

WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Office of Distribution
and
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Foods & Standards Cooperating

MARKET NEWS SERVICE ON FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

MARKETING THE MICHIGAN ONION CROP
Brief Review of the 1943-44 Season

by
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Market information on onions was issued from the Benton Harbor, Michigan office from August 5 to October 31, and from Grand Rapids, Michigan from November 4 to April 10, 1944.

National Situation

The 1943 late commercial onion crop was estimated by the Crop Reporting Service at 11,458,000 sacks (100-lb.) compared to 13,736,000 sacks in 1942 and 11,586,000 sacks for the previous 10-year (1932-41) average. Expressed in percentages, the 1943 crop was 16% less than a year ago and 1% under average. Both decline in acreage and reduced yields contributed to production of the smaller crop. The 1943 harvested acreage was placed at 54,740 acres compared to 60,540 acres for 1942 and 56,720 acres for the 10-year average. Average yields were estimated at 209 sacks per acre compared to 227 sacks in 1942 and 204 sacks for the 10-year average. The decline in production sectionally, was in the Midwestern and Eastern group of States. Production, acreage and yields were above 1942 and average in the Western irrigated areas. A late spring, and excessive rains during the early part of the growing season reduced yields in Midwestern and Eastern areas.

Michigan Situation

(F.o.b. prices strong at ceiling)

A short crop combined with a strong demand placed onions in a very favorable price situation. Open market values were held down by ceiling price limitations, and f.o.b. prices were strong at ceiling, with demand exceeding supply for the entire season. Supplies were especially short on domestic type Yellows, due to the short crop in the Midwestern and Eastern areas where this type bulb is the principal variety produced. This type onion is usually the principal source of late storage supplies for the country. Storage supplies of this short crop were further reduced by heavy movement to consumers in August. OPA ceiling levels were rolled back September 1, and a heavy movement occurred on early harvested stock in late August to avoid price decline. A strong domestic demand existed during the entire season, also demand from the Government buying agencies was strong. Domestic type onions are especially suitable for long distance shipment in the fresh state, late storage and dehydration, hence the demand from the Armed Forces and Lease Lend was active. Government buying needs prior to January 1 were largely filled from areas other than Michigan, but shortly after the first of the year, 50% of stocks on hands were requisitioned from Michigan. As a result, domestic supplies were extremely short after the first of January.

Holdings other than for the Armed Forces cleaned up the earliest since Michigan has become an important commercial producing area. Stocks held in storage received a price advantage not discernable at the start of the season. OPA regulations allowed a \$1.00 per 50-lb. sack extra for Boilers for the major part of the storage season, and with strong demand this grade stock sold readily at the extra premium. In spite of moderately favorable prices, the 1943 season was unprofitable to a large portion of Michigan muck growers. Yields were spotted. In the eastern, central, and southern sections of the State, crop failures or near crop failures due to excessive rainfall resulted in production losses. The Grant section had the best crop of any area and profited most from the active demand this season.

(1943 Michigan crop 55% less than for 1942 and 54% under average (1932-41).)

Michigan dropped from third place a year ago to sixth, as ranking onion producing State in the late crop group. Michigan's 1943 harvest was estimated by the Crop Reporting Service at 840,000 sacks (100-lb.) compared to 1,848,000 sacks in 1942 and 1,818,000 sacks for the 10-year (1932-41) average. Both reduction in acreage and lower average yields accounted for this decline. Average yields per acre declined to 150 sacks per acre compared to 220 sacks for 1942 and 186 sacks for the 10-year average. Harvested acreage was placed at 5,600 acres compared to 8,400 acres in 1942 and 10,000 acres for the 10-year average.

Excessive rains in the early part of the growing season caused abandonment of some planted acreage and greatly reduced yields in other fields. This was especially true in the muck areas in the eastern, central and southern parts of the State. The rainy growing season increased production costs, because of the additional weeding necessary.

Michigan rail shipments to date, April 1, (with the shipping season virtually over) amounted to 1,097 cars and compared to final shipments a year ago of 3,300 cars. A partial count of truck shipments was available from the WFA permit office. This is not complete, as permit system was not started until September 5. Truck shipments so recorded amounted to 816 carlot equivalents.

