

California Vegetable Review



Frequency: Jan., Apr., July, Sept. & Oct.
Released: April 13, 1999

(USPS 598-210)
VOL. 20 NO. 2



CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS SERVICE

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SPRING SEASON FRESH MARKET VEGETABLE ACREAGE

BROCCOLI: California's acreage for spring harvest is forecast at 33,000 acres, up 18 percent from 1998. Moderate spring temperatures experienced by Southern California provided good growing conditions. No unusual pest or disease problems were reported.

CANTALOUPS: California cantaloupe producers intend to harvest 19,800 acres, 7 percent above last year. Warm, spring weather and low rainfall have produced better than average growing conditions. Planting and other field operations have progressed normally. Quality is very good to excellent, and yields are expected to be high for Imperial and Coachella Valley producers. Nationally, acreage intended for harvest is estimated at 41,200 acres, up 14 percent from 1998.

CARROTS: Carrot growers in California expect to harvest 24,000 acres, 4 percent less than a year ago. The crop is a little behind schedule due to late, winter rains and cold, wet soils. Nationally, intended acreage for harvest is estimated at 25,700 acres, down 8 percent from last year.

CAULIFLOWER: California's acreage for spring harvest is estimated at 11,000 acres, 10 percent above 1998. Cooler temperatures in the Salinas area slowed crop development. Therefore, early yields are expected to be slightly below normal. Crop quality is excellent throughout the State.

CELERY: California's acreage for spring harvest is forecast at 5,000 acres, up 6 percent from last year. Acreage is up because growers are anticipating a repeat of last spring's high El Niño-driven prices. Harvest is nearly complete in the Imperial Valley. A harvest delay of seven days is expected in the coastal areas due to abnormally cool temperatures.

SWEET CORN: California's sweet corn acreage, at 11,800, is down 4 percent from 1998. Good quality and high yields are expected for the spring season in the Imperial and Coachella valleys (major sweet corn producing areas). Growing conditions have been excellent with warm temperatures and low rainfall. Nationally, acreage for harvest is forecast at 38,200 acres, down 7 percent from last year.

HONEYDEW MELONS: California honeydew melon acreage of 3,500 is 3 percent greater than a year ago. Temperatures were favorable at the beginning of the year, but turned cooler in March. As a result, growth of the crop has been slow. Harvest will likely be delayed at least one week. Nationally, acreage for harvest is forecast at 6,300 acres, up 11 percent from last year.

HEAD LETTUCE: California acreage was reported to be 40,000 acres, 5 percent above the comparable period a year ago. March weather has been drier than normal and cool. Growers have been busy weeding, thinning, and spraying for aphids. The San Joaquin Valley is just beginning its harvest. Wet conditions early in the season delayed planting 3-5 days. Improved conditions toward the end of March allowed producers to catch up on planting. Nationally, intended acreage for harvest is forecast at 46,200 acres, up 6 percent from 1998. Weather conditions in Arizona have been favorable and harvest is on schedule.

TOMATOES: California fresh-market tomato growers expect to harvest 7,800 acres during the spring quarter. Acreage is up 15 percent from last year, and field operations have been progressing normally. The Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, where most of the tomatoes are

grown, have experienced good rainfall. Imperial Valley on the other hand has had low rainfall which will slow development. Nationally, intended acreage for harvest is forecast at 28,250 acres, up 8 percent from 1998.

WATERMELONS: Expected California acreage for the April-June 30 harvest period is 4,500 acres, 2 percent above a year earlier. Conditions were favorable at the beginning of the season, but recent cool temperatures in March have slowed crop development. A delay of about seven days is expected. Nationally, acreage intended for harvest is estimated at 65,300 acres, down 7 percent from last year. Arizona producers have benefitted from excellent growing conditions during the first quarter of 1999.

