

Crop Production



USDA
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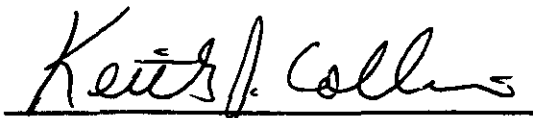
Record Large Orange Production

All oranges production for the 1996-97 season is forecast at a record-high 12.5 million tons, up 1 percent from the previous forecast in December and up 6 percent from a year ago. This year's crop is 5 percent larger than the previous record of 11.8 million tons set in the 1979-80 season. Florida's production amounts to 220 million boxes (9.90 million tons), unchanged from December but 8 percent above last season. Florida's all orange, early varieties, and Valencia production forecasts remained unchanged from last month and are each record large crops. Early and mid-season varieties are expected to produce 130 million boxes (5.85 million tons), 7 percent above last year. The Valencia forecast is 90.0 million boxes (4.05 million tons), 10 percent above a year ago. The California all orange production forecast, at 65.0 million boxes (2.44 million tons), is up 3 percent from the previous forecast in October but is 2 percent less than last season. The California Navel orange forecast is 39.0 million boxes (1.46 million tons), up 5 percent from October and up 3 percent from last year's production. The California Valencia forecast is unchanged at 26.0 million boxes (975,000 tons), 7 percent less than last year.

All cotton production is forecast at 19.0 million bales, up 1 percent from last month and a 6 percent increase from last year. This is the second largest production on record. Yield is a record high 709 pounds per harvested acre, up 172 pounds from 1995. Production in Texas increased 150,000 bales from December, and the Upland cotton yield of 522 pounds per harvested acre is a record high. Although early season weather caused high abandonment in Texas, favorable growing conditions in late summer and an open harvest period, resulted in large numbers of bolls and high boll weights. Georgia's production was increased 100,000 bales from last month, as yields were better than expected.

Florida frozen concentrated orange juice (FCOJ) yield for the 1996-97 season is forecast at 1.53 gallons per box at 42.0 degrees Brix, unchanged from December. The forecast projects the final yield as reported by the Florida Citrus Processors Association. The final 1995-96 yield for all fruit used in FCOJ was 1.52 gallons per box at 42.0 degrees Brix. Projected average yield for 1996-97 early and midseason varieties is 1.48 gallons per box compared to last season's final of 1.45. Valencia yield is projected at 1.62 gallons per box compared to 1.67 last season.

This report was approved on January 9, 1997, by the Acting Secretary of Agriculture and the National Agricultural Statistics Service's Agricultural Statistics Board.



Acting Secretary of
Agriculture
Keith J. Collins



Agricultural Statistics Board
Chairperson
Rich Allen

Crop Summary: Area Planted and Harvested, United States,
1995 and Forecasted January 1, 1997
(Domestic Units)

Crop	Area Planted		Area Harvested	
	1995	1996	1995	1996
	1,000 Acres			
All Cotton	16,931.4	14,665.5	16,006.7	12,833.4
Upland	16,716.8	14,407.5	15,795.6	12,577.0
Amer-Pima	214.6	258.0	211.1	256.4

Crop Summary: Yield per Acre and Production, United States,
1995 and Forecasted January 1, 1997
(Domestic Units)

Crop and Unit	Yield per Acre:			Production	
	1995	1996	1995	Dec 1, 1996	Jan 1, 1997
	----- 1,000 -----				
All Cotton 1/ Bale:	537	709	17,899.8	18,738.1	18,951.4
Upland 1/ "	533	703	17,532.2	18,197.1	18,418.4
Amer-Pima 1/ "	836	998	367.6	541.0	533.0
Cottonseed Ton :			6,848.7	7,186.4	7,271.3

1/ Yield in pounds.

Crop Summary: Area Planted and Harvested, United States,
1995 and Forecasted January 1, 1997
(Metric Units)

Crop	Area Planted		Area Harvested	
	1995	1996	1995	1996
	Hectares			
All Cotton	6,851,970	5,934,980	6,477,750	5,193,550
Upland	6,765,120	5,830,570	6,392,320	5,089,790
Amer-Pima	86,850	104,410	85,430	103,760

Crop Summary: Yield per Hectare and Production, United States,
1995 and Forecasted January 1, 1997
(Metric Units)

Crop	Yield per Hectare:		Production		
	1995	1996	1995	Dec 1, 1996	Jan 1, 1997
	Metric Tons				
All Cotton	0.60	0.79	3,897,230	4,079,740	4,126,180
Upland	0.60	0.79	3,817,190	3,961,950	4,010,130
Amer-Pima	0.94	1.12	80,040	117,790	116,050
Cottonseed			6,213,040	6,519,390	6,596,410

Crop Summary: Production, United States,
1995-96 and Forecasted 1996-97

Crop	Utilized Production		
		Dec 1, 1996	Jan 1, 1997
Crop Year 1/	1995-96	1996-97	1996-97
		1,000 Tons	
Citrus Fruits			
Oranges	11,723	12,380	12,452
Grapefruit	2,718	3,041	3,064
Lemons 2/	992	1,015	988
Tangerines	348	415	414
Temples (FL)	97	113	113
Tangelos (FL)	110	171	171
K-Early Citrus (FL)	7	7	7
		Metric Tons	
Oranges	10,634,930	11,230,950	11,296,260
Grapefruit	2,465,730	2,758,750	2,779,610
Lemons 2/	899,930	920,790	896,300
Tangerines	315,700	376,480	375,570
Temples (FL)	88,000	102,510	102,510
Tangelos (FL)	99,790	155,130	155,130
K-Early Citrus (FL)	6,350	6,350	6,350

- 1/ Crop year begins with the bloom of the first year and ends with the completion of harvest the following year.
2/ December 1 forecast carried forward from October 1.

