

PRO*ACT

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Crop Update

September 17, 2025

After a season dominated by small fruit, especially during the peak of the Navel window, early signs for the 2025–26 California Navel orange crop are encouraging. This year's crop is expected to increase in both size and volume, with the latest USDA estimate projecting 80 million cartons, a 6% rise over last year.

Early field reports suggest that the size curve is trending larger, with fruit peaking on 72s and 88s. That's a shift from last season, where much of the crop favored 113s and 138s, and leaned heavily toward foodservice. If sizing continues as forecasted, this year's crop will present more promotable opportunities for retail, particularly around bag and bulk programs.

Harvest is expected to begin in early October. As with most early-season fruit, we can expect light orange coloring and smaller sizes in initial picks. Growers will likely use gas to bring out color on early fruit, but it's worth reminding customers that light-skinned Navels still eat well. Their internal quality and sugar levels are typically right on target, even if the outside isn't fully orange.

Size distribution is expected to increase as the season progresses, with more consistent, larger fruit by mid-December. Growers will continue evaluating the groves over the next few weeks, but so far, this season is shaping up to be a more balanced and promotable Navel deal.

