

USDA, NASS, Hawaii Field Office

Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Hawaii Vegetables

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Weather turns drier

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

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Situational report by the Economic Research Service.

Vegetable crops made mostly fair progress in August as drier conditions prevailed in many parts of the State. Rainfall levels dropped the most on the islands of Kauai and Oahu where many stations recorded less than 30 percent of August's normal amount. Conditions were a little wetter the eastern half of the State with the Big Island getting most of August's rain. In particular, leeward areas of the Big Island received some heavy showers from August 7 through August 9 and again on August 28. The windward side of the island also received some heavy rains on August 6 and 7, but drier weather during the rest of the time kept the overall total rainfall for the month at below normal levels. Irrigation was heavy in most areas to combat the dryness and relatively warm temperatures (a string of 155 consecutive days of above normal temperatures was finally broken on August 29 when Honolulu recorded a daily average temperature of 81° F).

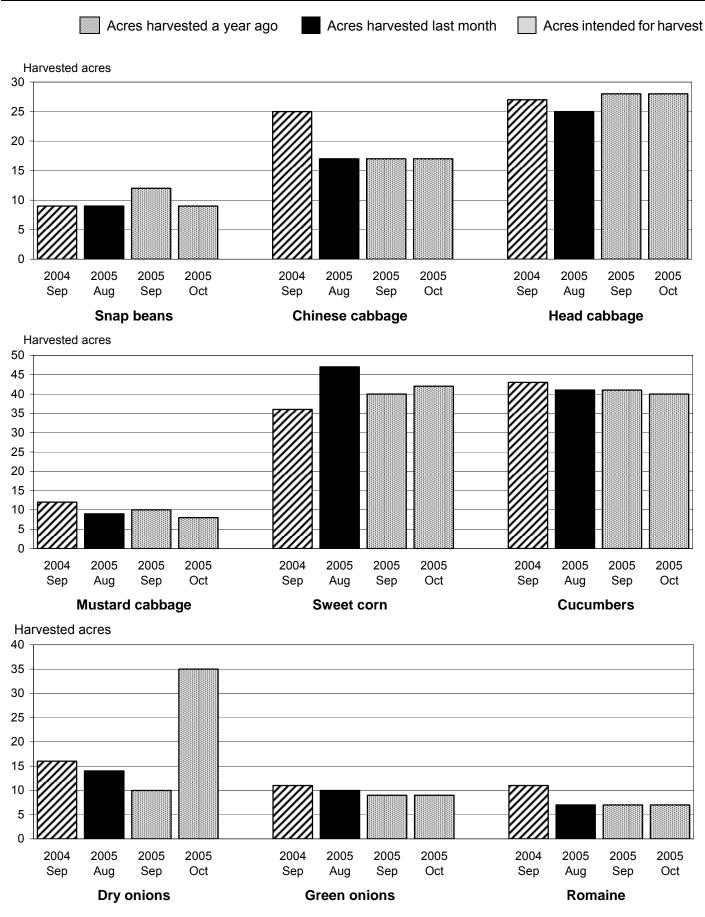
Harvested acreage will remain stable or increase for a majority of vegetable crops during September. Increases in harvested acreage will be registered by **snap beans** (+33%), **head cabbage** (+12%), **mustard cabbages** (+11%), and **head lettuce** (+75%). Declines in harvested acreage are anticipated for **sweet corn** (-15%), **dry onions** (-29%), and **green onions** (-10%). Harvested acreage is expected to remain unchanged for **Chinese cabbage**, **cucumbers**, **semi-head (Manoa) lettuce**, and **romaine**. ■

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

	Acres planted		Acres harvested		Acres for harvest	
Crop	Jul 2005	Aug 2005	Jul 2005	Aug 2005	Sep 2005	Oct 2005
Beans, snap	11	10	14	9	12	9
Cabbage, Chinese	16	19	17	17	17	7
Cabbage, head	26	26	25	25	28	19
Cabbage, mustard	9	11	7	9	10	8
Corn, sweet	45	36	42	47	40	42
Cucumbers	40	41	40	41	41	40
Lettuce, head	3	7	5	4	7	5
Lettuce, semi-head	5	5	5	5	5	5
Onions, dry	20	33	32	14	10	35
Onions, green	9	9	9	10	9	9
Romaine	7	7	10	7	7	4

Harvested acreage charts



August Review

Tomato Production Up 16 Percent in August

SNAP BEANS production totaled 55,000 pounds in August, down 44 percent from July and 15 percent below the level of a year ago. A 36 percent decline in harvested acreage and timing in harvest were major factors for the lower output.

HEAD CABBAGE production is estimated at 533,000 pounds in August, down 17 percent from July and lowest output for 2005. Warm temperatures and the increased presence of insects contributed to the lower output. Most fields were currently in fair condition.

