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BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS  
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February 6, 1952

SPECIAL STORM DAMAGE REPORT  
FOR FLORIDA TRUCK CROPS

On Saturday night, February 3, a tropical disturbance struck south Florida vegetable producing sections. Highest winds occurred along the lower East Coast reaching 60 to 65 miles per hour in the Pompano and Dade County sections. In the Fort Myers-Immokalee and Everglades sections the winds were not so strong but high enough to be damaging to tender crops. Rainfall accompanying the storm ranged from  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 inches in the Dade County and Pompano sections to 3 inches in the Immokalee-Fort Myers section and 4 inches in the Everglades.

Early reports are to the effect that tender crops in all of these South Florida sections were badly whipped by the high winds and considerable damage was done to these crops by the wind and rain, particularly to those approaching and in the harvesting stage.

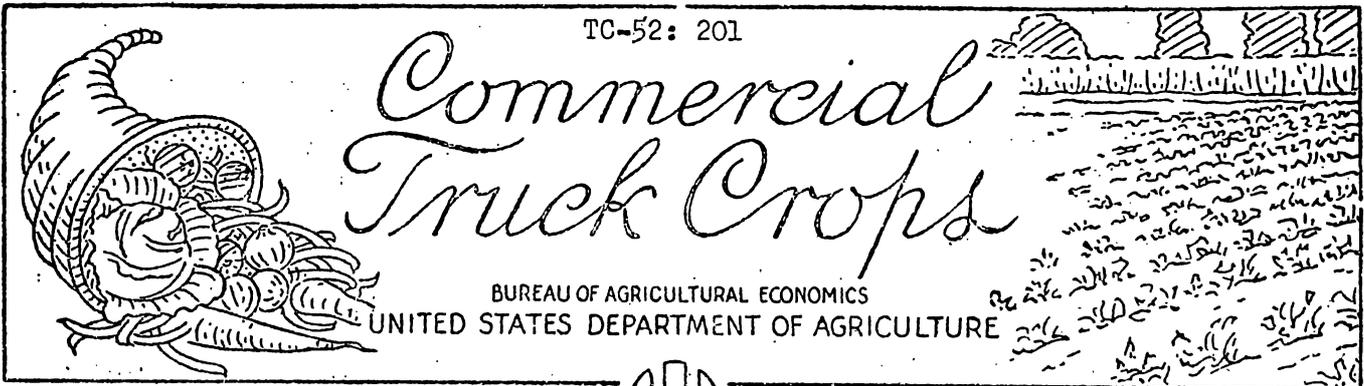
Damage to snap beans in the Pompano and Dade County sections was confined mainly to the quality of current harvestings and that to be picked during the first half of February. Yields during the second half of February will be reduced due to the loss of bloom and young buds. Pole beans in Dade County suffered extensive losses in quality and production with much of the staked acreage being blown over.

Pepper and eggplant bushes in the Pompano section were badly whipped and twisted by the high winds. Quality of marketings during the next few weeks will be lowered and early reports indicate that future production will be materially reduced.

Those tomato fields in the Dade County and Immokalee sections which were in the active and advanced harvesting stage were rather badly damaged. Yield prospects on these advanced crops will be materially reduced, but younger plantings are expected to overcome most of the set-back.

Much of the potato crop in Dade County had either reached or was nearing maturity at the time of the storm, but a considerable acreage of late plantings was only about half mature. Early opinions indicate that yields on these later plantings will be reduced.

In the Everglades section, damage was not extensive and was mostly confined to lowered quality of current harvestings.



Washington, D. C.



