

# CROP PRODUCTION

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## HIGHLIGHTS

CITRUS production is expected to total 13.2 million tons (11.9 million metric tons), fractionally above last month but 7 percent below the 1977-78 crop.

ORANGE production is forecast at 205 million boxes (8.12 million metric tons), virtually the same as February 1, but 7 percent below last season. By March 1, harvest of the U.S. crop was 48 percent complete.

GRAPEFRUIT production is forecast at 67.3 million boxes (2.50 million metric tons), nearly the same as February 1, but 9 percent below the 1977-78 crop. About 56 percent of the crop was harvested by March 1.

LEMON prospects at 21.5 million boxes (741 thousand metric tons) are 1 percent above last month's forecast but 18 percent below the previous season.

WINTER POTATO production is estimated at 2.72 million cwt. (124 thousand metric tons), unchanged from the February 1 forecast but 4 percent more than a year earlier.

SPRING POTATO acreage for harvest is estimated at 92.4 thousand acres (37.4 thousand hectares), 2 percent above the 90.9 thousand acres (36.8 thousand hectares) harvested in 1978.

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

CROP	1977-78	INDICATED 1978-79	
		FEB 1	MAR 1
		1,000 BOXES	
ORANGES	219,620	205,100	205,200
GRAPEFRUIT	73,700	67,400	67,300
LEMONS	26,100	21,300	21,500

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	
	1978	INDICATED 1979	1978	INDICATED 1979
			1,000 ACRES	
WINTER	13.0	13.2	12.9	13.2
SPRING	93.4	93.4	90.9	92.4
	YIELD PER ACRE		PRODUCTION	
	1978	INDICATED 1979	1978	INDICATED 1979
			1,000 CWT	
WINTER	203	206	2,621	2,723
SPRING	198	APR 10	17,963	APR 10 2,723

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

CROP	1977-78	INDICATED 1978-79	
		FEB 1	MAR 1
		METRIC TONS	
ORANGES	8 642 750	8 112 050	8 118 400
GRAPEFRUIT	2 720 650	2 502 920	2 500 200
LEMONS	899 930	733 910	741 170

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	
	1978	INDICATED 1979	1978	INDICATED 1979
			HECTARES	
WINTER	5 260	5 340	5 220	5 340
SPRING	37 800	37 800	36 790	37 390
	YIELD PER HECTARE		PRODUCTION	
	1978	INDICATED 1979	1978	INDICATED 1979
			METRIC TONS	
WINTER	22.78	23.13	118 890	123 510
SPRING	22.15	APR 10	814 780	APR 10 123 510

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.

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## FEBRUARY WEATHER

Much of California and the Pacific Northwest recorded above-normal precipitation during the month of February. Amounts ranged up to 150 percent above totals expected this time of year. The northern Plains also exceeded normal precipitation; amounts well above an inch in parts of this area were more than 3 times normal for February. Precipitation was generally heavier than average from New Mexico eastward to the Atlantic and from East Texas northeastward to Pennsylvania. Flooding occurred in the South and in the mid-Atlantic area. Temperatures averaged lower than normal over most of the Nation. The northern and central Plains dropped 12 to 15 degrees below normal. Only the West Coast and Plateau averaged near expected temperatures for February.

As the month of February began, a blast of cold air moved from western Canada to envelop the Rockies and Plains. Sub-zero temperatures were felt in the Plains as far south as Oklahoma. Spotty snowcover over most of the winter wheat area afforded some protection. A storm system moved into southern California and spread heavy rain along the coast with lesser amounts, in the form of snow, hitting the Plateau and central Rockies. A low pressure system formed in the Gulf of Mexico and spread precipitation northward and eastward to cover most of the area east of the Mississippi River.

Early in the week of February 5-11, another surge of cold air pushed southward into the Plains. The average temperature for the week was 21 degrees colder than normal in parts of the central Plains. The temperature plummeted to -20° in northern Missouri and southern Iowa. Freezing temperatures reached into northern Florida. Another storm system formed in the Gulf of Mexico, but this time stayed to the south and caused heavy rain from southern Louisiana to central Georgia and moderate rain or freezing rain into the mid-Atlantic States. Some heavy rain---snow in the mountains---fell in the Pacific Northwest.

The mid-month week of February 12-18 brought precipitation to nearly all of the Nation. Heavy rain or snow fell in the West with moderate amounts in the South and mid-Atlantic areas. Temperatures were warmer than normal in the West but colder east of the Rockies. Departures from normal plunged to as much as 27 degrees in New York State. At week's end, heavy snow began to fall in Georgia and moved northward.

