

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
September 14, 2015



Nick George, President
608-255-9946
Nick.George@mwfpa.org

Brian Elliott
Dir. of Communications
608-255-9946
Brian.Elliott@mwfpa.org

Midwest Food Processors Expect Greater Vegetable Production

The production of snap beans, sweet corn and green peas for processing in Wisconsin are expected to increase this year when compared to last, according to the Midwest Food Processors Association ([MWFPA](http://www.mwfpa.org)).

Projections released by the United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistical Service indicate that contracted snap bean production is forecast at 320,540 tons for 2015, up from 312,280 tons last year which is a six percent increase. This would result in the largest snap bean crop since 2009. Wisconsin leads the nation in the production of snap beans processing 46 percent of the nation's crop.

Contracted sweet corn for processing production is anticipated to total 571,140 tons, up five percent from 2014. Wisconsin ranks third nationally in processing sweet corn and its production is heavily concentrated in the upper Midwest. Wisconsin's sweet corn industry produces an annual state economic impact of nearly \$130 million when the crop is processed. Most is canned or frozen.

-MORE-

The production of processing green peas in Wisconsin is expected to jump ten percent to 77,600 tons, which would be the largest pea crop since 2009. Wisconsin maintains a third place ranking nationally in the production of green peas for processing. Green peas are among the most common vegetables present in processed foods.

“The Wisconsin vegetable industry provides millions of servings of food for people around the world and generates employment and income for many people in the Midwest,” said MWFPA President Nick George. “Crop production and processing industries are often overlooked by the general public, and many people don’t realize that Wisconsin and the Midwest are leaders in the industry.”

The Midwest region of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois produces more than 45 percent of the U.S. supply of processed vegetables, with a wholesale value close to \$2 billion dollars. Overall, Wisconsin ranks second in the nation for the production of processing vegetables. The vegetable industry contributes \$6.3 billion to the state’s specialty crop industry and employs over 35,000 Wisconsin residents.

George sees the key to vegetable production in Wisconsin as being the efficient use of water allowing vegetable growers to produce food for the rest of the country with a much smaller carbon footprint than would otherwise be possible. Irrigated production, particularly in Central Wisconsin, is the cornerstone of the vegetable industry and the prudent use of water by Wisconsin farmers allows the state to produce food efficiently for over half the country’s citizens, according to George.