



NEWS RELEASE

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2019 California Vegetable Value of Utilized Production Increases Despite Decline in Acres

USDA NASS released the annual vegetables summary data for the 2019 Crop Year

SACRAMENTO, California – February 21, 2020 – The value of California's 2019 utilized vegetable production rose to \$7.864 billion, 7.3 percent above the 2018 value according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Pacific Regional Field Office. Increases in the value of utilized production for carrots, broccoli, and head lettuce accounted for most of this increase. One of California's top vegetable crops, processing tomatoes, saw a slight decline in the value of utilized production.

This increase in value of utilized production occurred despite a decline in planted acres and production. California fresh market and processing vegetable growers planted 985,600 acres of principal vegetable crops in 2019, down 1.4 percent from 2018. Utilized production totaled 449.8 million hundred weight, down 2.6 percent from 2018.

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

USDA NASS recently posted the [Vegetables 2019 Summary](#) for vegetables grown during the 2019 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-out/mail-back, faxed questionnaires, and personal interviews.

Family favorites grown in California include artichokes, broccoli, carrots, garlic, tomatoes, and more. For a copy of the full report, visit <http://bit.ly/CAvegetables19>. Just interested in California? Here are comments on 2019 crops where The Golden State is the largest producer. The data reflects U.S. numbers:

Artichokes: Total production in 2019 totaled 1.01 million cwt, up 1 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 7,200 acres, up 4 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 7,200 acres, was also up 4 percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$78.6 million, 25 percent above the previous season. Utilized production totaled 1.01 million cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

In California, artichoke crops in the desert and Central Coast growing regions were impacted by heavy frost followed by rain early in the season, delaying and reducing supplies for the Easter demand. As the weather conditions improved, quality and production recovered for the remainder of the season.

Broccoli: Total production in 2019 totaled 17.4 million cwt, up 1 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 111,900 acres, down 3 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 111,600 acres, was down 2 percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$873 million, 18 percent more than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 17.4 million cwt, of which 16.6 million cwt was for the fresh market and 39,880 tons for processing.

In California, a relatively cool and wet spring complicated broccoli planting and led to increased pest pressures later in the year. In Arizona, uncharacteristically cold and wet weather during the growing season negatively impacted the crop, causing supplies to be lighter than demand. Quality was reported as good and by March, weather had improved.

Cabbage: Total production in 2019 totaled 21.7 million cwt, up 16 percent from 2018 for comparable States. Planted area was estimated at 61,100 acres, up 11 percent from the previous year for comparable States. Area harvested, at 59,100 acres, was up 15 percent from 2018 for comparable States. The value of the crop totaled \$519 million, 30 percent more than the previous season for comparable States. Utilized production totaled 21.6 million cwt, of which 18.9 million cwt was for the fresh market and 134,424 tons for processing.

In California, growing conditions were favorable, though there were some harvest delays due to wet fields. In Georgia, excessive rain hampered growth early, but conditions were nearly ideal later in the growing season. In Florida, conditions were abnormally dry early in the growing season but improved as the season progressed. In Michigan, warm weather in early spring was followed by cooler and wetter weather with some pest pressures.

Cantaloupes: Total production in 2019 totaled 12.7 million cwt, down 5 percent from the 2018 total for comparable States. Planted area was estimated at 53,500 acres, down 3 percent from the previous year for comparable States. Area harvested, at 53,100 acres, was down 2 percent from 2018 for comparable States. The value of the crop totaled \$303 million, 1 percent less from the previous season for comparable States. Utilized production totaled 12.7 million cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

In California, the largest cantaloupe producing State, below-average temperatures along with above-average rainfall early in the season pushed back planting nearly two weeks. Once planted, continued below-average temperatures were not ideal for growth. In Arizona, cooler, wet weather early in the season delayed planting. Despite the late start, quality and quantity were reported to be good. The season ended quicker than normal due to extreme heat maturing the fruit more quickly.

Carrots: Total production in 2019 totaled 49.8 million cwt, up 13 percent from the 2018 total for comparable States. Planted area was estimated at 80,300 acres, up 7 percent from the previous year for comparable States. Area harvested, at 79,600 acres, was up 7 percent from 2018 for comparable States. The value of the crop totaled \$864 million, 21 percent more than the previous season for comparable States. Utilized production totaled 49.8 million cwt, of which 40.5 million cwt was for the fresh market and 466,316 tons for processing.

In California, the largest carrot producing State, the year began with cold weather impacting vegetable crops in the Coachella Valley. Warmer temperatures later in the season were beneficial to the crop. In Washington, conditions were good throughout the growing season.

Cauliflower: Total production in 2019 totaled 10.1 million cwt, up 6 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 45,700 acres, up 1 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 45,500 acres, was up 1 percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$466 million, 7 percent more than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 10.1 million cwt, of which 10.0 million cwt was for the fresh market and 446 tons for processing.

In California, the largest cauliflower producing State, volume was up due to more optimal growing condition during the season. Demand during the season was good.

Celery: Total production in 2019 totaled 15.7 million cwt, down 4 percent from the 2018 total for comparable States. Planted area was estimated at 28,200 acres, down 1 percent from the previous year for comparable States. Area harvested, at 28,100 acres, was down 1 percent from 2018 for comparable States. The value of the crop totaled \$475 million, 9 percent more than the previous season for comparable States. Utilized production for 2019 totaled 15.7 million cwt, down 4 percent from 2018 for comparable States.

In California, growers reported lower production, however demand remained strong. As a result prices increased.

