

# Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

October 11, 2012

**Apples** ↔ New York is still packing Gala's and the size profile is still mixed but mostly large. They are also packing Empires, Honeycrisp, Golden Delicious, and Red Delicious and they are all large as well. Washington Reds are also large and they are higher in color right now. The smaller sizes and lower grade reds are more limited. Golden delicious are heavy to size 72-100's and the Washington extra-fancy grade. Golden inventories are starting to build. Washington Granny-Smith is still heavy to the Premium grade and 80-100 sizes. California is still packing a few Granny-Smith too 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 88-100's. Small lower grade Gala's are in a demand exceeds supplies situation. Both Washington and California are packing Fuji's and a few Braeburns. California also has a few Pink Ladies. California Bartlett pears have finished for the season. There are still some Bosc pears in California and they are producing mostly 90 size & larger. Washington Bartlett is steady and producing mostly 110 and larger fruit. Washington is also packing Bosc, red pears & D 'Anjou's.

**Asparagus** ↔ The market is steady. Suppliers are reporting light supplies throughout the week. Peruvian production is down as well. Jumbo packs are very light in supply. The pricing on Mexican grass continues to be very comparable to Peruvian product. Expect the pricing to increase 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 is starting to begin its down turn as we start to see the end of California's season. California fruit is bringing a premium market price.

**Bell Peppers — Western** ↔ **Eastern** ↔ The western green bell market is on an upward trend. Expect lighter supplies on larger fruit as some growers are sizing down on current fields and/or transitioning to other districts which will affect availability. 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. New acreage is starting in Coachella by mid/late October. Gold bells are settling but, they continue demand exceeds supplies. In the eastern market, Michigan is finished with pepper so the volume is now strictly in South Carolina and Georgia. The market remains steady and quality fair.

**Broccoli** ↔ Supplies have picked up due to a lack of demand in the marketplace. Supplies are stronger in Salinas but Santa Maria has production if desired. Overall, the quality has been favorable with little to no issues being reported. This market is steady.

**Cauliflower** ↔ This market is steady. Supplies are moderate to good with most suppliers. Demand overall is on the light side. The quality has been favorable with very little brown spotting issues being reported. There is a chance of this market getting stronger by the end of the week, as light rains are expected.

**Celery** ↓ This market is softer. Smaller sizing, 36s and smaller will be higher priced throughout the week. The supplies on 24 counts have increased and shippers are listening to offers. Loading in Santa Maria continues to show sharper pricing. Salinas' production is picking up with a few suppliers. Oxnard's target date for production is expected to begin in late October to early November.

**Citrus — Lemons** ↔ **Oranges** ↔ The lemon Ventura crop harvest is going at full production. With about 3 to 4 weeks remaining to harvest size continues to be heavy on the smaller fruit (140 and smaller). The desert production is ramping up with very good quality and improved availability for larger fruit. The Valencia orange harvest is beginning to drop and many shippers are finishing or looking to finish soon. Sizing is peaking on larger sizes — 72's/88's. The 138's and 113's continue to be very short supplied. The Navel crop looks to start around the first week on November. Navel sizing looks to start off with better supplies of the smaller fruit.

**Lettuce — Leaf ↔ Iceberg ↔** Good supplies exist on all leaf items. Extreme heat in the Salinas Valley a few weeks ago has created arrival problems in quality this past week. Issues continue to consist of wilt and decay. The shippers are listening to offers as demand has fallen off. Sizes and weights are good in all growing areas. Romaine Heart supplies have picked up and some suppliers have made a few offers on large volume orders. The lettuce market is steady. Demand overall is off. Weights continue to be reported on palletized at 42-44 pounds. There continues to be sporadic reports upon arrivals on quality. Again, heat related issues in the growing regions have been pink ribbing and browning on outer leaves. Santa Maria and Salinas are the two main growing regions. Huron is expected to begin production in the middle of October.

**Melons — Cantaloupes ↑ Honeydew ↑**

For cantaloupes, the Westside is finishing up quickly with hit and miss supplies with shippers. This week will be the last pack outs for most. The desert is starting up in a light way more than likely they are waiting for the Westside to finish before coming on strong. We hope to see better availability next week. The market is higher. Honeydew product remains limited and the Westside has finished up with most shippers. Nogales has started in a light way and is peaking to 5's. The desert is also starting in a light way better volume should be available next week.

**Onions ↔** Yellow onions are mostly steady in all areas. Some shippers are getting bullish on pricing since the harvest is almost finished but it's just talk at this point and hasn't affected the market. Oregon/Idaho has some volume specials on colossal & Supers but the market hasn't changed. Yellow demand has been fair. 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 smaller yellows. Red onions are also steady in all areas. Washington will still deal on volume orders of jumbos. The wide price-gap between Washington and Idaho/Oregon jumbo red onions is still there. Whites are steady to in all areas with good supplies available. The quality has been good in all areas.

**Potatoes ↔** Idaho norkotahs and Burbanks are mostly steady on all sizes. Some suppliers have moved up in price on the smaller counts. The norkotahs are heavier to the middle sizes. Burbanks are spread across all sizes but are producing more 40-60 count than anything else. The Washington & Colorado markets are also steady and they are both still heavier to the larger counts. Russet quality is good to excellent in all areas. Stockton, California is steady on most sizes of reds but the availability is lower. California whites and golds are steady. California potatoes are still heavier to A-size in all colors. Washington, Wisconsin, and Minnesota continue packing pack new- crop reds & golds and they are all mostly 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 west, although technically mature green tomatoes will still be picked in California's San Joaquin Valley for approximately three more weeks, reports have picking days becoming more sporadic than steady, and because of morning dew in the fields & less sunshine during the day, quality and maturity have begun to suffer as a result. Markets are higher and will continue to trend in that fashion until the deal ends at or near the end of October. In the east, the Benton Harbor district of Michigan picked fairly heavy in anticipation of freezing temps last weekend, and those tomatoes are being sold locally at this time. The mountain deal in eastern Tennessee is just about wrapped up, and there is a fair amount of picking being done in the Quincy/Tallahassee area in northern Florida, but not nearly enough yield to affect the tomato market adversely. Look for prices to increase as we move towards November.

