

Artichoke

Cynara scolymus (Compositae)

Fast Facts:

Acres in Washington: fewer than 20 Number of Growers: 15 farms *Statistics Provided by the Washington Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS).

**Description
of crop:**

Artichokes grow best in climates with cool summers and mild winters. Typically, perennial artichokes are primarily grown in California. Artichokes produced in Washington are grown as annuals; because they are susceptible to winter kill. Perennial artichokes are grown from crown divisions. Annual artichokes are produced from a new variety of seed (developed in 1991) that produces true-to-type- plants. Plants are started in the greenhouse in early to mid-March and are typically transplanted into the field in late April or early May. Harvest in Washington during late August or early September produces a crop when production in California has declined.

Key pests:

Black aphids, thistle aphids and cucumber beetle are the primary insect pests of artichokes. Weeds are the most significant artichoke pests. They can limit production because, although the artichoke plant is large, it is a poor competitor with weeds for water, sunlight, and nutrients. Lambsquarter, shepardspurse and mustards are a few examples of weed pests. Diseases are generally not a problem in artichokes since they are a hardy plant, which grows fast.

Key pesticides:

Aphids and cucumber beetle can be controlled with pyrethrins. The cucumber beetle can also be controlled by planting a trap crop of mustard around the perimeter of the field. The beetles tend to prefer this to the artichoke plants. Weeds can be controlled with herbicides but utilizing a sterile bed, light mulch and transplanting 60 day old seedlings will usually solve weed problems. Light hoeing is a typical means of weed control.

**Critical pest
control issues:**

There have been a few artichoke plum moths spotted here in Washington. Artichoke production in Washington is for local markets since commercial outlets want a certain shape and size.

Expert contact: Jay Gordon
Elma, Washington
360 482 3485

**Location
of production:** Adams, King, Lewis, Pierce, San Juan, Clallam, Skagit, Thurston,
Whatcom and Whitman counties.





Artichoke thistle



Artichoke

Artichoke Production in Washington State

