



fresh Directions

February 10th, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Washington reds are mostly high in color and still heavy to 100 counts & smaller. Strong demand has kept the market steady to higher on all grades. Golden's are producing mostly 88/100's but the smaller sizes are still short. Golden's are also still heaviest to the Washington extra-fancy grade with fewer Premiums and US extra-fancys. Galas are peaking on 100/113's and have good color while larger fruit remains tight. Granny-Smiths are peaking on 88's and larger while 100 size and smaller are extremely limited. Most suppliers are subbing sizes and grades on small granny-smith orders. Fujis are still high in color and continue to peak on 88's and larger. Small Fujis remain tight.

Asparagus ↑ This market is up with all shippers. Mexico has tightened up production due to cooler temperatures in the growing regions. Jumbo sizing is lighter in availability amongst all the sizes. 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 freeze at the end of last week has caused heavy losses. Severity is still being assessed. Eastern ↑ The bell pepper market in Florida is already reacting to Mexico's freeze with pricing jumping up over the last few days. The Florida season is typically winding down this time of year, so the increased demand out of the West will keep the market at high levels and supplies limited for a few weeks.

Broccoli ↑ This market is more active with bunched product as well as crowns. Expect this commodity to get stronger next week as well. Supplies are moderate out of Yuma. Some pin rot, discoloring, and heavy water damage is still being seen sporadically on different arrivals. Mexico production is light to moderate.

Cauliflower ↑ The cauliflower market is stronger. Most suppliers are cleaned up on excess inventories. Demand is better. Twelve count sizing continues to be the most readily size available. Santa Maria and Yuma volumes are sufficient to fill contract orders but open business will have lighter availability throughout the week.

Celery ↑ This market is stronger on all sizing. Demand exceeds supply. 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 115s and larger. The 165s 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 is extremely active. Supplies are light with all suppliers, and demand has increased. 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 all suppliers and it is reflected in the quality of their romaine. Red leaf is tight. The green leaf has also risen substantially. Look for active markets throughout the week on all leaf items. Sclerotinia continues to exist in Yuma.

Iceberg ↑ This market is higher with all 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 34 to 38 pounds. The sclerotinia issues in Yuma will only make production numbers smaller coupled with all the other issues. Many suppliers are substituting 30 counts for 24 counts due to sizing issues.

Melons **Cantaloupes** ↔ There is good availability and quality of all sizes of offshore fruit loading out of Florida and California. Larger sizes are demanding a little better price. **Honeydew** ↔ Nogales still has Mexican fruit peaking to 8's. Offshore fruit is available but a little more limited than cantaloupe on all sizes in both Florida and California with very good quality.

Onions ↓ The northwest yellow market is still sloppy. Some suppliers continue to deal and others are holding steady. The quality on storage yellows has been good in Washington and Idaho/Oregon. Mexican yellows are now heavier to jumbos and colossals and the market for both is slightly stronger. The Mexican yellow quality has also been very good. Reds are lower in the northwest 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 white supplies are light and a lot of shippers have had variable quality. Mexican reds and were supposed to start crossing at the end of this week but have delayed until next week. 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 back down below zero for Wednesday & Thursday so hauling of bulk will not be possible. Fortunately the demand has been affected by the recent storms hitting the country so we haven't had many shipping delays. We still need warmer weather on Friday though. Burbank carton prices are higher on all sizes but esp. the larger counts due to the lack of size. Norkotah prices are up across the board as well but are still lower on the larger counts. Burbanks and Norkotahs have been mostly good but a few lots of Burbank 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 stronger than normal demand and lower supplies due to many shippers trying to make their storage supplies last by running only parttime. Colorado is also higher on all and will continue to climb due to strong demand and smaller potatoes. 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 market has gone through the roof coinciding with the freeze in Mexico. Florida, already in "salvage" mode of operation with diminished supplies and inconsistent quality. Most to all shippers have already enacted "act of god" to most contracts and agreements. We can expect high markets and low supply up through the spring plantings. **Western** ↑ Mexico has been affected by the worst freeze since 1957. Growers really have no experience in dealing with such issues and are assessing daily to keep information flowing. There still is no clear picture as to the extent of damage, but it is not good. We can expect high markets, low supply leading into June.

