

PEACHES

ACREAGE SET AND REMOVED, IRRIGATED AND AVERAGE TREES PER ACRE

Following the disastrous production year of 1996, many growers were uncertain as to the future of their operations. Many responded to the questions of their intentions to set and remove trees in 1997 with a "don't know". For the growers who did respond, their intentions were to remove about 19,400 trees and set about 32,300 trees statewide.

Acreage of peaches maintained for production in 1996 was 17,000 - down 46 percent from 1991. Average number of trees per acre in 1996 was 113 trees compared to 100 trees in 1991. This increase was attributed to many acres of "high density" plantings over the last few years. Acreage reported to be equipped for irrigation in 1996 totaled 13,800, about 81 percent of the total acreage in the State.

Total Acreage, Total Trees, Trees Per Acre and Acreage Equipped for Irrigation, by Region, South Carolina, 1996

Region	Acreage Maintained for Production	Total Trees	Trees per Acre	Acreage Equipped for Irrigation
Upper State	6,100	692,000	110	4,400
Ridge	8,300	950,000	114	7,600
Coastal Plains	2,600	298,000	115	1,800
STATE	17,000	1,920,000	113	13,800

HIGH DENSITY PEACH PLANTINGS

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in high density peach plantings and many of our larger growers are trying this new procedure. Although we did not specifically ask for high density plantings on the questionnaire, we did an impromptu survey of high density acreage and tree numbers when interviewing the larger growers. While this supplemental survey was only based on a sample of all growers, the results were quite interesting. The growers who responded to the question reported over 400 acres of high density plantings, with over 161,000 trees of various varieties. About 75 percent of the acreage was in the Ridge with the remainder in the Upper State.