Crop Summary: Area Planted, Harvested, Yield, and Production,
United States, 1996-97 (Domestic Units)

Crop	Area Planted		Area Harvested	
	1996	1997	1996	1997
	1,000 Acres			
Winter Potatoes	14.5	14.7	14.5	14.7
Crop	Yield Per Acre		Production	
	1996	1997	1996	1997
	----- Cwt -----		---- 1,000 Cwt ----	
Winter Potatoes	226	219	3,273	3,225

Crop Summary: Area Planted, Harvested, Yield, and Production,
United States, 1996-97 (Metric Units)

Crop	Area Planted		Area Harvested	
	1996	1997	1996	1997
	Hectares			
Winter Potatoes	5,870	5,950	5,870	5,950
Crop	Yield Per Hectare		Production	
	1996	1997	1996	1997
	Metric Tons			
Winter Potatoes	25.29	24.58	148,460	146,280

Crop Summary: Hay Stocks on Farms, United States, 1994-96

Date	:	1994	:	1995	:	1996
	:			1,000 Tons		
May 1	:	22,096		20,775		20,739
December 1	:	105,296		109,438		105,208
	:			Metric Tons		
May 1	:	20,045,150		18,846,760		18,814,100
December 1	:	95,522,920		99,280,480		95,443,090

Cotton: Area Planted and Harvested by Type, State,
and United States, 1994-96

Type and State	Area Planted			Area Harvested		
	1994	1995	1996	1994	1995	1996
1,000 Acres						
Upland						
AL	463.0	590.0	540.0	455.0	578.0	538.0
AZ	313.0	365.0	315.0	312.0	364.0	314.0
AR	980.0	1,170.0	1,000.0	970.0	1,110.0	990.0
CA	1,100.0	1,170.0	1,000.0	1,095.0	1,165.0	995.0
FL	69.0	110.0	100.0	68.0	109.0	99.0
GA	885.0	1,500.0	1,350.0	875.0	1,490.0	1,345.0
KS	1.4	3.8	4.5	1.2	2.6	4.0
LA	900.0	1,085.0	890.0	890.0	1,075.0	885.0
MS	1,280.0	1,460.0	1,120.0	1,270.0	1,420.0	1,100.0
MO	352.0	462.0	390.0	345.0	453.0	385.0
NM	55.0	61.0	60.0	50.0	56.0	58.0
NC	486.0	805.0	721.0	485.0	800.0	710.0
OK	360.0	380.0	290.0	340.0	315.0	240.0
SC	225.0	348.0	284.0	223.0	342.0	282.0
TN	590.0	700.0	540.0	585.0	660.0	530.0
TX	5,450.0	6,400.0	5,700.0	5,150.0	5,750.0	4,000.0
VA	42.2	107.0	103.0	41.7	106.0	102.0
US	13,551.6	16,716.8	14,407.5	13,155.9	15,795.6	12,577.0
Amer-Pima						
AZ	48.0	48.6	42.0	47.9	48.1	41.9
CA	81.0	115.0	165.0	80.8	115.0	164.5
NM	11.0	15.0	14.0	10.7	15.0	14.0
TX	28.5	36.0	37.0	27.0	33.0	36.0
US	168.5	214.6	258.0	166.4	211.1	256.4
All						
AL	463.0	590.0	540.0	455.0	578.0	538.0
AZ	361.0	413.6	357.0	359.9	412.1	355.9
AR	980.0	1,170.0	1,000.0	970.0	1,110.0	990.0
CA	1,181.0	1,285.0	1,165.0	1,175.8	1,280.0	1,159.5
FL	69.0	110.0	100.0	68.0	109.0	99.0
GA	885.0	1,500.0	1,350.0	875.0	1,490.0	1,345.0
KS	1.4	3.8	4.5	1.2	2.6	4.0
LA	900.0	1,085.0	890.0	890.0	1,075.0	885.0
MS	1,280.0	1,460.0	1,120.0	1,270.0	1,420.0	1,100.0
MO	352.0	462.0	390.0	345.0	453.0	385.0
NM	66.0	76.0	74.0	60.7	71.0	72.0
NC	486.0	805.0	721.0	485.0	800.0	710.0
OK	360.0	380.0	290.0	340.0	315.0	240.0
SC	225.0	348.0	284.0	223.0	342.0	282.0
TN	590.0	700.0	540.0	585.0	660.0	530.0
TX	5,478.5	6,436.0	5,737.0	5,177.0	5,783.0	4,036.0
VA	42.2	107.0	103.0	41.7	106.0	102.0
US	13,720.1	16,931.4	14,665.5	13,322.3	16,006.7	12,833.4

