

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Hawaii Agricultural Statistics Service Hawaii Department of Agriculture

# Hawaii Vegetables

Vegetable crops were making favorable progress until a major winter storm moved

through the island chain during the closing days of February. The month-ending storm did not severely impact February production, but is expected to curtail production in March and beyond. Most of the storm-related damage incurred by

vegetable crops were the result of washouts, spoilage, or rain pelting. Gusty winds

and cloudy skies also limited yields. In addition, muddy fields delayed recovery

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March 2004

# Oahu records wettest February in 49 years

efforts for several days. The intense rain-storm (February 26 to 28) dumped 7 to 11 inches of rain in many parts of the State. Oahu experienced the most severe rainfall during the period as the storm pushed Honolulu Airport's February total to 9.47 inches, the highest total for any February since 1955.

Acreage for harvest will be lower for many vegetable crops in the coming months due to the loss of mature and young plantings. In addition to less acreage, yields are also expected to be lower as many crops are in fair to poor condition. However, subsequent weather conditions will have a significant impact on the progress of

also expected to be lower as many crops are in fair to poor condition. However, subsequent weather conditions will have a significant impact on the progress of younger plantings which will eventually determine yields.

Harvested acreage is expected to decrease for most of the vegetables listed below. Not surprisingly, many of the larger declines will be for crops predominately grown on Oahu such as **dry onions** (-74%), **green onions** (-33%), **snap beans** (-28%), and **semi-head (Manoa) lettuce** (-50%). An exception to the declining acreage will be **head cabbage** (+39%) as farmers planted additional acreage to meet increased demand from St. Patrick's Day.

# 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.

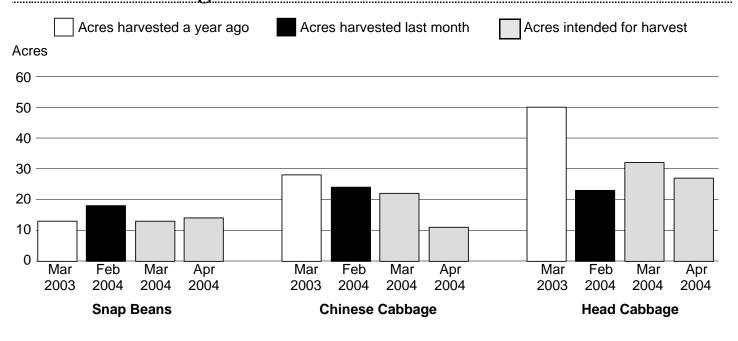
**U.S. cucumbers ..... page 4**Background and facts about the cucumber market in the U.S.

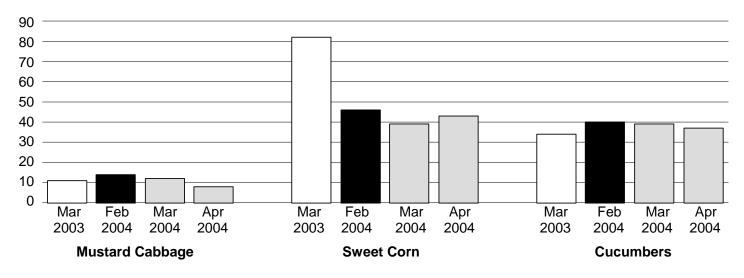
## Acreage Acreage

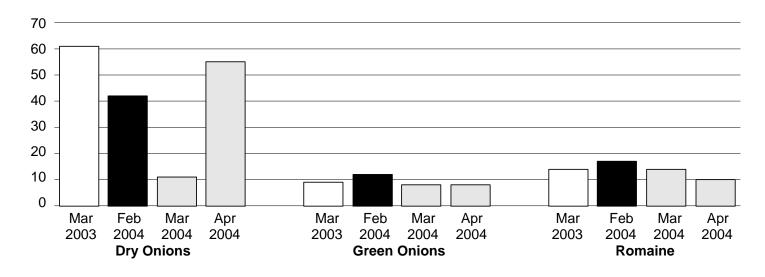
Acres planted, harvested, and for harvest for 11 selected vegetables, State of Hawaii.

