

The five major fruit and berry crops grown in New Jersey are apples, blueberries, cranberries, peaches and strawberries. In April, frost was reported for several days, and strawberry plants experienced some weather related injury. In addition, apple, blueberry and peach crops had some minor damages from snow and freezing rain. As the season concluded, blueberries and cranberries had higher production, while apples, peaches, and strawberries had lower production.

Total production of the five fruit and berry crops during 2007 amounted to 214.5 million pounds, down 0.3 percent from 2006's production of 215.1 million pounds. Value of utilized production of these crops totaled \$158.1 million, a 1 percent decrease from the 2006 total of \$159.5 million.

During 2007, among all major fruit and berry producing states in the nation, New Jersey ranked second in blueberry and peach production; third in cranberry production and twelfth in apple production. Ranking crops by value of production within the state, blueberries ranked first with \$90.2 million, peaches ranked second with \$32.8 million, while cranberries ranked third with \$22.4 million. Apples and strawberries ranked fourth and fifth with \$9.6 million and \$3.0 million, respectively.

Peaches: Fruit sets were good to excellent. Some orchards experienced thunderstorm damages during the summer. Both quality and prices were above average. As the season concluded, New Jersey peach growers still experienced one of the better marketing seasons in recent years. Total production was 32,000 tons, down 6 percent from 2006, while utilized production totaled 28,800 tons, down 15 percent. A record season average price, at \$1,140 per ton (57.0 cents per pound), was \$90 higher than last year's price. Value of utilized production was \$32.8 million in 2007, 8 percent less than 2006. Gloucester county was the leading county with 14,000 tons, while Cumberland was second with 8,000 tons. Camden ranked third with 3,500 tons and Burlington ranked fourth with 1,500 tons, followed by Atlantic with 1,250 tons.

Apples: It was a challenging growing season for apple growers in New Jersey. Localized thunderstorms damaged some apple crops during the summer months. Dry conditions caused some apple sizing problems. In general, the total value of production was lower than a year ago due to lower production combined with a lower price. Total apple production, 42 million pounds, was 7 percent lower than last year's. The season average price at 22.9 cents per pound was 18.1 cents lower than in 2006. Value of utilized production was \$9.6 million in 2007 compared to \$18.1 million in 2006. The leading apple producing county was Gloucester with 15.0 million pounds. Atlantic and Warren were second and third with 4.5 and 3.5 million pounds, respectively. Hunterdon and Sussex tied for fourth with 3.0 million pounds each. Burlington county finished fifth with 2.5 million pounds.

Blueberries: The blueberry crop's bloom and set of fruit were reported to be average to heavy. Blueberry production totaled 54 million pounds, an increase of 4 percent from last year. The season average price, at \$1.67 per pound, was the highest price ever recorded in the state. The value of utilized production for the 2007 blueberry crop was \$90.2 million, an increase of 8 percent from 2006. Atlantic and Burlington counties were the leading blueberry producing areas.

Cranberries: Cranberry total production was 531,000 barrels, up 9 percent from the 485,000 barrels produced in 2006. The season average price was \$42.20 per barrel, up \$3 from last year. The value of production for the 2007 cranberry crop was \$22.4 million, up 19 percent from 2006. The cranberry crop's bloom, set of fruit, and fruit size was reported to be average to heavy. Burlington county was the major cranberry producing area in the Garden State.

Strawberries: There were 14,000 hundredweight of strawberries produced in New Jersey in 2007, 13 percent lower than in 2006. The season average price of \$215 per hundredweight was \$15 higher than a year ago. The value of utilized production for the 2007 strawberry crop was \$3.0 million, a decrease of 6 percent from 2006. Most strawberries were sold through direct marketing.