

## ***Market News***

**A compromise proposal from Mexican growers to raise the floor price of tomatoes exported to the U.S. is being heralded by some as the best thing for bilateral trade and a positive outcome for consumers and domestic growers.** Representatives for Mexican growers met with Commerce Department officials Oct. 18 and proposed boosting the floor price of imported Mexican tomatoes 18%-25%, depending on tomato variety. They also propose to include all Mexican growers in the 16-year-old trade agreement, which currently covers about 85% of them, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**Supplies of some Thanksgiving produce favorites could be light this year,** grower-shippers and industry officials report. Very wet weather in the Glades/Lake Okeechobee region of Florida during plantings from mid-September to mid-October will put a major dent in green bean volumes for the holiday, stated a salesman and green bean manager for Hugh H. Branch, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**Growing strawberry plants in the U.S. Mid-Atlantic region beneath canopy-like structures called low tunnels can allow the season to start earlier and continue through the summer and fall,** according to USDA scientists. At the ARS Genetic Improvement of Fruits and Vegetables Laboratory in Beltsville, MD, a geneticist is testing some strawberry cultivars in the new production system designed to extend the growing season in the northern and eastern U.S. [Full Story](#)

**Fresh Quest, a melon grower, importer, shipper and marketer, is developing a new farm in Guatemala's Asuncion Mita growing region.** The company grew cantaloupe in Honduras, but is now consolidating production in Guatemala to improve efficiencies and logistics and ship a higher-quality fruit to North America, stated the

president, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**Stevia is being grown for the first time this year in research plots and in commercial fields in North Carolina and Georgia.** While it is not likely to replace cotton and corn any time soon, Stevia does present an interesting opportunity for a few farmers in the Southeast. The crop is grown much like tobacco stated superintendent of the Caswell Research Farm in Kinston. The crop was planted using transplants and a reconfigured tobacco planter that also resembles a sweet potato transplanter. So far, weeds have been the biggest problem in growing the crop, reported *Southeast Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

**Michigan farms that produce tree fruit crops have an enrollment deadline of Nov. 20** as the last date to enroll their farm's fruit crop's participation in 2013 crop insurance programs, reported *Michigan State University*. [Full Story](#)

**Total U.S. production of milk fell 1% to 14.7 billion-lbs., with gains in Wisconsin and Minnesota among the best in the nation. Wisconsin harvested 2.2 billion-lbs. last month, a 3% improvement over the September 2011 yield due to more productive cows,** according to USDA. The average cow produced 1,720 pounds of milk last month, 40-lbs. more than a year-ago, while production in California fell 4% to 3.2 billion-lbs. in September, reported *The Associated Press*. [Full Story](#)

**Live cattle futures for October delivery fell 0.3% on Oct. 23, held back by weakness in outside markets, while live cattle for December delivery, the most actively traded contract, also declined 0.3%.** Live-cattle futures were pressured by declines in equities, crude oil and gold, which fell on concerns about Spain's economy and worries about the strength of U.S. corporate earnings, while last week's monthly cattle-on-feed report from USDA had a mixed impact on the market. The report noted tighter supplies of slaughter-ready cattle than in past years for the month of September, reported *The Wall Street Journal*. [Full Story](#) (WSJ Subscription Required)

**Investors closed out bets on prices of raw-sugar futures, anticipating a rise ahead of the latest status report on Brazil's**

**sugarcane crush.** Traders expect a report from industry association Unica this week to show that the pace of the crush increased for the first half of October, as weather has been favorable for harvesting and transporting the cane. "There is a glut of sugar on the market right now," according to a market analyst at Citibank, reported *The Wall Street Journal*. [Full Story](#) (WSJ Subscription Required)

**Corn mazes, pumpkin patches and U-pick fruit are part of a growing agritourism trend in Yakima Valley.** For many, such fall activities are tradition and for family farms in the Yakima Valley, those traditions mean solid and reliable revenue. Corn mazes and the like are not new, as many farms have offered them for a decade or more. But those offerings have gained renewed interest as family farms search for more income amid the consolidation of commercial agriculture and to meet consumer demand for information about where their food comes from, reported *Yakima Herald*. [Full Story](#)

**Potatoes with higher levels of beneficial carotenoids are the result of USDA studies to improve the vegetable.** Scientists with USDA's ARS bred yellow potatoes with carotenoid levels that are two to three times higher than those of the popular Yukon Gold yellow-fleshed potato variety, reported *Science Daily*. [Full Story](#)

**Bejo Seeds' "Tasti-Lee" tomatoes contain up to 50% more lycopene than traditional varieties.** The company will be promoting that difference with a new sticker that will be unveiled at the Produce Marketing Association's Fresh Summit in Anaheim, CA, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

**New border facility could bring more Mexican produce into Texas.** A plan to change how millions of boxes of mangos are treated for the Mexican fruit fly and bacterial contaminants could be a boon for the Rio Grande Valley's growing produce industry. USDA lifted a procedural barrier recently to allow construction along the U.S.-Mexico border of facilities that blast mangos and other fruits and vegetables with a highly focused beam of electricity, eliminating pathogens and pests. The USDA's rule change, pushed by the valley's congressional delegation, should soon bear fruit when McAllen becomes the first city in the Southwest with the technology, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

