



National Agricultural Statistics Service

Hawaii Agricultural Statistics Service
Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Hawaii Vegetables

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March 2003

Dry onion production forecast to increase

Variable weather conditions were generally fair for vegetables during February. Heavy rains drenched the State on three occasions during the month with the most significant storm system occurring on February 12 through the 14th. During that period, Hanalei River on Kauai overflowed and well as many smaller streams on the other islands. There were also reports of mud slides and minor flooding. Agriculture, however, did not experience any serious damage from the passing storm. Isolated, heavy showers also occurred on February 6 and February 21. Aside from slowing field work, no serious agricultural losses were reported from the heavy showers. Otherwise, most days were a beneficial mixture of cool trade winds, moderate temperatures, and light to moderate rainfall.

Dry onions will lead all vegetables that are expected to show an increase in harvested acreage during March with a 270 percent increase to 63 acres. Most of the additional acreage will be on Oahu. **Head cabbage** growers are expected to harvest 50 acres this month, up 4 percent from February. Typically, March is a peak-month for cabbage growers due to the demand created by St. Patrick's day. **Sweet corn** harvested acreage will increase seasonally to 83 acres, up 20 percent from February.

For April, harvest acreage for **dry onions** and **sweet corn** will remain relatively high with 58 acres and 76 acres respectively. ■

Harvested acreage charts page 2

Year-ago, month-ago, current, and upcoming harvested acreage.

February review page 3

Production statistics and comments on selected crops.

U.S. quarterly fresh vegetable price outlook page 4

Latest forecast of 2003 f.o.b. shipping-point prices for select vegetables.



