



fresh Directions

April 14, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Washington reds are heavy to higher colored fruit and are still peaking on the smaller sizes. Lower than desirable storage numbers coupled with the short-crops in New York and Michigan have kept the red prices high. Many suppliers continue to ration their reds out so they can ship until the new season starts. Golden delicious are peaking on 100 sizes and larger and remain heavy to the Washington extra-fancy grade. Galas are producing mostly 100/113's and have good color but supplies are getting lighter as we approach the end of the storage season. Large Gala's remain very extremely short! The smaller Gala shipper will finish fairly soon so expect a much stronger market in late April. Imported Galas are starting to come into both coasts and are peaking on 90/100's with good color. Washington Granny-smith are still mostly 88's and larger. Most packers continue to sub sizes and grades on Granny orders of smaller fruit. Fuji's are still high in color and continue to peak on 88's and larger. Small Fuji's remain very tight and will get tighter as the Gala supplies drop.

Asparagus ↑ This market is stronger on all sizing except jumbos. Supplies continue to be light out of Mexico and domestic product is light to moderate in availability. Supplies are better on jumbo sizing and the price currently is anywhere from eight to nine dollars cheaper than standard sizing. Peruvian product is

moderate in availability. The Easter pull is on, and Mother's day is right around the corner so book your orders as soon as possible.

Avocado ↔ Avocado supplies crossing in from Mexico are light. Harvest next week is expected to be very light as many growers will not harvest and pack during the Easter Holy Week. California harvest is improving, but there is insufficient volume to meet demand through to spring and summer. There is upward pressure on pricing and this trend will continue.

Bell Peppers Western ↔ Green bells out of Mexico will continue with limited supplies, this includes the few small Mexican growers with their spring crop. California's Desert crop will start over the next 7 to 10 days. Colored bells has drop in production due poor quality and growers finishing for the season and others beginning to finish. Supplies will be very short for 3 weeks. Baja will start in 7 to 10 days with limited supplies. The California desert starts mid May to the end of May. **Eastern** ↓ The pepper market has loosened up considerably as supplies and quality improve. As Florida begins to transition northward in the coming weeks, the market should stay steady. Excellent weather throughout all the growing regions means continued good quality.

Broccoli ↔ This market is firm on bunched product as well as crowns to start the week. Demand is up. Expect pricing to get stronger by the middle of the week. The temperatures in the growing regions have been in the mid 60s and this has kept the growth pattern to be slower than normal. Current production is coming out of Santa Maria and Salinas. Mexico production continues to be moderate in supplies.

Cauliflower ↑ The cauliflower market is stronger. Supplies are light to moderate out of Santa Maria and Salinas. Yuma production is finished. Twelve counts continue to be the best in availability. There have been some reports of brown spotting upon arrivals coming out of all the growing regions.

Celery ↔ This market is firm. Suppliers continue to have stronger inventories on large sizing and this is where offers are being given for load volume orders. Current production is coming from Oxnard and Santa Maria. The Oxnard production is getting stronger, while in Santa Maria is only moderate. Expect small sizing to be light to moderate throughout the week.

Citrus Lemons ↔ Demand is increasing with the supplies of 165's and smaller is decreasing. Small choice fruit is very tight. **Oranges** ↔ We are seeing the size in the orange crop peaking with the 88/113's. The quality continues to be very good with peak sizes running to 88's and 113's.

Lettuce Leaf ↔ The romaine market is stable to start the week. Production numbers are better in Huron, and light in Salinas. Expect Salinas' production to be better next week. Yuma production is finished on all romaine and romaine hearts. The pricing has remained stable on green and red leaf in Huron. Salinas' production should start next week. There has been some insect sightings on the outer leaves of romaine in Huron so please be aware. **Iceberg** ↑ This market is active with all suppliers. Yuma production is winding down with most suppliers and Huron is only moderate in production numbers. Salinas will not have any product available for at least a week and expect numbers to be light for at least two weeks. Demand is stronger. There continues to be reports of discoloration, ribbing and decay that seen sporadically upon arrivals. Huron weights have been averaging 38-42 pounds. Some reports show insects are occurring on the outer wrap leaves so please be aware.

Melons Cantaloupes ↔ Cantaloupe is coming in with better volume. Quality is still excellent with most shippers. The market looks to remain steady this week. **Honeydew** ↔ Dews are coming in with much better volume. Quality is good and the market is steady.

Onions ↔ Northwest yellows are steady to lower on all sizes due to light demand and good supplies. The deals remain in both Washington & Idaho. The larger packers will be shipping from the northwest until mid April and possibly as late as mid May. The quality on storage yellows has been holding well. The Texas & Mexican crops are heavy to jumbos and

colossal but there is a split market between the two. The Mexican product is cheaper while Texas wants a premium because they have generally lower yields than the northwest. The quality from both areas has been good. Reds are steady to lower in the northwest and the volume deals remain. Texas/Mexico reds are lower to higher depending on the shipper and area they are from. The red quality has been good on both the storage and new crop onions. Northwest whites are steady to lower but are extremely limited. Mexican Whites are up as the market in Mexico turned around. Nevada still has a few yellows and reds. The California desert will begin their yellow harvest in seven to fourteen days.

Potatoes ↔ Idaho is still packing out mostly 90 counts and smaller on the cartons. The market remains mostly steady on all sizes and packs although there are some deals available on the larger counts due to the Easter consumer demand. Idaho's quality is still mostly good but some lots of Burbank will show hollow-heart and internal black spotting. Washington Norkotahs are still all over the size spectrum. The Washington market is steady on all sizes. Colorado is steady on all sizes. The Colorado spuds remain heavier to 70's and smaller. Bakersfield, Ca. is still shipping colored potatoes but availability is light on all colors because they are between the early and later desert potatoes. Golds and whites are still more limited than the reds. Mount Vernon, Washington has finished for the season. Minnesota & Wisconsin both continue to pack a few reds and the market is steady but availability is light. Florida production

is increasing as they continue packing all colors. Reds are still the bulk of Florida's production. Whites and golds are more available but still relatively limited. The Florida prices are slowly dropping as the supplies increase on all colors.

Tomatoes Eastern ↓ The market has begun to dip on rounds but Romas remain the most difficult item. While the quality on the Florida product is considerably better than the Mexican fruit, it is not close to the quality we come to expect from the Florida product. Weather, however, has been very cooperative and we should start to see improvement in the quality and supplies as well over the next few weeks. This deal should reach its peak mid to late April. Look for a steadily declining market on rounds but a rising market on Romas. Grapes and cherries remain steady. **Western** ↑ The Western tomato market is tightening up once again as Mexican product is now all but finished. With Baja still weeks away, we could be seeing a continuing rise in the market. Quality overall remains marginal.