Cotton: Yield and Production by Type, State,
and United States, 1994-96

Type And State	Yield			Production 1/		
	1994	1995	1996	1994	1995	1996
	Pounds			1,000 Bales 2/		
Upland						
AL	766	409	723	726.0	492.0	810.0
AZ	1,203	1,046	1,177	782.0	793.0	770.0
AR	877	635	776	1,772.0	1,468.0	1,600.0
CA	1,191	953	1,158	2,717.0	2,312.0	2,400.0
FL	735	472	582	104.1	107.2	120.0
GA	843	625	749	1,537.0	1,941.0	2,100.0
KS	480	185	408	1.2	1.0	3.4
LA	815	614	705	1,512.0	1,375.0	1,300.0
MS	806	622	807	2,132.0	1,841.0	1,850.0
MO	856	544	748	615.0	513.0	600.0
NM	720	609	794	75.0	71.0	96.0
NC	820	479	669	829.0	798.0	990.0
OK	349	187	260	247.0	123.0	130.0
SC	846	528	791	393.0	376.0	465.0
TN	726	527	610	885.0	724.0	674.0
TX	458	372	522	4,915.0	4,460.0	4,350.0
VA	944	620	753	82.0	137.0	160.0
US	705	533	703	19,324.3	17,532.2	18,418.4
Amer-Pima						
AZ	806	720	836	80.4	72.2	73.0
CA	1,098	937	1,109	184.8	224.5	380.0
NM	875	605	686	19.5	18.9	20.0
TX	942	756	800	53.0	52.0	60.0
US	974	836	998	337.7	367.6	533.0
All						
AL	766	409	723	726.0	492.0	810.0
AZ	1,150	1,008	1,137	862.4	865.2	843.0
AR	877	635	776	1,772.0	1,468.0	1,600.0
CA	1,185	951	1,151	2,901.8	2,536.5	2,780.0
FL	735	472	582	104.1	107.2	120.0
GA	843	625	749	1,537.0	1,941.0	2,100.0
KS	480	185	408	1.2	1.0	3.4
LA	815	614	705	1,512.0	1,375.0	1,300.0
MS	806	622	807	2,132.0	1,841.0	1,850.0
MO	856	544	748	615.0	513.0	600.0
NM	747	608	773	94.5	89.9	116.0
NC	820	479	669	829.0	798.0	990.0
OK	349	187	260	247.0	123.0	130.0
SC	846	528	791	393.0	376.0	465.0
TN	726	527	610	885.0	724.0	674.0
TX	461	375	524	4,968.0	4,512.0	4,410.0
VA	944	620	753	82.0	137.0	160.0
US	708	537	709	19,662.0	17,899.8	18,951.4

1/ Production ginned and to be ginned.

2/ 480-Lb. net weight bales.

Cottonseed: Production by State and United States, 1994-1996

State	Production		
	1994	1995	1996 1/
	1,000 Tons		
AL	271.0	162.0	290.0
AZ	324.0	334.0	322.0
AR	712.0	580.0	646.0
CA	1,063.0	940.0	1,020.0
FL	33.0	38.0	40.0
GA	516.0	674.0	720.0
KS	.5	.3	1.3
LA	549.0	499.0	475.0
MS	842.0	727.0	738.0
MO	238.0	221.0	244.0
NM	36.4	33.4	46.0
NC	295.0	282.0	351.0
OK	101.0	56.0	55.0
SC	134.0	132.0	164.0
TN	348.0	292.0	268.0
TX	2,111.0	1,828.0	1,833.0
VA	30.0	50.0	58.0
US	7,603.9	6,848.7	7,271.3

1/ Estimates based on 3-year average lint-seed ratio.

Potatoes: Area Planted, Harvested, Yield, and Production
by Seasonal Group, State, and United States, 1995-97

Seasonal Group and State	Area				Yield		Production		
	Planted		Harvested						
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997
	----- 1,000 Acres -----				--- Cwt ---		----- 1,000 Cwt -----		
Winter									
CA	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	250	250	1,300	1,425	1,425
FL	8.8	9.0	8.8	9.0	210	200	1,173	1,848	1,800
Total	14.5	14.7	14.5	14.7	226	219	2,473	3,273	3,225
Spring 1/									
AL	2.0		1.9		160		400	304	
AZ	9.0		9.0		275		1,755	2,475	
CA	20.1		20.1		375		6,230	7,538	
FL	38.0		35.5		219		7,830	7,765	
Hastings	28.5		27.5		230		5,940	6,325	
Other FL	9.5		8.0		180		1,890	1,440	
NC	17.5		17.0		190		3,053	3,230	
TX	6.8		6.5		170		925	1,105	
Total	93.4		90.0		249		20,193	22,417	

1/ 1996 revised; 1997 forecast will be published on April 11, 1997.