February 5, 1952

COMMERCIAL TRUCK CROPS FOR FRESH MARKET  
TRUCK CROP NEWS -- FEBRUARY 4, 1952

In the winter vegetable producing areas conditions during the second half of January were generally favorable for most commercial truck crops, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. In Florida, a brief cold period occurred during the last few days of the month but the overall damage was very light. The lower temperatures and the rains which accompanied the change in weather were generally beneficial, especially to hardy crops. In California, mild temperatures prevailed with no frosts occurring in vegetable areas since January 15. However, heavy rains caused creeks to overflow and there was some flooding of vegetables in low areas, but actual crop losses appear to be limited. Texas reports unseasonably warm weather with good progress on all crops in irrigated areas but with some deterioration in quality and yield prospects in unirrigated areas. In Louisiana the unseasonably warm weather has been ideal for the preparation of land, but too warm for the best development of hardy winter vegetable crops.

In South Carolina weather conditions were favorable for planting spring crops during most of the second half of the month.

In Florida harvesting of tender crops continues active in the South Florida areas and the movement of hardy vegetables is increasing in all of the principal producing sections. This is borne out by the fact that the volume of vegetables from the State during the second half of January increased about a third over the previous semi-monthly period. The largest factors in this increase were tomatoes and cabbage with peppers and potatoes also showing sharp increases over the previous period of comparatively light movement.

In Texas, currently maturing vegetables are of very good quality, but cooler weather is needed for quality to be maintained. The shortage of water for irrigation is affecting the development of some of the later plantings. This shortage of water is becoming critical in most areas. Early planted spring crops, all irrigated and mostly in the Lower Valley, are well advanced. In the early non-irrigated sections, considerable land is prepared for planting of cantaloups, cucumbers, watermelons and other crops as soon as moisture conditions are suitable. Supplies of hardy type vegetables are expected to be available in good volume for the next two months.

In the Salt River Valley of Arizona harvesting of vegetables is in the in-between period since nearly all of the winter crops have been harvested and the spring crops have not started to move. The Yuma deal is still in progress with lettuce the principal commodity being harvested. Frosts caused considerable damage to carrot tops but no damage to roots. The spring crops appear to be in good condition and many fields of lettuce have already been thinned. Considerable improvement in the supply of irrigation water has taken place this winter.

In California, wet fields are hampering harvest operations and ground preparation. Seeding of spring crops is practically at a standstill in many localities. Quality, production, and plant condition will deteriorate unless fields in some coastal districts begin to dry. It will be some time before operations can be resumed on heavier soils. There will be considerable delay in setting the spring celery crop which is grown primarily on heavy land in Los Angeles County. Planting of some other spring crops is being thrown off schedule as a result of wet fields. Movement of vegetables from California remains at a relatively low ebb with only carrots, celery, and lettuce moving out in volume. Loadings of other commodities are somewhat lighter than normal for this season of the year. Shipments are expected to show some increase in February as cauliflower and broccoli production increases in Central Coast areas.

ARTICHOKES: Winter (Calif.) Artichokes continue in seasonally light supply but production is expected to increase during February unless low temperatures are experienced. Most supplies continue to show frost discoloration and some lots show the effects of excessive field moisture.

LIMA BEANS: Winter (Fla.) The lima bean crop in the Pompano-Delray section is generally in fair condition. Current supplies from the reduced acreage are still light but are continuing to show a slight increase in volume. Indications are that plantings for spring harvest in the Everglades will be extremely light.

SNAP BEANS: Winter (Fla.) The snap bean crop in the South Florida sections is generally in fair condition. Lack of rainfall has affected the yield and quality and the recent cold winds have further reduced yield and quality prospects for the next few weeks. The recent rains, however, should prove very beneficial to the later plantings. In the important Pompano section, the current volume is slightly down from the recent high levels, but if weather conditions continue favorable, a good volume is in prospect throughout February and most of March. In Dade County, which is the second most important producing section of winter beans, the condition of the crop is only fair, but harvesting is now active. A very light volume continues to move from the Everglades from the much reduced early winter acreage. Planting of snap beans in the Dade County and Pompano areas are expected to be largely completed by mid-February. In the Everglades, light planting has been in progress since mid-January and will become active in early February, continuing until around the middle of March. The pole bean crop in Dade County continues in active harvest, but current yields are generally below normal expectations. Planting of pole beans in Dade County is expected to continue until around the first of March. Planting in the Manatee-Ruskin section got started in late January.

