

by Glen Sweetman, PAg Provincial Specialist – Greenhouse and Nursery Crops Branch. (Published with permission from Agriview, Ministry of Agriculture, Sasaktchewan.)

The time is right for greenhouse vegetable production in Saskatchewan. With consumers' increasing awareness of the growing "buy local" movement, and the high cost of transportation, the greenhouse vegetable industry is doing well in Saskatchewan.

The acres devoted to Saskatchewan greenhouse vegetables are increasing along with the number of greenhouse operators. However, production levels still have not met the increasing demand. It seems like everyone is on board with Saskatchewan produce. The farmers' markets have line ups, fine restaurants are adding it to their menu, and grocery stores are sourcing as much locally grown produce as possible.

There has also been a lot of diversification by the individual producers. They are extending their product lines beyond tomatoes and cucumbers to include miniature vegetables, as well as hot and sweet peppers. There has even been limited production of strawberries, pole beans, lettuce, zucchini and muskmelons across the province.

The challenge of greenhouse vegetable production is managing the growing environment to produce an ideal ecosystem for the crop. Production in a greenhouse is very technical with a number of management challenges.

The best place to buy Saskatchewan-grown produce is directly from farmers' markets and greenhouses, but more and more local produce can be found in grocery stores. Now, thanks to several of the larger greenhouses operating throughout the winter, produce is available year round.

For more information on the opportunities in greenhouse production

- Call Glen Sweetman, Provincial Specialist, Greenhouse and Nursery, at (306) 787-6606, or
- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.