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MARKETING THE MICHIGAN STRAWBERRY CROP
A Brief Review of the 1948 Season.

by
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In 1948 the Market News Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Fruit and Vegetable Branch, in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Agriculture issued bulletins on strawberries from the Benton Harbor office. This service was made available during the months of June and July and was the first year that such coverage has been available to interested members of the trade.

PRODUCTION: National Situation

1948 seasonal production figures, issued December 1, 1948, by the Crop Reporting Board, B. A. E., placed national strawberry production at 9,992,000 24-quart crates. This figure is about 1,100,000 crates over the 1947 crop of 8,895,000 24-quart crates and 650,000 crates above the 10-year (1937-46) average of 9,328,000 crates.

National acreage devoted to strawberries in 1948 totaled 120,945 as compared to 116,360 acres planted in 1947 and the 10-year average of 130,740 acres. Yields per acre reflect the improved varieties and growing methods and the 1948 yield per acre was placed at 82.6 24-quart crates per acre, as compared to a yield of 76.4 crates per acre in 1947 and a 70.2 crate yield per acre for the 10-year (1937-46) average.

PRODUCTION: Michigan situation

On December 1, 1948, the Crop Reporting Board, B. A. E., released the 1948 Michigan strawberry production figures of 750,000 24-quart crates. This figure was 20,000 crates below the 1947 crop of 770,000 24-quart crates but 57,000 crates over the average production for the 10-year (1937-46) period.

Michigan strawberry acreage was 7,500 acres, an increase of 500 acres over the 7,000 acres planted in 1947. Average acreage planted during the 10-year (1937-46) period was 7,790 acres.

Yield per acre in Michigan for the 1948 season was placed at 100 24-quart crates as compared to the 110 crate per acre yield in 1947 and the 10-year average yield per acre of 88 24-quart crates per acre.

Tabulations below indicate the national acreage, yield per acre and the total production by States for the Winter Group, Early Spring, Mid-Spring and Late Spring Group of States producing strawberries, together with totals for all States

STRAWBERRIES: Commercial crop 1/ : Acreage, yield and production with comparisons. Released by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, December 17, 1948.

SEASONAL GROUP AND STATE	ACREAGE 2/			YIELD PER ACRE			PRODUCTION		
	10-yr. average : 1937-46	1947	1948	10-yr. avge. : 1937-46	1947	1948	10-yr. average : 1937-46	1947	1948
	Acres	Acres	Acres	24-quart crates	24-quart crates	24-quart crates	1000	1000	1000
<u>Winter:</u>				5/	5/	5/			
Florida	5180	4750	4200	71	65	45	372	309	189
<u>Early Spring:</u>									
Louisiana	18210	21000	19000	60	40	43	1103	840	817
Alabama	2770	2100	2200	78	65	70	217	136	154
Texas	1360	650	1400	55	60	45	79	39	63
Calif. S. Dist.	1470	1250	1250	146	225	250	230	281	312
Group Total:	23810	25000	23850	66.8	51.8	56.4	1629	1296	1346
<u>Mid-Spring:</u>									
Mississippi	200	-	-	67	-	-	13	-	-
Georgia	140	-	-	64	-	-	9	-	-
S. Carolina	280	250	250	86	75	100	24	19	25
N. Carolina	4570	2400	2300	86	60	85	6/ 409	144	196
Tennessee	9360	8500	8500	74	90	80	5/ 599	765	680
Arkansas	12290	11000	10400	55	68	45	6/ 729	768	468
Oklahoma	760	850	900	60	80	70	51	68	63
Kansas	1140	1550	1705	42	55	45	48	85	77
Missouri	4570	3800	4000	50	60	55	227	228	220
Illinois	3450	3500	3000	48	80	65	172	280	195
Kentucky	5990	4500	5000	56	80	70	6/ 342	360	350
Virginia	5980	4100	4300	63	66	122	5/ 375	271	525
Maryland	5090	2700	3000	58	50	50	315	135	150
Delaware	2260	950	1050	53	45	45	126	43	47
Calif. other	2320	1800	2800	164	295	265	356	531	742
Group Total:	58400	45900	47205	64.0	80.1	79.2	3802	3677	3738
<u>Late Spring:</u>									
New Jersey	3380	3100	3200	55	50	75	188	155	240
Pennsylvania	3020	2200	1900	68	65	80	211	143	152
Ohio	3600	2200	2000	82	75	75	305	165	150
Indiana	2220	1600	1900	70	80	125	155	128	238
New York	3870	3800	3500	82	80	90	320	304	315
Michigan	7790	7000	7500	88	110	100	693	770	750
Wisconsin	2040	2000	2300	81	50	80	165	180	184
Iowa	1000	1050	840	56	50	36	55	52	30
Utah	1060	760	950	60	95	90	63	72	86
Washington	5460	6000	6600	97	120	140	6/ 524	720	724
Oregon	9910	11000	15000	84	84	110	6/ 840	924	1650
Group Total:	43350	40710	45690	80.4	88.7	103.3	3526	3613	4719
<u>ALL STATES</u>	<u>130740</u>	<u>116360</u>	<u>120945</u>	<u>70.2</u>	<u>76.4</u>	<u>82.6</u>	<u>9329</u>	<u>8895</u>	<u>9992</u>