SWEET CORN production is estimated at 230,000 pounds for August, up 28 percent from July, and more than double that of a year ago. Favorable weather and an increase in harvested acreage accounted for the boost in production during July. Fields were in good condition at the end of August.

CUCUMBER production is estimated at 534,000 pounds for August, down 10 percent from July. Heavy irrigation ensured good progress under mostly sunny skies and light winds.

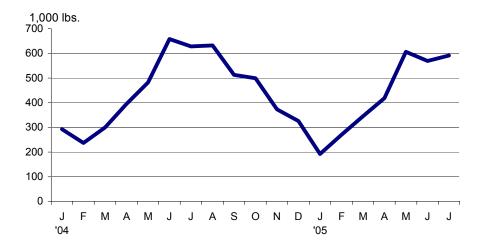
DRY ONION production totaled 270,000 pounds in August, down 24 percent from July. Warm temperatures during August were less than ideal for growth and development. The advent of cooler temperatures should result in improved growth in the coming months.

GREEN PEPPER production is estimated at 241,000 pounds for

August, unchanged from July. Crop conditions were mostly fair with heavy irrigation.

TOMATO production is pegged at 1.3 million pounds for August, up 16 percent from July. Field tomatoes account for the bulk of production and most plantings were in fair to good condition with some isolated reports of heavy insect infestation. Greenhouse plantings were in generally good condition. ■

Hawaii Cucumbers Monthly Production, 2004 – 2005



Acreage, average yield, sales, and average farm price, August 2005, State of Hawaii.

Crop	Total acres on Sep 1 st	August 2005				January-to-date sales		
		Acres harvested	Average yield ^{1/}	Total sales	Average farm price	2004 2/	2005	Change
			1,000 lbs		Cents per lb.	1,000 lbs		Percent
Beans, snap	21	9	6.1	55	106.8	559	445	- 20
Cabbage, Chinese	24	17	2.2	377	32.1	3,426	3,861	13
Cabbage, head	49	25	21.3	533	28.3	5,643	6,792	20
Cabbage, mustard	14	9	12.6	113	59.4	929	929	
Corn, sweet	90	47	4.9	230	50.5	977	1,081	11
Cucumbers	75	41	13.0	534	38.3	3,625	3,525	- 3
Lettuce, head	7	4	15.0	60	59.1	528	475	- 10
Lettuce, semi-head	9	5	3.8	19	86.4	228	217	- 5
Onions, dry	97	14	19.3	270	126.8	927	1,708	84
Onions, green	22	10	10.2	102	91.4	750	770	1
Peppers, green	3/	23	10.5	241	63.6	2,037	2,002	- 2
Romaine	10	7	17.1	120	73.8	966	1,121	16
Tomatoes	3/	63	20.7	1,304	65.8	10,286	9,171	- 11

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

U.S. Sweet Potatoes

Fewer Acres in 2005

In 2005, the total sweet potato area for harvest is estimated to be 89,500 acres-4 percent below 2004's production area. This decline is largely due to reduced area in North Carolina-the producing State. The estimated ratio of harvested to planted acreage-97 percent in 2005-represents the highest proportion since 1984 for the nine major sweet potato States. Average yields over the past 2 years-174 cwt in 2004 and 172 cwt in 2003-were the highest on record. If the yield in 2005 comes in around 170 cwt per acre, production will amount to 15.2 million cwt, which is 6 percent below 2004's level of 16.1 million cwt.

The increased supply of sweet potatoes from the 2004 crop appears to be responsible for lower average prices through June, which were down 12

percent from last year, reflecting relatively week domestic demand. However, shipping point prices in May and June are higher than last year, at least for sweet potatoes shipped from Louisiana and eastern North Carolina. Also, exports are up in value and volume, indicating stronger foreign demand, in part due to the dollar's lower exchange rate. However, exports comprise only 4 percent of U.S. production, thus limiting their overall effect on prices. Sweet potato growers are aware that a smaller crop is likely to bring higher prices, but only growers in North Carolina and New Jersey cut their planted acreage in 2005.

China Dominates World Production

World production of sweet potatoes was 127 million metric tons (mt) in 2004, excluding yams. Of this amount, China

produced 105 million mt, or 82 percent of the world total. By contrast, the United States produced only 730,830 mt, or 0.6 percent of world production in 2004, lower than Indonesia, Japan, and India. World imports or exports of sweet potatoes are even smaller, either one comprising only 0.07 percent of world production in 2003. An estimated 73.5 million mt of sweet potatoes were consumed as food globally in 2002, or close to 60 percent of world production. In per capita terms, 11.8 kilograms of sweet potatoes were consumed on average in 2002, including Americans. In the United States, per capita consumption of sweet potatoes was only 4.7 pounds, or 2.1 kilograms.■

Source: Vegetables and Melons Outlook/VGS-310/August 18, 2005, Economic Research Service, USDA.