

VEGETABLES



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PLANTED AREA OF FRESH MARKET VEGETABLES DOWN 1 PERCENT FROM LAST YEAR

The acreage planted to 14 fresh market vegetables since January 1, 1981 in major producing States is estimated at 239 thousand acres (96.5 thousand hectares), 1 percent below the acreage planted for the same period in 1980. The 14 vegetables included are snap beans, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, escarole-endive, lettuce, green peppers, spinach and tomatoes.

The 1981 acreage planted to melons (cantaloups, honeydew melons and watermelons) since January 1 is estimated at 134 thousand acres (54.1 thousand hectares), up 13 percent from the planted acreage for the same period a year ago.

The prospective area for harvest of asparagus during 1981 in major producing States is 71.9 thousand acres (29.1 thousand hectares), 1 percent more than the acreage harvested during 1980. The area for harvest of late crop strawberries is placed at 22.1 thousand acres (8920 hectares), unchanged from the harvested acreage for the 1980 crop.

At 3.09 million cwt (140 thousand metric tons) the April production forecast of early onions in Texas is down 13 percent from last year and the March 1981 forecast. Production forecasts for all early crop States will be published on June 8, 1981.

VEGETABLES FOR FRESH MARKET, AREA PLANTED IN MAJOR STATES, AS OF APRIL 1 ^{1/}
(DOMESTIC UNITS)

| CROP | AREA PLANTED | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|---------|----------|
| | 1979 | 1980 | IND 1981 |
| | ACRES | | |
| JAN 1 | 199,400 | 206,700 | 197,650 |
| APR 1 | | | |
| SNAP BEANS | 26,000 | 27,750 | 25,800 |
| BROCCOLI ^{2/} | 19,000 | 20,100 | 19,900 |
| CABBAGE | 16,500 | 16,650 | 15,850 |
| CARROTS ^{2/} | 5,900 | 6,000 | 5,600 |
| CAULIFLOWER ^{2/} | 6,800 | 6,700 | 7,100 |
| CELERY ^{2/} | 10,300 | 11,600 | 11,350 |
| SWEET CORN | 38,300 | 37,600 | 37,700 |
| CUCUMBERS | 20,400 | 21,200 | 19,600 |
| EGGPLANT | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,300 |
| ESCAROLE/ENDIVE | 2,150 | 2,460 | 2,560 |
| LETTUCE | 44,800 | 40,400 | 42,650 |
| GREEN PEPPERS ^{2/} | 13,000 | 12,900 | 12,400 |
| SPINACH | 1,750 | 1,780 | 1,600 |
| TOMATOES | 36,100 | 33,400 | 35,100 |
| TOTAL 14 VEGETABLES | 242,500 | 240,040 | 238,510 |
| CANTALOUPS | 33,100 | 28,800 | 30,700 |
| HONEYDEWS | 6,600 | 4,400 | 4,400 |
| WATERMELONS | 109,000 | 85,000 | 98,600 |
| TOTAL MELONS | 148,700 | 118,200 | 133,700 |
| TOTAL VEGETABLES & MELONS | 391,200 | 358,240 | 372,210 |

VEGETABLES FOR FRESH MARKET, AREA PLANTED IN MAJOR STATES, AS OF APRIL 1
(METRIC UNITS)

| CROP | AREA PLANTED | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------|----------|
| | 1979 | 1980 | IND 1981 |
| | HECTARES | | |
| JAN 1 | 80 700 | 83 660 | 79 980 |
| APR 1 | | | |
| SNAP BEANS | 10 520 | 11 230 | 10 440 |
| BROCCOLI | 7 690 | 8 130 | 8 050 |
| CABBAGE | 6 680 | 6 740 | 6 410 |
| CARROTS | 2 390 | 2 430 | 2 270 |
| CAULIFLOWER | 2 750 | 2 710 | 2 870 |
| CELERY | 4 170 | 4 690 | 4 590 |
| SWEET CORN | 15 500 | 15 220 | 15 260 |
| CUCUMBERS | 8 260 | 8 580 | 7 930 |
| EGGPLANT | 610 | 610 | 530 |
| ESCAROLE/ENDIVE | 870 | 1 000 | 1 040 |
| LETTUCE | 18 130 | 16 350 | 17 260 |
| GREEN PEPPERS | 5 260 | 5 220 | 5 020 |
| SPINACH | 710 | 720 | 650 |
| TOMATOES | 14 610 | 13 520 | 14 200 |
| TOTAL 14 VEGETABLES | 98 150 | 97 150 | 96 520 |
| CANTALOUPS | 13 400 | 11 660 | 12 420 |
| HONEYDEWS | 2 670 | 1 780 | 1 780 |
| WATERMELONS | 44 110 | 34 400 | 39 900 |
| TOTAL MELONS | 60 180 | 47 840 | 54 100 |
| TOTAL VEGETABLES & MELONS | 158 330 | 144 990 | 150 620 |

