



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



VEGETABLES

ACREAGE- WINTER QUARTER (JAN. FEB. MAR.)

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
1222 Woodward St. · Orlando, FL 32803
(407) 648-6013 · (407) 648-6029 FAX · www.nass.usda.gov/fl

January 9, 2008

FLORIDA

WEATHER: A low pressure system during early **October** brought ample rains to several areas across the State. Scattered thunderstorms hampered field activities in central and southern Peninsula areas. Several vegetable growers were experiencing extreme white fly infestation in fields across the Panhandle due to the dry weather. Vegetable growers had not been able to control the severe infestations with pesticides because of the very large populations. Okra harvesting remained active in Dade County. Cabbage planting began although field work was slowed due to heavy rains in Flagler County. Growers in St. Johns County continued to plant broccoli and cabbage. Tomato harvesting was active around Quincy. Light harvesting of pickles and squash also began during the first week of the month. By mid-month, dry conditions allowed ground preparations and planting to stay very active. In St. Johns County, fall cabbage planting was progressing as fields dried out from earlier storms. In Hillsborough County, strawberry transplanting was active. In Hendry County, the cooler, drier weather favored vegetable crop growth and development with armyworms affecting some crops. Snap bean, eggplant, pepper and squash harvesting got underway. By the end of October, heavy rainfall slowed the harvesting of tomatoes in the Quincy area. In the Suwannee Valley, the quality of beans improved slightly, but the heavy rains lowered prospects. Bean yields were reported as being below normal. The watermelon crop was in fair condition with cutting active. Cucumber and pepper quality improved significantly with harvesting underway. The planting of strawberries and the harvesting of squash were active. In the southwest region of the State, crops were looking good; however, higher than normal temperatures were causing early maturation in some crops. Growers started to harvest some early cucumbers and specialty crops. The tomato and pepper harvest also started. Potato planting began. St. Johns, Flagler, and Putnam counties continued squash and cucumber harvest. The planting of cabbage and mixed greens was active with some field work slowed by rain. In Plant City and Dover, the transplanting of strawberry plants continued with farmers irrigating recent sets due to extremely dry conditions. Strawberry planting and bell pepper picking were active.

NOVEMBER: Tropical Storm Noel interrupted some field work in southern Peninsula localities due to high, gusty winds and rains. Strong winds in Sumter County caused some damage to squash. Harvesting of most vegetables was underway with windy, wet weather increasing disease pressure in parts of Hendry County. Harvesting of tomatoes was active in Gadsden County. There were still reports of significant white fly population in the Panhandle. Growers continued planting of strawberries in Palatka. Windy conditions from Noel caused bloom-drop on some vegetables in Pompano. Despite rains, harvesting remained on schedule for watermelons, bell peppers, and cucumbers in Suwannee Valley; green bean yields continued to be low. Harvesting was off to a slow start in Wauchula with planting of strawberries underway. Growers in Wauchula finished planting snap beans, bell peppers, cantaloupes, cucumbers, tomatoes, and harvesting squash. By mid-month, most harvesting was on schedule as growers marketed their crops to satisfy the holiday's demand. However, warm weather in Hendry County accelerated vegetable crop growth disrupting in some instances the harvest schedule. In St. Johns County, cabbage and broccoli were being harvested but warm weather caused some size issues. Harvesting of beans, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, and peppers continued in central and south Florida. Marketing movement increased for endive and escarole in south Florida. Avocado, squash, beans, and tomatoes looked good in Florida City. Harvesting of vegetables continued in Immokalee. Broccoli harvest began on Monday in Palatka with quality and quantity reported as generally good. The strawberry crop in Plant City was reported in good condition. Clear weather during the end of the month over most of the central and southern Peninsula allowed planting and harvesting to stay on schedule.

DECEMBER: Growers continued to plant, harvest, and irrigate crops. Harvest of the small fall crop of watermelons in the Ft. Myers area, and picking of yellow-type Roma and globe tomatoes in the Quincy area was virtually finished. Planting remained on schedule in central and southern Peninsula with potato planting very active around Immokalee. Around Palatka, cabbage transplanting continued while squash harvest wound down. Cabbage heads are finally gaining size. Growers replanted some cabbage fields earlier due to problems with heading. Strawberries were in good condition around Plant City and Dover with picking increasing very slowly. Warm temperatures hindered strawberry development. Light harvesting of cucumbers and eggplant began around Pompano. Growers continued to plant, harvest, and irrigate crops. Harvest of the small fall crop of watermelons in the Ft. Myers area, and picking of yellow-type Roma and globe tomatoes in the Quincy area were finished. Planting remained on schedule in central and southern Peninsula with potato planting very active around Immokalee. Around Palatka, cabbage transplanting continued while squash harvest wound down. Cabbage heads were gaining size. Growers replanted some cabbage fields earlier due to problems with heading. Strawberries were in good condition around Plant City and Dover with picking increasing very slowly. Warm temperatures were hindering strawberry development. Light harvesting of cucumbers and eggplant began around Pompano. By the end of the month, harvesting and packing of beans, okra, squash and tomatoes continued in Florida City. Winter crops progressed nicely in Palatka; harvesting of cabbage and broccoli continued. Potato planting began and will continue through February. Strawberry plants continued to look good in Plant City while grape tomatoes neared the end of their fall harvest. Zucchini, peppers, cucumbers, squash and tomatoes moved through the market.