Papayas: Area and Fresh Production, by Month, Hawaii, 1995-96

Month	Area				Fresh Production	
	Total in Crop		Harvested			
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996
	----- Acres -----				-- 1,000 Pounds --	
Nov	3,760	3,500	2,370	1,400	3,775	2,970
Dec	3,790	3,455	2,415	1,475	3,510	3,040

Citrus Fruits: Utilized Production by Crop, State, and United States,
1995-96 and Forecasted January 1, 1997 1/

Crop and State	Utilized Production Boxes			Utilized Production Ton Equivalent		
	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
	----- 1,000 Boxes 2/ -----			----- 1,000 Tons -----		
Oranges						
Early Mid & Navel 3/						
AZ	400	700	550	15	27	21
CA	35,000	38,000	39,000	1,313	1,426	1,463
FL	119,700	121,200	130,000	5,387	5,454	5,850
TX	950	830	1,300	40	35	55
US	156,050	160,730	170,850	6,755	6,942	7,389
Valencia						
AZ	650	950	850	24	36	32
CA	21,000	28,000	26,000	788	1,051	975
FL	85,800	82,000	90,000	3,861	3,690	4,050
TX	105	110	150	4	4	6
US	107,555	111,060	117,000	4,677	4,781	5,063
All						
AZ	1,050	1,650	1,400	39	63	53
CA	56,000	66,000	65,000	2,101	2,477	2,438
FL	205,500	203,200	220,000	9,248	9,144	9,900
TX	1,055	940	1,450	44	39	61
US	263,605	271,790	287,850	11,432	11,723	12,452
Temples						
FL	2,550	2,150	2,500	114	97	113
Grapefruit						
White Seedless						
FL	25,700	23,200	26,500	1,092	986	1,126
Colored Seedless						
FL	28,700	28,100	31,500	1,220	1,194	1,339
Other						
FL	1,300	1,050	1,000	55	45	43
All						
AZ	1,400	1,200	1,000	47	40	34
CA 4/						
Desert	3,300			111		
Other Areas	6,000			201		
Total	9,300	8,100	9,000	312	271	302
FL	55,700	52,350	59,000	2,367	2,225	2,508
TX	4,650	4,550	5,500	186	182	220
US	71,050	66,200	74,500	2,912	2,718	3,064
Tangerines						
AZ	650	1,000	750	25	38	28
CA	2,500	2,600	2,700	94	97	101
FL	3,550	4,500	6,000	168	213	285
US	6,700	8,100	9,450	287	348	414
Lemons						
AZ	3,600	5,100	4,000	137	194	152
CA	20,000	21,000	22,000	760	798	836
US	23,600	26,100	26,000	897	992	988
Tangelos						
FL	3,150	2,450	3,800	142	110	171
K-Early Citrus						
FL	120	160	150	5	7	7

Citrus Fruit Footnotes

- 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-AZ & CA-75, FL-90, TX-85; grapefruit-AZ & CA-67, FL-85, TX-80; lemons-76, tangelos, K-Early Citrus & Temples-90; tangerines-AZ & CA-75, FL-95.
- 3/ Navel and miscellaneous varieties in AZ and CA. Early and mid-season varieties in FL and TX, including small quantities of tangerines in TX.
- 4/ California Desert and Other Areas Grapefruit forecasts combined to All Grapefruit beginning in 1995-96.

Hay: Stocks on Farms, December 1 and May 1 by State
and United States, 1994-96

State	December 1			May 1		
	1994	1995 1/	1996	1995	1996 1/	1997
	1,000 Tons					
AL	1,537	1,270	1,489	276	106	
AZ	133	265	82	27	28	
AR	2,055	1,910	1,850	426	141	
CA	1,642	2,250	2,594	327	361	
CO	2,030	2,390	1,945	447	636	
CT	105	78	97	32	11	
DE	12	9	11	10	1	
FL	490	397	437	132	29	
GA	1,170	1,050	924	371	150	
ID	2,263	2,794	2,285	222	660	
IL	1,397	1,979	1,350	540	432	
IN	1,097	1,584	1,131	148	216	
IA	4,274	4,079	3,876	751	736	
KS	5,080	4,590	5,600	796	787	
KY	5,292	4,806	4,334	648	492	
LA	512	513	502	97	15	
ME	243	272	202	61	126	
MD	347	265	433	20	55	
MA	138	115	95	28	17	
MI	3,020	3,166	2,514	1,074	754	
MN	4,895	4,374	4,018	753	694	
MS	1,688	1,368	1,620	206	50	
MO	5,755	6,000	6,159	1,016	955	
MT	3,950	4,931	4,674	772	858	
NE	5,413	4,813	5,063	1,112	1,325	
NV	630	750	752	42	166	
NH	90	82	70	26	16	
NJ	205	131	92	60	48	
NM	525	600	590	50	40	
NY	2,377	2,069	2,254	594	552	
NC	807	900	970	131	116	
ND	4,285	5,044	4,777	857	1,019	
OH	2,410	2,421	2,074	307	323	
OK	3,500	3,600	4,500	700	500	
OR	1,761	2,310	2,108	85	264	
PA	2,717	2,513	2,613	724	617	
RI	9	6	7	3	1	
SC	332	468	308	130	72	
SD	7,477	8,960	8,530	1,759	3,077	
TN	3,340	3,136	3,049	721	235	
TX	7,610	7,322	6,252	1,606	570	
UT	1,452	1,481	1,327	245	349	
VT	389	391	330	136	100	
VA	2,108	2,185	2,698	445	257	
WA	1,198	1,410	1,162	139	426	
WV	955	855	895	100	53	
WI	5,000	4,900	4,600	1,441	1,569	
WY	1,581	2,636	1,965	182	734	
US	105,296	109,438	105,208	20,775	20,739	

1/ Revised.

