



fresh Directions

May 31st, 2012

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↑ New York is still packing light volumes of Empires, Rome's, and Red Delicious. They are almost finished with Empires for the season. Washington Red Delicious continue to peak on the middle sizes and the higher grade. Lower grade fruit is tight as we approach the end of the storage season. Golden Delicious are still heavy to the higher grades and 88/100 sizes. Lower grade Golden's are also limited. Granny-Smiths are peaking on extra fancy 88/100 sizes and are also limited on the lower grades. Galas are peaking on 88's and smaller and the higher grades but remain limited. The Gala market will continue to rise as supplies dry up. Washington Fuji's are peaking on extra fancy 72-88's but supplies are very short right now and the market is higher on all sizes.

Asparagus ↑ This market is firm to start the week. Suppliers continue to have very light availability. Supplies out of Mexico continue to be very light. Production from Peru shows light availability as well. Domestic grass is winding down. Demand exceeds supplies. Suppliers continue to deal with the issue of seeding and feathering with this commodity.

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. Diminishing supplies on choice and small fruit as some growers winding down on production as older fields play out. We suggest loading from Southern California after this week. Southern California product starting but will be into mostly big fruit. Colored bell market is unsettled. There is a wide range of quality on red bells as growers begin to wrap up on open field product. Transition will continue to other districts in Baja California and southern California. Nogales will continue to with colored bells (mostly hot house) but, supplies are gradually becoming lighter as some growers wind down. We suggest loading from Southern California after this week.

Eastern ↔

Product also winding down in Florida and with GA crop not as good as expected demand and pricing should remain high. Majority of the pepper in GA remains big in size (JBO/XL) with very little off-grade pepper available at all.

Broccoli ↔ This market is up slightly. Suppliers are not offering special pricing on crowns but availability is fine to fill all orders. Bunched

product is lighter in supplies to start the week. Salinas and Santa Maria are the main growing regions for this commodity. Demand looks to be active throughout the week.

Cauliflower ↔ This market continues to gain strength. The main sizing is coming in the twelve counts. Demand has increased, while supplies have lessened. Light brown spotting is being seen upon arrivals, so please be aware. Most shippers continue to deal with this issue.

Celery ↔ This market is steady to start the week. Supplies are good on large sizing, 24s and 30s in particular. There have been reports of browning on the ends of bunches. Oxnard is the main area of production on this commodity. Santa Maria also has light production. Salinas will not begin production for another month.

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. The Valencia orange crop continues to increase in supply but sizing is running heavy to the 88's and larger.

Lettuce **Leaf** ↔ The leaf market is softer. Romaine in particular has begun the week with sharp pricing from most suppliers.

Supplies will be good throughout the week. Supplies out of Santa Maria are expected to be stronger, but Salinas will have the best availability of product throughout the week. Green and red leaf will have good availability as well. **Iceberg** ↑ The lettuce market is extremely active. To start the week, most suppliers are out or on stand buy for pricing. Many suppliers are harvesting in new fields, but issues of quality continue to pop up. Decay, pink ribbing and brown outer leaves continue to be an issue. Santa Maria has production also available, with weights similar to Salinas's lettuce. The weights on palletized lettuce will be 44-46 pounds.

Melons Cantaloupes ↔ Offshore fruit is done for the season. Mexican cantaloupe is very limited with very few crossing. Arizona domestic fruit is also limited as the weather has cooled off and shippers are just starting to scratch. Demand exceeds supplies. **Honeydew** ↔ 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 now available as well. Arizona is just starting to scratch but should have better availability next week.

Onions ↑ The yellow market is steady in all areas and will remain so this week. Reds are steady to higher and are more limited due to the growing area transitions, so expect the red market to get slightly stronger as the week goes on. Whites are more limited but steady. The biggest factor to consider this week is the shift in growing regions. Texas is essentially done. The California desert is still packing all colors but the heat is pushing them to finish quickly so they will only have product through this week. All the suppliers in California's San Joaquin valley will be packing next week for sure but could start

yellow sooner. The San Joaquin shippers will have limited amounts of reds to start. Some New Mexico shippers are packing all colors today and the rest should begin later this week. So we have a few onions in a lot of different places right now.

Potatoes ↓ The Idaho market is slightly lower on all sizes. Since Burbanks are the only variety left most shippers are pushing on 80-count and smaller but all sizes are available. Number-two's are still more limited but they are available. The Washington market is lower and they are peaking on 60-80's. Many Washington shippers will also flex for volume. The Colorado market is steady and they continue to peak on 50-80's. Colorado shippers aren't flexing as much now so they don't run out of product. The russet quality has been excellent in all areas. Bakersfield will start packing newcrop russets the week of June 4th. Bakersfield is still packing new-crop red, gold, and white potatoes and the availability is good for all colors. California is heavy to A-size now but they have plenty of B's also. Idaho is done packing few storage reds and golds and but they still have a few on the floor. Florida continues packing all colors and the market is steady but limited on as they are almost finished for the season. Most Florida packers are still heavy to A-size in all colors and are limited on B's and smaller.

Tomatoes Eastern ↔ Tomato harvests in the Palmetto/Ruskin area of central Florida have dropped precipitously, although if weather leaves them alone, picking will continue in that area into early June. With the first picking generally

coming towards an end, the second and third picks have dropped quite a bit in size, skewing more toward the large & medium sizes, and that should cause a significant price spread eventually. Firm to strong market overall. Tallahassee/Quincy in north Florida, along with Pelham, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina, are the next areas to commence picking within the next 7-10 days. **Western** ↔ With sporadic volume & variable quality, the Mexican tomato deal through Nogales, Arizona and McAllen, Texas is well past its peak and does not have nearly the distribution outlets it did a couple weeks ago. Extra-large size vine ripens out of Baja California are at a premium as well. Look for mature greens in the Indio district of the Imperial Valley of California to begin shortly. First yields in the Central Valley of California near Merced look to start around June 10.

