



fresh Directions

February 3rd, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Washington red delicious is still high in color and 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 firm with most shippers. Mexico has tightened up production due to cooler temperatures in the growing regions. Mexican production has been better on jumbo packs compared to the previous weeks. 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. Mexico has already packed 50% of their crop, and begging to lighten their harvest. The California crop has started packing light numbers of their new crop. Chile is almost done, and has little fruit left to bring to market.

Bell Peppers Western ↔ Mexico's supplies loading out of Nogales are good with demand still only fair. Some growers are in older fields, and there is a wide range of quality showing up. The Red and Yellow bells supplies from Mexico are still good. **Eastern** ↑ Pepper on the east is starting to tighten back up as rain in the growing areas begins to affect the crops. With limited picking going on and potential for quality issues in the near future, this market will continue to rise. Additionally, colder temperatures in Mexico's growing regions will lead to a rising market out of Nogales which will cause the Florida market to react.

Broccoli ↔ This market is steady. Deals continue to be offered on crowns more than bunched product. All offers are being listened to with volume. Supplies are good out of Yuma and Mexico. Some pin rot, Discoloring, and heavy water damage is still being seen sporadically on different arrivals. Mexico production has good production to start the week.

Cauliflower ↑ The cauliflower market is stronger compared to last week's low pricing. Most suppliers are cleaned up on excess inventories. Demand is light. Twelve count sizing continues to be the most readily size available. Santa Maria and Yuma volumes are good due to warmer temperatures in these growing regions.

Celery ↑ This market is stronger. Larger sizing continues to be the

most difficult sizing to come by and is commanding a higher price to that of smaller sizes. 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.

Citrus Lemons ↔ Fruit sizing is shifting to 115's and larger. The 165's and smaller are 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 has firmed up. Supplies are light with most suppliers, but demand is off more. 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 some 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 tight. The green leaf market has some suppliers heavy in production and deals can be made on this commodity. Sclerotinia continues to exist in Yuma. **Iceberg** ↔ This market is steady. Some suppliers continue to have better production compared to 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 steady. **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 ↔ Northwest yellows are steady to lower with volume deals on most sizes. The yellow quality has been good in Washington and Idaho/Oregon. Mexican yellows remain heavy to jumbos and are priced lower. The Mexican quality has been good as well. Reds are lower in all areas and the volume deals remain. Expect the red market to remain weak until the volume in Washington is gone. Red quality has been good. Whites are steady due to the addition of the Mexican product. The northwest supplies are light and a lot of shippers have had variable quality. Mexican reds and White will begin to cross in 10 to 14 days. Nevada is still packing whites, yellows, and reds. They are steady on all sizes and colors but remain relatively high on yellows due to light supplies.

Potatoes ↑ Idaho temperatures are below zero again and are supposed to stay cool until Friday, so expect lighter availability until then and into next week if the front persists. Burbanks are still the main Idaho variety although there are more norkotahs now. The demand has been very strong so expect carton prices to continue to rise especially on the larger counts. The quality for both Burbanks and Norkotahs has been mostly good but a few lots have had hollow-heart and internal black spotting. Washington Norkotahs are still peaking on 70- 90's. The Washington market is also higher due to strong demand and will also continue to rise. Colorado is higher as well and will also continue to climb due to strong demand. Their size profile is smaller now that many packers have switched to the nugget and/or centennial varieties. California red, white, and gold potatoes continue from Bakersfield and the availability is good on all colors. Mount Vernon, Washington continues packing excellent quality reds & golds but the gold volume is limited as they approach the end of the season. Washington reds will be available into March. The Washington market is mostly steady. Minnesota & Wisconsin both continue to pack reds and golds and the markets for both are steady but strong as supplies are limited.

Tomatoes **Eastern** ↔ The tomato market has stabilized in price on round tomatoes as well as Roma's coming off last weeks pricing. Demand has lightened up due to sever weather across most of the country. 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. There may be a bit of disruption as Mexico is preparing for some freezing temps. 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.

