

Pecan Inquiry – October 2023

(PECAN AP)



**United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service**



Workforce Performance and Staff Development Section
September 2023



Pecan Inquiry Overview

- Essentially an Ag Yield survey for pecans:
 - Helps producers develop marketing plans for their operations.
 - Enables the industry to forecast transportation and storage requirements and evaluate export potential.
 - Used by USDA agencies to determine crop insurance and disaster aid payments, along with other program benefits.
 - Used by grower organizations to help form policy positions.

General Survey Information

- Project Code: **142 - Tree Nut Survey**
- Questionnaires:
 - Mailed September 22
 - Web reporting option available
- Release:
 - *Crop Production*
 - October 12, 12.00 PM (Eastern)

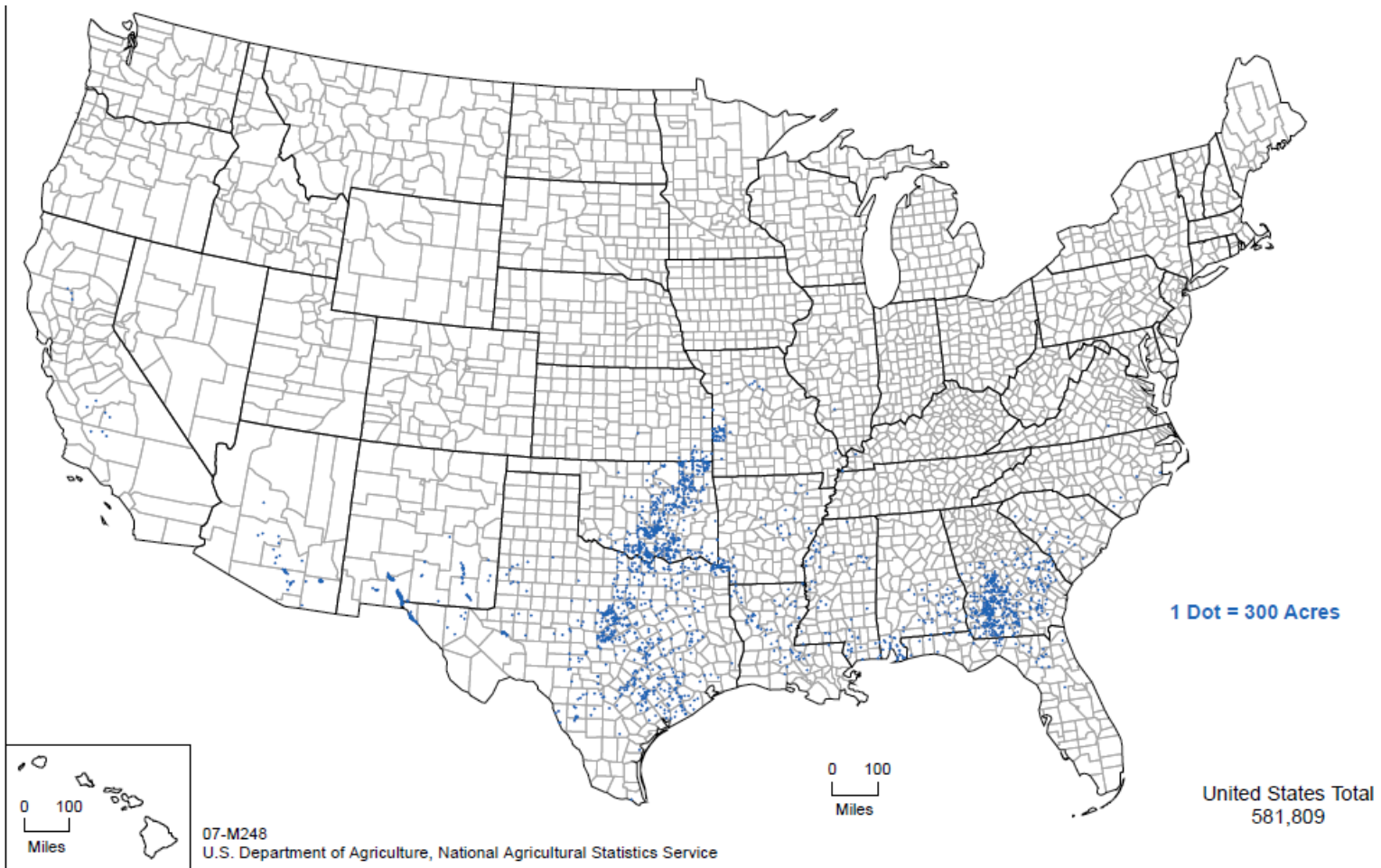
Definitions

- **Improved Varieties:** These trees are the result of careful grafting and budding.
 - Usually planted in managed, cultivated groves.
 - Shell is much thinner than that of the seedling and consequently its meat yield is normally higher.
 - The appearance is nicer and larger, making it a favorite of home cooks and gourmet commercial users.
- **Wild Native or Seedling:** Growing wild, usually unattended and not cultivated.
 - However, there are some large areas where they are well-managed and cultivated.
 - The nut is smaller than the improved type but its flavor and full firm meat make it especially adaptable for commercial uses.

Definitions

- **Total Acres:** Net acres in commercial orchards or groves. Includes bearing and non-bearing acreage.
- **Bearing Acres:** Fruit or nut trees of sufficient age to produce a marketable crop.
- **Alternate Bearing:** Resulting from carbohydrate build-up, this phenomenon produces normal to above normal yields one year, followed by smaller yields the next year.

Pecan Growing Regions



Survey Questions Vers. 1 (AZ, GA, NM)

- Any pecan acreage this year (2023)?
- Total acres of pecan trees maintained in 2023?
- How many bearing age acres this year?
