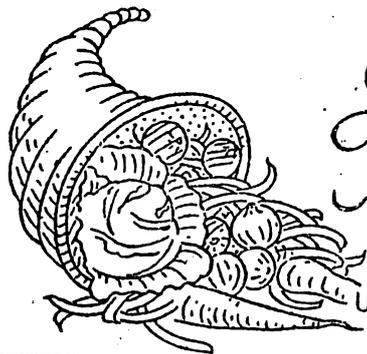


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Commercial Truck Crops

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
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COMMERCIAL TRUCK CROPS FOR FRESH MARKET

TRUCK CROP NEWS

MARCH 15, 1952

Conditions for truck-crop growth and development in the first half of March ranged from unfavorable to moderately favorable, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. In Florida, weather conditions were generally favorable for hardy crops such as cabbage, celery, and escarole but were unfavorable for most tender crops. Texas weather was reasonably favorable, both for growing crops in the early sections and for planting truck crops in the late-spring areas. In California, however, low temperatures, which prevailed in all sections, slowed the growth of both young and maturing crops. Although rains slowed field operations in Arizona, the improved moisture situation in that State is encouraging. Cool, dry weather in Louisiana was ideal for planting of spring crops but in Mississippi, Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina wet weather has delayed planting of spring crops.

In Florida, temperatures and atmospheric conditions were generally conducive to the development of plant diseases and made control more difficult. The week of March 9 was very unsettled, with unusually high winds at the beginning and end of the week. Fairly heavy rains in central Florida on the night of March 14 caused minor damage in low places. Light scattered frosts occurred in north and central Florida on the morning of March 17. Very little damage has been reported from this recent cold in the central Florida sections, but in north Florida, where the spring crops were already delayed, progress will be further retarded and some re-planting necessary.

Although the supply of irrigation water in the Lower Valley of Texas is still low, temperatures the first half of March were favorable and crops that survived the late February cold spell and have had some irrigation are making good recovery. Spring-crop plantings in the non-irrigated early sections that were favored with late February and early March rains made fairly good growth, and additional plantings were made in these areas. At mid-month, moisture was still deficient in part of the non-irrigated Coastal Bend and Raymondville sections, and crops, particularly onions, made very poor progress. Moisture conditions are favorable in most late spring areas and planting was active by the middle of March.

A series of cold rains swept California during the first two weeks of March and all vegetable sections except the desert valleys received an inch or more of precipitation. In the central and northern parts of the State many sections received two or more inches. These continuous heavy rains restricted field activity during this period and caused a further delay in planting of some crops for summer harvest. Except for asparagus, the volume of present harvests has not been reduced seriously.

ARTICHOKES: Winter (Calif.) Artichoke supplies are increasing but production is being restricted by cool weather. Excessive rainfall which has kept fields waterlogged has been detrimental to the crop. Recent frosts have discolored exposed buds in fields in colder locations. Supplies should increase during the next two weeks but may remain lighter than normal for this season of the year.

ASPARAGUS: Early Spring (Calif., Oreg., Wash., S.C.) The continuous cool weather of the past two weeks in California has delayed the start of asparagus harvest in volume in the principal producing Delta District. Crop prospects are excellent, and as soon as temperatures reach levels favorable for spear development, supplies will be available in volume. Recent frosts have delayed harvesting but have not caused any appreciable damage. Light cuttings of asparagus from fields in the southern San Joaquin Valley, Imperial Valley, and the Los Angeles area have been moving into the Los Angeles market. South Carolina's asparagus crop is in good condition. Shipping will be general by the end of the month and heaviest in early April.

LIMA BEANS: Winter (Fla.) The volume of lima beans from the small winter crop in the Pompano-Delray section is expected to continue very light for the next few weeks. The crop is only in fair condition.

Spring (Fla., Ga., S.C.) Indications are that the acreage of lima beans for spring harvest in Florida will be materially reduced from last year. In the important Hawthorne section of North Florida, most of the acreage was planted during the second half of February. The bulk of the crop is now up and growing, but progress has been slow and stands will be irregular due to excessive rains and cool weather. Planting in South Carolina is expected to begin the last week in March.

