



Figure 25. Mechanically picking grapes. Highly specialised machinery has replaced much hand labour in Australian fruit farming.

irrigation areas further down the Murray in South Australia. Here the summers are hotter and drier than in other grape-growing areas, producing fruit with a higher sugar content and providing excellent drying conditions. The grapes grown in these areas are also particularly suitable for making brandy. Grapes for wine are produced throughout these and other inland irrigation areas.

Away from the inland irrigation areas smaller but important areas of vineyards are located in the Hunter Valley inland from Newcastle (N.S.W.); in north-eastern Victoria; in the Barossa and Clare valleys north of Adelaide, around Adelaide itself, and in the Coonawarra area of South Australia; and in the Swan Valley (W.A.). In these wetter areas the grape yields per hectare are much lower than in the fully irrigated areas, but flavour is superior and high-quality wines are more easily made. Grapes grown in the Stanthorpe area of southern Queensland are grown almost exclusively for table use.

Vegetables

Historically, vegetable growing was mostly restricted to areas of good soil on the edges of towns and cities, as close as possible to the larger markets. Recent urban expansion into areas of market gardening and a great increase in vegetable processing, making proximity to markets less important, have led to a wider dispersal of growing areas.

The 100 000 ha currently used to grow vegetables has remained relatively stable for many years (Table 12) because production is almost entirely for the domestic market. Indeed the area has decreased slightly because higher yields, resulting from increased irrigation and

improvements in cultivation practices, have more than offset the increasing requirements of the growing population.

Those vegetables grown on areas totalling more than 2500 ha are given in Table 14, which shows the wide variety grown in all States and the lack of concentration of types in any one State except for melons and pumpkins in Queensland and sweet corn in New South Wales.

The map shows the dispersion of vegetable growing in the humid zone and south-eastern inland irrigation areas. However, there are some notable areas of concentration such as those on the alluvial soils of the Lockyer, Fassifern and Beaudesert areas near Brisbane and on basaltic soils in southern Victoria and northern Tasmania.

The areas in the south-east produce the bulk of the supplies for the large urban markets while those in Queensland supplement these with winter-grown early produce. Notable outlying areas at Bowen on the north Queensland coast and a smaller one at Carnarvon in Western Australia produce out-of-season vegetables, mainly tomatoes.

Potatoes, which occupy the largest area, are heavily concentrated in southern Victoria and northern Tasmania, where the cool, moist climate and deep, friable basaltic soils provide ideal growing conditions. These

areas supply much of the increasing demand for processed potatoes (frozen and cooked chips and instant potato flakes). Potatoes grown in Queensland and northern New South Wales provide early crops for south-eastern markets.

Of the other vegetables, peas occupy the largest area and have a similar distribution to potatoes although more than half the area is now in Tasmania. Almost the entire crop is processed in factories located close to the main producing areas so there is no need for growing areas to be close to major urban markets.

Tobacco

Tobacco, a summer crop needing a frost-free period of at least five months, is grown mainly at two widely separate locations: the Mareeba district of north Queensland and the Ovens and King valleys in north-central Victoria. Smaller areas are grown around Bundaberg and Inglewood (Qld) and around Texas (Qld and N.S.W.). Most of the area is sprinkler irrigated. The tobacco produced is mostly Virginia type and is flue-cured on the farms.

A very high-value crop, tobacco is grown over a relatively small area of about 7500 ha (Table 12). Although the area has declined, increases in yield have maintained production at 15 000 tonnes in recent years.

Table 14. Vegetables for Human Consumption (ha) 1975-76 (States) and 1979-80 (Australia only)

Crop	Qld	N.S.W.	Vic.	Tas.	S.A.	W.A.	AUSTRALIA (a)	
							1975-76	1979-80
Potatoes	6 000	8 300	10 600	3 400	2 800	2 300	33 400	36 700
Peas, green	1 600	2 500	5 200	5 500	3 200	900	19 000	14 500
Tomatoes	2 400	2 400	2 400	..	400	200	7 900	8 400
Beans	2 900	2 000	1 400	1 100	..	300	7 600	7 100
Pumpkins	4 100	1 500	900	100	400	400	7 300	6 700
Onions	1 000	1 000	800	300	800	200	4 000	4 000
Melons	2 100	800	300	..	100	300	3 700	4 800
Carrots	800	900	900	100	300	200	3 300	3 600
Sweet corn	200	2 100	400	..	400	..	3 100	2 900
Cabbages and brussels sprouts	500	600	900	200	300	100	2 700	3 000
Cauliflower	200	700	1 000	200	200	300	2 600	3 300
Lettuce	300	800	800	100	200	200	2 300	2 900
Other and not specified	2 400	3 300	1 700	400	400	300	8 600	8 600
TOTAL	24 600	27 100	27 100	11 300	9 500	5 700	105 600	106 500

(a) Includes small areas in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics—Crop Statistics, Australia: Season 1975-76 (somewhat revised) and Crops: Australia: 1979-80.

