

Maine Wild Blueberries



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United States Department of Agriculture

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A special "THANK YOU" goes to Maine wild blueberry growers and processors who have helped us by completing surveys throughout the year.

2008 WILD BLUEBERRY PRODUCTION INCREASES FOR FOURTH STRAIGHT YEAR, BUT VALUE AT A THREE-YEAR LOW

MAINE WILD BLUEBERRY CROP: Maine's 2008 wild blueberry crop totaled 89.95 million pounds, an increase of 16 percent above 2007 output, and 21 percent higher than 2006 production. The price growers receive for processing berries in 2008 is expected to average \$0.60 per pound, a decrease of \$0.47 per pound from 2007. If realized, this would place the 2008 processing value at a three-year low of \$53.64 million, compared with \$83.0 million the previous year.

Maine's wild blueberry crop survived the winter with minimal damage due to the large amount of snow coverage. Traces of mummyberry and red leaf disease were evident in some fields, however disease pressure was light and there were few insect problems. A good bloom in May, accompanied by great pollinating conditions, resulted in an average fruit set in most areas. Dry conditions in early July were cause for concern, but rains arrived later in the month to improve berry size. Harvest began during the first week of August but was halted at times due to rainy conditions. Excessive moisture in some areas caused berries to swell and crack. Where weather conditions were favorable, berries matured quickly and developed better flavor. Harvest was complete mid-September, slightly behind last year and normal.

NORTH AMERICAN WILD BLUEBERRY CROP: According to David Yarborough, Extension Wild Blueberry Specialist, "The wild

blueberry crop in Canada was 156 million pounds, which is well above the five-year average of 123 million pounds. Quebec's crop was a record at 72 million pounds despite the cool temperatures and excessive rainfall, and is well above the five-year average of 55 million pounds. The crop in Nova Scotia was above average at 40 million pounds compared to its five-year average of 33.9 million pounds. There was excellent bloom, but there was a cool spell during pollination that may have reduced fruit set and there were above average rains in August which hindered harvest. The crop in New Brunswick, at 33.6 million pounds, was a record for the province and well above the five-year average of 24 million pounds. The weather was good and the New Brunswick beekeepers had better over-wintering success this past year, and along with the importation of colonies from Quebec and Ontario, an adequate number of colonies were present in the fields. The crop increase is also attributed to the large number of acres coming into production which is expected to continue to increase the average crop. The lack of winter kill, good pollination weather, an adequate supply of bees and ample summer rainfall all contributed to the bumper crop of 9.8 million pounds in Prince Edward Island, which exceeds the five-year average of 8.6 million pounds. Crop figures for Newfoundland are at 0.6 million pounds versus the five-year average of 1.1 million pounds; this decrease is attributed to the lack of labor to harvest the crop."

MAINE WILD BLUEBERRIES: Production and Value, 1999 – 2008

Year	Total Production	All Price Per Pound	Total Value of Production	Fresh Wild Blueberries			Wild Blueberries for Processing		
				Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production	Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production
	1,000 Lbs	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Lbs	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Lbs	Dollars	1,000 Dollars
1999	66,102	0.513	33,889	300	1.100	330	65,802	0.510	33,559
2000	110,990	0.403	44,732	420	1.200	504	110,570	0.400	44,228
2001	75,200	0.305	22,945	350	1.400	490	74,850	0.300	22,455
2002	62,400	0.286	17,860	400	1.250	500	62,000	0.280	17,360
2003	80,400	0.334	26,880	400	1.200	480	80,000	0.330	26,400
2004	46,000	0.456	20,970	300	1.350	405	45,700	0.450	20,565
2005	60,150	0.656	39,430	350	1.600	560	59,800	0.650	38,870
2006	74,600	0.805	60,040	400	1.700	680	74,200	0.800	59,360
2007	77,250	1.070	83,031	450	1.900	855	76,800	1.070	82,176
2008 ¹	89,950	0.608	54,707	550	1.940	1,067	89,400	0.600	53,640

¹ Preliminary Price per Pound and Value of Production. Final price statistics to be published in July, 2009.

SOURCE: *Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts – Preliminary*, 3:00 pm January 23, 2009, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

Blueberries: Preliminary Price and Value by Crop, Selected States and United States, 2008 Crop

Crop and State	Total Utilized Production	All Price per Pound	Total Value of Production	Fresh Blueberries			Blueberries for Processing		
				Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production	Production	Price per Pound	Value of Production
2008	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars	1,000 Pounds	Dollars	1,000 Dollars
Wild Blueberries									
Maine	89,950	0.608	54,707	550	1.940	1,067	89,400	0.600	53,640
Cultivated Blueberries									
Alabama ¹	360	1.330	479	360	1.330	479			
Arkansas ¹	800	1.610	1,288	800	1.610	1,288			
California ¹	14,000	3.600	50,370	12,500	3.900	48,750	1,500	1.080	1,620
Florida ¹	9,800	5.300	51,940	9,800	5.300	51,940			
Georgia	41,000	1.710	70,180	24,000	2.230	53,520	17,000	0.980	16,660
Indiana	3,800	1.530	5,824	2,200	2.000	4,400	1,600	0.890	1,424
Michigan	110,000	1.130	124,000	40,000	1.700	68,000	70,000	0.800	56,000
Mississippi	4,000	1.980	7,920	2,600	2.400	6,240	1,400	1.200	1,680
New Jersey	59,000	1.390	81,990	46,000	1.480	68,080	13,000	1.070	13,910
New York	2,300	1.790	4,107	2,200	1.820	4,004	100	1.030	103
North Carolina	28,500	1.680	47,950	20,000	2.100	42,000	8,500	0.700	5,950
Oregon	43,100	1.140	49,266	19,400	1.440	27,936	23,700	0.900	21,330
Washington	32,000	1.360	43,360	12,000	2.280	27,360	20,000	0.800	16,000
UNITED STATES	348,660	1.540	538,674	191,860	2.110	403,997	156,800	0.859	134,677

¹ Small quantities of processed blueberries are included in fresh to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

SOURCE: *Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts – Preliminary*, 3:00 pm January 23, 2009, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

The wild blueberry estimating program is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources as a service to growers and others in the industry. The next Maine Wild Blueberries report will be published and available on the Internet at www.nass.usda.gov/nh in late July 2009. It will contain the final price statistics for the 2008 crop.

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Maine Total Wild Blueberry Production 1999 – 2008

