

MARKETING THE MICHIGAN GRAPE CROP  
A brief Review of the 1943 Season

by  
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Market reports on grapes were issued from the Benton Harbor, Michigan office, from August 22 to October 20, 1943.

National Situation

Grapes were one of the few fruit crops in the country during 1943 to have increased yields both over average and over the 1942 crop. The national 1943 grape harvest was estimated December 17, by the Crop Reporting Board at 2,789,700 tons, compared to 2,402,150 tons in 1942 and 2,354,460 tons for the previous ten-year (1932-41) average, or 16% increase over 1942 and 18% increase over average. National rail shipments of fresh grapes through January 15 amounted to 22,712 cars compared to 31,029 cars a year ago to date and to final 1942 forwardings of 31,139 cars.

Commercial production of grapes in Michigan is located principally in the southwestern part of the State and is centered largely in Berrien and VanBuren counties. The principal variety is Concord. Limited production is also maintained in Champions, Moores Early, Niagaras, Delawares and Wordens. The Champion is an early jell variety, maturing between August 15-31, and is the earliest variety on the Market. Moores Early follow Champions in maturity, maturing around August 25-September 10, according to the season. This variety is sold mostly on the fresh market for table and home canning use. Delawares, a white juice grape, maturing in late August are utilized mostly by champagne makers. Concord, the principal commercial variety, harvested in late September and October, excellent for table use, fresh juice, jams and wine, move into all these channels. Niagaras, a white grape maturing about the same time as Concord, is utilized mostly by wine makers for white juice blends.

Michigan Situation

Size, Quality and Condition of Michigan Crop

Michigan's 1943 grape harvest was estimated by the Crop Reporting Board December 17 at 42,400 tons. The crop was 8% under the 1942 production of 46,000 tons and 9% below the 10-year (1932-41) average of 46,770 tons. Grapes were the nearest to normal size of any of the major fruit crops in the State.

Maturity was unusually late due to cold delayed spring, but favorable late fall weather fortunately allowed stock to mature with almost no loss. An early fall freeze would have been disastrous as stock did not reach proper sugar content until a week or ten days later than usual. Vineyards were generally in good condition due to favorable returns the previous two seasons, resulting in better care. The quality of berries when they reached maturity was above average.

Marketing the Michigan grape crop, usually a problem of supply and demand, was drastically changed this season due to wartime regulations, OPA ceilings limiting prices and restriction of distribution to processing channels, upset normal trade procedure. Normal commercial demand this season far exceeded supplies. Consumer demand, both for fresh table fruit and for stock in home canning of jams and jellies, winery demand, and commercial processing demand was very active and strong. Varieties not affected by OPA ceilings and Concord, moved before ceiling was effective, sold at record levels.

1943 returns were favorable and compared to best seasons during prohibition era in the '20s. This, combined with good yields, resulted in one of the best seasons in recent years. However, open market values were not received due to OPA ceilings. Ceiling prices established September 24 rolled back values on Concord sharply from the established market levels, averaging around \$25.00 to \$50 per ton. Considerable dissatisfaction was felt over the extent of the roll-back. Grape producers had just passed through an extreme deflationary period from 1928 to 1941. Grape farming was so unprofitable that many vineyards had been abandoned. From 1930 through 1940, Michigan vine count decreased 32% according to census figures. Many remaining vineyards were saddled with debt. Fair prices had been received in 1942 which helped a lot. The Michigan grape industry has a history of extremes in price returns.

The weighted average price to growers over the Benton Harbor Cash Market amounted to \$1.04 per 12-quart basket and \$.43 for 4-quart baskets. The bulk of this was early varieties and Concord sold prior to establishment of ceiling prices. These values are the best since sales have been tabulated starting in 1931. The equivalent of 487 carlots, or 5,837 tons moved over the Market at these values. Fresh juice processors paid OPA ceiling prices of \$75.00 per ton and used 21,406 tons. Winery purchases as recorded by the State Liquor Commission amounted to 5,960 tons, with a weighted average price of \$85.00 per ton. Varieties other than Concord selling on open market increased the winery average above OPA ceiling on Concord.

Rail shipments of grapes, most of which went to fresh markets prior to enactment of the freeze order, amounted to 195 cars and were the heaviest in several seasons. The distribution of the 1943 crop of Concord grapes was restricted by WFA Food Order No. 80, limiting sales to processors. This was effective in specific commercial areas in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Washington. Due to short fruit and berry crops and limited supply of butter, grapes were needed to supplement the national supply of jams and jellies for military, lease-lend and domestic needs.