BEETS: Winter (Texas) Supplies of beets are available in good volume in all areas of the Valley and growing crops are in good condition. Movement of some of the advanced crops has been slow, and if harvest is delayed too long, some of these crops will be marketed as topped stock. Production in fairly good volume is expected to be available through March.

Spring (La., S. C., N.C., Va.) Planting of beets is about complete in South Carolina and part of the crop is now being thinned.

BROCCOLI: Spring (Calif.) Harvest is at a peak in Imperial Valley and production should continue heavy for another ten days to two weeks but will end late in February. Quality in early January was off due to frost discoloration, but is now excellent and should remain excellent for the balance of the deal. Production in Central Coast districts will continue at about present levels until the spring crop reaches maturity late in February. Quality is reportedly very good in the Santa Maria area and a portion of the supply is moving to freezers. In the Salinas and San Jose areas much of the production shows frost discoloration and slime, with current supplies going to local markets. Plant development has been retarded there by cold weather during the past two months and yields have been lowered as a consequence.

CABBAGE: Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., Fla.) In the Imperial Valley of California, defects caused by frost damage are limiting cabbage production at present. Only good quality is being shipped and poorer quality is being diverted to local markets. Production has passed its peak but will continue in volume for the next two weeks. Harvest on spring cabbage will begin in south coast regions in mid-February. There is some good cabbage coming on in San Diego County but production

CABBAGE: Winter (Cont'd) there and in other south coast counties will not be heavy until March. In Arizona, the deal is nearly over, but light shipments are expected to continue during February. In Texas, the quality of cabbage being marketed has been exceptionally good despite the warm weather that has continued through January, but sizes have been small. Considerable acreage of young cabbage will need cooler weather for quality to be maintained. Supplies will continue to be available in good volume through February, and if favorable growing conditions prevail, much acreage will furnish production for March harvest. Plantings for March harvest are a little higher than earlier reports indicated, but no change in the overall acreage for the season is indicated. Yields have been very good. In Florida the condition of the cabbage crop is generally fair to good. Growers have generally been cutting cabbage on the young side in order to take advantage of the good market which prevailed during most of January. Now that the market has declined to much lower levels, quality requirements will be higher. The recent cool weather and rains should materially improve the quality and yields. Supplies increased materially during the second half of January and the volume is expected to improve further during the first half of February, with the peak movement occurring during the second half of February and March. Transplanting is about completed, but light setting for spring harvest will continue well into February.

Early Spring: (La., Miss., Ala., Ga., S.C.) In Mississippi plants are now being brought into the Copiah county area and most of the acreage is expected to be set in the fields during the first three weeks of February. The acreage is expected to be smaller than in 1951. Principal type will be Round Dutch. In South Carolina, the spring cabbage crop is in good condition. Plants are in various stages of growth depending upon date set. Early plantings got off to a good start but reports indicate that in some areas the crop is suffering from a bad infestation of aphids. Harvest is expected to begin by mid-March.

CANTALOUPS: Spring (Calif., Fla., Ariz.) In California planting of the early covered acreage of cantaloups has been completed in the Desert areas and growers are actively thinning the most advanced fields. The crop has made good progress to date and frost damage has been negligible. Recent high temperatures for this season of the year have been beneficial to plant growth. The Imperial Valley acreage will show a reduction again this year in both covered and open plantings. Competition with other crops for ground and the poor economic position of Imperial Valley cantaloups in past seasons are factors contributing to the decline.