Early in the week of February 19-25, a low pressure system moved northward along the East Coast and left a heavy snowcover from Georgia to southern New England. Amounts ranged from 3 to 5 inches in Georgia to 20 to 25 inches in parts of the mid-Atlantic area. Subsequent warm rain depleted most of the snowcover. Again, precipitation fell in most of the Nation during the week. Heaviest amounts dampened Washington State, northern California, and the Southeast. Temperatures averaged near or slightly above normal in much of the Nation, but the northern Plains showed 12 to 15 degrees colder than normal.

During the last days of the month, February 26-28, a strong low pressure system caused rain from the Carolinas to New England stretching as far west as the Ohio Valley. Local flooding occurred in some mid-Atlantic areas. In the West, some heavy rain fell from central California northward. Snow fell in the Plateau and northern Rockies. Thunderstorms broke out in the South, and hail was recorded at several places along the lower Mississippi River. Cold air moved all the way to northern Florida but was rapidly replaced by another warming trend. Moderately cold air dominated the northern tier of States.

## WINTER WHEAT

Winter wheat rated fair to good with the exception of some poor ratings in the southern States where subnormal temperatures and excessive precipitation checked growth normally expected by March 1. Dryland stands on the southern Great Plains lacked adequate soil moisture for optimum spring growth but periodic February precipitation kept the moisture shortage from becoming serious. Winter wheat in the Nation's major production areas lay under a mantle of snow most of February which protected the crop from severe storms and temperatures as much as 27 degrees below normal on the Great Plains. Early in February, snowcover reached south into Oklahoma and all of the Corn Belt. By the end of the month snowcover receded northward from most of Kansas and the eastern North Central States.

Kansas wheat had snowcover through the first half of February protecting it from record low temperatures. By March 1 southwestern Kansas wheat began greening but most of the crop remained dormant. Oklahoma wheat rated fair to good with some greening but no growth evident. Texas winter wheat responded to higher temperatures in late February, making rapid growth in areas with adequate soil moisture. Parts of the northern High and Low Plains needed additional precipitation. Nebraska wheat rated fair to good and received new snowcover in the south and south central areas at the end of February. Early Arizona seedings advanced into the jointing stage by March 1. Early California plantings showed good growth. There was less winter damage in Washington and Oregon than anticipated. However, some fields in Washington sustained as much as 50 percent loss and will probably be replanted to spring wheat. The Oregon crop rated fair to good. Snow protected winter wheat in the Corn Belt through the period of lowest temperatures during February. Near the end of the month above normal readings melted the snow very quickly and by the beginning of March the crop lay exposed.

#### FEBRUARY FIELDWORK

Snow accumulations and subnormal temperatures held most outside activity to a minimum during February. Snow in the North and above normal precipitation in the Southeast and Pacific Coast area prevented an early start for spring land preparations. Deep snow blanketed the Nation from the northern Great Plains, across the Corn Belt and into the Northeast. Adverse weather and wet soils stalled the end of the 1978 cotton harvest in several southwestern States. The same conditions along with low soil temperatures delayed cotton planting in southern Texas. Cotton pre-planting activities were on schedule on the High and Low Plains. Growers planted corn by March 1 in several States including Texas, Mississippi, Florida, and Georgia. Planting in these States was limited to lighter, better drained soils. Grain sorghum planting began in southern Texas near the end of February. Progress stood at 1 percent, the same as last year but trailing the 6 percent average. Plowing in the South ranged from 16 to 29 percent complete as March began, almost equal to last year but well behind the average. Tobacco growers tilled plant beds in the Atlantic Coast States from Florida to the Carolinas; Virginia producers began seeding plant beds. Irish potato planting began across the South and the Pacific Northwest. Deciduous fruit growers pruned and sprayed trees as weather conditions permitted. Vegetable planting and harvesting activities were confined to warmer climates in the Southwest, Texas, and Florida.

ORANGES: The U.S. orange production is expected to total 205 million boxes (8.12 million metric tons), slightly above last month's forecast but 7 percent below the 1977-78 crop. Florida prospects remain unchanged at 163 million boxes, 3 percent below last season. Early and mid-season varieties are expected to total 93.0 million boxes, 5 percent above last year's harvest. The Valencia crop is forecast at 70.0 million boxes, 12 percent less than last season's crop. Harvest of early and mid-season oranges is 88 percent complete while harvest of the Valencia crop is just beginning. Mild February temperatures and more than adequate rainfall were beneficial to citrus trees as they neared the bloom period.

