



fresh Directions

January 27th, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Washington is still producing high colored Reds that are mostly in the 100 counts & smaller size range. Strong demand is keeping the prices up on all grades. Golden's are still packing out more heavily to 88's and larger while very few of the smaller sizes are available. The Golden's also continue to produce mostly Washington extra-fancy grade fruit with fewer Premiums and US extra-fancy. Gala's are still peaking on 100/113's and have good color while large fruit remains tight. Granny-Smiths are still heavy to 88 and larger fruit with 100 size and smaller remain very limited. Fuji's are still high in color and continue to peak on 88's and larger. Small Fuji's are still very short. Bartlett pears are essentially finished for the season.

Asparagus ↔ This market is steady with all suppliers. Mexico has tightened up production due to cooler temperatures in the growing regions. Mexican production is extremely tight on jumbos. Peruvian product is moderate in availability on standard and large sizes. The jumbo and extra large sizing is on the light side.

Avocado ↔ Avocado supplies have leveled out to match with current demand for fruit. 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 showing improved volume with demand improving as we move into the weekend. The Red and Yellow bells supplies from Mexico are still good. Eastern ↓ Pepper on the east is still readily available and demand is weak. While the pepper market in Nogales drops, Florida seems to be doing the same with deals available, particularly in big pepper. Quality has been excellent and the market should continue to weaken over the next few days.

Broccoli ↓ As expected, this market is softer, with the better deals coming on crowns. Supplies are stronger out of Yuma and Mexico. Some pin rot, Discoloring, and heavy water damage is still being seen sporadically on different arrivals. Mexico production has stronger production to start the week.

Cauliflower ↓ The cauliflower market is softer with most suppliers. Twelve count sizing continues to be the most readily size available. Santa Maria and Yuma volumes have increased due to warmer temperatures in the growing regions. The overall quality is getting stronger compared to previous weeks.

Celery ↔ This market is steady. Larger sizing continues to be the most difficult sizing to come by and is commanding a higher price. The gap in pricing has closed significantly among

all the growers. Currently, production is coming from Oxnard, Santa Maria and Yuma. The Oxnard production continues to be significantly reduced due to past cold temperatures and rain. Pith, crack, and bottom rot are the defects most commonly seen upon arrivals. The weights are fine.

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 ↔ The market on romaine is firm. Supplies are light with most suppliers. Yields are significantly down due to blister, bottom rot and epidermal peel that all suppliers are dealing with. Romaine Hearts are also an issue as suppliers are being made to put more heads in a carton to make weights. The freeze has hurt some suppliers more than others and it is reflected in the quality of their romaine. Red leaf is steady and butter is available. The green leaf market has decreased and deals can be made on this commodity. Sclerotinia continues to exist in Yuma. **Iceberg** ↓ This market is softer. Some suppliers are better off than others and this is reflected in pricing gaps amongst the different suppliers. Shippers are expected to have quality issues all week because of past freezing temperatures.

Shippers are still seeing some epidermal peel, bottom rot, as well as blister for product being harvested. The weights and quality will vary amongst the different shippers. Yuma production has weights ranging from 38 to 44 pounds. The sclerotinia issues in Yuma will only make production numbers smaller coupled with all the other issues.

Melons **Cantaloupes** ↔ There is good availability and quality of all sizes of offshore fruit loading out of Florida and California. Product is very good quality and Markets are lower. **Honeydew** ↔ Nogales still has Mexican fruit peaking to 8's. Offshore fruit is available on all sizes in both Florida and California with very good quality.

Onions ↔ Idaho/Oregon yellows are steady to lower with volume deals on all sizes except prepacks. Washington yellows are lower on all sizes except mediums which remain limited. The yellow quality has been good in both areas. Mexican yellows are crossing now and they are peaking on jumbos. The Mexican quality has been good and they are priced lower. Reds are steady to lower in all areas and the volume deals are still there. The red market will remain weaker until the volume in Washington cleans up. Red quality has been good. Whites are steady but strong due to lighter supplies and variable quality in both Washington and Idaho/Oregon. Nevada is still packing whites, yellows, and reds. They are steady on all sizes and colors but are still relatively high on their yellows due to light supplies. Mexican reds and Whites will begin to cross in 10 to 14 days.

Potatoes ↑ Idaho packers are still trying to work more norkotahs into the mix to help supply the larger counts. Burbanks are still the main variety in Idaho and the demand has been very strong so expect carton prices to continue to rise especially on the larger counts. The quality for both varieties has been good. Washington Norkotahs are still peaking on 70-90's. The Washington market is also higher due to strong demand. Washington prices will also continue to climb. Colorado is also higher and will stay strong. Their size profile remains large. California continues to ship colored potatoes from Bakersfield and the availability is good on reds and whites while golds are more limited. Mount Vernon, Washington continues packing excellent quality reds & golds but the gold volume is limited as they approach the end of the season. 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 but strong.

Tomatoes **Eastern** ↔ The tomato market has stabilized in price on round tomatoes as well as Roma's coming off last weeks pricing. Demand has increased slightly but not heavily enough to get the market going. Growers are still in a bit of a salvage mode due to the past freeze so volume is not going to near the normal amounts until they get back up north with the spring production. Production will begin to taper off a bit as we approach the winter gap in Florida. Cherry and grape production is both

strong with reasonable pricing. **Western** ↓ Availability and price is getting better as I am seeing more shippers with much better volume and are willing to listen to alternate pricing to what is being quoted. As the volume is increasing we can expect to see lower prices next week. Quality has been and continues to be good, with the exception of lots of Green fruit out there. Grape and Cherry tomatoes continue to be in good supply with very reasonable prices.