December Weather Summary: Arctic and Pacific air waged battle across the continental United States. The latter eventually overspread the Nation, but not before cold air made a serious but short-lived incursion into the South on December 18-19, delivering in some cases the lowest temperatures in 6 years. But the Northwest paid a steep price for the Pacific warmth, enduring flooding triggered by more than 40 inches of precipitation in the Sierra Nevada and the rapid melting of record snowfall from Washington to western Montana.

Although monthly temperatures averaged up to 9 degrees F below normal in the northern Plains, most of the Nation experienced warmer-than-normal conditions. December-record warmth peppered New England, where departures ranged from +5 to +11 degrees F.

Location	Average (degrees F)	Departure	Former Record
Caribou, ME	26.2	+11.4	24.0 in 1973
Burlington, VT	32.7	+9.7	31.9 in 1982
Portland, ME	34.5	+8.0	33.7 in 1990

The December 18-19 cold outbreak produced lows of 26 degrees F in Tucson, AZ and 29 degrees F in Brownsville, TX, the lowest readings since December 1990. In coastal Texas, Corpus Christi's reading of 21 degrees F was their lowest since December 22, 1989. Farther north, patchy snow cover provided some winter wheat insulation. In Kansas, Goodland's low dipped to -9 degrees F. During a second outbreak, on December 25-26, lows on the central Plains briefly dipped to near 0 degrees F. Meanwhile in Montana, Glasgow's low plunged to -36 degrees F.

In the Northwest, a 12-week wet spell culminated in major flooding at month's end. Monthly precipitation ranged from 200 to 400 percent of normal from Oregon to central California, northeastward into western Montana. Heavy snow fell throughout the Northwestern and North Central States, while rain and snow--specially before mid-December--perpetuated the Northeast's 15-month period of wetness. In contrast, little or no precipitation fell from the southern Rockies into the central and southern Plains. As a result, records for both December-record wetness and dryness were set in various parts of the country:

Location	Total (Inches)	Former Record (Inches)
Eureka, CA	21.26 (all-time)	19.42 in February 1902
Astoria, OR	20.38	16.57 in 1955
Olympia, WA	15.91	14.32 in 1970
Salem, OR	14.71	12.40 in 1964
Portland, OR	13.35	11.12 in 1968
Philadelphia, PA	8.47	7.37 in 1983
El Paso, TX	0.00	not available
Midland, TX	trace	not available
Abilene, TX	trace	not available
Wichita Falls, TX	trace	not available
Albuquerque, NM	trace	not available
Alamosa, CO	trace	trace in 1980 and earlier occasions
Tucson, AZ	trace	trace in 1981 and eight other times
Dodge City, KS	trace	trace in 1957, 1889
Oklahoma City, OK	trace	0.03 in 1955, 1910, 1908
Kansas City, MO	0.03	not available
Topeka, KS	0.04	0.05 in 1979, 1889

Monthly totals along the west slopes of the Sierra Nevada topped 40 inches in several locations, including 43.32 inches in the American River basin at Blue Canyon and 44.67 inches in the Feather River basin at Strawberry Valley. Precipitation fell heavily in the West until mid-month, then resumed more intensely than before around December 20. Toward month's end, freezing levels lifted and arctic air retreated northward, melting massive amounts of snow throughout the Northwest. Nevertheless, the Sierra Nevada snowpack's water

equivalent averaged 20 inches (about 160 percent of normal) at year's end. Meanwhile, snow in Washington totaled a December-record 42.7 inches in Spokane (breaking their 1964 record of 42.0 inches), and accumulated to an all-time-record 27 inches in Yakima (eclipsing their December 21, 1964, standard of 22 inches).

Farther east, near-record snowfall blanketed locations such as Duluth, MN (41.7 inches) and Marquette, MI (79.8 inches). For the second consecutive month, snowfall topped 20 inches in Fargo, ND (20.4 inches) and International Falls, MN (24.7 inches), as frequent white-out conditions continued to plague the North Central States. Some areas from the eastern Great Lakes to interior New England also received heavy snow, including Grand Rapids, MI (24.6 inches) and Worcester, MA (26.8 inches). During the cold outbreak on December 18-19, snow fell as far south as the Gulf Coast, totaling 2.0 inches in Montgomery, AL.

All but western and northern Alaska shared in the northern Plains' cold. Fairbanks' temperature averaged 7 degrees F below normal, resulting in their coldest December since 1980. Precipitation averaged below normal nearly statewide. In Hawaii, heavy rain across Maui County late in the month interrupted an otherwise dry pattern, as the West Coast's impressive moisture fetch remained just north of the islands.

