



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service



# VEGETABLES

## ACREAGE- SPRING QUARTER (APR., MAY, JUN.)

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### FLORIDA

**WEATHER:** **January** began with mostly dry conditions and more rain was still needed. Potatoes were planted in St. Johns, Putnam, and Flagler counties, while blight was a concern for potatoes in the southern Peninsula. The potato crop was relatively undamaged from the cold. In early January, some growers in southern Florida abandoned fields after the first picking due to poor prices. However, the predicted freeze caused many farmers to heavily harvest crops in mid-January. Several hours of freezing temperatures came in the third week causing growers throughout the State to report damage to some vegetables. Strawberry harvesting went well in Hillsborough County despite freezing temperatures. Orange and Seminole counties reported losing some ripe berries. Tomato growers in Sarasota County reported some blight due to cool, wet conditions experienced earlier in the season. Lee County plowed under damaged tomato plants. Some leaf burn was found on the cabbage crop in Flagler County. Growers marketed avocados, okra, greens, broccoli, cabbage, beans, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive/escarole, lettuce, peppers, radishes, and squash. Planting of spring crops resumed and replacement of plants affected by the freeze began. Warm temperatures and showers came in late January. **February** had warmer temperatures early in the month followed by freeze. Scattered showers were received mostly in the Panhandle and Big Bend while other areas were in much need of precipitation. Growers prepared for spring planting in Gadsden, Madison, and Lafayette counties. Potato planting continued in St. Johns, Putnam, and Flagler counties. Various crops were assessed and growers reported damage or loss due to the weeks of cool weather. Flagler County reported approximately twenty percent of the cabbage crop damaged and wrapped up planting by mid-February. Hillsborough County producers reported strawberries in fair to good condition with heavy movement through the market. However, greens, peppers, and radishes survived the freeze with little damage. Growers in Fort Myers reported minor damage to their greens and cabbage crops. Gadsden producers pushed planting back due to the freezes. Watermelon fields were in final preparation in Alachua County. Cabbage harvesting continued in St. Johns County and preparations for spring vegetables continued. **March** had very little rain allowing field work to progress, but hindering most crops. March also began as a cool month. Vegetables looked good, but production was slow due to drought and cold stress. Early planted potatoes in northeast Florida escaped cold damage, but newly emerging plants received some damage. Growers prepared fields for spring vegetables early in the month. Spring vegetables such as sweet corn, beans, and squash were already planted in more southern areas. Watermelons were set in many central and northern locations. Dry conditions delayed some planting and caused producers to irrigate throughout the State. St. Johns County growers continued to harvest cabbage and broccoli with good yields and quality. Temperatures warmed back up by mid-month and growers continued planting vegetables. Some cabbage in St. Johns County was plowed under and replaced with potatoes. Collier, Hendry, and Lee counties reported salt problems in vegetables due to warm, dry field conditions. Scattered showers fell towards late March, but accumulation barely eased drought circumstances. The final week of March brought heavy rain and flooding to the Panhandle. Up to eight inches fell in the extreme western counties, causing field work to stop. Hail and high winds caused some crop damage. Other parts of the State benefited from the rainfall. Areas where planting was delayed by drought conditions were able to proceed with planting. Vegetables marketed were tomatoes, squash, celery, onions, endive, escarole, strawberries, sweet potatoes, radishes, greens, cantaloupe, broccoli, cabbage, beets, eggplant, peppers, beans, and sweet corn.

This report reflects conditions as of April 1 and represents acreage planted for harvest during the months of April, May, June, and July. Estimated acreage by growing region is no longer available.

**SNAP BEANS:** Planting proceeded on schedule during early March for growers in Miami-Dade County. The Palm Beach County extension agent reported that the drought conditions may decrease snap bean yield.

**CABBAGE:** A series of cold fronts pushed planting back for some growers and resulted in crop loss for others. Cabbage planting ended the first of February with minor damage reported in Flagler, Putnam, and St. Johns counties.

**CUCUMBERS:** Spring planting was underway in January, but slowed due to a series of cold fronts. Larger operations finished planting early in preparation of the anticipated cool temperatures but smaller fields lost acreage due to the severe cold snap. Several growers used damaged fresh cucumbers for processing.

**BELL PEPPERS:** Below normal temperatures and abnormally dry conditions in the central and southern Peninsulas have slowed crop progress. Northern areas had hard freezes and several late frosts. Acres and yield may be adversely affected.

**TOMATOES:** Hendry County acreage and surrounding areas were down from last year. Poor prices in the fall and winter crop, cheap imports, and unfavorable weather conditions resulted in lower planted acreage. Other areas outside of this region have reported an increase in reported planted and intended acres. Heavy freezes and frost along with worsening drought conditions may adversely affect spring yields.

