

Market News

The glut of Maine lobster is now affecting New Jersey's lobster fleet of 30 to 40 active fishermen. Low-priced Maine lobster entered the state's market through grocery retailers and restaurant chains, driving down prices here as a result. One seafood wholesaler's lobsters have been selling for about 20% less than last year, reported *The Star-Ledger*. [Full Story](#)

A large supply of clementines this summer from multiple points of origin has created a very difficult and different marketing situation for the commodity this year. Chile, Peru and South Africa each sent more fruit to the U.S. East Coast this summer, with a great deal of it bunching up during June and July, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

Farmers markets across Southwest Florida are now applying for free equipment to handle purchases through an Electronic Benefits Transfer card used by consumers who receive federal benefits. A new Florida Department of Children and Families grant will help 100 farmers markets begin accepting federal benefits through \$78,749 worth of free wireless EBT card readers, and farmers hope to have a system up and running by the start of the fall season, reported *The Bradenton Herald*.

President Barack Obama will announce that the Department of Agriculture intends to buy up to \$170 million of pork, lamb, chicken and catfish to help support farmers suffering from the drought, according to a White House official. The food purchases will go toward "food nutrition assistance" programs, like food banks. The president will also direct the Department of Defense to "encourage" its vendors to speed up purchases of lamb, pork and beef and freeze it for later use, reported *Reuters*.

IMG Citrus, one of Florida's largest citrus grower-packers, is expanding its volume by adding an Indian River grapefruit grower-shipper. This fall, Hogan & Sons plans to market its fruit through IMG. Hogan shipped 570,000 cartons of grapefruit this past season, according to the Florida Citrus Administrative Committee. Last season, IMG packed 1.9 million cartons of grapefruit, oranges and

tangerines, according to the citrus administrative committee, making it the second-largest single Florida packing operation, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Prices of cocoa beans increased 13% since January due to a hot, dry summer in West Africa. Cocoa futures reached \$2,488 a ton on Aug. 13, their highest levels since February, while the contract for September delivery ended down 2.4% at \$2,388 a ton. Since the dry weather in the Ivory Coast took hold in early June, cocoa prices rose 15% and commodity traders, food companies and industry officials are now concerned that the situation could worsen if the El Nino weather phenomenon affects the crop, reported *The Wall Street Journal*. [Full Story](#) (WSJ Subscription Required)

Bulgarians are cultivating an ancient grain called einkorn as people seek out healthier food and sustainable farming methods. The grain thrives without fertilizer in poor soil and is genetically pure, as it has never been hybridized. Farmers in the Black Sea grain producer country that export about 2.0 million metric tons of wheat a year are now turning to einkorn and fields have tripled to about 400 hectares from a year ago and virtually from nothing in 2009, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

Dairy farmers in California are struggling to cover expenses, and some are leaving the industry due to the soaring cost of feed. California's dairymen are in an especially difficult position, because there are not enough processing facilities in the state for all the milk that dairy cows produce. Stringent permitting requirements often lead processors to build new facilities in other states, leaving California with an oversupply of raw milk. As a result, farmers are at a disadvantage in negotiating better prices from California processors, reported *The Sacramento Bee*. [Full Story](#)

Increased asparagus consumption is related to household income, according to the Peruvian Asparagus Importers Association. While there are some geographic variances as well as difference between the genders and marital status of consumers, how much money a household makes appears to have the most influence, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

After two years of heavy production, raisin-grape farmers expect

a smaller crop this year as vines recovered. Early varieties began harvesting this week as farmers claim raisin-grape crop is progressing nicely and that grapes ripened quickly this year, a change from last year's delayed harvest, reported *California Farm Bureau Federation*. [Full Story](#)

Pumpkin farmers are already preparing for Halloween, with reports that pumpkins are growing well. Most pumpkins grown for jack-o'-lanterns are planted in late spring and early summer, reported *California Farm Bureau Federation*

Food prices in India are on the rise despite a decline in July. The wholesale price index, India's benchmark measure of inflation, rose 6.87% in July versus a year earlier, below economists' expectations, reported *The Wall Street Journal*.

A former professor of agriculture economics expects Florida juice processors to offer at least \$1.50 per pound solids for next season's oranges. While not quite as high as the roughly \$2 per pound solids average farm price for the 2011-12 season, \$1.50 would still be a profitable price for Florida growers, reported *The Lakeland Ledger*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

Meanwhile, **Florida's dry spring resulted in limited citrus canker issues for growers.** The canker bacteria spreads primarily through wind-blown rain, so the dry spring helped contain the disease, reported *The Lakeland Ledger*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

El Nino could bring drought relief to Southeast, according to a climatologist. While the Midwest is suffering now, the Southeast has been struggling with drier than usual seasons for the past two years. Much of central and south Alabama and Georgia have rainfall deficits of several inches over the past 30 days and deficits of 12 to 14 inches over the past 180 days, which is nearly half of normal rainfall. After two years of the La Nina weather pattern, things appear to be changing in the Pacific Ocean, signaling the possible beginning of an El Nino pattern, leading to more fall and winter rain, reported *Southeast Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

A harvest of perhaps three million bushels of apples is expected in Michigan, down from the usual 22 million or so, according to

in Michigan, down from the usual 25 million or so, according to the executive director of the Michigan Apple Committee. Damage is heavier in southwestern Michigan, the state's top apple-producing region, where 25% to 30% is a respectable showing this year, reported *The Associated Press*