



fresh Directions

February 2, 2012

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

↔ Eastern markets are steady due to lighter demand but many shippers will try to push prices up this month to cover storage costs. Washington Reds are still mostly in the 88 & 100 size range with higher color. Lower grade reds remain fairly limited. Golden Delicious is also peaking in the 88 & 100 size-range and the higher grades. Lower grade golden have been limited this season. Granny-Smith is predominantly in the 88 & 100 count range as well and is also heavy to the higher grades. Galas are still producing mostly 88's and smaller and heavier to the extra-fancy grades. Gala demand remains strong. Washington Honey Crisp is peaking on 88/100's but the availability is low. Most shippers will finish packing Honey-crisps relatively soon. Cameos, Pink Lady's, Jonagolds, Fuji's, Braeburns and the other varieties are all still available.

↓ **Asparagus** This market is steady. Supplies out of Mexico are good on small, standard, and large sizing. There are many more suppliers calling to make offers. Extra large and jumbo sizes will continue to be light throughout the week. Peruvian product continues to have extra large and jumbos available if needed. The Peruvian product loads in Florida and LA.

↔ **Avocado** Mexican harvest volume is declining as the major pull for the Super Bowl is completed. Volume will adjust to steady demand. New crop California fruit harvest has begun with light

numbers. Chile's volume is steady. Expect steady markets going forward.

↔ **Bell Peppers Western** Markets are very unsettled. Bell pepper (green) production is improving. Supplies are more than adequate on smaller/choice fruit with lighter supplies on big fruit. ↔ **Eastern** Florida Bell Pepper prices remain steady. No fluctuations are expected for the remainder of the week. Demand is up slightly and quality is good.

↔ **Broccoli** Supplies are strong on bunched product as well as crowns, and suppliers are looking to move volume at discounted pricing. Demand however is light. Warmer weather in the growing regions has increased supplies. Availability will be strong throughout the week. There continues to be supplies available in Scottsdale if the need arises.

↓ **Cauliflower** This market is steady. Due to a lack of demand, suppliers are offering discount pricing for half load or better orders so promote as much as possible. Growers are continuing to deal with brown spotting and yields have been affected. The overall quality has picked up compared to the previous week.


↑ **Celery** This market is steady. Unusually, small sizing is light with some suppliers, while large sizing is good with others. Santa Maria as well as Oxnard and Yuma are the main areas of production on this commodity. The quality is good with


no major issues to report at this time. There will be a variance in pricing amongst the different shippers so please be aware.


↔ **Citrus Lemons** Desert crop is about done; their season is projected to end mid February. Central Valley crop is harvesting and the Ventura crop harvest is slow as growers are letting fruit gain size. ↔ **Oranges** The Navels are in full production and supplies are good. Quality looks very nice and fruit is now full natural color. Pack outs are running heavy to fancy grades.

↔ **Lettuce Leaf** The romaine market is steady. Blister and peel continues to exist but the severity is not as great compared to past weeks. Demand is off. Green and red leaf will have similar issue as romaine. This market is steady as well. The main growing area is in Yuma. The Thermal area has picked up in production numbers. Supplies out of Santa Maria are light in availability. ↔ **Iceberg** The lettuce market continues to be steady. Supplies are good with most suppliers. Epidermal peel and blister continues to be seen upon arrivals, but the frequency is less. Lettuce carton weights are averaging 40-44 #s. The availability is good and demand is light. Shippers are listening to offers so promote this commodity.


↑ **Melons Cantaloupes** Demand continues to exceed supplies. Offshore fruit is extremely limited. With fewer vessels coming in they are selling out the week prior to arrival. Product next week will continue to


be limited so getting orders on the books a week prior to loading is recommended. Quality is very good and the market is steady. **Honeydew**  Demand exceeds supplies. Offshore fruit is more limited on dews than Cantaloupe. Mexican fruit is extremely limited also. Very good quality and mostly 6's available for what little fruit is out there. Quality is good. Fruit is selling out before it comes into port or crosses the border.

Onions  The yellow and red storage onion demand is light and the supplies are plentiful. All areas are steady to lower and the volume deals are available. Texas is still crossing Mexican sweets and sack medium & jumbo yellows. The Mexican market is mostly steady with some lower. Yellow quality has been excellent in the northwest while the quality from Mexico has been fair to good. White supplies are fairly limited in the northwest but remain steady along with the market. Mexico has crossed a few whites but no reds yet.

Potatoes  Norkotahs are still short in Idaho since very few shippers are packing them. Norkotah are still peaking in the 70 to 100 count range. Burbanks are still the predominant Idaho variety. The market is steady but the demand is light. Burbanks are peaking on 80's and then 70's so they are average size. The Washington market is mostly steady on all sizes with some higher. They continue to peak on 60/70's. Colorado's market is also steady and they are peaking on 40-70's while the smaller counts are more limited. The russet quality has been excellent in all growing areas. Bakersfield, California is

still packing reds, golds, and whites and pricing is steady. The availability is good on all colors. Washington & North Dakota continue packing reds and golds and both areas are heavier to A-size. Gold supplies are limited in both areas though as we approach the end of the storage season. Wisconsin is also packing reds, whites, and golds and their market is also flat. Whites and golds are limited in Wisconsin as well. Idaho is still packing reds and golds and they are also peaking on A-size. Quality has been fair to excellent Idaho. Florida will start packing reds in a light way in February.

Tomatoes Eastern  Since there is not a Government mandated floor price for tomatoes in Florida, a good number of tomato wholesalers east of the Mississippi River have continued to take Florida product when in normal years they would have already switched to Mexico. But prices are at a 2-year low, and it is only a matter of time before Florida stops picking & packing at a loss, on-hand supplies dry up and the market reacts.

Western  With so many tomatoes having been planted in the Mexican interior for the winter 2012 season, it was only a matter of time before there would be a glut of product, and we have seen that situation manifest itself over the last 2-3 weeks. Compounding the situation has been sluggish post-holiday movement of tomatoes, even with warmer weather over most of the country. But as soon as Eastern supplies dwindle a bit more, we could have prices bounce a little off the floor prices set by the U.S. Department of Commerce Suspension Agreement.

