week of the month. Mint, potato and sugarbeet growers started spring field work in Washington. Planting of spring wheat also started near the end of the month.

Livestock and Feed Supplies

Livestock are wintering well with ample feed supplies in most of the Nation. February temperatures averaged well above normal from the western Corn Belt to the Pacific Coast. The warm temperatures and absence of severe winter storms have allowed maximum utilization of winter ranges and crop residues. By March 1, ranges and pastures in Texas were growing well with a good moisture supply except in the northern plains. Cattle were being moved off wheat acreage. Early ranges and pastures offer considerable feed in California and Oregon. Precipitation is needed in the Great Plains to promote growth of early season grasses. February weather was favorable for early calving and lambing.

Pasture growth was limited by cold temperatures in the Southeast. However, soil moisture is ample and prospects favorable. Below normal temperatures in much of the East have kept supplemental feeding heavy.

CITRUS: The March 1 forecast production of the Nation's orange crop is slightly below the February 1 forecast because prospects declined in Texas and California. Florida and Arizona prospects remain unchanged from February 1. The 1969-70 orange crop is expected to exceed last year by about one and one half percent.

Grapefruit prospects in Florida declined 1 million boxes from February 1 reducing the U. S. forecast nearly 2 percent. Lemon production in California and Arizona is expected to be almost 7 percent above last year, but 4 percent below the February 1 forecast.

In Florida, prospects are unchanged from last month, but latest tests indicate a lower season average yield of frozen concentrated orange juice. The March 1 forecast is 1.25 gallons of 45° Brix frozen concentrated orange juice per box for all Florida oranges for the 1969-70 season, compared with 1.28 forecast February 1.

Harvest of Florida's early and midseason oranges is declining but will be fairly heavy until mid-March. Harvest of Valencia oranges is light, mostly for fresh fruit. A few freeze-damaged Valencia groves, which were dropping heavily, are being harvested for processing where maturity permits. Grapefruit harvest is at high volume. Picking labor is available from the reduced rate of harvest in early and midseason orange groves.

Florida's citrus trees and fruit remain in excellent condition. There is no significant open bloom. But next year's crop is appearing in the form of pin head to pencil eraser size bloom buds on many trees. Rains, colder temperatures with scattered frost February 27 caused no damage but slowed bloom bud development.

In Central and Northern California harvest of Navel oranges continued heavy, and most of the crop is quite mature. In Southern California strong winds later in the month caused more scarring, splits and heavy drop. Navel harvest neared half way at the end of February. Harvest of Valencia oranges has begun in the Desert areas with as much as 50 percent going to processors because of serious frost injury. High winds have caused heavy drop of fruit in some districts of the south.

Harvest of California's Desert Valleys grapefruit continues to lag behind last year with a greater portion moving to processing because of freeze damage and other factors. Shipments to date are about 30 percent of the crop forecast compared with about 50 percent at this time last year. In other areas, continued dry weather in February and high winds retarded growth and development of summer grapefruit. Sizes are smaller than normal and color is high.

Lemons received rains the second week of February in California's south coastal counties where most current supplies are originating. The San Joaquin Valley also received rain in February, and picking is about two-thirds finished. In the important south coastal counties harvest is about 20 percent complete. Most March supplies will originate from the south coast.

Texas citrus harvest continued active in February and grapefruit movement was heavy. Harvest of Valencia oranges started in February and harvest of early and mid-season varieties declined.

Grapefruit harvest is expected to continue active in March with nearly half the crop going to processors. The remaining light supplies of early and mid-season oranges also are expected to go to processors. Harvest of Valencias is expected to be active in March with the majority of the fruit going for fresh market. Citrus trees, in generally good condition, were beginning to bloom by March 1.

In Arizona Valencia orange harvest is underway in the Yuma and Salt River Valley areas; volume harvest is expected in March. Considerable fruit will be lost in groves that suffered severe freeze damage in December and January. Grapefruit harvest is still limited. Freeze damage appears to be negligible. Sizes are generally smaller than normal. Citrus groves are recovering from the cold temperatures and new growth is prevalent.

POTATOES: The winter potato crop is forecast at 3,598,000 cwt., 6 percent less than last year. Harvest got underway in Dade County, Florida in early March. Harvest of "whites" for chipping is expected to start in the Ft. Myers-Immokalee area the second week of March. Harvest in Kern County, California has progressed well despite rainy weather, but rains delayed harvest in northern San Joaquin Valley and Riverside County. Digging is expected to be active into early April.

The early spring potato crop is estimated at 29,600 acres for harvest in 1970, 9 percent less than the 32,500 acres harvested last year. All of this reduction is in Florida where both the Hastings and "other" areas are estimated below 1969 levels. Planting neared completion by March 1 in the Hastings area. Heavy rains and freezing weather damaged some acreages. Harvest will be later than usual. The Texas crop has developed well, and harvest is expected to begin about mid-April and to peak by early May.