Much confusion and worry resulted in the application of the freeze order. First, rumors of freeze orders caused fresh stock buyers to rush in the market and place orders before it became effective. Rumors of ceiling prices of roll-back proportions caused farmers to hurry stock to market before ceilings were effected, the week prior to September 20. Most of this stock was rushed to market slightly immature. While the freeze order on distribution was made effective September 20, OPA ceilings did not go into effect until almost a week later. Stock undergrade and not suitable for processing sold on the open market during this period from \$10.00 to \$75.00 per ton above No. 1 stock. This price penalty for producing No. 1 fruit was subject to much comment.

Lack of labor at processing plants at the start of the freeze program, to handle the crop was by far the biggest worry. The season was late with the possibility of a hard frost at any time and processors were slow in taking delivery. Several measures to secure additional man-power for processing plants failed and the problem was getting critical. Farmers were not able to get the empty lugs back to continue picking and were unable to keep harvest help working steadily. This problem was finally solved by securing prisoners of war to man the processing plants. Just as soon as this labor was received, processors quickly caught up on deliveries and were able to handle stock before the advent of bad weather. Late enactment of the freeze order placed a strain on the physical handling of the stock. Many growers had sold their stock to wineries in previous seasons and depended on wineries for lugs and trucks to haul them to plants. This change in distribution right at harvesting time caught them unprepared and considerable worry and time was spent in assembling containers and securing trucks for hauling.

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AMOUNT OF GRAPES USED BY MICHIGAN JUICE PLANTS, WINERIES AND PROCESSORS & VALUE:

Year	Total Tons Used	Weighted Avg. Returns	Total Value
1943) State Wineries	5,960	\$85.00 per ton)	\$2,112,050
1943) Processors	21,406		
1942) State Wineries	5,835	55.00	1,339,918
1942) Processors	18,336		
1941	15,457	50.00	772,850
1940	12,938	42.25	546,620
1939	14,650	45.27	663,000
1938	4,500	52.50	236,750
1937	10,956	43.60	477,630
1936	8,000	42.50	340,000
1935	4,600	26.26	120,800
1934	5,700	28.00	159,600
1934	2,342	33.00	77,286
1933	3,400	19.06	64,800
1932	1,085	12.00	13,020
1931	1,600	40.00	24,000
1930	4,250	40.00	170,000
1929	2,468	40.00	98,720
1928	8,011	32.00	256,352
1927	6,700	41.50	278,050
1926	8,620	31.00	267,220
1925	Very small crop		
1924	3,500	76.00	266,000
*1923	4,500	60.00	270,000

DISPOSITION 1943 MICHIGAN GRAPE CROP:

	Tons
1. Fresh market sales over Benton Harbor Cash Market (Includes small quantity after September 20, going to processors) (487 cars moved over Market or 5,837 tons at 12 tons per car)	5,837
2. Sales to commercial processors as tabulated by FDO Administrator (Local West Michigan processors - 16,273 tons) (Other processors 5,133 tons)	21,406
3. Winery purchases fresh stock (Reported by Mich. Liquor Control)	5,960
Concords	3,566 tons
Niagaras	625 tons
Delawares	148 tons
Wordens	177 tons
Moore's Early	58 tons
Elviras	12 tons
Champions	124 tons
Lucilles	22 tons
Wyoming Reds	1/2 ton
TOTALS FOR WINE:	4,724 tons
*Concords (Juice)	1,237 tons
TOTAL GRAPES PURCHASED	5,960 tons
4. Carlot movement not previously reported moving over Benton Harbor Cash Market and not destined to processors (195 cars reported shipped by rail. Estimated 45 cars moving to processors, leaving 150 cars. Estimated 40% of this moved direct from farms to cars, or 60 cars of 12 tons per car)	720
5. Truck movement direct from farms to fresh market channels (Unavailable)	
TOTAL	34,022 tons

(\* ) This stock previously reported in processing tonnage.

BENTON HARBOR CASH MARKET ON GRAPES:

Note: Price ranges are for truckloads, cash to growers; 4 qt. packages are Fancy Table grade, 12 qts. packages are Michigan No. 1, and No. 2.