No special transportation shortages developed, either in trucks or refrigerator cars in moving the short 1943 crop.

Distribution

Distribution of Michigan onions shifted from normal channels, due to the effects of Government regulations diverting stocks to non-civilian channels and from price regulations. A heavy movement in August, prior to the rollback in ceiling prices, altered civilian distribution some. For the balance of the marketing season, civilian movement was heavier to nearby outlets than to distant markets than is normally the case. Shortly after the first of the year, 50% of the stocks on hand were diverted to military and Lease Lend outlets. Detailed distribution of rail movement is listed in chart form in this summary.

Quality and Condition

Quality and condition of the bulk onions stored in 1943 was above average. A dry fall and a short crop aided in storing stock in prime condition. Most weak lots were moved early in the harvest period.

Containers

Sufficient sacks were available for packaging the 1943 crop. However, field crates were scarce where replacement or increased requirements were needed.

PRIMARY DESTINATIONS CARLOT SHIPMENTS MICHIGAN ONIONS

(Rail shipments for the period August 5 through March 31)

State and City	Cars	State and City	Cars	State and City	Cars	State & City	Cars
<u>Alabama</u>		<u>Louisiana</u>		<u>New York (Cont'd)</u>		<u>Virginia</u>	
Birmingham	6	Camp Clayborne	1	New York City	138	Camp Lee	1
Daleville	2	Camp Livingston	1	Pier 29	1	Ft. Story	1
Ft. McClellan	1	New Orleans	35	33rd Street	1	Lynchburg	2
Montgomery	1	Total	37	Total	181	Moundsville	1
Siebert	1					Newport News	1
Total	11	<u>Maine</u>		<u>North Carolina</u>		Norfolk	13
<u>Arkansas</u>		Lewiston	2	Camp Butner	1	Richmond	9
Camp Chaffee	2	Portland	6	Charlotte	7	Total	28
Ft. Robinson	1	Total	8	Cherry Point	1	<u>West Virginia</u>	
Total	3			Durham	2	Bluefield	2
<u>Connecticut</u>		<u>Maryland</u>		Ft. Bragg	2	Huntington	4
Hartford	3	Baltimore	19	Goldsboro	4	Moundsville	1
New Haven	10	Preston	2	Raleigh	1	Parkeersburg	1
Total	13	Total	21	Washington	2	Princeton	2
<u>District of Columbia</u>		<u>Massachusetts</u>		Weldon	1	Total	10
Washington	2	Boston	57	Winston-Salem	2		
		Charleston	7	Total	23	<u>Wisconsin</u>	
<u>Florida</u>		Charlestown	2	<u>North Dakota</u>		Appleton Jct.	4
Camp Murphy	1	New Bedford	1	Preston	1	Camp McCoy	3
Defuniak Springs	2	Springfield	2			Green Bay	8
Drew Field	2	Worcester	2	<u>Ohio</u>		Oconto	2
Jacksonville	3	Total	71	Bellefontaine	1	Total	17
Miami	3	<u>Michigan</u>		Cincinnati	31	Unreported by	
Orlando	1	Detroit	37	Columbus	2	Railroads	116
Starke	1	Flint	6	Hamilton	8	TOTAL	1097
Talahassee	1	Ft. Custer	1	Toledo	2		
Tampa	8	Grand Rapids	18	Youngstown	18		
Yukon	1	Greenville	2	Total	63	<u>SUMMARY BY STATES:</u>	
Total 23		Houghton	1	<u>Pennsylvania</u>		Alabama	11
		Ishpeming	3	Altoona	1	Arkansas	3
<u>Georgia</u>		Zeeland	6	Chambersburg	5	Connecticut	13
Atlanta	5	Total	74	Harrisburg	3	Dist. of Col.	2
Augusta	1	<u>Mississippi</u>		Monessen	1	Florida	23
Camp Stewart	2	Camp McCain	2	Philadelphia	17	Georgia	15
Columbus	5	Camp Shelby	5	Pittsburgh	86	Illinois	41
Ft. Benning	1	Elliott	1	Springfield	1	Indiana	9
Savannah	1	Grenada	1	Springboro	1	Iowa	3
Total	15	Gulfport	1	Uniontown	2	Kentucky	28
		Total	10	Total	117	Louisiana	37
<u>Illinois</u>		<u>Missouri</u>		<u>Rhode Island</u>		Maine	8
Camp Ellis	2	Jefferson Barracks	3	Providence	4	Maryland	21
Blue Island	1	Kansas City	3			Mass.	71
Chicago	20	McElhany	1	<u>South Carolina</u>		Michigan	74
East St. Louis	1	Newburg	2	Charleston	3	Mississippi	10
Fulton	1	St. Louis	4	Chester	4	Missouri	13
Great Lakes	14	Total	13	Columbia	8	Nebraska	1
Table Grove	2	<u>Nebraska</u>		Ft. Jackson	1	New Hampshire	1
Total	41	South Omaha	1	Greenville	7	New Jersey	72
<u>Indiana</u>		<u>New Hampshire</u>		Greenwood	2	New York	181
Edinburg	1	Keene	1	Spartansburg	1	North Dak.	1
Ft. Wayne	3			Total	26	N. Carolina	23
Indianapolis	5	<u>New Jersey</u>		<u>Tennessee</u>		Ohio	63
Total	9	Bridgeton	2	Bristol	5	Penn.	117
<u>Iowa</u>		Campbell	1	Camp Forest	7	Rhode Island	4
Muscataine	3	Jersey City	50	Morristown	4	S. Carolina	26
<u>Kentucky</u>		NY Lighterage Sta.	7	Knoxville	2	Tennessee	44
Camp Breckenridge	2	Salem	5	Nashville	24	Texas	11
Camp Campbell	1	Waverly	1	Millington	1	Virginia	28
Edgerton	5	Weehawken	7	Tullahoma	1	W. Virginia	10
Ft. Knox	6	Total	72	Total	44	Wisconsin	17
Harlan	1	<u>New York</u>		<u>Texas</u>		Total	981
Lexington	5	Barclay St.	34	Bersley View	1	Unreported	116
Louisville	7	Brooklyn	1	Dallas	1	TOTAL	1097
Paducah	1	Medina	6	Ft. Worth	6		
Total	28			Flourbluff	1		
				Houston	1		
				San Antonio	1		
				Total	11		