NOTES: See next page.

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Notes: Continued from Page 1.

- 1/ Total for fresh market and processing.
- 2/ Acreage for harvest, including any partially harvested or not harvested because of low prices or other economic factors.
- 3/ Value is for the marketing season or crop year and should not be confused with calendar year income.
- 4/ Note that the 10-year average figures ("group" and "all States") are averages of the yearly totals, not the sum of the State or group averages.
- 5/ Equivalent 24-quart crates (approximately 36 pounds).
- 6/ Includes some quantities not harvested and excluded in computing value.

MATURITY AND HARVESTING: Michigan Crop

Weather during the 1948 growing season in Michigan was not entirely favorable to best development and maturity. However, as harvest time approached growers were hopeful for an excellent. Bloom was good and late frost damage was reported slight. Set was good. As berries neared maturity and harvesting moved toward an early moderate volume, cold and damp weather developed and held over a prolonged period. Maturity and ripening were retarded. Yield and quality were consequently seriously affected. A good run of the later Robinson varieties was anticipated during the early part of July but weather again took control. Rainy nights with hot, humid days curtailed operations and the increased volume of sandy, water saturated and overripe berries coming to market was marked. There were some reports of poor carrying quality due to the wet and soft condition of many berries.

The peak day of the 1948 harvest is indicated in the volume moving over the Benton Harbor Cash Market. On June 13, 24,336 16-quart crates passed over the Market. The big day in 1947 was June 21, when 38,601 16-quart crates were recorded on the Market. Season total in 1948 was 265,082 crates as compared to 362,611 crates in 1947 and 136,283 crates in 1946.

Quality of the 1948 strawberry crop suffered severe damage from the unfavorable weather conditions during harvest. The volume of soft berries was considerably above normal. Several other factors entered into the picture of reducing the marketable crop. Stem-end rot was perhaps one of the heaviest contributing factors in this respect and its effects made severe inroads on overall production. The Robinson variety seemed more susceptible to stem-end rot although Premiers and other varieties were also reported affected. Generally it is believed that the weather during Robinson harvest was responsible for the stem-end rot damage to that variety. Leaf-spot was another factor which did damage to the crop although not on the scale of stem-end rot.

While no final or accurate figures are available, reports from many growers indicate that the yield of marketable berries was sharply reduced because of the many factors which affected the 1948 crop. Had weather been favorable the 1948 production might possibly have reached record proportion.

