



Pacific Region 2021 Vegetable Report Summary



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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California's Vegetable Value of Utilized Production Down 15% from 2020 *USDA NASS released the annual vegetables summary data for the 2021 Crop Year*

SACRAMENTO, California – February 16, 2022 – The value of California's 2021 utilized vegetable production dropped 15% to \$7.24 billion compared to 2020's value of \$8.55 billion according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Pacific Regional Field Office.

Despite the decrease in state's overall total value of utilized production, crops showing an increase included asparagus, snap beans, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, garlic, honeydews, onions, chile peppers, pumpkins and tomatoes.

California fresh market and processing vegetable growers harvested 920,800 acres of principal vegetable crops in 2021, up 1% from 2020. Utilized production totaled 404 million hundred weight down 6% from 2020's 428 million hundred weight.

California leads the nation in vegetable production, accounting for over 40% of the U.S. vegetable acreage.

USDA NASS recently posted the Vegetables 2021 Summary for vegetables grown during the 2021 crop year in California and across the U.S. The report includes survey data collected for acreage, production, marketing year price and value collected on an annual basis for 26 vegetable and melon crops in the U.S. Questionnaire content, survey timetables, and survey administration are state specific. Data are gathered by telephone interviews, mail, faxed, and online reporting.

For a copy of the full report, visit [Vegetables 2021 Summary](#). Below are comments for crops where The Golden State is the largest producer.

Artichokes: Total California production in 2021 totaled 833 thousand cwt, up 9% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 4,900 acres, down 4% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 4,900 acres, was down 4% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$57.5 million, 10% below the previous season. Utilized production totaled 833 thousand cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

Despite artichokes in the Coachella region getting off to a late start due to the desert heat, the plants flourished and were very productive. In the primary growing region of the Central Coast, cool winter weather and pest pressures reduced early supplies, but better spring weather allowed the crop to recover with good quality and excellent production.

Broccoli: Total California production in 2021 totaled 12.3 million cwt, down 14% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 95,000 acres, up 6% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 94,500 acres, was also up 6% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$631 million, 19% less than the previous year. Utilized production totaled 12.3 million cwt, of which 11.8 million cwt was for the fresh market and 22.7 thousand tons for processing.

Broccoli prices increased as cooler weather in growing areas limited supplies. Crown quality was very good. Brown bead, hollow core, and yellowing were reported to be minor issues.

Cabbage: Total California production in 2021 totaled 5.40 million cwt, down 8% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 14,800 acres, down 2 % from the previous year. Area harvested, at 14,600 acres, was up 2% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$155 million, 5% more than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 5.40 million cwt.

Weather during planting in the fall of 2020 and through head development in 2021 was favorable. No significant pathogen impact on the crop was reported. Demand for cabbage was on the rise with consumer interest in health benefits during the continuing pandemic. Weather conditions were a mixture of dry and wet conditions during the season in most of the cabbage producing areas.

Cantaloupes: Total California production in 2021 totaled 6.90 million cwt, down 4% from 2020. Planted areas was estimated at 23,500 acres, up 7% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 23,400 acres, up 7% from 2020. The value of the crop total was \$163 million, a decrease of 11% from previous year. The utilized production was 6.90 million cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

Production of cantaloupes was strongly impacted by higher input costs, including water.

Carrots: Total California production in 2021 totaled 25.2 million cwt, up 2% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 61,700 acres, an increase of 2% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 61,400 acres, is also up 2% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$654 million, 5% less than the previous year. Utilized production totaled 25.1 million cwt.

The rise in the pandemic led to a surge in carrot demand, resulting in an increase in prices and labor costs. The market was steady with good supplies; growers saw jumbo and cello size in the fields. In the southern San Joaquin and Cuyama Valleys, the top carrot producing counties in California, growers reported severe drought conditions, limiting water supplies in 2021.

Cauliflower: Total California production in 2021 totaled 7.07 million cwt, down 11% from the previous year. Planted area was estimated at 39,400 acres, up 6% from 2020. Area harvested, at 39,300 acres, was up 7% from the previous year. The value of the crop totaled \$266 million, 2% less than the previous season. Utilized production also totaled 7.07 million cwt.

Prices received by growers improved. Cooler weather slowed growth, resulting in lighter volume, but quality remained strong with good sizing and color

Celery: Total California production in 2021 totaled 15.3 million cwt, a decrease of 5% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 28,000 acres, down 4% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 27,800 acres, showed a decrease of 3% from the previous year. The value of the crop totaled \$375 million, up 5% from previous year. Utilized production for 2021 totaled 15.3 million cwt, down 5% from 2020.