Acreage

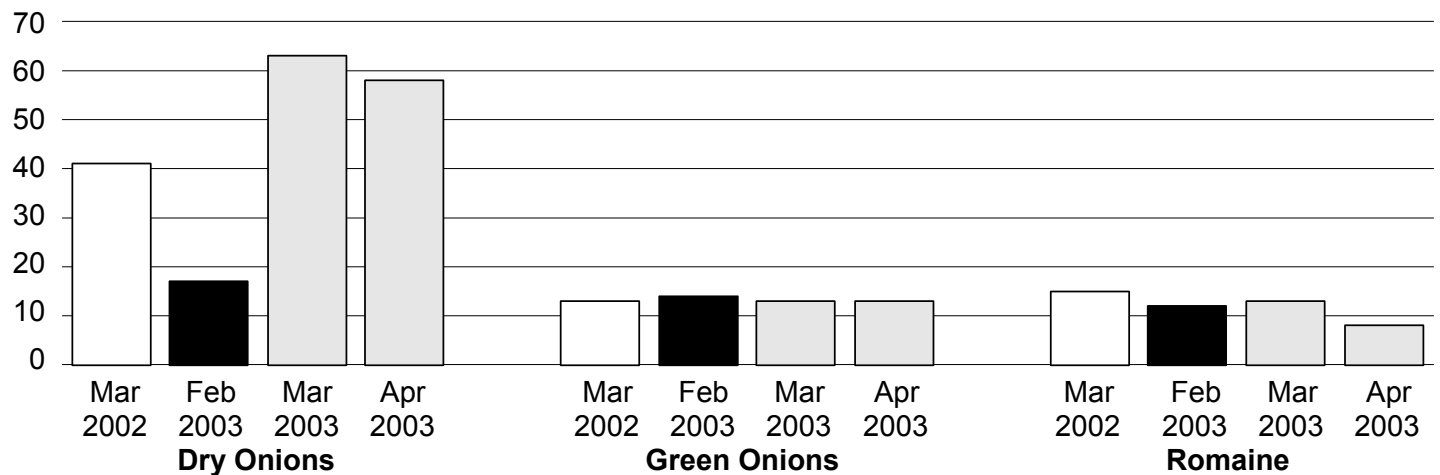
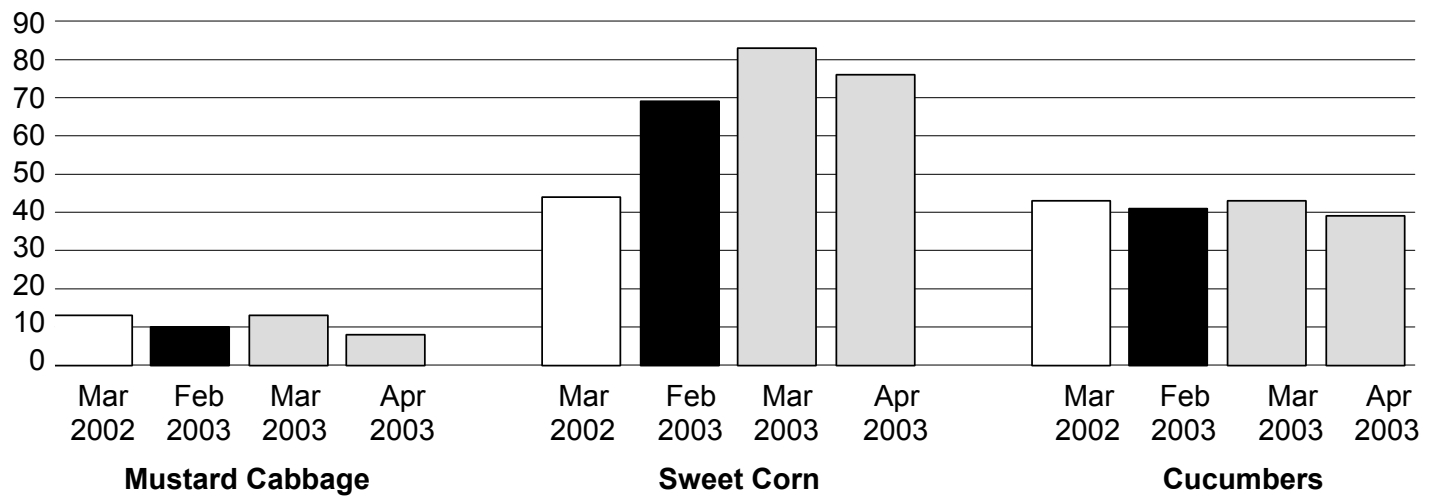
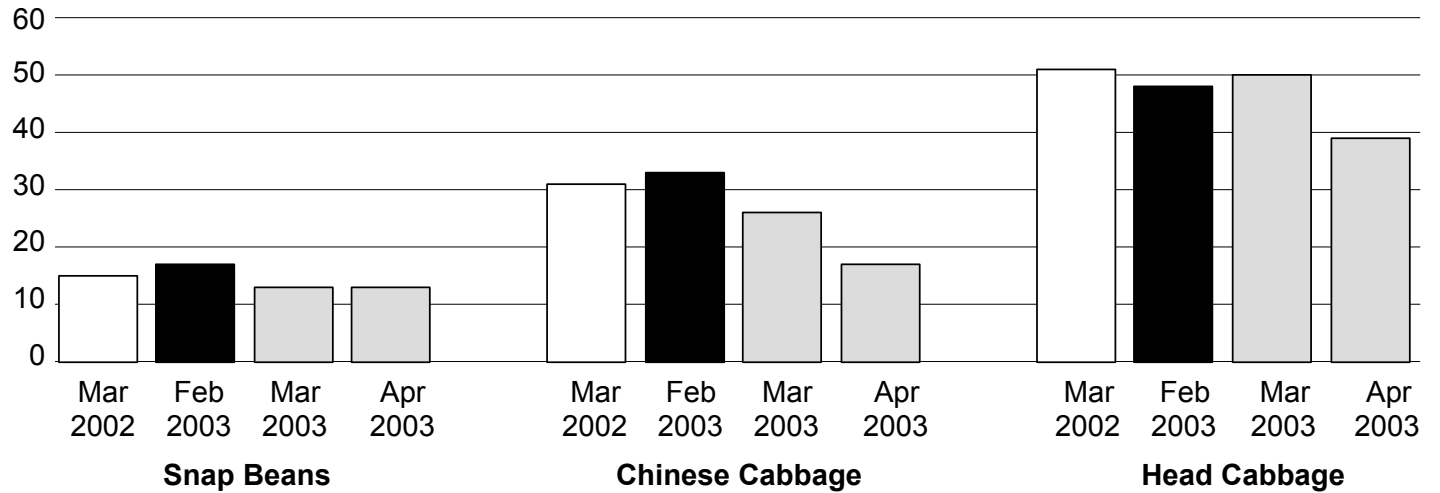
Acres planted, harvested, and for harvest for 11 selected vegetables, State of Hawaii.

