

Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

September 6, 2012

Apples ↓ New York is now packing Paula Reds, Mac's, Jonamac's, and Gala's. The latter three varieties are a couple weeks early this year. Washington is still limited on C.A. red delicious and they won't pack for another week to two weeks so stay ahead on them! Most shippers were packing the early golden variety's but ran through them quickly and are now gapping. We are supposed to get the first new crop golden delicious next week in Washington. CA Granny-Smiths are still peaking on higher grade 88's and 100's but most shippers are sold out or have very little to offer! Washington is supposed to pack the new-crop Granny-smiths the in the middle of September so we may see a gap with some suppliers. CalifOornia has started packing Granny-smith's and they are peaking on 100's and smaller. Washington Gala inventories are getting larger by the day and there are good numbers of smaller fruit. California Gala's are steady but supplies are extremely short and most shippers are cleaning up. Washington has started packing Gala's. California has also started packing Fuji apples. California is packing new-crop Bartlett, Bosc, and Stark-Crimson pears. The Bartletts are heavy to the middle sizes so you'll see more deals on 100's and larger, 110's and smaller are very short. The Washington Bartlett market is coming off as they adjust to California.

Asparagus ↔ The market on Mexican grass has softened on all sizes. Supplies are better on standard, large and x-large. Jumbo packs are much better in availability as well. The pricing on Mexican grass is very comparable to Peruvian product. This has not happened for some time. There continues to be no 28 pound cases being packed by any supplier, only eleven pounders.

Avocado ↔ Mexico's Flora Loca crop this year is producing good volume. The Flora Loca will have lower maturity than the old crop and will take longer to ripen. California volume is good and size curve has evened out with more 60's and 70's coming in to the packing house.

Bell Peppers — Western ↔ **Eastern** ↔ The western green bell market is steady. Improving supplies but, expect some lighter supplies from some shipping points this coming week. Anticipated moisture in some growing areas may slow down some shipping production. Colored Red bell market is steady as some growers are hitting increased production. Some shipping points are experiencing light supplies. We expect seasonal weather which should hold production steady. Demand slightly exceeds market. Gold bells are settling but, they continue demand exceeds supplies. The eastern bell volume will be light at the front part of the week since there was not much picking over the 3 day holiday weekend. However, the market should remain unchanged for the week, as volume will increase and demand will stay steady.

Broccoli ↔ This market continues to be steady with all suppliers. There continues to be a few shippers looking for half load orders on broccoli crowns. Santa Maria and Salinas continue to be the main growing regions for this commodity. There are no major issues to report in terms of quality. Supplies should be steady for the entire week.

Cauliflower ↔ There continues to be excellent supplies on this commodity. The larger sizes have a slightly smaller availability, but overall there is plenty of product available for all users. Supplies are expected to be good throughout the week.

Celery ↔ This market is firm. All sizing is light to moderate depending on the shipper. The option for Salinas and Santa Maria are the two regions to choose from when loading out of California. Suppliers are reluctant to offer volume deals for the most part at this time. Oxnard is expected to begin production in early November.

Citrus — Lemons ↓ **Oranges** ↑ The lemon Ventura crop harvest is going at full production. Supplies are good, with good steady demand. The Valencia orange harvest remains steady, with sizing peaking on larger sizes – 72's/88's, with very little 138's or 113's. It is demand exceeds on the small fruit.

Lettuce — Leaf ↔ Iceberg ↔ The leaf market has softened. Romaine has much better availability than the previous weeks. There continues to be some issues of bugs on the romaine so please beware. A few suppliers have reported this. Romaine hearts continue to have issues of fringe and tip burn. Carton romaine has had the same issues. Multiple shippers have reported this. Green and red leaf is light to moderate in availability. Demand is off. The lettuce market has started the week steady. Suppliers continue to have moderate to good availability. Santa Maria continues to have production. Good strong weights are being reported from all the growing areas. Weights are reported to be 42-45 pounds. Pink ribbing and decay issues have been minimal. The availability should good throughout the week on this commodity.

Melons — Cantaloupes ↔ Honeydew ↔ In the cantaloupe market melons are still limited. Depending on the shipper some have small product available and some with larger fruit but still mostly 12's. It's a mixed bag some shippers going strong and others between fields. The Westside honeydew is going strong with sizes peaking to 5's and 6's but all sizes available. The market remains steady.

Onions ↓ The yellow market is steady to slightly lower again and supplies are plentiful. The northwest is still relatively short on colossals and supers but both markets are also lower and supplies are improving. California is still packing yellows and they have all sizes available but will finish at the end of this week. Colorado is still producing mostly pre-pack & medium yellows. The red market is also steady to slightly lower and supplies are better. Most packers are still peaking on jumbos and are short on mediums. Whites are steady to slightly lower in all areas with good supplies available. The quality has been good on colors, in all areas.

Potatoes ↓ The potato market has leveled off to start the week but supplies are plentiful and demand has only been fair so expect the slow drop to continue. Idaho norkotahs are still peaking on 70's & larger however there is no shortage of 80's and smaller. Maturity had been a problem with some Idaho suppliers but the issues are starting to disappear. Washington norkotahs are still heavier to 70's and larger. Colorado is still peaking on 60's and larger but the smaller counts are available too. Russet quality ranged from excellent to average depending on maturity. Stockton, California is steady on all colors but they have good volume of reds and will flex for volume orders. All colors are heavier to the larger size in California. Washington, Wisconsin, and Minnesota continue packing pack new-crop reds & golds and they are also steady to lower with better availability in the A-size. The colored potato quality has been good to excellent in all areas.

Tomatoes — Eastern ↔ Western ↔ In the western market, the mature green tomatoes from California's central valley continue to supply a large part of the United States at this point, with good distribution and excellent quality. Interestingly, just this morning reports have size dropping off somewhat, and while pricing has been pretty much the same recently for all sizes, with X-large cheaper at times, look for that situation to flip around in the next couple of weeks. The eastern tomato deals from the mountains of Tennessee to the Eastern Shore of Virginia and Maryland are extremely sporadic picking-wise, with insufficient supplies to quote a market most of the time. A little bit of product is coming out of the Slocumb, AL district, with less than a full crop out of Benton Harbor, MI as well. Look for rains from Tropical Storm Isaac to have an effect on the deal within the next few days as it moves up the nation's midsection.

