



Commercial Truck Crops

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COMMERCIAL TRUCK CROPS FOR FRESH MARKET TRUCK CROP NEWS -- MARCH 1, 1952

Weather conditions in the winter and spring vegetable areas from Texas east were generally unfavorable for planting and for growth of truck crops during the latter half of February, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. Conditions in California were generally favorable during the same period but cool nights slightly retarded crop growth in Arizona. In Florida strong cold winds, followed by a heavy frost in some sections of North Florida, with scattered light frost extending into South Florida damaged tender plants. Frost did some damage to the Louisiana crops, but the cool weather was of benefit to cabbage and shallots. The Southeastern States, generally, received more rain than was needed and planting was delayed. Accompanying cool temperatures curtailed growth. Low temperatures and frost also did damage in Texas, but cool weather and rain improved growing conditions for late plantings of broccoli, cabbage, and spinach. Added moisture made possible the planting of onions in areas previously too dry. California vegetable producing sections experienced cool weather with scattered light frosts in mid-February, but temperatures in this State during most of the past two weeks have been favorable for the growth and development of vegetable crops.

Rains in North Carolina stopped potato planting during most of the last two weeks in February and on March 1 most fields were still too wet to work. Temperatures generally were too low to stimulate growth and most truck crop growers regard crop progress as behind schedule. Warm, sunny weather is badly needed in all early truck producing sections.

In South Carolina, Tennessee and Alabama rainfall was frequent and heavy during the last half of February. Field work was delayed and growth of crops retarded. The cold weather in Mississippi caused little damage to growing crops and progress was generally favorable.

Growing conditions in the vegetable producing sections of Florida during the second half of February have generally been unfavorable. Rainfall has been adequate to excessive and soil moisture is generally ample at this time. Temperatures have been near normal, but on the morning of February 27, strong cold winds caused considerable damage to tender foliage in all producing sections. This period of cold winds was followed by rather low temperatures on the morning of February 28 with heavy frost reported in some sections of North Florida and scattered light frost extending into South Florida. The growth of tender crops has generally been retarded by the unfavorable conditions but actual damage by the frost was comparatively light. Quality has been impaired and diseases have become more active and more difficult to control. Hardy crops have been less seriously affected and have generally made fair to good progress except in localities where the rainfall has been excessive and the soil has been too wet. In spite of these adverse conditions, total vege-

table shipments from the State during the second half of the month held at about the same level as during the previous semi-monthly period. There was some fluctuation in individual commodities with potatoes and corn showing a considerable increase while tomato shipments declined.

In Louisiana, nights were cool and moisture excessive during the last half of February. Frosts and freezing temperatures in the Hammond-Ponchatoula-Amite area on the morning of February 28 destroyed a large portion of the strawberry blooms and berries but did not materially damage the plants. With no further weather setbacks heavy movement of the crop is expected the last week of March. Cool weather was beneficial to cabbage and shallots. Harvest of winter shallots will be practically over by March 8, and shipment of the spring crop should be heavy by that time. Harvest of the cabbage crop in the New Orleans area picked up during the last half of February, and harvest in volume in the Breaux Bridge-Arnaudville area is expected about March 24. Planting of snap beans has been delayed because of too much moisture.

Progress of all early spring plantings of commercial vegetables in Texas was seriously retarded and some damage resulted from low temperatures and frosts the morning of February 27. Effects of this cold wave were more general in the lower Rio Grande Valley where plantings of spring crops were more extensive. Light to heavy frosts occurred over the entire Lower Valley, whereas only light scattered frosts occurred in the Winter Garden section which is considerably farther north and is usually more susceptible to damage from cold waves that reach into the southern areas. The important crops affected are the Lower Valley early spring tomato and potato crops, which were both well advanced, and the sweet corn crop that was knee high in many fields. The extent of damage cannot be fully appraised at this time because of the variation in rainfall that fell in the Valley the day preceding the cold spell and the degree of frost in the various areas, also the different stages of growth of plants. The rainfall was more extensive in the west end of the Valley than in the center and east end, with moisture for the area as a whole being less than was needed. A favorable feature of developments during the past two weeks is an improved moisture situation in the dry-land onion areas. Considerable tonnage and some total acreage of recently matured cabbage was being abandoned, and some fields of broccoli were being permitted to go to seed. Supplies of beets and carrots were plentiful and harvest of lettuce was fairly active in both the Valley and Winter Garden sections.

Weather conditions in Arizona during the last half of February were characterized by above normal daytime temperatures. Nights continued cool, however, and growth of crops was somewhat retarded. The first of March again brought cool weather with a good rain over the Salt River Valley area and in the mountain watershed. The rain was sufficient to take the place of an irrigation and added to the storage supply behind the dams. Current production consists mostly of lettuce and carrots from Yuma, and a light volume of carrots and celery with an occasional car of cabbage from Phoenix.