CAULIFLOWER: Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., Fla.) In Arizona, the deal is nearly over. No further shipments are expected after about February 8 or 10. In Texas, harvest of cauliflower is still active in the Winter Garden and Eagle Pass sections. Sizes of some of the recent harvestings have been large, but the quality is good. Most of the remaining crop is expected to be harvested by the latter part of February. The condition of the cauliflower crop in Florida is generally fair to good, but shows some effects of the long period of warm dry weather. The recent cool weather and rains should materially improve the prospects of the younger plantings. Harvesting continues active in the Manatee-Ruskin and Sanford-Winter Garden sections with a light volume originating in the Hastings and Dade County sections.

Early Spring (Calif., Ore.) In California, harvesting of spring cauliflower is under way in all sections of the State. The recent rise in temperatures has caused production to increase, particularly in the Santa Maria area. Quality there is very good and freezers have been receiving some supplies. Harvest is

**CAULIFLOWER:** Early Spring (Cont'd) active on a small acreage in Imperial Valley and most of this supply is being shipped out-of-State. In the Alvarado-Centerville district of Alameda County about 100 acres of fall cauliflower and 200 acres of spring cauliflower were lost due to flooding on January 12-13. Additional acreage there is in critical condition yet due to wet fields but much of this acreage will survive with clearing weather. Yields in this district have been reduced during the past two months due to cool weather retarding plant development. Production generally will increase late in February when additional acreage reaches maturity.

**CARROTS:** Winter (Calif., Ariz., Tex., La.) In California, carrot production in the Desert area is increasing slowly and should continue this trend during the next two weeks. Crop movement should follow a normal pattern this season and heavy shipments are not anticipated for February and March. Yields to date have been satisfactory but below last year's level due to less favorable weather conditions. Harvest, particularly on heavy soils, is still being hampered by wet fields due to the rain of January 17. There is a wide range in quality at present and top quality supplies are limited. Tops in some fields are lowering the grade of bunched stock and some packs are off grade because of rough or pale roots. Imperial Valley shippers have found it hard to control quality this season with inexperienced tying crews. General quality should improve as younger fields mature. In Arizona, winter carrots were damaged by frost. Tops were in such poor condition that the bulk of the crop was topped and much fewer bunched carrots were moved this season. However, roots are of good quality. Harvesting of the winter crop continues on a small scale and it is expected that this crop will be finished by about February 20. In Texas, good quality carrots are available in volume in both the Lower Valley and Winter Garden irrigated sections. Growing conditions have been exceptionally favorable for all crops and the quality of recent production has been very good. However, considerable young acreage was badly in need of water by the latter part of January and quality and yield may be lowered unless moisture is available soon. Should favorable weather develop early in February, there will be production for active harvest into the early part of April. The small acreage in the non-irrigated section of the Coastal Bend is making fairly good progress, considering the lack of moisture in that area.

Spring: (Calif., Ariz.) In Arizona, spring carrots are coming along in good shape and the first movement is expected to start early in April.

**CELERY:** Winter (Fla., Calif., Ariz.) The winter celery crop in Florida continues to make fair to good progress, but yields and quality have been affected by the prolonged period of warm weather and lack of rainfall. Yields have generally been running below the good crop of last winter. The plants have made rapid growth but sizes are generally running smaller than usual for this season of the year. The recent cool weather should materially improve the quality and sizes. All of the major sections are now in active harvest and the movement should continue at a fairly stable level during the remainder of the winter period. In California, January rains and warmer weather hastened plant growth, advancing late fields to a point where heavy production should continue during the next two weeks from the winter celery acreage in San Diego County. Movement from there has passed the peak and about 60 percent of the acreage has been cut. It appears that the bulk of the remaining acreage will be harvested during February and only limited supplies will be available from this section during the first half of March. Although there has been some damage from frost and disease, the quality of current harvestings is good to excellent for the deal as a whole and a majority of the packs are grading straight U.S. No. 1. In Orange County frost damage was quite severe and some fields are being allowed to regrow. Local market supplies from both Ohula Vista and Orange County are

CELERY: Winter (Cont'd) heavy. The heart market is flooded with stripped celery from frost damaged fields. Harvest is continuing on a small acreage in Kern, Tulare and Ventura Counties but supplies in these districts are negligible. In Arizona, prospects indicate good yields and quality. The first shipments are expected early next week. Some small amount of celery, mainly for local consumption, has already been harvested.

