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IN A NUTSHELL

Newsletter

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PECAN CROP

Severe defoliation from forest tent caterpillars, drought and two hurricanes have made 2005 a disappointing year for Louisiana's pecan growers. The USDA October 2005 forecast for Louisiana's pecan crop is 4 million pounds. This is approximately half of the June estimates of 8 million to 10 million pounds. The USDA forecast for the national crop is 289 million pounds, up 55 percent from last year's crop. The United States' 10-year pecan production average is 255 million pounds.

Harvesting has been slow because of pecans maturing a week or two later than normal. Hurricane damage has also slowed harvest by requiring removal of broken limbs before harvest and removal of extra trash and black hull pecans during nut cleaning. The statewide harvest completion rate was 53 percent November 14, 2005.

PECAN PRICES

There has been a good demand for good quality pecans to use in the gift pack and fundraising markets. 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. Demand for non gift pack pecans has been light to moderate.

Market news for pecans 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.

MOISTURE

Early harvested pecans often have a lot of moisture in the kernels. This factor, added to humid conditions, sometimes causes 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 on pecans. The seller loses pecan weight if the moisture level is below 6 percent.

EXTENSION PROGRAMS
Agriculture and Forestry
Community Leadership
Economic Development
Environmental Sciences
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Natural Resources

HURRICANE DAMAGE

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita severely damaged trees and nut crops in many orchards in Louisiana. The only programs available to assist growers are the Emergency Conservation Program and the Emergency Loan Program.

The Emergency Conservation Program is designed to help commercial growers with debris cleanup. This program is available in designated parishes only and for removal of debris that significantly hampers normal farming operations. The program also assists with removal of toppled trees.

The Emergency Loan Program provides loans for actual loss of pecans. A loss of 30 percent of production is required. The loss can be from hurricanes or drought and is available in all parishes. Loans must be repaid.

Contact your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office if one of these programs might apply to your situation. The possibility of other assistant programs might occur in the future.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

We are updating our newsletter e-mail addresses. E-mail is the quickest and cheapest method of distributing the newsletter. We are requesting that In A Nutshell subscribers who are receiving the newsletter through the mail and have e-mail addresses to send us their e-mail addresses. E-mail your address to jpyzner@agcenter.lsu.edu. Please include your name, mailing address and telephone number.

2005-2006 LOUISIANA STATE PECAN SHOW

This year's Louisiana State Pecan Show will be held during Ag Expo in the Monroe Civic Center, January 20 - 21, 2006. The show will have high visibility at Ag Expo, which has an attendance of approximately 8,000. This will be valuable in 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 2007.

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, contact your county agent's office or me, jpyzner@agcenter.lsu.edu, (318)-797-8034 ext 2319.

Sincerely,



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REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTERING THE LOUISIANA STATE PECAN SHOW

Ag Expo in the Monroe Civic Center, January 20-21, 2006

1. Pecan exhibits must be turned in to John Pyzner at the Pecan Research-Extension Station, P.O. Box 5519, Shreveport, LA 71135. Physical address: 10300 Harts Island Road, Shreveport, LA 71115 by **December 21, 2005**.
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).

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.

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 Schley
2101 Shawnee
2201 Shoshoni
2301 Stuart
2401 Success
2501 Sumner
2601 Wichita
2701 Known Hybrids
2801 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 Syrup Mill
5901 Van Deman
6001 Known Hybrids
6101 Other Shelling Pecans

Division III

7101 Large Native
7201 Medium Native
7301 Small Native

_____ Largest Pecan Entry
_____ Smallest Pecan Entry