SNAP BEANS: Florida area for harvest is forecast at 14,000 acres, up 1 percent from last year. Warm, dry weather during October through December allowed growers to plant the snap bean crop on schedule.

CABBAGE: In Florida, producers expect to harvest 5,000 acres through March, up 200 acres or 4 percent, above last year's revised 4,800 acres harvested. Hot and dry conditions during October through December delayed some plantings. However, most planting was finished by the end of the year. Winter area for U.S. harvest is forecast at 12,900 acres, 36 percent above 2007.

SWEET CORN: Florida harvested area is forecast at 6,400 acres, 9 percent below last year. Favorable conditions during October, November, and December allowed planting of the sweet corn crop to proceed on schedule.

BELL PEPPERS: Winter area for harvest in Florida is forecast at 5,800 acres, down 5 percent from last year. Mostly dry conditions from October through December allowed planting to progress on schedule.

STRAWBERRIES: Area expected to be harvested is forecast at 8,700 acres, up 400 acres or 5 percent, above last year's revised 8,300 acres harvested in Florida. Strawberry area planted for major States (California, Florida, and Oregon) in 2008 is forecast at 47,000 acres, up 1 percent from 2007.

TOMATOES: Florida winter tomato harvested area is forecast at 9,100 acres, down 9 percent from 2007. Growers were able to keep planting on schedule due to mostly mild weather conditions.

UNITED STATES

The prospective area for harvest of 11 selected fresh market vegetables during the winter quarter is forecast at 173,700 acres, down 3 percent from last year. Acreage declined for broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, sweet corn, head lettuce, bell peppers, and tomatoes. Acreage increased for snap beans and cabbage. Area harvested for spinach remains unchanged.

CELERY: The winter celery crop for harvest in California is forecast at 7,300 acres, down 4 percent from last year. The crop was in good condition with no pest or disease problems reported.

HEAD LETTUCE: Area for harvest is forecast at 62,000 acres, down 8 percent from last year. In Arizona, the crop was ahead of schedule due to above average temperatures until mid-December. However, below average and freezing temperatures since then resulted in harvest delays. In California, lettuce fields are in various stages of growth. Cool temperatures and rainfall delayed plant growth, and freezing temperatures resulted in some blistering and peeling.

SELECTED FRESH MARKET VEGETABLES AND STRAWBERRIES: Area for Harvest by Crop, State, and Total, Winter Season, 2006-2007 and Forecasted Area 2008

Selected crops And States	Usual harvest period	Winter acreage			2008 area for harvest as percent of 2007
		Harvested		For harvest 2008	
		2006	2007		
		<i>Acres</i>			<i>Percent</i>
SNAP BEANS:					
Florida	Jan-Mar	13,200	13,900	14,000	101
CABBAGE:					
Florida	Jan-Mar	3,900	4,800	5,000	104
Texas	Dec-Mar	6,700	4,700	7,900	168
Total		10,600	9,500	12,900	136
SWEET CORN:					
Florida	Jan-Mar	3,600	7,000	6,400	91
BELL PEPPER,^{1/}					
Florida	Jan-Mar	6,100	6,100	5,800	95
TOMATOES:					
Florida	Jan-Mar	10,000	10,000	9,100	91
CARROTS:					
California	Jan-Mar	20,000	18,200	18,000	99
Texas	Dec-Mar	1,200	900	900	100
Total		21,200	19,100	18,900	99
HEAD LETTUCE:					
Arizona--Western	Nov-Apr	47,600	45,400	42,000	93
California	Jan-Mar	20,000	22,000	20,000	91
Total		67,600	67,400	62,000	92
BROCCOLI:^{1/}					
California	Jan-Mar	28,500	30,000	28,500	95
CAULIFLOWER:^{1/}					
California	Jan-Mar	8,500	8,200	8,000	98
CELERY:^{1/}					
California	Jan-Mar	7,600	7,600	7,300	96
SPINACH:					
Texas	Dec-Mar	2,200	800	800	100
TOTAL OF CROPS LISTED					
Florida		36,800	41,800	40,300	96
United States		179,100	179,600	173,700	97
STRAWBERRIES:^{1/}					
Florida	Dec-May	7,300	8,300	8,700	105

^{1/} Includes fresh market and processing.