Spring: (Fla., Calif.) In Florida setting of spring celery at Sarasota has been completed. In the Everglades, most of the spring acreage has been set, but transplanting will continue for a few weeks. Transplanting continues in the Oviedo area and is active at Zellwood and in the Oklawaha-Island Grove section of North Florida.

SWEET CORN: Winter (Fla.) In Florida the prolonged period of warm dry weather has affected the yield prospects of the mid and late winter corn crop in the South Florida area. The movement during February is expected to continue rather irregular and it will be late March before a sustained volume develops. Supplies during the first half of the month will come principally from the Pompano-Boynton, Everglades, Dade County, and Fort Myers-Immokalee areas. In the important Everglades section, planting has been active since late December and if no unfavorable weather develops, the volume from this section should improve materially around mid-March. Spring harvest in this section continues active with some growers planning to have production available into June.

CUCUMBERS: Winter (Fla.) In Florida, cucumbers for winter harvest range from poor to good condition. The recent cold winds have caused some damage in yield prospects, but with favorable conditions, younger plantings should recover from most of this setback. The Fort Myers-Immokalee area is the principal source of winter cucumbers at this time and the volume from this area should show some increase during the first half of February. Light supplies are coming in at Pompano, but most of the cucumbers originating from this point are imports from Cuba most of which are repacked locally. Scattered harvesting is in progress in the Fort Pierce area and this section should continue to be the source of light supplies until spring plantings come into production. Light harvesting has started in Dade County and this section will also be the source of light supplies during the remainder of the winter period. If weather conditions continue favorable, a fairly good volume is in prospect from South Florida during the remainder of the winter period.

Early Spring (Fla., Tex.) In Florida, planting of the spring crop in the Immokalee-Fort Myers and lower East Coast sections was practically completed by the first of February. In the Wauchula and Webster sections of Central Florida, planting of the covered acreage was mostly done in late December and early January. Some open field plantings have been made in the Wauchula section, but most of this acreage will be planted in early February. Open field plantings in the Webster-Winter Garden section will also mostly be planted in February. In the Manatee-Ruskin section, indications are for a reduced spring acreage. Some early plantings have been made and are up and growing at this time.

EGGPLANT: Winter (Fla.) In Florida the condition of the winter eggplant crop in the important Pompano and Fort Myers sections of South Florida is generally fair to good. The prolonged period of warm weather has been very favorable for this crop and the early production has been much heavier than in recent years. The cold winds of late January will cause some scarring of the fruit for harvest during the next few weeks, but with favorable weather, indications are for a continued good volume throughout the winter period. A light volume is available from the Everglades and a limited movement continues from the Manatee section.

EGGPLANT: Spring (Fla.) In Florida, transplanting has started on the spring acreage in the Plant City section. In the South Florida areas, the younger acreage which will mostly furnish a production for spring harvest, is generally in fair to good condition.

ESCAROLE: Winter (Fla.) In Florida, escarole and chicory shipments moved in a fairly uniform volume through January. Plantings have been made to provide a continuous volume throughout the winter months and if no unfavorable conditions develop, indications are that supplies will continue to be available in good volume. The prolonged warm weather has not been favorable for these crops and yields have been slightly below normal. The recent cool weather has been beneficial and yields and quality should show some improvement. Most of the production at this time is coming from the Everglades supplemented by a light volume from the Zellwood-Sanford-Oviedo and Manatee-Ruskin sections.