SEE FOOTNOTES ON PAGE 4.

VEGETABLES FOR FRESH MARKET, AREA PLANTED IN MAJOR STATES, AS OF APRIL 1 ^{1/}

| CROP AND STATE | USUAL HARVESTING PERIOD | AREA PLANTED | | | 1981 |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | 1979 | 1980 | IND 1981 | AREA PLANTED AS PERCENT OF 1980 |
| | | ACRES | | | PERCENT |
| SNAP BEANS: | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 800 | 950 | 1,300 | 137 |
| FLA | APR-JUN | 15,400 | 16,400 | 15,400 | 94 |
| GA | MAY-JUN | 3,500 | 4,300 | 4,000 | 93 |
| N J | JUN | 1,200 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 100 |
| N C | MAY-JUN | 2,900 | 3,000 | 2,300 | 77 |
| S C | MAY-JUL | 2,200 | 2,100 | 1,800 | 86 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 26,000 | 27,750 | 25,800 | 93 |
| BROCCOLI: ^{2/} | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 19,000 | 20,100 | 19,900 | 99 |
| CABBAGE: | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 2,200 | 2,100 | 2,000 | 95 |
| FLA | APR-JUN | 5,800 | 6,300 | 5,000 | 79 |
| GA | APR-JUN | 1,900 | 2,000 | 1,700 | 85 |
| N J | MAY-JUN | 900 | 900 | 1,000 | 111 |
| N C | MAY-JUN | 3,200 | 2,800 | 3,100 | 111 |
| OHIO | APR-JUN | 400 | 450 | 450 | 100 |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 2,100 | 2,100 | 2,600 | 124 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 16,500 | 16,650 | 15,850 | 95 |
| CANTALOUPS: | | | | | |
| ARIZ | MAY-JUL | 7,100 | 4,600 | 5,100 | 111 |
| CALIF-DESERT | MAY-JUN | 10,400 | 10,000 | 10,400 | 104 |
| GA | JUN-JUL | 2,500 | 1,400 | 2,200 | 157 |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 13,100 | 12,800 | 13,000 | 102 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 33,100 | 28,800 | 30,700 | 107 |
| CARROTS: ^{2/} | | | | | |
| CALIF-OTHER | APR-JUN | 5,500 | 5,800 | 5,100 | 88 |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 400 | 200 | 500 | 250 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 5,900 | 6,000 | 5,600 | 93 |
| CAULIFLOWER: ^{2/} | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 6,800 | 6,700 | 7,100 | 106 |
| CELERY: ^{2/} | | | | | |
| CALIF - SOUTH COAST | APR-JUN | 5,000 | 5,100 | 5,200 | 102 |
| - CENTRAL COAST | APR-JUN | 600 | 600 | 650 | 108 |
| FLA | APR-JUL | 4,700 | 5,900 | 5,500 | 93 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 10,300 | 11,600 | 11,350 | 98 |
| SWEET CORN: | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 5,100 | 5,000 | 5,500 | 110 |
| FLA | APR-JUL | 33,200 | 32,600 | 32,200 | 99 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 38,300 | 37,600 | 37,700 | 100 |
| CUCUMBERS: | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 1,300 | 1,100 | 1,300 | 118 |
| FLA | APR-JUN | 8,300 | 8,200 | 8,400 | 102 |
| N C | JUN-JUL | 3,900 | 3,800 | 3,600 | 95 |
| S C | MAY-JUL | 4,000 | 3,700 | 4,300 | 116 |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 2,900 | 4,400 | 2,000 | 45 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 20,400 | 21,200 | 19,600 | 92 |

SEE FOOTNOTES ON PAGE 4.