DATE	Champions		Moore's Early		C o n c o r d s		Niagaras	
	4 qts.	12 qts.	4 qts.	12 qts.	4 qts.	12 qts.	12 qts.	12 qts.
Aug. 19	\$ .45							
22	.31-.40							
23	.30-.35							
24	.25-.35 .75							
25	.28-.33 .60-.75							
26	.27-.33 .50-.60							
27	.30-.35 .75							
29	.32-.36 .65-.82							
30	.35-.38 .75-.82							
31	.35-.40 .80-.91							
Sept. 1	.35-.39		.75-.90		.36-.40			
2	.33-.37		.60-.85		.40			
3	.31-.35		.70-.85					
6	.38-.42		.75-.90		.40-.47		.80-1.00	
7	.35-.42		.75-.95		.40-.43		.85-1.15	
8	.40		.80-.90		.40-.48		.90-1.10	
9	.32-.40		.90-1.00		.40-.51		.90-1.25	
10					.40-.50		.90-1.25	
12	.90-1.00		.45-.53		1.00-1.30		.45-.53 1.00-1.30	
13					.40-.50		1.10-1.25	
14					.50-.57		1.35-1.50 1.15-1.25 1.05-1.10	
15					.50-.57		1.15-1.50 1.05-1.40	
16					.40-.50		1.00-1.20 .90-1.10	
17					.40-.50		1.05-1.25 1.00-1.10	
19					.40-.45		1.00-1.25 1.00-1.15	
21							1.00-1.25	
22							1.20-1.30	
23							1.25-1.30	
24							1.20-1.35	
26							1.25-1.50 1.10-1.35	
27							1.40-1.65 1.00-1.25	
28							.80-1.00 1.25	
29							.60-.75 1.00-1.25	
30							.70-.80 1.00-1.25	
Oct. 1							.70-.90 1.00-1.25	
3							.64-.75 1.00-1.25	
4							.64-.75 .90-1.15	
5							.64-.75	
6							.75	
7							.70-.75	
8							.70-.75 .85-1.15	
10							.70-.75	
11							.70-.75	
12							.71-.75	
13							.70-.75	

BENTON HARBOR CASH MARKET TRUCK CARLOT EQUIVALENTS - GRAPES

Daily movement over the Market, calculated with the following carlot equivalents: 4 qt. packages 3,600 to the car, 12 qt. packages 1,200 to the car.

DATE	Carlot Equivalent	DATE	Carlot Equivalent	DATE	Carlot Equivalent	DATE	Carlot Equivalent
Aug. 24	1	Sept. 7	2	Sept. 21	5	Oct. 5	6
25	1	8	2	22	6	6	5
26	1	9	5	23	4	7	3
27	0	10	4	24	8	8	3
28	Sat.	11	Sat.	25	Sat.	9	Sat.
29	3	12	9	26	5	10	3
30	2	13	1	27	8	11	0
31	3	14	8	28	17	12	1
Sept. 1	4	15	25	29	14	13	0
2	4	16	49	30	12	14	25#
3	3	17	63	Oct. 1	9		
4	Sat.	18	Sat.	2	Sat.	SEASON	
5	Sun.	19	136	3	11	TOTAL	487
6	4	20	9	4	3	3 (#includes some unreported previously)	

SUMMARY OF GRAPE MOVEMENT AND AVERAGE PRICES ON BENTON HARBOR CASH MARKET

(Season)	(Carlot Equivalents)	(Value: 12-qts.	4-qts.)	(Total Value)
1931	1,328	\$.27	\$.12	\$512,308
1932	2,885	.15	.08	537,518
1933	1,786	.18	.12	523,845
1934	1,837	.23	.12	657,790
1935	1,643	.18	.11	460,849
1936	820	.35	.16	431,205
1937	1,800	.21	.12	501,713
1938	124	.45	.25	74,560
1939	1,376	.21	.12	392,816
1940	1,542	.20	.12	424,803
1941	617	.42	.18	333,348
1942	904	.50	.24	581,753
1943	487	1.04	.43	626,289

PRODUCTION OF GRAPES 1943 SEASON WITH COMPARISONS - Released by Crop Reporting Board, Washington, D.C.

PRINCIPAL STATES	Production 1/			PRINCIPAL STATES	Production 1/		
	Average	1942	1943	Average	1942	1943	
	1932-41			1932-41			
	Tons			Tons			
Conn.	1,550	1,100	700	Virginia	2,060	1,900	1,100
New York	63,190	69,600	36,000	N. Car.	6,150	6,400	5,200
New Jersey	2,680	2,600	2,100	Kentucky	2,000	2,000	1,800
Pa.	18,000	21,500	15,300	Tennessee	2,170	2,700	2,000
Ohio	25,130	22,400	17,900	Arkansas	9,480	8,400	7,300
Indiana	3,750	2,800	2,100	Oklahoma	3,040	3,100	2,300
Illinois	5,340	4,300	2,900	Texas	2,380	2,200	2,200
MICHIGAN	46,770	46,000	42,400	Washington	7,440	14,900	14,300
Iowa	4,020	3,200	2,900	Oregon	2,180	1,800	1,800
Missouri	8,430	7,200	5,200	Calif.	2,120,400	2,160,000	2,610,000
Nebraska	1,870	1,800	1,400	TOT. U.S.	2,354,460	2,402,150	2,789,700
Kansas	2,970	3,600	2,200	(1/ For some States in certain years, production includes some quantities unharvested on account of market conditions.			
Delaware	1,630	1,200	1,000				

JOBBER SALES OF MICHIGAN GRAPES IN IMPORTANT MARKETS

Prices for 4-qt. climax baskets are Fancy Table grade; 12-qt. climax baskets are Michigan No. 1's unless otherwise stated.

