

POTATO STOCKS

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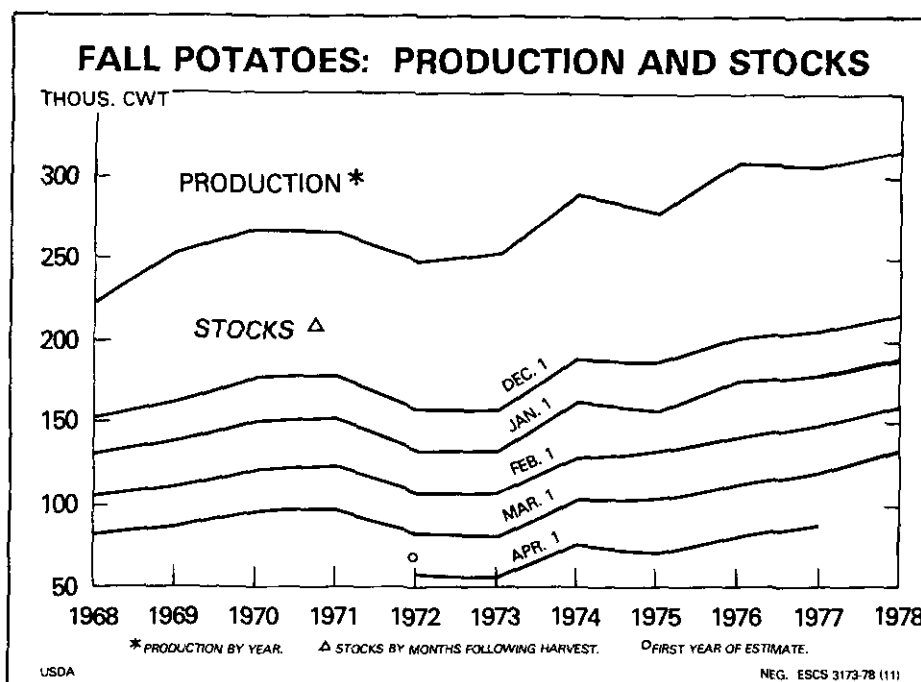
SIX PERCENT MORE POTATO STOCKS ON MARCH 1, 1979

An estimated 129 million cwt. of potatoes for all uses were in storage in the fall producing areas on March 1, 1979. This was 6 percent above a year earlier and 13 percent more than 1977.

The regional breakdown is as follows: The seven Eastern States have 16.4 million cwt. in storage, down 10 percent from a year earlier but 4 percent above 1977. Stocks in Maine amounted to 12.3 million cwt., 15 percent less than last year. Stocks in the eight Central States totaled 25.7 million cwt., 16 percent above last year. The eight Western States had 86.4 million cwt. in storage, up 7 percent from 1978 due mostly to larger holdings in Idaho and Washington.

Disappearance of the 1978 fall crop to March 1, 1979 was 185 million cwt. (excluding Nevada) which includes potatoes diverted to March 1, 1979 under the USDA's potato diversion program. The total disappearance includes 24.9 million cwt. of potatoes that were dumped during grading, fed to livestock on potato farms, discarded without grading and lost due to shrinkage (moisture loss).

The quantity of potatoes processed to March 1, 1979 in the seven major States amounted to 66.5 million cwt., 5 percent less than last year.



NOTE: Stocks are defined as the quantity remaining in storage for all purposes and uses, including shrinkage and waste and other losses that occur after the date of each report. Sales of fall potatoes for all purposes generally account for about 90 percent of the total fall production. Shrinkage and loss and home use account for the remaining 10 percent.

TABLE 1. FALL POTATOES: PRODUCTION, DECEMBER 1, JANUARY 1, FEBRUARY 1, MARCH 1, AND APRIL 1 TOTAL STOCKS, CROPS OF 1968-78 IN THE FALL STATES

YEAR	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS				
		DEC 1	JAN 1	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 1
1,000 CWT						
1968	234,832	152,810	130,350	104,995	81,940	
1969	252,561	162,800	138,140	111,510	87,620	
1970	267,827	175,145	150,030	122,230	96,780	
1971 ^{1/}	266,707	176,390	151,435	124,375	98,485	
1972 ^{2/}	249,320	158,565	134,420	107,310	83,380	58,250
1973	254,379	157,837	133,665	106,615	81,165	55,870
1974	289,342	187,935	163,095	133,425	104,116	75,905
1975	278,391	185,965	159,140	131,685	104,050	71,640
1976	307,427	201,980	174,775	143,925	114,140	81,875
1977	307,064	206,690	178,205	149,690	120,970	89,215
1978	318,702	218,685	190,480	159,141	128,524	

^{1/} BEGINNING WITH 1971, LATE SUMMER PRODUCTION FOR N Y-L I, WIS AND WASH HAS BEEN CLASSIFIED AS FALL.
^{2/} APR 1 STOCKS EFFECTIVE WITH 1972 CROP YEAR.

