



fresh Directions

January 13th, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↑ Washington is still packing higher colored reds but they are peaking on 100's and smaller now. Increased demand is pushing all grades of Red delicious higher. Golden's are still mostly large and continue to pack-out heavier to the Washington extra-fancy grade. Royal Gala's are peaking between 100/113's and have good color but large fruit remains very short. Granny-Smiths are still heavier to 64-88's while 100's and smaller are very limited. Fuji's remain high in color and is still peaking on 88's and larger. Small Fuji's remain very short.

Asparagus ↔ This market is firm on all sizing. Mexican product is starting to have light supplies on all sizing and Peruvian product is increasing in availability. Air space is much more available. The jumbo and extra large sizing has increased in availability.

Avocado ↑ Avocado supplies have become extremely limited. Mexico is the main supplier to the US with about 80% of the supply, and has packed only limited volume over the past 2 weeks during the holidays. Supplies will improve over the next couple of weeks as normal harvesting and packing resumes in Mexico. During these weeks and as we move into The Super Bowl event, markets are expected to be very active. The California which is forecasted to be 50% lighter than last year's crop will start later and be a shorter year. Chile has such a light crop this year; they are not much of a factor.

Bell Peppers Western ↑ Mexico's supplies loading out of Nogales are lighter this week with good demand. The Red bells supplies from Mexico have started to increase this week as new growers have begun to cross into the US. Yellow bell supplies are also increasing. **Eastern** ↔ Pepper on the east is still readily available and the market seems to be dropping a tad to compete with Nogales. With the pepper market not affected nearly as badly as once thought by the recent cold temperatures, we have seen good quality but weakening demand.

Broccoli ↑ The market is extremely active. Yuma production is down due to extreme cold weather that has slowed the growth. Santa Maria and the San Joaquin valley have had heavy rains. This has made this commodity very tough to purchase due to lack of availability. Pin rot, Discoloring, and heavy water damage are common defects we are currently seeing on all broccoli items. Very cold temperatures continue to exist in all the growing regions. Mexico production has moderate production but this region has had issues with low temperatures and rain as well.

Cauliflower ↑ The cauliflower market continues to get stronger. The supplies will be light to moderate throughout the week. Twelve count sizing continues to be the most readily size

available. Santa Maria and Yuma volumes have decreased due to past freezing temperatures. The overall quality is reported to be good.

Celery ↑ This market continues to gain strength. Large sizing is tight and is commanding a higher price. The gap in pricing has closed significantly amongst all the growers. Large sizing will be tight for the entire week. Currently, production is coming from Oxnard, Santa Maria and Yuma. The weights are fine but the quality has had issues such as cracking at the nose, pith and bottom rot.

Citrus Lemons ↔ Fruit is sizing up due to the heavy rains in the growing areas. 140's and larger are now more available, and look for 200's to start getting less abundant. **Oranges** ↔ We are seeing the size in the orange crop starting to size up as well. The percentage of small sizes being packed is starting to drop.

Lettuce Leaf ↑ This market on romaine continues to get stronger. Supplies are light to moderate with most suppliers. The freeze has hurt some suppliers more than others and it is reflected in the quality of their romaine. Romaine continues to show some blister, epidermal peel and bottom rot. This continues to be an industry wide issue. Green and red leaf and butter is available with an increase in price as well. Issues of fringe burn and blistering is occurring as well, but

not to the extent of romaine. Yuma is in full production on leaf items. **Iceberg**

↑ This market is stronger. Shippers are expected to have issues next week because of past freezing temperatures. Pricing will be active throughout the week. Shippers are still seeing some epidermal peel, bottom rot, as well as blister for product being harvested. Shippers are expected to have light to moderate supplies for the rest of this week. The weights and quality will vary amongst the different shippers. Yuma production has weights ranging from 38 to 44 pounds.

Melons **Cantaloupes** ↑ Transition from Guatemalan to Honduras fruit this week is making for limited volume. Cantaloupe availability is subject to port arrivals. Sizes are switching to peak to large fruit again with small fruit limited. Quality is good and prices up. **Honeydew** ↑ Nogales still has Mexican fruit peaking to 8's. Offshore dewes are showing a little activity with the market starting to firm up a bit due to the transition of growing areas. Sizes are peaking to large fruit again. Quality is excellent.

Onions ↔ Idaho/Oregon is slightly higher on colossal, jumbo, and medium yellows because of stronger demand. The market will level off in the short-term though. Washington is still producing mostly jumbo yellows and their pricing is steady but the market is strong due to strong domestic and export demand. The yellow quality has been mostly good in both areas. Reds are steady although there are some volume deals available in all areas. Whites are slightly higher in both areas as we approach the end of the storage deal for them. The quality on reds and whites has been good. Nevada is still packing whites, yellows, and reds and they are steady on all sizes and colors but are still relatively high on their yellows. Nevada is also relatively cheap on reds.

Potatoes ↑ Cold temperatures in Idaho on Monday & Tuesday have many shippers unable to haul and/or pack. The temperatures are supposed to be higher on Wednesday but it is also snowing with more expected so time will tell whether the availability eases up. Idaho continues to peak on smaller Burbanks and the larger counts remain limited. More shippers are supposed to pack norkotahs this week which will help with more volume of the larger counts. The quality for both varieties has been good. Pricing is steady on both varieties for now but expect a stronger market due to lack of availability. Washington Norkotahs are still peaking on 70-90's. The Washington market is steady on all sizes. Colorado Norkotahs remain mostly large while the small counts remain short. Colorado's market is steady on most sizes with volume deals on the larger counts. California continues to ship colored potatoes from Bakersfield but the recent rain has kept the availability down. Expect more volume from California this week as the weather turns dryer. Mount Vernon, Washington continues packing excellent quality reds & golds, and they have limited supplies of whites. They have had limited pack time lately due to weather. The Washington market is mostly steady on all colors. Minnesota & Wisconsin both continue to pack reds and golds and the markets for both are steady.

Tomatoes **Eastern** ↑ Shippers continue to have decent volume behind them with some color and are making deals based on higher color. Shippers have cleaned up most of their surplus and some shippers are edging up on pricing. I do not anticipate a long duration of them raising prices due to Nogales

ramping up with supplies. Quality remains good. Grape and cherry production is still lower than expected. There are slightly cooler temps in Florida than typical but no freezing reported. **Western** ↑ Roma tomatoes continue a bit active and pricing is up from last week. There are two layer tomatoes crossing through McAllen TX currently and are slowly building up with 25# round and Roma tomatoes. We can expect to see increased fob's as the east will be stressed from the cold, if demand picks up. Nogales is going with very low volume currently but by next week should have significantly more volume on all varieties.

