Crop Production

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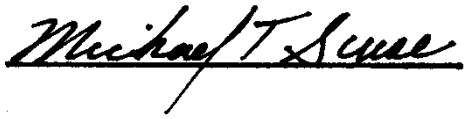
Orange Production Up 1 Percent from February

The United States all orange forecast for the 2011-2012 season is 9.00 million tons, up 1 percent from the previous forecast and up 2 percent from the 2010-2011 final utilization. The Florida all orange forecast, at 147 million boxes (6.62 million tons), is up 1 percent from the February forecast and up 5 percent from last season's final utilization. Early, midseason, and Navel varieties in Florida are forecast at 74.0 million boxes (3.33 million tons), up 1 percent from the February forecast and up 5 percent from last season. The Florida Valencia orange forecast, at 73.0 million boxes (3.29 million tons), is unchanged from the February forecast but up 4 percent from the 2010-2011 crop. Sizes for Valencia oranges in Florida are expected to be about average.

The California Valencia orange forecast is 14.0 million boxes (560,000 tons), up 4 percent from the previous forecast. This brings California's all orange forecast to 58.0 million boxes (2.32 million tons), up 1 percent from the January 1 forecast. Objective survey measurements taken during January and February indicated that fruit set per tree was slightly lower than the previous year, while measured average fruit size was slightly larger than the previous year. The forecast for Texas is carried forward from January.

Florida frozen concentrated orange juice (FCOJ) yield forecast for the 2011-2012 season is 1.64 gallons per box at 42.0 degrees Brix, up 1 percent from the February forecast and up 3 percent from last season's final yield of 1.59 gallons per box. The early-midseason portion is 1.56 gallons per box, up 3 percent from last season's yield of 1.52 gallons per box. The Valencia portion is projected at 1.76 gallons per box, 6 percent higher than last year's final yield of 1.66 gallons per box. All projections of yield assume the processing relationships this season will be similar to those of the past several seasons.

This report was approved on March 9, 2012.



Acting Secretary of
Agriculture
Michael T. Scuse

Agricultural Statistics Board
Chairperson
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Contents

Sugarcane Area Harvested, Yield, and Production by Use – States and United States: 2010 and 2011

Use and State	Area harvested		Yield per acre [1]		Production [1]	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
	(1,000 acres)	(1,000 acres)	(tons)	(tons)	(1,000 tons)	(1,000 tons)
For sugar						
Florida	374.0	382.0	32.7	37.1	12,230	14,172
Hawaii [2]	15.5	15.5	77.1	82.0	1,195	1,271
Louisiana [2]	390.0	385.0	27.8	28.0	10,842	10,780
Texas [2]	45.8	47.0	30.5	33.5	1,396	1,575
United States	825.3	829.5	31.1	33.5	25,663	27,798
For seed						
Florida	18.0	16.0	41.2	43.3	742	693
Hawaii [2]	1.9	1.5	26.3	30.0	50	45
Louisiana [2]	30.0	25.0	27.8	28.0	834	700
Texas [2]	2.3	2.0	31.0	35.5	71	71
United States	52.2	44.5	32.5	33.9	1,697	1,509
For sugar and seed						
Florida	392.0	398.0	33.1	37.3	12,972	14,865
Hawaii [2]	17.4	17.0	71.6	77.4	1,245	1,316
Louisiana [2]	420.0	410.0	27.8	28.0	11,676	11,480
Texas [2]	48.1	49.0	30.5	33.6	1,467	1,646
United States	877.5	874.0	31.2	33.5	27,360	29,307

[1] Net tons.
[2] Estimates are carried forward from the *Crop Production 2011 Summary* released January 2012.

Utilized Production of Citrus Fruits by Crop – States and United States: 2010-2011 and Forecasted March 1, 2012

[The crop year begins with the bloom of the first year shown and ends with the completion of harvest the following year]