LETTUCE: Winter (Ariz., Calif., Fla., Tex.) Higher temperatures brought on heavy production of lettuce in the Imperial Valley of California beginning January 21. By January 28 an unsatisfactory lettuce market was restricting production with most operators limiting loadings to 4s and shipping 5s on orders only. Unless cool weather sets in again, production in Imperial Valley is expected to remain heavy for another two weeks. By mid-February volume will begin to decline and supplies late in that month and in early-March should be more moderate. Quality has continued excellent and solidity has improved with warmer weather. A few cracked ribs were noted on January 28 when temperatures rose to 76 degrees, but cooler weather should slow the too rapid growth of mature heads. Temperatures around 80 degrees during the next few days can be damaging. Harvest on the winter acreage at Blythe should be about completed within the next two weeks. The spring acreage there will not be ready until around March 1. Harvesting continues active in Florida with most of the production at this time coming from the Everglades and Manatee-Ruskin sections. Light supplies are also available in the Sanford-Winter Garden-Zellwood, Webster and Samsula sections of Central Florida. The small late acreage in the McIntosh section of North Florida has been transplanted and is generally reported to be making slow progress. The prolonged period of warm weather has generally been unfavorable for this crop, especially in the important Everglades section. The recent cool weather is expected to benefit the acreage remaining for harvest in the State and if conditions are favorable, a fair volume is indicated throughout the balance of the winter period. In Texas, liberal supplies of lettuce have continued to be available in the Lower Valley, and the later crops are in good condition. Shipments will continue fairly active through February if market conditions justify harvesting. A light movement has continued from the Winter Garden section and plantings for early spring harvest are getting started under favorable conditions:

Early Spring: (Ariz., Calif., Ga., S.C., N.C.) In California, early plantings in the San Joaquin Valley and in coastal sections are up to stand but have made slow progress due to the retarding effects of cold weather. A normal acreage was planted to January 1 but very little acreage has been seeded during January because of wet fields. In South Carolina, planting has been practically completed and the crop is in good condition.

ONIONS: Early Spring (Texas) Irrigated crops have made exceptionally good growth. Some fields in the Laredo section and scattered areas of the Winter Garden now have top growth comparable to that of a month later in some past years. If these fields escape adverse growing conditions the balance of the season, there could be considerable production available by mid-March. Non-irrigated crops in the Coastal Bend have held up remarkably well considering the long period without

ONIONS: Early Spring (Cont'd) moisture. Most plants have a fairly good top growth and a healthy appearance. While normal development is being retarded, it is believed that most crops would respond rapidly should favorable moisture conditions occur soon. Thrips are in some crops in the Coastal Bend area but most plants have held a good color. Both irrigated and dry-land crops in the Raymondville section need water; water for irrigation has been scarce in this section for some time. Transplanting of the Eagle Pass crop was completed around the middle of January and all crops in this section, although somewhat later than other irrigated areas, have started growing under favorable conditions.

Late Spring: (Calif., Ariz., La., Tex., Ga.) Transplanting of the north Texas crop is limited to scattered areas where moisture was suitable for field work. Most of the early plantings need moisture and field work is being delayed. Plants are plentiful and can be moved into the area on short notice. Planting can be held off until the latter part of February without serious delay in the usual marketing period. In past years, some acreage has been planted as late as the early part of March and produced satisfactory yields.

GREEN PEAS: Winter (Fla., Tex., Calif.) The crop at Calipatria, California will come into production early in February. Shipments are expected to be light but steady from about February 10 to March 10. The crop is in good condition and better than normal yields are in prospect, given favorable weather.

Early Spring (Calif., Miss., S.C., Va.) In South Carolina, approximately three-fourths of the crop has been planted and reports indicate that planting will be completed by mid-month. Early plantings are in good condition.

PEPPERS: Winter (Fla.) The winter pepper crop in South Florida continues to make good progress. The light to moderate rains which fell in the winter producing sections during the past week were very beneficial. Production improved sharply during the second half of January. The important Pompano section should reach full harvest in early February and continue to maintain a good volume throughout the winter period. In the Fort Myers area, the peak production has been reached. Older fields are beginning to go back, but younger plantings are just getting into production. This area will continue to be the second important source of supplies during the winter period. In the Everglades, the crop is in good condition. Light harvesting is in progress and the volume from this section should improve materially during February if no setbacks occur. Light supplies are also coming from the Indiantown, Dade County, and Manatee sections.

