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1948



# Fruit, Vegetable, AND OUTLOOK

Agricultural Outlook Series No. 5

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
DOCUMENTS

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SEP 17 1948

ST. PAUL, MINN. 55101

The demand, supply, and prices for fruits, vegetables, and potatoes in 1948 are expected to be about the same as in 1947.

Since before the war, the average consumption per person in the United States of fruits, vegetables, and potatoes has changed:

Fresh vegetables increased.....	20 pounds
Canned fruits increased.....	10 pounds
Frozen fruits increased.....	2 pounds
Apples consumed fresh declined.....	5 pounds
Potatoes declined.....	6 pounds



## LOOKING AHEAD




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*Agricultural Extension Service.*  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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# POTATOES

● **Supply** The 1947 United States crop of potatoes is estimated at 384 million bushels. This is about 26 per cent smaller than the record crop of 484 million bushels in 1946. The acreage harvested in 1947 was the smallest since 1881.

Estimated needs for potatoes in the United States can be met with a 1948 crop of approximately 375 million bushels. The announced potato-acreage goal for 1948 is 5.5 per cent more than the acreage planted in 1947. Under average conditions this acreage should produce the needed 375 million bushels.

Potato acreage in Minnesota is now less than half that of 20 years ago. Minnesota produced 14.5 million bushels in 1947; 3 million bushels less than a year earlier and 4 million bushels less than the 10-year average.

● **Demand** The total demand in 1948 for potatoes for civilian food, military requirements, seed, and starch will be about as great as in 1947. Civilian per capita consumption is expected to continue at about the same rate as for the last two years. The annual average per capita potato consumption was 131 pounds for 1935-1939, but by 1947 it had dropped to 125 pounds. Commercial exports in 1948 are not likely to exceed the usual 2 to 4 million bushels.

● **Prices** Support prices for potatoes are to continue at 90 per cent of parity through December 31, 1948, for growers who plant no more than their acreage goal and are eligible otherwise. Prices of potatoes in Minnesota on November 15, 1947, were \$1.50 per bushel, and 90 per cent of parity was \$1.62. Prices this winter are expected to advance more than seasonally, reaching levels considerably higher than a year ago. This prospect arises from a much smaller supply of potatoes this year than last.

# FRUITS

● **Supply** Total production of all fresh fruits in the United States increased from an annual average of 16 billion pounds in 1935-1939 to 19 billion in 1947. With favorable weather in 1948 another large fruit crop can be expected. The tendency has been for a large crop to follow a small crop. If this occurs in 1948 larger crops of apples and apricots will result. The commercial apple crop in 1947, estimated at 113 million bushels, is down some from a year earlier but about the same as the previous 10-year average. The crops in 1948 should be fully as large.

Increased imports of bananas, pineapples, dried figs, and dates will increase the available supply of

fruit. Imports of bananas have increased from a low point in 1942 and may reach prewar levels in 1948.

● **Demand** Demand for fruit in 1948 is expected to be about the same as in 1947 because of continued high consumer income and high prices for other foods. Per capita consumption of all fruit in the United States averaged 138 pounds during 1935-1939 and rose to 145 pounds in 1947. Most of this increase occurred in citrus-fruit consumption. Average annual apple consumption declined 5 pounds per person during this same period because apple supplies in the United States were smaller; the consumption of canned fruits increased by 10 pounds per person. Domestic demand for apples for fresh use is expected to be strong this winter and during the spring of 1948.

Exports are likely to be less in 1948, largely because of dollar shortages. The United Kingdom and Canada have been our best customers, and both countries are short of dollar exchange; also, Canada has set up definite import restrictions.

● **Frozen Fruits** Per capita consumption of frozen fruit in the United States has increased from less than 1 pound annually in 1935-1939 to over 3 pounds in 1947. The quantity of commercially frozen fruit in 1948 may be larger than in 1947 and will probably increase during the next few years.

# VEGETABLES

*... for marketing*

● **Supply** Production of fresh vegetables in 1948 is expected to exceed that of 1947. Crops that were high in price the previous year have often been followed by a larger crop at low prices. In 1948 this could happen to cabbage and onions.

● **Demand** in the first half of 1948 is not expected to change much from the same period in 1947, but will probably weaken in the second half of the year. Even though incomes remain high, consumers may be less willing to pay high prices. Per capita consumption of fresh vegetables averaged 235 pounds annually in 1935-1939, reached a high of 273 in 1946, and dropped back to 255 in 1947.

*... for processing*

● **Supply** Production of vegetables for commercial processing in 1948 is expected to equal or exceed that of 1947, particularly of snap beans, beets, cabbage for kraut, and pimentos.

● **Demand** in 1948 is expected to be about the same as in 1947. Packers will try to improve the quality to gain increased brand recog-

niton. The high level of food prices this winter should favor consumption of canned vegetables, with the result that carry-over stocks at the beginning of the 1948 pack season will be lower. Average annual per capita consumption of canned vegetables was 31 pounds in 1935-1939 and reached a record high of 46 pounds in 1947. Consumption of canned baby foods in the United States has increased greatly in the last 10 years, from 37 million pounds in 1935-1939 to 400 million pounds in 1947. During the same period, the per capita consumption per child under three years of age increased from 6 to 42 pounds.

● **Frozen Vegetables** Demand for frozen vegetables in the first half of 1948 is expected to continue strong. Stocks on hand late in 1947 were larger than a year earlier. Per capita consumption of frozen vegetables has increased from less than ½ pound per person annually in 1935-1939 to over 2 pounds in 1947.

*... specific crops*

*Dry edible beans and peas.* Civilian consumption per capita has declined from 8.8 pounds annually in 1935-1939 to 8 pounds in 1947. Foreign needs for relief feeding may be great enough to absorb any surplus beans from a large 1948 crop.

*Carrots.* Prices received by farmers for 1947 fall carrots are considerably higher than a year ago. It seems likely that acreage planted to carrots in 1948 will increase over 1947.

*Cabbage.* Supplies of 1947 fall cabbage for sale in early 1948 will be less than last winter, but shipments from winter-producing areas may be larger. Intention-to-plant reports from winter-crop areas point to larger acreages in 1948 than in 1947, but 6 per cent smaller than average. Prices of cabbage on the fresh market this winter are expected to average higher than a year ago. These higher prices may encourage larger plantings in 1948.

*Onions.* The 1947 crop of dry onions was 30 per cent smaller than the record crop a year earlier. Prices this winter are expected to be considerably higher than last year. In former years, high prices received during a short-crop year for onions usually have been followed by an increase in production, with resulting lower prices. This seems the most likely prospect for onions in 1948.

*Green peas for processing.* Consumption of canned and frozen peas probably will be somewhat larger during the early part of 1948. This may encourage a larger pack during the season.

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Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Minnesota, Agricultural Extension Division and United States Department of Agriculture Co-operating, Paul E. Miller, Director. Published in furtherance of Agricultural Extension Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914.