After the cool weather and scattered light frosts of mid-February, temperatures in California during most of the past two weeks have been favorable for the growth and development of vegetable crops. All crops are at normal stages of development at this time and if March weather is favorable, a relatively early spring vegetable season is possible in all of the various producing districts of the State. Only a limited amount of rainfall has been received during the past two weeks giving growers an opportunity to prepare seed beds, plant and cultivate. In many sections of Central and Northern California field operations have been off schedule because of heavy winter rains and some growers have been forced to alter their 1952 crop acreage plans. However, at the present time it does not appear likely that there will be any shortage of spring vegetables in California. Growers have completed planting of spring crops and the seeding and setting of vegetable and melon crops for summer harvest has begun. The production of winter vegetables is declining rapidly and the harvest season on major crops will be concluded in some districts during the next two weeks. The over-all production of California vegetables will decline during March and will not show any appreciable increase until harvest on spring crops becomes active in April.

ASPARAGUS: Early Spring (4 States) South Carolina's small acreage is in good condition with light harvest just beginning. Due to the limited acreage, volume will be small.

LIIMA BEANS: Winter (Fla.) The small winter lima bean crop in the Pompano-Delray section is only in fair condition. Quality has mostly been poor to fair and this condition is expected to continue for several weeks.

SNAP BEANS: Winter (Fla.) The snap bean crop in the Pompano and Dade County sections is only in fair condition. These crops were just coming out of the setback received by the storm in early February when the cold winds of February 27 caused a further setback. The quality of beans during the past few weeks has generally been poor to fair and the recent unfavorable weather will cause these conditions to continue during most of the first half of March. In addition to impairing the quality, the recent cold winds will cause some reduction in yield, particularly to those crops which were in the blooming stage. The small acreage of late winter beans in the Everglades section is generally in fair condition. Light harvesting now in progress will continue light during the first half of March and reach a fair volume during the second half of the month. That acreage of the winter pole bean crop in Dade County for harvest during March has made some recovery from the damage caused by the early February storm. The recent cold winds caused some additional damage to this crop, but the supplies from this area should increase as the month progresses.

Early Spring (Tex. Fla.) Planting of snap beans in the earliest section of the Lower Valley of Texas, which usually starts the early part of February, has been delayed by lack of sufficient water for irrigation. Only light rains were received in the east end of the Valley the latter part of February and the water supply is still being restricted in all areas. Any further delay will probably result in lighter than usual acreage for the area. Most sections outside of the Valley, although somewhat improved from a moisture standpoint, will need additional rains before planting will become general. Practically all of the usual acreage outside of the Valley is in non-irrigated areas. Planting of the spring crop of snap beans in the important Everglades section of Florida is nearing completion although it is expected that some seeding will continue until around the middle of March. The acreage in this section for spring harvest is slightly reduced from the plantings of last spring. Late planting of snap beans in the Pompano and Dade County sections was largely completed by the week ending February 23. These young plantings are in poor to good condition. Planting of snap beans in the Central Florida area has mostly been completed. In North Florida most of the acreage has been seeded, but wet lands has caused some delay and it is expected that seeding will continue into March. The spring pole bean crop in Dade County is generally in fair to good condition. Seeding was practically finished by the first of March. In the Manatee-Ruskin-Plant City area, most of the acreage has been planted and some of the oldest fields are now being staked.

Mid-Spring (6 States) Planting of the Louisiana crop has been delayed because of excessive rains.

BEETS: Winter (Tex.) Heavy supplies of good quality beets are available in practically all irrigated sections, with the bulk of the acreage being in the Lower Valley. Considerable tonnage is being shipped as topped stock but supplies are ample for good quality bunched beets. If the present acreage is held there will be production for shipments to continue active through most of April.

BEETS; Spring (4 States) (Cont'd) North Carolina's beet crop is up to a good stand. Growth has been slow due to cool, wet weather. Harvest is expected to begin early in May. In South Carolina, beets are in various stages of growth as a result of earlier cold weather and much replanting. Harvest is expected to begin around March 20, increasing in volume by the end of the month.

CABBAGE: Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., Fla.) Production is available in heavy volume in all sections of the Lower Valley of Texas. The quality of considerable acreage has deteriorated, however, because of lack of water for irrigation. With many very small sizes and some immature heads, much of this tonnage is not meeting present market grade requirements. Considerable tonnage was being left in partially-harvested fields the latter part of February and some total acreage was abandoned, with prospects for further abandonment the early part of March. Despite these losses, considerable tonnage of good quality cabbage remains in the areas that were able to obtain water for irrigation, and some young acreage is being held for late March and probably early April harvest. Prospects for some of the later maturing crops were improved by the late February rains, particularly in the west end of the Valley, but additional moisture will be needed to assure good yield and quality from the remaining acreage. Unless further improvement develops soon, it is doubtful that all of the present acreage will be harvested. The condition of the cabbage crop in Florida continues to be generally good. However, slow market conditions have caused some postponement in harvesting and some fields are becoming overripe. Shipments during the second half of the month held at about the same level as during the previous semi-monthly period. However, a more active demand would have produced an increased volume. Continued good volume is in prospect from the State throughout the month of March and substantial late plantings are expected to provide a good volume during April and early May.