MARKETING THE CROP: Benton Harbor Cash Market

The first crate of strawberries of the 1948 season moved over the Benton Harbor Cash Market May 27. Volume selling, however, did not begin until around June 4. Opening prices for the few crates offered ranged from \$6.50-10.00. There followed a leveling period and prices during the middle of June ranged around \$4.00-7.25 according to quality and condition. Good demand for berries in terminal markets held prices at fairly high levels as the season progressed. The wide range in quality and condition of offerings is reflected in the daily price ranges reported from the Market.

The following tabulation shows the daily price ranges for Premiers and Robinsons on the Benton Harbor Cash Market during the 1948 season. Quotations are for 16-quart crates and represent the full range of prices, covering quality and condition of all offerings.

VARIETIES				VARIETIES			
DATE	Premiers	Robinsons	DATE	Premiers	Robinsons		
JUNE	16-quart crates		JUNE	16-quart crates			
4	\$ 6.50-8.50	\$ 8.50-10.00	26	Saturday			
5	Saturday		27	\$ 3.00-6.00	\$ 3.00-6.00		
6	6.00-8.50	9.00	28	2.75-6.00	2.75-6.00		
7	6.00-8.00	7.50-8.50	29	2.50-5.50	2.50-5.50		
8	5.00-7.50	7.50-8.00	30	3.00-6.00	3.00-6.00		
9	5.00-8.00	7.00-8.00	JULY				
10	5.00-8.25	5.00-8.25	1	3.00-6.00	3.00-6.00		
11	5.00-7.25	5.00-7.25	2	4.00-7.00	4.00-7.00		
12	Saturday		3	Saturday			
13	4.75-6.00	4.75-6.00	4	Holiday			
14	4.25-5.50	4.25-5.50	5		3.25-6.50		
15	4.00-6.00	4.00-6.00	6		4.00-6.00		
16	4.50-6.25	4.50-6.25	7		4.00-6.50		
17	4.00-7.25	4.00-7.25	8		4.00-7.00		
18	4.25-7.00	4.25-7.00	9		4.50-7.00		
19	Saturday		10	Saturday			
20	4.50-6.50	4.50-6.50	11		6.50-7.25		
21	4.75-6.75	4.50-6.75	12		6.00-6.80		
22	4.00-6.00	4.00-6.00	13				
23	3.50-5.00	3.50-5.00	14		6.25		
24	3.00-5.50	3.00-5.50	15		6.25		
25	2.75-6.00	2.75-6.00					

The tabulation below indicates seasonal volume of packages and carlot equivalents together with weighted average price per package and total seasonal value with 10-averages. This includes only strawberries passing over the Benton Harbor Cash Market. Carlot equivalents are tabulated on the basis of 560 16-quart crates per car.

BENTON HARBOR CASH MARKET					
SEASON	Total No Packages	Carlot Equivalent	Weighted Average for Season	Total Season Value	
1948	265,082	473	\$ 5.52	\$ 1,463,252	
1947	362,611	648	5.20	1,887,577	
1946	136,283	243	7.14	973,060	
1945	40,431	73	5.76	232,882	

BENTON HARBOR CASH MARKET (Con't)					
SEASON	Total No Packages	Carlot Equivalent	Weighted Average for Season	Total Season Value	
1944	49,503	88	\$ 5.00	\$ 247,515	
1943	194,631	348	4.40	855,276	
1942	303,567	542	2.16	655,704	
1941	305,867	546	1.73	529,149	
1940	500,986	895	1.20	601,183	
1939	439,501	785	1.20	527,401	
10-year Averages	259,846	464	\$ 3.93	\$ 797,300	

DISPOSITION OF THE CROP: Truck Shipments

The Michigan strawberry crop moves almost entirely by truck. During the 1948 season refrigerator trucks for long hauls were plentiful for the need and there was little or no trouble in securing adequate transportation for moving the daily volume to marketing centers.

The tabulation below indicates the daily carlot equivalent movement by truck of strawberries passing over the Benton Harbor Cash Market for the past two seasons. Carlot equivalents are tabulated on the basis of 560 16-quart crates per car.

