

Cauliflower

Brassicaceae (Cruciferae)

Fast Facts:

Acres in Washington: 310 Number of Growers: 3 larger growers, 29 small growers Per Acre Value: 4,000 an acre

Description of crop:

Cauliflower grows best in cool, wet climates. Cauliflower is not direct seeded; it is produced from transplants. When the crop is transplanted into the field depends on the cultivar-either, early, late or winter. Transplant dates depend on whether the crop is intended for fresh market or processing. If the crop is for fresh market, transplanting occurs in mid-March through July. If not for processing, the crop is transplanted in mid-June through July. Harvest occurs 60 to 100 days later. Winter varieties are transplanted in June or July and harvested from November to March. Overwintering varieties are transplanted from mid-August to the beginning of September and harvested from mid-April through May. All cauliflower is hand-harvested when the heads are five to six inches in diameter.

Key pests:

Insects are the most severe pests of cauliflower. Root maggot is the most common and damaging insect pest and cabbage aphid, turnip aphid and green peach aphid are also serious problems. The green peach aphid, is more easily controlled, but cabbage aphid and turnip aphid can be devastating. Cutworms and loopers can also cause losses. Alternaria spot and club root are the key diseases of cauliflower in Washington. The crop is grown on a four-year rotation to control club root, which generally occurs when heavy rains and soil saturation follow planting. Alternaria spot also can be a serious disease. Groundsel and shepardspurse both compete with cauliflower, but weeds are less severe than insects or diseases.

Key pesticides:

Lorsban effectively controls outbreaks of root maggots. Pyrethrin can control the green peach aphid. Ambush/Pounce is registered to control cutworms and loopers. Phosphorous acid and copper hydroxide can control club root and alternaria spot. Roundup will control groundsel and shepardspurse and Treflan controls most other weeds.

Critical pest control issues:

The most critical issue is aphid control. Growers should practice a 3-year rotation with non-susceptible crops. Spring planted and summer-harvested crops have fewer problems than fall-harvested crops. Growers should try to use stock seeds that are pathogen free and maintain uninfected seedbeds. Attention to plantings within rows to allow good air circulation can also help. Controlling the frequency and source of irrigation water by timing the irrigation to allow heads to dry can also reduce problems.

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**Location
of Production:**

Clallam, Clark, Island, Jefferson, Kitsap, Lewis, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Skagit, Snohomish, King, Whatcom and Thurston Counties

