

# News Release



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**Compiled by:**

**Agriculture & Fisheries Unit**  
e-mail: [agric.nso@gov.mt](mailto:agric.nso@gov.mt)  
Tel: 25997529

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## Agriculture

### Fruit and Vegetables - March Quarter 2006

#### March quarter

A total of 9.33 million kilograms of fresh fruit and vegetables passed through the markets in the March quarter 2006. This was an increase of 1.61 million kilograms (+20.8 per cent), when compared to the same period last year, where 7.73 million kilograms were recorded in the same period. The increase in the volume of the produce brought about a drop of Lm 0.8 million (-4.8 per cent) in the wholesale value which dropped from Lm1.76 million in the first quarter of 2005 to Lm1.68 million in the first quarter this year.

The increase in fresh fruit and vegetable availability was a result of contrasting developments within the sector. Whereas, the quantity of fresh vegetables over the comparative period increased by 1.70 million kilograms (+23.1 per cent), from 7.36 million kilograms in March quarter 2005 to 9.07 million kilograms in the first quarter this year, fresh fruit availability declined by 0.10 million kilograms (-26.6 per cent) from 0.37 million kilograms to 0.27 million kilograms in the respective period. Whereas increases were registered in most horticultural products, tomatoes and dry onions were outstanding with an increase of 42.4 per cent and 123.0 per cent respectively. Sweet oranges were responsible for the decline in fresh fruit availability where a 45.4 per cent drop was recorded.

#### Regional Statistics

During the period covered by the report, Maltese farmers marketed a total of 8.47 million kilograms of fresh produce or 90.7 per cent of the total market share. When compared to the same period last year, the supply of fresh produce increased by 1.80 million kilograms (+27.1 per cent) from 6.66 million kilograms. On the other hand, the wholesale value of marketed produce declined marginally by Lm 0.10 million liri (-0.3 per cent) from Lm 1.44 million liri in 2005 to Lm 1.43 million liri in 2006.

Gozitan farmers supply of fresh fruit and vegetables declined by 18.5 per cent, from 1.06 million kilograms in March quarter 2005 to 0.87 million kilograms in the first quarter this year. This decline was mainly due to the heavy drop in sweet oranges which fell by 47.2 per cent from 0.19 million kilograms in the first quarter 2005 to 0.10 million kilograms in the first quarter this year. Similarly the wholesale value of fresh fruit and vegetables declined by Lm 0.08 million liri (-24.3 per cent) over the comparative period.

#### Indices

The 'All Items' fresh vegetables price index for the month of March stood at 122.08 points, a drop of 6.92 points (-5.4 per cent) over the same month in 2005. Although a 26.0 per cent increase in the price of potatoes was registered, the overall decline was mainly due to drop in the average price of tomatoes (-59.8 per cent) and cauliflowers (-18.6 per cent). The 'All Items' fresh vegetables volume index rose from 82.61 points in March 2005 to 97.26 points in March 2006, a rise of 14.65 points (+17.8 per cent) when compared to March 2005.

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**National Statistics Office**  
**Library & Information Unit**  
Lascaris, Valletta CMR 02, Malta  
Tel: (+356) 25997219  
Fax: (+356) 25997205  
e-mail: [nso@gov.mt](mailto:nso@gov.mt)  
<http://www.nso.gov.mt>

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The rise in the volume index was the result of higher volumes in most horticultural products and the most notable increases were tomatoes (+28.0 per cent) and dry onions (+233.9 per cent). A drop of 27.9 per cent in cauliflower availability was also registered.

The 'All Items' fresh fruit price index dropped by 6.38 points (-4.4 per cent) from 146.10 points in March 2005 to 139.72 points in March 2006. A decline of 10.3 per cent in the unit price of strawberries was mainly responsible for this drop. The volume index declined by 13.56 points (-30.8 per cent) from 44.16 points in March 2005 to 30.54 points in March 2006. The shortage of sweet oranges (-78.3 per cent) placed on the market was responsible for the decline. On the other hand, the supply of strawberries for March 2006 increased by 37.9 per cent over the comparative period ■

Table 1. Wholesale value and quantity of agricultural products sold through official markets

