

Planting Date, Yield, and Expected Prices for Delaware Vegetable Crops

Crop yields during a particular season depend on the interaction of the crop's genetic makeup, the grower's experience, and the environment, especially the weather. Although growers have little control over some environmental factors, their selection of appropriate varieties, cultural practices, timely plantings, and general good management will help achieve good yields. As growers become more experienced with a specific crop, their yields usually increase.

This fact sheet is designed as a basic reference in the planning process for crop management. Other valuable references include Commercial **Vegetable Production Recommendations**, Ext. Bulletin 137, and **Vegetable Crop Budgets**, Extension Bulletin 152. This fact sheet also serves as a general guide for lending institutions, Insurance companies, government agencies, and any commercial company. Good records of varieties, yields, cultural practices, and weather will help growers understand their crops better and give them a basis for estimating future yields. Good, documented yield records for individual farming operations are the best and final source of information.

Table 1. Planting dates, yields, and price for several fresh market and processing crops

Fresh Market						
Crop	Planting dates	Low	Good	High	Unit	Price
Asparagus		2000	4000	6000	Lbs.	0.75
Gr. Beans	4/25-8/10	125	160	200	bu.	5.00
Cantaloupes	5/1-6/1	3000	5000	8000	melons	0.50
Cucumbers	4/20-7/15	100	300	400	bu.	5.50
Peppers, bell	5/1-6/1	300	500	800	bu.	6.00
Potatoes	3/15-5/5	100	225	300	cwt.	5.50
Pumpkins	5/25-6/25	800	1200	1500	pumpkin	1.00
Sweet Corn	4/1-6/15	8000	12000	14000	ears	0.12
Tomatoes	4/25-7/1	400	800	1000	boxes*	6.00
Watermelons	4/25-6/5	20000	30000	40000	lbs.	0.04

* - 25 lb. tomato boxes

Processing						
Crop	Planting Dates	Low	Good	High	Unit	Price
Gr. Beans	4/25-8/10	2	3	4	tons	120
Baby Limas	5/25-7/15	1000	2000	3000	lbs.	0.16
Frdh. Lima	5/25-7/4	800	1000	2000	lbs.	0.40
Carrots	5/15-6/15	10	15	20	tons	70
Peas	2/20-5/5	1	2	3	tons	210
Pickles	5/15-8/4	100	170	290	bu.	3.50
Sweet Corn	4/1-7/1	3	6	7	tons	65
Tomatoes	5/1-6/15	10	15	20	tons	65

Peppers,Bell	5/1-6/1	12000	16000	18000	lbs.	0.08
Cheese		10000	12000	18000	lbs.	0.10
Cherry		12000	17000	21000	lbs.	0.12
Banana		12000	16000	20000	lbs.	0.11

Note: All processing crops are mechanically harvested, except Peppers, which are hand-harvested.

Table 2. Average yield and price on a per-ton basis

Fresh Market			
Crop	Yield-Ton/Acre	\$/Ton	Gross \$/Acre
Asparagus	2	1500	3000
Green Beans	2.25	333	750
Cantaloupes	17.5	142	2485
Cucumbers	8.25	200	1650
Peppers, Bell	7.5	400	3000
Potatoes	11.25	110	1238
Pumpkins	15	25	375
Sweet Corn	5	288	1440
Tomatoes	10	480	4800
Watermelons	15	80	1200
Processing			
Cauliflower	8	180	1440
Green Beans	3	120	360
Baby Lima Beans	0.9	320	288
Frdh. Lima Beans	0.5	800	400
Carrots	15	70	1050
Peas	2	210	420
Pickles	4.25	140	595
Spinach	8	120	960
Sweet Corn	6	65	390
Tomatoes	15	65	975

Following are best management practices guidelines that indicate proper and adequate management in a crop disaster situation:

1. Proper planting date - Did planting occur at the proper times? Was there enough time for replanting if a good stand was not established.
2. Past History of the Field - Was a good crop rotation used? Was pesticide used in previous years that could carryover?
3. Irrigation - Was irrigation available and was it used?
4. Fertilizer/Seed Rates/Pesticide Rates - Were fertilizer, seed, and pesticides applied properly as outlined in Extension Bulletin #137, 1990 Commercial Vegetable Production Recommendations.

Note: Prices reflect average season long conditions, or in the case of processing crops, an average of contracts available to Delaware growers