

Greenhouse Vegetables



Industry statistics

Almost all the production of tomatoes, cucumbers and capsicums grown in South Australia are grown in greenhouses. South Australia produces over 5,300 tonnes of tomatoes, 4,400 tonnes of cucumbers and 2,200 tonnes of capsicum. Grown annually in South Australia are about 92 hectares of tomatoes, 97 hectares of cucumbers and 86 hectares of capsicums.

The value of greenhouse production in South Australia includes tomatoes (\$2.1 million), capsicums (\$1.7 million) and cucumber (\$3 million) as the main crops.

There are about 500-600 greenhouse vegetable growers in South Australia, representing more than half the total number of vegetable growers in South Australia. Of these growers, about 420 produce tomatoes, 400 produce cucumbers and 300 produce capsicums (growers may produce more than one vegetable type).

South Australian greenhouse production (tomatoes, capsicums, cucumbers) is mainly marketed domestically into supermarkets and wholesale markets, within South Australia and interstate (rather than to overseas export).

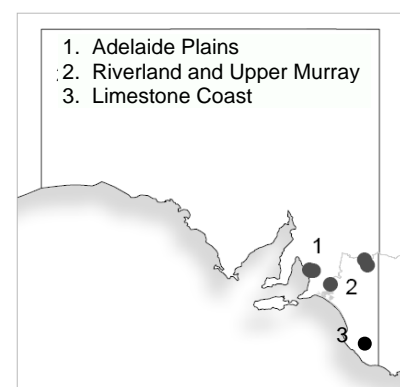
Source: ABS Agcensus

Industry structure

There is a total area of about 720 hectares of greenhouses in South Australia of which about 700 hectares are at Virginia on the Adelaide Plains. This includes about 5 large producers with a total of about 22 hectares of high-technology hydroponic tomato greenhouses and 5 producers with a total of about 10 hectares of hydroponic lettuce under shade cloth. The remaining 630 greenhouses are low to medium technology glasshouses or polyhouses (each about 150 metres square each). About 30% of these producers have >40 houses, 40% have 20-40 houses and 30% have <20 houses. The average 5 acre (2.1 hectare) property has 30-40 houses each.

Location of industry in South Australia

Greenhouse vegetable production is located on the Adelaide Plains (Virginia, Two Wells, Angle Vale - the largest concentration in Australia), Riverland and Upper Murray (Murray Bridge, Barmera, Loxton) and in the Limestone Coast (O.B. Flat).



Greenhouse Vegetables

Why South Australia is a good place for the crop

South Australia has a Mediterranean climate, with optimal sunlight, ideal for greenhouse production. The greenhouse industry in South Australia, located mainly on the Adelaide Plains, is on the rural/urban interface and in close proximity (low transport costs) to Adelaide international and domestic airport (30 kilometres), with excellent road system for fast access, enabling ready access to world markets including Asia.



Main varieties

The greenhouse vegetable varietal types grown in South Australia are: tomato (mainly truss, with some cherry and grape), capsicum (mainly blocky style and red and green, but also more orange and yellow coloured fruit), and cucumber (mainly the long continental, but also the short Lebanese and green cucumbers).

Examples of downstream value adding

Value adding greenhouse produce is mainly through packaging (punnets and trusses of tomatoes, shrink wrapped cucumbers, tray with tri coloured capsicums), with minor processing into fresh cut.



Main industry issues

The main South Australian greenhouse vegetable industry issues include: access to registered and new chemicals for insect, disease and weed control, and the need for a greater degree of representation at the state and national level, the need for better management of soil and farm hygiene, and better control over profit margins. A wider range of industry issues were identified in the [Strategic Plan for the South Australian Vegetable Industry 2004-2009](#) (September 2004) Other industry plans applicable to this industry are the [Australian Vegetable Protected Cropping Industry Strategic Plan 2006-2020](#) (HAL, AUSVEG, 2007), and the [VegeVision 2020](#) (AUSVEG) plan.

Main markets including export

South Australian greenhouse production (tomatoes, capsicums and cucumber) is mainly marketed in supermarket chains in South Australia and Australia, with minor exports.

Industry associations

Vegetable Commodity Groups (under the Virginia Horticulture Centre)

Covering hydroponic, glasshouse and field vegetables including lettuce, carrot, brassica, bunchlines, glasshouse (tomato, capsicum, cucumber)
Virginia Horticulture Centre
PO Box 847, VIRGINIA SA 5120
Phone: (08) 8282 9200 fax: (08) 8380 8950
Web: www.virginiahc.com.au

Vegetable Committee (under SAFF)

Chair: John Pitchford, Phone: (08) 8388 8352, Mobile: 0439 847352
South Australian Farmers' Federation (SAFF)
3rd Floor, 122 Frome Street, ADELAIDE SA 5000
PO Box 6014, Halifax Street, ADELAIDE SA 5000
Phone: (08) 8232 5555 Fax: (08) 8232 1311
Email: saff@saff.com.au
Web: <http://www.farmwide.com.au/nff/safarmers/SAF.htm>

AUSVEG (Australian Vegetable and Potato Growers Federation)

Suite 9, 756 Blackburn Rd, CLAYTON NORTH VIC 3168
PO Box 563, MULGRAVE VIC 3170
Phone: (03) 9544 8098 Fax: (03) 9558 6199
Email: info@ausveg.com.au
Web: <http://www.ausveg.com.au>