SNAP BEANS: Winter (Fla.) In the Pompano and Dade County sections, harvesting is expected to continue active for several weeks. Recent weather conditions, particularly the high winds, have lowered the quality of the prospective marketings for the remainder of March. The volume from these two important winter areas is being supplemented by increasing supplies from the Everglades section. The pole bean crop in Dade County is generally in fair condition.

Early Spring (Tex., Fla.) Conditions were favorable in the Lower Valley of Texas for the early plantings to make good growth. Some replanting was necessary in part of the area following the late February frosts, but some acreage in the east end of the Valley escaped damage and is expected to furnish a light harvest starting the early part of April. Most of the late areas--central and eastern counties--have sufficient moisture for early plantings to get a good start. Planting of the spring crop of snap beans in Florida has largely been completed except in the North Florida section where some replanting is still being done. In the important Everglades section where a slightly reduced acreage is in prospect, the crop is generally making good progress. Light harvesting is now in progress on acreage originally intended for late winter harvest and if no setbacks occur, this deal should reach its full volume in early April. Late plantings of snap beans in the Pompano and Dade County sections are expected to continue to furnish a fair volume during the first half of April. Snap beans in the Central Florida sections, principally around Plant City, Webster, and Sanford, are generally making fair to good progress with light harvesting expected to start in early April. In North Florida, much replanting has been necessary and the crop is generally delayed. A few of the earliest fields may start to pick around the middle of April, but most of this acreage will harvest during early May. The pole bean crop is generally in fair condition. The recent high winds generally reduced yield prospects on all

SNAP BEANS: Early Spring (Cont'd.) crops which were old enough to be staked. In Dade County, considerable late plantings have been made and this section is expected to continue in active harvest throughout most of April. In the Manatee-Ruskin-Plant City section, very light harvesting is expected around the first of April with active harvest by mid-April.

Mid-Spring (Calif., La., Miss., Ala., Ga., S.C.) In California, recent cold and wet weather has retarded early fields of snap beans in Coachella Valley and San Diego County and has delayed seeding of mid-season acreage in the Los Angeles area. Start of spring harvest may be somewhat later than usual. In Southern California, field moisture conditions for snap beans are favorable as a result of generous winter rains. Although planting of Louisiana snap beans was active during the first half of March, a large portion of the crop is yet to be planted. Because of cool weather very few beans are up. In Mississippi, planting of snap beans will begin the latter half of March. Land preparations for planting are being retarded by wet soils.

Late Spring (N.C., Ark., Va.) In North Carolina planting in some areas is expected to get under way as soon as weather permits, becoming general by April 1.

BEETS: Spring (La., S.C., N.C., Va.) In South Carolina, beet harvest is expected to begin around March 20 and become general by the end of the month. Condition of the crop varies but as a whole is considered good. North Carolina's beet crop is up to a good stand and is in good condition. Low temperatures and excessive moisture have made the crop a little later than normal. With favorable weather conditions, harvest should begin around May 10-15.

BROCCOLI: Spring (Calif.) Low temperatures of the past two weeks have slowed the development of both young and maturing broccoli and have held back any increase in shipments. Rain has also hampered harvest. At present temperature levels, no increase in supplies can be expected, but warmer weather would result in heavier production. Continued rain has kept waterlogged some late fields of broccoli that were planted on heavy, poorly drained soils, and has prevented satisfactory plant development. Some acreage abandonment is possible, and lowered production is likely on such fields. Excessive moisture is also adversely affecting the carrying quality of some broccoli.

