

# Vegetables



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**Fresh Vegetable Down 2 Percent**  
**Spring Onion Acreage off 11 Percent**  
**Winter Strawberry Acreage Up 100 Acres**

The prospective area for harvest of 13 selected fresh market vegetables during the winter quarter is forecast at 192,000 acres. This is 2 percent less than last year but 7 percent greater than in 1995. Acreage declines in cabbage, sweet corn, escarole/endive, head lettuce, bell peppers, spinach, and tomatoes more than offset acreage increases in broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, and eggplant. Spinach, cabbage, and bell peppers showed the largest percentage decreases while eggplant, cauliflower, and broccoli had the largest percentage increases.

Acres planted for spring onions, at 36,400 acres was down 11 percent from 1996 and 2 percent less than in 1995. Acreage declined in all 4 states.

Winter strawberry acreage is estimated at 6,100 acres, up 100 acres from last year and two years ago.

Selected Fresh Market Vegetables and Melons: Area for Harvest  
by Season, Major States, 1995-1997  
(Domestic Units)

Crop and Season	Area		
	Harvested		For
	1995	1996	Harvest 1997
	Acres		
Snap Beans	13,000	10,000	10,000
Broccoli 1/	28,000	27,500	29,000
Cabbage	12,000	13,500	10,300
Carrots	22,400	28,800	30,500
Cauliflower 1/	9,000	8,500	9,500
Celery 1/	6,600	6,400	6,900
Sweet Corn	4,900	5,800	5,500
Eggplant	800	600	700
Escarole/Endive	650	850	700
Head Lettuce	60,200	73,500	71,000
Bell Pepper 1/	6,000	6,000	4,800
Spinach	2,600	2,800	2,100
Tomatoes	13,700	11,700	11,000
Total Winter Crop	179,850	195,950	192,000

1/ Includes fresh market and processing.

Selected Fresh Market Vegetables and Melons: Area for Harvest  
by Season, Major States, 1995-1997  
(Metric Units)

Crop and Season	Area		
	Harvested		For
	1995	1996	Harvest 1997
	Hectares		
Snap Beans	5,260	4,050	4,050
Broccoli 1/	11,330	11,130	11,740
Cabbage	4,860	5,460	4,170
Carrots	9,070	11,660	12,340
Cauliflower 1/	3,640	3,440	3,840
Celery 1/	2,670	2,590	2,790
Sweet Corn	1,980	2,350	2,230
Eggplant	320	240	280
Escarole/Endive	260	340	280
Head Lettuce	24,360	29,740	28,730
Bell Pepper 1/	2,430	2,430	1,940
Spinach	1,050	1,130	850
Tomatoes	5,540	4,730	4,450
Total Winter Crop	72,770	79,290	77,690

1/ Includes fresh market and processing.

Selected Fresh Market Vegetables and Melons: Area for Harvest  
by Crop, State, and Total, Winter Season, 1995-97

Crop and State	Usual Harvest Period	Area			1997 as Percent of 1996
		1995	1996	For Harvest 1997	
		Acres			Percent
Snap Beans					
FL	Jan-Mar	13,000	10,000	10,000	100
Broccoli 1/					
CA	Jan-Mar	28,000	27,500	29,000	105
Cabbage					
FL	Jan-Mar	5,000	5,000	4,000	80
TX	Jan-Mar	7,000	8,500	6,300	74
Total		12,000	13,500	10,300	76
Carrots					
CA	Jan-Mar	15,700	21,500	23,000	107
FL	Nov-Mar	3,600	3,900	5,100	131
TX	Dec-Mar	3,100	3,400	2,400	71
Total		22,400	28,800	30,500	106
Cauliflower 1/					
CA	Jan-Mar	9,000	8,500	9,500	112
Celery 1/					
CA	Jan-Mar	6,600	6,400	6,900	108
Sweet Corn					
FL	Jan-Mar	4,900	5,800	5,500	95
Eggplant					
FL	Jan-Mar	800	600	700	117
Escarole/Endive					
FL	Jan-Mar	650	850	700	82
Head Lettuce					
AZ - Western	Nov-Apr	41,700	57,000	54,000	95
CA	Dec-Apr	18,500	16,500	17,000	103
Total		60,200	73,500	71,000	97
Bell Pepper 1/					
FL	Jan-Mar	6,000	6,000	4,800	80
Spinach					
TX	Jan-Mar	2,600	2,800	2,100	75
Tomatoes					
FL	Jan-Mar	13,700	11,700	11,000	94

1/ Includes fresh market and processing.

Onions and Strawberries for Fresh Market: Area Planted  
and Harvested by Crop, Season, and Total, 1995-97

Crop, Season, and State	Planted Area			Harvested Area		
	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	For Harvest 1997
	Acres					
Onions 1/ Spring						
AZ 2/	1,400	2,100	1,900	1,400	1,900	
CA 2/	8,000	7,500	7,000	7,500	7,200	
GA	12,800	16,000	15,500	12,500	14,700	15,000
TX	15,100	15,300	12,000	14,200	13,000	11,000
Total	37,300	40,900	36,400	35,600	36,800	26,000
Strawberries 3/ Winter						
FL	6,000	6,000	6,100	6,000	6,000	6,100

1/ Primarily fresh market.

2/ 1997 - planting intentions - harvested acreage published April 9, 1997.

3/ Includes fresh market and processing.

