



Florida Agricultural Statistics Service
1222 Woodward Street
Orlando, Florida 32803
407 / 648-6013

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>

VEGETABLES



FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE

ACREAGE-FALL QUARTER (October, November, December)

October 6, 2003

FLORIDA

FLORIDA WEATHER: The clash of the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico sea breezes, coupled with moisture from tropical systems, caused daily, scattered storms during July with some land preparation activities for the planting of fall crops delayed. However, drought conditions stressed some cover crops in St. John's County potato fields. Water accumulation in low lying areas hindered the growth and development of early plantings in some southern Peninsula fields. Cloud cover kept most July temperatures below normal. Wet conditions continued into early August which interrupted field activities with wet, muddy fields slowing some planting and preventing the application of pesticides to some acreage. The leaching of fertilizer along with the prevention of fertilizer applications slowed development of some acreage. Producers in the Hastings area were plowing under cover crops and planting winter crop vegetables by the end of August. The August rains reduced yield prospects for tomatoes around Quincy by increasing bloom and fruit drop. Southern Peninsula growers started planting snap beans in early September. The harvesting of cucumbers and peppers got underway in mid-to-late September with very light amounts marketed. Okra harvesting in Dade County continued during most of August and September. Drier weather during the first part of September allowed the planting of fall crops to proceed at a normal pace in the southern Peninsula. Rains returned during the last part of September which interrupted some planting with most on schedule. Tomato picking started around Quincy by early October as northern Peninsula snap bean harvesting got underway.

This first quarterly release for the 2002-2003 season shows acreage for harvest during fall months of October through December based on conditions existing October 1. Estimated acreage by growing region is no longer available.

SNAP BEANS: Acreage to be picked is set at 10,200 acres, up 200 acres or two percent from the 10,000 acres harvested during the fall of 2002. Picking in northern areas is getting underway.

CABBAGE: Growers hope to harvest 500 acres, equal to the acreage cut during the fall of 2002. Harvesting is expected to begin by early December.

CUCUMBERS FOR FRESH MARKET: Acreage to be picked this fall is estimated at 3,500 acres equal to the acreage picked last fall. Harvesting is underway with very light amounts available.

SWEET CORN: Producers expect to pick 4,800 acres this fall, down 100 acres or two percent from the 4,900 acres harvested last fall. Picking is expected to start in mid-to-late October.

BELL PEPPERS: Acreage to be picked this fall is set at 4,500 acres. This compares with 4,900 acres harvested last fall. Harvesting is getting underway with very light amounts available.

TOMATOES: Producers hope to pick 14,200 acres this fall, down 1,300 acres or eight percent from the 15,500 acres harvested last fall. Picking around Quincy started by early October.

UNITED STATES

GENERAL: The prospective area for harvest of 11 selected fresh market vegetables and melons during the fall quarter is forecast at 178,750 acres, up 1 percent from last year. Acreage increased for broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, and sweet corn, while acreage decreased for snap beans, cucumbers, head lettuce, bell peppers, and tomatoes. Acreage for carrots remained the same. Area forecasted for melon harvest is 14,500 acres, up 14 percent from last year's comparable commodities. Cantaloupe harvested area is forecast at 10,000 acres, up 18 percent from 2002. Honeydew harvested area is forecast at 4,500 acres, up 7 percent from last fall.

SNAP BEANS: Fall fresh market area for harvest is forecast at 18,000 acres, down 3 percent from last year but 4 percent above 2001. Recent rains have slowed progress but no major problems have occurred as a result. Georgia's recent weather has been dry, which is good during harvest, but more rain was needed to improve crop conditions. The New Jersey yields are expected to be lower for the fall crop due to wet conditions in late August and September. In Virginia, growers have dealt with excessive rainfall from mid-July through mid-August. The effects of Hurricane Isabel, which came through the area on September 18, are unknown at this time.

CABBAGE: Fresh market area for harvest is forecast at 6,800 acres, up 8 percent from last year and 15 percent above two years earlier. Georgia's crop benefitted from hot, sunny weather over the summer, but rain is needed to improve crop conditions. New Jersey's fall crop is expected to have lower yields due to wildlife damage and excessive rainfall. In Texas, the Rio Grande Valley region was recently hit hard

by rains and growers have been unable to plant because of standing water in the fields.

SWEET CORN: Fresh market area for harvest is forecast at 9,800 acres, up 10 percent from last year and 13 percent above 2001. California's crop is in good condition with no insect or disease problems reported.

CUCUMBERS: Area for fall harvest is forecast at 7,150 acres, 5 percent below last year and 1 percent lower than 2001. South Carolina had sufficient rainfall and good temperatures early in the season. However, fall conditions have been drier and growers without irrigation are concerned about quality. The Rio Grande Valley region of Texas had problems during planting because of heavy rains which left standing water and prevented workers from getting into the fields. In Virginia, growers were challenged by excessive rainfall from mid-July to mid-August.

BELL PEPPERS: Fall area for harvest is forecast at 4,800 acres, down 8 percent from both 2002 and 2001. In Texas, planting went well in the San Antonio/Winter Garden area. However, excessive rainfall in the Rio Grande Valley has halted fall planting.

TOMATOES: Fresh market area for fall harvest is forecast at 23,600 acres, 4 percent below last year and down less than 1 percent from 2001. California growers report steady growth and development of the fall tomato crop with no major problems reported.

Vegetables for fresh market, prospective acreage for harvest, October, November and December, by States, 2002 with comparisons

Selected crops and States	Usual harvest period	Fall acreage			2003 area for harvest as percent of 2002
		Harvested		For harvest 2003	
		2001	2002		
		Acres			Percent
SNAP BEANS:					
Florida	Oct-Dec	9,000	10,000	10,200	102
Georgia	Oct-Dec	4,500	5,000	4,500	90
New Jersey	Sep-Oct	1,800	1,600	1,500	94
Virginia	Sep-Oct	2,000	1,900	1,800	95
Total		17,300	18,500	18,000	97
CABBAGE:					
Florida	Oct-Dec	500	500	500	100
Georgia	Oct-Dec	3,500	4,100	4,800	117
New Jersey	Sep-Nov	500	500	500	100
Texas	Sep-Nov	1,400	1,200	1,000	83
Total		5,900	6,300	6,800	108
SWEET CORN:					
Florida	Oct-Dec	4,900	4,900	4,800	98
California	Oct-Dec	3,800	4,000	5,000	125
Total		8,700	8,900	9,800	110
CUCUMBERS:					
Florida	Oct-Dec	3,500	3,500	3,500	100
South Carolina	Oct-Dec	800	800	850	106
Texas	Sep-Nov	1,500	1,400	1,000	71
Virginia	Sep-Oct	1,400	1,800	1,800	100
Total		7,200	7,500	7,150	95
BELL PEPPERS: ^{1/}					
Florida	Sep-Dec	4,500	4,900	4,500	92
Texas	Sep-Nov	700	300	300	100
Total		5,200	5,200	4,800	92
TOMATOES:					
Florida	Sep-Dec	14,000	15,500	14,200	92
California	Oct-Dec	9,700	9,200	9,400	102
Total		23,700	24,700	23,600	96
TOTAL OF CROPS LISTED					
Florida		36,400	39,300	37,700	96
United States		68,000	71,100	70,150	99
TOTAL OF CROPS ESTIMATED					
United States ^{2/}		177,200	177,000	178,750	101

^{1/} Includes fresh market and processing.^{2/} Total of crops listed plus broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, head lettuce, cantaloupes, and honeydew melons. Estimates for eggplant discontinued in 2002.