MALTA												
Item	2005		2006						±% 2006/2005			
	January/March		January		February		March		January/March		January/March	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm
<b>Total vegetables and fruit</b>	<b>7,728,980</b>	<b>1,764,176</b>	<b>3,230,177</b>	<b>545,989</b>	<b>2,840,656</b>	<b>490,217</b>	<b>3,263,893</b>	<b>643,988</b>	<b>9,334,726</b>	<b>1,680,195</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>-4.8</b>
<b>Total vegetables</b>	<b>7,361,859</b>	<b>1,667,769</b>	<b>3,090,992</b>	<b>504,874</b>	<b>2,772,137</b>	<b>466,913</b>	<b>3,202,246</b>	<b>595,496</b>	<b>9,065,374</b>	<b>1,567,284</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>-6.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>												
Artichokes Globe	250,879	78,168	28,321	25,425	56,454	35,103	200,644	26,589	285,419	87,116	13.8	11.4
Beans Broad	61,039	36,434	3,384	1,892	9,234	4,931	90,589	36,755	103,207	43,578	69.1	19.6
Bellpepper	72,853	48,870	24,580	12,241	20,427	10,802	27,565	15,277	72,572	38,320	-0.4	-21.6
Cabbages	674,704	69,746	269,975	11,310	242,447	12,503	258,199	15,067	770,621	38,880	14.2	-44.3
Carrots	411,196	40,898	189,908	21,253	139,342	21,919	158,867	27,229	488,117	70,402	18.7	72.1
Cauliflowers	1,329,272	138,176	612,140	33,524	540,573	28,862	313,635	58,601	1,466,348	120,987	10.3	-12.4
Celery	125,057	12,127	46,263	3,668	37,139	3,995	45,467	3,657	128,869	11,320	3.0	-6.7
Cucumber	65,944	47,353	26,964	15,479	19,533	16,194	17,438	14,707	63,935	46,380	-3.0	-2.1
Eggplant	47,871	37,134	16,513	10,027	16,222	8,677	17,475	7,085	50,209	25,789	4.9	-30.5
Kohlrabi	372,686	27,597	120,386	7,565	140,595	5,800	100,944	9,059	361,925	22,423	-2.9	-18.7
Lettuce	359,379	82,862	155,460	26,226	137,868	20,102	205,957	31,972	499,285	78,300	38.9	-5.5
Marrows Vegetable	495,305	304,824	214,237	107,062	195,498	100,411	236,322	110,425	646,056	317,899	30.4	4.3
Melons Sugar	1,031	269	376	100	118	28	-	-	494	128	-52.1	-52.6
Melons Water	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Onions Dry	332,963	97,618	253,333	32,344	210,284	24,961	278,836	31,027	742,453	88,331	123.0	-9.5
Onions Green	28,984	1,942	2,650	119	5,053	223	30,577	1,273	38,280	1,615	32.1	-16.8
Potatoes	910,309	98,675	365,529	38,253	268,497	35,040	357,108	49,561	991,134	122,854	8.9	24.5
Pumpkins	195,596	18,666	79,025	7,209	55,538	4,530	59,957	6,079	194,520	17,818	-0.6	-4.5
Tomatoes	642,535	288,751	261,425	83,724	292,959	71,426	360,407	81,252	914,791	236,402	42.4	-18.1
Other vegetables	984,255	237,661	420,524	67,456	384,357	61,407	442,260	69,882	1,247,141	198,744	26.7	-16.4
<b>Total fruit</b>	<b>367,120</b>	<b>96,407</b>	<b>139,186</b>	<b>41,115</b>	<b>68,519</b>	<b>23,305</b>	<b>61,647</b>	<b>48,492</b>	<b>269,352</b>	<b>112,911</b>	<b>-26.6</b>	<b>17.1</b>
<i>of which:</i>												
Figs Dry	52	35	-	-	46	27	47	32	93	60	78.8	68.6
Figs Early	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grapes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lemons	57,951	3,861	23,669	3,374	18,887	2,634	21,962	2,610	64,518	8,618	11.3	123.2
Nectarines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oranges Sweet	208,322	36,959	72,263	23,291	32,292	11,832	9,137	3,697	113,692	38,820	-45.4	5.0
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plums Cherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pomegranates	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strawberries	22,664	42,489	1,642	4,170	2,231	4,960	25,836	40,793	29,709	49,922	31.1	17.5
Other fruit	78,131	13,062	41,612	10,280	15,063	3,853	4,665	1,359	61,340	15,492	-21.5	18.6