Crop and State	Utilized production boxes [1]		Utilized production ton equivalent	
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2010-2011	2011-2012
	(1,000 boxes)	(1,000 boxes)	(1,000 tons)	(1,000 tons)
Oranges				
Early, mid, and Navel [2]				
California [3]	48,000	44,000	1,920	1,760
Florida	70,300	74,000	3,164	3,330
Texas [3]	1,700	1,292	72	55
United States	120,000	119,292	5,156	5,145
Valencia				
California	13,500	14,000	540	560
Florida	70,000	73,000	3,150	3,285
Texas [3]	249	334	11	14
United States	83,749	87,334	3,701	3,859
All				
California	61,500	58,000	2,460	2,320
Florida	140,300	147,000	6,314	6,615
Texas [3]	1,949	1,626	83	69
United States	203,749	206,626	8,857	9,004
Grapefruit				
White				
Florida	5,850	5,200	249	221
Colored				
Florida	13,900	13,500	591	574
All				
California [3]	4,100	3,300	164	132
Florida	19,750	18,700	840	795
Texas [3]	6,300	4,977	252	199
United States	30,150	26,977	1,256	1,126
Tangerines and mandarins				
Arizona [3 4]	300	200	12	8
California [3 4]	9,900	10,300	396	412
Florida	4,650	4,300	221	204
United States	14,850	14,800	629	624
Lemons [3]				
Arizona	2,500	700	100	28
California	21,000	19,500	840	780
United States	23,500	20,200	940	808
Tangelos				
Florida	1,150	1,150	52	52

[1] Net pounds per box: oranges in California-80, Florida-90, Texas-85; grapefruit in California-80, Florida-85, Texas-80; tangerines and mandarins in Arizona and California-80, Florida-95; lemons-80; tangelos-90.
[2] Navel and miscellaneous varieties in California. Early (including Navel) and midseason varieties in Florida and Texas. Small quantities of tangerines in Texas and Temples in Florida.
[3] Estimates for current year carried forward from previous forecast.
[4] Includes tangelos and tangors.

Crop Area Planted and Harvested – United States: 2011 and 2012 (Domestic Units)

[Data are the latest estimates available, either from the current report or from previous reports. Current year estimates are for the full 2012 crop year. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Crop	Area planted		Area harvested	
	2011	2012	2011	2012
	(1,000 acres)	(1,000 acres)	(1,000 acres)	(1,000 acres)
Grains and hay				
Barley	2,559		2,239	
Corn for grain [1]	91,921		83,981	
Corn for silage	(NA)		5,928	
Hay, all	(NA)		55,633	
Alfalfa	(NA)		19,213	
All other	(NA)		36,420	
Oats	2,496		939	
Proso millet	370		338	
Rice	2,689		2,618	
Rye	1,266		242	
Sorghum for grain [1]	5,481		3,929	
Sorghum for silage	(NA)		224	
Wheat, all	54,409		45,705	
Winter	40,646	41,947	32,314	
Durum	1,369		1,312	
Other spring	12,394		12,079	
Oilseeds				
Canola	1,071.5		1,043.0	
Cottonseed	(X)		(X)	
Flaxseed	178		173	
Mustard seed	23.2		21.8	
Peanuts	1,140.6		1,097.6	
Rapeseed	1.5		1.3	
Safflower	130.7		127.3	
Soybeans for beans	74,976		73,636	
Sunflower	1,543.0		1,457.8	
Cotton, tobacco, and sugar crops				
Cotton, all	14,732.4		9,747.9	
Upland	14,426.0		9,444.0	
American Pima	306.4		303.9	
Sugarbeets	1,232.8		1,213.1	
Sugarcane	(NA)		874.0	
Tobacco	(NA)		324.8	
Dry beans, peas, and lentils				
Austrian winter peas	18.0		12.3	
Dry edible beans	1,205.9		1,155.9	
Dry edible peas	362.0		342.8	
Lentils	428.0		411.0	
Wrinkled seed peas	(NA)		(NA)	
Potatoes and miscellaneous				
Coffee (Hawaii)	(NA)		6.3	
Hops	(NA)		29.8	
Peppermint oil	(NA)		74.0	
Potatoes, all	1,098.9		1,076.7	
Spring	93.3		91.5	
Summer	48.2		46.0	
Fall	957.4		939.2	
Spearmint oil	(NA)		17.3	
Sweet potatoes	134.2		130.3	
Taro (Hawaii) [2]	(NA)		0.5	

(NA) Not available.
(X) Not applicable.
[1] Area planted for all purposes.
[2] Area is total acres in crop, not harvested acres.