Early Spring (La., Miss., Ala., Ga., S.C.) The volume of harvest of Louisiana cabbage in the New Orleans area has increased during the past two weeks. Shipment in volume in the Breaux Bridge-Arnaudville area is expected to begin around March 24. The Alabama crop got off to a slow start due to lack of moisture at time of setting, but the growing season since has generally been favorable. Harvesting of the early planted acreage is underway in Baldwin and Mobile Counties. Peak movement is expected about the second week of March. The spring cabbage crop in South Carolina is in fair to good condition after suffering from earlier cold and wet weather. Reports indicate that plants are prematurely forming small heads which is expected to reduce yields. First movement is expected in the Charleston-Beaufort area March 20-25.

Late Spring (8 States) By March 1 most of North Carolina's cabbage crop had been set, and resetting was general throughout the area. Most home-grown plants were killed by November and January freezes. Plants were difficult to obtain at setting time and many of the shipped-in plants were damaged. As a result, survival was low and stands generally are ragged. In Carteret and Pamlico most of the acreage has been set to Copenhagen, while the Weeksville-Currituck acreage is set to round Dutch variety. Condition of the crop is only fair and warm sunny days are needed to stimulate growth. With favorable weather conditions, harvest should begin around the first of May. Wet weather in Tennessee has retarded the setting of plants in the field and setting is about a week to 10 days later than usual. Only a small percentage of the acreage had been set by March 1. Plants are in fair condition.

CANTALOUPS: Mid-Summer (12 States) Considerable acreage was planted in the early sections of Texas--Lower Valley, Laredo, and Winter Garden-- starting around mid-February, and some plantings were up to a good stand when the cold spell of February 27 occurred. Much of the acreage in the Laredo and Winter Garden sections was covered in advance of the cold spell and damage in these areas was slight. Most of the plantings in the Lower Valley were in the west end of the Valley where temperatures were lower and frost more general than other areas and some total loss of acreage was reported. Very little acreage has been planted in the early non-irrigated sections, but with the recent improved moisture situation in these areas, considerable planting will take place, starting the early part of March. Planting in the later areas is not expected to get started until after mid-March.

CARROTS: Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., La., Fla.) Supplies of carrots are plentiful in both the Lower Valley and Winter Garden irrigated districts of Texas and the small acreage in the non-irrigated Coastal Bend has held up well despite the long period of dry weather. Development of some crops in the Valley has been retarded by lack of water for irrigation and some of the matured carrots in these dry areas have been utilized as topped stock, mainly because of the irregular root growth. There has been sufficient acreage that has had enough irrigation to produce ample supplies of good quality crops for bunched stock. Prospects were improved over much of the west end of the Valley as a result of rains the latter part of February, and if all of the present growing acreage is held for production, there will be ample supplies for active movement for the next two months. Crops in the Winter Garden have had ample irrigation from wells and considerable production in this area is being marketed as packaged carrots. The small acreage in the Coastal Bend was improved by the late February rains.

CAULIFLOWER: Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., Fla.) The condition of the cauliflower crop remaining for harvest in Florida is fair to good. The active shipping season is rapidly drawing to a close, but some late plantings will provide a fair volume throughout most of March with shipments falling off rapidly after the middle of the month.

CELERY: Winter (Fla., Calif., Ariz.) Florida celery yields have shown improvement during the past few weeks in response to the improved moisture conditions and cooler weather. If the weather continues cool, this improvement in yields should hold on the remainder of the acreage for winter harvest.

Spring (Fla., Calif.) Setting of spring celery in the Florida Everglades section was practically finished by March 1. Some transplanting continues at Zellwood, Oviedo and in the North Florida muckland sections.

SWEET CORN: Winter (Fla.) The remaining acreage of winter corn, principally for harvest during March, in South Florida is in ordinary to fair condition. Unfavorable growing conditions and disease have definitely reduced yield prospects. The volume during the second half of February improved sharply over the shipments of the previous semi-monthly period and the movement from the State should continue to show a gradual increase as the crop in the important Everglades section comes into active harvest. Shipments from the Pompano, Dade County, and Fort Myers-Immokalee sections are expected to decline rather sharply after the middle of March. The Everglades section is the principal source of supply at this time and will continue to hold this position throughout the balance of the winter period.

SWEET CORN: Spring (Fla.) (Cont'd) Planting of the spring crop in the important Everglades section has largely been completed, but some seeding will continue until around the middle of March. Indications are for a slight increase in plantings in this area over that planted last spring. Growers have made an effort to extend their planting season over a rather long period of time, but the bulk of the acreage was seeded during the period from the middle of January to the first of March. That acreage which is up and growing is generally looking good and only a limited acreage was affected by the recent cold. In the Manatee-Ruskin section, most of the acreage has been planted, but some seeding will continue until the middle of March. Light harvesting is expected to start around mid-April. In the important Zellwood section, planting got actively underway during the last week of February.

