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Cherry Production

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Tart Cherry Production Up Over 3 Fold

U.S. tart cherry production is forecast at 218.0 million pounds, up 349 percent from the weather-devastated crop in 2002 but 41 percent below 2001 production.

Michigan, the largest producing State, expects a crop of 150.0 million pounds, up 10 fold from last year's weather-devastated crop but down 49 percent from 2001. The Michigan tart cherry crop in the northwest was damaged from sub-zero temperatures at the beginning of March. The damage was generally confined to the lower elevations of orchards, and as a result, some trees have a full crop while others are barren. There is some marked fruit in the southwest but good yields are expected. The crop in the west central region is poor due to a long cool period after bloom. This weather caused pollination problems, resulting in only a single fruit per bud being produced. This area also had some early frost damage.

Utah production is forecast at 24.0 million pounds, compared to 3.0 million pounds produced in 2002 and 12 million pounds in 2001. The tart cherry outlook for 2003 is much improved from 2002 due to favorable weather conditions. Although there were patches of frost damage, most orchards in the State made it through with little damage.

Washington expects to produce 20.0 million pounds of tart cherries in 2003, down 2 percent from 2002 and 25 percent less than 2001. Washington's production was reduced by a cold, wet spring which provided poor pollinating weather.

Wisconsin production is forecast at 11.0 million pounds, 175 percent above 2002 but 15 percent below 2001. Spring weather has been favorable, and the crop is in good condition.

New York is expected to produce 7.0 million pounds, 45 percent below 2002 and 52 percent less that the 2001 crop. Production is down due to an early spring ice storm which caused crop loss and tree damage. Bloom and fruit set are reported to be light due to poor pollination.

Pennsylvania expects to produce 3.6 million pounds of tart cherries in 2003, down 5 percent from 2002 and 8 percent below 2001. A long, cool and wet spring had a mixed effect on the bloom. The bloom in some areas was adversely affected, while other areas were not.

Oregon's crop forecast of 1.9 million pounds, is down 41 percent from last year and 21 percent below 2001. Spring weather in the Willamette Valley was wet and cold, adversely impacting bloom. Growers in the Wasco County area did not experience the same bloom problem, and expect a better harvest than last year.

Colorado's tart cherry crop, at 0.5 million pounds, is up 67 percent from last year, but down 17 percent from 2001. Growing conditions have been favorable this year with no significant frost. Stored water supplies are reported tight but adequate.

Tart Cherries: Total Production by State and United States, 2001-02 and Forecasted 2003

State	Total Production		
	2001	2002	2003
	Million Pounds	*Million Pounds*	*Million Pounds*
CO	0.6	0.3	0.5
MI	297.0	15.0	150.0
NY	14.7	12.7	7.0
OR	2.4	3.2	1.9
PA	3.9	3.8	3.6
UT	12.0	3.0	24.0
WA	26.5	20.5	20.0
WI	13.0	4.0	11.0
Total	370.1	62.5	218.0

Sweet Cherry Production Up 17 Percent

U.S. sweet cherry production is forecast 211,340 tons, up 17 percent from 2002 but 8 percent below 2001.

The Washington crop, at 95,000 tons, is up 6 percent from the previous forecast and 10 percent above 2002. Cold spring weather is expected to hold down production for many Washington growers, particularly those located in the Yakima Valley. The sweet cherry crop was adversely affected by poor pollination weather and frost.

Production in California is forecast at 60,000 tons, 8 percent more than last year. The California forecast is carried forward from the June Crop Production report. An increase in bearing acreage contributed to the increased California crop. Cool, wet weather slowed crop development and delayed the beginning of harvest by one week. Fruit quality is reported to be excellent.

The sweet cherry crop in Oregon is forecast at 40,000 tons, unchanged from the previous forecast but up 29 percent from 2002. Harvest began last week in The Dalles and should begin soon in the Hood River Valley. The crop has enjoyed generally favorable weather throughout the season.

The Michigan crop is forecast at 9,000 tons, up over 3 fold from last year's weather-devastated crop but 61 percent below 2001. The crop was adversely affected by a harsh winter, and condition of the crop varies across the State. In the northwest, sweet cherry production was reduced by a hard freeze during early March, when significant bud damage was incurred. Producers in the west-central and southwest anticipate a reduced crop due to frost damage.

Idaho is expecting a sweet cherry crop of 2,500 tons, up 47 percent from last year and 79 percent above 2001. The 2003 sweet cherry crop escaped any major frost damage. Some growers reported cold, rainy weather at bloom. Harvest is expected to peak around June 25. Idaho's 2003 cherry crop will be the largest crop since 2000.

Utah is forecasting sweet cherry production to be 2,100 tons, a significant increase over the crops of 2001 and 2002. Although frost caused minor damage in some areas, there was no statewide frost similar to last year.

The Montana sweet cherry crop is forecast at 1,800 tons, 19 percent below 2002 and 22 percent less than 2001. This year's mild winter and cool wet spring set the stage for good production potential. However, a late season frost and cold temperatures during pollination have growers concerned. Pollination started late, and as a result, growers are expecting larger, but fewer cherries than normal.

New York production is forecast at 600 tons, 71 percent above the 2002 frost-reduced crop but 45 percent below 2001. An early spring ice storm caused crop loss and tree damage, while poor weather during pollination contributed to a reduced fruit set.

Pennsylvania production, at 340 tons, is down 4 percent from 2002 and 41 percent below 2001. Heavier then normal precipitation adversely affected the cherry crop. The constant rain has some producers reporting that a cherry crop that was perfect in May has been reduced in June.

Sweet Cherries: Total Production by State and United States, 2001-02 and Forecasted 2003

State	Total Production		
	2001	2002	2003
	Tons	*Tons*	*Tons*
CA [1]	55,300	55,500	60,000
ID	1,400	1,700	2,500
MI	23,000	2,700	9,000
MT	2,300	2,220	1,800
NY	1,100	350	600
OR	40,000	31,000	40,000
PA	580	355	340
UT	700	400	2,100
WA	106,000	86,000	95,000
Total	230,380	180,225	211,340

[1] Forecast carried forward from "Crop Production" released June 11, 2003.

The next "Cherry Production" report will be released in June, 2004.

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