Crop Yield and Production – United States: 2011 and 2012 (Domestic Units)

[Data are the latest estimates available, either from the current report or from previous reports. Current year estimates are for the full 2012 crop year. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Crop		Yield per acre		Production	
		2011	2012	2011	2012
				(1,000)	(1,000)
Grains and hay					
Barley	bushels	69.6		155,780	
Corn for grain	bushels	147.2		12,358,412	
Corn for silage	tons	18.4		108,926	
Hay, all	tons	2.36		131,144	
Alfalfa	tons	3.40		65,332	
All other	tons	1.81		65,812	
Oats	bushels	57.1		53,649	
Proso millet	bushels	27.1		9,149	
Rice [1]	cwt	7,067		185,009	
Rye	bushels	26.1		6,326	
Sorghum for grain	bushels	54.6		214,443	
Sorghum for silage	tons	10.3		2,298	
Wheat, all	bushels	43.7		1,999,347	
Winter	bushels	46.2		1,493,677	
Durum	bushels	38.5		50,482	
Other spring	bushels	37.7		455,188	
Oilseeds					
Canola	pounds	1,475		1,538,010	
Cottonseed	tons	(X)		5,267.0	
Flaxseed	bushels	16.1		2,791	
Mustard seed	pounds	718		15,644	
Peanuts	pounds	3,313		3,636,320	
Rapeseed	pounds	2,177		2,830	
Safflower	pounds	1,333		169,671	
Soybeans for beans	bushels	41.5		3,056,032	
Sunflower	pounds	1,398		2,038,275	
Cotton, tobacco, and sugar crops					
Cotton, all [1]	bales	772		15,673.7	
Upland [1]	bales	754		14,828.0	
American Pima [1]	bales	1,336		845.7	
Sugarbeets	tons	23.7		28,789	
Sugarcane	tons	33.5		29,307	
Tobacco	pounds	1,850		601,029	
Dry beans, peas, and lentils					
Austrian winter peas [1]	cwt	1,463		180	
Dry edible beans [1]	cwt	1,716		19,833	
Dry edible peas [1]	cwt	1,641		5,625	
Lentils [1]	cwt	1,151		4,732	
Wrinkled seed peas	cwt	(NA)		509	
Potatoes and miscellaneous					
Coffee (Hawaii)	pounds	1,320		8,300	
Hops	pounds	2,175		64,781.6	
Peppermint oil	pounds	89		6,570	
Potatoes, all	cwt	397		427,406	
Spring	cwt	279		25,573	
Summer	cwt	282		12,960	
Fall	cwt	414		388,873	
Spearmint oil	pounds	132		2,286	
Sweet potatoes	cwt	208		27,041	
Taro (Hawaii)	pounds	(NA)		4,100	

(NA) Not available.
(X) Not applicable.
[1] Yield in pounds.

Crop Area Planted and Harvested – United States: 2011 and 2012 (Metric Units)

[Data are the latest estimates available, either from the current report or from previous reports. Current year estimates are for the full 2012 crop year. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Crop	Area planted		Area harvested	
	2011	2012	2011	2012
	(hectares)	(hectares)	(hectares)	(hectares)
Grains and hay				
Barley	1,035,600		906,100	
Corn for grain [1]	37,199,510		33,986,270	
Corn for silage	(NA)		2,399,000	
Hay, all [2]	(NA)		22,514,120	
Alfalfa	(NA)		7,775,310	
All other	(NA)		14,738,810	
Oats	1,010,110		380,000	
Proso millet	149,740		136,790	
Rice	1,088,210		1,059,480	
Rye	512,340		97,930	
Sorghum for grain [1]	2,218,110		1,590,030	
Sorghum for silage	(NA)		90,650	
Wheat, all [2]	22,018,780		18,496,360	
Winter	16,449,030	16,975,530	13,077,150	
Durum	554,020		530,950	
Other spring	5,015,730		4,888,250	
Oilseeds				
Canola	433,630		422,090	
Cottonseed	(X)		(X)	
Flaxseed	72,030		70,010	
Mustard seed	9,390		8,820	
Peanuts	461,590		444,190	
Rapeseed	610		530	
Safflower	52,890		51,520	
Soybeans for beans	30,342,040		29,799,750	
Sunflower	624,440		589,960	
Cotton, tobacco, and sugar crops				
Cotton, all [2]	5,962,050		3,944,880	
Upland	5,838,060		3,821,890	
American Pima	124,000		122,990	
Sugarbeets	498,900		490,930	
Sugarcane	(NA)		353,700	
Tobacco	(NA)		131,460	
Dry beans, peas, and lentils				
Austrian winter peas	7,280		4,980	
Dry edible beans	488,020		467,780	
Dry edible peas	146,500		138,730	
Lentils	173,210		166,330	
Wrinkled seed peas	(NA)		(NA)	
Potatoes and miscellaneous				
Coffee (Hawaii)	(NA)		2,550	
Hops	(NA)		12,050	
Peppermint oil	(NA)		29,950	
Potatoes, all [2]	444,710		435,730	
Spring	37,760		37,030	
Summer	19,510		18,620	
Fall	387,450		380,080	
Spearmint oil	(NA)		7,000	
Sweet potatoes	54,310		52,730	
Taro (Hawaii) [3]	(NA)		200	