CUCUMBERS: Winter (Fla.) The adverse weather conditions in early February severely damaged the winter acreage of cucumbers in South Florida. Most of this acreage was killed and the yields on the small acreage remaining drastically reduced. Very light supplies of Florida grown cucumbers will be available during March. These supplies will come from small scattered acreages in the Immokalee-Fort Myers, Fort Pierce-Indiantown, Pompano, and Dade County sections. Imports from Cuba which are being repacked at points along the East Coast will constitute the bulk of the shipments moving from the State.

Early Spring (Fla., Tex.) Much replanting of spring cucumbers was necessitated in the South Florida areas by the adverse weather conditions of early February. Plantings in the Fort Myers-Immokalee area have been fairly heavy and these crops were generally making fair to good progress until the heavy rains of February 26 and the cold winds of the following day. This adverse weather caused considerable damage to the young crop. Very little loss is expected from outright drowning, but the crops are generally delayed and very favorable growing conditions will be necessary for a satisfactory recovery. Harvesting of the spring crop should start around the first of April. Spring plantings in the Pompano and Fort Pierce sections are only in fair condition. The earliest of these spring plantings should provide a light production in late March. The covered acreage in the Wauchula and Webster sections is generally reported to be making fair progress with light harvesting expected to start the second half of March. Open field plantings in the Wauchula section were mostly made in early February with some planting continuing into the latter part of the month. Most of these plantings are reported to have come through the recent adverse weather in fair condition. In the Manatee-Ruskin section, most of the late winter plantings were killed by the adverse weather of early February. Plantings for spring harvest started in mid-February with most of the acreage being planted in late February and early March. Indications are for a reduced acreage in this section. Plantings around Plant City are also expected to be slightly less than last year. The open field acreage in the Webster section is expected to show a slight increase over last year with most of the plantings going in in late February. Planting in North Florida started in late February, but some delay has been caused by wet fields. Most of the Texas acreage is planted in the non-irrigated area of the Coastal Bend where surface moisture was very deficient for several weeks. Some acreage, however, was dry planted and a large part of the area received sufficient moisture the latter part of February to germinate these plantings, with the section around Sandia receiving good rains. A limited area has enough moisture for these crops to get a good start, but the area as a whole will need additional moisture to assure a crop. Very few crops were advanced enough to be hurt by the recent cold spell.

EGGPLANT: Winter (Fla.) The quality of the harvestings in the important Pompano section were just beginning to improve from the damage caused by the early February storm when the high winds of February 27 occurred. These strong winds are expected to lower the quality for the next few weeks. The plants are generally in fair condition and if growers give them the usual care and attention, they will continue to provide a good volume well into the spring season. In the Fort Myers section harvest has passed the peak, quality and sizes are generally on the decline. Most growers are apparently not making any effort to prolong the bearing period of their crops.

Spring (Fla.) In the South Florida areas, the younger acreage in the Pompano and Everglades section is in fair condition. These younger crops will furnish most of the production for spring harvest in the South Florida area. Young plantings in the Plant City and Manatee sections are in fair to good condition.

ESCAROLE: Winter (Fla.) The escarole and chicory crops are generally in fair to good condition. In a few cases, excessive moisture has caused heavy trimming, but in general, current yields are now good. Slow market demand has resulted in delayed harvesting and some shippers are only cutting on orders. A continued good volume is in prospect during March and most of April.

LETTUCE: Winter (Ariz., Calif., Fla., Texas) Supplies of good quality lettuce are available in the Lower Valley and Winter Garden sections of Texas, but carlot shipments from the main winter acreage during the balance of the season will be light. The usual light acreage for late season harvest in the Winter Garden is in good condition and shipments from this area will continue through March, but most of the Valley crop is expected to be over by the early part of this month. In Florida the bulk of the winter lettuce crop has been harvested. However, light supplies from late plantings will continue during March and well into April.

Early Spring (Ariz., Calif., Ga., S.C., N.C.) Most of North Carolina's lettuce crop had been transplanted or sown in the fields by March 1. Plants have made slow growth this year both in the beds and in the fields. Some resetting has been necessary due to poor plant survival. The percent of the crop sown in the field is much smaller than usual this year. Although growth has been slow, the crop generally is in good condition and about on schedule. Harvest will begin about April 20 in the St. Helena-Wilmington area and about May 10 in the Elizabeth City area where a small commercial acreage is being grown. Prospects in South Carolina are generally good. The crop is in various stages of growth but harvest is expected to begin around April 1.