General Crop Comments: The month started with heavy rains and high winds along the Pacific Northwest, causing flooding. Wheat producers in the Northern States were concerned about early snow accumulation and the lateness of small grain seedings, while producers in the central High Plains were concerned about the lack of moisture. In the southern Great Plains, cold, wet weather slowed the cotton harvest, but the moisture improved wheat conditions. Wet weather in early December across the Southeast slowed field operations and limited cotton harvest activity. Beneficial rain in Florida aided plants recovering from recent wind damage, but slowed some vegetable harvest for the holiday markets. Cool nights and cloudy conditions have helped citrus trees harden up, with most of the early fruit reported in good condition and coloring well.

Later in the month, heavy rain continued along the Pacific Coast, causing flooding and leaving many fields too wet for fieldwork. Significant snowfall across the upper Great Plains and Great Lakes region provided adequate snow cover for small grains. Farther south, above-normal temperatures prevailed across the southern Great Plains, generating vigorous winter wheat growth, and allowing cotton producers to make good harvest progress. Continued dry weather in the central High Plains, combined with windy weather, threatened some wheat fields. Dry weather in Florida furnished ideal harvesting conditions, while low temperatures and some scattered frost held new growth on citrus in check.

On December 20, low temperatures hit Florida's citrus belt, but windy weather prevented frost from forming. The cold weather slowed Florida's citrus trees' rate of growth. Most vegetables in south Florida were undamaged by the cold, but a hard frost farther north brought an end to harvest activity. Heavy rain returned to California, causing flooding and disrupting fieldwork. Below-freezing temperatures in parts of south Texas and Louisiana burned some crops' leaves and caused sugarcane producers to quickly complete the harvest of frost-damaged sugarcane. A blizzard across the upper Great Plains and Great Lakes region threatened livestock but provided adequate snow cover for small grains. Completion of the cotton harvest was delayed by precipitation later in the month from the Delta to the Tennessee Valley. Patchy snow cover in parts of the central Great Plains, combined with very low temperatures, threatened some winter wheat.

At month's end, saturated fields in the Pacific Northwest were overwhelmed by a barrage of moisture that caused flooding. The heavy rain followed snow that caused significant damage and left many farms without electricity. High winds, combined with the freezing rain, threatened ornamental and fruit trees. The excessive downpour and potential flooding jeopardized vineyards in parts of California. Most winter wheat in the Northern States was unharmed by the frigid, sub-zero temperatures due to the substantial snow cover, but farther south, fluctuating temperatures and uneven snow cover in the central Great Plains stressed some exposed winter wheat. The end of December brought a return of mild weather in Florida, aiding vegetables recovering from the previous week's cold snap. Cool nights in Florida's citrus belt prevented new growth.

Cotton: Upland cotton planted acreage is estimated at 14.4 million acres, down 14 percent from 1995, and harvested acreage, at 12.6 million acres, was 20 percent less than last year. Producers planted 258,000 acres of American-Pima cotton in 1996, up 20 percent from 1995 and harvested acreage is estimated at 256,400 acres, a 21 percent increase from last year.

In Texas, harvest was 90 percent complete in late December, as open weather generally prevailed during the harvest season. Storms in early June provided some relief from the dry planting conditions in May, but high winds and hail damaged acreage, forcing producers to replant. Poor growing conditions had adverse effects on the South Texas crop during the planting season. These adverse conditions resulted in an abandonment of 30 percent of Texas' planted acreage. Texas producers planted 5.70 million acres, down 11 percent from 1995, and harvested acres, at 4.00 million were down 30 percent. In August and September, rainfall resulted in the highest boll counts and second highest boll weights since 1986.

The Delta States (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee) lagged behind the average planting pace due to wet soils and because other row crops were being planted. In mid-May, producers exceeded the 5-year average pace, and planting was complete in mid-June. Crop development was ahead of average during the season. Louisiana's crop suffered from dry conditions during early summer, and boll counts ranked ninth, but boll weights were second highest since 1986. Boll weights ranked eighth and sixth in Arkansas and Mississippi, respectively, but Arkansas' large boll counts ranked fourth highest and Mississippi's ranked second highest during the past 10 years. Planted acreage in this region was down 19 percent from 1995 and harvested acreage was down 18 percent.

Arizona's planted and harvested acres decreased by 14 percent from 1995, and California producers decreased acreage 15 percent for both planted and harvested acreage. Arizona's acreage was planted well ahead of the average pace, due to approval of early planting dates in an attempt to lessen any effects of whitefly. California's seeding pace was behind average, as low April soil temperatures and rainfall in mid-April and mid-May slowed activity and also caused some replantings. California's boll counts were second lowest and boll weights were third lowest since 1986.

