

Vegetable Production

U.S. vegetable sales up 16 percent since 2012; vegetable acreage down



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U.S. vegetable sales (including melons) in 2017 were \$19.6 billion, 5.0 percent of total U.S. agriculture sales. This was an increase of \$2.7 billion, or 16 percent, since 2012, the last time the Census of Agriculture was conducted. The number of farms growing vegetables increased, but acreage for vegetables declined from 4.5 million acres in 2012 to 4.4 million acres in 2017. Vegetable producers on average are younger than U.S. producers overall.

74,276 farms



4.4 million acres



\$19.6 billion sales



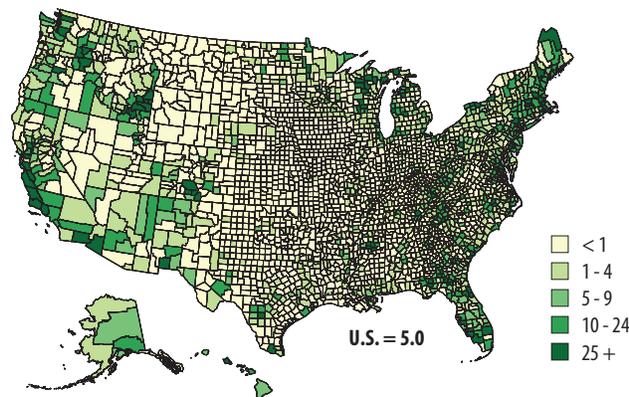
Number and Location

Ten states accounted for 79 percent of U.S. vegetable sales in 2017, with California alone accounting for 42 percent. Four of the top five U.S. counties in vegetables sales are in California, with Monterey County accounting for 14 percent of the U.S. total (one third of California's). With \$2.8 billion in vegetable sales, Monterey County had more vegetable sales than any state except California.

Farms produce vegetables for the fresh market and for processing, which refers to altering the commodity by heat, pressure, or freezing. Some farms produce for both markets, others specialize in one or the other. In 2017, of the 74,276 farms producing vegetables, 68,377 farms grew fresh market vegetables and 11,901 farms grew vegetables for processing. The number of farms in 2012 was 72,045.

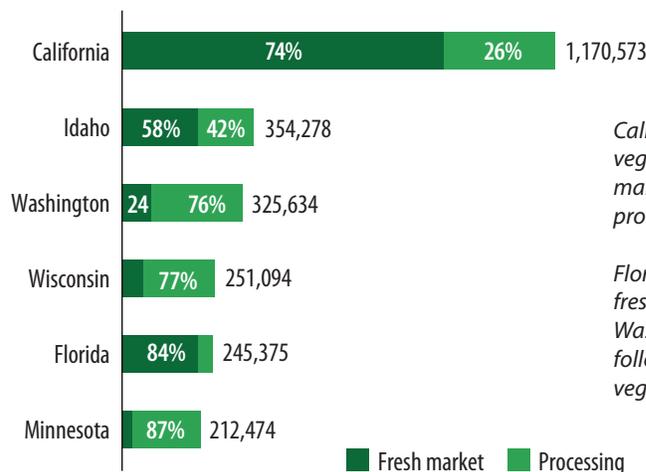
With 1.2 million harvested vegetable acres in 2017, California had the largest total acreage for both fresh market and processing vegetables.

Vegetable Sales as Percent of Agriculture Sales, by County, 2017



Top States	(\$ mil)
California	8,167.8
Florida	1,284.1
Idaho	1,147.1
Washington	1,094.9
Arizona	1,009.1
Georgia	566.4
North Carolina	533.4
Wisconsin	543.0
Oregon	539.2
Michigan	535.1

Top States in Vegetable Harvested Acres, 2017 (total acres and fresh market/processing shares)



California ranked first in both vegetable categories: fresh market (870,274 acres) and processing (300,299 acres).

Florida and Idaho followed in fresh market vegetables, and Washington and Wisconsin followed in processing vegetables.

SNAPSHOT Vegetable Producers, 2017

Number = 80,603*

	Vegetable (percent)	All U.S. (percent)
Sex		
Male	61	64
Female	39	36
Age		
<35	13	8
35 - 64	62	58
65+	25	34
Years farming		
10 or less	41	27
11 or more	59	73
Lived on their farm	74	74
Worked off farm		
No days	38	39
1 to 199 days	28	21
200+ days	34	40
Primary occupation		
Farming	50	42
Other	50	58
Hispanic	5	3
With military service	9	11
Average age (years)	53.9	57.5

* Producers on 45,165 specialized vegetable farms as defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). More than half a farm's sales come from growing vegetables and melons. Data collected for up to four producers per farm.

About the Census

The Census of Agriculture, conducted once every five years, is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Results from the 2017 and earlier censuses are available at national, state, and county levels.

See the searchable database Quick Stats, the new Census Data Query Tool, downloadable PDF reports, maps, and a variety of topic-specific products.

www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus

Producer Characteristics

Producers on farms specializing in vegetable production were, on average, younger (53.9 years) than U.S. producers overall (57.5 years). They were more likely to be relatively new farmers (41 percent had been farming 10 years or fewer) than U.S. producers overall

(27 percent) and more likely to have farming as their primary occupation (50 percent versus 42 percent). Thirty-nine percent were female, compared with 36 percent for all U.S. producers.

The percent of vegetable producers farming 11 years or more. **59**

Farm Characteristics

Half of farms specializing in vegetable production had sales and government payments of less than \$10,000 in 2017. A third had sales and payments ranging from \$10,000 to \$99,999, compared with 26 percent of all farms.

Economic Class (sales and government payments)	Vegetable Farms (percent of total)	All Farms
< \$10,000	49	55
\$10,000 - \$99,999	33	26
\$100,000 - \$499,999	9	11
\$500,000 - \$999,999	3	4
\$1,000,000 +	6	4

\$16.3 billion

The total production expenses of farms specializing in vegetable production.

Average Farm

On average, farms specializing in vegetable production have fewer acres than U.S. farms overall, but higher sales, greater production expenses, and higher net income.

	Vegetable Farms	All Farms
Avg. acres	206	441
Avg. sales	\$436,877	\$190,245
Avg. government payments	\$16,439	\$13,906
Avg. expenses	\$360,015	\$159,821
Avg. net cash farm income	\$88,205	\$43,053

Top Vegetables

Of the top vegetables, potatoes ranked first in 2017 harvested acres overall (1.1 million acres) and first in harvested acres for both the fresh market (535,792 acres) and the processing (597,336 acres) categories.

	harvested acres
Potatoes	1,133,128
Sweet corn	496,096
Lettuce	342,965
Tomatoes grown in the open	335,348
Snap beans	219,373
Sweet potatoes	172,983
Onions, dry	163,982
Green peas	147,791
Broccoli	135,185
Watermelons	129,790
Cucumbers	119,655

Among Vegetable Farms

 **79%** Have internet access

 **36%** Hire farm labor

 **95%** Are family farms

 **59%** Have net positive income