



◆ Vegetables and Melons

The farm value of Hawaii's vegetables and melons is estimated at a record high \$60.2 million in 2006, up 11 percent from the previous record high set in 2005. Production was up fractionally, but an overall increase in farm prices ensured 2006's record revenues.

Weather conditions were mixed during 2006. The year began dry, but quickly turned wet for an extended period of time. Much of the remaining year had a mixture of wet and dry periods, before the year ended on a dry note. A series of unstable weather conditions produced periods of heavy rainfall between February 19 and April 2. This was the result of a blocking weather pattern which formed in place south of Alaska that helped to keep a series of low pressure systems anchored to the northwest of the State producing the unstable conditions and subsequent heavy precipitations. Although the wet weather slowed crop progress and hampered farm activities during this period and for at least a month afterwards, most vegetable and melon growers benefited from the more ideal weather conditions which followed.

Hawaii's tomato farms (field and greenhouse types) experienced a 16 percent increase in farm revenues during 2006, and continued to lead all other vegetable and melon commodities with \$11.3 million in farm revenues or 19 percent of the overall total. The increase in revenue was due to a 4 percent increase in production coupled with a 12 percent increase in farm prices. Ranking second was sweetpotatoes which posted \$4.4 million in farm revenues during 2006, up 16 percent from 2005. A 21 percent increase in farm prices more than offset the 5 percent decrease in production.



◆ Taro

Hawaii taro production is estimated at 4.5 million pounds in 2006, up 5 percent from the previous year estimate of 4.3 million. Farm prices increased 6 percent to an average of 57 cents per pound, and value of sales was estimated at \$2.6 million, up 10 percent from 2005.

Taro production was once again hampered by a combination of wet weather and pests during 2006. This year began drier than normal, but quickly turned very wet. The northern islands experienced heavy rainfall during February with record amounts and flooding affecting most of the State during March. The beginning of April finally marked the end of six weeks of heavy rainfall. The remainder of the year was a mix of drier than normal weather and occasional periods of heavy rains. Reports of apple snail (*Pomacea canaliculata*) infestations and losses varied from light to heavy. Taro Pocket Rot (TPR), a disease that forms pickets of rotting tissue in the corm, also continued to result in some losses.