Crop	Acres planted		Acres harvested		Acres for harvest	
	Jan 2003	Feb 2003	Jan 2003	Feb 2003	Mar 2003	Apr 2003
Beans, snap	14	14	16	17	13	13
Cabbage, Chinese	29	25	28	33	26	17
Cabbage, head	50	43	48	48	50	39
Cabbage, mustard	12	11	11	10	13	8
Corn, sweet	80	75	55	69	83	76
Cucumbers	42	38	40	41	43	39
Lettuce, head	7	5	6	8	6	2
Lettuce, semi-head	4	4	4	4	4	4
Onions, dry	46	41	27	17	63	58
Onions, green	13	13	12	14	13	13
Romaine	14	13	19	12	13	8

Harvested acreage charts

Acres harvested a year ago
 Acres harvested last month
 Acres intended for harvest

Acres



February review

Output Lower Than Expected For Dry Onions And Sweet Corn

SNAP BEAN production is estimated at 65,000 pounds, up 8 percent from January. The effects of strong winds in January showed up in February when mature pods curled where bruising occurred.

CHINESE CABBAGE production is estimated at 585,000 pounds for February, down 9 percent from January. Plants made good progress under generally favorable weather conditions. Insect and disease damage was light.

HEAD CABBAGE production totaled 1.3 million pounds in February, up 2 percent from January. Most plantings were in good condition. Dry conditions were slowing crop progress in some areas.

SWEET CORN production is estimated at 97,000 pounds for February, down 37 percent from last month. Offsetting the increase in harvested acreage were poor germination rates on Oahu.

GREEN ONION production 116,000 totaled pounds in February, up 1 percent from January and 33 percent

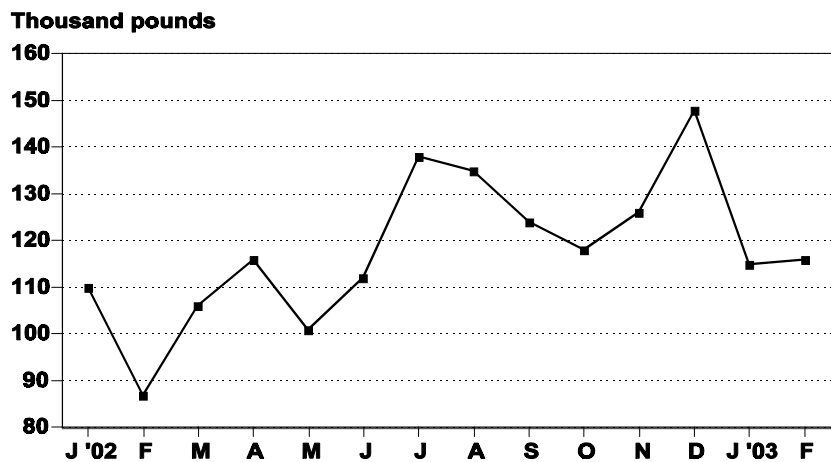
more than a year ago. Isolated incidences of rust continues to plague some Oahu growers.

DRY ONION production 120,000 totaled pounds in February, down 33 percent from January. Losses from previous rains lowered yields in February. Farmers abandoned some

acreage due to rot. Plantings were in mostly fair condition at the start of March.

TOMATO production totaled 1.4 million pounds in February, down 4 percent from January and 6 percent lower than a year ago. ■

**Hawaii Green Onions:
Monthly production, 2002 - 2003**



Acreage, average yield, sales, and average farm price, February 2003, State of Hawaii.

