

Potato Stocks



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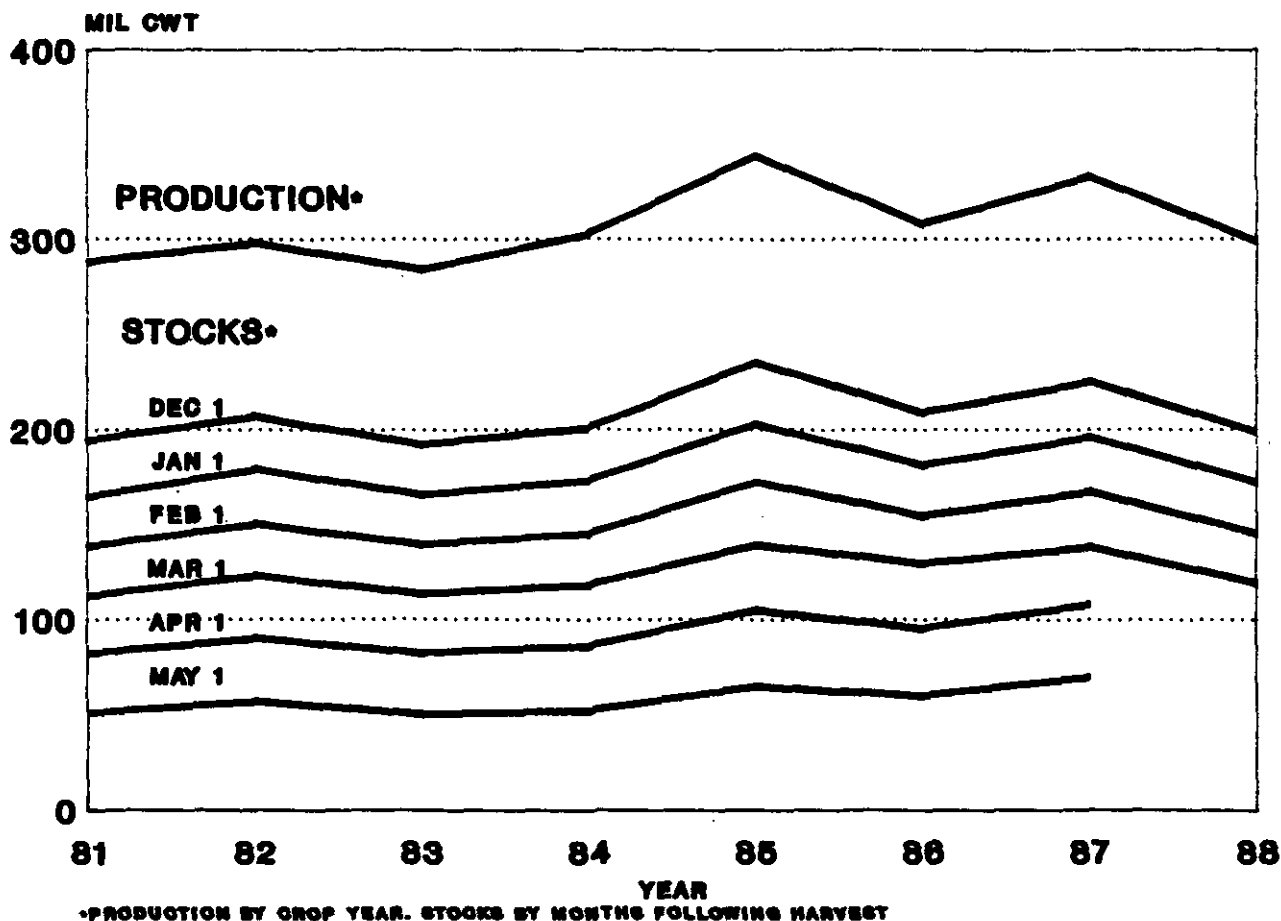
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POTATO STOCKS DOWN 14 PERCENT

March 1 potato stocks are set at 119 million cwt, down 14 percent from last year and 8 percent below two years ago. The percentage drop continues to widen compared with last year as the season progresses. January was 12 percent below a year earlier and February was down 13 percent. The 15 major stocks States are now holding 40 percent of fall production compared with 42 percent last year.

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FALL POTATOES: PRODUCTION AND STOCKS (15 STORAGE STATES)



 * NOTE: Stocks are defined as the quantity (whether sold or not) re- *
 * maining in storage for all purposes and uses, including shrink- *
 * age and waste and other losses that occur after the date of *
 * each report. Sales of fall potatoes for all purposes general- *
 * ly account for about 90 percent of the total fall production. *
 * Shrinkage, loss, and home use account for the remaining 10 per- *
 * cent. *

TABLE 1. FALL POTATOES: PRODUCTION AND STOCKS, 15 MAJOR STATES

CROP YEAR	PRODUCTION	DEC 1	JAN 1	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 1	MAY 1
	1,000 CWT						
1979	284,940	200,820	176,020	147,910	121,720	92,550	59,535
1980	256,518	172,030	147,010	122,065	97,680	72,660	44,546
1981	287,710	193,610	164,380	137,820	111,780	82,270	50,760
1982	298,031	206,525	178,980	150,200	122,500	90,105	57,305
1983	284,344	192,150	165,330	138,900	112,730	81,740	50,365
1984	303,384	201,410	173,380	144,760	118,400	86,440	52,465
1985	343,984	235,475	202,800	171,510	138,720	104,540	65,380
1986	307,501	209,280	180,800	154,490	128,700	95,090	59,790
1987	333,105	224,610	195,750	166,690	138,380	107,750	70,020
1988	299,296	198,520	171,560	144,625	118,960		