(NA) Not available.
(X) Not applicable.
[1] Area planted for all purposes.
[2] Total may not add due to rounding.
[3] Area is total hectares in crop, not harvested hectares.

Crop Yield and Production – United States: 2011 and 2012 (Metric Units)

[Data are the latest estimates available, either from the current report or from previous reports. Current year estimates are for the full 2012 crop year. Blank data cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Crop	Yield per hectare		Production	
	2011	2012	2011	2012
	(metric tons)	(metric tons)	(metric tons)	(metric tons)
Grains and hay				
Barley	3.74		3,391,710	
Corn for grain	9.24		313,918,120	
Corn for silage	41.19		98,816,000	
Hay, all [1]	5.28		118,971,840	
Alfalfa	7.62		59,268,190	
All other	4.05		59,703,640	
Oats	2.05		778,710	
Proso millet	1.52		207,500	
Rice	7.92		8,391,870	
Rye	1.64		160,690	
Sorghum for grain	3.43		5,447,100	
Sorghum for silage	23.00		2,084,710	
Wheat, all [1]	2.94		54,413,310	
Winter	3.11		40,651,230	
Durum	2.59		1,373,890	
Other spring	2.53		12,388,190	
Oilseeds				
Canola	1.65		697,630	
Cottonseed	(X)		4,778,140	
Flaxseed	1.01		70,890	
Mustard seed	0.80		7,100	
Peanuts	3.71		1,649,410	
Rapeseed	2.44		1,280	
Safflower	1.49		76,960	
Soybeans for beans	2.79		83,171,560	
Sunflower	1.57		924,550	
Cotton, tobacco, and sugar crops				
Cotton, all [1]	0.87		3,412,550	
Upland	0.84		3,228,420	
American Pima	1.50		184,130	
Sugarbeets	53.20		26,116,940	
Sugarcane	75.17		26,586,860	
Tobacco	2.07		272,620	
Dry beans, peas, and lentils				
Austrian winter peas	1.64		8,160	
Dry edible beans	1.92		899,610	
Dry edible peas	1.84		255,150	
Lentils	1.29		214,640	
Wrinkled seed peas	(NA)		23,090	
Potatoes and miscellaneous				
Coffee (Hawaii)	1.48		3,760	
Hops	2.44		29,380	
Peppermint oil	0.10		2,980	
Potatoes, all [1]	44.49		19,386,810	
Spring	31.33		1,159,970	
Summer	31.58		587,860	
Fall	46.41		17,638,980	
Spearmint oil	0.15		1,040	
Sweet potatoes	23.26		1,226,560	
Taro (Hawaii)	(NA)		1,860	

(NA) Not available.
(X) Not applicable.
[1] Production may not add due to rounding.

Fruits and Nuts Production – United States: 2011 and 2012 (Domestic Units)

[Data are the latest estimates available, either from the current report or from previous reports. Current year estimates are for the full 2012 crop year, except citrus which is for the 2011-2012 season. Blank cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Crop	Production	
	2011	2012
	(1,000)	(1,000)
Citrus [1]		
Grapefruit ..... tons	1,256	1,126
Lemons ..... tons	940	808
Oranges ..... tons	8,857	9,004
Tangelos (Florida) ..... tons	52	52
Tangerines and mandarins ..... tons	629	624
Noncitrus		
Apples ..... 1,000 pounds	9,429.9	
Apricots ..... tons	59.2	
Bananas (Hawaii) ..... pounds		
Grapes ..... tons	7,088.4	
Olives (California) ..... tons	65.0	
Papayas (Hawaii) ..... pounds		
Peaches ..... tons	1,129.1	
Pears ..... tons	888.3	
Prunes, dried (California) ..... tons	122.0	
Prunes and plums (excludes California) ..... tons	13.1	
Nuts and miscellaneous		
Almonds, shelled (California) ..... pounds	1,950,000	
Hazelnuts, in-shell (Oregon) ..... tons	41	
Pecans, in-shell ..... pounds	251,700	
Walnuts, in-shell (California) ..... tons	485	
Maple syrup ..... gallons	2,794	

