

**Gulf Coast shrimp processors are seeking new tariffs on imported shrimp as imports now account for more than 90% of the U.S. shrimp market.** The Commerce Department and the International Trade Commission are preparing to begin considering the tariffs case this week, and The Coalition of Gulf Shrimp Industries is challenging seven countries that exported \$4.3 billion worth of shrimp to the U.S. in 2011, including China, Thailand, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam, reported *McClatchy Newspapers*. [Full Story](#)

**The deep freeze in the West are raising prices of the nation's 'salad bowl.'** Romaine lettuce prices have nearly tripled in a year to as much as \$32 for a carton of 24 heads of lettuce, broccoli prices are up 288% to \$33 a carton, and spinach prices are up 150% to as much as \$25 a carton, according to USDA. "The price has more than doubled on our spinach," stated the operator of a chain of Los Angeles restaurants called Maria's Italian Kitchen, which pulled asparagus after the produce was sold at approximately \$75 a case, or more than \$6/lb., reported *NBCNews*. [Full Story](#).

**The slow start to the Chilean grape season is being felt in the marketplace,** stated importers and officials. Movement should remain slow and prices high until February, at the earliest, stated the president and chief executive officer of Capespan North America. Fruit was running seven to 10 days behind schedule as of early January, and that will likely continue, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**Washington dairy farms have been able to grow, thanks to exports.** The state has seen the value of dairy exports increase by 35% during the past three years, reaching \$461.2 million in 2011, according to the Washington State Department of Agriculture, reported *Yakima Herald*. [Full Story](#)

**Landings of inshore or Gulf of Maine cod, already cut by 22% for the 2012 fishing year that ends Apr. 30, could be further reduced by between 76.8% and 82.6% starting in May and covering the next three years,** according to the NOAA's New England Regional Fishery Management Council. Landings of offshore, or Georges Bank, cod were also projected to be reduced by 60% for the 2013 fishing year that begins May 1, reported *Gloucester Times*. [Full Story](#)

**Most of the state's crops appear to have weathered the freezing temperatures this month without significant damage, but vegetables from Southern California may be in shorter supply as farms try to catch up on harvest.** An Imperial County farmer who is currently harvesting head lettuce, romaine and broccoli in El Centro, stated the cold temperatures have "significantly slowed" the growth of plants, reported *Ag Alert*. [Full Story](#)

**Mission Produce is expanding its Toronto ripening and distribution facility and has opened a new avocado packinghouse near Zamora, Mexico.** Its Toronto Ripe Center, leased from Ippolito Group, is increasing its square footage to about 28,000 from 6,000 and doubling ripening capacity from 72 to 144 pallet spaces, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**German 2012 output of all types of chocolate products fell 1.1% on the year to 1.02 million tonnes, as producers suffered falling exports and rising commodity prices,** according to the German confectionery industry. Sales by value in 2012 rose 2.1% on the year to 5.02 billion euros largely because of higher raw materials prices, the BDSI stated. Cocoa futures rose some 6% in 2012. Chocolate exports fell 0.9% on the year, to 480,000 tonnes, the BDSI estimated, reported *Reuters* [Full Story](#)

**California is the carrot capital, producing about 80% of the nation's crop.** More than 70,000 acres - primarily in Kern County - are devoted to carrots. In 2012, California grew 1.9 billion-lbs. of carrots, according to the California Fresh Carrot Advisory Board. Of that total, about 70% was turned into baby-cut carrots, reported *The Sacramento Bee*. [Full Story](#) (Free Registration Required)

**Nebraska farmers are being advised to plan for another growing season of drought,** according to *The Associated Press*. *The Hastings Tribune* reports that state climatologist Al Dutcher estimates Nebraska has a 70% chance of a second consecutive year of drought. Dutcher told those attending a gathering of beef producers in Clay Center on Jan. 22 that 8 to 10 inches of moisture more than normal would be needed to break Nebraska's drought, reported *San Francisco Chronicle*. [Full Story](#)

**Importers of South American apples and pears expect strong**

**demand when volumes begin shipping in February and March.**

Apples Chelan Fresh Marketing hopes to have Chilean galas available by March, stated the vice president of marketing. Bengard Marketing expects to begin bringing in Chilean bartletts the first or second week of February, about seven to 10 days later than normal, stated the vice president. Despite the delay, volumes are expected to be normal and quality good, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**Sweet onion importers and shippers stated demand should remain strong at least through the Mexico and Texas deals.** The Onion House expected to begin receiving onions from Mexico Jan. 10-15, stated the company's president. Instead, thanks to cool weather, arrivals are likely to be pushed back to about Feb. 5. With Peru winding down in late January, markets should remain strong when Mexico gets up and running in February, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

**The U.S. had the world's top two costliest natural disasters in 2012**, according to a report from global reinsurance firm Aon Benfield. The largest global disasters of 2012 were Hurricane Sandy (with a cost of \$65 billion) and the year-long Midwest/Plains drought (\$35 billion), according to the company's *Annual Global Climate and Catastrophe Report*. The \$35 billion figure is one of the first estimates of the U.S. drought cost, which "comes from a combination of anticipated losses sustained by the agricultural sector and other factors such as business interruption," reported *USA Today*. [Full Story](#)

**This year marks the 200th anniversary of coffee cultivation in Hawaii, and bright red "cherries" are grown and processed on each of the state's five major islands.** But the heart of Hawaii's \$31 million-a-year coffee industry is on the Big Island, where a combination of rich volcanic soil and ideal climate has translated to ideal growing conditions, reported *USA Today*. [Full Story](#)

**Foodservice salad, slaw and leafy greens provider GreenGate Fresh plans to open a new processing facility in April in Salinas, CA.** The company purchased an 11-acre site with a 50,000-sq.-ft. concrete tilt-up structure that it plans to renovate. The facility will include a raw product room, cold room, observation deck, food safety, quality and new product development laboratories, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)