

CROP PRODUCTION



Economics, Statistics, &
Cooperatives Service

U.S. Department
of Agriculture

Washington, D.C.
20250

Released: March 8, 1978
3:00 P.M. ET

HIGHLIGHTS

CITRUS--Production is expected to total 12.9 million metric tons, down 1 percent from last month and 7 percent below the 1976-77 crop.

ORANGES--Production is forecast at 221.5 million boxes (8.7 million metric tons), virtually the same as February 1, but 9 percent below last season. By March 1, harvest of the U. S. crop was 43 percent complete.

GRAPEFRUIT--Production is forecast at 73.8 million boxes (2.7 million metric tons), 3 percent less than February 1 and 1 percent below the 1976-77 crop. About 43 percent of the crop was harvested by March 1.

LEMONS--Prospects at 24.5 million boxes (845 thousand metric tons) are 2 percent below last month's forecast and 4 percent below the previous season.

WINTER POTATOES--Final production is estimated at 2.8 million cwt. (125 thousand metric tons), 2 percent below last month's forecast but 4 percent above the 2.7 million cwt. (121 thousand metric tons) harvested in 1977.

SPRING POTATOES--Acreage for harvest is estimated at 87,700 acres (35,490 hectares), 4 percent below the 91,400 acres (36,990 hectares) harvested in 1977 and 11 percent less than in 1976.

Access to Data Via Computer Network

Selected major reports of the Crop Reporting Board, the World Food and Agricultural Outlook and Situation Board, and related information are now being distributed through a nationwide computer network system. Crop Reporting Board data, within minutes of official Washington, D.C. release, are available via telephone to data users who have access to an interactive terminal or compatible computer. For further information write the Secretary, CRB, Room 0233, South Building, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

UNITED STATES CROP SUMMARY
(DOMESTIC UNITS)
CITRUS FRUITS, PRODUCTION 1/

CROP	1976-77	INDICATED 1977-78	
		FEB 1	MAR 1
1,000 BOXES			
ORANGES	244,250	221,420	221,520
GRAPEFRUIT	74,500	75,700	73,800
LEMONS	25,600	25,100	24,500

1/ SEASON BEGINS WITH BLOOM OF THE FIRST YEAR SHOWN AND ENDS WITH THE COMPLETION OF HARVEST THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

SEASONAL GROUP	AREA PLANTED		AREA HARVESTED	
	1977	INDICATED 1978	1977	INDICATED 1978
	1,000 ACRES			
WINTER	13.6	12.6	13.4	12.6
SPRING	92.8	88.4	91.4	87.7
	YIELD PER ACRE		PRODUCTION	
	1977	INDICATED 1978	1977	INDICATED 1978
	CWT		1,000 CWT	
WINTER	199	220	2,660	2,814
SPRING	250	APR 7	22,870	APR 7 2,766

UNITED STATES CROP SUMMARY
(METRIC UNITS)
CITRUS FRUITS, PRODUCTION 1/

CROP	1976-77	INDICATED 1977-78	
		FEB 1	MAR 1
METRIC TONS			
ORANGES	9 611 620	8 691 740	8 695 370
GRAPEFRUIT	2 747 860	2 795 040	2 721 550
LEMONS	882 690	865 450	844 590

1/ SEASON BEGINS WITH BLOOM OF THE FIRST YEAR SHOWN AND ENDS WITH THE COMPLETION OF HARVEST THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

SEASONAL GROUP	AREA PLANTED		AREA HARVESTED	
	1977	INDICATED 1978	1977	INDICATED 1978
	HECTARES			
WINTER	5 500	5 100	5 420	5 100
SPRING	37 560	35 770	36 990	35 490
	YIELD PER HECTARE		PRODUCTION	
	1977	INDICATED 1978	1977	INDICATED 1978
	METRIC TONS		METRIC TONS	
WINTER	22.26	24.60	120 650	127 640
SPRING	28.04	APR 7	1 037 360	APR 7 125 460

The CROP PRODUCTION report contains State and National estimates with related information on selected agricultural commodities. These data were prepared and adopted by the Crop Reporting Board which consists of commodity statisticians from Washington headquarters and the State Statistical Offices.