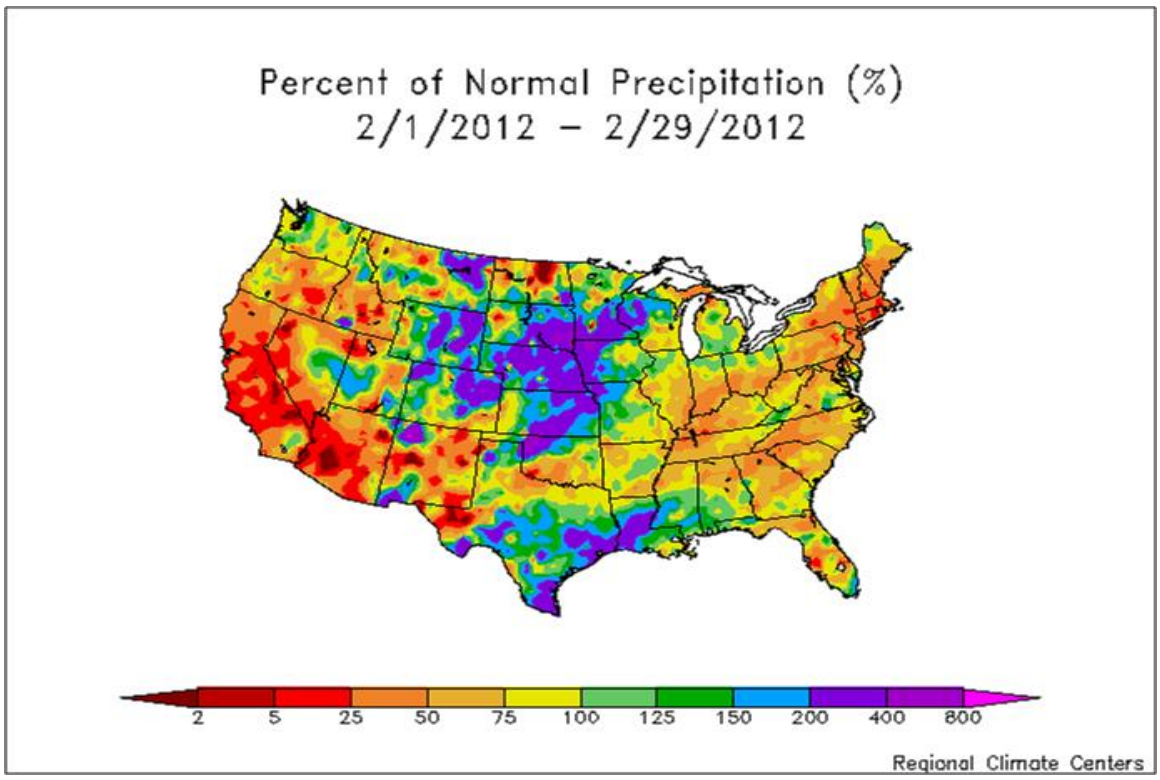
[1] Production years are 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.