SPRING FRESH MARKET VEGETABLE ACREAGE

Crop and State	Usual Harvesting Period	Area Harvested		For Harvest 1999	Percent Change
		1997	1998		
		Acres			Percent
BROCCOLI: 1/					
California	Apr-Jun	28,500	28,000	33,000	118
CANTALOUPE:					
Arizona	May-Jul	11,500	9,800	12,200	124
California	Apr-Jun	18,700	18,500	19,800	107
Georgia	Apr-Jun	2,100	3,000	3,500	117
Texas	Apr-Jun	3,400	4,700	5,700	121
GROUP TOTAL		35,700	36,000	41,200	114
CARROTS:					
California	Apr-Jun	20,000	25,000	24,000	96
Florida	Apr-Jul	2,400	1,500	---	---
Texas	Apr-Jun	500	1,300	1,700	131
GROUP TOTAL		22,900	27,800	25,700	92
CAULIFLOWER: 1/					
California	Apr-Jun	10,000	10,000	11,000	110
CELERY: 1/					
California	Apr-Jun	5,200	4,700	5,000	106
SWEET CORN:					
California	Apr-Jun	10,800	12,300	11,800	96
Florida	Apr-Jul	31,800	28,900	26,400	91
GROUP TOTAL		42,600	41,200	38,200	93
HONEYDEWS:					
California	Apr-Jun	3,200	3,400	3,500	103
Texas	Apr-Jun	2,000	2,300	2,800	122
GROUP TOTAL		5,200	5,700	6,300	111
HEAD LETTUCE:					
Arizona-Other	Mar-Jun	1,900	2,600	3,000	115
California	Apr-Jun	40,000	38,000	40,000	105
New Jersey	May-Jul	800	800	800	100
New Mexico	Apr-May	1,100	2,100	2,400	114
GROUP TOTAL		43,800	43,500	46,200	106
TOMATOES:					
Alabama	Apr-Apr	600	300	300	100
Arkansas	Jun-Aug	550	700	750	107
California	Apr-Jun	7,800	6,800	7,800	115
Florida	Apr-Jul	13,100	13,800	14,200	103
South Carolina	May-Jul	3,200	3,200	3,600	113
Texas	Apr-Jun	1,300	1,400	1,600	114
GROUP TOTAL		26,550	26,200	28,250	108
WATERMELON					
Alabama	Apr-Apr	2,100	2,200	2,300	105
Arizona	May-Jul	6,500	7,300	6,500	89
California	Apr-Jun	4,600	4,400	4,500	102
Florida	Apr-Jun	30,000	32,000	31,000	97
Texas	Apr-Jun	27,800	24,500	21,000	86
GROUP TOTAL		71,000	70,400	65,300	93

1/ Includes fresh market and processing.

PROCESSING TOMATO ACREAGE AND TONNAGE INTENTIONS

California's contracted production is estimated to be 11.5 million tons, up 30 percent from 1998. This estimate is based on a survey of processors that was conducted in January. Updated acreage and production will be available by mid-June. Cool weather for February and March has hampered transplant growth in California's major growing regions. Harvest will likely be delayed 6-10 days.

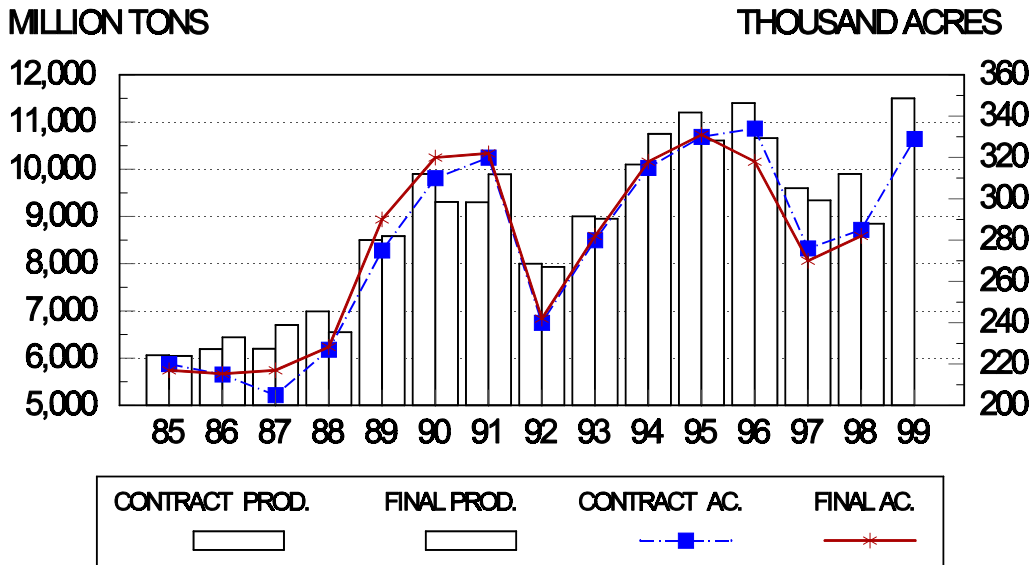
Nationally, processors are increasing contracted tomato acreage by 17 percent this year. Contracts with growers cover 349,840 acres in 1999. Tonnage contracts, which cover 12.0 million tons, are up 29 percent from last year.

