

Market News

A record state apple crop has fruit packing houses across the Yakima Valley scrambling to find warehouse space. As Cowiche Growers pack about 15% more apples than anticipated, every spare storage room at its facility - including the aisles - is bulging with apple bins and filled apple boxes. The company has been running a second half-shift in the evenings to get apples packed and shipped quicker to open space for apples sitting outside. The state is projected to have a fresh apple crop of about 121.5 million boxes in the 2012-13 season, 11% higher than the previous record of 109.4 boxes for 2010-11, according to a recent estimate from the Yakima Valley Growers-Shippers Association. Yakima Valley shippers are expected to pack 85.5 million boxes, or 70.4% of the state fresh apple crop, about the same size as the entire 2001 state fresh apple crop, reported *Yakima Herald*. [Full Story](#)

The South African citrus season was not smooth, but good quality and consistent supplies made it a successful one. The last of the navels and midnight oranges arrived in East Coast ports in late October, and product should remain in the market into early November. The season was difficult for exporters to the U.S. because California supplies stayed in the market longer, according to the chief executive officer of the Western Cape Citrus Producers Forum, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Michigan's wine grape acreage doubled over the past decade, according to a report by NASS. While acreage of Concord and Niagara grape varieties - used primarily for juice, jams and jelly- have remained steady at approximately 12,000 acres over the past 10 years, acreage of wine grapes increased from 1,300 to 2,650 acres, reported *DBusiness*. [Full Story](#)

The South African deciduous fruit industry continues to grapple with escalating input costs. Despite this, South African table grape exports are up more than 15% on the year in 2012. Meanwhile, forecasts see approximately 3% growth in production and exports for apples and pears. [USDA Report](#)

Coming off the worst drought in more than half a century,

farmers in the U.S. are scrambling to get their hands on the best corn seed this year to ensure they plant a bumper crop next spring. Some farmers began buying seed in August, months earlier than usual, to lock in the best-yielding varieties. Farmers are "concerned about getting their seed varieties, especially corn," according to one farmer. "It may not be there come Dec. 1." Their success could be pivotal in keeping food prices stable across the globe, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

The Microbiological Data Program is in shutdown mode after 11 years of gathering data about foodborne pathogens. Federal officials told state agriculture departments that are part of the program to stop collecting random samples for pathogen testing as of Nov. 9, according to industry reports. Officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture were not available to comment, but a USDA spokesman confirmed the end of the program in an article on www.law360.com, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

California Dairies (CD) purchased the assets of Security Milk Producers Association, a milk cooperative that produces around 1.3 billion-lbs. of milk a year with sales of around \$300 million. CD is the result of a 1999 merger of three of California's most financially successful cooperatives: California Milk Producers, Danish Creamery and San Joaquin Valley Dairymen, reported *The Business Journal*. [Full Story](#)

Florida's Natural posted some large numbers, several setting new records, for its 2011-12 fiscal year that ended Aug. 31. Probably the most important numbers were the returns to nearly 1,000 Florida growers who provided more than 15 million boxes of oranges, grapefruit and other citrus to the juice cooperative. They received a record high \$1.90 per pound solids on average for oranges, up 10% from 2010-11, and \$1.55 per pound solids for grapefruit, the second-highest on record and up 14% from the previous season, reported *The Lakeland Ledger*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

Healthy demand for turkey has helped producers overcome record-high feed costs this year. The holidays are always "a good time for the turkey industry," because of the whole-body birds that are sold about 40% of the year's business and the state will once again sell all of its turkeys this year, according to the president of the California

Poultry Federation. The state supplies about 35% of the nation's turkeys and consumers who want a California-grown fresh turkey will need to act fast, because California birds tend to sell out long before out-of-state birds. While U.S. poultry producers have had to reduce their production of chickens this year, turkey farmers matched supply to demand, and that has kept prices strong, reported *Ag Alert*. [Full Story](#).

Despite severe crop losses in Michigan and New York, nearly 109 million bushels of U.S.-grown fresh-market apples had yet to be shipped as of Nov. 1, 4% more than last year at the same time and 1% above the five-year average. Thanks to a big Washington crop, expected to be a record-breaker, about 108.7 million bushels were still on hand, up from 104.7 million bushels last year, according to the U.S. Apple Association. By variety, about 35 million bushels of red delicious had yet to be shipped on Nov. 1, up from 34 million last year at the same time, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#).

Help is on the way for specialty crop-growers in Ohio who want to sell more of their products to grocery stores and restaurants. The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association in Columbus is joining with Countryside Conservancy in northeastern Ohio to develop ways to help small fruit-and-vegetable growers increase sales to retailers. The two nonprofits will use a Specialty Crop Block Grant from the U.S. Agriculture Department to help farmers clear hurdles, such as lack of business skills or inadequate production techniques, that stand in the way of capitalizing on retail and distribution opportunities identified in the Ohio State report, reported *The Columbus Dispatch*. [Full Story](#).

The Central Coast was hit with earlier-than-usual frost this week, causing farmers to take preventative measures. Growers in the area received warning in advance of the cold snap and were able to avoid most damage to crops by starting up wind machines and adjusting irrigation schedules, reported *California Farm Bureau Federation*. [Full Story](#).

Washington's unfermented grape juice has enjoyed a pretty good year thanks to higher prices and a relatively bountiful crop. However, those rising prices should be peaking, stated the co-owner and vice president of FruitSmart. Just like a roller coaster,

prices are bound to come back down, reported *Yakima Herald*. [Full Story](#)

Washington apple grower-shippers have stopped shipping to Indonesia, the industry's fifth-largest export market, due to new regulations. Since the end of October, Washington shippers have not exported to Indonesia because of new regulations that fruit be inspected before it's shipped, and that importers in Indonesia have a permit, stated an export marketing director for the Washington Apple Commission. In the 2011-12 season, Washington shippers sent 2.5 million bushels worth \$51 million to Indonesia, making the country the fifth-largest importer of Washington apples, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Northwest pear shippers and officials report strong demand for promotable volumes of high-quality fruit. Through early November, Northwest growers had shipped 31% of the 2012-13 crop, up from 25% at the same time last year, stated the president and chief executive officer of Pear Bureau Northwest. Pricing has been strong, despite a good-sized crop- the 19.2 million boxes expected this year are down from last year's 20.5 million-box record crop, but expectations are right at the five-year average, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)