



fresh Directions

May 9th, 2012

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

↑ New York is still packing McIntosh, Empires, Rome's, and Red Delicious but they are almost finished for the season. Washington Red Delicious is peaking on 88/100's with higher color. Lower grade red are very short as we approach the end of the storage season. Golden Delicious is peaking on higher grade 88/100's as well and the lower grades are also short. Granny-Smiths are heavy to higher grade 88/100 sizes too and they are also limited on the lower grades. Galas are peaking on 88's and smaller and the higher grades but remain limited. Washington Fuji's are peaking on extra fancy 72/80's but supplies are very short right now and the market is higher on all sizes.

Asparagus ↔ This market is firm. Supplies out of Mexico continue to be very light. Production from Peru shows light availability as well. Domestic grass is being harvested in the Bakersfield region. Demand exceeds supplies. With the Mother's Day pull over expect supplies to be light to moderate at best for the entire week.

Avocado ↔ Very good 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 steady, continuing light supplies of fancy large sized green bell pepper keeping that market steady. Adequate supplies on choice and small fruit. Some growers winding down on production as older fields play out. Some southern California product starting but will be into mostly big fruit. Colored bell pricing is settling. Demand still exceeds on all red bells lighter supplies and will continue until other districts in Baja California and southern California begin to come online. Nogales will continue to with colored bells but, supplies are gradually becoming lighter as some growers wind down. **Eastern** ↔ The pepper market is a bit softer heading into the weekend but recent rains in Georgia will prevent the market from making any significant drops. Most Florida shippers are working very little of the bigger per as they head into the end of their season. Some of the growers farther south are finished entirely. Georgia is just getting started on pepper with no real volume to be seen for another 7-10 days.

Broccoli ↔ This market is firm on the bunched product. Supplies are on the lighter side compared to crowns. Suppliers continue to have strong crown production. Salinas and Santa Maria are the main growing regions for this commodity. Demand is expected to pick up at the end of the week, but for now, this market is steady.

Cauliflower ↔ This market is firm. The main sizing is coming in the twelve counts. Expect pricing to have gaps of two to three dollars depending on the supplier. Availability is varying in the industry amongst the different growers. Demand has increased slightly. Light brown spotting is being seen upon arrivals, so please be aware. Most shippers are dealing with this issue.

Celery ↔ This market is firm. Supplies have become lighter, particularly on the small sizes. Many suppliers continue to deal with seeder, and yields are down. There have been reports of browning on the ends of bunches. Supplies continue to vary amongst different suppliers and this has created a pricing gap of two to three dollars. Oxnard is the main area of production on this commodity. Santa Maria also has light production.

Citrus Lemons ↑ Central Valley crop is done with their harvest and the Ventura crop harvest is going at full production. Demand is exceeding supplies on 140 and smaller lemons. **Oranges** ↔ The Navels production and supplies are light. Size curve is peaking on 56's, 72's. Smaller sizes, 88's, 113's, 138's are demand exceed on supplies. There are a few Valencia oranges being packed, but limited on them.

Lettuce Leaf ↔ The leaf market has firmed up. Demand overall is light. Romaine hearts continue to have the issue of cupping properly. There is Epidermal Peel, Blister, and tip burn showing up in romaine, red leaf, and green leaf due to past cold temperatures.

Green leaf is the lightest in availability of all the leaf items. Supplies out of Santa Maria are expected to be light in availability throughout this week. **Iceberg** ↑ The lettuce market is stronger. Due to past weather fluctuations, suppliers are having issues with this commodity. Pink ribbing, discoloration, decay, brown butts and light weights are issues suppliers are dealing with. Yields are down with all suppliers as packing a consistent box of lettuce has become very difficult. Santa Maria has production also available, with weights similar to Salinas's lettuce.

Melons Cantaloupes ↔ Central

American melons are nearly finished. Mexican fruit is crossing into Nogales now and their volume is slowly picking up. Quality on the Mexican melons has been good and looks to continue the trend of improving. **Honeydew** ↔ There are still some off shore dewes out of Florida. Mexican fruit continues to cross over into Nogales where both volume and quality are getting better.

Onions ↔ The northwest is essentially done with all colors. Texas yellows are steady and most packers are still heavy to mediums and jumbos. Texas remains limited on large yellows. California yellows remain mostly small and are also heavy to medium and jumbos but they will have larger size by the end of the week. Jumbo red onions are still short in all areas but California expects more volume by the end of the week. Texas reds are still producing more mediums than jumbos. Expect the jumbo red market to remain steady this week as demand catches up with supplies. White onions are steady to lower in all areas.

Potatoes ↓ Cartons in Idaho are lower on all sizes and both varieties. Many packers are finishing their norkotahs and

will discount for volume. Number-two's remain steady due to strong demand. Idaho is peaking on 80/90/100's. Washington potatoes are steady to lower and are peaking on 60-80's. Many Washington shippers are still offering volume discounts. The Colorado market is also steady to lower as well and they are peaking on 50-80's. Some of the Colorado shippers are also flexing for volume. The russet quality has been excellent in all areas. Bakersfield is packing all colors of new-crop desert potatoes but the supplies are down a little as they begin to transition to Bakersfield product. Expect California to have better numbers next week. Idaho is still packing a few storage reds and golds and they continue to peak on A-size but their supplies is also limited. Florida continues packing all colors and the market is steady on most sizes.

Tomatoes Eastern ↔

Although pickers are rapidly moving through the heavy volume spring crop in Palmetto/Ruskin (FL), there is still plenty of product & prices have fluctuated over the last week. As we move towards late May, expect yields to decrease and if demand stays constant, prices will have to trend upwards. The next area on deck before Memorial Day, the Quincy/Tallahassee district, has reports of much less planted than in previous years. **Western** ↔ While volume is diminishing in some Mexican districts, harvest out of newer fields is coming close to offsetting that. There is an added demand from Midwest repackers as the price point, still at or near the minimum, is proving to be a viable alternative as product out of the East has become higher-priced.