CITRUS FRUITS, PRODUCTION 1/

Crop and State	1967-68	1968-69	Indicated: 1969-70	1967-68	1968-69	Indicated 1969-70
ORANGES:	-	-	-	-	-	-
	1,000 boxes 2/			Equivalent tons		
EARLY, MIDSEASON & NAVEL VARIETIES: 3/						
Calif.	9,150	18,600	22,000	343,000	698,000	825,000
Fla.	51,400	69,700	75,000	2,313,000	3,136,000	3,375,000
Texas	970	2,800	3,000	43,600	126,000	135,000
Ariz.	880	1,270	1,100	33,000	47,600	41,200
Total Above	62,400	92,370	101,100	2,732,600	4,007,600	4,376,200
Varieties						
VALENCIAS:						
Calif.	10,000	25,700	21,000	375,000	964,000	788,000
Fla.	49,100	60,000	59,000	2,210,000	2,700,000	2,655,000
Texas	830	1,700	1,500	37,400	76,500	67,500
Ariz.	2,240	4,110	4,000	84,000	154,000	150,000
Total Valencias	62,170	91,510	85,500	2,706,400	3,894,500	3,660,500
ALL ORANGES:						
Calif.	19,150	44,300	43,000	718,000	1,662,000	1,613,000
Fla.	100,500	129,700	134,000	4,523,000	5,836,000	6,030,000
Texas	1,800	4,500	4,500	81,000	202,500	202,500
Ariz.	3,120	5,380	5,100	117,000	201,600	191,200
U.S., All Oranges	124,570	183,880	186,600	5,439,000	7,902,100	8,036,700
GRAPEFRUIT:						
Fla., All	32,900	39,900	36,000	1,399,000	1,695,000	1,530,000
Seedless	23,700	27,700	26,000	1,008,000	1,177,000	1,105,000
Pink	9,400	10,700	10,000	400,000	455,000	425,000
White	14,300	17,000	16,000	608,000	722,000	680,000
Other	9,200	12,200	10,000	391,000	518,000	425,000
Texas	2,800	6,700	7,500	112,000	268,000	300,000
Ariz.	3,740	2,510	3,100	120,000	80,300	99,200
Calif., All	4,618	5,060	5,200	150,400	165,300	169,600
Desert Valleys	2,918	3,260	3,100	93,400	105,000	99,200
Other Areas	1,700	1,800	2,100	57,000	60,300	70,400
U.S., All	44,058	54,170	51,800	1,781,400	2,208,600	2,098,800
Grapefruit						
LEMONS:						
Calif.	13,600	12,300	14,000	517,000	468,000	532,000
Ariz.	3,250	3,510	2,850	124,000	134,000	108,000
U. S. Lemons	16,850	15,810	16,850	641,000	602,000	640,000
TANGELOS: Fla.	1,700	1,800	2,500	76,500	81,000	112,000
TANGERINES:						
Fla.	2,800	3,400	3,100	133,000	162,000	147,000
Ariz.	150	170	220	5,620	6,380	8,250
Calif.	560	640	750	21,000	24,000	28,100
Total Tangerines	3,510	4,210	4,070	159,620	192,380	183,350
TEMPLES: Fla.	4,500	4,500	5,000	202,000	202,000	225,000

1/ The crop year begins with the bloom of the first year shown and ends with completion of harvest the following year. 2/ Net content of box varies. Approximate averages are as follows: Oranges - California and Arizona, 75 lbs.; Florida and other States, 90 lbs.; Grapefruit - California, Desert Valleys, and Arizona, 64 lbs.; other California areas, 67 lbs.; Florida 85 lbs. and Texas 80 lbs.; Lemons - 76 lbs.; Tangelos - 90 lbs.; Tangerines - California and Arizona, 75 lbs.; Florida, 95 lbs.; and Temples - 90 lbs. 3/ Navel and Miscellaneous varieties in California and Arizona. Early and Midseason varieties in Florida and Texas, including small quantities of tangerines in Texas.

POTATOES, IRISH

Seasonal group and State	Acreage			Yield per harv. acre			Production		
	Harvested	For	harvest:	1968	1969	Indi- cated:	1968	1969	Indi- cated
	1968	1969	1970	1968	1969	1970	1968	1969	1970
	- - 1,000 acres - -			- - Cwt. - -			- - 1,000 cwt. - -		
Winter:									
Fla.	11.4	11.0	10.8	175	180	160	1,995	1,980	1,728
Calif.	10.5	8.8	8.5	180	210	220	1,890	1,848	1,870
Total	21.9	19.8	19.3	177	193	186	3,885	3,828	3,598
Early Spring:									
Fla. -Hastings	27.4	26.3	24.2	160	185	Apr.10	4,384	4,866	Apr.10
-Other	3.1	3.1	2.3	125	135	"	388	418	"
Texas	2.6	3.1	3.1	95	130	"	247	403	"
Total	33.1	32.5	29.6	152	175	"	5,019	5,687	"

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
STATISTICAL REPORTING SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250**

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