Table 2. Wholesale value and quantity of agricultural products sold through official markets

MALTA												
Item	2005		2006								±% 2006/2005	
	January/March		January		February		March		January/March		January/March	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm
<b>Total vegetables and fruit</b>	<b>6,664,427</b>	<b>1,439,221</b>	<b>2,912,271</b>	<b>457,444</b>	<b>2,573,445</b>	<b>415,504</b>	<b>2,981,878</b>	<b>561,252</b>	<b>8,467,595</b>	<b>1,434,200</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>-0.3</b>
<b>Total vegetables</b>	<b>6,544,660</b>	<b>1,387,045</b>	<b>2,863,305</b>	<b>443,350</b>	<b>2,547,917</b>	<b>406,412</b>	<b>2,940,189</b>	<b>520,282</b>	<b>8,351,411</b>	<b>1,370,044</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>-1.2</b>
<i>of which:</i>												
Artichokes Globe	237,188	71,905	26,071	24,043	51,266	33,237	193,617	25,232	270,954	82,513	14.2	14.8
Beans Broad	55,758	32,523	3,349	1,881	9,162	4,899	86,540	34,286	99,051	41,065	77.6	26.3
Bellpepper	41,618	28,018	18,841	9,434	14,549	7,613	17,263	9,818	50,653	26,865	21.7	-4.1
Cabbages	612,664	62,989	255,126	10,008	231,086	11,441	243,582	13,740	729,794	35,189	19.1	-44.1
Carrots	395,417	38,469	185,934	20,522	134,323	20,955	153,393	26,392	473,650	67,869	19.8	76.4
Cauliflowers	1,203,375	120,452	564,211	29,333	501,420	25,062	274,675	48,426	1,340,306	102,820	11.4	-14.6
Celery	111,015	10,348	44,876	3,436	35,758	3,795	43,370	3,339	124,004	10,569	11.7	2.1
Cucumber	28,072	19,977	16,786	9,567	10,691	8,680	9,240	7,350	36,717	25,597	30.8	28.1
Eggplant	24,579	18,112	9,773	5,215	7,087	3,816	6,330	2,846	23,189	11,878	-5.7	-34.4
Kohlrabi	346,709	24,245	112,496	6,675	129,697	4,918	97,248	8,287	339,441	19,880	-2.1	-18.0
Lettuce	321,239	73,729	146,354	24,195	127,654	18,402	195,049	29,680	469,057	72,277	46.0	-2.0
Marrows Vegetable	377,027	232,859	184,166	91,383	170,332	87,974	204,127	96,437	558,624	275,794	48.2	18.4
Melons Sugar	680	209	202	36	18	3	-	-	220	38	-67.6	-81.6
Melons Water	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Onions Dry	315,233	91,964	247,392	31,476	205,406	24,243	273,877	30,237	726,675	85,956	130.5	-6.5
Onions Green	24,534	1,479	2,170	78	4,565	193	29,078	1,189	35,813	1,460	46.0	-1.3
Potatoes	834,927	90,062	347,750	36,248	258,718	33,592	329,725	44,960	936,193	114,799	12.1	27.5
Pumpkins	176,645	16,903	73,763	6,704	51,855	4,246	57,386	5,838	183,004	16,788	3.6	-0.7
Tomatoes	550,758	245,660	231,245	72,959	255,026	60,579	314,453	69,777	800,724	203,315	45.4	-17.2
Other vegetables	887,220	207,142	392,801	60,157	349,306	52,765	411,237	62,449	1,153,344	175,371	30.0	-15.3
<b>Total fruit</b>	<b>119,767</b>	<b>52,176</b>	<b>48,967</b>	<b>14,094</b>	<b>25,528</b>	<b>9,092</b>	<b>41,689</b>	<b>40,970</b>	<b>116,184</b>	<b>64,157</b>	<b>-3.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>
<i>of which:</i>												
Figs Dry	52	35	-	-	46	27	47	32	93	60	78.8	68.6
Figs Early	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grapes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lemons	38,083	2,356	13,397	1,890	11,096	1,489	13,907	1,591	38,400	4,969	0.8	110.9
Nectarines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oranges Sweet	20,738	4,028	11,229	3,265	2,994	1,021	417	156	14,640	4,443	-29.4	10.3
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plums Cherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pomegranates	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strawberries	21,001	39,407	1,490	3,788	1,914	4,244	23,569	38,160	26,973	46,192	28.4	17.2
Other fruit	39,893	6,351	22,851	5,150	9,478	2,312	3,749	1,031	36,078	8,493	-9.6	33.7