APPROVED:

Howard W. Hoyt

ACTING SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

CROP REPORTING BOARD:

B. M. Graham, Chairman,
M. L. Koehn, Secretary,
J. W. Kirkbride, F. E. Rolf,
R. P. Small, R. W. Britton,
D. J. Buckner, H. J. DeLong,
J. R. Garrett, C. J. Koines.

FEBRUARY WEATHER SUMMARY

February 1978 was a cold winter month. For many cities east of the Rockies, the month was one of the coldest February's on record. Unlike last year, when sudden warming took place at mid-month, this February continued to be colder than normal from the continental divide to the Atlantic and, typical of the entire winter, warmer than normal in the West. Fruit trees in California are blooming much earlier than usual.

Precipitation for the month was well above normal and last year from the Great Plains westward. Snow pack in the mountains and previously depleted reservoirs approached normal levels. There were some exceptions in the West; parts of Washington and Oregon measured much less than normal precipitation.

Nearly all of the area from the Mississippi Valley eastward had much below normal precipitation although the amount of snow was generally above normal. This area had previously been very wet so the departure was, for the most part, welcome. The exception was the extreme southeastern U. S. where rainfall was well above normal.

Precipitation was generally light over most of the Nation during the first week of February. Exceptions were the central Gulf Coast where rain measured a little over an inch, and the Northwest where rain totaled up to an inch on the mountain slopes and 2 to 5 inches on the coast line. Snow was widespread but the snow-on-ground line receded along its southern boundary. Much colder than normal temperatures continued over the area east of the Rockies while the west was unusually warm.

The second week of February showed no signs of easing the severe winter. The Rocky Mountains and areas eastward to the Atlantic were much colder than normal. The southern Plains and parts of the Midwest averaged as much as 15 to 18° colder than normal for this time of year. Precipitation was also excessive in many parts of the U. S. Early in the week, the Northeast was inundated with heavy snow. At midweek the central and southern Plains and from New Mexico into Mississippi experienced a mixture of precipitation; snow, sleet, and rain. Amounts in excess of 2 inches fell in eastern Oklahoma and Texas. Later, heavy rain fell in Florida. After midweek, a storm system dumped heavy rain throughout California and moved eastward into the Plateau and the Southwest.

Precipitation was widespread around the U. S. during the week of mid-February. More snow fell in the southern Plains, heavy rain washed Florida. The Plateau and Southwest had some heavy showers of snow or rain. In the central Mississippi Valley and parts of the Ohio Valley, significant amounts of snow cover were added.

The cold weather became even more widespread at mid-February and below normal temperatures extended all the way to the Sierra and Cascade mountains. The central Plains averaged as much as 22° colder than normal.

Unlike the final ten days of February last year when all of the area east of the Rockies experienced a dramatic warming, the same period this year continued the pattern of being much colder than normal east of the Rockies and warmer to the west. The zero degree Fahrenheit temperature line remained far south in the Plains to Oklahoma. Fortunately snow covered most of the winter wheat providing a welcome blanket against the bitter cold.

Precipitation was light over most of the country during the last ten days until the end of the period when rain began in southern California and Arizona. The lower Mississippi and Tennessee Valleys measured significant precipitation during the period.

WINTER WHEAT

Winter wheat rated fair to good with the exception of some poor areas in the Deep South where subnormal temperatures prevented the growth normally expected by March 1. Dryland stands in the southern Great Plains were drought-stressed most of February but late in the month snow and ice brought temporary relief. Most of the Nation's winter wheat lay under an insulating blanket of snow for at least part of the month, giving protection from persistent low temperatures. Snow extended into the Texas Panhandle as only the southern States had no snow cover during February. Wheat greened in the South and into parts of Oklahoma. Last year at this time winter wheat showed color as far north as Montana.

Kansas winter wheat rated good to excellent. Snow protected most of the crop from bitter cold and wind. Toward the end of February melting snow provided temporary topsoil moisture which was especially needed in western areas. Oklahoma wheat was in fair condition. Snow covered the State at midmonth and by the end of February higher temperatures melted the snow and wheat began greening in some localities. Texas High and Low Plains winter wheat prospects improved at mid-month with much-needed moisture. Heavy snows broke the prolonged precipitation-free period which had sent dryland stands into a drought-stressed condition. Elsewhere, Texas fields had adequate soil moisture but subnormal temperatures virtually stopped growth. The effects of dry soils on the Plains and unusually cold weather cannot be assessed until warm temperatures encourage new growth. New Mexico irrigated wheat rated fair to good, providing moderate grazing, while dryland wheat rated fair, yielding limited grazing. By the end of February, Arizona's wheat reached the jointing stage; a few early fields headed.

