

# VEGETABLES

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## AREA FOR HARVEST DURING WINTER QUARTER INCREASES 8 PERCENT

Prospective area for harvest in major producing States during the winter quarter of 1979 (January, February, and March) for 13 fresh market vegetable crops is placed at 193 thousand acres (78.0 thousand hectares). This is an increase of 8 percent over the 179 thousand acres (72.3 thousand hectares) harvested during the winter quarter of 1978.

An increase in area is indicated for snap beans, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, sweet corn, eggplant, escarole/endive, lettuce, spinach, and tomatoes. The area in green peppers is expected to be down from a year ago.

Potential production of these 13 fresh market crops is placed at 35.9 million cwt. (1.63 million metric tons), 8 percent more than the 33.3 million cwt. (1.51 million metric tons) produced during the winter quarter of 1978.

Production projections in this report are based on average yields for the last three years.

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\* Temperatures reached into the low 20°'s in the Lower Valley of Texas and \*  
\* into the mid to upper 20°'s in the coldest vegetable growing areas of central \*  
\* and northern Florida on the morning of January 3. Some damage has occurred \*  
\* to vegetables in the Lower Valley and Winter Garden areas of Texas, and to \*  
\* some tender vegetables in central and north Florida. Strong gusty winds \*  
\* caused some light leaf burn in southwest Florida. Estimates included in this \*  
\* report were prepared prior to this cold wave. \*  
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PROSPECTIVE AREA AND PRODUCTION, WINTER QUARTER 1/, UNITED STATES  
(DOMESTIC UNITS)

CROP	AREA				PRODUCTION			
	HARVESTED			FOR	1977 TOTAL	1978		MAJOR
	1977 TOTAL	1978		HARVEST		TOTAL	MAJOR STATES	STATES
		TOTAL	MAJOR STATES	MAJOR STATES 1979				
	ACRES				1,000 CWT			
SNAP BEANS	5,500	14,400	14,400	14,600	198	302	302	438
BROCCOLI 3/	14,050	17,100	15,000	16,500	1,168	1,180	1,050	1,320
CABBAGE 3/	17,400	20,500	20,500	22,900	4,188	4,701	4,701	5,221
CARROTS 3/	16,700	17,800	17,800	18,100	3,351	4,059	4,059	3,837
CAULIFLOWER 3/	7,110	5,800	4,300	6,000	528	409	301	462
CELERY 3/	8,200	8,700	8,700	10,000	3,957	4,149	4,149	4,930
SWEET CORN	3,800	10,800	10,800	11,100	285	767	767	910
EGGPLANT	250	450	450	500	50	99	99	106
ESCAROLE/ENDIVE	2,700	2,600	2,600	3,300	324	325	325	422
LETTUCE	62,000	62,200	62,200	66,500	13,590	14,342	14,342	14,896
GREEN PEPPERS 3/	4,800	5,500	5,500	5,300	264	633	633	493
SPINACH	3,000	3,500	3,500	3,700	260	305	305	329
TOMATOES	7,300	12,800	12,800	14,100	1,059	2,240	2,240	2,510
TOTAL WINTER	152,810	182,150	178,550	192,600	29,222	33,511	33,273	35,874

PROSPECTIVE AREA AND PRODUCTION, WINTER QUARTER 1/, UNITED STATES  
(METRIC UNITS)