CABBAGE: Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., Fla.) Recent cool weather in California has prolonged the harvest of late fields of cabbage in the Imperial Valley, but only a limited tonnage remains to be cut. Production is increasing in the South Coastal section but is being restricted by market conditions. Only the better quality heads are being harvested from mature fields. A small carlot deal is developing in San Diego County but the volume of this movement will depend on market demand. Additional acreage will become available for cutting during the next two weeks and heavier production is expected. Supplies of cabbage have continued plentiful in Texas, with considerable tonnage being left in the fields since the latter part of February because of the market situation. Most marketings during the past two weeks have been from areas that have had some water, and quality has been fairly good. Only the best quality will be cut from now on, with harvest expected to end by early April. Harvesting of the Florida winter cabbage crop reached its peak level during the first half of March. Weak market conditions caused some postponement in harvesting, resulting in some fields becoming over-ripe. Considerable abandonment has taken place during the past two weeks. The crop is well past the halfway mark so far as acreage harvested is concerned, but a good volume continues in prospect during the remainder of March with a declining volume indicated during April.

CABBAGE: Early Spring (La., Miss., Ala., Ga., S.C.) The spring cabbage crop in South Carolina is in fair to good condition. Shipping is expected to begin during the week of March 23 but little volume is likely before April 1 with heaviest movement during the last half of April. Mississippi cabbage fields have been too wet for much cultivation or side dressing, but growth of plants is about up to normal for mid-March.

Late Spring (8 States) Transplanting of the North Carolina cabbage crop has been completed. The stands are fair but the crop has made little progress because of the cold weather and excessive rain. In general the crop is about 2 weeks late. With favorable weather conditions from now on, harvest should begin about the first of May. Field setting of Tennessee cabbage has made slow progress as a result of wet weather. Setting was started in late February and is expected to be finished about March 20.

CANTALOUPS: Spring (Calif., Fla., Ariz.) Recent cool weather has slowed the development of cantaloups in the Desert areas of California, but because of favorable temperatures in February the crop has made satisfactory progress to date. Caps are being removed from the covered acreage at the present time.

Mid-Summer (12 States) Planting of early fields in California has begun in the San Joaquin Valley at Delano and in Western Fresno County, and seeding will be active during the balance of March. Recent rains will necessitate the re-planting of some fields due to crusting. Conditions during the past two weeks in the early sections of Texas were favorable for crops that survived the late February cold spell. There was considerable "capped" acreage that was not affected by the cold spell, and those plantings made exceptionally good growth in the past two weeks. Planting in some of the later areas was getting started around mid-March, and most late areas have ample moisture for their early plantings to get a good start.

CARROTS: Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., La.) Owing to market conditions, there has been little change in the level of production of California Imperial Valley carrots during the past two weeks. Some expansion will be possible during the last half of March as more acreage reaches maturity, but increased volume is not a certainty. Quality of both roots and tops has improved during the past two weeks and is now generally good. Light shipments continue from the Yuma area of Arizona with an occasional car from Phoenix. In Texas, shipments of good quality carrots continued active from both the Lower Valley and Winter Garden districts. Plantings in the Winter Garden were timed for harvest to end by late March to early April, but the Lower Valley has ample acreage for active harvest to continue throughout April. Market conditions, however, will have a bearing on whether all of the remaining acreage will be held for harvest.

Spring (Calif., Ariz.) The spring crop in Arizona is expected to start moving in heavier volume from the Salt River Valley around the middle of April. Rain and cool weather have held back the development of the crop and slowed harvesting and shipping operations.

CAULIFLOWER: Winter (4 States) Shipments of cauliflower declined sharply during the first half of March in Florida and are expected to continue but at a declining rate with the active shipping season drawing to a close around the first of April.

CAULIFLOWER: Early Spring (Calif., Oreg.) Because of cool weather, cauliflower production declined during the first half of March in California's producing sections. Warmer weather will be required to bring about an increase in volume. The bulk of the present supplies for the carlot trade are originating in the Santa Maria area. Production in Alameda County is quite light this season. Adequate supplies of cauliflower are available for local markets in the Los Angeles area. Freezers are taking some cauliflower in both the San Francisco Bay and Santa Maria areas at the present time.

CELERY: Winter (Fla., Calif., Ariz.) Recent weather conditions in Florida have been favorable for improved yields on most of the remaining acreage of the winter crop. Shipments increased materially during the first half of March owing to these improved yields. With favorable weather, continued good yields are in prospect from the remainder of this winter acreage. A continuation of present prices would cause some restriction in volume. Most sheds in California's San Diego County have finished their season's operations, and only light shipments of celery will be made from California during the next two weeks. Harvest will continue on the limited acreage remaining in San Diego, Orange, and Ventura Counties and the southern San Joaquin Valley. Local market supplies will be plentiful during the last half of March. Some celery is still available in the Salt River Valley of Arizona. The deal probably will be completed by the end of the month.

