



Market Analysis and News Branch

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Fresh Basil Statistics State of Hawaii, 2020

Hawaii fresh basil production is estimated at 9.9 million pounds, valued at \$22.3 million in 2020. Both volume and value measures decreased since 2019 (down 22% and 20% respectively). Declines are attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, cancelled orders, and reduced out-of-state airline/cargo flights (March to May 2020). Approximately 410 acres of farmland were dedicated to planting fresh basil (down 12% from the previous year). The collection of basil farms provided employment opportunities for nearly 113 hired workers, down substantially from 2019. Many departing farm workers reportedly pivoted gradually to non-farming jobs during the course of the year.

Sweet (Italian) and Asian (Thai) are the two primary types of basil grown in Hawaii. In 2020, Sweet basil accounted for an estimated 6 million pounds (about 60%) of 9.9 million pounds harvested in total. Asian (Thai) basil accounted for the remaining balance. An estimated 99.3% of all locally produced basil is exported to the U.S Mainland and Canada. In 2020, Sweet and Asian basil fetched \$2.61 and \$1.71 per pound respectively in the export markets, down five cents (2%) and two cents (1%) correspondingly over the previous year. Nevertheless, the export markets commanded much higher prices than those in the local markets for comparable products.

Table 1: Acreage, Yield, Production, Value and Workforce of Fresh Basil, 2019-2020

	2019	2020
Crop harvested (acres)	466	410
Yield per acre (pounds)	27,339	24,215
Utilized production - all purpose (1,000 pounds)	12,740	9,928
Value of production (1,000 dollars)	28,039	22,338
Farm workforce (hired workers)	388	113

Table 2: Local and Export Sales and Price of Fresh Basil, 2019-2020

	2019	2020
Local market sales (1,000 pounds)	102	71
Export market sales (1,000 pounds)	12,638	9,857
Local market price - Sweet (dollars per pound)	1.61	2.10
Local market price - Asian (dollars per pound)	1.20	1.25
Export market price - Sweet (dollars per pound)	2.66	2.61
Export market price – Asian (dollars per pound)	1.73	1.71

Table 3: Production, Price, and Value by Variety of Fresh Basil, 2000-2020

Crop Year ¹	Production (1,000 pounds)			Farm Price (dollars per pound)		Farm Value (1,000 dollars)		
	Sweet (Italian)	Asian (Thai)	Total	Sweet (Italian)	Asian (Thai)	Sweet (Italian)	Asian (Thai)	Total
2000	1,600	500	2,100	2.00	0.80	3,200	400	3,600
2001	1,500	650	2,150	2.00	0.80	3,000	520	3,520
2002	2,000	1,000	3,000	1.95	0.85	3,900	850	4,750
2003	2,000	1,200	3,200	2.00	0.80	4,000	960	4,960
2004	1,800	1,000	2,800	2.05	0.95	3,690	950	4,640
2005	1,700	1,300	3,000	2.45	1.10	4,165	1,430	5,595
2006	2,000	1,600	3,600	1.90	0.95	3,800	1,520	5,320
2007	2,100	1,600	3,700	1.65	1.25	3,465	2,000	5,465
2008	2,500	1,700	4,200	1.75	1.40	4,375	2,380	6,755
2009	1,900	2,300	4,200	1.95	1.35	3,705	3,105	6,810
2010	1,200	2,000	3,200	1.95	1.60	2,340	3,200	5,540
2011	1,400	2,800	4,200	1.75	1.35	2,450	3,780	6,230
2012	800	2,900	3,700	2.60	1.65	2,080	4,785	6,865
2013	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2014	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2015	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2016	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2017	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2018	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2019	6,520	6,220	12,740	2.65 ³	1.73 ³	17,278	10,761	28,039
2020	5,957	3,971	9,928	2.61 ³	1.71 ³	15,548	6,790	22,338

¹ Sourced from USDA-NASS, 2000-2012.² Not available due to reduction-in-force (RIF).³ Weight average of local and export market prices.