TOMATOES FOR PROCESSING, BY STATE, 1997-99

State	Area Planted				Contract Change 1999 1998	Production				Contract Change 1999 1998
	1997 Total	1998		1999 Contract Intentions ^{1/}		1997 Total	1998		1999 Contract Intentions ^{1/}	
		Total	Contract ^{1/}				Total	Contract ^{1/}		
	Acres					Percent	Tons			
California	270,000	282,000	280,000	329,000	118	9,342,309	8,892,800	8,845,960	11,500,000	130
Indiana	6,400	7,200	7,200	7,500	104	157,440	156,200	156,200	194,230	124
Michigan	4,300	2,300	2,200	2,400	109	133,300	82,800	79,200	74,000	93
Ohio	9,100	6,700	6,600	7,100	108	252,670	169,090	167,550	183,500	110
Pennsylvania	1,200	1,300	1,300	1,600	123	27,010	33,800	33,800	42,540	126
Other States ^{2/}	2,720	2,760	2,760	2,240	81	60,530	60,120	60,120	52,660	88
U.S.	293,720	302,260	300,060	349,840	117	9,973,259	9,394,810	9,342,830	12,046,930	129

^{1/} Includes acreage from major brokers.
^{2/} 1997 - DE, IL, MD, NJ, NY, TX, and VA.
 1998 - DE, MD, NJ, NY, and TX.
 1999 - DE, MD, NJ, NY, AND VA.

**CALIFORNIA PROCESSING TOMATOES
 INTENTIONS VS. FINAL PRODUCTION AND ACREAGE**



CONTRACT PLANTED ACRES AND PRODUCTION

SPRING AND SUMMER ONIONS

California growers expect to harvest 6,000 acres of spring onions this year, down 12 percent from 1998. Crop quality is very good to excellent. Cool temperatures, which affected other California vegetable crops, have placed the spring onion harvest date only slightly behind normal. Nationally, producers intend to harvest 35,900 acres, up 4 percent from last year. Production is on schedule in Arizona as a result of excellent growing conditions during the first quarter of 1999. The Georgia crop is also in good condition and weather conditions for onion development have been better than normal.

California producers expect to plant 29,500 acres of summer onions, mostly for processing, down 8 percent from last year. Crop quality is very good to excellent. Planting and other field operations have progressed without difficulty. Planted acreage for summer onions on the National level is estimated at 129,060 acres, 2 percent below last year's acreage.

