



Yakima Chief Inc.
2004 U.S. Hop Crop Report #4
Week of September 12

1. **Water & Weather** –Showers, wind and a few dark overcast days visited the valley this week. Though the crop received some late moisture, harvest activities were not dampened. In fact, all harvests seem to be moving at full speed... a real drain on the energies of diversified hop growers who are now making decisions by-the-minute on grapes and/or apples as well. The air is heavy with the sweet essence of apples, the vinous perfume of grapes and the bracing aroma of hops.

On drives through the region in the last twenty-four hours, we observed between 30-35% of the trellis still draped with crop. This puts harvest 10-15 % late for this date. The hops still hanging look great. In earlier issues we had noted significant crop browning. The affected vines have largely been harvested and most of what remains is still green with lengthening cones.

Farms have accelerated their picking now in order to compensate for slower progress earlier in the season. Warehouse deliveries are on a steep ascent above their historical peak as a reflection of this push.

The coming week looks to be just what the growers need. Seasonable temperatures with little probability of rain until next Sunday should allow them to focus on crop, equipment and labor logistics without harassment from bad weather.

2. **Pest Pressure** – No longer an issue.
3. **Aroma Hop Crop** – The aroma crop harvest is complete. Please see last issue for details.
4. **Bitter Hop Crop** – As noted above, deliveries of alpha and super-alpha hops are catching up from past delays. Widely different yield reports are now emerging from around the region; they split into two categories. One group is seeing “marginally above average” with others “down 1-2 bales/acre”. With plenty of crop left to pick, we are not ready to move overall yield estimates from last week’s report (14 – 14.5 bales/acre).

Over all “super” varieties received, the weighted alpha content is at 16.0%; compared to this time last year the crop is down 0.7 points of alpha, an approximate drop of 4% relative. Warrior® and Millennium observed to date are a minority of the crop but they show the same reduction. If this trend persists, total alpha intake projection for 2004 could back off 15,000 KgA, UV harvest basis.

The hops are green, cool and sweet with H.S.I. data still low; this provides some optimism for crop stability over the near future.

- a. **Oregon/Idaho** – No updates this past week.
 - b. **Overall US Crop** – Unchanged since last week.
5. **Market Activity** – No activity reported this past week.

Our next report is to be transmitted the evening of September 26, 2004