In California, crop prospects continued the same at 33.0 million boxes, 21 percent below last season. The Navel crop is expected to total 18.0 million boxes, 10 percent below last season. The Valencia crop is forecast at 15.0 million boxes, 32 percent less than was harvested last season. Navel harvest is about 60 percent complete. The harvest season is now expected to extend into April. Quality is fair with good flavor and texture; however, a considerable amount of the remaining fruit is expected to be utilized as products. Harvest of the Valencia crop began during late February. A larger proportion of the crop is expected to be utilized for processing than in 1977-78 when 41 percent went for processing.

The Texas orange crop is expected to total 6.20 million boxes, 9 percent more than was forecast last month, and 2 percent above last year's production. Harvest of early and mid-season varieties was complete by the end of February. Valencia harvest should continue until mid to late March.

Prospects in Arizona at 3.00 million boxes are 12 percent below last month and 19 percent less than was harvested in 1977-78. Navel harvest is complete while Valencia harvest has not become general.

Changes between the March 1 U.S. orange production forecast and final production have averaged 4.06 million boxes over the past 10 seasons, ranging from 510 thousand boxes in 1974-75 to 11.0 million boxes in the 1975-76 season.

FLORIDA FROZEN CONCENTRATED JUICE YIELD: The all orange juice yield for the 1978-79 crop is projected at 1.33 gallons of 45 degree brix concentrate per box compared with the February projection of 1.32 gallons. The yield from the 1977-78 crop was 1.23 gallons per box.

GRAPEFRUIT: The 1978-79 U.S. grapefruit crop is expected to total 67.3 million boxes (2.50 million metric tons), slightly below last month's forecast and 9 percent below last season. Prospects for the Florida crop were unchanged from February 1 at 50.0 million boxes, 3 percent below the 1977-78 crop. The Texas crop prospects remained at 9.00 million boxes, 24 percent less than was harvested in 1977-78. Harvest of processing fruit is expected to continue through late March. Some bloom occurred in early February but several days of cool weather near the middle of the month delayed additional blooming until the end of February. Full bloom is expected about mid-March. California growers expect to harvest 6.00 million boxes, unchanged from last month but 20 percent below last season. Prospects for the Arizona crop, now expected to total 2.30 million boxes, are down 4 percent from last month and 21 percent below 1977-78.

Harvest of the U.S. grapefruit crop was 56 percent complete by March 1 compared with 43 percent on March 1 last year. Harvest is ahead of last season in all States.

Changes in the U.S. grapefruit production estimate between the March 1 forecast and final production have averaged 2.27 million boxes over the past 10 seasons, ranging from 100 thousand boxes in 1977-78 to 4.70 million boxes in 1976-77.

LEMONS: The California and Arizona lemon crop is expected to total 21.5 million boxes (741 thousand metric tons), 1 percent more than was expected last month but 18 percent less than was harvested in 1977-78. California prospects improved during the month and growers are now expected to harvest 15.5 million boxes, 24 percent less than last season. The desert lemon crop should be finished by the end of March. Quality has been good. Central Valley lemons are sizing better than expected. Frost-damaged fruit remains at about 25 percent of the fruit left on the trees. Coastal lemons are very mature for this time of year. The Arizona crop is now forecast at 6.00 million boxes, 5 percent more than last season. Harvest is slowing and is nearing completion. Harvest in the two States was 56 percent complete on March 1 compared with 48 percent harvested by March 1 last year.

TANGELOS: Florida's tangelo crop is set at 4.20 million boxes (171 thousand metric tons), 5 percent above last month's forecast but 14 percent below 1977-78. Harvest is virtually complete.

TANGERINES: Production is expected to total 5.40 million boxes (217 thousand metric tons), unchanged from both last month and last year. The Florida crop at 3.60 million boxes is 13 percent above last year's crop. The California crop at 1.25 million boxes is 17 percent below last season. The Arizona crop at 550 thousand boxes is 21 percent below 1977-78.

TEMPLES: Production in Florida is estimated at 4.80 million boxes (196 thousand metric tons), unchanged from last month but 2 percent below last season. Harvest was about 70 percent complete on March 1, the same as on March 1, 1978.

PAPAYAS: Hawaii papaya production during March is forecast at 3.30 million pounds (1500 metric tons), 39 percent more than during February, but 24 percent below last March. February's preliminary production estimate of 2.38 million pounds (1080 metric tons) is the lowest since March 1974. Heavy rains periodically halted all field and harvesting operations in major growing areas. Conditions were particularly severe on Hawaii Island, the major producing area, as the cool, wet weather delayed fruit ripening and also increased the incidence of disease to a very serious level. Normal weather conditions now prevail and are expected to continue. However, lingering effects from the rains have caused a downward revision of the forecasts for the coming months. Production in April is expected to total 3.60 million pounds (1630 metric tons). As farmers continue to restore their fields, production should increase to levels of 4.00 and 4.10 million pounds (1810 and 1860 metric tons) in May and June, respectively.