Spring: (Fla.) Planting of the spring crop in the important Plant City area has been active during the second half of January. Most of the regular fields have been set and light transplantings have been made in the strawberry fields. Transplanting of this acreage will gradually increase, going in heavy by the middle of the month. Very little damage was incurred by the frost at the close of January. Very light transplanting has been done in the Webster section at the time of the cold. Some unprotected plantings were killed, but the overall loss was light. Seed beds were covered.

Early Summer: (La., Miss., N.C.) In Mississippi, beds are being prepared and seed planted for this year's crop.

COMMERCIAL EARLY IRISH POTATOES: Winter (Tex., Fla.) In Florida, digging is in its peak in the Fort Myers section. The bulk of this production should be moved by mid-February; but some late plantings will prolong harvest throughout the entire month. This crop is not digging out as good yield as was obtained last season, but sizes and quality are generally good. In the important Dade County section, harvesting will start the first week of February, but it will be about the middle of the month before digging reaches its peak level. Indications are also that the yields on this crop will be slightly below the excellent yields obtained last season.

Early Spring: (Fla., Tex.) Planting has generally been completed in the important spring areas of Florida. The recent rains have been beneficial for getting the crop started and no material damage has been reported from the cold. Acreages for spring harvest include the important Hastings section with smaller acreages in the LaCrosse, West Florida, Everglades, Indiantown, and Balm sections. In Texas, exceptionally good growing weather has prevailed for this crop but the supply of water for irrigation is scarce. Most crops were planted under favorable moisture and growing conditions and got a good start. Yield prospects could be lowered materially by continued lack of water. Should favorable weather develop harvest could start around mid-March, and with the small acreage this year, could be completed by the early part of April.

Late Spring: (12 States) In California, early fields in the Edison district of Kern County are just coming up and planting is now active in other Kern districts and will continue until March 1. Planting has just started in the Charleston area of South Carolina and will be general within a few days. Reports indicate that planting in this and other areas of the State will continue through February.

SHALLOTS: Winter (Louisiana) Warm weather accompanied by heavy dews and a rain on January 27 has been unfavorable for the winter crop. It is reported that harvest has been discontinued in a good many fields due to poor quality.

Spring: (Louisiana) The spring crop is reported to be in fair condition with shipments expected to begin around March 1. Continued warm weather accompanied by rains could materially reduce the prospects of this crop between now and harvest.

SPINACH: Winter (Tex., La., Calif., Miss.) In Texas, supplies during the balance of the season will come mainly from the irrigated sections. Most of the remaining acreage in the Coastal Bend is being abandoned, and the quality of spinach on considerable acreage in the Raymondville section has been affected by mould. Growers in the Winter Garden section have been using insect and plant disease control measures consistently all season, and as a result quality and yields have been very good. The long period of warm weather has contributed to rapid plant growth. Many of the early crops in the Eagle Pass section were very disappointing. Control measures have not been practiced generally in this section. There is considerable young acreage in the Eagle Pass area, and if growing conditions are favorable, there should be considerable production for early March harvest. Supplies from the Winter Garden district will continue to be plentiful through February. Shipments from the area around Greenville, Mississippi, are expected to start about February 10. Some fields have had water damage but most of the acreage is now showing good quality spinach.

SQUASH: Winter (Florida) Although the prolonged dry weather reduced yield prospects of squash in the winter producing sections of South Florida, a fairly heavy volume has continued to more from this area. The recent rains should prove beneficial to younger plantings and a continued good production is in prospect for the remainder of the winter period. The Dade County and Pompano sections are the principal sources of supply at this time, but widely scattered plantings in the Fort Myers-Immokalee and lower West Coast sections are also contributing a fair volume.

