

# Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

September 27, 2012

**Apples** ↔ New York is still packing Mac's, Jonamac's, and Gala's and the size profile is mixed. They will start packing Empires and Honeycrisp this week. Washington Reds are still mostly large and higher in color. The foodservice sizes & grades of reds are short. Golden's are peaking on 88's-113's and the Washington extra grade. Golden supplies are up. Granny-Smith inventories remain light. The fruit that Washington is harvesting is heavy to the Premium grade and sizes 80-100's. California is still packing a few Granny-Smith and they are peaking on 100's and smaller. Washington Gala's are producing more of the Washington extra-fancy grade and are peaking on 88's-113's. California Gala's are finished for the season. Both Washington & California are packing Fuji's and a few Braeburns. California is still packing Bartlett & Bosc pears and they are both now producing mostly 90 size & larger. The Washington Bartlett market has stabilized and they are also short on the smaller sizes. Washington is also packing Bosc & D'Anjou pears.

**Asparagus** ↔ The market on Mexican grass is firm. Most suppliers are reporting light to moderate availability throughout the week. Jumbo packs are very light in supply. The pricing on Mexican grass is very comparable to Peruvian product. Expect the pricing to be stronger by the end of the week.

**Avocado** ↔ Mexico's Flora Loca crop is begging to wind down. Their new main crop will be ready to come to market as soon as the Flora Loca is done. California volume looks good, but will begin its down turn as we move into October as we start to see the end of California's season.

**Bell Peppers — Western** ↔ **Eastern** ↔ The western green bell market is on an upward trend. Expect some lighter supplies on larger fruit as some growers are sizing down on current fields. Colored Red bell market is steady but, some growers are anticipating slightly lighter production as other shipping points are experiencing some increased harvesting. We expect cooler temperatures which will slow some harvesting. Demand slightly exceeds market. Gold bells are settling but, they continue demand exceeds

supplies. In the eastern bell market, Supplies remain good out of Michigan. Georgia is starting this week with pepper. However, it is mostly crown picking so there is less volume in the off grades. Demand is steady.

**Broccoli** ↔ Demand is average and the market overall is stable with most suppliers. Bunch broccoli continues to be short with some suppliers but in general all packs are available in all growing regions. Broccoli crown supplies have picked up.

**Cauliflower** ↔ This market has remained steady with most suppliers. Supplies are moderate as demand is off. With a push of any kind, this market could be going upward by the end of the week. The quality overall has been favorable with very little brown spotting issues being reported.

**Celery** ↔ This market has remained steady with most suppliers. Supplies are moderate as demand is off. With a push of any kind, this market could be going upward by the end of the week. The quality overall has been favorable with very little brown spotting issues being reported.

**Citrus — Lemons** ↔ **Oranges** ↔ The lemon Ventura crop harvest is going at full production. Supplies are good on 140's and smaller, with the 115's and larger tightening up. 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 supplies on the 113's and 138's, with 88's starting to get a little tight.

**Lettuce — Leaf** ↓ **Iceberg** ↔ Supplies are stronger on all leaf items. Demand overall is light and this has caused the market to be steady, overall. Size and weight are improving in all growing areas. Romaine Heart supplies have picked up and some suppliers have made a few offers on large volume orders. The quality overall has been good. Supplies on the iceberg market are steady and this along with light to moderate demand has kept the market stable. Weights continue to be reported on palletized at 42-44 pounds. There have been some reports of brown outer

leaves and sporadic pink ribbing seen upon arrivals. Santa Maria and Salinas are the two main growing regions. Huron is expected to begin production in the middle of October.

#### Melons — Cantaloupes ↑ Honeydew ↑

Supplies remain extremely limited in the cantaloupe market. What limited supplies there are, the varietal of fruit in the ground now is very large. They are peaking to 9's and Jumbo 9's. In addition the new varietal will have more of a green cast than they have had. The Westside deal started early and looks to finish early this year. The desert is set to scratch in 2-3 weeks. In the honeydew market, product remains extremely limited and looks to finish up very quickly. We may see a gap between Westside and desert deals. The desert should start scratching at the beginning of next month.

**Onions** ↔ All areas are steady on all sizes of yellows. Washington has some volume deals on jumbo yellow and Oregon/Idaho has some on colossals. Yellow demand has been light. The tightest item in the northwest right now is transportation! California has two shippers still packing onions and they have mostly yellows. Colorado is still producing mostly medium and smaller yellows. Reds are also steady in all areas. Washington will still deal on volume orders of jumbos. Most northwest packers are still short on medium reds. Whites are steady to in all areas with good supplies available. The quality has been good on colors and in all areas.

**Potatoes** ↔ The potato market is flat. Most districts have good supplies available on all sizes. Idaho is a little short on the smaller carton counts but aside from that there are no availability issues. Idaho is still peaking on 70's & larger. Most Idaho packers are still only packing norkotahs but a few are also packing Burbanks & that market is a little stronger. Washington norkotahs are still heavier to the larger counts. Colorado is also still peaking on the larger

sizes but all sizes are available. Russet quality is good to excellent in all areas. Stockton, California is steady on all sizes and colors but the availability is slightly lower since a couple shippers have finished. The remaining packers are still heavier to A-size in all colors. Washington, Wisconsin, and Minnesota continue packing pack new-crop reds and golds and they are all steady and also have better availability in the A-size. The colored potato quality has been fairly good in all areas.

**Tomatoes** — Eastern ↔ Western ↔ In the western market, while harvesting in California's San Joaquin Valley remains steady and will continue for approximately the next 3-4 weeks, demand definitely has slowed, putting down-ward pressure on the mature green tomato market. However, every week is bringing colder weather to the Midwest & Eastern states, meaning that backyard tomatoes will be coming to an end, which should increase demand right about the time yields, start to decrease in California. In the eastern market, the Tennessee deal, in addition to the other districts in Michigan, North Carolina & Alabama, have been winding down for a couple weeks now, but there is just enough product to stay local and take the edge off the tomato market. Look for these deals to be completely finished by the 1st or 2nd week in October and the fields in Quincy/Tallahassee, Florida to begin harvest.