**WATERMELONS:** Some planted acreage was lost due to freeze damage. Plants for resets were not available in some locations. Planting in some of the Panhandle was delayed by cold and dry conditions. Recent flooding in the Panhandle has limited field work.

**UNITED STATES**

**GENERAL:** The prospective area for harvest of 11 selected fresh market vegetables during the spring quarter is forecast at 194,200 acres, down 4 percent from last year. Acreage declines for snap beans, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, sweet corn, cucumbers, and head lettuce, more than offset acreage increases for bell peppers and tomatoes. Celery area remains unchanged. Melon acreage for spring harvest is forecast at 65,300 acres, down 3 percent from last year. Cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon acreages are down 4 percent, 3 percent, and 1 percent, respectively, from 2008. Asparagus area for spring harvest is forecast at 31,000 acres, down 4 percent from last year. Strawberry area for harvest is forecast at 48,900 acres, up 6 percent from a year ago.

**SNAP BEANS:** Area for spring harvest is forecast at 20,300 acres, down 1 percent from last year. In Florida, planting proceeded on schedule for growers in Miami-Dade County. Georgia snap beans are in fair to good condition. Soil moisture has been mostly adequate this spring and temperatures were close to normal.

**CABBAGE:** Area for spring harvest is forecast at 6,600 acres, down 15 percent from last year. In Florida, a series of cold snaps delayed some plantings. Planting was complete by the first week in February. The Georgia crop is in fair to good condition. Soil moisture and temperatures have been favorable during the growing season. In New Jersey, adequate moisture combined with near normal spring temperatures provided favorable growing conditions for the cabbage crop.

**CUCUMBERS:** Spring harvested area is forecast at 9,200 acres, down 5 percent from 2008. Spring planting in Florida began in January. A series of cold fronts delayed planting activities.

**TOMATOES:** Area for harvest is forecast at 26,300 acres, up 7 percent from 2008. In California, recent rainfall benefited plant growth. No disease or pest problems reported.

**WATERMELONS:** Area intended for harvest is forecast at 37,300 acres, down 1 percent from last year. In California, planting is still ongoing for the spring melon crop. Harvest is expected to begin in June. In Florida, some planted acreage was lost due to freeze damage. Planting in the Panhandle was delayed due to cold and dry conditions.

**SELECTED FRESH MARKET VEGETABLES AND MELONS:, AREA HARVESTED BY CROP, STATE, AND TOTAL, SPRING SEASON, 2007-08 AND FORECASTED AREA 2009**

Selected crops and States	Usual harvest period	Spring acreage			2009 area for harvest as percent of 2008
		Harvested		For harvest 2009	
		2007	2008		
		Acres		Percent	
<b>SNAP BEANS:</b>					
Florida	Apr-Jun	12,200	11,200	10,700	96
Georgia	Apr-Jun	7,500	7,800	8,000	103
New Jersey	Jun-Aug	1,600	1,500	1,600	107
Total		21,300	20,500	20,300	99
<b>CABBAGE:</b>					
Florida	Apr-Jun	2,280	2,990	2,700	90
Georgia	Apr-Jun	2,700	3,200	2,400	75
New Jersey	May-Aug	1,000	1,000	1,000	100
Texas	Apr-Jun	500	600	500	83
Total		6,480	7,790	6,600	85
<b>SWEET CORN:</b>					
Florida	Apr-Jul	25,200	27,300	26,000	95
California	Apr-Jun	12,000	11,100	11,100	100
Total		37,200	38,400	37,100	97
<b>CUCUMBERS:</b>					
Florida	Apr-Jun	8,100	8,300	7,700	93
South Carolina	May-Aug	800	1,000	1,000	100
Texas	Apr-Jun	400	400	500	125
Total		9,300	9,700	9,200	95
<b>BELL PEPPERS: <sup>1/</sup></b>					
Florida	Apr-Jul	7,900	7,700	7,800	101
<b>TOMATOES:</b>					
Florida	Apr-Jul	17,200	15,000	16,800	112
California	Apr-Jun	7,000	7,000	7,000	100
South Carolina	May-Aug	2,900	2,500	2,500	100
Total		27,100	24,500	26,300	107
<b>WATERMELONS</b>					
Florida	Apr-Jul	22,800	26,100	25,800	99
Texas	Apr-Jun	11,100	9,400	9,500	101
California	Apr-Jun	2,400	2,300	2,000	87
Total		36,300	37,800	37,300	99
<b>TOTAL OF CROPS LISTED</b>					
Florida		95,680	98,590	97,500	99
United States		145,580	146,390	144,600	99

<sup>1/</sup> Includes fresh market and processing.