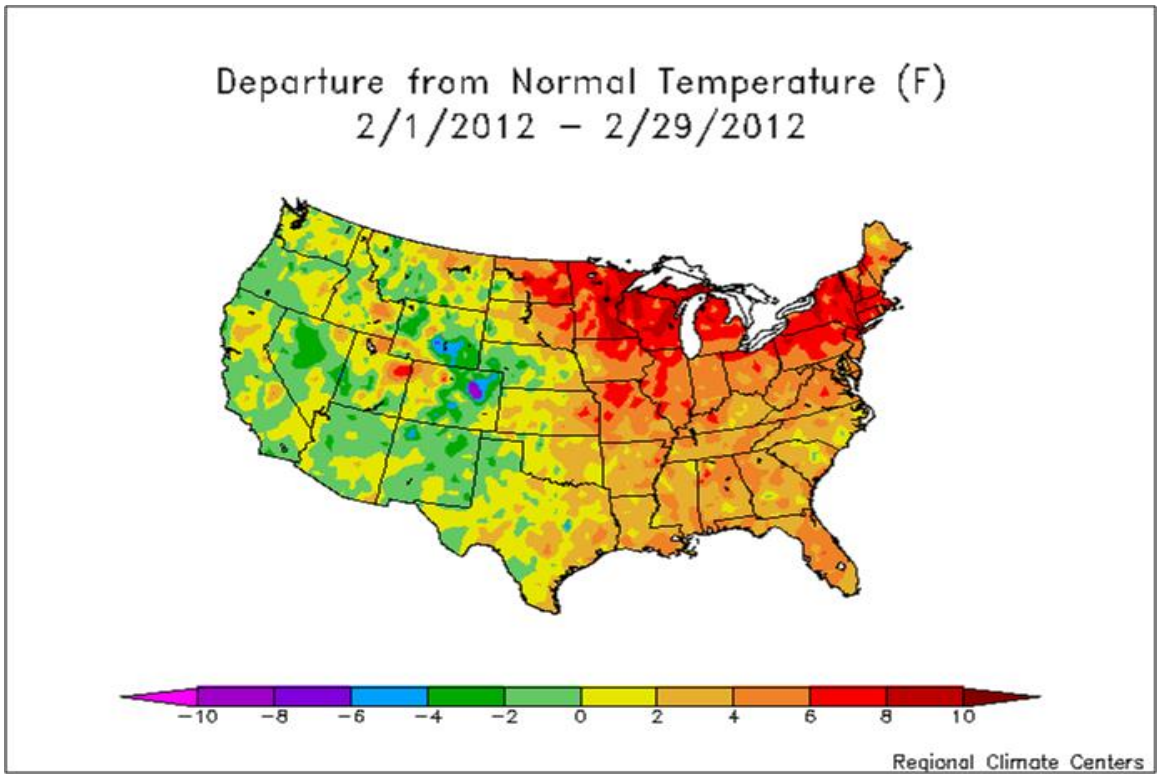
Fruits and Nuts Production – United States: 2011 and 2012 (Metric Units)

[Data are the latest estimates available, either from the current report or from previous reports. Current year estimates are for the full 2012 crop year, except citrus which is for the 2011-2012 season. Blank cells indicate estimation period has not yet begun]

Crop	Production	
	2011	2012
	(metric tons)	(metric tons)
Citrus [1]		
Grapefruit	1,139,420	1,021,490
Lemons	852,750	733,010
Oranges	8,034,940	8,168,290
Tangelos (Florida)	47,170	47,170
Tangerines and mandarins	570,620	566,080
Noncitrus		
Apples	4,277,330	
Apricots	53,680	
Bananas (Hawaii)		
Grapes	6,430,520	
Olives (California)	58,970	
Papayas (Hawaii)		
Peaches	1,024,340	
Pears	805,850	
Prunes, dried (California)	110,680	
Prunes and plums (excludes California)	11,840	
Nuts and miscellaneous		
Almonds, shelled (California)	884,510	
Hazelnuts, in-shell (Oregon)	37,190	
Pecans, in-shell	114,170	
Walnuts, in-shell (California)	439,980	
Maple syrup	13,970	

[1] Production years are 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.


Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
2/1/2012 – 2/29/2012
2
5
25
50
75
100
125
150
200
400
800
Regional Climate Centers


Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
2/1/2012 – 2/29/2012
−10
−8
−6
−4
−2
0
2
4
6
8
10
Regional Climate Centers

February Weather Summary

Most areas east of the Rockies completed a fourth consecutive month with above-normal temperatures, capping a winter with only fleeting periods of cold weather. February warmth was especially prevalent across the eastern half of the Nation, where pastures, winter grains, and fruit crops exhibited earlier-than-normal spring development.

Meanwhile, portions of the West moved closer to a failed winter wet season, with California and the Great Basin expecting significantly below-average spring and summer runoff. However, much of the West - excluding Arizona and New Mexico - had a temporary buffer against developing drought in the form of abundant reservoir storage.

Farther east, the Plains escaped the winter without a severe cold wave, although moisture shortages and a lack of a protective snow cover caused some problems for winter wheat. In particular, the southern High Plains suffered through several February dust storms, a by-product of high winds and soil moisture depleted by the historic drought of 2011.