Cold and wet weather slowed production during the end of the year. Some growers in the Oxnard area reported crop damage due to flooding and a canal breach. Additionally, fusarium and insects caused reduced yields for some producers. The market was tight for organic celery during a portion of the 2021 growing season.

Garlic: Total California production in 2021 totaled 4.19 million cwt, an increase of 18% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 26,500 acres, up 12% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 26,200 acres, also showed an increase of 11% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$244 million, up slightly from the 2020 value of \$242 million. Utilized production also totaled 4.19 million cwt.

Despite the minimal water availability and the extreme heat, the garlic crop was above average. Moisture received in April was beneficial and the crop was able to survive the hot temperatures

Honeydew: Total California production in 2021 totaled 1.76 million cwt, down 20% from 2020. Planted area and harvested area were both estimated at 6,900 acres, down 4% from the previous year. The value of the crop totaled \$48.9 million, up 7% from the previous season. All production was sold for the fresh market.

Higher input costs, including water, reduced supply of honeydew melons. Consumer demand increased, which resulted in higher prices than the previous season.

Head lettuce: Total California production in 2021 totaled 24.9 million cwt, down 11% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 76,000 acres, up 3% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 75,400 acres, was also up 3% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$728 million, 19% less than the previous season. All utilized production was sold for the fresh market.

The head lettuce market was steady while supply remained low. Labor, weather, and quality were concerns throughout the growing season. High temperatures and humidity in the Salinas Valley during July and August caused stress for some of the crop, which resulted in internal burn and fog burn. There were also reports of below freezing temperatures causing harvesting and packing delays.

Leaf lettuce: Total California production in 2021 totaled 10.2 million cwt, down 23% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 50,000 acres, down 6% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 49,700 acres, was 4% lower than 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$532 million, 44% less than the previous season. Utilized production was all sold for the fresh market.

Production of leaf lettuce continued to trend downward as the market remained steady. Quality was fair, while pricing remained competitive. Extreme temperatures affected crop quality and harvest efforts. There were reports of below freezing temperatures, causing harvesting and packing delays.

Romaine lettuce: Total California production in 2021 totaled 20.1 million cwt, down 12% from the 2020 total. Planted area was estimated at 71,300 acres, up 3% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 70,400 acres, was up 4% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$768 million, 37% less than the previous season. All production was sold for the fresh market.

The Romaine lettuce crop experienced some quality issues that affected yields and resulted in substantial price decreases compared to 2020.

Onions: Total California production in 2021 totaled 19.0 million cwt, down slightly from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 45,800 acres, up 7% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 45,300 acres, was up 6% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$297 million, 10% more than the previous year. Of the utilized production, 9.51 million cwt was sold for the fresh market and 475 thousand tons were for processing.

Growers had low expectations early in the season, given the extreme heat challenges and limited water supply. Onions dried up too quickly and volumes were disappointing. Dryness and long periods of intense heat, led to expansion of wildfires and prolonged lack of sunlight, causing minimal damage to the crop. Widespread, Fusarium basal rot was reported on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, causing some onions to decay and lower yields.

Bell peppers: Total California production in 2021 totaled 3.83 million cwt, down 24% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 9,200 acres, down 22% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 9,000 acres, was down 23% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$185 million, 31% less than the previous year. Utilized production totaled 3.82 million cwt, of which 2.17 million cwt was for the fresh market and 82.2 thousand tons was for processing.

Bell pepper growers were faced with rising production costs and transportation issues.

Spinach: Total California production in 2021 totaled 5.17 million cwt, up 2% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 40,300 acres, down 5% from the previous year. Area harvested, at 39,800 acres, was also down 5% from 2020. The value of the crop totaled \$359 million, 11% less than the previous season.

Water supply was an issue for spinach growers as they experienced severe drought conditions during the 2021 growing season.

Tomatoes: Total California production in 2021 totaled 224 million cwt, down 4% from 2020. Planted area was estimated at 251,000 acres, down 2% from the previous year. Area harvested, estimated at 248,900 acres, was unchanged from the previous year. The value of the crop totaled \$1.18 billion, 6% higher than 2020. Utilized production totaled 222 million cwt, of which 6.72 million cwt was for the fresh market and 10.8 million tons were for processing.

Drought concerns impacted planting decisions for the 2021 processing tomato crop and planted acreage decreased significantly from early season contracted intentions. Extremely high temperatures in May and throughout the summer lowered expected yields and slowed down operations at the canneries. Harvest began the first week of July and continued through November, marking the longest harvest in recent years.

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