**Snap Beans:** Florida acreage for harvest is forecast at 10,000 acres, unchanged from last year but 23 percent less than 1995. Planting and harvesting remained active. The crop was in mostly good condition and quality was good. The weather has been good to the crop except for some cold wind damage in the southwest in late December.

**Broccoli:** California acreage is estimated at 29,000 acres, 5 percent more than last year and 4 percent greater than 1995. Abnormally cool weather hindered crop development while the wet fields have slowed fieldwork. The crop looks good but could use some warmer weather.

**Cabbage:** Winter acreage for harvest is estimated at 10,300 acres, 24 percent less than last year and 14 percent below the 1995 level. In Florida, rains from Tropical Storm Josephine and Hurricane Lili hampered germination and crop development in some areas in early fall. Warmer, drier conditions during late October aided growth. The crop escaped major damage from near freezing temperatures during early-to-mid November and again around mid-December. Significant rainfall in early December caused very little damage to the crop. Harvest began about mid-December with good quality and yield prospects reported by growers.

**Carrots:** Acreage for harvest is forecast at 30,500 acres, up 6 percent from last year and 36 percent greater than in 1995. In California, wet weather provided abundant moisture but led to an increase in weeds. Growers reported that the crop was in good condition.

**Cauliflower:** California acreage is forecast at 9,500 acres up 12 percent from 1996 and 6 percent above 1995. Wet weather provided abundant moisture but led to an increase in weeds. Warmer temperatures were needed to improve crop conditions in some fields, but overall the crop was rated good.

**Celery:** The winter celery crop acreage for harvest in California is estimated to be at 6,900 acres, 8 percent above 1996 and 5 percent above the 1995 crop. Recent wet weather caused harvest delays along the coast and in southern areas.

**Sweet Corn:** Florida harvested acreage is estimated at 5,500 acres, down 5 percent from last year but 12 percent more than in 1995. Rainfall from Hurricane Lili caused no significant damage to plants around mid-October, but did delay some fieldwork and leached some fertilizer from some fields. Milder weather from late October into early November aided crop development. Windy weather around mid-November caused some plant damage along the east coast region. Drier and mostly warm weather from late November until mid-December allowed fieldwork to progress normally. Cold, winter temperatures arrived around mid-December but caused no significant damage to the acreage around Lake Okeechobee and in Dade county.

**Eggplant:** Acreage for winter harvest in Florida at 700 acres, was 17 percent greater than in 1996 but 12 percent less than in 1995. Weather and growing conditions have been mostly favorable. Some minor wind damage occurred in some fields. However, producers reported that the crop had good grade and yield.

**Escarole/Endive:** The harvested acreage of Florida's winter crop of escarole and endive is forecast at 700 acres, 18 percent below last year but 8 percent greater than in 1995. Heavy rainfall caused by Tropical Storm Josephine and Hurricane Lili in early-to-mid October damaged some plants but most recovered in the milder weather.

**Lettuce:** Acreage for harvest is forecast at 71,000 acres in Arizona and California. Harvested 1997 acreage in the two states is 3 percent below last year, but 18 percent above their 1995 total. Wet weather in California lead to an increase in weeds in some areas. The crop was in generally good condition but warmer temperatures were needed.

**Onions:** Growers intend to plant 36,400 acres of spring onions for 1997, a decrease of 11 percent from 1996 and 2 percent less than the 1995 acres planted. In Texas, acreage was down due to producer concerns over the availability of irrigation water. In California, wet grounds had delayed some plantings and promoted weed growth in some fields. Producers in Georgia rated their crop condition as fair.

**Bell Peppers:** Florida winter acreage for harvest is estimated at 4,800 acres, 20 percent less than last year and two years ago. Rainy, windy weather from Tropical Storm Josephine caused some foliage damage and reduced yield prospects. Heavy rainfall again reduced crop prospects when Hurricane Lili passed to the south about mid-October. Drier weather from late October through early November allowed most plants to recover. Windy, cooler weather during mid-November slowed fruit setting and sizing, caused foliage to burn, increased bloom loss, and scarred some fruit in southern fields. Milder weather from late November into early December boosted crop development and allowed transplanting to proceed on schedule in the east coast and southwestern regions. Cold winds near mid-December again caused some crop damage with most plants recovering well in the warm, calm conditions existing from late December into early January.

**Spinach:** The harvested acres of winter spinach for 1997 is forecast at 2,100 acres in Texas. This is 25 percent below 1996 and 19 percent less acreage than 1995. Dry conditions and producer concerns about the availability of irrigation water accounted for the acreage decline.

**Strawberries:** Florida winter acreage is estimated at 6,100 acres, 100 acres greater than last year and two years ago. Crop development has proceeded favorably thus far, with no major weather problems reported. A good volume, high quality crop was expected.

**Tomatoes:** Florida acreage is forecasted at 11,000 acres, down 6 percent from last year and 20 percent below 1995. Heavy rains and strong winds caused by the southern passage of Hurricane Lili around mid-October increased bloom drop which lowered the late fall and early winter crop yield potential. Cold, windy weather around mid-November caused plant dehydration and foliage to burn and break in many southern localities, but most younger plants escaping significant damage. Mild weather allowed fieldwork to progress on schedule from the last part of November through most of the first half of December. Heavy rain at the end of the first week of December slowed some activity in all southern areas. Most southern peninsula acreage escaped damage from a winter cold spell that arrived after mid-December.

The next "Vegetables" report will be released at 3:00 p.m. ET on April 9, 1997.

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