VEGETABLES FOR FRESH MARKET, AREA PLANTED IN MAJOR STATES, AS OF APRIL 1 ^{1/}

| CROP AND STATE | USUAL HARVESTING PERIOD | AREA PLANTED | | | 1981 |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | 1979 | 1980 | IND 1981 | AREA PLANTED AS PERCENT OF 1980 |
| | | ACRES | | | PERCENT |
| EGGPLANT: | | | | | |
| FLA | APR-JUN | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,300 | 87 |
| ESCAROLE/ENDIVE: | | | | | |
| FLA | APR-MAY | 1,800 | 2,100 | 2,200 | 105 |
| N J | MAY-JUN | 350 | 360 | 360 | 100 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 2,150 | 2,460 | 2,560 | 104 |
| HONEYDEWS: | | | | | |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 6,600 | 4,400 | 4,400 | 100 |
| LETTUCE: | | | | | |
| ARIZ - OTHER | APR-JUN | 6,800 | 3,400 | 4,000 | 118 |
| CALIF - SAN JOAQUIN | MAR-MAY | 8,900 | 9,600 | 10,000 | 104 |
| - SANTA MARIA- OCEANO | MAR-MAY | 3,700 | 3,500 | 3,600 | 103 |
| - SALINAS- WATSONVILLE | MAR-MAY | 15,500 | 15,400 | 16,200 | 105 |
| - SOUTH COAST | MAR-MAY | 2,100 | 1,300 | 1,100 | 85 |
| FLA | APR-MAY | 4,600 | 5,000 | 5,300 | 106 |
| N J | MAY-JUN | 1,700 | 1,500 | 1,600 | 107 |
| N MEX | APR-JUN | 1,500 | 700 | 850 | 121 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 44,800 | 40,400 | 42,650 | 106 |
| GREEN PEPPERS: ^{2/} | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 400 | 600 | 500 | 83 |
| FLA | APR-JUN | 9,700 | 9,300 | 9,700 | 104 |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 2,900 | 3,000 | 2,200 | 73 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 13,000 | 12,900 | 12,400 | 96 |
| SPINACH: | | | | | |
| CALIF | APR-JUN | 900 | 1,000 | 750 | 75 |
| N J | APR-JUN | 850 | 780 | 850 | 109 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 1,750 | 1,780 | 1,600 | 90 |
| TOMATOES: | | | | | |
| ALA | JUN-JUL | 2,100 | 1,900 | 1,800 | 95 |
| ARK | APR-JUN | 2,900 | 2,700 | 2,500 | 93 |
| CALIF - DESERT | APR-JUL | 2,000 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 100 |
| FLA | APR-JUL | 15,900 | 16,000 | 17,900 | 112 |
| S C | JUN-JUL | 8,400 | 7,600 | 8,500 | 112 |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 4,800 | 3,900 | 3,100 | 79 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 36,100 | 33,400 | 35,100 | 105 |
| WATERMELONS: | | | | | |
| ALA | JUN-JUL | 4,500 | 4,400 | 5,000 | 114 |
| ARIZ | MAY-AUG | 5,900 | 2,700 | 4,000 | 148 |
| CALIF - DESERT | MAY-JUN | 4,800 | 4,000 | 4,500 | 113 |
| FLA | APR-JUL | 50,000 | 45,000 | 54,000 | 120 |
| GA | JUN-AUG | 15,800 | 9,400 | 7,900 | 84 |
| TEX | APR-JUN | 28,000 | 19,500 | 23,200 | 119 |
| GROUP TOTAL | | 109,000 | 85,000 | 98,600 | 116 |

^{1/} IN ADDITION TO ACREAGE PLANTED AS OF APR 1, ESTIMATES INCLUDE: (a) ACREAGE TO BE PLANTED AND HARVESTED DURING THE NEXT THREE MONTHS AND (b) ACREAGE INTENDED TO COMPLETE PLANTINGS UNDERWAY IN A PRODUCING AREA WITHIN A STATE.