|                    | Acres planted |             | Acres harvested |             | Acres for harvest |             |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Crop               | Jan<br>2004   | Feb<br>2004 | Jan<br>2004     | Feb<br>2004 | Mar<br>2004       | Apr<br>2004 |
| Beans, snap        | 14            | 15          | 18              | 18          | 13                | 14          |
| Cabbage, Chinese   | 24            | 22          | 17              | 24          | 22                | 11          |
| Cabbage, head      | 30            | 34          | 23              | 23          | 32                | 27          |
| Cabbage, mustard   | 14            | 13          | 12              | 14          | 12                | 8           |
| Corn, sweet        | 59            | 65          | 42              | 46          | 39                | 43          |
| Cucumbers          | 38            | 40          | 42              | 40          | 39                | 37          |
| Lettuce, head      | 8             | 5           | 5               | 9           | 5                 | 2           |
| Lettuce, semi-head | 3             | 4           | 4               | 4           | 2                 | 2           |
| Onions, dry        | 9             | 7           | 35              | 42          | 11                | 55          |
| Onions, green      | 7             | 10          | 12              | 12          | 8                 | 8           |
| Romaine            | 15            | 14          | 9               | 17          | 14                | 10          |

# Harvested acreage charts







### February review

#### Many crops in fair to poor condition after February storm

CHINESE CABBAGE production is estimated at 415,000 pounds for February, up 1 percent from the previous month but down 29 percent from a year ago. Heavy showers flooded some fields. Current crop conditions were mostly fair with some plantings in good condition.

HEAD CABBAGE production totaled 550,000 pounds in February, down 4 percent from January and down 58 percent from a year ago. The recent rains caused some flooding, leaching of fertilizer, and a flourishing of weeds. Most of the crop was in good to fair condition in anticipation of St. Patrick's day.

**SWEET CORN** production is estimated at 93,000 pounds, down 13 percent from last month and down 4 percent from a year ago. Crop conditions were fair, but farmers are on alert for an expansion of blight disease due to the recent rains.

**CUCUMBER** production is estimated at 237,000 pounds for February,

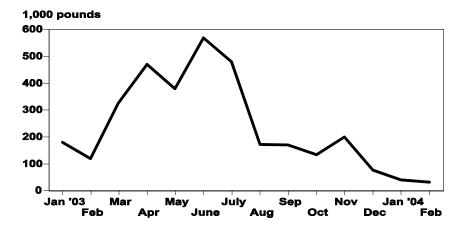
down 19 percent from last month and down 36 percent from a year ago. Although acreage for harvest is expected to decline only 2 percent, production will be impacted by lower yields due to poor crop conditions.

**DRY ONION** production is pegged at 32,000 pounds for February, down 20 percent from January and down 73 percent from a year ago. Some mature fields were abandoned due to

excessive moisture. Overall, the crop was in fair condition.

**TOMATO** production is estimated at 914,000 pounds in February, down 23 percent from last month and the first time it has dipped below the 1-million pound mark since October 1998. Field plantings were in mostly poor to fair condition due to the recent weather while greenhouse fields were in good to fair condition.O

#### Hawaii Dry Onions: Monthly Production, 2003 - 2004



Acreage, average yield, sales, and average farm price, February 2004, State of Hawaii.

