



## Market Analysis and News Branch

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# Statistics on Imports of Select Vegetables State of Hawaii, 2019

A series of recent reports on imports of select vegetables in Hawaii showed a wide range of import proportion in 2019. Fresh lettuce and Oriental squash were imported from elsewhere with a high margin exceeding 91% of consumption availability. In contrast, eggplant was imported close to the 50% level while head cabbage was highly dependent on local production at about 87%.

At the national level, consumption availability (annual U.S. per capita) fluctuated across the different vegetables surveyed. Consumption availability of head cabbage had declined by almost 30% over the decade while lettuce had decreased by about 8%. Eggplant consumption availability was constant while kale lived up to its reputation as the “green super food” by more than doubling its per capita consumption within a short period of five years.

Consumption availability is essentially the sum of volume of imports and local production. Hawaii traditionally relies more on imports when it produces less locally. Local production of head cabbage and lettuce were relatively much larger than the other vegetables surveyed (see Table 1). In recent years, local production of various vegetables had been declining, due mostly to a combination of decreasing statewide yield per acre and shrinking harvested acreage.<sup>1</sup>

Any concerted industry efforts on import replacement of vegetables should focus on the type of commodities or niche crops that are heavily imported into the state. This report identified a few examples such as lettuce, Oriental squash, and kale. Equally important is the recognition of declining yields of different crops and their shrinking acreage. The industry must act to develop countermeasures and to adopt new technologies and/or improve best farming practices to arrest and reverse the declining trends.

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<sup>1</sup> USDA-NASS. *Hawaii 2019 Vegetable and Melon Crops Report*. April 8, 2020.

**Table 1: Consumption Availability, Production, and Imports of Select Vegetables in Hawaii, 2019**

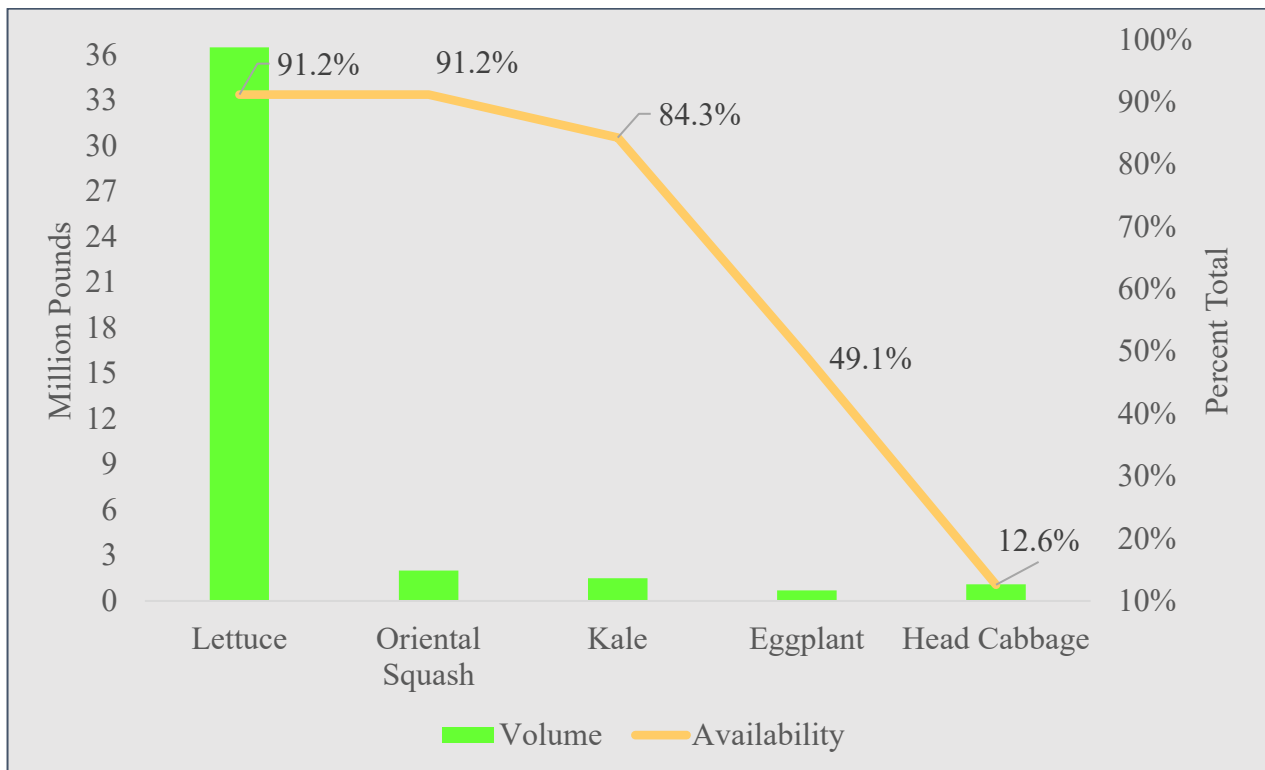
Vegetable <sup>1</sup>	Consumption Availability U.S. Per Capita (Pounds)	Consumption Availability in Hawaii <sup>2</sup> (Million pounds)	Production in Hawaii (Million pounds)	Imports to Hawaii (Million pounds)	Import Proportion (Percentage)
Lettuce	25.1	40.0	3.5	36.5	91.2%
Oriental Squash	1.4	2.2	0.2	2.0	91.2%
Kale	1.1	1.8	0.3	1.5	84.3%
Eggplant	0.9	1.4	0.73	0.7	49.1%
Head Cabbage <sup>3</sup>	5.7	9.1	8.0	1.1	12.6%

<sup>1</sup> Sourced from USDA-ERS and USDA-NASS.

<sup>2</sup> Based on annual consumption availability (U.S Per Capita).

<sup>3</sup> Based on 2018 statistics.

**Chart 1: Select Vegetables’ Imports by Volume and Availability for Consumption in Hawaii, 2019**



## References

HDOA-MANB (2021). Statistics on Eggplant Imports – State of Hawaii, 2008-2019. Available at: [https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/08/Eggplant-Imports-Stats-2019\\_SOH\\_08.26.21.pdf](https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/08/Eggplant-Imports-Stats-2019_SOH_08.26.21.pdf)

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HDOA-MANB (2021). Statistics on Kale Imports – State of Hawaii, 2014-2019. Available at: [https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/09/Kale-Imports-Stats-2019\\_SOH\\_09.14.21.pdf](https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/09/Kale-Imports-Stats-2019_SOH_09.14.21.pdf)

HDOA-MANB (2021). Statistics on Lettuce Imports – State of Hawaii, 2008-2019. Available at: [https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/08/Lettuce-Imports-Stats-2019\\_SOH\\_08.13.21.pdf](https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/08/Lettuce-Imports-Stats-2019_SOH_08.13.21.pdf)

HDOA-MANB (2021). Statistics on Oriental Squash Imports – State of Hawaii, 2008-2019. Available at: [https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/09/Oriental-Squash-Imports-Stats-2019\\_SOH\\_09.30.21.pdf](https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2021/09/Oriental-Squash-Imports-Stats-2019_SOH_09.30.21.pdf)