Spring (Fla., Calif.) Practically all setting of spring celery in Florida was completed around the middle of March. Conditions have generally been favorable for spring plantings and most crops are in fair to good condition. In California, planting of the bulk of the acreage in the Venice section of Los Angeles County has been completed, but setting has been delayed on late fields by a shortage of plants. Plantings in southern Los Angeles County will continue into April. To date, the crop has made good progress although it is a little later than last season. Harvest should begin the first week in April, about the normal date.

SWEET CORN: Winter (Fla.) The volume of sweet corn increased materially during the first half of March and a further increase is indicated during the last half of the month as more late winter acreage in the Everglades ~~comes into production.~~ In this important corn producing section and in the other smaller sections of south Florida, recent weather conditions have been favorable for leaf blight, and yield prospects have generally been reduced. Most of the acreage in the Pompano-Boynton and Dade County sections has been harvested, but a few late fields, particularly in Dade County, will still furnish a light production.

Spring (Fla.) Planting in the important Everglades section was mostly completed by the middle of March, but a few growers are still planting. The younger plantings for spring harvest generally are in good condition, but future weather and the effectiveness of disease and insect control will largely determine the outcome of the crop. Production in this section should be heaviest during April and the first half of May with some harvesting continuing into June. In the Manatee-Ruskin section, the crop is in fair to good condition with light harvesting expected to start around mid-April. In the important Zellwood section, planting has been active since the last week of February. Early reports indicate little or no frost damage from the cold of March 17. Young plantings at Sanford are making fair progress, with some fields showing mineral deficiency at this time. Heavy rains in late February delayed land preparation and planting in the Starke-Lawtey section of North Florida but planting is now in progress. In North Carolina, planting has just begun in the Wilmington area and growers in other areas are waiting for the weather to clear up to begin their planting.

CUCUMBERS: Winter (Fla.) The small acreage of winter cucumbers in south Florida that survived the adverse weather of early February will continue to furnish a limited production during the remainder of March and into early April. Imports from Cuba, which are being repacked at points along the East Coast, constitute the bulk of the shipments now moving from the State.

Early Spring (Fla., Tex.) The spring cucumber crop in Florida is in only fair condition owing to adverse weather conditions. In the important Immokalee-Fort Myers section, the spring plantings have generally made a fair recovery from the setback incurred in late February. Harvest of this spring crop is expected to start around April 5 to 10. Spring plantings in the Pompano-Fort Pierce area range from poor to fair condition, with light harvesting from this acreage to get underway in late March. The covered acreage in the Wauchula and Webster sections is making fair progress. Very light harvesting has started on this acreage, and it will be after the first of April before this acreage gets in active harvest. Open field plantings in the Wauchula, Webster, Plant City, and Winter Garden sections were mostly made in February. Production from the earliest of this open field acreage should become active during the second half of April, with the bulk of the plantings in active harvest around the first of May. In the Manatee-Ruskin section, most of the plantings for spring harvest were seeded in late February and early March. Very little production from this acreage is expected before early May. Planting in North Florida started in late February. Some replanting has been necessary. Earliest plantings are up, but the crop is generally delayed. Only those cucumber crops in the Texas areas favored with the late February rains have made satisfactory progress, despite favorable temperatures for growth in all areas the past two weeks. Moisture is still deficient in the important Ingleside area, and hard winds in the Falfurrias section caused some damage to young plantings. Planting in the Riviera section started about the usual time--from mid to late February--but most of the acreage was not up to a stand until early in March. Present prospects point to very little production until late April, and all sections will need additional moisture for reasonable yields to be expected.

Late Spring (7 States) Planting of cucumbers in North Carolina has started in the Wilmington area. In other early truck crop areas, where rainfall has been excessive planting will begin as soils dry out.

