







The Top 10 Vegetable Crops in 2020

Which ones are more popular?
Which ones are fading?

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	Crop	% of Operations Growing the Crop	2019 Rank
1	Tomatoes 	64%	1 ↔
2	Peppers 	61%	2 ↔
3	Cucumbers 	59%	4 ↑
TIE	Zucchini/ Summer Squash 	59%	3 ↔
5	Sweet Corn 	53%	8 ↑
6	Beans 	52%	5 ↓
7	Winter Squash 	51%	6 ↓
8	Onions 	49%	7 ↓
9	Cabbage 	47%	9 ↔
10	Pumpkins 	47%	13 ↑

WHEN WE ANALYZED our State of the Vegetable Industry Survey last month, we noticed some interesting crop trends. The crops vegetable growers include in their mix can vary from year to year. But on the whole, the most popular crops tend to be stable. The percentage of operations growing them deviate very little.

And that proved to be the case with the top four crops. Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and zucchini/summer squash have been the top four crops for a long time and remain there in 2020.

Below is a closer look at crops on the move. One thing to note: the percentages represent the operations growing the crop, not the number of acres dedicated to it. That is why a crop like potatoes did not make the Top 10.

Leafy Greens. Leafy greens dropped out of the Top 10 for the first time this year, to No. 11. Just prior to the *E. coli* in romaine outbreaks, it ranked No. 5. It has yet to recover its popularity after the *E. coli* outbreaks of 2017 and 2018. The number of growers producing the crop fell from 51% in early 2017 to only 44% in 2020 — a seven-point drop.

Sweet Corn. Sweet corn jumped up to the fifth most popular vegetable crop for the first time. It was No. 9 last year. One reason for that rise links to a surge in those adding the crop. Among those who reported growing corn, a whopping 9% said they were adding it — as in they were not sweet corn growers in the previous year. That's a figure that traditionally stays between 3% to 5%. It was one of only two crops with such a bump. Read more about that crop next.

Pumpkins. Pumpkins made the Top 10 list for the first time this year. That's a remarkable feat, considering what growers were saying during the first few chaotic weeks of the pandemic. Many wondered if they should dump more ornamental crops like pumpkins, since grocery stores were focusing heavily on essentials. But instead of pulling back on production, many growers decided to add pumpkins to their mix. It surpasses even sweet corn in the percentage of its growers who are adding the crop — an impressive 11%.

Beans. Beans maintained its popularity from 2019. In both years, 52% of growers reported growing the crop. But just four years ago, only 44% reported doing so. That eight-point percentage climb is second only to pumpkin's 9-point climb. **AVG**