Spring: (Florida) Light planting has started in the important Plant City area, but most of this acreage will be seeded during the first half of February. Planting in the important Ocala-McIntosh section of North Florida will also get started in early February with most of the crop going in around mid-February.

STRAWBERRIES: Winter (Florida) In the important Plant City-Wauchula-Webster section of Central Florida, the winter strawberry crop is expected to reach its peak volume during February, but active harvest will continue through March if no setbacks occur. The crops are generally in good condition, but yields have been considerably below expectations. No material damage has been reported from the recent frost which occurred in this area, but some blooms were killed, particularly in the Webster section. In the Starke-Lawtey section of North Florida, fairly heavy damage was reported to green fruit and open bloom by the recent cold and production from this section will be reduced for the next few weeks.

Early Spring: (La., Ala., Tex., Calif.) The Louisiana strawberry crop is much further advanced than normal. Unseasonably warm weather during January has pushed the crop rapidly and with continued warm weather, shipments can be expected to begin around February 9. Today the crop is in good condition with most of the fields scraped and strawed. However, the advanced stage of growth causes the crop to be extremely vulnerable to possible future freeze damage. Growers anticipate a short harvest season if temperatures continue warm.

**TOMATOES:** Winter (Florida) The winter crop in the South Florida area is rather irregular, but most of the acreage continues to make fair to good progress. The dry weather, some blight, and insects have affected yield prospects, but with favorable growing conditions during the remainder of the season, continued good volume is in prospect. In the important Dade County section, yields have been rather light, but later plantings show improved prospects. This deal should be in its peak from mid-February to mid-March, but later plantings will continue to provide some production well into the spring period. Practically all transplanting in this section was completed by the first of February. The crop in the Dania-Hallandale section has made rapid growth and light harvesting is now in progress. In the Immokalee section, the winter plantings are now in production and a good volume is indicated from this acreage during February and March. The winter acreage in the Indiantown section is in fair to good condition and is expected to continue harvesting throughout February. Late plantings in the Manatee-Ruskin section are still in production and with favorable weather will continue harvesting throughout the first half of February.

Early Spring: (Fla., Tex., Calif.) In Florida, late plantings in Dade County have generally been benefitted by the recent rains and are making good progress. The acreage in the Trail section of Collier County has been set and is reported to be in good condition. Seeding in the Immokalee, Fort Pierce, and Manatee sections has largely been completed. Most of the acreage in the Webster-Oxford-Belleview-Ocala area has been seeded and some of the earlier plantings are now up. No reports have been received which would indicate any material damage from the recent cold to these young plantings. Conditions in Texas indicate an earlier than usual crop in the Lower Valley, and with a longer than usual harvesting period average per acre yields will run high. Most plantings are up to a good stand. Some of the earliest fields had plants that were starting to bloom the latter part of January. The extent that these early blooms will continue to hold is unpredictable, but under similar conditions in some past years an early bloom held enough for solid carlot loadings to start the latter part of March. Another factor to be considered in the development of this crop is the water supply. Most plantings had sufficient irrigation to get a good start, but the low water supply was becoming critical in all sections by the latter part of January. In California, light supplies continue to be available from the covered acreage planted in Imperial Valley for winter harvest. Production is expected to increase during February as additional acreage becomes available for picking.

**WATERMELONS:** Late Spring (Calif., Fla.) In the South Florida area, planting of watermelons was mostly completed by early January and most of this acreage is up and growing, ranging from just up to running. Occasional early patches are farther advanced, but most of the acreage in the important Immokalee section is in the running stage. In the Central Florida area, original planting was mostly completed by the latter part of the month. Some of the oldest fields were bunched to run, but most of the acreage ranges from very small to just coming up. In North Florida, planting is in progress and some seeding will continue during the first half of February. No particular damage has been reported from the recent cold wave.