



# fresh Directions

February 23, 2012

*An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.*

**Apples** ↔ The New York market is steady on all varieties. Michigan is also steady on all sizes but Red Delicious is the main variety now, varieties are limited. Michigan does have better numbers of Golden-Delicious as well. Washington Reds are peaking on 88/100's and heavier to higher colored fruit. Lower grade reds are more prevalent right now however. Golden Delicious is also peaking on 88/100's and is also in the higher grades. Lower grade Golden's are also limited. Granny-Smith is peaking on 88/100's as well and is also heavy to the higher grades. Galas are peaking on 88's and smaller and are heavier to the extra-fancy fruit. Gala demand remains strong. Washington Honey Crisp is very limited now as most suppliers are finished. Cameos, Pink Lady's, Jonagolds, Fuji's, Braeburns and the other varieties are all still available.

**Asparagus** ↔ This market continues to be steady. Supplies out of Mexico continue to be strong on small, standard, and large sizing. Jumbo sizing is available as well. Peruvian product is also available. This product can be loaded in LA or Florida if desired.

**Avocado** ↑ Mexican harvest is being slowed due to heavy rains in Mexico. Look for harvest to start to get back to normal as we move through the week. California fruit harvest has begun with light numbers. Chile's volume is steady. Markets on 48's are very firm this week.

**Bell Peppers Western** ↔ Market on green bell pepper is unsettled. Bell pepper (green) good supplies most availability is on medium, smalls, and choice. Production is light on big fruit. Colored bell pricing settling. La Rouge variety colored bells are demand exceeds but, supplies are improving. Hot house colored bells are adequate in supplies.

**Eastern** ↔ After a brief gap in supplies due to recent rains, Florida pepper market remains steady with good quality and supplies.

**Broccoli** ↔ Production continues to be strong on this commodity. Good weather in the growing regions has made production numbers very good on bunched product as well as crowns. Availability is expected to be good throughout the week at the minimum. There continues to be supplies available in Scottsdale as well. Shippers are willing to deal for load volume orders, so promote as much as possible.

**Cauliflower** ↔ This market is steady. Suppliers are continuing to deal with some sporadic brown spotting. Pricing is forecasted to be a little stronger by the end of the week. Demand will obviously be the main factor for this to happen. Overall demand is down and suppliers are looking to keep inventories clean. The rains from the previous week did not hurt production, whatsoever.


**Celery** ↔ Small sizing continues to demand a higher price. This market overall is steady with most suppliers. 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. Pricing is competitive on 24 and 30 count and shippers are listening to offers.


**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 to start the week. Blister and peel continues to exist but the issue is not as great compared to previous weeks. Demand is light. The market is steady as well on green leaf and red leaf, with light demand 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 is flat. Supplies are good with most suppliers. Epidermal peel and blister continues to be seen upon arrivals sporadically. Lettuce carton weights are averaging 44-48 #s. The market was expected to get stronger at the end of last week but things did not transpire. This market should stay steady throughout the week.


**Melons**  Demand continues to exceed supplies. Offshore fruit is extremely limited. With fewer vessels coming in they are still selling out the week prior to arrival. Product will continue to be limited for the next couple of weeks. Quality is very good and the market is steady. **Honeydew**  Demand exceeds supplies. Offshore fruit is still more limited on dews than on Cantaloupes. Mexican fruit is still limited with supplies looking to increase slightly as the week progresses. Very good quality and mostly 5's available for what little fruit is out there. Quality is good. Fruit continues to sell out before it comes into port or crosses the border.

**Onions**  The market for red and yellow storage onions is still flat and cheap. Idaho, Oregon, & Washington have good supplies of both colors in storage. The storage season will last at least into April. Mexican sweet and sack yellow supplies are still limited due to rain in Mexico. Yellow quality has been excellent in the northwest and fair to good in Texas. The white onion market showing much higher prices as supplies fall off.

**Potatoes**  The Idaho carton market is showing some signs of strengthening the start of this week on 90ct and larger. Most sizes of cartons are available but are limited. Consumer bags are up slightly on both poly and mesh. Norkotahs remain more limited than Burbanks. The norkotah size range is still 70's through 100's while Burbanks are still peaking on 80's and then 70's. Washington potatoes are steady on all sizes and they are still heavy to 60/70's. The Colorado market is steady to lower with some flex, due mostly to light demand. They continue to produce mostly 40-70's. Russet quality

has been excellent in all areas. Bakersfield, California is still packing all colors and pricing is steady. The availability is good on all colors for now but golds are getting limited. 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 seasons. 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 continue to peak on A-size. Quality has been fair to excellent Idaho. Florida has started packing red potatoes and they are heavier to b-size and smaller.

**Tomatoes**  Markets have firmed up considerably, with large and medium size rounds being higher-priced than the x-large size. Look for this situation to continue for at least a week or two as the foodservice business is driving the take on the smaller sizes. And time will tell whether the x-large price rises to meet the others or the large and medium eventually fall to a one-size-fits-all price.

**Western**  Definitely more business is coming out to Mexico with Eastern tomato supplies in a volume skip of sorts, especially on the smaller sizes. But reports have most of what is crossing at Nogales, AZ and McAllen TX to be x-large to jumbo size, with the large and medium size rounds becoming somewhat scarce, and higher prices on those sizes being the result.

