



Vegetable Production

ACH12-32/October 2015

A \$16.9 billion industry in 2012, up \$2.2 billion since 2007.

Top States in Sales (\$ millions)

California	6,327.8
Florida	1,349.0
Washington	1,064.1
Idaho	967.5
Arizona	764.1
Wisconsin	555.4
Oregon	492.1
Texas	474.9
Michigan	462.7
North Carolina	435.0

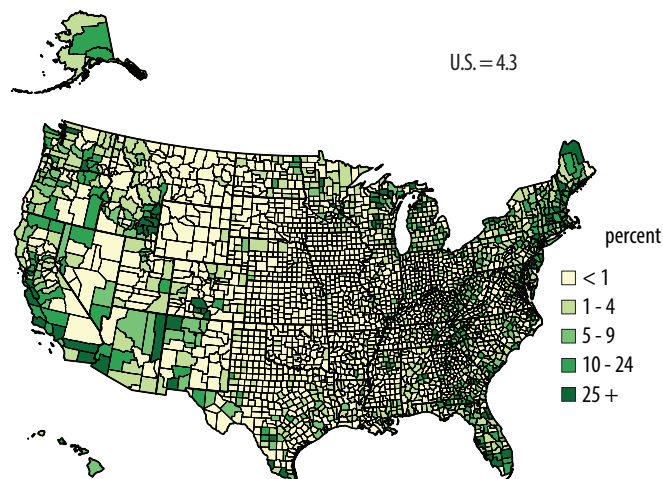
Top Counties in Sales (\$ millions)

Monterey, CA	1,677.1
Fresno, CA	726.9
Imperial, CA	702.4
Yuma, AZ	579.1
Santa Barbara, CA	455.9

Vegetable sales (including melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes) amounted to \$16.9 billion in 2012, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture. This represented 4.3 percent of the \$395 billion in U.S. agriculture sales that year. It was an increase of \$2.2 billion or 15 percent since 2007. The number of farms growing vegetables increased, but acreage for vegetables as a whole declined from 4.7 million acres in 2007 to 4.5 million acres in 2012. Acreage declined for most vegetable commodities but increased for some.

Ten states accounted for 77 percent U.S. vegetable sales in 2012, with California alone accounting for 38 percent. Four of the top five vegetable-producing counties are in California, with Monterey County accounting for 10 percent of total sales. (Fig. 1)

Fig. 1
Vegetable Sales as Percent of Agriculture Sales, by County, 2012



Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

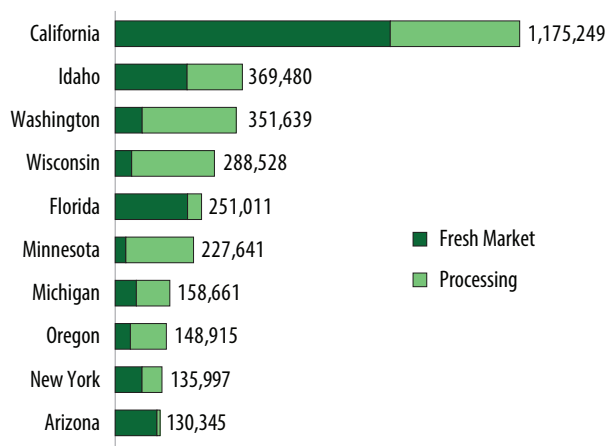
Fresh Market and Processing Vegetables

Farms produce vegetables for the fresh market and for processing, which refers to altering the commodity by heat, pressure, or freezing. Some farms produce for both markets, others specialize in one or the other. In 2012, there were 65,814 farms that grew fresh market vegetables and 13,072 farms that produced vegetables for processing.

With 1.2 million harvested acres, California had by far the largest area devoted to production of both fresh market and processing vegetables, followed by Idaho, Washington, Wisconsin, Florida, Minnesota, Michigan, Oregon, New York, and Arizona. (Fig. 2) The top states in fresh market acreage were California (which alone accounted for 32 percent of fresh market acres),

followed by Florida, Idaho, Arizona, and Washington. The top states in harvested acres of vegetables used for processing are California, Washington, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Idaho.

Fig. 2
Top States in Vegetable Harvested Acres, 2012
 (fresh market and processing shares)



Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Major Crops

The five largest fresh market crops in terms of acreage are potatoes, lettuce, sweet corn, watermelon, and tomatoes. Potatoes, sweet corn, and tomatoes are also among the top processing crops, along with snap beans and green peas.

The acreage devoted to most vegetables with more than 100,000 harvested acres in 2012 stayed the same or declined between 2007 and 2012. Acreage increased for lettuce, potatoes, and sweet potatoes.

Top Vegetables : Fresh Market and Processing (thousands of harvested acres)	
Potatoes	1,168.2
Sweet corn	572.1
Tomatoes grown in the open	397.7
Lettuce	323.4
Snap beans	266.1
Green peas	192.6
Onions, dry	150.0
Broccoli	128.9
Watermelons	128.2
Sweet potatoes	125.7
Cucumbers and pickles	111.9

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

To learn more about vegetable production, the 2012 Census of Agriculture, and how to access national, state, and county data, go to:

www.agcensus.usda.gov

Farm and Producer Characteristics

Compared to all U.S. farms, operations specializing in vegetable production on average have fewer acres but higher sales. Just under half had sales of less than \$10,000 a year.

	Vegetable Farms, 2012	All Farms, 2012
Average size of operation (acres)	191	434
Average value of sales	\$388,793	\$187,097
Average expenditures	\$318,643	\$155,947
Average net cash farm income	\$80,698	\$43,750
% of farms with sales < \$ 10,000	49%	54%

Principal operators of vegetable farms are on average younger than principal farm operators overall, more likely to be female, and more likely to be a minority race or of Hispanic origin. (Table 1)

Table 1
Vegetable Producers: Key Characteristics, 2012
 (principal operators of farms specializing in vegetable production)^a

	2007	2012	All Farms 2012
	percent		
Gender			
Male	83	80	86
Female	17	20	14
Age			
Under 45 years	19	20	16
45 to 64 years	55	53	51
65 years and older	26	27	33
Race/Ethnicity			
White (non-Hispanic)	81	80	92
Minority ^b	19	20	8
Worked some days off the farm			
Yes	63	61	61
No	37	39	39
Percent of income from farming			
< 25%	68	68	70
25% to 49%	8	8	8
50% to 74%	9	9	9
75% to 100%	15	15	13
Average Age (years)	55.9	55.9	58.3

^aMore than half its sales come from vegetables.

^bIncludes Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, Black, Asian Pacific Islander, and multi-race.

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.