



# fresh Directions

October 20th, 2011

*An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.*

**Apples** ↓ The early Red Delicious is high in color and is heavy to the middle sizes. The fruit has matured late so availability is still fairly light and the demand has been strong. There are some good quality C.A. reds still available. Golden Delicious is still mostly in the premium grade and peaking on 88/100's. Granny-Smith are smaller this year and peaking on 88's-113's. The early Granny's are also mostly of the premium grade. Small Galas are still available but supplies are lighter as they are all in storage now. Galas are still peaking between 88 and 113's. Washington Honey Crisp remains very large. Some suppliers have size 27's and 36's! Jona-Golds, Fuji's, & Braeburns are now available. California continues to pack a few Grannies' and they are still heavier to 100's and smaller but California is cleaning up.

**Asparagus** ↔ This market is firm. Supplies on jumbo grass are fair out of Peru. Mexico production is heaviest to small and standard sizing and supplies are only moderate. Jumbo sizing are non-existent coming out of Mexico. Production is expected to be light throughout the week. Continue to place orders early. The quality out of both growing regions are having issues of soft tips and browning.

**Avocado** ↔ California season is done. Mexico supplies are tighter to start the week due to heavy rains in the growing areas. Harvest should pick back up by

the end of the week. Chile has cut back imports to the US by 50% as they are shipping a larger percentage of their fruit to Europe.

**Bell Peppers** Western ↑ The Central Valley and Oxnard crop on green bells are beginning their seasonal decline, and overall volumes are dropping. Green bells will begin out of the California desert in a light way by next week. No real volume until mid November. Colored bell supplies remain good, but are starting their seasonal decline. **Eastern** ↑ The pepper market has been steady with the rain having stopped for several days. With more rain and cooler temperatures coming into the southeast this week, the market is threatening to go up. Quality remains good and demand is steady.

**Broccoli** ↔ This market is steady on bunched product as well as crowns. Supplies have picked with a few shippers and this has stabilized the market. Salinas and Santa Maria continue to be the two main growing regions for this commodity. There are no major quality issues to report at this time.

**Cauliflower** ↑ This market is up slightly as demand has picked up. Supplies continue to be strongest on twelve count sizing. There are also decent supplies on nines and sixteen counts. The overall quality has been good. Production continues to be coming out of Santa Maria and Salinas.

**Celery** ↔ This market is continues on a steady course. Suppliers continue to be strong in Salinas and Santa Maria on large sizing. All sizing is available. Thirty-six and forty-eight counts are lighter in supplies are demanding a higher price. The quality continues to be good with no major issues to report at this time.

**Citrus** Lemons ↔ Supplies on small fruit continue to be plentiful. Mexico has begun crossing lemons through McAllen Texas and quality of the new crop looks to be excellent. **Oranges** ↔ Valencia orange supplies on 113 and 138's continue to be demand exceeds with most shippers selling out several days in advance. Some shippers are finished or will finish Val's over the next 7 to 10 days. Valencia supplies will be limited through the balance of October. The Navel crop currently is showing signs of a slow start with indications of a short supply situation for oranges during the transition from Valencia's to Navels which will start around the first to second week of November.

**Lettuce** Leaf ↔ The romaine market is steady. There are a few suppliers that have light supplies and are pricing three dollars over the market. The market is stable on green and red leaf as well. Demand is light. There have been some issues of tip burn and decay with all leaf items. The plants are getting tired at this time of the season and the quality will not be as strong as in past months. **Iceberg** ↔ This market continues to stay steady. Early field reports in

Huron indicate potential insect problems, which is typical of this fall transitional acreage. Carton weights along with head size will be on the smaller, lighter side. Santa Maria and Salinas weights continue to be in the 42-46# range. The quality has lessened. Problems include pink ribbing, russet spotting and brown butts.

**Melons** **Cantaloupes** ↑ The Westside district is finishing up quickly with little to no demand. There is extremely limited availability. The desert has started up in a light way and will have better availability next week. All fruit in the new growing areas is running large. **Honeydew** ↑ Availability is limited with Westside shippers finishing up and Arizona/Mexican product running mostly to 5's and just starting up. It will take a couple of weeks for good volume to come on.

**Onions** ↔ Yellows are steady in all areas. Jumbos and mediums are still the main sizes and most shippers will still deal for volume. The demand is still only fair and but some Idaho/Oregon shippers have limited volume now esp. in medium yellows. The reason that supplies are lighter is the rain that hit Idaho both one week ago and again last night. Colorado is still light on yellows with some on the eastern side and some on the western slope. California has a few yellows and they are also steady with limited volume. The yellow quality has been excellent in the northwest. Reds remain plentiful in Washington and some of the volume deals remain but the demand is stronger. Colorado & Idaho still only have mixer volume of reds. White supplies are up slightly in all areas and the market is down a little.

**Potatoes** ↔ The potato market for Norkotahs is mostly steady with some lower on big counts and mostly steady with some higher on the small counts. Supplies are more limited in Idaho because of the rain that hit last night but good weather is forecast for the balance of the week so they can continue harvesting. Idaho Burbanks supplies are up as several shippers are now packing them and their market is also mostly steady. The early Burbanks are heavier to 70-count and larger. Bakersfield, California continues shipping colored potatoes and they all three available. Washington & North Dakota both continue packing reds and golds. Washington has good numbers of reds, a few more golds, and some whites. Wisconsin continues packing reds, whites, and golds and supplies are good. The California, Washington, and Wisconsin quality has been excellent.

**Tomatoes** **Eastern** ↔ Heavy rains have taken their toll on not only the Quincy/Tallahassee crop in north Florida, but the fields in the Palmetto/Ruskin district near Tampa, which is no more than two weeks away from commencing harvest. This could definitely have the effect of initial reduced yields, possibly signaling a product supply gap in mature green tomatoes around the first of November. **Western** ↔ The rains in the San Joaquin Valley of California lasted until Thursday of last week, which has pushed off the restart of mature green tomato harvesting until the middle of this week, as the fields have not totally dried out as of yet. Early reports are that

the fruit is looking "surprisingly good", although past experience says there will be at least a little rain check in the product, depending on the grading jobs at the individual packing sheds. Markets are mixed this morning, with an underlying strength from talk that some packers will finish by the 21st of this month.