F.O.B. ONION SALES WEST MICHIGAN POINTS 1943-44 WITH COMPARISONS

Prices for 1939-40 thru 1942-43 are for US #1 Yellows, 50-lb. sacks, all size ranges 40% 2" & 1gr to 2" min. Prices for 1943-44 are for Yellows & Yellow Boilers, 50-lb. sacks, all size ranges. All sales are on basis of sales f.o.b. shipping point quoted weekly.

Week Ending	1943-44	1943-44	1942-43	1941-42	1940-41	1939-40
	Yellows	Yellow Boilers	Yellows	Yellows	Yellows	Yellows
Nov. 6	\$1.69		\$1.20-1.25	\$1.25-1.45	\$.60	\$.50-.55
13	1.69		1.17-1.25	1.25-1.40	.55-.60	.48-.53
20			1.20-1.25	1.35-1.55	.55-.60	.48-.53
27			1.20-1.40	1.50-1.65	.62-.68	.50-.55
Dec. 4	1.79		1.25-1.45	1.50-1.55	.60-.70	.50-.55
11	1.79	\$2.79	1.40-1.50	1.50-1.55	.60-.75	.47-.55
18	1.79	2.79	1.45-1.50	1.50-1.60	.62-.70	.48-.55
24	1.79	2.79	1.50	1.45-1.60	.62-.70	.48-.55
31		2.79	1.50-1.65	1.60-1.85	.62-.70	.50-.55
Jan. 8	1.89	2.89	1.60-1.72	1.90-2.25	.62-.67	.44-.60
15	1.89	2.89	1.65-1.72	2.00-2.10	.62-.70	.55-.65
22	1.89	2.89	1.65-1.72	1.95-2.15	.60-.70	.57-.65
29	2.04	3.04	1.72	1.90-2.10	.60-.70	.65-.95
Feb. 5	2.04	3.04	1.80-1.82	2.00-2.15	.60-.70	.75-.95
12	2.04	3.04	1.80-1.82	2.10-2.20	.60-.67	.80-.95
19	2.04		1.82	2.05-2.15	.55-.65	.85-.95
26			1.82	2.05-2.15	.55-.65	.77-.95

