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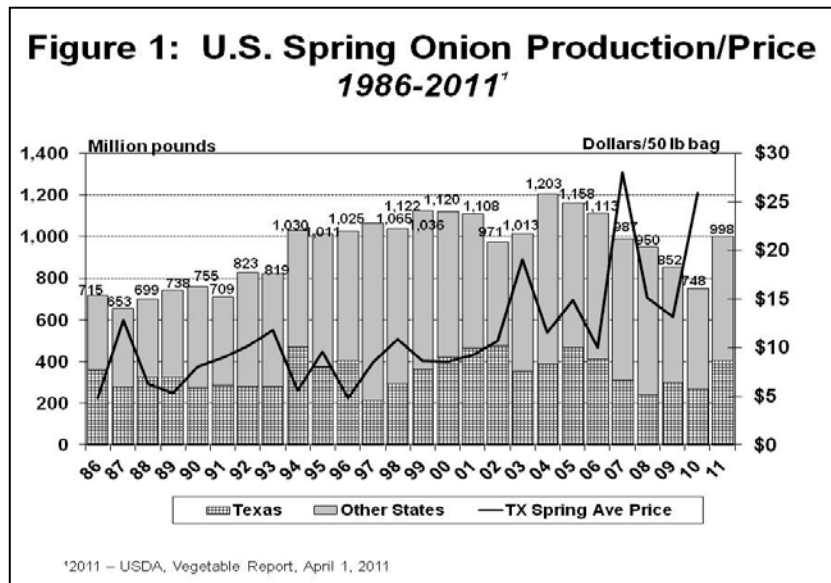
April 6, 2011

**U.S. Spring Onion Acreage For Harvest, Up 15 Percent,
 Estimate of Production: Texas Up 51%; U.S. Up 33%**
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The spring onion harvest in South Texas opened during the last week in March 2011 to significantly lower market prices when compared to last year. Abundant supplies from Mexico and a large production forecast from Texas are currently flooding the market. Last year, adverse weather in Mexico and Texas substantially reduced supplies. Prices reached record highs. This season, except for the hard freeze during early February 2011, which probably caused some damage to the onion crop in the Winter Garden region of Texas, growing conditions in both Mexico and Texas have been near ideal.

According to USDA-NASS, the 2011 spring onion production in South Texas is expected to total 4.0 million hundredweight (cwt), up 51 percent from last year. According to the report, the production estimate is based on a yield estimate of 360 cwt per acre, up 50 cwt from last year and a 30 percent increase in the acreage for harvest. The estimates are based on an April 1, 2011 survey conducted by the USDA-NASS, Texas Field Office.

According to USDA-NASS Vegetable Report, released on April 1, 2011, U.S. spring onion producers intend to harvest 30,300 acres, up 17 percent from last year. Based on estimates of acres for harvest by region and the report's estimate of average yields (except for California which is based on average yields of the past 5 years) spring onion production should approximate 998 million pounds, up 33.4 percent from 748.4 million pounds produced last year when prices reached record highs (See Figure 1).



If realized, Texas will lead the nation with about 40.4 percent of the 998 million pound, U.S. spring onion production estimate.

Acreage Up

The U.S. estimate of spring onion plantings and acreage for harvest is up across the spring onion producing states, but especially in Texas where the estimate of acreage for harvest is up 30.2 percent from last year (See Table1). NOTE: USDA reports of acres planted and for harvest in Arizona were discontinued in 2010.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Percent Change	2008	2009	2010	2011 ¹	Percent Change
STATE	Acres Planted					Acres Harvested				
ARIZONA	1,500	1,600	N/A	N/A	0.0%	1,500	1,600	N/A	N/A	0.0%
CALIFORNIA	6,700	6,200	6,400	6,900	7.8%	6,500	6,000	6,200	6,700	8.1%
GEORGIA	12,000	11,800	12,000	13,000	8.3%	11,500	10,800	11,100	12,400	11.7%
TEXAS	11,000	10,300	10,000	13,000	30.0%	8,900	9,100	8,600	11,200	30.2%
Lower Rio Grande Valley	9,200	8,200	8,200	10,000	22.0%	7,500	7,300	7,100	8,600	21.1%
Winter Garden/Laredo ²	1,800	2,100	1,800	3,000	66.7%	1,400	1,800	1,500	2,600	73.3%
TOTAL	31,200	29,900	28,400	32,900	15.8%	28,400	27,500	25,900	30,300	17.0%

Source: USDA, Vegetable Report, April 1, 2011
¹Preliminary estimate of 2011 acres for harvest.
²Includes San Antonio and Eagle Pass, and the Coastal Bend areas.

In California, spring onion growers report a good growing season despite rainy conditions during December. In Georgia, adequate soil moisture and good conditions have been reported. Harvest is expected to begin around mid-April.

The extent of the potential early February 2011 hard freeze damage to the onion crop in the Winter Garden region of Texas has not been established. Producers are hoping that the market will improve as supplies from Mexico are exhausted by the time the harvest moves to the Winter Garden region of Texas.

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