EGGPLANT: Winter (Fla.) Eggplant shipments during the remainder of March are expected to continue in fairly steady volume. Normally some seasonal increase can be expected at this time, but cullage from scarring caused by the recent high winds in the Pompano section may prevent this increase.

Spring (Fla.) In the south Florida areas, the younger acreage is in only fair condition owing to adverse weather. The Pompano, Everglades, and Fort Myers-Immokalee sections are expected to be the principal sources of supply during April and most of May. Young plantings in the Plant City and Manatee sections are in ordinary to fair condition with very limited production in prospect before May. Setting to the field in north Florida started the first week of March.

ESCAROLE: Winter (Fla.) Continued good supplies of escarole and chicory are in prospect for the next few weeks. Growing conditions generally have been favorable. Slow market conditions have resulted in some abandonment. The Everglades is the principal source of supply, supplemented by some volume from Zellwood and limited harvestings from minor areas.

LETTUCE: Winter (Ariz., Calif., Fla., Tex.) Lettuce production is now declining in Imperial Valley, California and shipments will drop off rapidly during the balance of March. Heavy supplies had been sustained for a longer than normal period by recent cool weather. The unusually heavy yields this year have resulted in substantially heavier shipments than in 1951, despite a sharp cut in acreage. At Blythe, production is increasing. In Florida, shipments declined sharply during the first half of March and prospects are for light supplies during the remainder of the season. The Everglades and Zellwood will be the principal sources of supply. There are scattered plantings in minor areas which are grown mostly for local consumption. The usual small acreage for late harvest in the Winter Garden section of Texas is now in production, and harvest is expected to continue in fair volume for the next 30 days. A light movement has continued from the Lower Valley, but most of the Valley acreage was harvested by the middle of March.

Early Spring (Ariz., Calif., Ga., S.C., N.C.) Development of the spring deal in Arizona has been slowed by cool weather in both the Phoenix and Yuma areas. Cutting started on a small scale in the Phoenix area on March 13 but progress was interrupted by rains. The main part of the Phoenix deal probably will not start moving until about the last week of March or early in April, with peak movement not likely until near the middle of the month. The Phoenix season is about three weeks later than last year, with prospects still uncertain due to unsettled weather conditions. In California, early spring lettuce has been retarded by recent cool weather, but the crop is in good condition in all sections. Harvest has been delayed about one week by low temperatures and it now appears probable that volume supplies will not be available until after April 15. In South Carolina, prospects continue favorable with most of the crop in good to excellent condition. Harvest is expected to begin around April 1 and reach a peak during the latter part of April. North Carolina's crop is in good condition and stands are good. However, owing to cool, damp weather, growth has been slow and the crop is about 2 weeks late. Harvest is expected to begin the last week in April, reaching volume during the first week in May.

Summer (Calif., Colo., N.Y.) Rains during the past two weeks in California have not permitted growers in Central Coast sections to seed a normal acreage of lettuce for June harvest, and because of wet fields, it is not likely that seeding can be resumed for several days. It appears probable that June supplies will be short.

ONIONS: Early Spring (Texas) Conditions were favorable for development of onions in all irrigated districts and in the non-irrigated sections that received late February rains. Temperatures during the past two weeks were favorable for maturing advanced onions, except for brief cool spells over each week end and young onions in all irrigated sections made rapid growth. There is some acreage in both the Coastal Bend and Raymondville non-irrigated areas that did not receive much rain during late February, and yields on this acreage are expected to be very light. In some fields, prospective yields are so poor that growers are pulling green onions. Harvest was becoming fairly active by March 15 and solid carlot movement, which had shown a material gain on the 14th and 15th, was expected to show a further increase starting the week of March 17. Movement during the last half of March is expected from the Raymondville, Laredo, and Coastal Bend districts. The Winter Garden expects to start shipping the early part of April although a small acreage may be ready by the last of March.