WEEKLY PRICE RANGE MICHIGAN ONIONS IN IMPORTANT MARKETS 1943-44

Quotations are for complete size range as quoted on each market, for 50-lb.sacks, jobbing lots, price range quoted weekly.

Week Ending	N E W Y O R K			C H I C A G O		C I N C I N N A T I
	White Boilers 25 lbs	Yellow Boilers 50 lbs	Yellows 50 lbs	Yellows 50 lbs	Yellow Boilers 50 lbs	Yellows 50 lbs
Nov. 6	\$1.88					
13	1.88				\$2.20	\$2.22
27						2.20-2.29
Dec. 11					2.17 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2.30	
18	1.95-1.98	\$3.48				
24	1.95	3.48		\$2.45-2.47	2.85	
31				2.45-2.47	2.34	
Jan. 8		3.58			2.39-2.40	
15		3.58			2.22-2.40	
22		3.58		2.60	2.22-2.44	
29				2.60		
Feb. 5		3.78				\$3.55
12	2.07			2.62-2.75	2.37-2.59	3.56
19	2.07				2.28-2.44	
26					2.28	2.39
Mar. 4					2.28-2.70	
11					2.45-2.50	
18				2.85	2.52-2.72	

Week Ending	B O S T O N			P I T T S B U R G H		
	Yellows 50 lbs	Yellow Boilers 50 lbs	Yellows 50 lbs	Whites 50 lbs	Whites 25 lbs	Yellow Boilers 50 lbs
Nov. 13			\$2.28-2.29	2.58-2.68		
20			2.27-2.30		\$1.85	
Dec. 11			2.38-2.40			
24	\$2.48	\$3.48				
Jan. 8			2.50			\$3.50
15			2.50			3.50
22		3.58	2.50			3.50
29		3.58	2.50			3.50
Feb. 5			2.55			3.55
12			2.64-2.65			3.64-3.65
26			2.64			3.64
Mar. 4			2.79			
11			2.79			

ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION ONIONS (for Market): COMMERCIAL CROP

(Released by Crop Reporting Board, U. S. D. A., Washington, D. C., December 17, 1943.)

GROUP AND STATE	ACREAGE		YIELD PER ACRE		PRODUCTION	
	10-year Average 1932-41	1942	10-yr. average 1932-41	1942	1943	1943
	- Acres -		- 100 lb sacks -			- 1,000 sacks -
Early Spring:						
Texas	47,220	38,200	28,000	37	60	61
Late Spring:						
Group Total	17,180	26,830	20,650	56	59	43
Early Summer:						
Group Total	8,380	9,050	5,500	139	129	138
Late Summer:						
Massachusetts	2,820	1,350	1,200	228	250	215
New York	12,210	15,200	10,800	238	232	210
Pennsylvania	360	360	390	162	170	155
Eastern	15,390	16,910	12,390	233	232	209
Ohio	2,920	1,200	860	145	220	180
Indiana	4,330	2,100	1,900	166	240	130
Illinois	2,540	2,200	2,200	121	155	120
MICHIGAN	10,000	8,400	5,600	186	220	150
Wisconsin	1,180	1,700	1,900	170	200	150
Minnesota	2,880	4,280	3,900	196	215	135
Iowa	780	750	450	182	225	200
Central	24,630	20,630	16,810	168	213	143
Colorado	5,180	7,400	9,300	206	270	265
Utah	1,080	1,200	1,200	250	220	250
Nevada	160	200	300	212	250	200
California	4,010	6,350	7,000	179	195	215
Idaho	2,490	3,400	3,300	310	250	260
Oregon	2,500	3,400	3,600	256	215	285
Washington	1,280	1,050	840	242	280	300
Western	16,700	23,000	25,540	231	236	253
Total Late	56,720	60,540	54,740	204	227	209
TOTAL ALL STATES	129,500	134,620	108,890	119	140	136

