



# IN A NUTSHELL

Newsletter

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## PECAN CROP

The USDA October pecan crop estimate for the United States is 201.4 million pounds. This is down 78.8 million pounds from last year's 280.2 million pound crop and is 55.4 million pounds below the ten year average of 256.6 million pounds. The estimate for Louisiana's 2006 pecan crop is 19 million pounds. That is 5.2 million pounds above Louisiana's ten year average of 13.8 million pounds.

The large Louisiana pecan crop is a pleasant surprise following the two hurricanes from last year. Observations from previous years following hurricanes suggested that a light crop was expected. Possible reasons for the pleasant surprise were that the hurricanes struck late in the pecan production cycle and Louisiana has had light production years the two previous seasons.

The drought this summer caused some crop loss due to small nut size, nut drop and water split due to heavy rains following a severe dry period. The drought did help unsprayed trees and orchards because scab disease was very light.

Insect pests were overall light this year although some orchards did have unexpected damage from nut casebearer, black aphids, scorch mites and walnut caterpillars.

## **HARVEST**

Shuck split was seen early on a lot of varieties following rain in September; however, the shucks did not open as quickly as expected. The lack of shuck opening may have been due to a lack of soil moisture.

Pecans should be harvested as soon as feasible. A lot of things can happen to pecans in the orchard. This is especially true once they are on the ground. Loss from wet weather can be a serious problem in some years. Wet pecans can deteriorate rapidly on the ground if the weather remains warm. Heavy rains and floods can also wash pecans away. Excessive loss to squirrels, crows, and other critters can occur. It has also been shown that stinkbugs can penetrate the shell of pecans after nut drop which could cause kernel spotting.

## **MOISTURE**

Early harvested pecans often have a lot of moisture in the kernels. This factor, added to humid conditions, can cause problems with embryo rot. Pecans should be dried to 6 percent moisture (or 4.5 percent to 3.0 percent for long-term storage).

Pecan buyers usually buy pecans at 6 percent moisture. A seller may be penalized for excessive moisture in pecans. The seller can lose pecan weight if the moisture level is below 6 percent.

## **PECAN PRICES**

Prices for pecans should be good if the USDA pecan crop estimate is accurate. All the major pecan producing states except for Louisiana and Oklahoma appear to be having an off year.

There are currently few active buyers in Louisiana. The number of buyers should be increasing rapidly in the next couple of weeks as the harvest gets underway.

There is traditionally high demand for good quality pecans to use in the gift pack and fundraising markets early in the season. The price usually declines slowly until about a week before Thanksgiving, when most of the gift pack buyers will quit buying and the commercial shellers will then become the primary buyers. The price often drops about 20 percent at that time.

During light crop years commercial shellers sometimes enter the market earlier and prices often remain good; occasionally, however, prices may increase later in the season as shellers try to obtain pecans to meet their obligations.

USDA Market News for pecans at Thomasville, GA; Baton Rouge, LA; Austin, TX; Phoenix, AZ; and Oklahoma City, OK; is available at

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/mncs/shipnut.htm>. The price quotes may give prices per point. Points refer to percent shell out for pecans. Pecans with a 48 percent shell out selling at \$2.50 a point will bring \$1.20 per pound in shell ( $2.50 \times 0.48 = 1.20$ ). Unit counts refer to the number of nuts per pound.

The report for Baton Rouge is expected to start within the week. The first report from Thomasville, Georgia, indicated very light deliveries by growers. Price quotes included Elliott with 53% meat yield at \$2.00 per pound and Stuart with 46% meat yield at \$1.84. Seedling few yard tree lots of generally good quality at 70 – 90 cents.

## **CROW CONTROL**

This is a reminder for growers interested in crow control with toxicants to turn in their crow survey. The results of the survey will be used to determine if there is enough interest in the program to have the toxicant labeled in Louisiana.

## **2006-2007 LOUISIANA STATE PECAN SHOW**

This year's Louisiana State Pecan Show will be held in Monroe during Ag Expo at the Monroe Civic Center, January 19 - 20, 2007. The show will have high visibility at Ag Expo, which has an attendance of approximately 8,000. It is an excellent opportunity for promoting Louisiana pecans. A list of show participants selling pecans will be developed. The list will be available to indicate potential pecan sources to pecan buyers until January 2008. Growers are encouraged to assist with the show by sharing their knowledge with show visitors.

Requirements for entering the show, divisions of the show, and suggestions on selecting and handling pecans for the show are included. Yard tree growers as well as commercial growers are encouraged to participate with their pecans. If additional show information is needed, I can be contacted at [jpyzner@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:jpyzner@agcenter.lsu.edu), (318)797-8034 ext 2319 or (318)537-0583.

Sincerely,



John Pyzner  
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LSU Ag Center  
Pecan Research-Extension Station  
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**REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTERING THE LOUISIANA STATE PECAN SHOW**  
**Ag Expo in the Monroe Civic Center, January 19 - 20, 2007**

1. Pecan exhibits must be turned in to John Pyzner at the Pecan Research-Extension Station, P.O. Box 5519, Shreveport, LA 71135. (mailing address) Physical address: 10300 Harts Island Road, Shreveport, LA 71115 (UPS and FedEx deliveries) by **December 19, 2006**.
2. Pecans must be of current year's crop.
3. Exhibitors must have grown their entries.
4. An entry must be 40 nuts.
5. An entry may come from one or more trees, but must be of one cultivar (a pecan tree that has been named and is commercially propagated - a cultivated variety).
6. An individual may enter as many different cultivars as he/she wishes.
7. Any individual may enter regardless of the number of producing trees he or she owns.
8. Individuals should know the name of the cultivars they are entering, or if they are hybrids or native.
9. An exhibitor may enter as many native pecan entries as he/she wishes; however, each tree can have only one entry, and each entry must be from an individual tree that is identified by a name, number or letter number combination of the owner's choosing; for example (DE23).