Wheat lay dormant under a heavy layer of snow in Eastern North Central States. Generally, crop conditions rated good. In the Southeast, winter wheat began growing slowly after a warming trend near midmonth, although temperatures continued subnormal. Farmers fertilized open fields as far north as Virginia.

In the Pacific Coast States, surplus water in low-lying fields yellowed wheat stands. Growers applied fertilizer and herbicides.

COLD AND SNOW DELAY FIELDWORK

Snow accumulations and subnormal temperatures held field activity to a minimum during February. Wintery weather confined fieldwork to the extreme South, the Pacific Coast States and along the Atlantic Coast as far north as Virginia. Heavy snow cover kept farmers out of fields in the northern Great Plains, the Corn Belt, and the Northeast. Wet fields delayed land preparation to some degree and low soil temperatures discouraged planting in southern Texas where earliest row crop planting usually begins. Farmers plowed fields as far north as Virginia but progress lagged; Mississippi plowing reached 13 percent, well below the 34 percent last year and the 19 percent average. Fruit growers pruned trees and in southern areas set peach trees. Tobacco producers tended plant beds in Florida and Georgia, seeded beds in South Carolina and prepared beds in Virginia. Vegetable planting and harvesting was confined to extreme southern areas.

Arizona and Texas cotton producers prepared fields for planting but low soil temperatures delayed seeding. Normally, a few fields have been planted in the Lower Rio Grande Valley by March 1. Texas growers began planting sorghum in the Lower Valley the last week of February, but normally, 6 percent has been planted by this time. Corn planting was underway in Texas, Florida, and Georgia.

ORANGES: The U. S. orange production is expected to total 221.5 million boxes (8.7 million metric tons), virtually unchanged from last month's forecast but 9 percent below the 1976-77 crop. Florida prospects remain unchanged at 166.0 million boxes, but are 11 percent below last season. Early and mid-season varieties are expected to total 88.0 million boxes, 23 percent less than last year's harvest. The Valencia crop is forecast at 78.0 million boxes, 9 percent above last season's crop. Harvest of early and mid-season oranges is about 90 percent complete while harvest of Valencias is just beginning. Most of Florida's groves are in excellent condition for the next bloom period.

In California, crop prospects continue the same at 45.0 million boxes, 3 percent less than last season. The Navel crop is expected to be 20.0 million boxes compared with 25.6 million boxes in the previous season. The Valencia crop is forecast at 25.0 million boxes, 19 percent above last season. Harvest of the Navel crop is over $\frac{1}{2}$ complete and harvest of the Valencia crop has begun in the Coachella Valley on a limited scale.

The Texas orange crop is expected to total 6.4 million boxes, 2 percent above last month's forecast but 7 percent below the 6.9 million boxes harvested in 1976-77. Overall quality of the fruit is excellent. Harvest of early season oranges is nearing completion while Valencia movement continues to increase.

Prospects in Arizona at 4.12 million boxes are unchanged from last month, but 4 percent above last year's crop. The Navel harvest is virtually complete while Valencia harvest has just started.

Changes between the March 1 U. S. orange production forecast and final production have averaged 4.2 million boxes over the past 10 seasons, ranging from 0.3 million boxes in 1976-77 to 11.0 million boxes in the 1975-76 season.

FLORIDA FROZEN CONCENTRATED JUICE YIELD: The all orange juice yield for the 1977-78 crop is projected at 1.24 gallons of 45 degree brix concentrate per box, compared with the February projection of 1.25 gallons. Final freeze-reduced yield from the 1976-77 crop was 1.07 gallons per box.

GRAPEFRUIT: The 1977-78 U. S. grapefruit crop is expected to total 73.8 million boxes (2.7 million metric tons), 3 percent below last month's forecast and 1 percent less than last season. Prospects in Florida declined 2 million boxes during February to 52.0 million boxes, 1 percent above last season's output. The crop outlook in Texas improved during the month and is now expected to total 11.0 million boxes, 11 percent less than last season's crop. Quality of the fruit is excellent. California growers expect to harvest 7.7 million boxes, a decline from last month of 200,000 boxes in the Desert Valley. The Arizona crop of 3.1 million boxes is unchanged from last month, but is 3 percent above last season.