Elsewhere, late-February storminess eased dry conditions in the upper Midwest and provided snow across the Nation's Northern Tier, while damaging thunderstorms and heavy rains swept across parts of the South, East, and lower Midwest. However, most of the late-month rain bypassed Florida's parched Peninsula.

February Agricultural Summary

While temperatures across the western half of the United States were near-normal, most areas east of the Great Plains were above average. Most notably, monthly averages in portions of the Great Lakes region and the Northeast were 8 degrees or more above normal. February was a relatively dry month for much of the Nation. Total precipitation accumulations were less than 50 percent of normal throughout the areas of the Great Basin and Southwest, leaving many producers concerned about the lack of available moisture going into the upcoming crop season. Conversely, winter storm systems delivered moisture totaling 200 percent or more above normal to much of the Great Plains and lower Delta, improving snow cover for winter wheat and improving soil moisture levels following an unusually dry 2011 crop year.

Weather conditions provided producers in many States plenty of time to prepare farm equipment and fields for spring planting. Mid-month, cultivation was underway in corn and sorghum fields throughout Texas, while cotton growers were pre-watering fields and laying rows. In California, rice fields were drained, and fertilizers and herbicides were applied before cotton and corn planting began. A late-month storm system dumped beneficial rainfall on much of drought-stressed northern Florida. The moisture improved planting conditions, but limited fieldwork activities. Sugarcane producers in Florida and Texas continued to harvest their 2011 crop throughout the month.

An early-month storm system improved snow cover for the winter wheat crop in portions of the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains; however, warmer than normal temperatures throughout the month left most areas without measurable snow accumulations. Windy, dry conditions persisted throughout February in the High Plains and Edwards Plateau regions of Texas, depleting soil moisture levels and causing blowing dust storms that negatively impacted the developing wheat crop. Irrigated and some rain-fed small grain fields in California showed exceptional development throughout the month, with limited heading evident in winter wheat fields toward month's end. Conversely, some oat fields in the State were disked under due to poor establishment and growth. Elsewhere, above average precipitation in major wheat-producing regions benefitted soil moisture levels as the crop began to emerge from dormancy.

Throughout the month, a variety of winter vegetables were harvested and shipped from the southern States, while spring vegetable fields were planted. As February progressed, the harvest of early and mid-season oranges tapered off, as the grapefruit, tangerine, temple, and Valencia orange harvest gained speed. While blooming was beginning on most stone fruit trees in California early in the month, early bloom was reported in almond, apricot, and plum trees mid-month. Producers moved bees into orchards to aid in pollination and continued a variety of maintenance activities including irrigation, planting, pruning, and applying herbicides.

Crop Comments

Sugarcane: Production of sugarcane for sugar and seed in 2011 is estimated at 29.3 million tons, of which 27.8 million tons will be utilized for sugar and 1.51 million tons for seed. Total production for sugar and seed is up 2 percent from the previous forecast and up 7 percent from 2010. Producers expect to harvest 874,000 acres for sugar and seed for the 2011 crop year, up 1,000 acres from February but down 3,500 acres from the previous year. Expected yield is forecast at 33.5 tons per acre, up 0.7 tons from the previous forecast and up 2.3 tons from 2010.

Production in Florida is estimated at 14.9 million tons, up 5 percent from February and up 15 percent from last year. Rainfall received in early November delayed harvest which remained active through February. Minor freeze damage was reported during the first week of January. By the end of February, harvest was virtually complete. Estimates for Hawaii, Louisiana, and Texas were carried forward from January.

Grapefruit: The 2011-2012 United States grapefruit crop is forecast at 1.13 million tons, unchanged from the previous forecast but down 10 percent from last season's final utilization. For both white and colored grapefruit in Florida, size is projected to be below average with above average droppage. California and Texas grapefruit production forecasts are carried forward from the January 1 forecast.

Tangelos: Florida's tangelo forecast is 1.15 million boxes (52,000 tons), up 5 percent from the previous forecast but unchanged from last season's final utilization. Florida's row count survey showed that 97 percent of the rows were harvested.

Tangerines and mandarins: The United States tangerine and mandarin crop is forecast at 624,000 tons, unchanged from the previous forecast but down 1 percent from the 2010-2011 crop. In Florida, the row count survey showed that harvest was finished for the early tangerine varieties, while nearly 80 percent of Honey tangerines were harvested. Arizona and California estimates are carried forward from the January 1 forecast.

