



fresh Directions

December 22nd, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Reds in Washington are still very high in color and producing a lot of the higher grades and not many of the lower grades. Reds are still peaking on 88's and 100's. Golden delicious are also peaking on 88/100's producing mostly extra-fancy grade fruit. Many suppliers are still limited on Golden's this year so stay ahead. Granny-Smith is also heavier to the higher grades and peaking on 88's and 100's. Galas are still peaking on 88's and smaller and they are producing more of the higher grade fruit. Gala demand remains strong and the supplies limited. Washington Honey Crisp is producing more 88's and 100's now but the availability is light. Most packers will be finished with Honey Crisp in early January. Cameos, Pink Lady's, Jonagolds, Fuji's, Braeburns and the other varieties are all still available.

Asparagus ↔ This market is firm on all sizes coming out of Mexico. Extra large and jumbo sizes are extremely light out of Mexico and this will continue thru the rest of the month. Standard and small sizing will be available. Peruvian product has a better price compared to Mexican product, and extra large and jumbos are available.

Avocado ↑ Mexico harvest will be lower as we move through the next 2 weeks of holidays. Improved demand with New Year ads will firm up the market. Chile's volume coming to the US is slowly increasing 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. Open field bells are starting to arrive but, not enough production to offset demand. Markets remain strong and do not foresee relief for another couple of weeks. **Eastern** ↔ This market continues its gradual decline this week, as demand has been off. Expect this market to remain inactive until next week. Quality in Florida pepper has been good.

Broccoli ↓ Demand has fallen off and supplies have increased slightly compared to last week. Expect supplies to be better for the rest of the week. Yuma availability is light. Salinas continues to have light production and some suppliers continue to transfer to Yuma. There are also supplies available in Scottsdale.

Cauliflower ↓ This market is softer. Availability is expected to be light throughout the week in Yuma. Demand however has fallen off. 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. Supplies are expected to pick up in the next couple of weeks depending

on the weather. Growers have planted good supplies in Yuma.

Celery ↔ This market is steady. Demand is off and this has allowed shippers to build up some inventory. Suppliers continue to have good supplies on the smaller sizes. Santa Maria as well as Oxnard looks to be the main areas of production. 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 softer. Many suppliers are looking to move volume and discounted pricing is available. Demand is off. Suppliers are dealing with ice in the fields. 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 off and pricing is softer. 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 softer. Many suppliers are

starting the week with decent supplies and with demand off, suppliers are listening to offers. Ice on the plants has delayed production with all growers. Epidermal peel and blister are going to be issues caused from the cold weather. Lettuce carton weights continue to be 35-40 pounds on average.

Melons **Cantaloupes** ↔ Nogales is limited 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. Off shore sizing on the small fruit cleans up quickly so getting orders on the books early is a must. **Honeydew** ↑ Mexican honeydew crossings into Nogales are limited but should have better availability next week. The market is higher. Florida off shore product is available and peaking to 6's.

Onions ↔ Northwest yellow onions continue steady to lower on all sizes. Idaho/Oregon is still packing a few more colossal yellows while Washington is getting more mediums. All areas are still discounting for volume orders. Colorado supplies remain limited and product is still split between the eastern side and the western slope. Yellow quality has been excellent in all areas. Washington still controls red onion market and the volume and they are steady to lower. They also will discount for volume orders of either size. The Idaho red market remains higher than Washington and also steady to lower with some flex for volume. White supplies are steady along with the market.

Potatoes ↔ Idaho potatoes are lower on 80-count and larger and steady on 90's and larger in both variety's. The smaller sizes/counts remain short. 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 for volume. Russet quality has been good in all areas. Bakersfield, California continues shipping red & gold potatoes from the northwest and all sizes are available. They are still packing their own whites and will start with reds and gold's next week. The California white market is steady. Washington & North Dakota both continues packing reds and golds and both areas are heavier to A's than B's. Wisconsin continues packing reds, whites, and golds and supplies are good. Idaho is also packing reds and golds and they are also peaking on A-size. Quality has been excellent in Washington while Wisconsin and North Dakota have ranged from excellent to fair.

Tomatoes **Eastern** ↔ The size profile of the mature green tomatoes being picked in the Immokalee/Naples & Palmetto/Ruskin districts in Florida is still heavy towards the large & medium sizes, and consequently this is causing a price spread between the x-large and those sizes. Add very good weather & holiday markets to the overall situation, and the result is somewhat sluggish movement over the next few days. Look for harvests in the northern areas to taper off in mid-January. n harvest overall will be pushed back

somewhat as a result of the recent rains in northern Mexico. Although there are some crossings at McAllen, TX and Nogales, AZ, there will probably not be appreciable volume of round or roma tomatoes until the 1st or 2nd week of January. **Western** ↔ Talk is that the Mexican harvest overall will be pushed back somewhat as a result of the recent rains in northern Mexico. Although there are some crossings at McAllen, TX and Nogales, AZ, there will probably not be appreciable volume of round or roma tomatoes until the 1st or 2nd week of January.

