

Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

January 24, 2013

Apples ↔ New York continues to pack Golden Delicious, Red Delicious, Red Rome's, Crispins, and McIntosh. The availability is fair. 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. There are a couple suppliers with hail-grade reds. 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 in the smaller sizes. 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. Gala's are still producing more of the Washington extra-fancy grade and continue to peak on 80-100's. Gala demand remains very strong and many shippers are booked up!! Washington Fuji's are heavy to 64/72/80's and are producing more of the Washington extra-fancy grade. Fuji volume is up so look for deals in this variety. Pink-Lady's, Cameo's, Jonagolds, Braeburns, Rome's, Jazz, and the other varieties are still available.

Asparagus ↔ This market is firm. Demand exceeds supply. Although the weather has been better in Mexico over the past four days, the consistent days of past freezing temperatures has altered production severely. 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 available at lower fob costs compared to California.

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 supply 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. 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 to upward trend. 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. 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. Demand is strong.



Broccoli ↑ This market continues to gain strength. Demand continues to exceed supplies on bunched product as well as crowns. Shippers continue to struggle on covering contract as well as open business. The weather has been in the low 70s for a high temperature in the growing regions but nighttime temperatures continue to be low. 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.



Cauliflower ↑ This market is stronger. Demand exceeds supply. A few suppliers have started this week sold out on Monday. Supplies will be very light 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 is stronger on all sizing. The smaller sizes, 36s and smaller still have better availability but not a good size for foodservice. The cold weather has simply slowed growth severely for this commodity. Santa Maria and Oxnard are the areas of production, with light availability coming out of Yuma.

Citrus — Lemons ↔ **Oranges** ↔ The Desert 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 Navel orange 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 is strong to start the week. With the blister and peel that growers are dealing with, expect supplies to continue to be light, especially on romaine and romaine hearts for the next 2-3 weeks minimum. Demand clearly 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 as well. Blister and peel are issues that all suppliers are dealing with on all leaf items daily. Yields are down, needless to say. The iceberg commodity has lightened up in pricing compared to most other commodities. The weights on the palletized lettuce have been averaging 40-44 #s. There continues to be complaints on mechanical damage, pink ribbing, epidermal peel and discoloration. This is all due to the past freezing temperatures. 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 on the second cycle. Cantaloupe is moving to the large sized fruit again with limited small fruit around. Pompano area has good availability. The west coast now has good availability as well. For cantaloupe, offshore fruit is becoming limited as they get into the next cycle. It will remain limited this week. Mexican fruit with some hit and miss quality issues. The market is strong.

Onions  Washington & Idaho/Oregon are steady but strong on yellows. Demand has leveled off in both areas. Most suppliers are still bullish from the Asian export demand, the lower stocks-on-hand, and the lower yields. The cold weather in Idaho/Oregon has limited the packing for a few shippers. Washington is peaking on jumbo yellows now along with Idaho/Oregon. There are a few Mexican sweet onions crossing into Texas and they are quoting 40# cartons and sack mediums. The Red onion market is steady as well but red supplies are down so expect that market to continue to rise. Many Washington shippers will only sell reds with yellows now. Whites are higher in both areas

due to lower availability. The quality has been good in both areas and all colors.

Potatoes  Idaho Norkotahs are steady while Burbanks are slightly higher. Most suppliers are running Burbanks right now. The current cold front is preventing many shippers from hauling bulk to their packing sheds so expect light availability on Idaho cartons until the weather warms up. The lack of packing is pushing the market higher. Demand for both varieties has been fair to strong. Idaho is still producing mostly 70's and larger. 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, volume of rounds at the Nogales crossing have been increasing with good quality and are of larger sizes, however Mexico growing regions have had some cooler weather creep in from Southern Arizona and Northern Mexico which may slow the harvest in coming weeks. Roma and Grape tomatoes are reported in good volumes but are of a wide range in quality with a light supply of cherries also varying in quality. In the eastern market, Florida remains in good supply and quality, but larger fruit is harder to come by. New fields are reported to start up in 3-5 days which could bring more size to the smaller fruit in the market currently if record high temperatures don't have an adverse effect. Grape tomatoes remain plentiful and Roma volume is average.