Table 3. Wholesale value and quantity of agricultural products sold through official markets

GOZO												
Item	2005		2006								±% 2006/2005	
	January/March		January		February		March		January/March		January/March	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm
<b>Total vegetables and fruit</b>	<b>1,064,553</b>	<b>324,955</b>	<b>317,906</b>	<b>88,545</b>	<b>267,211</b>	<b>74,713</b>	<b>282,015</b>	<b>82,736</b>	<b>867,131</b>	<b>245,995</b>	<b>-18.5</b>	<b>-24.3</b>
<b>Total vegetables</b>	<b>817,199</b>	<b>280,725</b>	<b>227,687</b>	<b>61,524</b>	<b>224,220</b>	<b>60,501</b>	<b>262,057</b>	<b>75,215</b>	<b>713,963</b>	<b>197,240</b>	<b>-12.6</b>	<b>-29.7</b>
<i>of which:</i>												
Artichokes Globe	13,691	6,262	2,250	1,382	5,188	1,865	7,027	1,356	14,465	4,604	5.7	-26.5
Beans Broad	5,281	3,911	35	11	72	33	4,049	2,470	4,156	2,513	-21.3	-35.7
Bellpepper	31,235	20,852	5,739	2,807	5,878	3,189	10,302	5,459	21,919	11,455	-29.8	-45.1
Cabbages	62,040	6,757	14,849	1,301	11,361	1,062	14,617	1,327	40,827	3,690	-34.2	-45.4
Carrots	15,779	2,429	3,974	732	5,019	964	5,474	836	14,467	2,532	-8.3	4.2
Cauliflowers	125,897	17,724	47,929	4,191	39,153	3,800	38,960	10,175	126,042	18,167	0.1	2.5
Celery	14,042	1,779	1,387	232	1,381	200	2,097	319	4,865	751	-65.4	-57.8
Cucumber	37,872	27,376	10,178	5,912	8,842	7,514	8,198	7,357	27,218	20,783	-28.1	-24.1
Eggplant	23,292	19,022	6,740	4,812	9,135	4,861	11,145	4,239	27,020	13,912	16.0	-26.9
Kohlrabi	25,977	3,352	7,890	890	10,898	882	3,696	771	22,484	2,543	-13.4	-24.1
Lettuce	38,140	9,133	9,106	2,031	10,214	1,700	10,908	2,292	30,228	6,023	-20.7	-34.1
Marrows Vegetable	118,278	71,965	30,071	15,678	25,166	12,438	32,195	13,989	87,432	42,105	-26.1	-41.5
Melons Sugar	351	61	174	64	100	25	-	-	274	89	-21.9	46.9
Melons Water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Onions Dry	17,730	5,654	5,941	868	4,878	717	4,959	790	15,778	2,376	-11.0	-58.0
Onions Green	4,450	463	480	41	488	30	1,499	83	2,467	155	-44.6	-66.6
Potatoes	75,382	8,613	17,779	2,005	9,779	1,449	27,383	4,601	54,941	8,055	-27.1	-6.5
Pumpkins	18,951	1,762	5,262	505	3,683	284	2,571	241	11,516	1,030	-39.2	-41.6
Tomatoes	91,777	43,091	30,180	10,764	37,933	10,847	45,954	11,475	114,067	33,087	24.3	-23.2
Other vegetables	97,035	30,519	27,723	7,298	35,052	8,641	31,023	7,433	93,797	23,373	-3.3	-23.4
<b>Total fruit</b>	<b>247,353</b>	<b>44,230</b>	<b>90,219</b>	<b>27,021</b>	<b>42,991</b>	<b>14,213</b>	<b>19,958</b>	<b>7,521</b>	<b>153,168</b>	<b>48,755</b>	<b>-38.1</b>	<b>10.2</b>
<i>of which:</i>												
Figs Dry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Figs Early	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grapes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lemons	19,868	1,506	10,272	1,485	7,791	1,145	8,055	1,019	26,118	3,649	31.5	142.3
Nectarines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oranges Sweet	187,584	32,931	61,034	20,025	29,298	10,810	8,720	3,541	99,052	34,377	-47.2	4.4
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plums Cherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pomegranates	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strawberries	1,663	3,082	152	381	317	716	2,267	2,633	2,736	3,730	64.5	21.0
Other fruit	38,238	6,712	18,761	5,130	5,585	1,541	916	328	25,262	6,999	-33.9	4.3