Florida citrus: In the citrus growing areas, weather stations reported temperatures ranging from highs in the 80s to lows in the 40s. Moderate rainfall helped improve soil moisture conditions throughout the citrus region. However, drought conditions continued throughout the citrus growing region. Harvesting of early oranges (Navels and Hamlins) has peaked and is in decline. White and colored grapefruit, Valencia oranges, and Honey tangerine harvests continued. A few tangelos and Sunburst tangerines were still being harvested, but were mostly finished. Production practices included general grove work, fertilizer application, and irrigation as needed.

California citrus: Harvest and export of Navel oranges, Murcott tangerines, and Mineola tangelos continued during February. The export of pummelos, grapefruit, Cara Caras, and lemons was ongoing.

California noncitrus fruits and nuts: During February, peach, prune, and other stone fruit orchards were irrigated, pruned, and planted. After a very dry January, February rains were a relief to growers. However, lack of water remained a concern as growers began planning for the coming year. Weed control and dormant sprays were applied. Bloom sprays were applied in stone fruit orchards as early varieties started blooming. Grape and kiwi vineyards were pruned and sprayed. Kiwifruit, persimmons, and Asian pears were exported. Olives were dormant. Irrigation, planting, and pruning continued in some walnut and pistachio orchards. Bees were moved into almond orchards as the bloom began. Some operations applied bloom sprays to almonds in February. Due to lack of precipitation, many orchards have been irrigated at least once.

Statistical Methodology

Survey procedures: The orange objective yield survey for the March 1 forecast was conducted in Florida, which accounts for nearly 73 percent of the United States production. Bearing tree numbers are determined at the start of the season based on a fruit tree census conducted every other year, combined with ongoing review based on administrative data or special surveys. From mid-July to mid-September, the number of fruit per tree is determined. In September and subsequent months, fruit size measurement and fruit droppage surveys are conducted, which are combined with the previous components to develop the current forecast of production. California and Texas conduct grower and packer surveys on a quarterly basis in October, January, April, and July. California also conducts objective measurement surveys in September for navel oranges and in March for Valencia oranges.

Estimating procedures: State level objective yield estimates for Florida oranges were reviewed for errors, reasonableness, and consistency with historical estimates. Reports from growers and packers in California and Texas were also used for setting estimates. These three States submit their analyses of the current situation to the Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB). The ASB uses the survey data and the State analyses to prepare the published March 1 forecast.

Revision policy: The March 1 production forecasts will not be revised. A new forecast will be made each month throughout the growing season. End-of-season estimates will be published in the *Citrus Fruits Summary* released in September. The production estimates are based on all data available at the end of the marketing season, including information from marketing orders, shipments, and processor records. Allowances are made for recorded local utilization and home use.

Reliability: To assist users in evaluating the reliability of the March 1 production forecasts, the "Root Mean Square Error," a statistical measure based on past performance, is computed. The deviation between the March 1 production forecast and the final estimate is expressed as a percentage of the final estimate. The average of squared percentage deviations for the latest 20-year period is computed. The square root of the average becomes statistically the "Root Mean Square Error." Probability statements can be made concerning expected differences in the current forecast relative to the final end-of-season estimate, assuming that factors affecting this year's forecast are not different from those influencing recent years.

The "Root Mean Square Error" for the March 1 orange production forecast is 2.0 percent. However, if you exclude the three abnormal production seasons (one freeze season and two hurricane seasons), the "Root Mean Square Error" is 1.9 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the current orange production forecast will not be above or below the final estimates by more than 2.0 percent, or 1.9 percent excluding abnormal seasons. Chances are 9 out of 10 (90 percent confidence level) that the difference will not exceed 3.4 percent, or 3.3 percent when excluding abnormal seasons.

Changes between the March 1 orange forecast and the final estimates during the past 20 years have averaged 181,000 tons (184,000 tons, excluding abnormal seasons), ranging from 17,000 tons to 503,000 tons regardless of exclusions. The March 1 forecast for oranges has been below the final estimate 10 times and above 10 times (below 9 times and above 8 times, excluding abnormal seasons). The difference does not imply that the March 1 forecasts this year are likely to understate or overstate final production.

Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity statisticians in the Crops Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to nass@nass.usda.gov

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