
Vegetables



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Washington, D.C. 20250

RELEASED March 8, 1988
3:00 P.M. ET

ALL ONIONS: Planted area of onions in the U.S. is expected to total 125 thousand acres (50.5 thousand hectares) in 1988, down 1 percent from last year but slightly above 1986. Spring acreage is set at 23.6 thousand acres, up 1 percent from last year. Summer non-storage acreage is estimated at 12.2 thousand acres, down 8 percent from last year, with all of the short-fall coming out of Texas. Summer storage onions are intended for planting on 63.9 thousand acres (excluding California), up 1 percent from last year and 5 percent above two years ago. California acreage, at 25.0 thousand acres, is expected to be down 6 percent.

SPRING ONIONS: Growers of spring onions in Arizona, California, and Texas expect to harvet 23.1 thousand acres (9350 hectares) in 1988, up 5 percent from last year and 10 percent above 1986. Cool weather in Texas has slowed development in the Rio Grande Valley and in the Winter Garden area. Harvest should start in the earliest fields about mid-March. In California, warm weather aided development, although irrigation has increased on drier soils. The start of harvest should be on time in early April. Arizona growers have a good crop, developing normally with harvest expected in May.

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* The next issue of this report will be published April 8, 1988 *

Production of spring onions in Texas is forecast at 3.64 million cwt (165 thousand metric tons), up nearly one-third from last year and 1 percent above two years ago. Acreage for harvest is up 12 percent and yields should average 18 percent above last year.

SUMMER NON-STORAGE ONIONS: Growers in Texas, New Mexico, and Washington have planted 12.2 thousand acres (4940 hectares) for harvest in the early summer season. This is down 8 percent from last year and 3 percent below 1986. Planting is virtually finished in New Mexico and onions are making normal progress. Texas growers are slightly behind schedule with planting. In the High Plains, moisture is only fair. Trans-Pecos planting is underway with fair progress. Early stands are varied. Washington fall seeded onions came through the winter in good shape.

SUMMER STORAGE ONIONS: Planting intentions point to 63.9 thousand acres (25.9 thousand hectares) in 1988 (excluding California). This is up 1 percent from last year and 5 percent above two years ago. Acreage will be up generally across the board, with down turns shown only in Colorado and New York. Favorable price prospects have encouraged more acreage. Planting is underway as soils permit in early areas.

California acreage should total 25.0 thousand acres, a drop of 6 percent from last year.

ONIONS

SEASON AND STATE	AREA			YIELD PER ACRE			PRODUCTION		
	HARVESTED		FOR						
			HARVEST	1986	1987	1988	1986	1987	1988
	1986	1987	1988						
	ACRES		CWT			1,000 CWT			
SPRING 1/									
ARIZ	1,200	1,300	1,100	550	450		660	585	
CALIF	7,800	8,200	8,000	370	390		2,886	3,198	
TEX	12,000	12,500	14,000	300	220	260	3,600	2,750	3,640
GROUP TOTAL:	21,000	22,000	23,100	340	297		7,146	6,533	
	AREA PLANTED							1988	
	1986		1987	1988			AS % OF		
							1987		
	ACRES			PERCENT					
SPRING 1/	24,000		23,300		23,600		101		
SUMMER 1/									
NON-STORAGE									
N MEX	5,100		5,600		5,600		100		
TEX	5,900		5,900		4,800		81		
WASH	1,600		1,700		1,800		106		
GROUP TOTAL:	12,600		13,200		12,200		92		
STORAGE									
COLO	11,800		13,300		13,000		98		
IDAHO &									
MALHEUR	15,700		17,100		17,500		102		
MICH	8,000		8,000		8,100		101		
MINN	700		730		730		100		
N Y	13,300		12,900		12,800		99		
OHIO	500		490		490		100		
OREG,OTHER	3,300		3,300		3,500		106		
UTAH	1,500		1,500		1,600		107		
WASH	4,400		4,700		4,800		102		
WIS	1,400		1,400		1,400		100		
SUBTOTAL	60,600		63,420		63,920		101		
CALIF 2/	26,900		26,600		25,000		94		
TOTAL SUMMER CROP	100,100		103,220		101,120		98		
U S	124,100		126,520		124,720		99		

1/ PRIMARILY FRESH MARKET. 2/ PRIMARILY PROCESSING.

VEGETABLES FOR FRESH MARKET 1/

CROP AND STATE	AREA			YIELD PER ACRE			PRODUCTION		
	HARVESTED			FOR					
	HARVEST			HARVEST					
	1986	1987	1988	1986	1987	1988	1986	1987	1988
	ACRES			CWT			1,000 CWT		
ASPARAGUS									
SPRING									
CALIF	37,800	39,700	40,100	29	30		1,096	1,191	
STRAWBERRIES:									
WINTER									
FLA	4,900	4,900	5,000	185	225	270	907	1,103	1,350
SPRING									
CALIF	15,600	16,800	17,000	505	490		7,878	8,232	

1/ INCLUDES FRESH MARKET AND PROCESSING.

ASPARAGUS: California's area for harvest is forecast at 40.1 thousand acres, up 1 percent from 1987. Volume has been much lower than last year. However, recent above normal temperatures and ideal harvesting conditions have caused harvest to accelerate.

STRAWBERRIES: The area for harvest in California during the 1988 spring season is expected to total 17.0 thousand acres, up 1 percent from last year and 9 percent above 1986. Cold weather and strong winds in December slowed production in southern California. Bloom and fruit set was interrupted. As of March 1, production was below a year ago because of the adverse weather.

Production of winter strawberries in Florida is forecast at 1.35 million cwt, 22 percent more than last year. The crop is in good condition. Some minor water damage to fruit occurred when growers sprinkled plants to avoid freeze damage during late January and early February. The early volume is running ahead of last year. Early harvest began in December and the main commercial harvest is getting underway in the West Central areas. Good volumes are expected through April. U-Pic and roadside stand sales in the lower southeast and Dade County areas are active.