Garlic: Total production in 2019 totaled 4.19 million cwt, down 20 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 27,000 acres, Down 10 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 27,000 acres, was down 10 percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$327 million, 21 percent less than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 4.19 million cwt, of which 1.46 million cwt was for the fresh market and 136,013 tons for processing.

California growers reported that extended wet weather increased pathogen pressures on the crop.

Honeydew: Total production in 2019 totaled 2.83 million cwt, down 26 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 11,100 acres, down 10 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 11,100 acres, was also down 10 percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$59.2 million, 21 percent less than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 2.83 million cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

In California, below-average temperatures along with above-average rainfall in the early parts of the season pushed back honeydew planting nearly two weeks. Once planted, continued below-average temperatures were not ideal for growth which was slowed significantly.

Head lettuce: Total production in 2019 totaled 41.4 million cwt, up 2 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 114,900 acres, down 5 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 114,500 acres, was down 4

percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$1.96 billion, 60 percent more than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 41.4 million cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

In California, the largest head lettuce producing State, unfavorable weather conditions affected the crop in the coastal region of the State. An early summer heatwave damaged some of the crop, leading to an increase in prices. In Arizona, supplies could not keep up with demand early in the season.

Leaf lettuce: Total production in 2019 totaled 12.5 million cwt, up 16 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 57,900 acres, down 13 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 57,300 acres, was also down 13 percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$650 million, 17 percent more than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 12.5 million cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

Interest and demand for leaf lettuce continued to trend upward due to consumer concerns over food safety issues with other lettuce varieties.

Romaine lettuce: Total production in 2019 totaled 27.4 million cwt, down 6 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 89,800 acres, down 12 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 87,900 acres, was down 12 percent from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$881 million, 2 percent less than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 27.2 million cwt, all of which was for the fresh market.

In California, a large-scale recall due to an E. coli outbreak impacted the Romaine lettuce crop. In November 2019, the recall was linked to romaine lettuce harvested from Salinas, CA. All romaine lettuce grown in the Salinas area was pulled from the market by the FDA and CDC. This outbreak prompted growers and the rest of the industry to agree on new labeling standards that specified where the lettuce was grown. Romaine lettuce harvested outside the Salinas region was not affected by the outbreak.

Onions: Total production in 2019 totaled 69.9 million cwt, down 4 percent from the 2018 total. Planted area was estimated at 132,400 acres, down 2 percent from the previous year. Area harvested, at 129,400 acres, was down slightly from 2018. The value of the crop totaled \$1.00 billion, 13 percent more than the previous season. Utilized production totaled 68.6 million cwt, of which 47.8 million cwt was for the fresh market and 1.04 million tons for processing.

In California, the largest onion producing State, a cool, wet spring led to a slight delay in planting and a later crop. In Washington, the overall size and quality of the crop was reported as good.

Bell peppers: Total production in 2019 totaled 12.1 million cwt, down 1 percent from the 2018 total for comparable States. Planted area was estimated at 39,200 acres, up 5 percent from the previous year for comparable States. Area harvested, at 38,300 acres, was up 6 percent from 2018 for comparable States. The value of the crop totaled \$558 million, 11 percent more than the previous season for comparable States. Utilized production totaled 12.1 million cwt, of which 9.50 million cwt was for the fresh market and 129,332 tons for processing.

In California, bell pepper growth was slow early due to a cool, wet spring, but caught up quickly due to warmer weather later in spring. Hot summer weather was ideal for pepper production. In Florida, abnormally dry conditions in late spring through early summer impacted the crop in the Panhandle. In Georgia, conditions were ideal for most of the growing season, although excessive rainfall hampered some crop growth early in the season.

Spinach: Total production in 2019 totaled 9.61 million cwt, up 21 percent from the 2018 total for comparable States. Planted area was estimated at 66,800 acres, up 9 percent from the previous year for comparable States. Area harvested, at 65,800 acres, was also up 9 percent from 2018 for comparable States. The value of the crop totaled \$527 million, 28 percent more than the previous season for comparable States. Utilized production totaled 9.61 million cwt, of which 8.70 million cwt was for the fresh market and 45,053 tons for processing.

In California, the largest spinach producing State, the year began with very cold weather that impacted crops in the Coachella Valley. Warmer temperatures later in the season benefitted the crop. In Salinas Valley, a very wet spring delayed planting. This led to some fields maturing later in the summer, which impacted the planting schedule for the second crop. In Arizona, the tender leaf market was strong early in the season due to lower yields caused by the unusually cool temperatures. Once the weather warmed up, the tender leaf market was steady throughout the season.

Strawberries: Beginning in 2019, estimates will only be published in the [Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts](#) Summary which will be published in May 2020.

Tomatoes: Total production in 2019 totaled 239 million cwt, down 9 percent from the 2018 total for comparable States. Planted area was estimated at 282,000 acres, down 4 percent from the previous year for comparable States. Area

harvested, estimated at 273,700 acres, was down 5 percent from 2018 for comparable States. The value of the crop totaled \$1.60 billion, 4 percent more than the previous season for comparable States. Utilized production totaled 238 million cwt, of which 14.2 million cwt was for the fresh market and 11.2 million tons for processing.

In California, wet weather delayed tomato planting and slowed crop development. Substantial hail damage in Fresno County and the Central Valley destroyed a portion of the crop. High temperatures in July and August helped the crop mature, but harvest was about 2 weeks later than normal. There were some reports of pest and disease pressure.

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