Harvest of the U. S. grapefruit crop was 43 percent complete by March 1 compared with 40 percent on March 1 last year.

Changes in the U. S. production estimate between the March 1 forecast and final production have averaged 2.4 million boxes over the past 10 seasons, ranging from 280,000 boxes in 1975-76 to 4.6 million boxes in 1976-77.

LEMONS: The California and Arizona lemon crop is expected to total 24.5 million boxes (845,000 metric tons), 2 percent less than last month and 4 percent less than in 1976-77. The California crop forecast at 19.0 million boxes declined 1.0 million boxes during the month because of brown rot and wind damage in the central district. The Arizona crop at 5.5 million boxes is up 8 percent from last month and is 10 percent above last season.

Harvest is 53 percent complete, slightly ahead of last season.

TANGELOS: Florida's tangelo crop is set at 4.9 million boxes, 2 percent above both last month and the 1976-77 crop. Harvest is virtually complete.

TANGERINES: Production is expected to total 5.8 million boxes (226,000 metric tons) unchanged from last month and about the same as last season. The crop in Florida at 3.2 million boxes is 3 percent below last year's crop. The California crop at 1.9 million boxes is 4 percent above last season. The Arizona crop is placed at 700,000 boxes, 8 percent above 1976-77.

TEMPLES: Production in Florida is estimated at 4.7 million boxes, unchanged from last month but 24 percent above last season. Harvest is about 70 percent complete.

POTATOES: The final forecast for the 1978 winter potato crop in California and Florida of 2.8 million cwt. (125 thousand metric tons) is 4 percent above the 1977 production. The March 1 forecast is off slightly from a month ago because of a drop in the yield per acre. Most of the California winter acreage has been harvested in Kern County while digging is active in Riverside County. Florida harvest was active in late February in the Everglades, Martin County and the Ft. Myers area. Dade County harvest, interrupted by rains in late February, is expected to increase rapidly in March and continue active through April. Quality of the Florida crop is very good.

Producers of spring potatoes in the 8 producing States are expected to harvest 87,700 acres (35,490 hectares), down 4 percent from the 1977 harvest. Most of the fields in the spring growing areas of California which were damaged by rains have been replanted. Some further plantings are expected to continue until mid-March. Harvest from early planted fields is expected to begin about April 1. Plantings in the Hastings area of Florida are finished except for a few fields that have been too wet because of February rains. Very little damage was caused by the February cold weather but a dry period is needed. Early planted potatoes in other Florida areas are making good growth.

Planting in North Carolina is underway but was delayed by wet fields. Rains in Arizona delayed the start of potato planting, but by the first of March, most fields were in. Planting is completed in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas and continues in the Winter Garden area. Planting is underway but progress is running behind schedule in central and east Texas because of cold, wet weather.

POTATOES

SEASONAL GROUP AND STATE	AREA					
	PLANTED			HARVESTED		
	1976	1977	INDICATED 1978	1976	1977	INDICATED 1978
	1,000 ACRES					
<u>WINTER</u>						
CALIF	5.2	4.5	1/3.0	5.2	4.5	3.0
FLA	9.4	9.1	9.6	9.2	8.9	9.6
TOTAL	14.6	13.6	1/12.6	14.4	13.4	12.6
<u>SPRING</u>						
ALA	11.5	11.0	11.0	11.5	10.5	11.0
ARIZ	6.8	6.5	6.0	6.8	6.5	6.0
CALIF	34.8	30.8	25.5	34.2	30.8	25.5
FLA-HASTING	19.5	19.7	20.5	19.3	19.5	20.5
-OTHER	3.0	1.7	1.9	2.5	1.7	1.9
LA	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3
MISS	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2
N C	13.1	13.5	13.1	13.0	13.4	13.0
TEX	7.3	5.6	6.5	7.1	5.4	6.3
TOTAL	100.4	92.8	88.4	98.4	91.4	87.7
	YIELD			PRODUCTION		
	1976	1977	INDICATED 1978	1976	1977	INDICATED 1978
	CWT			1,000 CWT		
<u>WINTER</u>						
CALIF	220	235	250	1,144	1,058	750
FLA	200	180	210	1,840	1,602	2,016
TOTAL	207	199	220	2,984	2,660	2,766
<u>SPRING 2/</u>						
ALA	140	120		1,610	1,260	
ARIZ	270	270		1,836	1,755	
CALIF	395	385		13,509	11,858	
FLA-HASTING	210	220		4,053	4,290	
-OTHER	160	185		400	315	
LA	75	75		195	173	
MISS	95	90		133	117	
N C	145	165		1,885	2,211	
TEX	155	165		1,101	891	
TOTAL	251	250		24,722	22,870	

1/ REVISED.

