



# fresh Directions

November 3rd, 2011

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

**Apples** ↓ Red Delicious are generally more available but are still higher in color so they are not yielding many of the lower grades and they continue to peak on 80-100's. Golden Delicious is still producing mostly Washington Extra Fancy grade fruit and is peaking on 88/100's. Granny-Smith is peaking on 88's-113's and is producing a lot of the premium grade. Small Galas are still available but supplies are lighter as they are all in storage now and Mexico is pulling a lot. Galas are still heavy to 88/100/113 sizes. Washington Honey Crisp remains very large. Most suppliers have only 88's and larger and are heavy to the 64 size and larger. Cameo's, Pink Lady's, Jona Golds, Fuji's, & Braeburns are also still available. California has limited volume of Pink Ladies.

**Asparagus** ↔ This market continues to be steady on small and standard sizing being produced in Mexico. Mexico production continues to be very light on jumbo sizing and is commanding a premium price. Peruvian product has picked up this week. The quality out of both growing regions are having issues of soft tips and browning.

**Avocado** ↔ Mexico inventories are lower, but steady with harvest retuning back to normal. Chile has cut back imports to the US by 30% as they are shipping a larger percentage of their fruit to Europe, this will affect the overall available supplies and firm the market.

**Bell Peppers** Western ↔ The Central Valley and Oxnard crop on green bells are beginning their seasonal decline, and overall volumes are dropping. Green bells are beginning out of the California desert in a light way this week. No real volume until mid November. Colored bell supplies are dropping as they are starting their seasonal decline. Eastern ↔ South Georgia continues to work pepper and now Florida is as well. However, a weekend of heavy rains throughout central and southern Florida has slowed down picking, keeping the market from dropping. Demand continues to be strong and the market has been holding steady for a few days now. It should stay at the current levels until Florida weather dries up.

**Broccoli** ↔ This market is steady on bunched product as well as crowns to start the week. Supplies are good in the Salinas valley and deals are being offered on volume orders. 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 a little stronger in both Salinas and Santa Maria. Supplies continue to be strongest on twelve count sizing. There are also decent supplies on nine and sixteen counts. The overall quality has been good. Suppliers are moderate to begin the week. Demand has been better.

**Celery** ↔ This market is steady on all sizes. Suppliers continue to be strong in Salinas and Santa Maria on most sizing. All sizing is available. The quality continues to be good with no major issues to report at this time. Production in Oxnard has begun.

**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 ↔ The Valencia season is coming to the end. Some shippers will have Val's into next week, but peak sizing looks to be 88's and 72's. Supplies on 113 and 138's will be limited. The harvest of the Navel crop will begin in a limited way this week, with fruit ready to begin shipping by the end of the week; more readily available next week. Volume should hit by the 4th week of November.

**Lettuce** Leaf ↔ The romaine market is steady to begin the week. The market is also steady on green and red leaf as well. Demand is light. There continues to be sporadic issues of tip burn and decay with all leaf items upon arrival. Please remember these plants are tired and quality will not be as strong as in past months. Yuma production will begin with a few suppliers the first week of November. There is a little leaf in Huron if desired. Iceberg ↔ This market is steady. Supplies in Salinas are drying up and the quality is suspect. Lettuce carton weights along with head size will be on the smaller, lighter side for the entire product that is being

harvested in Huron. Huron is also showing pale color with most suppliers.

**Melons** **Cantaloupes** ↓ Cantaloupes are continuing to increase in volume.

Mexican growers are ramping up their volumes and crossing into Arizona. Most of the fruit in Nogales from Mexico is starting off on the larger size. The Arizona grown fruit is running on the small size. The cantaloupe market is showing weakness due to the increase in volume while demand remains steady. **Honeydew**

↓ Mexican honeydew's crossings into Nogales are running on the larger size, peaking on 5's. The small fruit will continue to be limited for the near future. Arizona grown fruit is available but production has not fully started. The market is weaker with light demand.

**Onions** ↓ Northwest yellows are steady to lower on jumbos and mediums while colossal and larger are steady. Most of the Idaho/Oregon shippers have come down slightly from last week. Last week's cold temperatures had many growers scared but they kicked the harvest into high gear and got most of the onions in, so we don't expect to see any long-term effects. Colorado still has limited volume of yellows with some on the eastern side and some on the western slope. California still has a few yellows and they are also steady but the volume is limited. The northwest yellow quality has been excellent. Reds remain plentiful in Washington and the volume deals remain. Idaho's red volume is higher and they have some volume deals as well but for mixers the market is steady. White supplies are steady along with the market.

**Potatoes** ↔ The Idaho market is steady on all sizes and both variety's however most suppliers will deal for volume on 70-count and larger. 80-count and smaller and consumer bags remain short. Idaho's peak sizes are 50's & 60's. Washington is mostly steady and they are peaking on 60's and 70's and are also short on the smaller counts. Colorado is peaking on 40 and 50's with very few 80-count and smaller. Bakersfield, California continues shipping colored potatoes and all sizes are 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. Idaho has started packing a few red and gold potatoes which will work to minimize pick-ups. The California, Washington, and Wisconsin quality has been excellent.

**Tomatoes** **Eastern** ↔ The northern Florida deal in the Quincy/Tallahassee area never really got off the ground due to a variety of factors, and the thrust of Florida mature green tomatoes until around Thanksgiving will be in the Palmetto/Ruskin district near Tampa. Early reports of quality are fair to good, with very light volume so far. Look for harvests and yields to increase in the next two weeks, as more of the mature green buying transitions over from California. **Western** ↔ One by one the mature green tomato growers in the San Joaquin Valley of California are finishing up for the season. Markets are stable for the most part, and product is good considering the rains that fell earlier this month that at the time curtailed harvest and hurt quality.

Buyers are not yet quite ready to make the transition to Florida, thus are making their current purchases from the best California growers from a reputation standpoint. Reports have virtually all the shippers in the Valley being finished by the 10th of next month.

