



Fresh Directions

May 17th, 2012

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↑ New York is still packing light volumes of McIntosh, Empires, Rome's, and Red Delicious but they are almost finished for the season. Washington Red Delicious is still peaking on higher grade 88 & 100's. Lower grade reds remain tight as we approach the end of the storage season. Golden Delicious are heavy to the higher grades and 88/100 sizes as well. Lower grade Golden's are also tight. Granny-Smiths are heavy to higher grade 88/100 sizes too and 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 continues to be active. Suppliers are very light in availability. Supplies out of Mexico continue to be very light. Production from Peru shows light availability as well. Domestic grass is being harvested in the Salinas, Bakersfield and Stockton region. Demand exceeds supplies. Suppliers are dealing with the issue of seeding and feathering with this commodity. With the Mother's Day pull over expect supplies to be very light in availability for the entire week.

Avocado ↔ Very good demand continues to drive the avocado market. Mexican supplies are declining weekly and will so through June as they major season

come to the end. Maturity and flavor are excellent. California fruit harvest continues at a steady pace and is now out pacing the Mexican harvest. California fruit has good 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** ↔ Bell Peppers have tightened up tremendously this week. Florida continues to finish up and quality has been very inconsistent. Minimal amount of GA pepper starting next week and what pepper will be picked will be mostly JBO and XL. There was some hail damage sustained earlier this week in GA, unknown to what extent at this time. Expect to pay more and supplies to run short on pepper for at least next week.

Broccoli ↔ This market is steady on bunched product. Supplies have lessened on broccoli crowns;

however there is plenty to fill all orders. Suppliers continue to listen to offers on crown business so please keep in mind. 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 steady. The main sizing is coming in the twelve counts. Pricing has flexibility with a few suppliers. Demand has lowered slightly. Light brown spotting is being seen upon arrivals, so please be aware. Most shippers are dealing with this issue.

Celery ↔ This market is steady. 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** ↑ Ventura crop harvest is going at full production. Demand is exceeding supplies on 140 and 165 lemons which are normal this time of year. We will not see much relief until Chilean imports begin sometime around mid July. **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 still limited on them. The sizing of the Valencia's this year is larger, and many shippers expect 138's will be a demand exceeds supplies situation throughout the Valencia season.

Lettuce Leaf ↔ The leaf market is steady. A few shippers tried to increase romaine in price but that idea fell off quickly. Demand overall is light to begin the week. There is Epidermal Peel, Blister, and tip burn showing up in romaine, red leaf, and green leaf. Supplies out of Santa Maria are expected to be light in availability throughout this week. **Iceberg** ↑ The lettuce market is active. Due to past weather fluctuations, suppliers are having issues with this commodity. Pink ribbing, discoloration, decay, and brown butts are issues that most 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 and volume is slowly picking up. Quality on the Mexican melons has been good and looks to continue the trend of improving. Brawley, CA has good availability and quality is good. **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 good. The Imperial Valley has good quality and availability of honeydew with mixed melons starting next week.

Onions ↑ Texas had another storm hit although not as heavy, but nonetheless they will have limited supplies for the balance of the week. They will be packing next week weather permitting. California is slightly higher on all yellows but is handling the

increased demand. Allow a couple extra days to cover orders though. California reds are still short but are available. Expect the red market to remain strong this week as Texas isn't much of a factor. White onions are available in all areas and are steady. New Mexico is supposed to start packing a few yellows at the end of next week and Huron, California could start packing light volume the week after that.

Potatoes ↓ The Idaho market is being quoted steady but several suppliers are looking to discount on volume orders and the availability is good. Number-two's remain steady due to stronger demand and light supplies. Idaho is still peaking on 80's and smaller. Washington potatoes are steady to lower and are peaking on 60-80's. Many of the Washington shippers are still offering volume discounts as well. The Colorado market is steady to lower and they are still peaking on 50-80's. Most Colorado shippers are also flexing on volume. The russet quality has been excellent in all areas. Bakersfield is packing new-crop red, gold, and white potatoes and the availability is good for all colors. California is heavy to B-size and smaller right now. Idaho is still packing a few storage reds and golds and they continue to peak on A-size. Florida continues packing all colors and the market is steady on most sizes and varieties. Most Florida packers are still heavy to A-size in all colors and are limited on B's and smaller.

Tomatoes Eastern ↔ The crown (1st) pickings in the Palmetto/Ruskin district in Florida are about finished, and reports have the 2nd and 3rd picks to be minimal because of the heat that

bunched up the initial harvest that had been staggered. As we move towards late May, expect yields to decrease more and if demand stays constant, prices will continue to trend upwards. The next area on deck around Memorial Day, the Quincy/Tallahassee district, has reports of much less planted than in previous years. **Western** ↔ Volume is definitely diminishing in some Mexican districts, even with harvest out of newer fields. Prices have begun to increase on the mature greens as more business has come out their way due to higher prices in the East. Roma tomatoes have spiked in price as well, with quality variable.