ONIONS, CALIFORNIA AND UNITED STATES, 1997-99

Season and State	1997	1998	1999	1999/1998
	Acres for Harvest			Percent
Spring 1/				
Arizona	2,100	2,500	2,700	108
California	9,600	6,800	6,000	88
Georgia	15,800	13,900	14,000	101
Texas	9,800	11,400	13,200	116
Spring Total	37,300	34,600	35,900	104
	Acres Planted			Percent
Spring 1/	40,600	36,500	37,000	101
Summer 1/				
Non-Storage				
Nevada 2/	1,800	2,100	---	---
New Mexico	7,900	7,300	7,200	99
Texas	4,200	4,200	3,800	90
Washington	900	850	850	100
Group Total 3/	14,800	14,450	11,850	96
Storage				
California 4/	32,400	32,000	29,500	92
Colorado	18,000	16,500	16,000	97
Idaho	8,400	8,200	8,100	99
Michigan	5,000	4,900	4,300	88
Minnesota	650	490	490	100
New York	12,500	13,100	13,100	100
Ohio	520	530	520	98
Oregon				
Malheur County	12,200	12,200	13,000	107
West	7,600	7,600	7,000	92
Utah	2,400	2,500	2,500	100
Washington	17,800	19,800	20,800	105
Wisconsin	2,200	2,100	1,900	90
Summer Total	134,470	134,370	129,060	98
UNITED STATES TOTAL 3/	175,070	170,870	166,060	98

1/ Primarily fresh market.

2/ Estimate to be published in "Vegetables 1999 Summary" in January 2000.

3/ Percent calculated, excluding Nevada.

4/ Primarily for processing.

ASPARAGUS

California's area for harvest, at 33,600 acres, is 4 percent above the previous year. Drier weather resulted in good growing conditions. Harvest is coming to an end for the Imperial Valley and in full-swing in the Stockton-Delta region.

Nationally, intended acreage for harvest is estimated at 73,100 acres, up 1 percent from 1998. New Jersey producers report the crop in good condition and are expecting a good season. Most Michigan growers report plant stand quality as average. A normal crop is expected as long as frosts do not occur during April and May.

ASPARAGUS, BY STATE, 1997-99 a/

State	Area Harvested		Area For Harvest 1999	Yield Per Acre			Production		
	1997	1998		1997	1998	1999 b/	1997	1998	1999 b/
	Acres			Cwt.			1,000 Cwt.		
California	30,100	32,200	33,600	27	28	---	813	902	---
Michigan	17,500	17,500	16,500	15	16	---	263	280	---
New Jersey	1,000	1,000	1,000	23	27	---	23	27	---
Washington	23,000	22,000	22,000	36	36	---	828	792	---
TOTAL	71,600	72,700	73,100	27	28	---	1,927	2,001	---

a/ Includes fresh market and processing.

b/ Data available September 9, 1999.

CUCUMBERS FOR PICKLES

California processors have contracted 5,000 acres from growers for 1999, up 14 percent from last year. Soil conditions in California are better this year due to drier spring weather.

Nationally, pickle packers intend to contract 94,060 acres of cucumbers for pickles, up 3 percent from last year. Acreage increases are forecast for California, Florida, and Michigan.

CUCUMBERS FOR PICKLES, BY STATE, 1997-99

State	1997 Total	1998 Area Planted		1999 Contract Intentions <u>1/</u>	Contract Change 1999\1998
		Total	Contract <u>1/</u>		
	Acres				Percent
California	4,400	4,400	4,400	5,000	114
Colorado	780	160	160	----	----
Florida	6,500	6,700	3,200	6,100	191
Indiana	2,000	2,100	2,100	2,000	95
Michigan	27,000	27,000	24,000	26,000	108
North Carolina	18,300	18,200	11,200	11,000	98
Ohio	3,000	3,000	3,000	2,900	97
South Carolina	4,000	2,100	2,100	----	----
Texas	9,400	9,900	9,900	9,800	99
Wisconsin	4,500	4,300	4,100	4,000	98
Other States <u>2/</u>	27,400	27,510	27,330	27,260	100
UNITED STATES	107,280	105,370	91,490	94,060	103

1/ Includes acreage from major brokers.

2/ 1997 -- AL, AR, DE, GA, IL, LA, MD, MA, MN, MO, NJ, NY, OR, VA, and WA.

1998 -- DE, LA, MD, MA, MN, MO, NJ, NY, OR, VA, and WA.

1999 -- AL, DE, GA, LA, MD, MN, MO, NJ, NY, OR, VA, and WA.