Vegetable production remains a tremendous industry for Florida in terms of acreage and value. Including vegetables, melons, potatoes, and strawberries, production occurred on approximately 251,011 acres and generated more than $1.34 billion in gross sales in 2016, which ranks second among all the states. Growing seasons are well defined by the peninsular geography, allowing Florida to serve as the main vegetable supplier during late fall, winter, and early spring months to the United States. Although more than 40 vegetable crops are commercially planted in the state, Florida ranks in the top three on production value of tomato, bell pepper, snap bean, squash, sweet corn, watermelon, cabbage, cucumber, and strawberry (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1. Vegetable production acreage and value in Florida.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Planted Acres</th>
<th>Value (million US$)</th>
<th>US Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tomato</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>382.2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry</td>
<td>10,800</td>
<td>449.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell pepper</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td>209.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet corn</td>
<td>37,600</td>
<td>160.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato</td>
<td>29,300</td>
<td>117.0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snap bean</td>
<td>28,200</td>
<td>105.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td>22,500</td>
<td>123.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squash</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Vegetables—2015–2016 summary, NASS, USDA.

The objective of this publication is to provide updated information on crop cultivars, pesticide labels, and certain practices for vegetable production in Florida. Suggested practices are guidelines for growers to plan farm activities and are always subject to review using the latest scientific data available.

Web Links to Additional Information on Vegetable Production Topics

UF/IFAS Extension provides information through the Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) found at https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu. Below is a partial list of EDIS articles pertaining to vegetable production for further information beyond the Vegetable Production Handbook of Florida.

**Vegetable Crop Production**
Complete Vegetable Production Handbook: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv292

**Variety Selection**: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv102

**Seed Quality and Seeding Technology**: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv103

**Transplant Production**: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv104

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2. Josh H. Freeman, associate professor, UF/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center; Peter J. Dittmar, assistant professor, Horticultural Sciences Department; and Gary E. Vallad, associate professor, Plant Pathology Department, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Introduction to Organic Crop Production: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv118

Value Added Agriculture: Is It Right for Me?: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fe638

Farm to School: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_farm_to_school

Row Covers for Growth Enhancement: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv201

Fertility and Irrigation
Commercial Vegetable Fertilization Principles: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv009

Soil and Fertilizer Management for Vegetable Production in Florida: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv101

Controlled-Release and Slow-Release Fertilizers as Nutrient Management Tools: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs1255

Cover Crops: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/aa217

Principles and Practices of Irrigation Management for Vegetables: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv107

Drip Irrigation in the BMP Era: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs172

Postharvest Quality and Handling Resources
UF/IFAS Postharvest Quality & Technology: https://irrec.ifas.ufl.edu/postharvest/

UF/IFAS EDIS (Electronic Data Information Source): https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_postharvest

Postharvest Technology: http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu

Marketing and Regulatory Resources

US Grade Standards for Fruits and Vegetables: https://www.ams.usda.gov/standards

National Agricultural Statistics Service: https://www.nass.usda.gov/fl/

National Nutrient Database: https://www.ars.usda.gov/


Food Safety Resources
Food Safety on the Farm: An Overview of Good Agricultural Practices: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fs135

The Food Safety Modernization Act and the FDA Facility Registration Program: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fs231

UF/IFAS Food Safety: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_food_safety/

Good Agricultural Practices Training: http://www.gaps.cornell.edu/

CDC: Division of Foodborne, Waterborne, and Environmental Diseases: https://www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dfwed/

FDA: US Food and Drug Administration: https://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/fsma/default.htm

Fumigation
Maximizing the Efficacy of Soil Fumigant Applications for Raised-Bed Plasticulture Systems in Florida: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs1169

Pesticide Safety
Pesticide Provisions of the Florida Agricultural Worker Safety Act (FAWSA): https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pi078

Pesticide Safety: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv108

Interpreting PPE Statements on Pesticide Labels: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pi137

Honeybees and Pesticides: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1027

Pest Management
Vegetable IPM. Integrated Disease Management for Vegetable Crops: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp111

Florida Nematode Management Guide: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/features/handbooks/nematode.html

Weed Management: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/cv113

Insects in Vegetables: https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_vegetable_pest_insects