ONIONS: Early Spring (Texas) Prospects were materially improved in all non-irrigated onion areas and crops in the irrigated sections continued to make good progress. The cool spell the latter part of February may retard maturity of some of the most advanced crops, but the delay is not expected to be significant. All sections have some acreage, with onions from two to three weeks earlier than usual, but the beginning of harvest is uncertain. A few fields in the Coastal Bend could furnish considerable production by mid-March by spot pulling, and the usual early acreage in the west end of the Lower Valley may be harvested the first few days in March. The main Raymondville acreage is not expected to be in production until late March and early April, but the few fields in this area that

ONIONS: Early Spring (Cont'd) had access to irrigation are well advanced. Crops in the Laredo section are in all stages of growth, but there is considerable acreage that could be ready for complete acreage harvest around March 20 if favorable growing weather prevails. An occasional field in the Winter Garden shows promise of late March harvest but most crops in this area are not expected to be ready until early April. In the Eagle Pass section most crops were planted later than in other irrigated areas but all plantings have made good growth. The late February rains in the Coastal Bend are expected to be sufficient to assure production from all plantings in the important area around Mathis, and prospects were materially improved for all the acreage around Robstown and Corpus Christi. Although rainfall at reporting stations in the Raymondville section was light, many localities received good rains and prospects for the entire area indicate that most of the intended onion acreage will be planted. Considerable acreage was being used for green onions the latter part of February.

Late Spring: (Calif., Ariz., La., Texas, Ga.) Prospects were improved over much of the north Texas onion area by the late February rains, with the most improvement in the southern part of the area. Only light rains were received in the area north of Dallas, but most of the early plantings in this area are in good condition as a result of earlier rains. Plantings in the north Texas area are lighter than usual and are confined to areas favored with moisture satisfactory for transplanting. Although plants are abundant and moisture conditions are improved in the southern part of the area, very little additional acreage is expected to be planted.

GREEN PEAS: Early Spring (Calif., Miss., Ga., S.C., N.C., Va.) The small crop of green peas in South Carolina is in good condition but needs warmer weather for best development.

PEPPERS: Winter (Fla.) Prospective yields in the important Pompano section were generally lowered by the adverse weather of early February and further reduced by the strong cold winds of February 27. The volume from the State during the second half of February held at about the same level as for the previous semi-monthly period. It would have been materially larger if adverse weather had not occurred. A good volume is in prospect from this section during March. Harvesting is well over the peak in the Fort Myers section. The acreage in the Everglades is in fair to good condition and will continue to be a source of light supplies during the remainder of the winter period.

Spring (Fla.) Late plantings in the Pompano section, which will provide supplies during the spring season, are in fair to good condition although some setback was incurred by the recent cold winds. The younger acreage in the Everglades is also in fair to good condition. In the important Plant City area, most of the spring acreage has been set. The crop is generally well advanced with light harvesting expected in late March. In the Webster section, transplanting has been completed. Some resetting was necessary due to frost in early February.

Summer (La., Miss., Ga., N.C., S.C.) Pepper beds have been seeded in North Carolina and seeds generally have germinated.

COMMERCIAL EARLY IRISH POTATOES: Winter (Texas, Fla.) In Florida's important Dade County section, harvesting is at its peak and should continue at this level throughout most of March with some digging expected to continue into April. Early digging and dry weather have combined to produce yields much below the high levels of last season.

Early Spring: (Fla., Tex.) In the important Hastings section of Florida, recent weather has not been too favorable for potato development. In some of the poorly drained fields, crops are showing the effects of too much rain, otherwise fair to good progress is being made. It is possible that some early fields will be dug in late March. At LaCrosse, most of the acreage is up to a stand. In the Everglades, the spring crop is making fair to good progress and setting a good crop of tubers. Crops in the Balm and Indiantown sections have had too much rain. Progress of most of the Texas early spring crop was exceptionally good until the cold spell of February 27 which brought moderate to heavy frosts over much of the Valley. Most of the acreage is in the eastern end of the Valley where only light frosts occurred. Some plants were damaged and harvest will be delayed but no loss of acreage is expected. Part of the acreage in this area is expected to be ready for harvest about March 20, and the remaining acreage in early April. The acreage around Raymondville that had been retarded somewhat by lack of irrigation water was improved by the rains that preceded the cold spell. Planes were used to keep the air moving during the short frost period.

Late Spring: (Calif., La., Miss., Ala., Ga., S. Car., Tex., Okla., Ark., Tenn., N. Car.) In the Coastal Counties of Alabama, growers made good progress in January and early February in planting potatoes. Rainy weather since February 15 caused some delay but the bulk of the acreage was planted prior to that date. Most fields are beginning to show young plants but very few are up to a stand. There was some fear of seed rotting in the ground due to the cool, wet weather of the past two weeks; however, none has been reported and if the weather continues favorable for the next few days, this crop will be off to a good start. In the Charleston area of South Carolina, planting is about 90 percent complete. Due to excessive moisture, rotting of seed has occurred in varying degrees and some replanting has been necessary. Moisture conditions are improved in most of the early sections of Texas' late spring areas and planting in these sections will start the early part of March. Most mid-season areas also received needed rains the last week in February and planting in these areas will start about mid-March. Most late areas need additional moisture, but planting in these areas seldom starts until late March and early April. In North Carolina, frequent heavy rains during the latter half of February stopped planting. Percent completeness of planting before March 1 varies from practically nil in Pamlico County to 90 percent or more in Currituck. In the Weeksville area, about 25 percent of the acreage has been planted and about three-fourths of the crop was planted in the Mt. Olive and Carteret areas. Some growers are concerned over the possibility of seed pieces now in the ground rotting due to the extremely wet soils throughout the producing areas. With favorable weather, most planting should be completed within the next ten days. The crop is about a week later than normal.