ONIONS: Late Spring (Calif., Ariz., La., Tex., Ga.) Early onions in all sections of California are making good progress. Conditions in the late spring areas of north Texas did not permit growers to get all of their intended acreage planted. Areas that were favored with ample moisture for transplanting have had additional rains and most plantings have made satisfactory growth. Total plantings are expected to be considerably under growers' early intentions to plant, with the most significant reduction occurring in the early sections where moisture has been deficient all winter.

Late Summer (17 States) The late onions that have been planted in California are making good progress. Planting was delayed by rains and wet fields and a considerable acreage was scheduled to be seeded during March. Recent rains have further delayed planting and it is possible that growers will not plant as much acreage as they intended.

GREEN PEAS: Winter (Fla., Tex., Calif.) Harvest is under way on a small acreage in Imperial Valley, California. These fields were planted for February harvest but were damaged by freezing temperatures in January. Light shipments will continue during the remainder of March.

Early Spring (Calif., Miss., S.C., N.C.) The South Carolina crop is in fair to good condition. Progress has been somewhat delayed by cool weather and harvest is not expected to begin until near the end of April.

PEPPERS: Winter (Fla.) The effects of adverse growing conditions in South Florida during February showed up in reduced volume during the first half of March. Condition of the crop is reported to be just fair at this time. While indications now are for a continued good movement from the south Florida section, both quality and sizes are expected to decline as the season progresses. The important Pompano section will continue to be the principal source of supply, supplemented by lighter supplies from Fort Myers and slightly increasing supplies from the Everglades

Spring (Fla.) Late plantings in the Pompano section, which will provide supplies during the spring season, are reported to be in only fair condition owing to the adverse weather in recent weeks. The younger plantings in the Everglades have been subjected to similar growing conditions, and prospects are only fair. In the important Plant City area, the crop is well advanced. Light harvesting has started from a few very early plantings, but a substantial volume will not develop until after April 15. The bulk of the crop is expected to move in May. Transplanting has been completed in the Webster and Sanford sections and the young crops are growing nicely. In the north Florida sections, transplanting started the first week in March and most of the acreage has been set at this time.

POTATOES, EARLY COMMERCIAL: Winter (Tex., Fla.) In Florida's important Dade County section harvest is expected to continue at its peak level during the remainder of March with some movement continuing into April. Yields on later plantings are lighter than those obtained earlier in the season.

Early Spring (Fla., Tex.) In the important Hastings section of Florida, the crop is generally in good condition, and excellent yields are in prospect. It is possible that the heavy rains early in the growing season may have leached out sufficient fertilizer to reduce yields, but this condition is not apparent at this time. Digging of some early fields is expected in late March, but it will be the second week in April before harvesting becomes general. The crop around LaCrosse is making very good progress. In the Everglades, average condition of the spring crop is only fair. Progress of the Texas Lower Valley crop was retarded

POTATOES, EARLY COMMERCIAL: Early Spring (Cont'd) by the cool spell and light to heavy frosts that reached into part of the area in late February. With most of the acreage being in the extreme eastern part of the Valley, damage was light and limited largely to retarding of growth. A small acreage is expected to be ready for harvest by the latter part of March, but most of this year's crop will not be ready until early April. All of the crop is expected to be harvested within a two to three week period.

Late Spring (Calif., La., Miss., Ala., Ga., S.C., Tex., Okla., Ark., Tenn., N.C.) Planting of early potatoes in California has been completed in the San Joaquin Valley but some acreage is still being planted in the Perris Valley and Chino sections. Early fields in Kern County's Edison District have made fair progress to date but their development has been slowed by periods of cool weather. It may be mid-April before the first car is loaded. Conditions in the early sections of Texas were favorable for planting and in the later areas some acreage was being planted around the middle of the month. Most sections have ample moisture for plantings to come up to good stands and March temperatures, generally, have been favorable for growth. Planting of commercial early potatoes in Tennessee's Coffee and Franklin county area started about March 1 and most growers expect to finish by the end of March. Wet weather has delayed this operation. Growers are showing little interest in the crop, and a sharply reduced acreage is in prospect. Cumberland Plateau growers expect to plant in April. Planting in some North Carolina areas has been seriously hampered by excessive rain, and only limited acreage was planted during the first half of March. In the Weeksville area, only about one-fourth of the crop had been planted by March 15 and much of that acreage will have to be replanted. In the Currituck area, little or no replanting has been necessary and some of the plants have surfaced. In the Carteret-Pamlico area, some replanting has been necessary but not to any large extent. With favorable weather conditions, all planting in the State should be completed by March 25.