- Total pounds harvested/to be harvested this year
- Note:
 - Acres are collected to nearest tenth.
 - Production in total pounds. Leave a note if yield/acre is given or if a different unit is used.
 - In shell weight

Survey Questions Vers. 2 (OK, TX)

- Improved Varieties and Wild Native/Seedling Varieties asked separately.
 - Questions are the same as Version 1 for each variety.
- For Wild Native variety, operator may report number of trees instead of number of acres.

2022 Pecan Data

- Average yield: 679 lbs/acre
 - Highest: Arizona 1,700 lbs/acre
 - Lowest: Oklahoma 75 lbs/acre
- Bearing Acres: 409,000
 - Georgia #1 with 147,000 acres
- 277,700,000 lbs produced
 - Improved variety accounts for 97% of total crop

Watch For:

- Large acreage
- Large changes in acreage
- Low bearing to total acres
- High/low yield
 - If low yields are result of bad weather or alternate-bearing please leave a note

Things to Be Aware Of

- Some farmers may say it's too soon to know production. Ask for best estimate
- Asking for 2023 crop
 - Harvest begins in the fall for some and extends into the next year
- We want them to only include fall 2023, Jan-Mar of 2024 harvest information

Things to Be Aware Of

- If the respondent doesn't know which variety he or she has, record the acreage, and leave a comment!
- If the respondent gives a name for the tree, for example Pawnee or Kiowa, it's likely an improved variety. Leave a comment!
- If trees are scattered in a pasture, get the best estimate of tree acres and not pasture acres.

Reluctant Responses

- Small farmer/operation
 - I'm glad you brought that up. All pecan growing operations are important, big or small. The management practices of a smaller operation are different from the larger ones, and this is your chance to let your voice be heard. Information you provide can help others become aware of the challenges facing smaller pecan growers such as yourself.

Conclusion

- Notes are your friend:
 - When in doubt, comment it out
 - Extra information is especially important for specialty crops
- Reach out to your supervisor or RFO if you have any questions