SHALLOTS: Winter & Spring (Louisiana) Cool weather during the month of March was beneficial to Louisiana shallots. Harvest of the winter crop will be practically over by March 7, but shipments of the spring crop should be heavy by that time.

SPINACH: Winter (Tex., La., Calif., Miss.) Production in Texas for the remainder of the season will come from the Winter Garden and Eagle Pass irrigated sections. The small acreage remaining in the Raymondville and Lower Valley areas is not furnishing production sufficient for mixed car loadings, and harvest is over in the Coastal Bend. The good quality of the Winter Garden crop

SPINACH: Winter (Continued) has been maintained and prospective supplies for March harvest are expected to continue to be of good quality. Shipments from the Eagle Pass section have been light, but there is considerable acreage in that area for March harvest, and with continued good growing weather, some production may extend into early April.

Spring: (9 States) Due to an unusually mild winter in Arkansas, a considerable volume of fall planted spinach has moved to market since January 1. Movement was rather light during most of January but the volume picked up considerably in February. Weather conditions have been favorable for planting spring spinach. Much of it is up and prospects at this time are very promising.

SQUASH: Winter (Florida) Shipments during the second half of February improved slightly over the volume for the previous semi-monthly period. The cold strong winds of February 27 caused some damage to the crops due for harvest in March, but a fair to good volume continues in prospect. Supplies during March will come principally from the lower East Coast sections supplemented by a light volume from the West Coast sections.

Spring: (Florida) The crop in the important Plant City section is well advanced. Occasional early plantings will be ready for harvest during the first half of March, but it will be late March before harvesting becomes active. In the McIntosh section of North Florida, most fields are just coming up.

STRAWBERRIES: Winter (Florida) The volume moved from Florida during the second half of February held at about the same level as for the previous semi-monthly period. Yields have generally been below expectations and much of the prospective production has been lost from decay due to excessive moisture. A good volume is expected to continue during March from the Plant City-Mauchula-Webster area. In the Starke-Lawtey section of North Florida, cold weather and rains sharply reduced the volume during February. Plants are now showing an abundance of bloom with a fair amount of green fruit. With favorable weather, this small acreage should get into active harvest by mid-March.

Early Spring: (La., Ala., Tex., Calif.) Progress of the Louisiana crop was delayed by light frosts during the first and third weeks of February plus a heavy frost and a few hours of freezing temperature on the morning of February 27. Damage to the plants themselves from the February 27 freeze was negligible, but fruit and blooms on the bushes received considerable damage of varying extent from field to field. Berries have been available for small shipments. Minor shipments will continue from berries not nipped by the frost, but heavy shipments from the new blooms can not be expected before March 22. Prospects for Alabama strawberries appear generally bright at this time. While there was considerable blooming during the mild weather in January, killing frosts were frequent enough to prevent any out of season production. A few berries in the South Alabama area have been marketed but little volume is expected before the middle of March.

Mid-Spring: (S. Car., N. Car., Tenn., Ark., Okla., Kans., Mo., Ill., Ky., Va., Md., Del., Calif.) Plants in South Carolina were in a good, healthy condition and blooming on March 1. Prospects are bright for a good crop. North Carolina's strawberry crop was just coming out of the dormant stage by the end of February. Red spider infestation is quite heavy this year and losses in some stands have been rather severe. Growers generally are dusting or spraying, however, and making good progress in controlling damage. A few blooms are beginning to appear, and with favorable weather light harvest will begin the second week of April. Growers expect to start mulching as soon as fields are dry

STRAWBERRIES: Mid-Spring (Continued) enough to work. Yield prospects in Tennessee are almost normal even though dry weather last fall caused some irregular stands. Many strawberry beds in Arkansas, especially the older ones, have been neglected, and prospects for such beds are not promising. Newer beds as a whole are in better condition but the stand of plants is thin and skippy in many beds, both old and new. Prospects at this time appear to be the least promising in the White County area and the most promising in Northwest Arkansas, including Searcy County. Beds have been blooming off and on during the very mild winter and harvest is expected to be early this year.

TOMATOES: Winter (Florida) Prospects for the remaining winter tomato crop (mostly that acreage to be harvested during March) are very uncertain. In the Dade County, Dania-Hallandale, and Immokalee sections, the storm of early February seriously damaged the plants. The weather immediately following the storm was very favorable for blight to attack the weakened plants. Growers generally had arrested this condition by the latter part of the month. On February 27, strong cold winds again whipped the plants. Dampness and wet lands have caused considerable loss from ground rot. Cullage has generally been heavy and recent yields light. Yields on the acreage for harvest during March will continue to be light even with favorable weather. The volume from the State during the second half of February was down 20 to 25 percent from the previous semi-monthly period and indications are that a downward trend will continue during most of March.