^{2/} INCLUDES FRESH MARKET AND PROCESSING.

VEGETABLES FOR FRESH MARKET

| CROP AND STATE | AREA | | | YIELD PER ACRE | | | PRODUCTION | | |
|----------------------|-----------|--------|---------|----------------|------|------|------------|-------|-------|
| | HARVESTED | | FOR | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 |
| | 1979 | 1980 | HARVEST | | | | | | |
| | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | | | | | | |
| | ACRES | | | CWT | | | 1,000 CWT | | |
| ASPARAGUS: 1/ | | | | | | | | | |
| CALIF | 26,400 | 27,900 | 27,300 | 35 | 28 | | 924 | 781 | |
| ILL | 3,100 | 2,900 | 2,600 | 11 | 13 | | 34 | 38 | |
| MICH | 17,000 | 16,800 | 16,800 | 13 | 13 | | 221 | 218 | |
| N J | 1,600 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 17 | 15 | | 27 | 23 | |
| WASH | 21,000 | 22,000 | 23,700 | 28 | 23 | | 588 | 506 | |
| GROUP TOTAL | 69,100 | 71,100 | 71,900 | 26 | 22 | | 1,794 | 1,566 | |
| ONIONS: 2/ | | | | | | | | | |
| EARLY | | | | | | | | | |
| ARIZ 3/ | 1,600 | 1,400 | 1,500 | 335 | 445 | | 536 | 623 | |
| CALIF 3/ | 5,600 | 5,100 | 5,500 | 340 | 330 | | 1,904 | 1,683 | |
| TEX | 21,900 | 18,300 | 18,200 | 160 | 195 | 170 | 3,504 | 3,569 | 3,094 |
| GROUP TOTAL | 29,100 | 24,800 | 25,200 | 204 | 237 | | 5,944 | 5,875 | |
| STRAWBERRIES: 1/ | | | | | | | | | |
| EARLY | 2,400 | 2,500 | 3,000 | 160 | 190 | 170 | 384 | 475 | 510 |
| LATE | | | | | | | | | |
| CALIF | 11,500 | 11,000 | 10,900 | 410 | 465 | 430 | 4,715 | 5,115 | 4,687 |
| MICH | 2,500 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 54 | 54 | | 135 | 124 | |
| N J | 650 | 650 | 650 | 38 | 42 | | 25 | 27 | |
| OREG | 5,200 | 5,200 | 5,400 | 82 | 89 | | 426 | 463 | |
| WASH | 3,100 | 2,900 | 2,800 | 53 | 60 | | 164 | 174 | |
| GROUP TOTAL | 22,950 | 22,050 | 22,050 | 238 | 268 | | 5,465 | 5,903 | |
| MAJOR STATES TOTAL | 25,350 | 24,550 | 25,050 | 231 | 260 | | 5,849 | 6,378 | |

1/ INCLUDES FRESH AND PROCESSING.

2/ PRIMARILY FRESH MARKET.

3/ FIRST FORECAST WILL BE PUBLISHED ON JUN 8TH.

ASPARAGUS: Preliminary acreage of asparagus for harvest in major producing States during 1981 is estimated at 71.9 thousand acres (29.1 thousand hectares), an increase of 1 percent from the 1980 acreage harvested.

In New Jersey, light harvest is expected to get underway during mid-April. Movement is expected to be general through May and into June until harvest ends in late June. Asparagus harvest in Michigan is expected to get off to a good start if recent warm weather continues. In Illinois, the winter was mild and there appears to be minimum crop damage. Early moisture supplies are short.

Winter damage appears to be only minimal to the Washington asparagus crop. Crop development is 10-14 days ahead of last year. Light harvest may be underway within the next week. Some acreage was plowed up due to aphids, but spraying seems to have averted further damage.

SNAP BEANS: Acreage planted and to be planted to snap beans as of April 1 at 25.8 thousand acres (10.4 thousand hectares) is 7 percent below the planted acreage for the same period in 1980.

