



fresh Directions

August 18th, 2011

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Red Delicious is still mostly small fruit with high color and the lower grades remain limited. The fancy grade is virtually non-existent but there are a few Washington-Extra number two's. Expect lower grade fruit to remain very short for the rest of the storage crop. Reds are so short that some suppliers may gap. Golden Delicious is still heavy to larger fruit and the Washington extra-fancy grade. Stay ahead on the lower grades and the smaller sizes due to light supplies and expect the market to continue climbing. California has started packing Galas and they are peaking on 88 through 113's. There is some smaller fruit but most is going into consumer bags so expect the smaller counts to remain limited. Granny-Smiths are still heavy to larger fruit and very limited on 100's and smaller. Stay ahead on Grannies as that market is also rising due to light supplies in Washington. Some Washington suppliers may gap on Granny's as well. California won't start packing Granny-Smiths in volume for at least two weeks. Most packers will sub larger sizes and higher grades on orders of the smaller sizes.

Asparagus ↑ This market is extremely active on all sizes. Peruvian product is light out of Miami. Supplies out of Mexico are not good enough to meet demand. Standard sizing is the best size available, but this item is up three to four dollars compared to the previous week. Peruvian product will be light throughout

this week. Place orders on this commodity early all this week as supplies will be on the lighter side.

Avocado ↔ August looks to be the most volatile and confusing month of this avocado season. California harvest is winding down and is 80% shipped. Volume has dropped significantly, and we look to be about done with California fruit by the end of the month. Mexico is beginning to increase just a bit this week and slowly increase over the next couple of weeks. We will begin to see some increasing supplies from Chile in the next 2 to 3 weeks, as well as light supplies of fruit from Peru enter the market around mid August.

Bell Peppers Western ↔ The California crop on green bells is producing good volume. Good demand is firming the market. Colored bell supplies are starting to lighten in production this week as older field finish and new fields look to begin in 1 to 2 weeks. **Eastern** ↔ Michigan supplies on Peppers have increased this week. Quality has been good with mostly larger sizes available with the start of a new crop. The market remains steady and demand on peppers has been moderate.

Broccoli ↔ This market is firm on bunched product as well as crowns. For the second week in a row, there is a supply difference amongst our different suppliers and this is causing a pricing gap of a few

dollars. Salinas and Santa Maria are the two main growing regions for this commodity. The back to school promotions should start to make the market more active later in the week. There have been no issues in terms of poor quality to report at this time.

Cauliflower ↔ This market is steady. Supplies continue to be heaviest to the twelve counts. Overall, demand is expected to pick up with school business. The overall quality of this commodity is reported to be strong in terms of color and texture. Production continues to be out of Santa Maria and Salinas.

Celery ↔ This market is steady. Suppliers are offering deals on large sizing, mainly 24s. Volume pricing is being offered. Small sizing continues to be lighter in availability and is commanding a higher price. Santa Maria and Salinas continue to be the main growing regions for this commodity. Expect small sizing to continue to have light availability throughout the week.

Citrus Lemons ↔ The lemon market continues to strengthen with good demand that is typical for this time of year. 140s and larger sizes are becoming tight. **Oranges** ↑ Valencia orange supplies are shorting up on 88s and smaller as demand for small fruit is starting to increase with schools beginning.

Lettuce Leaf ↔ The romaine market continues to be steady to start the week. Supplies are good and shippers are offering

volume discounting. The market continues to be steady on green and red leaf as well. The overall quality has been reported as good. All of these commodities would be good to promote throughout the week.

Iceberg ↔ This market is steady. Salinas and Santa Maria production is good. Demand continues to be on the light side. Weights continue to average 40 to 44 pounds on lettuce. The weights throughout the week are expected to be strong. Promote this item as suppliers are looking to move load volumes. A few suppliers are much more aggressive in pricing, but this is a small attempt to stimulate pricing. Bottom line is that offers are being listened to from most shippers.

Melons **Cantaloupes** ↓ Volume continues to increase on Cantaloupes with product peaking on 12s and 15s. Small fruit has picked up in volume with deals being cut on 15s and 18s. Demand is slow.

Honeydew ↓ Honeydews continue to remain limited. Shippers are continuing to slowly increase their volumes. Fruit is peaking to 6s now with 5s and 8s being limited although available. Demand is slow.

Onions ↔ California yellows continue to be steady on all sizes. Some suppliers have larger onions and others have smaller size but all sizes are available. Most suppliers will still deal on volume orders. New Mexico is also steady on all size yellows and will also deal for volume. Some of the New Mexico shippers will finish at the end of this week so expect their availability drop slightly. Colorado and Washington yellows are steady and heavy to the jumbo size. California red supplies are dropping but the market is stable. They just aren't discounting for volume like they were a few weeks back. Most New Mexico shippers continue to buy reds from California and their market is up slightly. Colorado and Washington both have reds

but mixer volume only. White supplies are dropping in both California and New Mexico but the market is stable. Colorado has a few whites and Washington will have them at the end of this week. Stay ahead on whites and reds until Idaho/Oregon starts packing in early September. Quality in both California and New Mexico has ranged from fair to excellent on all colors. Colorado and Washington quality has been good.

Potatoes ↔ The Idaho carton market is two-tiered right now since they have both old Burbanks and new norkotahs. Prices are steady on the larger counts in both varieties and slightly lower on the smaller norkotahs. Number-two Burbanks remain limited but steady and will rise as more suppliers finish packing. Most suppliers will finish packing Burbanks this week and will start packing new norkotahs next Monday. The shippers who are running norkotahs have mostly smaller size so 70-count and larger are limited. New-crop Washington Norkotahs are still peaking on 80/90 count but some lots have larger size. Colorado is essentially done with old crop norkotahs. Kansas & Nebraska continue packing new-crop Norkotahs. The new-crop norkotahs are still all over the size spectrum but mostly small although some suppliers have larger counts. Stockton, California continues to pack colored potatoes of all colors and the market is steady to lower. California availability is good except in larger reds and golds. Washington & Minnesota both continue packing reds and golds but supplies are fairly limited. Both areas have good numbers of As and Bs while premiums remain limited.

Tomatoes **Eastern** ↔ With hit-and-miss tomato supplies coming out of the Eastern Shore of Virginia/Maryland, the thrust of the Eastern deal resides in the mountain deals of North Carolina/Tennessee and the districts of Benton Harbor, Michigan and Oak Harbor, Ohio. Depending on weather-always a factor in the late summer-we can expect harvests to gain momentum for the next 2-3 weeks and try to control most of the Eastern distribution centers. Prices are stable and could rise a bit over that timeframe.

Western ↔ In the San Joaquin Valley of Central California, mature green tomatoes shippers had planned for light harvests during this timeframe to offset consumers pulling homegrown tomatoes out of their backyards, and finally that is having an effect on the FOB market. While extra-large sizes are still relatively plentiful, large and medium sizes have tightened up quite a bit and many sheds are currently sold out for the week. This fact in conjunct with schools coming back into session—which helps foodservice business—could strengthen those markets considerably; forcing a continued inverted pricing structure of extra-large trading for less than the smaller sizes.