Early Spring: (Fla., Tex., Calif.) In Florida, the late plantings in Dade County, which are expected to supply some production during the spring months, are in poor to fair condition. Most fields show the effects of the adverse weather during February. Growers generally are having fair success in controlling blight. In the Immokalee section, the spring crop had made a fair recovery by the latter part of February. However, moderate to heavy rains fell in this section on February 28 and on the following day strong cold winds whipped the plants. Yield prospects were lowered. Harvesting is expected to start in late March. The spring crop in the Fort Pierce area is generally in fair to good condition. This section experienced light to moderate rains and strong winds during the latter part of the month, but no particularly damaging effects have been reported. Some blight has been reported, but growers generally have this situation under control. Planting has been extended over a longer than usual period of time and some acreage is just being thinned. Possibly ten percent of the acreage will be ready for harvest during the last week of March with the bulk of the crop ready by mid-April. The spring crop in the Manatee-Ruskin section has been subjected to about the same weather conditions as the Fort Pierce section. This section has had considerable blight and much resetting was necessary. Blight generally was under control prior to the recent rains and cold winds. Light harvesting is expected to begin during the last week of March, but it will be late April before volume production is reached. In the Wauchula section, most of the acreage has just been thinned. In the Webster-Oxford section, the crop is mostly in the thinning stage. The unusually early prospective tomato crop from the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas received a jolt the morning of February 27 in the form of moderate to heavy frosts that prevailed for a short time in practically all areas. The extent of damage is still uncertain. Most of the Valley area was cloudy two days before the cold spell and light to moderate rains fell the day before in all sections. During the night of the low temperatures winds were fairly strong until well into the morning and the duration of the frost period was very short. A warm sun came out early, however, causing damage in varying degrees. Most of the damage was in the west end of the Valley where temperatures were the lowest and plantings the heaviest. Prior to the frost, tomato plants in the Valley were in all stages of growth and generally in good condition. Progress of some plantings had been retarded because of insufficient water for irrigation. However, many fields had

TOMATOES: Early Spring (Continued) ample water supply and plants were well advanced. Temperatures have been favorable all season for all plantings. Many of the earliest plantings would have furnished supplies by March 10 or 15 and a fairly large acreage would have been ready for late March and early April harvest. Most of the acreage for later harvest had been thinned to a good stand and these plants were in generally healthy condition. The prospective crop this year had been fully two months ahead of last year, and with reasonable recovery, a much larger crop than last year could still be produced. Total acreage losses are not expected but considerable loss of plants and killing of blooms, as well as some delay in maturity, is inevitable.

Late Spring: (Tex., La., Miss., S.Car., Ga., Ala.) Prospects for the late spring crop in Texas are of favorable. Seed beds have developed under favorable conditions and the number of plants that have been set to the cold frames came through the late February cold spell without any losses. Moisture conditions have developed favorably in most of the east Texas land that has been prepared for transplanting, and setting of plants to the fields can get underway at the usual time--the second half of March. Some plants from the Lower Valley have already been shipped into the early tomato sections of east Texas, which received ample moisture the latter part of February. A fairly large acreage is in prospect for the 1952 season, despite the unfavorable outcome of the late spring crop last year.

Early Summer: (11 States) Tennessee tomatoes are now being seeded in hot beds. Some are just coming up while some growers report good stands in the beds. Preparation of fields may be a week later than usual.

WATERMELONS: Late Spring (Calif., Fla.) In Florida, recent weather conditions generally have been unfavorable for the young watermelon crop. Progress since mid-February has been relatively slow due to wet fields and cold winds.

Early Summer: (12 States) In Texas, considerable acreage was up to a fairly good stand in the early sections, both irrigated and non-irrigated areas, at the time of the late February cold spell. However, a larger acreage than usual was capped and many growers applied temporary covers on part of their plantings, especially in low spots. Some loss of unprotected plantings was expected in most of the early sections but enough acreage was saved to provide a fairly good early volume. Moisture conditions were improved over most of the non-irrigated sections in late February, exceptions being the important Falfurrias and Riviera early sections where surface moisture was deficient before planting started the early part of the month. Conditions are favorable for active open-field planting in the Sandia Stockdale, Pearsall, and Pleasanton sections and most of the acreage in these areas will be planted by mid-March. Most mid-season areas had rains the latter part of February and growers that had their land prepared will be able to start planting at about the usual time, starting the latter part of March. Late areas have ample time for favorable conditions to develop.

Late Reports from Arizona, California, and Mississippi

ARIZONA:

CARROTS: Winter Volume continues light from both Phoenix and Yuma areas, with most of the Phoenix production going as topped stock. Spring fields coming on in the Salt River Valley look very good but will be a little later than last year in reaching volume shipments.

CELERY: Winter Celery is moving at the rate of about half a dozen cars a day. The crop is of excellent quality but prices are considerably lower than last year.

LETTUCE: Spring Volume of production at Yuma has increased to about 80 to 90 cars a day, about the same as a year ago. However, the Salt River Valley is not shipping any lettuce and is not expected to open the spring deal until about March 10, with the bulk movement not expected to start until about the end of the month.