In New Jersey, plantings on the lighter soils are expected to become general by mid-April. Plantings are then expected to continue on a regular basis through the season. Early harvest is expected to get underway the first part of June.

In Florida, the Pompano crop is in good condition. Quality of beans and yields are very good. Planting is complete. Recently seeded fields are up to good stands. In the Dade County area, the bush and pole crops are improving from earlier adverse weather conditions. Quality is generally good. In the West Central area, planting continues. Stands and crop progress are mostly good. In the north and west areas, planting is active.

California's snap bean crop has progressed about normally so far this season. Most of the volume will come from the south coast with smaller amounts coming from the central coastal areas during the next three months.

BROCCOLI: Planted acreage of broccoli in California is estimated at 19.9 thousand acres (8050 hectares), down 1 percent from the acreage planted during the same period a year ago. Favorable weather facilitated planting except for Ventura County where heavy March rains delayed planting and caused some damage.

CABBAGE: Prospective planted acreage of cabbage at 15.9 thousand acres (6410 hectares) is down 5 percent from the April 1, 1980 planted acreage.

In New Jersey, topsoil moisture is about adequate. Transplanting is expected to increase during early April and marketings are expected to get underway during late May and become general after mid-June. Ohio's acreage of cabbage set is about on schedule. Frost did limited damage to the very early settings. Some plants have been imported but most were grown in the State. Current weather conditions are favorable and early settings have begun to show growth. Transplanting in the North Carolina coastal counties began in early February and is expected to continue through April 15. Crop condition is mostly good. Moisture is needed in some areas.

In Florida, transplanting is practically complete in all areas of the State. Harvest is active in the central and northern areas but volume is below normal due to poor market conditions. Quality and size have been generally good but yields are below average.

Weather to date has been favorable and California's cabbage crop is progressing normally. The largest volume will come from south coast areas with additional supplies available from the central coast during the next three months.

CANTALOUPS: The April 1 estimate of acreage planted to cantaloups at 30.7 thousand acres (12.4 thousand hectares) is 7 percent above the 1980 planted acreage for the same period.

In Georgia, planting progress has been about normal but well ahead of last year's slow pace.

Plantings in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas progressed well during February but were delayed in March by cooler, wet weather.

In Arizona, planting is running slightly ahead of schedule due to unusually warm conditions, and was virtually complete by the end of March. Earlier plantings are up to good stands, vine turning is complete and fruiting progress is good. Harvest is expected to begin in May and continue through July.

Planting of California's desert cantaloups was completed in March. The crop is progressing well and harvest should begin in mid to late May and peak in the last half of June.

CARROTS: Acreage planted to carrots during the January through March period is placed at 5600 acres (2270 hectares), 7 percent below the planted acreage for January through March period in 1980.

California's carrot crop is progressing normally. Some digging is underway in the San Joaquin Valley but harvest won't peak until June. Development of carrots on the central coast is a little behind normal.

CAULIFLOWER: An estimated 7100 acres (2870 hectares) of cauliflower were planted in California during the January - March period. This is 6 percent above the acreage planted for the same period in 1980. Weather was favorable for planting until late February. Harvest should be orderly.

CELERY: Celery acreage planted during the January - March period is estimated at 11.4 thousand acres (4590 hectares), down 2 percent compared to last year.

In Florida, harvest is active in the Everglades and Zellwood areas. Mild days and cool nights have been beneficial. Peak size is 2's followed by 2 1/2's. Quality is good and yields are very good. However, a few seeders are showing up in some fields. Transplanting continues in all areas.

Harvest of celery on California's central coast will start in May. Field work has been facilitated by generally good weather and plantings are slightly ahead of last year. Harvest is complete in San Diego County and the desert. Volume continues heavy from Ventura County with some supplies coming from Orange County. Weather has been very favorable.

SWEET CORN: Sweet corn planted acreage in major producing States at 37.7 thousand acres (15.3 thousand hectares) is virtually the same as a year ago.