Summer (9 States) Planting of the Texas Panhandle's summer crop was started in a light way the week of March 10-15, and most growers expect to be planting actively during the week of the 17th.

SHALLOTS: Spring (La.) Harvest of the spring crop is in full swing. The cool, dry weather has been very good for growth.

SPINACH: Winter (Tex., La., Calif., Miss.) In Texas, supplies have been available in fair volume from the Winter Garden and Eagle Pass sections. Conditions have been favorable in these areas for the acreage that was planted for March harvest, and shipments are expected to continue until the end of the month. Movement in April, if any, will be very light. Harvest in the Greenville, Mississippi area will continue through March.

SQUASH: Winter (Fla.) Effects of the cold winds in late February were reflected in a rather sharp reduction in volume during the first half of March. Some improvement in supplies is expected during the second half of the month, although the average condition of the crop at this time is only fair. The principal source of supplies during the remainder of March will be the lower East Coast sections supplemented by a light volume from the West Coast and Plant City sections.

Spring (Fla.) The crop in the important Plant City section is well advanced. Occasional early fields are now being harvested but it will be late March before the bulk of the acreage in this section is ready for harvest. In the McIntosh section of North Florida, a much reduced acreage is in prospect. Considerable replanting has been necessary and the average maturity of the crop has generally been delayed by unfavorable growing conditions. Light harvesting is expected to start around the middle of April.

STRAWBERRIES: Winter (Fla.) Shipments declined during the first half of March and while growing conditions have not been favorable during the last few weeks, fairly steady supplies are in prospect during the remainder of March. The principal source of supply will be the Plant City-Wauchula-Webster section. Harvesting during April will depend largely on market conditions and competition from other sections. In the Starke-Lawtey section of North Florida, cold, wet weather has greatly curtailed harvesting during the past few weeks. This small producing section should reach active harvesting during the latter part of March and should continue to be a source of light supplies throughout April.

Early Spring (La., Ala., Tex., Calif.) Progress of the Louisiana crop has been further delayed by cool weather. Shipments have been light and heavy movement is not expected before the end of March. Because of cooler weather and rain, California's crop is not as early this year as it was in 1951. While some picking may start the latter part of March in Southern California, no significant supplies will be produced. Plants in all sections are beginning to bloom but have not yet developed a heavy crop of blossoms. April supplies are expected to be lighter than in 1951.

Mid-Spring (S.C., N.C., Tenn., Ark., Okla., Kans., Mo., Ill., Ky., Va., Md., Del., Calif.) In South Carolina, plants are in good condition and prospects for a good crop continue. Plants are blooming rather freely and a fair set of berries had formed by March 15. Shipping is expected to begin around April 15. The present outlook for North Carolina's crop is good. Frost on the night of March 15 did very little, if any, damage as practically no blooms had opened. Fertilization and mulching have been delayed by heavy rains and only about 40 percent of the crop had been mulched by mid-March. Activity of the red spider has been very light. Full bloom is expected about the first week in April, and with favorable weather conditions picking should begin around April 20, reaching volume around the first week of May. Development of the Tennessee plants has been delayed somewhat by cool, wet weather. The delay has probably been beneficial since blooms are often killed in the first or second week of April. Some early blooms were killed on March 5. Beds damaged by drought last summer and poor stands in some fields are likely to result in below average yields this season. Reports indicate that the drought damage was greater in West Tennessee than in other areas.

TOMATOES: Winter (Fla.) Harvesting is rapidly drawing to a close and will finish up in early April. Quality of current marketings are very variable with large to small sizes.