DAILY TRUCK MOVEMENT OVER BENTON HARBOR CASH MARKET						
DATE	1948 Season	1947 Season	DATE	1948 Season	1947 Season	
JUNE 1	2	-	JUNE 25	14	58	
2	2	-	26	Sat	36	
3	2	-	27	18	63	
4	7	-	28	14	Sat	
5	Sat	-	29	5	64	
6	8	-	30	6	52	
7	13	Sat	JULY 1	5	23	
8	8	-	2	2	31	
9	11	-	3	Sat	Hol	
10	16	-	4	6	40	
11	22	-	5	1	Sat	
12	Sat	-	6	-	15	
13	43	1	7	1	22	
14	32	Sat	8	-	9	
15	27	3	9	1	4	
16	26	3	10	Sat	7	
17	29	3	11	1	3	
18	28	10	12	-	Sat	
19	Sat	8	13	1	2	
20	31	26	14	-	1	
21	11	Sat	15	-	-	
22	36	69	16	-	1	
23	18	49	TOTALS	473	648	
24	26	45				

DISPOSITION OF THE CROP: Processors

One very important factor in the disposition of the the Michigan strawberry is the large volume taken by processors. The good commercial demand and price levels were no doubt responsible for the heavy movement to fresh channels, otherwise an even greater percentage of the crop would probably have been taken by the canners and processors in the State. Although no final figures are available many reports indicate that a large percentage of berries bought on the Benton Harbor Cash Market were trucked to processors located outside the State.

About 65 percent of berries processed in the State were field capped. This is a rather new procedure in the Michigan areas and is apparently meeting with a favorable acceptance from both growers and processors.

Several different basis of sale were noted in Michigan in 1948 in the volume of berries moving into processor channels. Many growers sold their berries directly to processors while others moved their crop through cooperative groups. As mentioned above berries were sold either field capped or uncapped according to the demands of the processor.

In the tabulation below, assembled by the Michigan Co-operative Crop Reporting Service, Lansing, Michigan, the volume of both capped and uncapped berries moving to processors is shown with approximate season average prices paid to growers. Carlot equivalents are tabulated on the basis of 560 16-quart crates per car.

MOVEMENT OF MICHIGAN STRAWBERRIES TO PROCESSORS				
METHOD OF MOVEMENT	Pounds	16-quart Crates	Carlot Equivalent	Price Per Pound
To Processors (all)	5,455,630	238,480	426	
Field Capped	4,808,830	209,080	373	\$.244
Uncapped	646,800	29,400	53	.178
Over Benton Harbor Cash Market		265,082	473	
TOTALS	5,455,630	503,562	899	

DISTRIBUTION OF THE CROP:

No complete figures are available for destinations of truck shipments of Michigan strawberries. The Market Master's office of the Benton Harbor Cash Market have furnished the following tabulations and it is included for those who wish to make a further study of distribution of Michigan strawberries.

Shipments of Michigan strawberries moved to 105 cities in 10 States. These States were centered in the mid-western areas. Had more complete records been available there would no doubt have been a much wider coverage of distribution than is indicated by these figures.