**INFORMATION NEEDED FOR ENTRY**

1. Grower's name and address.
2. Parish pecans grown in.
3. Name of cultivar or name of parent cultivars and appropriate identification number for known hybrids or tree identification number for native.
4. Indicate if grower is retailing and/or wholesaling pecans. (This is for the list of pecan sources.)

**In-shell Cultivar** - A cultivar that has less than 55 nuts per pound listed in Division I. In-shell pecans are suitable for sale in the shell.

**Shelling Cultivar** - A cultivar that has more than 55 nuts per pound listed in Division II. Shelling pecans are suitable for sale as shelled pecans.

**Known Hybrid** - A hybrid pecan that has not been named, but for which both parents are known. This includes those pecans commonly referred to as "USDA Crosses." The parents and identification number must be listed on the entry card.

**Native** - All unnamed pecan trees that have at least one unknown parent. This division will include cultivar seedlings. The division will be divided into large natives (less than 60 nuts per pound), medium natives (60-100 nuts per pound) and small native (more than 100 nuts per pound).

## DIVISION OF CULTIVARS IN A PECAN SHOW

### DIVISION I

101 Barton  
201 Branch  
301 Cape Fear  
401 Centennial  
501 Choctaw  
601 Davis  
701 Desirable  
801 Forkert  
901 Gloria Grande  
1001 Jackson  
1101 Kiowa  
1201 Mahan  
1301 Maramec  
1401 Mohawk  
1501 Nacono  
1601 Oconee (56-7-72)  
1701 Owens  
1801 Pawnee (63-16-125)  
1901 PE-Cou-2  
2001 Podsednik  
2101 Schley  
2201 Shawnee  
2301 Shoshoni  
2401 Stuart  
2501 Success  
2601 Sumner  
2701 Wichita  
2801 Known Hybrids  
2901 Other In-shell Pecans

### DIVISION II

4101 Caddo  
4202 Candy  
4301 Caspiana  
4401 Cheyenne  
4501 Chickasaw  
4601 Curtis  
4701 Elliott  
4801 Farley  
4901 Gafford  
5001 Jennings  
5101 Jenkins  
5201 McMillan  
5301 Melrose  
5401 Moneymaker  
5501 Moreland  
5601 Moore  
5701 Pabst  
5801 Sioux  
5901 Syrup Mill  
6001 Van Deman  
6101 Known Hybrids  
6201 Other Shelling Pecans

### Division III

7101 Large Native  
7201 Medium Native  
7301 Small Native

\_\_\_\_ Largest Pecan Entry

\_\_\_\_ Smallest Pecan Entry

# ***PECAN CROW MANAGEMENT SURVEY***

**Please Return to**

***John Pyzner***  
***P.O. Box 5519***  
***Shreveport, La. 71135***  
**[ipyzner@agctr.lsu.edu](mailto:ipyzner@agctr.lsu.edu)**  
**Fax # (318) 676-7371**

- 1) Parish or Parishes where orchard(s) are located: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Total number of acres in production (natives and improved): \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Are crows a problem in your orchard? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Estimated annual pecan loss from crows:
  - a. Direct crop loss \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Management costs (example: cost of propane, shotgun shell, etc.)  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Type of crow management you currently use (check all that apply)
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Propane cannons
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Scare crows
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ Kites, eye balloons, noise makers, etc.
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Cracker shells
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_ Live shooting
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. \_\_\_\_\_ No management actions taken
- 6) Are you interested in using the Crow toxicant DRC-1339 in your management program in 2006? (See Pecan South, March 2003, pp16 for information on DRC-1339)  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) Other comments \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **SUGGESTIONS ON SELECTING AND HANDLING PECANS FOR SHOW**

1. Select nuts that are mature, uniform in size, color and representative of the cultivar.
2. Picking mature nuts from the tree may avoid soil and moisture discoloration.
3. Select nuts that are free of insect and disease damage.
4. Weighing or briefly floating nuts can help identify light and heavy nuts; however, wetting the nuts may cause discoloration of the shells and kernels. Spreading the nuts out on a paper towel to dry will reduce the chance of discoloration.
5. Nuts should be free of dirt, dust and shuck remnants; however, they should not be buffed or polished to where the shape and color markings are altered.
6. Nuts removed from the shucks too early may not be mature and may have white areas on the shells.
7. Select the largest nuts that are uniform in size.
8. Select the heaviest nuts for each entry.
9. After nuts have been selected, place them in a ventilated bag and store at room temperature.
10. The major criteria for judging pecans are:
  - A. Whole nuts
    1. Uniform in size and true to cultivar type.
    2. Free of defects.
    3. Appearance and shell color.
    4. Number of nuts per pound.
  - B. Kernel quality
    1. Percentage of kernel.
    2. Color (the lighter the better).
    3. General appearance (free from defects, insect and disease damage).
    4. Texture.