Table 4. 'All Items' Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Index

Month	Fresh Fruit Index (2000 = 100)		Fresh Vegetables Index (2000 = 100)	
	Price Index	Volume Index	Price Index	Volume Index
<b>2003</b>				
January	92.55	51.33	117.69	81.57
February	138.38	27.86	159.32	65.50
March	152.77	26.92	185.40	70.22
April	100.22	55.44	176.90	92.60
May	102.47	75.80	162.24	100.55
June	134.17	163.39	95.62	148.56
July	152.49	125.38	71.57	164.90
August	133.46	173.02	81.71	130.95
September	124.99	145.26	120.07	104.57
October	118.10	55.29	178.59	68.16
November	117.16	63.05	168.08	61.24
December	134.40	83.90	199.86	67.09
<b>2004</b>				
January	122.28	30.51	198.24	67.32
February	153.71	14.47	143.87	72.08
March	145.57	26.94	149.71	85.79
April	77.82	71.71	124.03	102.44
May	106.00	72.56	86.65	109.36
June	107.56	222.79	66.29	137.61
July	127.14	179.14	74.21	187.35
August	94.12	256.24	70.09	155.81
September	71.08	197.85	77.94	113.85
October	89.39	64.95	81.60	89.31
November	85.38	69.30	125.84	80.43
December	75.89	82.45	142.06	71.61
<b>2005</b>				
January	59.49	88.96	144.86	80.68
February	113.33	48.79	165.02	60.31
March	146.10	44.10	129.00	82.61
April	97.69	73.33	140.93	98.88
May	92.07	77.86	139.24	109.19
June	92.77	241.26	89.77	146.25
July	98.12	165.47	71.13	160.63
August	81.09	254.77	75.06	154.18
September	76.77	148.54	97.89	103.34
October	103.07	43.95	106.35	83.56
November	100.56	68.94	102.52	63.97
December	88.67	92.59	96.40	84.65
<b>2006</b>				
January	96.36	68.94	100.08	93.88
February	133.61	33.94	94.98	84.20
March	139.72	30.54	122.08	97.26

## Methodological Notes

1. The information is collected from the four official markets namely; Pitkali Malta, Co-op Malta, Pitkali Gozo, Co-op Gozo where all farmers deposit their produce for sale to licensed hawkers, through private middlemen. The information is compiled on a daily basis, Monday and Thursdays being the busiest days. The data is forwarded to the NSO on a monthly basis.
2. The data is recorded by crop where quantities and value are kept, together with average unit price.
3. The unit volume and prices are used in the compilation of monthly volume and price indices for each agricultural product. The indices are used to monitor developments in price and volume movements over a particular period. The price and volume indices have 2000 as the base year. Price indices are calculated using the Laspayres method with variable monthly baskets. Price indices from one month to another are not comparable and can only be compared to the same month in previous years.
4. The regional data are derived at source where every consignment at the official markets are classified by the residence of the farmer.
5. The data in this release are not normally subject to revision.
6. The Fruit and Vegetable News Release is being presented to show the dominant produce. A full list of all produce passing through the official markets will be made available upon request.
7. These statistics are published and disseminated by the National Statistics Office and can also be found on the NSO website <http://www.nso.gov.mt>