TRUCK DISTRIBUTION OF MICHIGAN STRAWBERRIES 1948 SEASON

STATE AND CITY	Cars	STATE AND CITY	Cars	STATE AND CITY	Cars
<u>ILLINOIS</u>					
Bloomington	1	<u>IOWA</u>		<u>OHIO</u>	
Champaign	1	Des Moines	3	Akron	1
Chicago	28	Jefferson	1	Cavett	1
Danville	2	L.C.L. Lots	3	Celina	1
Decatur	1	TOTAL	7	Cincinnati	4
Dixon	4			Cleveland	5
Galesburg	1	<u>KENTUCKY</u>		Columbus	3
Hoopeston	1	Lexington	1	Dayton	2
Joliet	2	Louisville	1	Findlay	1
Kankakee	3	L.C.L. Lots	1	Lima	2
LaSalle	1	TOTAL	3	Toledo	3
Mattoon	1			Van Wert	1
Peoria	3	<u>MICHIGAN</u>		Youngstown	2
Rockford	2	Battle Creek	3	L.C.L. Lots	5
Springfield	3	Benton Harbor	2	TOTAL	31
Wheaton	1	Cadillac	1		
L.C.L. Lots	3	Detroit	15	<u>PENNSYLVANIA</u>	
TOTAL	58	Flint	2	Harrisburg	1
		Grand Rapids	5	Philadelphia	1
		Hartford	2	Pittsburgh	3
<u>INDIANA</u>		Kalamazoo	2	Wilkes Barre	1
Anderson	1	Lansing	3	L.C.L. Lots	1
Crawfordsville	1	Saginaw	1	TOTAL	7
Decatur	1	St. Joseph	2		
Elkhart	3	L.C.L. Lots	5	<u>WISCONSIN</u>	
Evansville	8	TOTAL	43	Green Bay	1
Ft. Wayne	6			Milwaukee	3
Gary	4	<u>MINNESOTA</u>		Racine	1
Hammond	1	Minneapolis	3	L.C.L. Lots	1
Indianapolis	6	St. Paul	1	TOTAL	6
Kokomo	1	L.C.L. Lots	2		
Lafayette	1	TOTAL	6	<u>TOTALS BY STATES</u>	
Michigan City	2			Illinois	58
Mishawaka	1	<u>MISSOURI</u>		Indiana	46
Muncie	1	Kansas City	1	Iowa	7
South Bend	3	St. Louis	2	Kentucky	3
Terre Haute	2	L.C.L. Lots	2	Michigan	43
Valparaiso	1	TOTAL	5	Minnesota	6
L.C.L. Lots	3			Missouri	5
TOTAL	46			Ohio	31
				Pennsylvania	7
				Wisconsin	6
				TOTAL	212

Carlöt equivalents tabulated on basis 560 16-quart crates per car.

JOBGING SALES ON MICHIGAN STRAWBERRIES IN IMPORTANT MARKETS

Note: Prices are for 16-quart crates. Ranges cover full range of quality and condition. Quotations for various varieties are included where such quotations fall within the range quoted on Premiers and Robinsons

DATE	CHICAGO		CINCINNATI		DEERIT	
	Premiers	Robnsons	Premiers	Robnsons	Premiers	Robnsons
	16-quart crates		16-quart crates		16-quart crates	
JUNE 7	7.00-9.50				8.00	
8	6.00-8.50				7.50	
9	5.00-8.00				7.50-8.00	
10	5.50-8.00				8.00	
11	6.00-8.00			6.00-8.00	8.50	
12	Saturday					
13	Sunday					
14	4.00-6.50	4.00-6.50		5.50-7.00	6.00-6.25	
15	3.50-6.00	3.50-6.00		6.00-7.00	6.00-6.25	
16	4.50-6.00	4.50-6.00		5.75-6.50	6.25	9.00-9.50
17	4.50-6.50	4.50-6.50	6.00-6.50	7.00	6.00	7.00-8.00
18	4.00-8.00	4.00-8.00	5.00-6.50	7.00	6.00	
19	Saturday					
20	Sunday					
21	4.00-8.00		5.50-6.00	6.25-6.50	7.00	
22	3.00-7.00					
23	3.50-6.50	3.50-6.50		6.00		
24	2.50-6.00	3.00-6.00		6.00		
25	3.00-6.00	3.00-6.00		6.00		
26	Saturday					
27	Sunday					
28	3.00-7.00	3.00-7.00		6.00-6.25		
29	2.50-6.00	2.50-6.00	4.50-5.00	4.50-5.00		8.00
30		2.50-7.00		4.25-6.00		
JULY 1		3.00-8.00		5.00-6.00		7.50
2		3.50-7.50				
3	Saturday					
4	Sunday					
5	Holiday					
6		2.50-7.00				
7		2.50-8.00				
8		3.00-7.00				
9		4.00-8.00				
10	Saturday					
11	Sunday					
12		4.00-9.00				
13						
14		6.00-8.00				