



fresh Directions

March 29th, 2012

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

↔ New York still has Cortlands, Macs, Empires, Rome's, Golden delicious, and Red delicious. All varieties are slightly higher with very limited supplies of smaller fruit. Michigan has finished for the season. Washington Red delicious is heavy to 88/100's with higher color. Lower grade red availability is still decent. Golden are also heavy to 88/100's and the higher grades. The availability of lower grade Golden's is also better right now. Granny-Smiths are also peaking on the higher grades and the 88/100 sizes. Galas are still producing mostly 88's and smaller and the higher grades but are very limited. Cameos, Pink Lady's, Jonagolds, Fuji's, Braeburns and a few other varieties are still available but supplies are lighter. Many shippers still have clean-up deals on some varieties.

Asparagus ↔ This market is firm to start the week. Supplies out of Mexico continue to be ample to fill all orders. Small, standard, and large sizing are all available. Jumbo sizing has pretty good numbers as well. Product from Peru is also available. This product can be loaded in LA or Florida if desired.

Avocado ↑ Mexican supplies are decent, but not enough supply on 48's at this time. Maturity and flavor are excellent. California fruit harvest continues to increase weekly with improving maturity, flavor and oil content. Chile's volume will continue its decline weekly as their season

comes to an end. Great demand is driving the avocado market and pricing.

Bell Peppers Western ↔ Green bell market is unsettled as supplies are increasing but, continuing light supplies on fancy large sized green bell pepper. Adequate supplies on choice and small fruit. Colored bell pricing is unsettled. Light supplies on fancy La Rouge variety colored bells. Hot house colored bells are experiencing better movement and availability. Gold bells higher markets lighter supplies and will continue until other districts come online. **Eastern** ↔ New pepper fields have begun which means off grade pepper will be less available with the exception of some of the older field pepper. Markets have decreased sharply over the past week, especially on bigger pepper. We should see improved quality over the next week.

Broccoli ↔ This market is steady. Most supplies are coming from Salinas as Yuma is winding down. Phoenix also has production if needed. Supplies on crowns have increased compared to last week. Demand is moderate at best.

Cauliflower ↔ This market is firm. Suppliers are moderate in Yuma as well as Salinas. The main sizing continues to be heaviest to 12 counts. The quality continues to be fair in all growing regions, with complaints of yellowing, and black and brown spotting being reported upon arrivals.

Celery ↓ This market is softer. Demand has fallen off and supplies have increased. 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. The best deals available continue to be with the 24 and 30 counts.

Citrus Lemons ↔ Central Valley crop is harvesting and the Ventura crop harvest is slow as growers are letting fruit gain size. Small fruit is a little tight. **Oranges** ↑ The Navels are in full production and supplies are good. Size curve is swinging to peak sizing on 72's, 88's. Smaller sizes are getting tight. Quality looks very nice and fruit is now full natural color. Pack outs are running heavy to fancy grades.

Lettuce Leaf ↔ The entire leaf market is steady like the previous week. Demand continues to be light. The main growing area is in Yuma. The Thermal area has lightened up in production. Supplies out of Santa Maria are light in availability. Huron is getting stronger in their production numbers. Deals are being offered for volume orders so continue to promote as much as possible. **Iceberg** ↔ The lettuce market continues on a steady path. It should be noted that some suppliers continue to attempt to take the market up, but overall, deals are being offered. Epidermal peel and blister continues to be seen upon arrivals sporadically. Lettuce carton weights are averaging 44-48 #s. Huron has stronger production. Yuma production should

continue thru the week with some suppliers.

Melons Cantaloupes ↔ Demand

continues to exceed supplies. Honduras fruit is coming in with a better range of sizes but remains limited on availability. Product is still selling out early on what limited small sized fruit is coming in.

Quality is good and the market is steady.

Honeydew ↓ Better volume coming in on dewes. Sizing is still running large on the honeydews due to the weather. Mexican fruit has good availability with smaller sized fruit available. Quality is good.

Onions ↑ The northwest is higher again on yellow and red onions; in fact many suppliers are pricing day-of-shipment. Reds, Supers, Colossals, and medium yellows are the most limited. There are still good numbers of jumbo yellows in storage and the storage season should go through at least mid April. Mexican Colossal and jumbo yellows are steady but supplies are limited this week. Texas is starting in a light way with mostly yellow only available. Mexican reds are very limited. Many of the Idaho/Oregon suppliers have finished with their own reds and are buying from Washington. The yellow quality has been excellent in the northwest and fair to good on Mexican product. The quality of reds has been good in the northwest but has ranged from poor to good on Mexican. White onions remain strong due to light domestic supplies and light supplies from Mexico. Much of the Mexican product is still being kept in Mexico so expect the strong market to continue.

Potatoes ↔ Cartons are still short in Idaho but the market has stabilized. Many suppliers still need three to four days to cover big quantities though. Consumer bags and number-two's are also steady

and their availability is better. Norkotahs are still more limited than Burbanks. Washington potatoes are slightly higher on all sizes and they are still peaking on 80-count. Colorado is slightly higher on counts as well. They continue to get much of the overflow that Idaho cannot cover. Colorado is peaking on 80's and smaller now. The russet quality has been excellent in all areas. Bakersfield, California is still packing whites and reds but will finish with its own product this week. Bakersfield will start packing desert product the last week of March. 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(s). Wisconsin is still packing a few reds and golds but they are almost finished. Idaho is still packing reds and golds and they continue to peak on A-size. Quality has been fair to excellent Idaho. Florida continues packing all colors and the market is slightly lower on most sizes.

Tomatoes Eastern ↔ With new fields in the Immokalee/Naples area of Florida beginning to yield, harvests have increased over the last week and with less than normal movement at destination, prices have continued to drop. Quality is excellent and weather has been temperate. Reports have the next crop in the Palmetto/Ruskin district near Tampa to commence picking about the third week of April. **Western** ↔ There is a wide variance on quality of tomato crossings at Nogales, AZ & McAllen, TX, and consequently prices are all over the board this morning. It appears that most of the product entering the U.S. is staying west of the Mississippi River from

a destination standpoint, except for Roma tomatoes which are still getting nationwide distribution. New fields from the shade houses are beginning harvest, however, and should continue to produce for the next month at least.