2/ YIELD AND PRODUCTION FOR 1978 TO BE RELEASED APRIL 7, 1978.

CITRUS FRUIT

1/

CROP AND STATE	PRODUCTION BOXES			PRODUCTION TON EQUIVALENT		
	UTILIZED	INDICATED		UTILIZED	INDICATED	
	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
	1,000 UNITS		2/	1,000 UNITS		
ORANGES,EARLY MID & NAVAL 3/:						
ARIZ	730	800	820	27	30	31
CALIF	28,300	25,600	20,000	1,061	960	750
FLA	98,800	115,000	88,000	4,446	5,175	3,960
TEX	3,700	4,400	4,000	157	187	170
U S	131,530	145,800	112,820	5,691	6,352	4,911
ORANGES,VALENCIA						
ARIZ	1,950	3,150	3,300	73	118	124
CALIF	24,500	21,000	25,000	919	788	938
FLA	82,400	71,800	78,000	3,708	3,231	3,510
TEX	2,400	2,500	2,400	102	106	102
U S	111,250	98,450	108,700	4,802	4,243	4,674
ALL ORANGES						
ARIZ	2,680	3,950	4,120	100	148	155
CALIF	52,800	46,600	45,000	1,980	1,748	1,688
FLA	181,200	186,800	166,000	8,154	8,406	7,470
TEX	6,100	6,900	6,400	259	293	272
U S	242,780	244,250	221,520	10,493	10,595	9,585
TEMPLES						
FLA	5,500	3,800	4,700	248	171	212
GRAPEFRUIT,WHITE SEEDLESS						
FLA	28,300	29,900	30,000	1,203	1,271	1,275
GRAPEFRUIT,PINK SEEDLESS						
FLA	13,000	12,500	14,000	553	531	595
GRAPEFRUIT,OTHER						
FLA	7,800	9,100	8,000	332	387	340
ALL GRAPEFRUIT						
ARIZ	3,080	3,000	3,100	99	96	99
CALIF						
DESERT	4,100	4,500	4,200	131	144	134
OTHER AREAS	3,100	3,100	3,500	104	104	117
TOTAL	7,200	7,600	7,700	235	248	251
FLA	49,100	51,500	52,000	2,088	2,189	2,210
TEX	10,700	12,400	11,000	428	496	440
U S	70,080	74,500	73,800	2,850	3,029	3,000
TANGERINES						
ARIZ	660	650	700	25	24	26
CALIF	1,300	1,820	1,900	49	68	71
FLA	3,400	3,300	3,200	162	157	152
U S	5,360	5,770	5,800	236	249	249
LEMONS						
ARIZ	2,420	5,000	5,500	92	190	209
CALIF	15,200	20,600	19,000	578	783	722
U S	17,620	25,600	24,500	670	973	931
TANGELOS						
FLA	5,500	4,800	4,900	248	216	221

1/ THE CROP YEAR BEGINS WITH THE BLOOM OF THE FIRST YEAR SHOWN AND ENDS WITH YEAR HARVEST IS COMPLETED.

2/ NET LBS PER BOX: ORANGES-CALIF & ARIZ-75,FLA-90, TEX-85; GRAPEFRUIT-CALIF DESERT & ARIZ-64, CALIF OTHER-67, FLA-85, TEX-80; LEMONS-76; TANGELOS & TEMPLES-90; TANGERINES- CALIF & ARIZ-75, FLA-95.

3/ NAVAL AND MISCELLANEOUS VARIETIES IN CALIFORNIA AND ARIZONA. EARLY AND MIDSEASON VARIETIES IN FLORIDA AND TEXAS, INCLUDING SMALL QUANTITIES OF TANGERINES IN TEXAS.