In Florida, harvest is gaining in the Pompano and Dade County areas. Yields are slightly below average but they are expected to improve during the next several weeks. Crop condition is very good in both Dade County and the Pompano areas. Good volume is expected through April. The crop in the Everglades was damaged by frost on the morning of March 21. Foliage was burned on significant acreage and some acreage will be lost. Yields will be reduced in earlier planted fields. Planting continues in the central area. Cool nights have slowed growth and development.

California's sweet corn crop is in good condition. Cool nights in the Coachella Valley have slowed growth somewhat. Harvest is expected to begin the first week in May. Most of the volume will come from the Coachella Valley with a smaller amount coming from other Southern California areas later in the upcoming three months.

CUCUMBERS: Acreage planted and to be planted to cucumbers for harvest after April 1 is estimated at 19.6 thousand acres (7930 hectares), 8 percent below the same period in 1980.

In Florida, the cucumber crop is in fair to good condition. Yield prospects are poor on older plantings but good on younger plantings. Limited harvest is underway in the southern areas of the State. Volume production is expected during April. Seeding is very active in the north central areas. California's cucumber crop is about normal. Harvest should begin during early April. Most of the supplies will come from the south coast area.

EGGPLANT: April 1 planted acreage of eggplant in Florida is placed at 1300 acres (530 hectares), 13 percent less than the previous year. Most fields are in good to very good condition. In the southeast area, fruit set and size are very good. Packout is reduced by poor shape and windscar. Volume is increasing. In the north central areas, transplanting is underway.

ESCAROLE-ENDIVE: At 2560 acres (1040 hectares) the acreage planted to escarole-endive since January 1 is 4 percent above the 1980 acreage planted during the January-March period.

In New Jersey, transplanting and early direct seeding is expected to be general during early April. Topsoil moisture is adequate in most areas. Early supplies are expected to reach market during late May.

In Florida, harvest is expected to remain steady in the Everglades and central areas. Quality is generally good. However, some tip burn from gusty winds during the latter part of March is showing on the outer leaves. Planting continues but is winding down for the season.

HONEYDEW MELONS: Honeydew melon acreage planted in Texas since January 1, 1981 is estimated at 4400 acres (1780 hectares), unchanged from a year ago. Planting progressed on schedule with only slight delays in February and March due to rain and wet field conditions. Unseasonably warm temperatures in February allowed planting to start early.

LETTUCE: An estimated 42.7 thousand acres (17.3 thousand hectares) of lettuce were planted during the January - March period. Compared to last year this is an increase of 6 percent.

In New Jersey, topsoil moisture is adequate in most areas. Transplanting and direct seeding is expected to become general during mid-April. Early marketings are expected to begin during mid-May and become quite heavy by late May.

In Florida, harvest is gaining in the Everglades and central areas. Head weight and quality are very good. Most types are available. Iceberg lettuce is averaging 50 to 56 pounds per carton and heads are very solid. Harvest is expected to continue active through April. Plantings are winding down for the season. Recent cool nights and mild days have been beneficial for growth and progress.

In Arizona, the central area lettuce crop has made excellent progress. Harvest began near mid-March and is expected to continue well into June, weather permitting. Crop quality at this time appears good. The latest plantings are establishing stands and weeding and thinning are active.

In New Mexico, the lettuce crop is in generally good condition. Harvest should get underway the last of April.

Lettuce acreage in California's San Joaquin Valley is up slightly from last year. Light harvest started in the Kern and Huron districts the week ending March 21. Quality has been fairly good. Light harvest got underway in the Santa Maria-Oceano area the week ending March 21 with a few cartons cut in the Salinas area. Harvest in the central coast area will remain fairly light through April. Weather has been favorable for growth and maturity of south coast lettuce. Harvest was underway in Ventura County by mid-March.

ONIONS: Texas early crop onion production is estimated at 3.09 million cwt (140 thousand metric tons), down 13 percent from the 1980 early crop and the March 1981 forecast.

In the Texas Rio Grande Valley, cloudy, wet conditions during March have reduced yield prospects. The damp soil and cool temperatures slowed growth and caused some problems with blight and seed stems. Some harvest had begun in the Valley by late March and is expected to be in full swing by early April.