1/ Includes some quantities not marketed and excluded in computing value: California, late spring - 145,000 sacks in 1942; early summer - 70,000 in 1942; Texas, late spring - 303,000 in 1942; Georgia - 60,000 in 1942; and Wisconsin - 30,000 sacks in 1942.

EARLY TEXAS ONION SHIPMENTS PAST TEN SEASONS:

For weekly periods, dates as of 1944 season and corresponding dates of previous seasons.	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
Week Ending										
March 18	2	44	4	1	6					
March 25	74	347	19	27	47					14
April 1	464	632	136	203	238				23	210
April 8	646	580	412	379	445			39	#	#
April 17	563	664	637	364	940	205	7	675	#	#
April 22	859	1,128	790	1,106	824	391	147	777	#	#

(#) Unavailable.

CARLOT SHIPMENTS MICHIGAN ONIONS BY CROP YEARS

Crop Year	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Total
1927	-	20	168	639	532	308	346	331	277	32	-	-	2,653
1928	-	30	499	673	289	211	370	244	285	63	-	-	2,664
1929	-	32	303	451	424	378	501	386	405	84	-	-	2,964
1930	-	86	812	1050	686	493	580	649	735	381	27	-	5,499
1931	1	73	237	499	349	475	454	424	260	28	-	-	2,800
1932	-	89	454	612	503	448	659	765	853	342	49	2	4,776
1933	1	185	754	708	472	552	653	748	561	278	1	-	4,913
1934	-	334	1099	1007	477	609	985	1011	511	138	-	-	6,170
1935	-	81	353	335	303	269	561	744	704	262	17	-	3,629
1936	5	357	1157	1104	720	624	923	1060	679	320	-	-	6,954
1937	3	196	551	387	377	432	566	425	718	189	-	-	3,844
1938	16	162	543	431	402	578	747	732	768	185	5	-	4,569
1939	28	236	369	238	255	335	633	404	616	293	20	-	3,422
1940	36	74	156	297	223	227	386	363	519	239	25	17	2,581
1941	62	237	562	347	272	324	581	374	302	34	-	-	3,138
1942	43	294	519	553	319	326	477	446	312	5	-	-	3,300
1943 #	8	232	74	31	79	156	220	191	203	-	-	-	1,101

(#)Subject to correction.CARLOT ONION SHIPMENTS BY PRINCIPAL STATES OF ORIGIN 1938-39 TO 1943-44:

STATE	C R O P M O V E M E N T S E A S O N I /					
	1938-39	1939-40	1940-41	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44 2/
	Cars	Cars	Cars	Cars	Cars	Cars
Massachusetts	164	130	102	101	189	61
New York	4,109	3,687	4,552	4,598	5,197	2,033
Ohio	284	246	241	298	201	95
Indiana	549	590	745	912	753	429
Illinois	114	91	95	158	144	77
MICHIGAN	4,589	3,422	2,581	3,138	3,300	1,101
Wisconsin	426	141	278	456	356	231
Minnesota	1,357	2,031	1,956	1,948	2,591	918
Iowa	665	593	427	400	695	219
Texas	6,956	7,373	4,907	3,819	8,877	5,577
Idaho	2,781	2,468	1,652	2,389	1,766	2,202
Colorado	1,656	2,670	1,607	3,218	3,914	6,042
Utah	759	614	261	367	289	414
Washington	242	714	316	708	767	457
Oregon	1,972	2,152	1,719	2,184	1,255	1,896
California	1,320	1,376	1,445	1,125	1,741	2,352
TOTAL	28,706	28,746	23,098	26,102	32,663	25,001

Notes: 1/ Crop-movement season covers 16 months from March of one year through June of the following year.

2/ Includes shipments through April 1, 1944.

REK.

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