Crop	Total acres on Mar 1 st	February 2003				January-to-date sales		
		Acres harvested	Average yield ^{1/}	Total sales	Average farm price	2002 ^{2/}	2003	Change
				----- 1,000 lbs. -----	Cents per lb.	----- 1,000 lbs -----		Percent
Beans, snap	27	17	3.8	65	100.9	111	125	13
Cabbage, Chinese	42	33	17.7	585	19.4	1,247	1,225	-2
Cabbage, head	95	48	27.5	1,320	19.9	2,036	2,614	28
Cabbage, mustard	17	10	11.1	111	48.5	273	224	-18
Corn, sweet	176	69	1.4	97	50.8	273	252	-8
Cucumbers	65	41	9.1	373	49.3	699	772	10
Lettuce, head	9	8	7.5	60	48.8	120	125	4
Lettuce, semi-head	7	4	6.0	24	81.5	51	48	-6
Onions, dry	188	17	7.1	120	109.2	149	300	101
Onions, green	30	14	8.3	116	87.2	197	231	17
Peppers, green	3 [/]	18	14.7	264	61.2	508	509	0
Romaine	21	12	11.0	132	39.8	326	323	-1
Tomatoes	3 [/]	65	20.8	1,350	59.0	2,796	2,755	-1

^{1/} Total sales divided by acres harvested. ^{2/} Revised. ^{3/} Not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

Quarterly U.S. Fresh Vegetable Price Outlook

Forecasting short-term f.o.b. shipping-point prices for fresh vegetables with any reasonable degree of accuracy is difficult. Among a range of variables, forecasting difficulties largely stem from vegetable's perishability and the heavy influence of weather on both yields and consumer demand. Further unknowns this year include the influence of world events on consumer confidence and demand for such things as food-away-from home.

Despite limitations, there remains an interest in such price forecasts, if only to serve as a baseline for further refinement of the outlook. To this end, one useful exercise is examining quarterly average prices over the

most recent 5 years (see table below). These averages suggest that shipping-point prices during the first quarter could average as much as one-third less than a year earlier. Based on the prices reported to date for 2003, the 5-year average appears to yield a reasonable starting point for forecasting short-run quarterly prices. The 5-year average for the spring season (April-June) would suggest a small increase (around 3 percent) is possible in the absence of unusual weather or market events. Further small increases are indicated for the second-half of the year as well - reasonable, considering the poor prices experienced a year ago. ■

U.S. quarterly f.o.b. shipping-point prices, selected vegetables, 2002-2003

Commodity	2002				2003				Change
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	First	Second	Third	Fourth	First Q 1/
	--- Dollars ---								
Asparagus	166.33	102.17	153.00	--	145.63	119.70	129.77	--	-12.4
Broccoli	44.50	24.40	32.40	27.17	30.09	27.28	28.38	29.73	-32.4
Carrots	20.03	21.30	19.87	18.90	17.45	18.06	15.60	14.87	-12.9
Cauliflower	46.80	28.17	24.37	29.67	35.09	33.91	26.03	31.68	-25.0
Celery	17.70	13.42	11.17	11.33	13.25	18.39	12.40	12.90	-25.1
Sweet corn	24.87	17.43	20.90	17.07	23.75	17.89	19.04	23.08	-4.5
Cucumbers	22.90	18.70	20.30	23.17	33.13	19.33	21.71	18.82	44.7
Lettuce, head	52.23	11.39	13.40	11.70	18.90	16.36	17.47	14.33	-63.8
Onions, dry bulb	8.22	20.50	14.10	10.97	12.08	17.67	13.40	10.45	47.0
Snap beans	51.53	44.97	59.07	60.53	59.18	44.36	57.17	57.24	14.8
Tomatoes, field-grown	35.20	30.23	23.90	39.30	39.09	29.81	28.15	35.43	11.1

-- = not available. 2003 largely based on the average of the previous 5 years. 1/ Change for first-quarter 2003 over first-quarter 2002.

Source: *Vegetables and Melons Outlook*, February 25, 2003, Economic Research Service, USDA.