CROP	AREA				PRODUCTION			
	HARVESTED			FOR	1977 TOTAL	1978		MAJOR
	1977 TOTAL	1978		HARVEST		TOTAL	MAJOR	STATES 1979
		TOTAL	MAJOR STATES	STATES 1979				
	HECTARES				METRIC TONS			
SNAP BEANS	2 230	5 830	5 830	5 910	8 980	13 700	13 700	19 870
BROCCOLI 3/	5 690	6 920	6 070	6 680	52 980	53 520	47 630	59 870
CABBAGE 3/	7 040	8 300	8 300	9 270	189 960	213 230	213 230	236 820
CARROTS 3/	6 760	7 200	7 200	7 320	152 000	184 110	184 110	174 040
CAULIFLOWER 3/	2 880	2 350	1 740	2 430	23 950	18 550	13 650	20 960
CELERY 3/	3 320	3 520	3 520	4 050	179 490	188 190	188 190	223 620
SWEET CORN	1 540	4 370	4 370	4 490	12 930	34 790	34 790	41 280
EGGPLANT	100	180	180	200	2 270	4 490	4 490	4 810
ESCAROLE/ENDIVE	1 090	1 050	1 050	1 340	14 700	14 740	14 740	19 140
LETTUCE	25 090	25 170	25 170	26 910	616 430	650 540	650 540	675 670
GREEN PEPPERS 3/	1 940	2 230	2 230	2 140	11 970	28 710	28 710	22 360
SPINACH	1 210	1 420	1 420	1 500	11 790	13 830	13 830	14 920
TOMATOES	2 950	5 180	5 180	5 710	48 040	101 600	101 600	113 850
TOTAL WINTER	61 840	73 720	72 260	77 950	1 325 490	1 520 000	1 509 210	1 627 210

1/ JAN, FEB AND MAR.

2/ BASED ON AVERAGE YIELD PER ACRE FOR YEARS 1976-78.

3/ INCLUDE FRESH MARKET AND PROCESSING IN THIS RELEASE.

PLANTING INTENTIONS AND PROSPECTIVE AREA FOR HARVEST, SPECIFIED CROPS,  
WINTER QUARTER

CROP AND STATE	AREA PLANTED AND TO BE PLANTED				WINTER AREA		
	PLANTING PERIODS	YEAR OF PLANTING		INTENDED 1979	HARVESTED		FOR HARVEST 1979
		1977	1978		1977	1978	
				ACRES			
CABBAGE							
CALIF	SEP-OCT	2,200	2,300	2,500	2,200	2,300	2,500
FLA 1/	SEP-MAR	17,100	17,700	18,000	9,000	8,700	9,900
TEX 1/	JUL-JAN	15,800	20,100	22,200	6,200	9,500	10,500
TOTAL		35,100	40,100	42,700	17,400	20,500	22,900
CELERY							
CALIF-S CST 1/	JUL-APR	11,000	11,100	11,200	4,100	4,300	4,900
FLA 1/	AUG-APR	10,700	11,300	12,100	4,100	4,400	5,100
TOTAL		21,700	22,400	23,300	8,200	8,700	10,000
ESCAROLE/ENDIVE:							
FLA 1/	AUG-MAR	6,900	6,600	7,300	2,700	2,600	3,300
TOMATOES							
FLA 1/	JUL-APR	43,200	42,100	44,800	7,300	12,800	14,100

1/ PLANTED AND INTENDED PLANTINGS ARE FOR PREVIOUS YEAR'S FALL CROP AND CURRENT YEAR'S WINTER AND SPRING CROPS.

PROSPECTIVE AREA FOR HARVEST, WINTER QUARTER

CROP AND STATE	WINTER AREA			1979 AREA FOR HARVEST AS A PERCENT OF 1978
	HARVESTED		FOR HARVEST 1979	
	1977	1978		
	ACRES			PERCENT
SNAP BEANS <u>1/</u>				
FLA	5,500	14,400	14,600	101
BROCCOLI <u>1/</u>				
CALIF	12,900	15,000	16,500	110
MINOR STATES <u>2/</u>	1,150	2,100		
TOTAL	14,050	17,100		
CARROTS <u>1/</u>				
ARIZ	600	700	800	114
CALIF-DES	4,000	3,800	3,600	95
-OTH	4,100	4,100	5,200	127
TEX	8,000	9,200	8,500	92
TOTAL	16,700	17,800	18,100	102
CAULIFLOWER <u>1/</u>				
CALIF	5,900	4,300	6,000	140
MINOR STATES <u>2/</u>	1,210	1,500		
TOTAL	7,110	5,800		
SWEET CORN <u>1/</u>				
FLA	3,800	10,800	11,100	103
EGGPLANT <u>1/</u>				
FLA	250	450	500	111
LETTUCE <u>1/</u>				
ARIZ	14,000	15,500	15,100	97
CALIF-DES	40,900	39,600	42,000	106
FLA	4,300	4,100	5,600	137
TEX	2,800	3,000	3,800	127
TOTAL	62,000	62,200	66,500	107
GREEN PEPPERS <u>1/</u>				
FLA	4,800	5,500	5,300	96
SPINACH <u>1/</u>				
CALIF	800	800	900	113
TEX	2,200	2,700	2,800	104
TOTAL	3,000	3,500	3,700	106

1/ PLANTING INTENTIONS FOR SPECIFIED PERIODS ARE NOT ESTIMATED NATIONALLY.