TABLE 2. POTATOES USED FOR PROCESSING ^{1/}, SEVEN STATES 1977 AND 1978 CROP

STATE	STORAGE SEASON	TO DEC 1	TO JAN 1	TO FEB 1	TO MAR 1	TO APR 1	STORAGE SEASON
1,000 CWT							
IDAHO AND MALHEUR CO., OREG	1977-78	16,761	22,217	27,360	32,913	39,070	61,261
	1978-79	15,660	21,215	26,045	31,115		
MAINE ^{2/}	1977-78	2,500	3,290	4,185	4,980	5,960	8,040
	1978-79	2,280	2,800	3,670	4,390		
WASH AND OTHER AREAS, OREG	1977-78	14,205	17,745	21,620	26,160	30,280	44,460
	1978-79	14,758	18,060	21,910	25,720		
OTHER STATES ^{3/}	1977-78	3,380	4,255	5,405	6,230	7,385	9,855
	1978-79	2,625	3,520	4,420	5,290		
TOTAL	1977-78	36,846	47,507	58,570	70,283	82,695	123,616
	1978-79	35,323	45,595	56,045	66,515		

^{1/} TOTAL QUANTITY RECEIVED AND USED FOR PROCESSING REGARDLESS OF THE STATE IN WHICH THE POTATOES WERE PRODUCED. DOES NOT INCLUDE QUANTITIES USED FOR POTATO CHIPS IN MAINE, MICH OR MINN.
^{2/} INCLUDES MAINE GROWN POTATOES ONLY.
^{3/} MICH, MINN AND N DAK.

TABLE 3. POTATOES: PRODUCTION AND TOTAL STOCKS OF FALL POTATOES HELD BY GROWERS, PROCESSORS, AND LOCAL DEALERS ON MARCH 1, 1978 AND MARCH 1, 1979

STATE	CROP OF 1977			CROP OF 1978		
	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS	MAR 1 STOCKS AS % OF PRODUCTION	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS	MAR 1 STOCKS AS % OF PRODUCTION
	1,000 CWT		PERCENT	1,000 CWT		PERCENT
CALIF	5,950	1,700	29	6,055	1,880	31
COLO	9,490	3,400	36	9,750	3,050	31
CONN	2/	2/		2/	2/	
IDAHO	88,200	46,500	53	96,980	50,000	52
IND	1,128	75	7	936	55	6
MAINE	28,320	14,400	51	26,180	12,300	47
MASS	888	105	12	810	145	18
MICH	8,800	2,400	27	8,670	3,000	35
MINN	12,960	5,700	44	14,910	7,600	51
MONT	2,016	1,770	88	2,088	1,750	84
NEBR	1,440	550	38	1,680	750	45
N H 1/	2/	2/				
N Y - L I	7,182	800	11	6,175	600	10
- UPSTATE	5,356	1,200	22	6,500	1,200	18
N DAK	21,600	8,800	41	22,400	9,900	44
OHIO	2,744	330	12	2,215	260	12
OREG	25,550	10,800	42	28,488	9,900	35
PA	6,375	1,600	25	6,250	2,150	34
R I	2/	2/		2/	2/	
S DAK	1,062	305	29	1,190	180	15
UTAH	1,416	285	20	1,127	280	25
VT	2/	2/		2/	2/	
WASH	50,600	15,900	31	50,685	19,300	38
WIS	18,038	4,000	22	17,325	4,000	23
WYO	1,474	220	15	1,360	190	14
OTH STS	1,715	130	8	1,488	34	2
23 STATE						
TOTAL 3/	302,304	120,970	40	313,262	128,524	41

1/ ESTIMATES DISCONTINUED AFTER 1977 CROP. 2/ INCLUDED IN "OTHER STATES". 3/ EXCLUDING NEV FOR WHICH NO STOCKS ESTIMATES ARE MADE. NEV 1977 PRODUCTION 4,760,000 CWT AND 1978 PRODUCTION 5,440,000 CWT.

