



fresh Directions

December 15th, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Red delicious in Washington is still producing mostly higher grade fruit and they are peaking on 88/100's. There are some fancy grade reds but the demand for them remains strong. Golden delicious are also peaking on 88/100's and are still producing mostly extra-fancy grade fruit. Many suppliers have limited supplies of Golden's this year so stay ahead. Granny-Smith is also heavier to the higher grades and is also peaking on 88 & 100 count. Galas are peaking on 88/100's and smaller are producing more of the Washington extra-fancy grade. Gala demand is very strong and the supplies are limited. Washington Honey Crisp is producing more 88's and 100's now but the availability is light. Most packers will be finished with Honeycrisp in January. Cameos, Pink Lady's, Jonagolds, Fuji's, Braeburns and the other varieties are still available as well.

Asparagus ↑ This market is extremely active and will remain so through the end of December. Large sizes out of Mexico continue to be on the light side in availability, with the predominance of sizing coming in small and standard sizing. Suppliers are light in availability. Peruvian product is also in extremely short availability.

Avocado ↔ Mexico inventories and harvest continue steady and looks to stay this way. Chile's volume coming to the US will begin to increase over the next 1 to 2

weeks as the demand in Europe for their fruit drops.

Bell Peppers Western ↔ Bell pepper production is increasing as additional growers come online. Most production is heavy towards large fruit with light supplies on medium size. Colored bells are starting to trickle in but, mostly in hothouse variety and packs. Conventional colored bells continue demand exceeds. Sinaloa colored bells are projected to start in this week in a light way. Market remains strong and will continue strong until Mexican colored bell production begins. **Eastern** ↔ Demand on pepper is getting stronger as South Florida ramps up. Despite recent rains, the quality has been excellent. This market has remained steady but shows signs of increasing for the weekend.

Broccoli ↑ Demand is strong but supplies are way off. This market is much stronger than last week. Demand has become stronger after the holiday pull. Yuma availability is light. Salinas continues to have production and some suppliers continue to transfer to Yuma. There are also supplies available in Scottsdale. Supplies will remain extremely short for the balance of the week.

Cauliflower ↑ This market is still active, as demand clearly exceeds supplies. Availability is expected to be extremely light throughout the week in Yuma so please place orders early. Supplies will be

light out of Santa Maria as well. Suppliers continue to have the best availability on sixteen count sizing. The overall quality has been fair.

Celery ↑ This market is higher. The cold temperatures have slowed the growth of this commodity. Suppliers are heaviest in availability to the 30 and 36s. Santa Maria as well as Oxnard looks to be the main areas of production. Demand has picked up. The quality is good with no major issues to report at this time. Suppliers are willing to take product to Yuma for an extra charge.

Citrus Lemons ↑ Demand is exceeding supplies of the small fruit (140's, 165's, 200's, and 235's). Tight supplies will go through December and January. The fruit is sizing up quicker with the lighter crop hanging on the trees of the Desert crop this year. **Oranges** ↔ The Navels are in full production. Quality looks very nice and fruit is gaining better color with the cool weather we are now getting. Pack outs are running heavy to Fancy grades.

Lettuce Leaf ↑ The romaine market is stronger. Demand is steady but supplies are lighter. Suppliers are Iceberg dealing with ice in the fields which is causing harvesting to begin much later than normal. Blister and epidermal peel are issues we will be dealing with for the next couple of weeks. Green and red leaf also will have the same issues as romaine. Demand is steady as well. The main growing area is in Yuma. The Thermal area has also begun production. Supplies

out of Santa Maria are light in availability.

Iceberg ↑ The lettuce market is active. A few suppliers started this week sold out while others were open in pricing. Ice on the plants has delayed production with all growers. Epidermal peel and blister are going to be issues caused from the cold weather. Although demand is steady, expect it to pick up in the middle of the week. Place orders early. Lettuce carton weights continue to be 35-40 pounds on average.

Melons Cantaloupes ↑ Nogales product is available on all sizes and finishing up quickly. The offshore season is off and running with good availability. Fruit is still peaking to large sizes and limited availability on small fruit. The cantaloupe market is steady. Offshore product has started out west in a light way with good availability midweek.

Honeydew ↑ Mexican honeydew crossings into Nogales are limited at best and will continue to be light. The market is steady to higher. Florida off shore product is available and peaking to 6's. Offshore product will be available in a light way this week out west.

Onions ↔ Idaho/Oregon & Washington yellows are steady to lower on all sizes due to light demand. The former is still producing mostly jumbos and colossals while the latter is peaking on jumbos and mediums. Both growing areas are still discounting for volume. Colorado supplies remain limited and product is split between the eastern side and the western slope. The yellow quality has been really nice in all areas. Washington still has more reds than any other area and the volume discounts remain. The Idaho red market is still higher than Washington but steady with some flex on volume. White supplies are steady. White supplies are lower than they were but steady and the market is generally

higher than it was. Trucks are the shortest commodity right now so stay ahead esp. as we approach the holidays.

Potatoes ↔ Most Idaho packers are into big lots right so 70's and larger are abundant in both vareityts. 80-count and smaller, 6 oz number-two's, and consumer bags are limited due to the larger potatoes. The markets for both varietyts are being quoted steady but there some flex on the larger counts. Washington is steady on all sizes and they continue to peak on 60/70's while 80's and smaller remain limited. Colorado is still peaking to 70-count and larger and they are also discounting on volume orders. Russet quality has been good in all areas. Bakersfield, California continues shipping colored potatoes from the northwest and all sizes are available. They are packing their own whites today and will start with reds and gold's next week. Washington & North Dakota both continue packing reds and gold's. Both areas are heavier to A size, then B's, and both are still short on premiums. The North Dakota B-size market is stronger. Wisconsin continues packing reds, whites, and golds and supplies are good but the Red B market is also stronger. Idaho continues packing reds and golds as well and they are also peaking on A size. Quality has been excellent in Washington while Wisconsin and North Dakota has ranged from excellent to fair.

Tomatoes Eastern ↔ With the post Thanksgiving lull in business, coupled with increasing supplies out of the Palmetto/Ruskin & Immokalee/ Naples districts in Florida, the eastern mature green tomato market has become quite sloppy. But, with above-average temperatures in the state, look for the size profile to trend more towards the smaller fruit, as the tomatoes will mature before they size, which could stabilize the market over the next couple of weeks. **Western** ↔ Every week, the tomato volume out of Nogales, AZ is increasing, and along with the vineripes that cross from Baja California, it appears that the western tomato deal is hitting stride from a volume standpoint a little early. Look for mature greens to start crossing at Nogales towards the end of the month.