TABLE 2. POTATOES PROCESSED 1/, EIGHT STATES. 1987 AND 1988 CROPS

STATE AND CROP YEAR	DEC 1	JAN 1	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 1	MAY 1	SEASON
	1,000 CWT						
IDAHO AND MALHEUR CO, OREG	1987 : 18,260	23,320	28,680	34,340	40,380	46,440	64,495
	1988 : 18,740	24,270	29,420	34,720			
MAINE 2/	1987 : 1,770	2,440	3,145	3,745	4,410	4,865	6,745
	1988 : 1,690	2,195	2,840	3,475			
WASH AND OTHER AREAS, OREG	1987 : 22,265	25,950	30,790	35,800	40,900	44,925	58,085
	1988 : 19,200	23,450	27,275	31,960			
OTHER STATES 3/	1987 : 5,750	7,370	9,200	11,250	13,305	15,270	20,155
	1988 : 5,805	7,450	9,040	10,645			
TOTAL	1987 : 48,045	59,080	71,815	85,135	98,995	111,500	149,480
	1988 : 45,435	57,365	68,575	80,800			

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, MINN, N DAK, OR WIS. 2/ INCLUDES MAINE GROWN POTATOES ONLY. 3/ MICH, MINN, N DAK, AND WIS.

TABLE 3. FALL POTATOES: PRODUCTION AND STOCKS ON MARCH 1, 1988 AND MARCH 1, 1989

STATE	CROP OF 1987			CROP OF 1988		
	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS MAR 1, 1988	MAR 1 STOCKS AS % OF PRODUCTION	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS MAR 1, 1989	MAR 1 STOCKS AS % OF PRODUCTION
	1,000 CWT		PERCENT	1,000 CWT		PERCENT
CALIF	7,869	2,600	33	6,105	1,700	28
COLO	19,500	10,200	52	18,445	8,600	47
IDAHO	99,710	49,000	49	99,320	47,000	47
MAINE	23,240	10,100	43	22,000	8,100	37
MICH	8,910	2,300	26	6,900	1,200	17
MINN	16,330	7,100	43	12,075	6,000	50
MONT	2,370	1,970	83	2,156	1,800	83
NEBR	2,175	1,050	48	2,128	670	31
N Y -LI	2,225	1/320		1,920	1/100	
-UPSTATE:	5,875	1,400	24	4,500	1,040	23
N DAK	23,125	10,000	43	14,375	4,600	32
OHIO	2,254	1/		1,697	1/	
OREG	25,924	11,800	46	20,735	8,700	42
PA	4,730	1,340	28	3,690	950	26
WASH	66,960	22,800	34	63,250	22,500	36
WIS	21,908	6,400	29	20,000	6,000	30
15 STATES	333,105	138,380	42	299,296	118,960	40

1/ COMBINED TO PREVENT POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF INDIVIDUAL OPERATIONS.

RELIABILITY OF MARCH 1 STOCKS ESTIMATES

The "Root Mean Square Error" for the March 1 stocks estimate is 3.4 percent. This means that the chances are 2 out of 3 that the current estimate of 119 million cwt will not be above or below the final estimate by more than 3.4 percent or approximately 4.0 million cwt. Chances are 9 out of 10 (90 percent confidence level) that the difference will not exceed 5.9 percent or approximately 7.0 million cwt.

The 10-year (1979-88) record of the differences between the March 1 stocks estimate and the final estimates averaged 3.47 million cwt, ranging from .43 million to 6.00 million cwt. During this 10-year period, the March 1 estimate has been below the final estimate 9 out of 10 years.

Three EASTERN STATES are holding 10.1 million cwt of potatoes, down 22 percent from last year and 10 percent below two years ago. Maine stocks are off 20 percent, Upstate New York is down 26 percent and Pennsylvania is off 29 percent from last year. Last month, Eastern stocks were 16 percent below a year ago.

CENTRAL STATES are holding 18.5 million cwt of potatoes in storage, a drop of 31 percent from last year and 24 percent below 1987. Ohio stocks are nearly played out, North Dakota stocks are down 54 percent, Michigan down 48 percent, and Nebraska is off 36 percent from last year. Minnesota and Wisconsin hold two-thirds of Central States stocks and are down 15 and 6 percent, respectively, from last year.

Potato stocks in the six WESTERN STATES totaled 90.3 million cwt on March 1, 1989, down 8 percent from last year and 3 percent below 1987. This is the lowest March 1 level in the West for the past four years. Idaho and Washington, with 77 percent of the Western stocks, are down 4 and 1 percent, respectively. Oregon stocks are down 26 percent and California is down 35 percent. Colorado potato storage, going mostly to fresh market, is down 16 percent.

DISAPPEARANCE of fall potatoes from 1988 harvest to March 1, 1989, totaled 180 million cwt, down 7 percent from last year but 1 percent above the 1986 season. Shrinkage and loss of 20.8 million cwt this season is running 6 percent below last year's 22.2 million cwt and 2 percent below the 21.3 million cwt lost two years ago. February disappearance was 25.7 million cwt, 9 percent less than last year's 29 day total of 28.3 million cwt and slightly below 1987.

PROCESSING has taken 80.8 million cwt of potatoes (not including chips) so far this season. This is 5 percent below last year but 5 percent above two years ago. February processing used 12.2 million cwt, down 8 percent from a year ago.

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* The next issue of this report will be published April 14, 1989. *