To assist users in evaluating the reliability of the March 1, 1979 potato stocks estimates, the "Root Mean Square Error", a statistical measure based on past performance, has been calculated. This is computed by expressing the deviations between the March 1 preliminary estimate and the final estimate as a percent of the final estimate and averaging the squared percentage deviations for the 1959-78 twenty-year period. The square root of this average becomes statistically the "Root Mean Square Error". Probability statements can be made concerning expected errors in the current preliminary estimate relative to the final end of season estimate, assuming that factors affecting this year's estimate are not different from those influencing recent years' preliminary estimates.

The "Root Mean Square Error" for the March 1, 1979 potato stocks estimate is 3.8 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the current estimate of 129 million hundredweight will not be above or below the final estimate by more than 3.8 percent or approximately 4.88 million hundredweight. Chances are 9 out of 10 (90 percent confidence level) that the difference will not exceed 6.6 percent or approximately 8.48 million hundredweight.

During the past 10 years, the difference between the March 1 preliminary and the final estimate averaged 2.9 million hundredweight. The largest deviation was 6.3 million hundredweight and the smallest was .3 million hundredweight. The preliminary March 1 estimate was below the final estimate 9 times and above the final estimate once during the past 10 years.

POTATO STOCKS QUALITY SURVEY
MINNESOTA AND NORTH DAKOTA (RED RIVER VALLEY)

The potato stocks quality information contained in this report is based on a survey conducted by the Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service in the Red River Valley of North Dakota and Minnesota. Sample bags of potatoes selected on a random basis were placed in storage at harvest time. Reports are issued each month during the 1978-79 storage season showing the cumulative average grade and weight loss for potatoes at the time of removal from storage. At the request of the Red River Valley Potato Growers Association, samples were selected only for processing potatoes.

Samples recovered before March 1, 1979 continue to indicate that the quality of white varieties at harvest was slightly higher and the after storage quality was significantly higher than for the comparable period a year ago. For Russet varieties, however, a reduction in quality was reflected for both at harvest and after storage potatoes compared with March 1, 1978. The decline in No. 1 grade (including B's) for white varieties while in storage was only 8 points as of March 1, 1979 compared with a 12 point decline a year earlier. Russet samples removed from storage to date indicate a 14 point decline in No. 1's versus a 10 point decline last March 1.

The percent of white varieties graded as culls at harvest was the same as a year ago, but after storage culls, at 11 percent, were 3 points below March 1, 1978. Samples recovered to date indicate that the percent of Russet culls at harvest was below the comparable date last season but was 2 points higher for after storage potatoes. The total weight loss while in storage was 1 point higher this year than March 1, 1978 for white varieties but 1 point lower than a year ago for Russets.

The cooperation of the many potato growers and storage operators who assisted on this project is greatly appreciated.

POTATO STOCKS QUALITY SURVEY, RED RIVER VALLEY, 1978-79
AVERAGE GRADE OF POTATOES

CROP	NO. 1 INCLUDING B'S		NO. 2		CULLS		NO. 1 B'S 1/		WEIGHT LOSS
	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	AT HARVEST	AFTER STORAGE	
PERCENT									
SAMPLES RECOVERED BEFORE MARCH 1, 1979 ^{2/}									
WHITE	88	80	7	9	5	11	6	7	5
RUSSET	84	70	9	16	7	14	2	4	3
SAMPLES RECOVERED BEFORE MARCH 1, 1978 ^{2/}									
WHITE	87	75	8	11	5	14	6	6	4
RUSSET	86	76	6	12	8	12	4	6	4
ALL SAMPLES 1977-78 STORAGE SEASON-FINAL ^{2/}									
WHITE	86	72	7	11	7	17	6	7	6
RUSSET	85	69	7	16	8	15	4	5	6

1/ NO. 1 B'S ARE POTATOES THAT MEET THE U S NO. 1 GRADE BUT DO NOT MEET MINIMUM SIZE STANDARDS FOR THE AREA: RED AND WHITE VARIETIES - 1½ - 2¼ INCHES IN DIAMETER AND RUSSET VARIETIES - UNDER 2 INCHES IN DIAMETER OR LESS THAN 4 OUNCES.

2/ MATCHED SAMPLES, QUALITY AT HARVEST COMPARED WITH QUALITY AFTER STORAGE.