Early Spring (Fla., Tex., Calif.) In Florida, plantings in Dade County have made a fair recovery from the unfavorable growing conditions of recent weeks. This acreage is expected to furnish a good volume during April and early May. In the Immokalee section, the spring crop has made a fair recovery and harvesting should start in early April with the bulk of the crop getting into active harvest by mid-April. The Fort Pierce-Okeechobee-Indiantown spring crop is in fair to good condition. Light harvesting is expected to get underway in late March with most of the crop ready for picking around mid-April. The Manatee-Ruskin section is expected to start harvesting in late March, but it will be late April before volume production is reached. Crops in the Wauchula-Plant City section are in fair condition and are in about the same stage of advancement as the main acreage in the Manatee-Ruskin section. The crop around Webster is mostly set or thinned. In the Oxford-Belleview-Ocala section, plantings are very irregular. Considerable replanting has been necessary and the crops have generally been retarded. Progress of the Lower Valley crop in Texas was seriously retarded by the late February cold spell

TOMATOES: Early Spring (Cont'd.) that brought light to heavy frosts over most of the Valley. The lowest temperatures were in the west end of the Valley where plantings are the heaviest and plants of all ages were damaged. There was considerable advanced acreage with plants holding a fair set and with plants in bloom. These plants were damaged to some extent, although not completely destroyed. Some younger plants on acreages that had been thinned were killed, but no total loss of acreage from frost alone was reported. There was some acreage, however, with only fair stands as a result of the limited water supply, on which additional plant losses from the frosts made it impracticable to hold the acreage for production. Prior to the cold spell harvesting was expected to begin the early part of March but now very little production is expected until after the middle of April. Most fields at Niland in Imperial Valley, California were pruned back in February. Recent temperatures have been too low to favor a heavy set and early production may be quite light. No significant supplies will be available until late April.

Late Spring (Tex., La., Miss., S.C., Ga., Ala.) In Texas, conditions during the past two weeks were generally favorable. Exceptions were the Falfurrias section, where high winds during the second week in March caused some damage, and the Ingleside section, where moisture is deficient. The Yoakum crop is in exceptionally good condition, being a little further advanced than usual at this date. In the Marlin and Bremond sections, setting of plants to the fields was started the week of March 10, and both areas have favorable moisture conditions. Transferring of plants to cold frames has started in the area around Jacksonville, and most of the land in this area is ready for setting of plants. Hot-bed plants in the Avery section are in good condition, and some will be ready for the cold frames soon after the middle of March. Most sections have ample moisture for transplanting to get a good start.

Early Summer (11 States) In California, planting has been completed in the Southern San Joaquin Valley but is continuing at Merced. Recent frosts have served to retard plant development, but as fields were protected by caps or firing, no damage occurred. In San Diego County, planting of covered fields has been completed but open acreage is still being set. Plant beds in Tennessee are making good growth and should be ready for transplanting at the usual time.

WATERMELONS: Late Spring (Calif., Fla.) The condition of the Florida crop is very irregular as the result of adverse weather for growing and favorable conditions for disease (mostly gummy stem blight). In the South Florida sections, some early plantings are making good growth and have set young melons, but condition of most of the crops is just fair. In the central Florida area, considerable replanting has been necessary. There are a few well advanced fields, but most of the acreage is late with spotted stands. In north Florida, some acreage is up and some replanting is being done. Present prospects are for a light movement of early melons. Most of the acreage will be later than usual.

LATE REPORT FROM ALABAMA

Temperatures during the past two weeks have generally been below normal. Light frosts were frequent early in the period in central and northern areas, but no freezes occurred in the south where early truck crops have been planted. Rainfall has been heavy.

COMMERCIAL EARLY IRISH POTATOES: Planting of this crop was completed in Escambia County during the first half of March, after much delay from wet soils. The bulk of the acreage in Baldwin County is up and the crop generally is making satisfactory progress.

STRAWBERRIES: The outlook for strawberries continues bright, but cool weather has retarded development. Light harvesting is taking place in the South Alabama area and movement in volume will begin about April 1.

CABBAGE: This crop is at peak production, although movement has been restricted by market conditions. Quality is generally good, although some heads are small as a result of the dry weather last winter. The late crop has had a favorable growing season.

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