

# Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

January 17, 2013

**Apples** ↔ New York is packing Golden Delicious, Red Delicious, Rome's, Crispins, and McIntosh. The availability is a little better now that we are past the New Year. All New York varieties are large except the Mac's which are small. The larger New York shippers still expect to finish packing in mid March. Washington Reds continue to peak on size 88/100's with high color. Small lower grade reds remain very short although there is some hail-grade available. Golden Delicious are also heavy to the 88/100 sizes and the Washington extra- fancy grade. Lower grade Golden's are more available than many varieties but are still limited. Granny-Smiths are still heavy to the higher grades and are peaking on 64-80's. Lower grade Granny availability is extremely light especially on 88's and smaller. Small Granny-Smiths may be the shortest item in Washington right now. Gala's are still producing more of the Washington extra-fancy grade and continue to peak on 80-100's. Gala demand is still very strong and many shippers are sold out!! Washington Fuji's are heavy to 64/72/80's and are producing more of the Washington extra-fancy grade. The Washington Fuji volume is up this year so look for potential deals there. Pink-Lady's, Cameo's, Jonagolds, Braeburns, Rome's, Jazz, and the other varieties are all still available.

**Asparagus** ↑ This market is still very active on all sizes. Demand exceeds supply. The continual freezing temperatures in Mexico has caused growth to be minimal on this commodity. Peruvian grass is available in LA but supplies are very light. Place orders as soon as possible. If loading is an option in Miami, Peruvian grass is in light availability over there.

**Avocado** ↑ Mexico continues with good volume. We are starting to see demand pickup and the market firm up. Supplies of 60's and 70's are lighter, with 48's and 40's still holding steady. Mexican fruit remains the major supplier and remains at a good price point even with the firming market.

**Bell Peppers — Western** ↔ **Eastern** ↔ The western green bell market is slightly unsettled; some indications market is moving upward on all fruit. Southern California

has wrapped up. Increasing crossings through Nogales but, sizing will be more toward medium and choice; supplies are adequate on these sizes. Last and latest weather disturbances have hampered production in some growing areas. \*Open field colored Red bell market is steady but still light supplies. Growers are anticipating slight increase in production as new ranches come online. Coachella/Thermal California are currently shipping light volume and anticipate wrapping up soon. Demand exceeds market. Open field colored bells to started crossing through Nogales. Last and latest weather disturbances will hamper production in some growing areas. Gold bells are settling and adequate supplies. Not much change in the eastern market but off grades is harder to come by. Market should remain steady through the week.

**Broccoli** ↑ This market continues to be extremely active. Demand exceeds supplies on bunched product as well as crowns .Shippers are gapping due to the adverse weather conditions over the past four weeks in Yuma and Santa Maria. The cold weather is going to continue. Pin rot, purple cast and bruising are common characteristics that is seen so please be aware. Supplies will be light for the next few weeks, and pricing will continue to rise.

**Cauliflower** ↔ This market continues to gain strength. Demand exceeds supply. Supplies will be minimal throughout the week. There are continual issues with brown spotting and curd discoloration seen upon arrivals so please beware of this. Pricing will steadily increase throughout the week.

**Celery** ↑ This market continues to get stronger on all sizing. The smaller sizes, 36s and smaller has better supplies than larger sizing. The supplies on 24 counts are light in availability. Santa Maria and Oxnard are the areas of production, with light availability coming out of Yuma.

**Citrus — Lemons** ↑ **Oranges** ↔ The Desert lemon crop volume is good on large sizes as we see the size is switch to more of the larger sizes (115's and 95's) with 165's and 200's lightening up with normal seasonal growth. Quality is good. Market is firming on smaller sizes. The orange Navel crop volume is good. Fruit is testing well and color

is good. Fruit is currently packing on heavy to the Fancy grade and peaking on 88's/72's/56's. We have had freezing temps in the growing areas over the weekend and this morning. This cold could go through mid week. The early reports do not look bad, but assessments are still going on.

**Lettuce** — ↑ **Leaf** ↑ **Iceberg** The leaf market continues to gain strength on all leaf items. Demand exceeds supply. Romaine hearts are extremely light and shippers are watching twelve week averages. Romaine issues include blister and epidermal peel due to excessive days of cold weather. Overall, green and red leaf has become stronger in the marketplace. Blister and peel are issues that all suppliers are dealing with on all leaf items daily. The iceberg commodity is active with all suppliers. The cold weather has hindered supplies severely with all shippers. The weights on the palletized lettuce have fallen off to 35-40 pounds. Demand exceeds supplies. There continues to be complaints on mechanical damage, pink ribbing, epidermal peel and discoloration. All shippers are having these issues. Yuma continues to be the main growing area for this commodity.

**Melons** — **Cantaloupes** ↑ **Honeydew** ↑ In the cantaloupe market, offshore fruit is coming in with better volume. There is a lifruit is coming in with better volume. Cantaloupe is peaking to 12's. Large fruit is remaining limited. Pompano area has good availability. The west coast now has good availability as well. Honeydew: Offshore fruit is becoming limited as they get into the next cycle. It will remain limited into next week. Mexican fruit with some hit and miss quality issues. The market is strong.

**Onions** ↑ Both Washington and Idaho/Oregon are higher again on all yellows and many suppliers are pricing day-of-shipment. Most shippers remain bullish from the potential Korean & Japanese export business, the lower stocks-on-hand, and the lower yields. The cold weather front hitting right now is only making the market worse. Washington is still peaking on jumbo and medium yellows while Idaho/Oregon is peaking on jumbos. Reds are also higher in both areas for the same reasons as the yellows. Whites are higher in both areas due to lower availability. The quality has been good in both areas and all colors.

**Potatoes** ↔ The potato market is mostly steady on all sizes and both varieties but the availability is in question of the weather. The current cold temperatures are preventing any shippers from hauling bulk to their packing sheds so expect light if any availability on Idaho potatoes for the balance of the week. Demand for both varieties has been fair to strong. Idaho packers are still split between packing Burbanks & Norkotahs but many have both. 70's and larger are still the bulk Idaho's carton production while 80's and smaller are more limited. Washington is steady to slightly higher on counts and they are also heavier to the larger sizes. The Colorado market is steady on all sizes and they continue to produce more of the larger counts but they have been covering all orders. The russet quality has been good to excellent in all areas. Stockton, California is finished packing whites and gold's. Bakersfield, California continues packing Gold's and Whites. Both California varieties are heavier to A-size. Washington, Wisconsin, and Minnesota continue packing red & gold potatoes and they are all mostly steady. All areas have better availability on A-size. Idaho reds and golds are also both peaking on A-size and the availability is good. B-size is limited in Idaho for both varieties. The colored potato quality has been fairly good to excellent in all areas.

**Tomatoes** — **Eastern** ↔ **Western** ↔ In the western market, Nogales is receiving an influx of tomatoes coming from Mexico. Supplies have increased for rounds while others remain steady. Supplies are light at the Mexico Crossing through Texas with a wide range of quality and condition are reported for Roma, grape, and cherry tomatoes. Eastern: The market is about steady with an abundance of smaller sized round tomatoes of good quality coming out of the east. As in past weeks, grape tomatoes remain plentiful.