2/ INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING STATES WHICH ARE LIMITED TO END-OF-SEASON ESTIMATES ONLY: BROCCOLI-ARIZ AND TEX: CAULIFLOWER-ARIZ AND TEX.

# PLANTING INTENTIONS AND PROSPECTIVE AREA FOR HARVEST

CROP, SEASON AND STATE	PLANTED AREA			HARVESTED AREA		
	1977	1978	1979	1977	1978	FOR HARVEST 1979
	ACRES					
ONIONS 1/ SPRING:						
ARIZ 2/	1,400	2,100	1,500	1,400	1,800	
CALIF 2/	5,700	5,400	5,500	5,700	5,300	
TEX	17,800	25,800	24,500	16,900	22,300	23,100
TOTAL	24,900	33,300	31,500	24,000	29,400	
STRAWBERRIES 3/ WINTER:						
FLA	1,500	2,000	2,300	1,500	2,000	2,300

1/ PRIMARILY FRESH MARKET. 2/ 1979-PLANTING INTENTIONS-FIRST ESTIMATE PUBLISHED MAR 7.

3/ INCLUDES FRESH MARKET AND PROCESSING.

**ONIONS:** Planted area of spring crop onions is placed at 31.5 thousand acres (12.7 thousand hectares), 5 percent below 1978. In Texas, land preparation and initial planting in the Lower Rio Grande Valley was delayed by September rains; however, most fields were seeded by mid-November and transplanting was active until late December. The December 9th freeze caused minor top leaf damage primarily in the central and western end of the Valley. Most fields have begun to recover. Late fields generally have good stands but there are some thin stands in earlier fields. Although the freeze did not appear to cause any permanent damage, crop development was delayed.

Planting in the Winter Garden area began in October and is expected to continue through January with late-season varieties. The December 9th freeze killed some young stands of onions and replanting has been active. Earlier plantings escaped with only top leaf burn and are expected to recover. Initial harvest may be later than normal due to slowed growth resulting from the cold temperatures.

At Laredo, seeding was completed by early December and transplanting will continue through early January. Only light top growth damage was attributed to the December freeze.

California growers are intending to grow slightly more spring onion acreage than last year. Planting is still underway in most areas and will end in January. The crop is making good progress at this time.

**SNAP BEANS:** The 1979 winter quarter prospective area for harvest in Florida is estimated at 14.6 thousand acres (5910 hectares), an increase of 1 percent over the area harvested during the winter quarter of 1978. This area is expected to produce 438 thousand cwt. (19.9 thousand metric tons) of snap beans, 45 percent more than the winter quarter of 1978 and nearly two and one-fourth times the 1977 output.

Overall plant condition is very good in Florida. Growth was rapid early in the month as a result of above normal temperatures. Planting is active and on schedule. Harvest is active in the Dade County and Pompano areas and is essentially complete in the West Central area. Quality is mostly good and packout has improved. Good supplies of both pole and bush beans are available.

**BROCCOLI:** The 1979 prospective area for harvest in California during the winter quarter is 16.5 thousand acres (6680 hectares), 10 percent more than last year. Production is expected to total 1.32 million cwt. (59.9 thousand metric tons), 26 percent above the 1978 winter quarter.

Broccoli supplies from the central coast will increase in February and March. Supplies from the south coast and desert areas are expected to peak in January and taper off by the end of the winter quarter. Cooler than normal weather has slowed plant growth in all areas.

CABBAGE: Prospective area for harvest during the 1979 winter quarter at 22.9 thousand acres (9270 hectares) is 12 percent more than last year. This area is expected to produce 5.22 million cwt. (237 thousand metric tons) of cabbage, 11 percent more than the winter quarter of 1978 and 25 percent more than for the same period in 1977.

