



fresh Directions

May 19th, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Higher grade reds are still the bulk of Washington's production. Lower grade fruit is limited and will remain so as we get closer to the end of the storage season. The demand on small fruit is especially strong as the varieties finish up. Most suppliers are still rationing their Red Delicious in order to stretch the storage supplies until new crop. Golden Delicious are still heavy to 100 sizes and larger and the Washington extra-fancy grade. Galas remain heavy to 100/113's with good color but supplies limited as we approach the end of the storage season. Larger Gala's are extremely short. Imported Galas are still available on both coasts and are peaking on 80/90/100's. Washington Granny-Smith is peaking on 88's and larger still while the smaller sizes remain limited. Most packers continue to sub sizes and grades on orders of smaller Granny's. 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 domestic Gala supplies drop.

Asparagus ↓ This market continues to be firm on all sizes. Supplies are moderate coming from California as well as Mexico. California will finish production in 3-4 weeks out of the Bakersfield region. Salinas expects to continue production a little longer than Bakersfield. Supplies have tightened up on jumbos. Peruvian product is moderate in availability.

Avocado ↔ Avocado crossings in from Mexico remain light; Mexican growers are 75% shipped for this season's crop. The remaining fruit must last until their new crop starts in August. California harvest is good, but lighter than normal and there we will see insufficient volume to meet normal demand through to spring and summer.

Bell Peppers Western ↑ Green bells out of Mexico continue with limited supplies. California's Desert crop has good volume, good quality with good demand. Colored bells remain light in supplies, but will start to see supplies coming on but the end of the week as new shippers begin their spring crop out of the California Desert. Baja still has fair supplies. **Eastern** ↔ Volume remains steady in Florida, with some areas beginning to increase in the middle part of the state. Georgia is still a few weeks off. Quality on pepper has been good and demand is steady.

Broccoli ↑ This market is firm on bunched product as well as crowns. All suppliers are caught up with excess inventories, due mainly to the holiday demand we had. Production is coming out of Santa Maria and Salinas. The growing regions have had rain and this will continue for the next few days. This has slowed production with all suppliers.

Carrots ↔ California carrot supplies remain light, but expect size and supplies to start coming back by the first of June.

Cauliflower ↑ The cauliflower market is lower with supplies increasing as the week finishes. Twelve count cauliflower continues to be the best in availability. There have been some reports of brown spotting upon arrivals coming out of all the growing regions. This will likely continue throughout the week.

Celery ↑ This market is firm on all sizes. Demand clearly exceeds supply. All sizes are tight. Current production is coming from Oxnard and Santa Maria. The Easter and Mother's day pull has caused supplies to be light. Salinas' production is expected to begin approximately the first week in June as production has been set back slightly.

Citrus Lemons ↔ Lemon supplies and demand are about equal, with some tightness on smaller lemons. **Oranges** ↑ Regular navels are expected to continue through May. Sizing in running to 56's/72's/88's with limited numbers on small sizes. The quality continues to be good and eats great. Valencia oranges have started; peak sizes are 88's/113's/138's. Sugar levels are good, but lower than the Navel's.

Lettuce Leaf ↑ The romaine market is steady to finish the week. The market is also steady on green and red leaf. Supplies look to be plentiful for the rest of the week.

There have been reports of fringe burn and some red discoloration upon arrival. Salinas and Santa Maria production will increase into next week. **Iceberg** ↑ This market is extremely active. Production numbers are very light with all suppliers to start the week. There is a planting gap of 5-7 days with suppliers. Some suppliers are already holding customers to twelve week averages. Salinas' production will be light throughout the week. There continues to be reports of discoloration, ribbing and decay that seen sporadically upon arrivals. The weights have been averaging 42-46 pounds. Production in Santa Maria is the same as Salinas.

Melons **Cantaloupes** ↓ Off shore cantaloupe are still available for loading in Florida and California with limited volume. Quality is still good. Nogales is crossing Mexican fruit with good quality. Coachella has started in a light way with California fruit, very good quality. **Honeydew** ↓ Off shore product is all but done for the season with clean up this week. Nogales has good volume coming up on large fruit peaking to 5's. Coachella for the most part will start next week with dews.

Onions ↔ The Texas yellow market remains strong because the valley is finishing and the Uvalde volume is limited. The availability in Texas will improve as the week goes on. Texas is still producing yellows mostly jumbo and colossal yellows while mediums and pre-packs are short. Vidalia, Georgia continues packing yellow sweets and they are steady on all sizes. California has good yellow volume this week but the demand is strong and the market is rising. California yellows are also heavy to jumbos and larger. Many California packers will finish running next Monday so expect the yellow market to continue to rise through next

week. Reds in Texas are mostly steady for now but they will also rise next week due to lighter supplies. The quality on Texas reds is still good. California has better supplies of reds this week and they are steady to lower with volume deals available but that will change next week. The California quality is also good. Texas whites are still heavy to jumbos but priced higher due to the transition and short supplies. California white supplies are steady along with the market. We will see a stronger white market next week as well.

Potatoes ↓ The Idaho carton market continues to decline. Most suppliers are done with Norkotahs so we are almost 100% Burbank now. The size profile is still fairly small but there are still volume deals available on all sizes. Idaho's quality is mostly good but some Burbank lots have hollow-heart and internal black spotting. Washington is steady to lower on all sizes and they are also dealing a little for volume. Colorado is also steady to lower on all sizes. They are still producing more of the larger counts. Bakersfield colored potato supplies is much better now that they are into production of Bakersfield product. There are good supplies of all colors available. Arizona is running reds with excellent color and golds. Florida continues to pack all colors and there are volume deals available in all colors.

Tomatoes **Eastern** ↔ Now that the overlap in harvesting from the two regions of South Florida and Palmetto-Ruskin is over, the rounds market is turning upward. With Palmetto Ruskin being the only Eastern region going and demand staying strong, we are seeing

higher pricing that is typical for this time of year. Also typical is the excellent quality fruit being harvested that comes with the warmer weather. With the lighter plantings of Romas in Central Florida and northward, control of the Roma market will be out of Mexico for a few more weeks. The focus on the Grape tomato market is back on the East now as Nogales cleans up their supplies. Cherries remain tight as with the Romas, fewer fields are planted each year, particularly as the growing regions move north. **Western** ↔ Bits and pieces of shade house grown vineripes continue to cross into Nogales. Both Nogales and McAllen will be trickling in through early June but pricing there will continue to be quite high due to the minimal volume and marginal quality. Mexico now has control of the Roma market as Florida growing regions move farther north where there are fewer Roma plantings. This will continue to be the case until the end of June when Central California is in full swing. Nogales has seen the last of the crossings of the quality Grape tomatoes with only marginal quality left in that region. The additional demand now being put on McAllen and Florida is pushing that market upwards. The Cherry market is up as well as Mexico finishes up and we wait for the Baja area to begin harvesting in a couple of weeks.