C H I C A G O						M I N N E A P O L I S		
DATE	Moore's Early 4 qts	Moore's Early 12 qts	Champions 12 qts	Champions 4 qts	Concords 12 qts	DATE	4 qts	12 qts
Sept. 7	\$.45-.50		.85-1.00			Sept. 20	.57-.60	1.70-1.80
8	.45-.50			.45		21	.60-.70	1.70-1.90
9	.45-.55			.52		22	.70	1.75-1.90
10	.48-.52	1.25				23	.70	1.65-1.90
13				.54-.58	1.20-1.40	24	.70	1.65-1.90
14	.57			.55-.60	1.25-1.50	27		1.50-1.75
15	.55			.55-.60	1.25-1.50	28		1.25-1.65
16				.50-.60	1.25-1.40	29		1.50-1.75
17				.40-.55	.90-1.35	30		.73
20				.48-.52	1.15-1.40			
21				.52-.65	1.35-1.40			
22				.55	1.50-1.75			
24					1.50			
27					1.50			
28					1.40-1.65			
29					.85-1.35			
30					.81			
Oct. 4					.81			

  

M I L W A U K E E						S T. L O U I S		
DATE	Champions 4 qts	Champions 12 qts	Moore's Early 4 qts	Moore's Early 12 qts	Concords 4 qts	DATE	4 qts	12 qts
Aug. 30	\$.39-.40	1.00	.40					
31	.39							
Sept. 1	.42-.43	.90-1.00						
2	.38-.43	.90						
7			.40					
8			.40-.45					
9			.53	1.00				
13			.55	1.15-1.25				
14: KANSAS CITY			.55	1.15-1.25				
15: Concords					.60-.63	1.40-1.50		1.75-1.85
16: 4 qts					.56	1.25-1.30		1.65-1.75
17: 12 qts	\$1.40-1.75				.45-.50	1.10-1.20	.55-.60	1.40-1.65
20					.50-.55	1.30-1.35	.55-.60	1.55-1.75
21		1.60-1.65					.52-.65	1.35-1.50
22		1.55-1.65					.55	1.50-1.75
23	.70	1.65						1.75
24	.70	1.60-1.75						1.50
27								1.75-2.25
28		1.60-1.75						1.50-2.25
29		1.50-1.75						1.50-1.75
30		1.50-1.65						1.60-1.75
Oct. 1		1.50-1.75				.81		1.10-1.50
4								1.25-1.35
8								2.00

CARLOT DISTRIBUTION OF MICHIGAN GRAPE SHIPMENTS, 1943 SEASON  
(Through November 1, 1943)

State & City	Cars	State & City	Cars	State & City	Cars
<u>Colorado</u>		<u>Missouri</u>		<u>South Dakota</u>	
Denver	2	Kansas City	5	Aberdeen	1
		St. Louis	2	Huron	1
<u>Illinois</u>		Total	7	Sioux Falls	2
Blue Island	6			Total	4
		<u>Nebraska</u>			
<u>Iowa</u>		Lincoln	1	<u>Tennessee</u>	
Des Moines	1	Norfolk	1	Memphis	1
Esterville	1	Total	2		
Mason City	1			<u>Texas</u>	
Sioux City	1	<u>New Jersey</u>		Dallas	2
Total	4	Egg Harbor	4		
				<u>Wisconsin</u>	
<u>Kansas</u>		<u>New York</u>		Eau Claire	1
Hays	1	Fredonia	10	Milwaukee	2
Hutchinson	1	Highland	18	Sheboygan	1
Salina	1	Penn Yan	1	Total	4
Total	3	Milton	4	GRAND TOTAL	195
		Rheims	8		
<u>Kentucky</u>		Thiems	1	<u>SUMMARY BY STATES:</u>	
Louisville	3	Total	42	Colorado	2
				Illinois	6
<u>Michigan</u>		<u>North Dakota</u>		Iowa	4
Detroit	40	Bismarck	2	Kansas	3
Ishpeming	1	Devils Lake	1	Kentucky	3
St. Johns	7	Fargo	2	Michigan	48
Total	48	Grand Forks	2	Minnesota	52
		Minot	1	Missouri	7
<u>Minnesota</u>		Total	7	Nebraska	2
Alexander	1			New Jersey	4
Brainard	1	<u>Ohio</u>		New York	42
Duluth	4	Cincinnati	1	North Dakota	7
Mankato	2	Cleveland	2	Ohio	4
Marshall	1	Toledo	1	South Dakota	4
Minneapolis	25	Total	4	Tennessee	1
St. Cloud	2			Texas	2
St. Paul	14			Wisconsin	4
Wilmar	1			GRAND TOTAL	195
Winona	1				
Total	52				