In Texas, mature fields primarily located in the western end of the Lower Rio Grande Valley received wrapper and cap leaf damage from the December 9, 1978 freeze. Movement is expected to be light for several weeks as fields recover. Some late fields of cabbage were lost, especially those stands that had been cultivated just prior to the cold temperatures.

Cool weather in December slowed growth of California's cabbage crop. Supplies will be available during the winter quarter from the South Coast and Desert areas.

In Florida, cabbage harvest was active in practically all areas during December. Quality has been very good but heads are large as the crop is maturing rapidly and demand is slow. Supplies should increase into January. Transplanting continues in all areas and growers are on schedule.

CARROTS: The 1979 prospective area for harvest during the winter quarter is estimated at 18.1 thousand acres (7320 hectares), 2 percent more than the area harvested in 1978. Production is projected at 3.84 million cwt. (174 thousand metric tons), 5 percent below the 1978 winter output.

Fields in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas survived the December 9, 1978 freeze with minor top damage. Initial digging was underway by mid-December. The freeze resulted in heavy top growth damage in the Winter Garden area which has slowed machine harvest.

In Arizona, harvest of carrots began on a limited basis in early December. The crop is somewhat earlier than normal because of an unusually warm fall. However, sub-freezing temperatures during the first week in December slowed development. Harvest is expected to extend well into June.

In California, carrot digging is increasing in the desert areas. Peak harvest will be in March. Below normal temperatures in December slowed crop growth. Digging is heavy in the Kern district of the San Joaquin Valley, with some supplies coming from Central Coast and South Coast areas. Heavy harvest will continue through January tapering off into February and March. Below normal temperatures in all areas slowed growth.

CAULIFLOWER: Prospective area for harvest in California for the winter quarter is estimated at 6000 acres (2430 hectares), two-fifths more than the area harvested during the winter quarter of 1978. Production is expected to total 462 thousand cwt. (21.0 thousand metric tons), 53 percent larger than last year's winter quarter production.

California's South Coast and San Joaquin Valley harvest is active and will continue through February. Central Coast harvest will pick up in February and continue heavy into March. Cool weather during December slowed crop progress in all areas of the State.

CELERY: Area for harvest during the 1979 winter quarter is placed at 10.0 thousand acres (4050 hectares), 15 percent more than 1978. Production from this area is projected at 4.93 million cwt. (224 thousand metric tons), 19 percent above 1978 and 25 percent above 1977 winter quarter production.

Harvest of Florida's celery is active. Yields are excellent and quality is improving. Size is very good. Most of the volume is coming from the Everglades area. Transplantings are active in both the Everglades and Zellwood areas.

In California, growing conditions have been favorable except for a cold spell in December which slowed growth. Harvest is active in the South Coast area.

SWEET CORN: Prospective area for harvest in Florida during the 1979 winter quarter is estimated at 11.1 thousand acres (4490 hectares), 3 percent more than the same quarter of 1978. Production is projected at 910 thousand cwt. (41.3 thousand metric tons), 19 percent more than 1978 and more than three times larger than the 1977 winter quarter output.

Harvest of sweet corn in Florida continues at a steady pace. Harvest has shifted from the Everglades to the east coast and Dade County areas. Crop condition is good to very good except a few fields where heavy rains damaged the older crop. Yields are variable but quality is good. Volume should register a gradual increase during the next several weeks. Weather has been near ideal for crop growth and progress.

EGGPLANT: The 1979 prospective area for harvest in Florida during the winter quarter is placed at 500 acres (200 hectares), 11 percent above 1978 and double 1977. Projected production at 106 thousand cwt. (4810 metric tons) is 7 percent more than the 1978 winter quarter output.

Florida's eggplant crop is in good to very good condition. Some older acreage not on plastic is being abandoned. Recently set acreage is progressing favorably. Quality is generally good but wind scars caused above average gradeout. Poor market conditions are causing some acreage to be passed. Most volume is coming from the Ft. Pierce-Pompano area. Harvest is expected to hold steady for several more weeks, then decline seasonally.

ESCAROLE/ENDIVE: Prospective area for harvest in Florida during the 1979 winter quarter is estimated at 3300 acres (1340 hectares), an increase of 27 percent from the same period in 1978. Projected production at 422 thousand cwt. (19.1 thousand metric tons) is 30 percent above last year.