In the Southeastern States (Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina), cotton acreage was 11 percent less than in 1995, at 2.90 million acres. The planting pace was slightly behind average in Alabama and Georgia early in the season, but early May storms followed by a dry period, allowed producers to exceed the average pace by mid-May. Early June storms in these two States replenished soil moisture and improved crop condition. Hurricane Fran entered North Carolina on September 5, flooding some acreage and deteriorating the condition and yield prospects as it moved across the cotton producing areas. More storms followed hurricane Fran during the month, which slowed harvest in most of the region.

American-Pima production is forecast at 533,000 bales, up 45 percent from 1995's output, and down 8,000 bales from the December forecast. Yield is indicated at 998 pounds per harvested acre, up 162 pounds from last year as a result of favorable weather during most of the season. However, early season high temperatures in California and late October rainfall, diminished yield prospects and quality. California producers increased their seedings 43 percent from the previous year, to 165,000 acres, and Texas' acreage increased 3 percent from 1995 to 37,000 acres.

All cotton ginnings totaled 17,684,650 running bales prior to January 1, compared with 17,011,400 running bales ginned to the same date last year and 18,438,400 running bales in 1994.

Winter Potatoes: Production of winter potatoes in 1997 is forecast at 3.23 million cwt. This is down 1 percent from 1996 but 30 percent above 1995. Area for harvest is estimated at 14,700 acres, up 1 percent from a year ago and 24 percent above two years ago. The average yield is projected at 219 cwt per acre, 7 cwt lower than last year.

Florida potatoes are mostly planted. Crop conditions are good and harvest should get underway in January. California's potato production is expected to be the same as last year.

Spring Potatoes, 1996 Revised: Production estimates of spring potatoes were revised up 6 percent from the May 1 forecast to 22.4 million cwt in 1996. This is up 11 percent from a year earlier but remained 1 percent below 1994. Harvested area totaled 90,000 acres, up 7 percent from a year ago, and the average yield of 249 cwt per acre gained 9 cwt from last year.

Papayas: Hawaii fresh papaya production is estimated at 3.04 million pounds for December. This was 2 percent higher than November but 13 percent lower than December 1995.

Weather conditions during December were variable. Showers during the first half of December kept soil moisture adequate. Cool temperatures slowed growth and maturity of fruit.

Area in production totaled 3,455 acres. This was 1 percent lower than November and 9 percent lower than a year ago. Harvested area, totaling 1,475 acres, was 5 percent higher than last month but 39 percent lower than December 1995.

Grapefruit: The January 1 forecast of the 1996-97 U.S. grapefruit crop is a record large 3.06 million tons, 1 percent larger than last month's forecast and 13 percent larger than last year. This year's crop surpasses the previous record of 3.032 million tons in the 1976-77 season.

The Florida all grapefruit forecast is a record large 59.0 million boxes (2.51 million tons), unchanged from the last forecast but 13 percent more than last season. The all seedless grapefruit forecast was held at 58.0 million boxes. The varietal divisions of 26.5 million boxes of white grapefruit and 31.5 million boxes of colored grapefruit were maintained. If attained, the total seedless will be 13 percent above the 51.3 million boxes recorded last season and 7 percent above the recorded high of 54.4 million boxes attained in the 1994-95 season. The colored forecast exceeds the record 1994-95 crop of 28.7 million boxes by 10 percent and last season's by 12 percent. The white

variety exceeds last season by 14 percent but will not be a record. The December survey of fruit size indicated that the averages of both white and colored are surprisingly close to the means of the 28-season historic series. However, they are far smaller than the extremely large sizes of the past two seasons. Loss from fruit droppage through late December has been minimal and well below the average of the past 5 seasons. Movement of all seedless grapefruit is just about 10.8 million boxes with 7 million going to fresh markets. The seedy (Duncan) grapefruit forecast was held at 1.0 million boxes (43,000 tons).

The Florida forecasts are based on objective fruit counts and measurement surveys in relationship to the harvest patterns and utilization of the past two seasons. All citrus forecasts project certified utilization including a pre-season allocation of less than two percent for unrecorded usage. Certifications include only fruit actually shipped in fresh pack or recorded at a processing plant.

California's crop is forecast at 9.00 million boxes (302,000 tons), up 13 percent from the last forecast in October and 11 percent from last season. Crop is slightly ahead of normal due to higher than normal temperatures this past fall. Harvest started in the desert area, and grading was good to excellent with good sizing reported. Some thrips scar, redscale, and wind scar defects were noted. The Texas grapefruit forecast, at 5.50 million boxes (220,000 tons), is down 4 percent from December's forecast but up 21 percent from the 1995-96 season. Utilization reports indicate a slightly smaller crop than originally forecast. Arizona's grapefruit forecast decreased 9 percent to 1.00 million boxes (34,000 tons), 17 percent less than last year's crop. Citrus growers continue to take grapefruit acreage out of production. Fruit is of average size and quality is good.

Lemons: The 1996-97 lemon crop is forecast at 988,000 tons, 3 percent less than the last forecast in October and slightly less than the 1995-96 crop.

California production in 1996-97 is forecast at 22.0 million boxes (836,000 tons), unchanged from the last forecast but 5 percent more than last year. Grades throughout the state were fair to good, with quality reported as excellent. Grade defects are wind scar, sunburn, and picking injuries. The Arizona lemon crop is expected to be 4.00 million boxes (152,000 tons), down 15 percent from the last forecast and down 22 percent from last year. Growers continue to take acreage out at a faster pace than the young, nonbearing lemon trees come into production.