CALIFORNIA:

ARTICHOKES: Winter Although production is increasing, supplies are relatively light for this time of year. While a further increase is expected during the next two weeks it appears likely that the spring crop will be lighter than normal due primarily to the effects of excessive moisture in the principal producing Castroville district. At the present time, quality is generally good with frost discoloration no longer a problem. However, excessive moisture in water-logged fields is reducing the carrying quality of buds.

ASPARAGUS: Early-Spring Cutting began in the Delta early in February but cool weather in mid-February has limited volume moved to date. Most supplies have been absorbed in local markets with only a limited volume being moved, largely by air express, to Eastern terminals. Cool weather during the past two days in the Delta has slowed spear development again and while the first cars may be shipped this week, no significant volume is expected. Some asparagus has been harvested during the past month from the smaller acreage available for cutting in Imperial Valley, Borrego Valley and in Orange County. These districts will not produce any significant volume at any time during the season.

BROCCOLI: Spring Harvest of the spring crop in Imperial Valley has been about completed but production is increasing in the Central Coast areas. Some excellent quality broccoli is available at the present time but the condition of the crop varies according to location. On heavy, poorly drained soils spring broccoli has not made normal progress to date and crop prospects in such fields are only fair.

CABBAGE: Winter Harvest of late fields in Imperial Valley will be completed in early-March. Production is increasing in the south coastal counties but due to limited market requirements, no active shipping deal has developed and most supplies are being used locally. Production during March can increase substantially as a considerable acreage reaches maturity.

CANTALOUPS: Spring Although cool weather in mid-February slowed the development of the crop in the Desert areas slightly, most fields have made good to excellent progress to date. Growers in the Blythe area who increased their covered plantings to a record level this year have been experiencing some difficulty in getting their crop thinned. Planting of the open acreage in Imperial Valley has been completed and only a small open acreage remains to be planted in the Blythe section.

CARROTS: Winter Production in Imperial Valley is being restricted by market conditions. There is considerable variation in the quality of carrots being moved from Imperial Valley with some showing rough roots and off-grade tops.

CAULIFLOWER: Spring Production has shown a considerable increase during the past two weeks. Most of the volume has been originating in the principal producing Santa Maria area but the Centerville district is now turning out a fair quantity. Spring strains are coming into production on schedule and most growers are now moving into fields planted for March harvest. Quality has been generally good but some fuzz has been apparent in all districts. During the last week in February, market prices declined and quick freezers are again taking delivery on cauliflower. Production for local market in the Los Angeles area appears to be about normal. Some carrots will be available in that area in March.

CELERY: Winter Production in the principal producing Chula Vista district is declining and practically all of the remaining acreage will be harvested by March 15. Quality has deteriorated in the past month and is only fair. In Orange County, production during March may show some increase as growers begin cutting fields which were allowed to regrow after January frosts. A small amount is being cut in the Southern San Joaquin Valley where frost damaged the crop considerably in January. Some of the acreage is being salvaged for hearts and the total volume remaining is small.

CELERY: Spring Setting of spring celery has been completed in the Venice area^{and} although planting was delayed in January due to flooding and wet fields, it is not likely that the usual harvest pattern will be affected materially. Planting of late-spring fields in Southern Los Angeles County is continuing and considerable acreage will be set this week. Early fields have made good progress and harvest should begin on schedule around April 1.

LETTUCE: Winter Production in Imperial Valley has been sustained at a higher level than anticipated during the past two weeks. This was due primarily to excellent growing weather which brought fields into production ahead of schedule and did not permit shipments to decline. Only a small acreage remains available for harvest and production will drop off rapidly during the first two weeks in March. At Blythe, cutting of the small late planted acreage is under way this week and harvest will be in full swing by March 10.

LETTUCE: Early Spring Early-spring lettuce in all sections of the State has made good to excellent progress to date. Cutting will probably begin at Delano, Oxnard and in local market districts in Southern California the last week in March but there will not be any significant carrot volume until early April. Acreage planted prior to January 1 has shown a considerable increase this year over other recent years and much of this acreage is expected to be available for cutting during April.

STRAWBERRIES: Spring Growers in all sections are active cleaning up their fields in preparation for the 1952 harvest season. Plants in all sections are beginning to bloom and in Southern California fields in warm localities show a light setting of berries. While there will be a light volume produced in March in Southern California, it will be April before appreciable supplies are available.

TOMATOES: Early Spring Imperial Valley production is at a low level since most growers are between crops. No appreciable increase in production is expected during March as most growers have pruned back their early acreage to increase spring production.

MISSISSIPPI:

CABBAGE: Early Spring Setting of plants in the fields is now practically complete and the Mississippi crop is off to a good start.

SPINACH: Winter Harvest of the crop in the Greenville, Mississippi, area is being retarded somewhat by wet fields. The crop continues in good condition. Movement is expected to continue through March and into April if conditions continue favorable.