

NEW YORK VEGETABLE VALUE AND PRODUCTION IS UP-WAY UP!

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GENEVA, NY: The buzz at the New York State Vegetable Growers Association meeting in Syracuse next week is going to be about money. New York growers are reporting a \$63 million increase in the value of their crops for 2000.



"The value of NYS vegetables rose from \$255 million in 1999 to \$378 million in 2000," says Steven Reiners, associate professor in horticultural sciences at Cornell University. "Of the increase, \$63 million represents an increase in production, and \$60 million is due to the inclusion of six new crops previously not included in the NYS Ag & Market's annual report."

The six new crops-pumpkins, squash, peppers, eggplant, spinach and escarole/endive-accounted for an additional \$60 million of the total, according to Reiners. The NYS Vegetable Growers Association urged that these vegetables be included to better represent the true size of the industry.

"The news was especially welcome after growers struggled with a cool, wet season that delayed plantings, slowed maturity and interfered with harvest," says Reiners, who works at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva. Despite the problems, acreage increased by about 10 percent from 1999, rising to 170,000 acres, split about equally between fresh market and processed crops.

The New York State vegetable industry is continuing expansion that began in the early 1990s. Since that time acreage has increased by about 30 percent and value has more than doubled. With these additional figures, New York now ranks 5th in the nation for fresh market vegetable production and 7th for processing.

Table 1 shows the acreage and value of fresh market vegetables. Table 2 shows processed vegetables in 2000.

Table 1. Value and acreage of New York fresh market vegetables, 2000.

CROP	VALUE (million\$)	PLANTED ACRES
Cabbage	79.6	13,400
Sweet Corn	56.4	32,300
Onions	52.6	13,400
Snap Beans	31.5	8,600
Tomatoes	30.7	3,300
Pumpkins	26.3	6,700
Cucumbers	20.3	3,900
Squash	17.2	3,500
Peppers	7.1	800
Cauliflower	4.1	1,100
Eggplant	3.7	550
Spinach	3.2	700
Endive/Escarole	2.6	300
TOTAL	335.3	88,550

Table 2. Value and acreage of New York processed vegetables, 2000.

CROP	VALUE (million \$)	PLANTED ACRES
Snap Beans	17.2	28,800
Sweet Corn	11.6	30,700
Peas	6.7	16,500

Kraut Cabbage	4.1	2,800
Beets	2.4	2,600
TOTAL	42.0	81,400

The figures do not include values for potatoes, estimated at approximately \$60 million or carrots, lettuce and broccoli, estimated at about \$10 million. When these commodities are factored in, the actual value of New York vegetable crops approaches \$450 million.



The industry has also increased the level of funding they provide for research. In 1999, green pea growers began a crop assessment and, in 2000, cabbage growers started their own research and development fund. These funds, along with money already contributed by potato, onion, fresh market and processed vegetable growers and industry, will account for more than \$350,000 for vegetable research in 2001.

"At a time when many states report declines in their vegetable industries, and other commodities in New York are facing tough times, the continued strength of the New York State vegetable industry is extremely encouraging," says Reiners.

The NYS Vegetable Conference runs Feb. 13-15, at the Holiday Inn & Convention Center in Liverpool, NY. Hours are 8 am-4:30 pm on Feb. 13; 8 am-5:30 pm on Feb. 14; and 8 am-5 pm on Feb. 15. The public is welcome to attend. Registration at the door is \$40/day which includes a copy of the conference proceedings and lunch. Proceedings are also available from the NYS Vegetable Growers for \$10, by contacting nysvqa@clarityconnect.com or calling 607-539-7648.

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