Harvest is active in the Florida Everglades and Zellwood areas. Size is good but quality is variable. Cool weather will bring about an improvement in quality. Planting continues active in the Everglades area.

LETTUCE: The 1979 winter quarter area for harvest is estimated at 66.5 thousand acres (26.9 thousand hectares), up 7 percent from the same period in 1978. Production is projected at 14.9 million cwt. (677 thousand metric tons), 4 percent above the 1978 winter quarter and 10 percent above 1977.

In Texas, some head damage and deterioration occurred in the western portion of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Most fields suffered only wrapper leaf burn from the freezing temperatures of December 9th. Tonnage will be reduced from these fields as head development has been delayed. Plantings just prior to the freeze were damaged but are expected to recover.

In Florida, harvest is gaining momentum as more fields of iceberg become ready for harvest. Most of the volume is coming from the Everglades, supplemented by supplies from the Lake Placid and Zellwood areas. Quality is variable but mostly good and improving. Iceberg, Romaine, Boston and other types are available in good volume. Quality should continue to show improvement in January as cool temperatures arrive. Plantings continue on schedule.

In Arizona, lettuce planting began in September in the Willcox area, October in the Salt River Valley and November in the Yuma area. Warm weather hurt the early lettuce crop. Later plantings were making good progress when hit by a severe early December freeze, again reducing quality. Planting for the late winter and spring harvest is active and is expected to be complete in early February. Supplies will be available until early June.

Harvest of California lettuce is active in the Imperial Valley. Supplies should be good throughout the winter months. Cutting of South Coast lettuce will start in March. Below normal temperatures in December slowed crop growth in all areas.

GREEN PEPPERS: Winter quarter area for harvest in Florida is estimated at 5300 acres (2140 hectares), down 4 percent from the same quarter in 1978. Production is placed at 493 thousand cwt. (22.4 thousand metric tons), 22 percent below 1978 but nearly double the 1977 output.

The pepper crop in Florida is generally in very good condition with younger acreage in excellent shape. Harvest is active but poor market conditions have delayed picking somewhat. Most of the volume is coming from the southeast and southwest areas. Quality, size and yields are generally good. Spring plantings are complete in the southeast area and continue active in other areas.

SPINACH: The winter quarter area estimate of 3700 acres (1500 hectares) is 6 percent more than the area harvested during the winter quarter of 1978. Production is projected at 329 thousand cwt. (14.9 thousand metric tons), 8 percent more than in 1978.

In Texas, the December 9th freeze caused heavy damage to fields in the Winter Garden area. Replanting of some young fields was necessary. Many fields that were mature or near maturity at the time of the freeze lost at least one cutting and some may be abandoned. Warm, cloudy weather since the freeze has promoted white rust infestation in new growth. Some fields intended for fresh market will be cut for processing.

Cold weather during December slowed growth of California's winter spinach crop. Most of the available supplies will come from the South Coast area.

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TOMATOES: The 1979 prospective area for harvest during the winter quarter in Florida is placed at 14.1 thousand acres (5710 hectares), 10 percent above the 1978 winter quarter area harvest and nearly double 1977. Production is expected to total 2.51 million cwt (114 thousand metric tons), 12 percent more than a year ago and more than double the 1977 winter quarter output.

Florida's tomato harvest increased during December. Harvest in the Palmetto-Ruskin area is essentially complete except for salvage and u-pick operations. Picking is very active in the Southwest and Dade County areas. Steady supplies are coming from the Ft. Pierce-Pompano area. Quality, size and yields are generally good. Light plantings continue in the Ft. Pierce-Pompano and southwest areas. Volume is expected to decline seasonally during the winter months.

STRAWBERRIES: Winter area for harvest in Florida is placed at 2300 acres (930 hectares), 15 percent above 1978.

Florida's strawberry crop is making rapid growth in the Plant City area. Harvest is increasing but yields are generally light. Bloom and fruit set is improving. Fruit quality and size are good. Harvest should gain rapidly in January as more fields mature. The small acreage in Dade and Bradford Counties is making good progress.