The estimated total area for harvest during February at 2400 acres (970 hectares) was slightly higher than January's 2380 harvested acres (960 hectares).

POTATOES: The final forecast for the 1979 winter potato crop in California and Florida is set at 2.72 million cwt. (124 thousand metric tons), unchanged from the February forecast but 4 percent above the 1978 production. Harvest continues at a slow pace in California with digging delayed at times because of wet fields. About 75 percent of the acreage has been harvested. Digging is underway in the Winter Garden area of Florida. Harvest of Reds in the Fort Myers area is active with good yields reported. White varieties are making good growth and digging is expected to begin by the end of the month. In Dade County, harvest is underway and should be active through March. Harvest is about complete in the Everglades and is winding down in the Southeast coastal area.

Producers of spring potatoes in the 7 producing States expect to harvest 92.4 thousand acres (37.4 thousand hectares), 2 percent above the 90.9 thousand acres (36.8 thousand hectares) harvested in 1978. Estimates in Mississippi have been discontinued commencing with the 1979 crop.

In California, planting is nearly finished. Many fields in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas are up to a good stand and making favorable progress. Harvest is expected to begin around mid-April. Planting in the Winter Garden area will be completed by mid-month. In the Knox-Haskell area, planting was delayed early in the season by cold, wet weather but has resumed and is expected to continue through March.

In the Hastings area of Florida, planting was practically complete by early March. There have been some problems with seed rotting because of excessive moisture. However, this is not as extensive as last year. Harvest is expected to begin in late April. Early planted fields in the other areas of Florida are up to a good stand and making favorable progress. Planting has been delayed in North Carolina because of recent wet field conditions.



## CITRUS FRUIT

1/

CROP AND STATE	PRODUCTION BOXES			PRODUCTION TON EQUIVALENT		
	UTILIZED		INDICATED	UTILIZED		INDICATED
	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79
	1,000 UNITS		2/	1,000 UNITS		
ORANGES, EARLY MID & NAVAL 3/						
ARIZ	800	820	700	30	31	26
CALIF	25,600	20,000	18,000	960	750	675
FLA	115,000	88,300	93,000	5,175	3,974	4,185
TEX	4,350	3,850	4,200	185	164	179
U S	145,750	112,970	115,900	6,350	4,919	5,065
ORANGES, VALENCIA						
ARIZ	3,150	2,900	2,300	118	109	86
CALIF	19,700	22,000	15,000	739	825	563
FLA	71,800	79,500	70,000	3,231	3,578	3,150
TEX	2,550	2,250	2,000	108	96	85
U S	97,200	106,650	89,300	4,196	4,608	3,884
ALL ORANGES						
ARIZ	3,950	3,720	3,000	148	140	112
CALIF	45,300	42,000	33,000	1,699	1,575	1,238
FLA	186,800	167,800	163,000	8,406	7,552	7,335
TEX	6,900	6,100	6,200	293	260	264
U S	242,950	219,620	205,200	10,546	9,527	8,949
TEMPLES						
FLA	3,800	4,900	4,800	171	221	216
GRAPEFRUIT, WHITE SEEDLESS						
FLA	29,900	28,700	28,000	1,271	1,220	1,190
GRAPEFRUIT, PINK SEEDLESS						
FLA	12,500	14,300	13,000	531	608	553
OTHER GRAPEFRUIT						
FLA	9,100	8,400	9,000	387	357	383
ALL GRAPEFRUIT						
ARIZ	3,000	2,900	2,300	96	93	76
CALIF						
DESERT	4,500	4,300	3,500	144	138	112
OTHER AREAS	3,200	3,200	2,500	107	107	84
TOTAL	7,700	7,500	6,000	251	245	196
FLA	51,500	51,400	50,000	2,189	2,185	2,126
TEX	12,400	11,900	9,000	496	476	360
U S	74,600	73,700	67,300	3,032	2,999	2,756
TANGERINES						
ARIZ	650	700	550	24	26	21
CALIF	1,820	1,500	1,250	68	56	47
FLA	3,300	3,200	3,600	157	152	171
U S	5,770	5,400	5,400	249	234	239
LEMONS						
ARIZ	5,000	5,700	6,000	190	217	228
CALIF	21,000	20,400	15,500	798	775	589
U S	26,000	26,100	21,500	988	992	817
TANGELOS						
FLA	4,800	4,900	4,200	216	221	189

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.