



## Market Analysis and News Branch

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In Cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service, Pacific Region

### Fresh Basil Statistics State of Hawaii, 2021

Hawaii fresh basil production is estimated at 12.3 million pounds, valued at a record \$29.4 million in 2021. Compared with the previous crop year, volume and value measures increased 24% and 31% respectively. Hawaii basil growers managed to deliver this new record with higher yields (27%), higher market prices on slightly fewer acres of land, and with a smaller workforce. Approximately 400 acres of farmland were dedicated to planting fresh basil (down 2% from the previous year).

The main challenge for most basil growers is the availability of experienced and dedicated farm workers. Some growers managed to hire more foreign workers (mainly from Philippines) through the USDA H-2A visa program for temporary workers, but the total number of basil workers was still down in 2021. The collection of basil farms provided employment opportunities for nearly 102 hired workers, down slightly by 10% from 2020. Many departing farmworkers reportedly pivoted 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 2021, Sweet basil accounted for an estimated 7.4 million pounds (about 60%) of the 12.3 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 2021, Sweet and Asian basil fetched \$2.72 and \$1.91 per pound respectively in the export markets, up eleven cents (4%) and twenty cents (12%) correspondingly over the previous year. Nevertheless, the export markets commanded much higher prices than those in the local markets for comparable products.

**Table 1: Fresh Basil – Acreage, Yield, Production, Value and Workforce, 2019-2021**

	2019	2020	2021
Crop harvested (acres)	466	410	400
Yield per acre (pounds)	27,339	24,215	30,660
Utilized production – all purpose (1,000 pounds)	12,740	9,928	12,264
Value of production (1,000 dollars)	28,039	22,338	29,360
Farm workforce (hired workers)	388	113	102

**Table 2: Fresh Basil – Local and Export Sales and Price, 2019-2021**

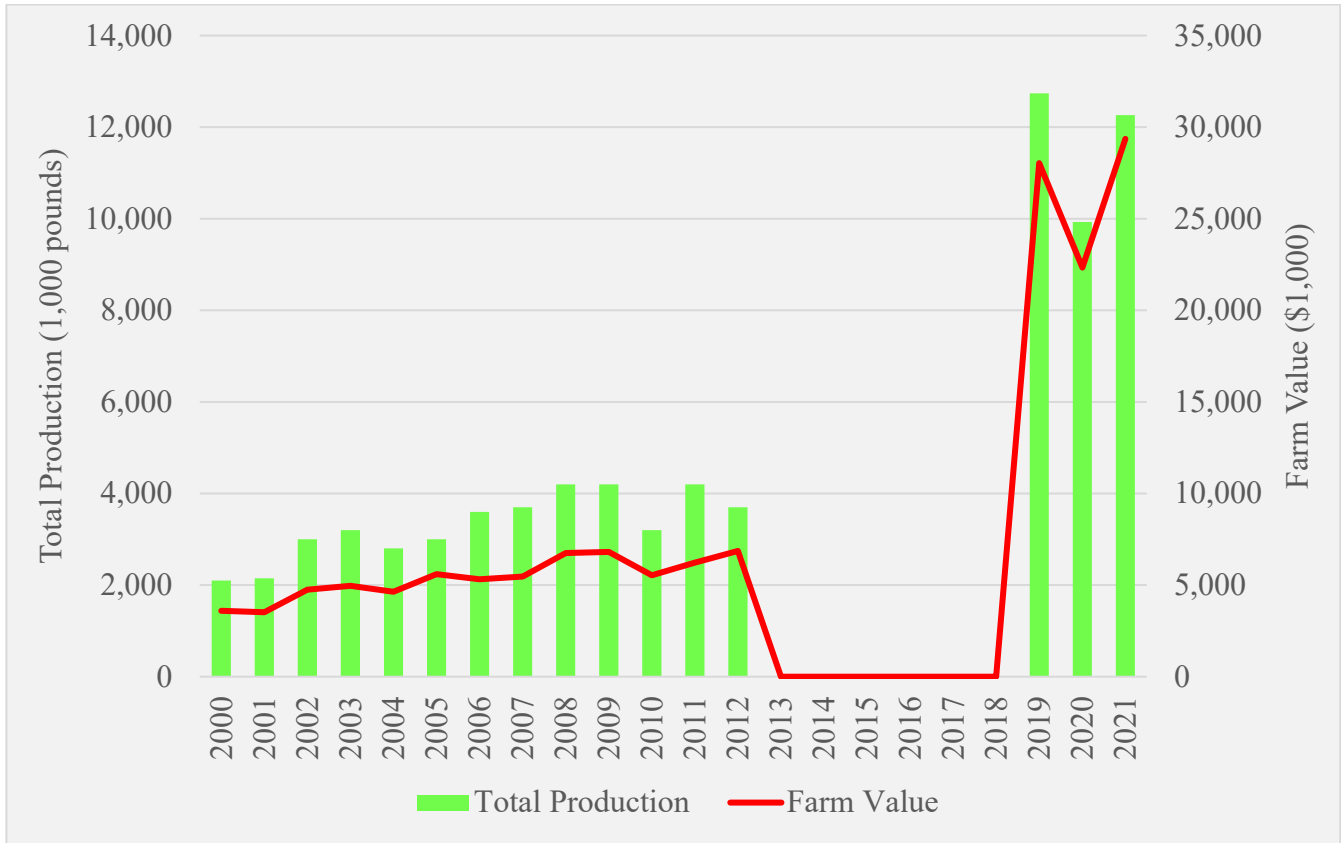
	2019	2020	2021
Local market sales (1,000 pounds)	102	71	84
Export market sales (1,000 pounds)	12,638	9,857	12,180
Local market price – Sweet (dollars per pound)	1.61	2.10	2.20
Local market price – Asian (dollars per pound)	1.20	1.25	1.40
Export market price – Sweet (dollars per pound)	2.66	2.61	2.72
Export market price – Asian (dollars per pound)	1.73	1.71	1.91

**Table 3: Fresh Basil – Production, Price, and Value by Variety, 2000-2021**

Crop Year <sup>1</sup>	Production			Farm Price		Farm Value		
	(1,000 pounds)			(dollars per pound)		(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	1.73	17,278	10,761	28,039
2020	5,958	3,970	9,928	2.61	1.71	15,547	6,791	22,338
2021	7,358	4,906	12,264	2.72	1.91	19,990	9,370	29,360

<sup>1</sup> Sourced from USDA-NASS, 2000-2012.<sup>2</sup> Not available due to reduction-in-force (RIF).<sup>3</sup> Weight average of local and export market prices.

**Chart 1: Fresh Basil – Total Production and Farm Value, 2000-2021**



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