

Fruit Review, 1998

By Liana C. Cuffman

Fruit trees bloomed ahead of schedule due to above normal temperatures in the spring. Frost damage was a concern, but its actual effects varied throughout the season. During mid to late summer, below normal precipitation and above normal temperatures prevailed.

The Commonwealth's six major fruit crops, comprised of apples, peaches, pears, sweet cherries, tart cherries and grapes, utilized production totaled 289,100 tons in 1998. Utilized production was down 21 percent from the 366,250 tons utilized in 1997.

Apples: The 1998 commercial apple crop in Pennsylvania totaled 395 million pounds, down 26 percent from the 535 million pounds in 1997. The crop was valued at 54.1 million dollars, down 23 percent from the 1997 value. Pennsylvania ranked fifth nationally in apple production.

Grapes: Pennsylvania's 1998 total grape crop was 54,000 tons, down 11 percent from 1997. The price per ton averaged 267 dollars, up 9 dollars from last year. The total value of utilized production was 14.4 million dollars, down 8 percent from the previous year. The Commonwealth's grape production ranked fifth nationally.

Pears: The production of pears in Pennsylvania totaled 6,100

tons, up 53 percent from 1997. The utilized crop was valued at 2.1 million dollars, 3 percent less than the previous year. The Commonwealth ranked fifth nationally in pear production.

Peaches: Peach production in Pennsylvania totaled 65.0 million pounds in 1998, down 7 percent from 1997. The season-average price decreased from 0.337 cents per pound in 1997 to 0.317 cents in 1998. The total value of utilized production was 20.6 million dollars. Nationally, Pennsylvania ranked fifth in peach production.

Tart Cherries: Tart cherry production in Pennsylvania totaled 4.2 million pounds, down 2.3 million pounds from last year's crop. The season average price was 0.190 cents per pound, compared with 0.258 cents per pound in 1997. The total value of utilized production was 0.8 million dollars, 52 percent less than the previous year. Nationally, Pennsylvania ranked sixth in the production of tart cherries.

Sweet Cherries: Production of Pennsylvania's sweet cherries in 1998 totaled 550 tons, the same as a year ago. The average price per ton decreased from 2,380 dollars in 1997 to 2,320 dollars in 1998. The Commonwealth's crop for 1998 was valued at 0.9 million dollars. Sweet cherry production from Pennsylvania ranked ninth nationally.

Usual Dates of Full Bloom, Harvest & Marketing for Principal Pennsylvania Fruit Crops

Crop	April					May					June					July					August					September					October					November					Marketing				
	5	10	15	20	25	30	5	10	15	20	25	30	5	10	15	20	25	30	5	10	15	20	25	30	5	10	15	20	25	30	5	10	15	20	25	30	5	10	15	20	25	30	Most Active	Ends	
Apples																																												Sept 10	Nov 5
Peaches																																						Aug 10	Oct 1						
Cherries-Sweet																																					Jun 20	July 10							
Cherries-Tart																																					July 5	Aug 1							
Pears																																					Aug 15	Oct 31							
Grapes																																					Sept 25	Nov 1							

Key: Full Bloom  Harvesting  Begin Most Ends Active