In the San Antonio-Winter Garden area, wet conditions in March have also slowed development. Harvest is expected to begin in mid-April but drier weather conditions are needed to avoid disease problems.

At Laredo, conditions remain fair and yield prospects are good. Disease and insect problems have been minimal.

GREEN PEPPERS: Planted acreage of green peppers for April 1 at 12.4 thousand acres (5020 hectares) is 4 percent less than the April 1, 1980 planted acreage.

In Florida, the green pepper crop is in fair to very good condition. In the Pompano and southwest areas, harvest is increasing as new fields come into production. Quality and size are variable but expected to improve in several weeks. Poor shape is reducing packout. Plants are recovering from wind and sand damage in the west central areas. Transplanting is active in the north central area.

Planting of California's early green pepper crop proceeded rapidly under favorable weather conditions. The crop is in good condition.

SPINACH: Acreage planted to spinach since January 1 is estimated at 1600 acres (650 hectares), a decrease of 10 percent compared to the same period in 1980.

In New Jersey, harvest of the "wintered over" acreage is expected to begin during late April. Spring planting is underway. Harvest is expected to be general through most of May and June.

California's spinach crop progress is about normal. Most of the production through June will come from the Oxnard area.

STRAWBERRIES: Strawberry acreage for harvest in the major late crop producing States is placed at 22.1 thousand acres (8920 hectares), unchanged from the previous year.

In New Jersey the crop is making early growth. Temperatures are warming and light marketings are expected during late May. General harvest is expected from early June through mid-June. Late marketing from northernmost areas is expected to extend through early July. Lack of sufficient snow cover in Michigan this winter has caused some strawberry winterkill. Soil moisture supplies are below normal.

Damage to Washington's strawberry crop was small due to this year's extremely mild winter. There are a few reports of rot and weevil damage but this is not widespread.

Oregon strawberry fields are in average to good condition at this time. There was no winter damage, as a result of this year's unusually mild winter. The biggest problem reported to date has been the large infestations of insects and other pests, especially the crown borer.

Strawberry harvest in California got off to a strong early start in south coast counties. Rains in March delayed heavy shipments but only light storm damage occurred. Shipments are well ahead of last year, but less than 2 percent of the total volume is normally shipped by April 1.

TOMATOES: The April 1, 1981 planted acreage of tomatoes in major producing States is estimated at 35.1 thousand acres (14.2 thousand hectares), 5 percent above the 1980 planted acreage for the same period.

In South Carolina, tomato planting was about two-thirds complete by the end of March. Cold and windy weather damaged plantings in the major areas, requiring extensive replanting. The crop seemed to be making good recovery progress and conditions were fair. In Alabama, excellent spring planting conditions exist and planting is on schedule.

In Florida, the overall crop condition is generally fair to good. Dade County, Ft. Pierce-Pompano and the southwest should be back into volume production by mid-April. Recent production has been very small following the killing freezes during January. The spring crop in the Palmetto-Ruskin area is making fair to good progress. Early plantings are setting and sizing fruit. Most of the acreage is blooming. Transplanting of the spring crop in the Gadsden County area is nearing completion; however, strong winds March 16-18 caused heavy damage and a large acreage had to be reset.

California's desert tomato crop is growing well. Light harvest is underway in the Imperial Valley.

WATERMELONS: Watermelon acreage planted since January 1 is placed at 98.6 thousand acres (39.9 thousand hectares), up 16 percent from the same period a year ago.

In Florida, planting and replanting is rapidly nearing completion. The early crop, grown in the southwest, is making fair progress. Harvest will start by mid-April from a few fields that survived the cold weather during January. In central areas, the crop is making fair progress although strong winds in late March damaged the vines to some extent. In the north and west most acreage was coming up to fair stands.

In Alabama, spring planting conditions have been excellent and planting progress is on schedule.

Watermelon planting in Arizona was virtually complete by mid-March. Earliest plantings are up to good stands and growing well. Fruit development is good on earliest plantings with later plantings just emerging to blooming. Harvest is expected to begin in May and continue into early August.

California's spring watermelon plantings are complete in the Imperial and Palo Verde Valleys. Harvest is expected to peak in June.