



# fresh Directions

April 19th, 2012

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

↔ New York is still packing McIntosh, Empires, Rome's, and Red Delicious but only light volume. All varieties are steady with limited supplies available especially on smaller fruit. New York is almost finished for the season. Washington Red Delicious continues to peak on 88/100's and have higher color. Lower grade red availability is still good but the supplies of the smaller fruit are drying up. Golden delicious are also peaking on 88/100's and the higher grades. The availability of lower grade Golden Apples are down so plan ahead. Granny-Smiths are peaking on the higher grades and the 88/100's as well. Lower grades of Granny-Smith are more limited and will get very short as the varieties clean up. Galas are peaking on 88's and smaller and the higher grades but remain very limited. Cameos, Pink Lady's, Jonagolds, Fuji's, Braeburns and a few other varieties are still available but supplies are light as all are nearly finished for the season.

**Asparagus** ↔ This market is firm. Supplies out of Mexico are light. Small, standard, and large sizing are light in availability. Jumbo sizing has light production as well. Product from Peru continues with all sizes being available. This product can be loaded in LA or Florida if desired. Domestic grass is being harvested in the Bakersfield region. Supplies are good on jumbo sizing.

**Avocado** ↔ Great demand continues to drive the avocado market.

Mexican supplies are decent, and growers limiting harvest to spread their harvest through the springtime. Maturity and flavor are excellent. California fruit harvest continues at a steady pace with improving maturity, flavor and oil content.

**Bell Peppers Western** ↔ Green bell market is unsettled, continuing light supplies of fancy large sized green bell pepper keeping that market higher. Adequate supplies on choice and small fruit. Some growers winding down on production as older fields play out. Colored bell pricing is very unsettled. Extreme Demand exceeds on all colored bell markets with lighter supplies. This will continue until other districts in Baja California begin to come online. Nogales will continue with colored bells but, supplies are gradually becoming lighter as some growers wind down. **Eastern** ↔ Bell Peppers continue to get tighter. Warm winter weather brought much of the peppers on prematurely with many shippers currently either finished or in process of finishing up. This has obviously led to a tremendous shortage which could possibly continue until GA begins production. Other factors contributing to pepper shortage include; thrip damage (insect), cheap markets during winter, labor, and overall less acreage (much less acreage in Plant City area). Much of the pepper being harvested continues to be of the larger sizes (jbo and XXL) with very small amounts of XL, large, medium, and choice available.



**Broccoli** ↔ This market is steady. Supplies are coming from Salinas and Santa Maria. Supplies on broccoli crowns and bunched broccoli are good. Most shippers are listening to offers for volume orders. Demand is light. Expect to see competitive pricing throughout the week in Salinas for this commodity as supplies should be good.



**Cauliflower** ↔ This market is steady. The main sizing continues to be heaviest to 12 counts. Many suppliers will have increased volumes next week, due to ideal temperatures in the growing regions. Expect pricing to be very competitive by the middle of next week. Demand is on the light side.


**Celery** ↔ This market overall is steady. Supplies are split amongst different suppliers and this has created a pricing gap of two to three dollars. Demand is light to moderate. Oxnard is the main area of production on this commodity. Santa Maria also has light production. Seeder is becoming an issue with most suppliers so please be aware. Yields will be less next week and pricing is likely to go up.

**Citrus Lemons** ↔ Central Valley crop is 90% harvested and the Ventura crop harvest is going at full production. Demand is very good. **Oranges** ↑ The Navels production and supplies are light. Rain had halted harvest most of last week putting harvest way behind. Size curve is swinging to peak sizing on 56's, 72's. Smaller sizes 88's, 113's, 138's are getting very tight,


and demand exceeds supplies. There are a few Valencia oranges being packed, but very limited on them.



**Lettuce** **Leaf**  The leaf market continues to gain strength. Huron production is all but finished. Salinas has begun production, but numbers are light to start the week. There is Epidermal Peel and Blister showing up in romaine, red leaf, and green leaf due to past cold temperatures. Demand has picked up. Yuma is finished. Supplies out of Santa Maria are light in availability. **Iceberg**  The lettuce market is stronger. Yuma has finished production. Epidermal peel, blister, and pink ribbing are issues that are coming out of the Huron region. Lettuce carton weights are averaging 44-48 #s. Santa Maria has production also available, with weights similar to Huron lettuce. Salinas will begin production next week with most suppliers.

**Melons** **Cantaloupes**  Central American melons are finishing up for the season and may come to an end a little earlier than expected. Wednesday thru Friday last week with heavy rains getting into the fields has made it impossible. Most of the remaining fruit is on vessels now and it's questionable as to how many more vessels will get out. The good news is Mexican fruit should start coming in, however it will be limited at best starting out. **Honeydew**  Offshore dews continue to remain very limited peaking to 5's. Mexican fruit in Nogales is coming in with a good run of sizes and good quality.

**Onions**  Storage yellows are lower as the supplier's are still shipping and look to clean up. Colossals and Supers are still limited in the northwest. Texas yellows are steady to lower on all sizes. The yellow quality has been excellent in the northwest and fair to excellent in Texas. Reds are steady to slightly lower in all areas but

remain limited. Many of the northwest shippers are buying from other areas or other shippers to cover mixer orders. The red quality has been good in the northwest and has ranged from fair to good in Texas. White onions are mostly steady although supplies are still generally light. The quality on whites has ranged from excellent to poor depending on the shipper and area.

**Potatoes**  Cartons and consumer bags are lower again in Idaho. The only size that is holding is numbertwo's and that's because the demand for them is so strong. Norkotahs are still limited but many suppliers will start packing them in the next few weeks to finish up. Burbanks are still the bulk of Idaho's volume. Washington potatoes are also steady to lower and they are still peaking on 80-count. Some Washington shippers are offering volume discounts on cartons. Colorado cartons are steady due to limited volume this time of year. Colorado is producing all sizes but the peak has varied by lot and shipper. The russet quality has been excellent in all areas. Bakersfield is packing all colors of new-crop desert potatoes and has good supplies available. North Dakota is still packing storage reds and golds and they are still heavy to A-size but supplies are limited. Idaho is still packing a few storage reds and golds and they continue to peak on A-size but their supplies is also limited. Quality has been fair to excellent Idaho. Florida continues packing all colors and the market is slightly lower on most sizes and varieties. Most Florida packers are still heavy to A-size in all colors and are limited on B-size and smaller. Florida will move from its southern growing area to the central area in the next week or two.

**Tomatoes** **Eastern**  The tomato deal is making its transition from the Immokalee/Naples district to the Palmetto/Ruskin area, and once this has been completed, volume should pick up quite a bit. Markets are slightly lower but inventories of unsold product at shipping point have been relatively low, which has propped up prices until now. If good weather remains, look for higher yields next week, which will continue through mid-May. Quality remains excellent. **Western**  Prices have been inching up out this way as volumes are starting to dwindle & quality is more variable. Roma tomato prices have strengthened considerably. Crossings out of McAllen, TX and Nogales, AZ remain steady but expect those numbers to begin dropping within 2-3 weeks. Distribution on rounds geographically is becoming more local with each passing week.