| Crop               | Total<br>acres on<br>Mar 1 <sup>st</sup> | February 2004      |                                |                |                    | January-to-date sales |       |         |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------|---------|
|                    |  | Acres<br>harvested | Average<br>yield <sup>1/</sup> | Total<br>sales | Average farm price | 2003 <sup>2/</sup>    | 2004  | Change  |
|                    |  |                    | 1,000 lbs                      |                | Cents per lb.      | 1,000 lbs             |       | Percent |
| Beans, snap        | 25                                       | 18                 | 3.6                            | 59             | 118.5              | 125                   | 124   | 8       |
| Cabbage, Chinese   | 35                                       | 24                 | 24.1                           | 415            | 30.6               | 1,225                 | 825   | -36     |
| Cabbage, head      | 62                                       | 23                 | 25.0                           | 550            | 32.4               | 2,614                 | 1,125 | -56     |
| Cabbage, mustard   | 19                                       | 14                 | 7.4                            | 103            | 64.9               | 224                   | 192   | -21     |
| Corn, sweet        | 130                                      | 46                 | 2.5                            | 93             | 46.9               | 252                   | 200   | -31     |
| Cucumbers          | 65                                       | 40                 | 7.0                            | 237            | 58.3               | 772                   | 530   | -27     |
| Lettuce, head      | 8  | 9                  | 10.0                           | 60             | 58.1               | 125                   | 110   | -23     |
| Lettuce, semi-head | 7  | 4                  | 4.3                            | 17             | 76.9               | 48                    | 34    | -29     |
| Onions, dry        | 103                                      | 42                 | 5.7                            | 32             | 184.3              | 300                   | 72    | -78     |
| Onions, green      | 23                                       | 12                 | 6.6                            | 62             | 117.6              | 231                   | 141   | -31     |
| Peppers, green     | 41                                       | 20                 | 13.9                           | 256            | 77.3               | 509                   | 534   | 13      |
| Romaine            | 20                                       | 17                 | 11.7                           | 130            | 55.4               | 323                   | 235   | -45     |
| Tomatoes           | 140                                      | 68                 | 17.5                           | 914            | 64.8               | 2,755                 | 2,104 | -15     |

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1/</sup> Total sales divided by acres harvested. <sup>2/</sup> Revised. <sup>3/</sup> Not published to avoid disclosure of individual operations.

#### Commodity Highlight: U.S. Cucumbers

Originating in India, cucumbers were brought to the New World by Columbus, and cucumbers have been grown in the U.S. for several centuries. Cucumbers are members of the cucurbit family and are related to gourds, gherkins, pumpkins, squash, and watermelon.

The U.S. produces 3 percent of the world's cucumbers, ranking fourth behind China (62 percent), Turkey, and Iran. Produced year-round, U.S. fresh-market cucumber production reached a record-high in 1999 but has trended lower since. Florida and Georgia are the leading freshmarket cucumber States, each with about 25 percent of the Nation's output during 2001-03.

There is limited overlap between the U.S. fresh and processing cucumber industries because of differences in varieties and methods of production and marketing. Freshmarket cucumbers are hand-harvested, while many pickling cucumbers are harvested by machine.

Fresh prices are generally higher January to April (because of limited domestic supplies and higher production costs) and lowest in June when supplies are available from many areas. The farm price (f.o.b. shipping-point) generally accounts for about 25 percent of the retail value for fresh cucumbers. Imports are strongest January and February when U.S. production is limited by cool weather and weakest in summer during the height of the domestic season.

Imports accounted for 45 percent of U.S. fresh cucumber consumption during 2001-03—up from 38 percent in the 1990s and 37 percent in the 1980s. In 2003, the majority of imports came from Mexico (86 percent) and Canada (9 percent). During 2001-03, about 3 percent of fresh export volume was exported, compared with about 5 percent in both the 1980s and 1990s. Canada takes 98 percent of U.S. fresh cucumber exports.

About 60 percent of cucumber consumption is in fresh form, with the remainder in processed (largely pickled) products. Per-capita use of all cucumbers has risen during each of the past four decades. Per capita use averaged 10.9 pounds during 2000-03, up from 10.2 in the 1990s, 9.8 in the 1980s and 8.9 pounds in the 1970s. Freshmarket use has accounted for all the growth over the past 20 years, because pickling use has been on a slow decline since peaking in 1976 at 6.1 pounds. Fresh use reached a record-high 6.8 pounds in 1999, 44 percent higher than 1989. This level was nearly matched in 2002 (6.7 pounds).

According to the USDA 1994-1996 Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals, 85 percent of fresh cucumbers are consumed at home. This may reflect limited uses for fresh cucumbers in fast food establishments and on mainstream restaurant menus. ■

Souce: *Vegetables and Melons Outlook*/VGS-301/February 26, 2004, Economic Research Service, USDA.