Tangelos: Florida's 1996-97 tangelo forecast is 3.80 million boxes (171,000 tons), unchanged from last month's forecast but 55 percent more than last season's crop. Harvest is slightly ahead of last year at the same time with 1.9 million boxes moved through the end of December. Processing is ahead of the past two seasons.

Tangerines: The 1996-97 U.S. tangerine crop is forecast at a record large 414,000 tons, down slightly from December but 19 percent more than last season. Last season's 348,000 tons was the previous record large crop. Florida's tangerine forecast was continued at 6.00 million boxes (285,000 tons), 33 percent more than 1995-96. Harvest of all Florida tangerines through December is a little more than 3.5 million boxes, which is considerably ahead of last year at the same time. Average fruit sizes are still smaller than last season and accumulated loss from droppage to date is at an historic minimum. California's tangerine forecast is 2.70 million boxes (101,000 tons), up 4 percent from the last forecast and from last season. Arizona's forecast was reduced 12 percent from the last forecast in October to 750,000 boxes (28,000 tons), down 25 percent from the 1995-96 crop.

Temples: The 1996-97 forecast of Florida temples remained at 2.50 million boxes (113,000 tons), 16 percent more than last season. Harvest is just underway with only a few thousand boxes picked. The December surveys did not indicate a forecast change.

K-Early Citrus: The 1996-97 K-Early Citrus forecast is 150,000 boxes (7,000 tons), unchanged from December but 6 percent less than last season's 160,000 boxes. K-Early Citrus harvest is complete.

Florida Citrus: Most of Florida's citrus groves were in very good condition during December. There were very few rains and thunderstorms; therefore, many growers used irrigation to maintain good tree and fruit condition. There were a few days when the temperature dropped into the low 30's with no resulting damage to citrus. The cool temperatures helped retard new growth. The last week to ten days of December were very warm with daytime temperatures reaching into the low 80's. There were no reports of new growth flushing on young trees. Harvest of early and midseason oranges was very active with most of this fruit going to the processors. Much seedless grapefruit was moved on the lower east coast where most of the fresh grapefruit packing houses are located. Packing of tangerines and tangelos for the Christmas trade was strong until the last week of the month. Caretakers were busy cutting cover crops prior to harvest operations. Growers dirt-banked young trees and placed heaters in groves in colder areas. Harvest of early and midseason oranges through December was almost 59 million boxes, 10 million boxes less than last year at the same time. Utilization of Navel oranges was almost 5 million boxes.

Texas Citrus: Harvest moved ahead rapidly during December, especially at mid-month when cold weather threatened citrus groves. Temperatures dipped into the mid-twenties for 2-7 hours, not long enough to damage fruit. The cold temperatures did cause some leaf burn. Also, because so many early oranges were mature, the cold weather caused quite a bit of fruit droppage. Droppage increase in grapefruit was not as bad. Dropped fruit was sent to the juice plant. Quality of grapefruit remained good despite the cold.

California Citrus: Grapefruit maturity was slightly ahead of normal due to higher than normal temperatures this past fall. Harvest started in the desert area, and grading was good to excellent with good sizing reported. Some thrips scar, redscale, and wind scar defects were noted. Lemon picking was active throughout the state with excellent quality. Some defects include wind scar, sunburn, and picking injuries. Harvest of the navel orange crop progressed with approximately one-fourth of the crop picked. Wet weather during December resulted in some problems with clear rot. Maturity was good with huge sized fruit. The new crop Valencia oranges matured well with average set and size reported. Harvest should begin in the desert area by mid February. Tangerine quality, condition, and color were reported good. Some defects were flatsides, sunburn, and wind scar; texture was pebbly in the larger sizes.

California Fruits and Nuts: Wet weather during much of December hampered orchard activities. Conditions permitting, nut and stone fruit orchards and grape vineyards were pruned. Wind in southern California blew many avocados off trees. Kiwifruit harvest ended in early December. Strawberry and bareroot nursery stock digging was active.

Hay Stocks on Farms: Stocks of all hay on farms December 1, 1996 totaled 105 million tons, 4 percent below the stocks on farms December 1, 1995. Stocks decreases occurred in 30 of the 48 contiguous States, mainly in the northern and western States where 1996 all hay production was also down. The largest stocks increases occurred in the Atlantic Coast States, the Central Plain States, and Alabama and Mississippi in the Southeast.

Report Features

The next "Crop Production" report will be released at 8:30 a.m. ET on February 12, 1997.

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Crops Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information.

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Joel Moore - Barley, Hay, Sorghum	(202) 690-3234
Greg Preston - Sugar Crops, Weekly Crop Weather, Oats	(202) 720-7621
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Dave Mueller - Fresh and Processing Vegetables, Onions	(202) 720-2157
Linda Simpson - Noncitrus Fruits, Mint, Dry Beans & Peas, Mushrooms, Hops	(202) 690-0270
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