

# Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

January 31, 2013

**Apples** ↔ New York is packing Golden Delicious, Red Delicious, Red Rome's, Crispins, and McIntosh. The availability is fair. The New York varieties are all large except the Mac's which are small. The larger New York shippers are still expecting to finish packing in mid March. Washington Red delicious is still heavy to the 88 & 100 sizes with higher color. Small & lower grade reds remain very short. A few suppliers have 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 still limited. Granny-Smiths are peaking on 64-80's and the higher grades. Small and lower grade fruit is extremely short especially on 100's and smaller. Small Granny-Smiths may be the tightest 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 extrafancy 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. Washington D'Anjou's are heavier to the larger sizes and the US#1 grade.

**Asparagus** ↓ This market is softer. The availability out of Mexico has increased with standard and large sizing. Jumbos are still very limited. Peruvian grass is available in LA, as well. 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 to seeing great demand for the Super Bowl and the market firm up and supplies of 48's and smaller cleaning up. Mexican fruit remains the major supply and remains at a good price point even with the firming market.

**Bell Peppers — Western** ↔ **Eastern** ↔ The western greenbell 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 on an 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 indicating an upward trend in FOB's as some are transitioning and gapping. 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 is firm. Demand continues to exceed supplies on bunched product as well as crowns. Shippers continue to struggle on covering contract as well as open business. Rain this past weekend in Yuma has not helped things. Pin rot, purple cast and bruising are common characteristics that is seen so please be aware. Supplies will be light to moderate for the week.

**Cauliflower** ↓ This market is softer. This is the one commodity that has some flex for volume type orders. There are still some issues with brown spotting and curd discoloration seen upon arrivals so please beware of this. Supplies look to be good throughout the week.

**Celery** ↑ This market is extremely active, especially on large sizes. Demand exceeds supply. The smaller sizes, 36s and smaller still have better availability but not a good size for foodservice. The cold weather coupled with rain this past weekend has made production minimal. 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.

**Lettuce — ↑ Leaf ↑ Iceberg** The leaf market is active. Yields continue to get smaller as blister and peel continue to wreck havoc for all suppliers. This week may possibly be the worst on availability of romaine and romaine hearts. Twelve week averages are being watched very closely, and all open business will be difficult to come by. Romaine issues include blister and epidermal peel due to excessive days of cold weather. Overall, green and red leaf is steady. Blister and peel are issues that all suppliers are dealing with on all leaf items daily. Rain this past weekend in the desert has just added to the multiple problems that already exist with production in Yuma. The quality of product is going to be rough. Suppliers are trying to make the best pack available, but conditions are becoming overwhelming. The iceberg lettuce commodity is very active once again. Many suppliers have walked in to work Monday sold out on this commodity. Heavy rains this past weekend in Yuma has set production back with all suppliers. The weights on the palletized lettuce have been averaging 38-42 #s in Yuma. 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 — Honeydew ↑ Cantaloupe ↔** 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. Honeydew offshore fruit is becoming limited as they get into the next cycle. It will remain limited through this week. The market is strong.

**Onions ↔** Idaho, Oregon, and Washington are all steady on yellows due to lighter demand. Most suppliers are still bullish from the export demand, lower stocks-on-hand, and the lower yields. All three states continue to peak on jumbo yellows. Mexico is still crossing sweet yellows into Texas and they are quoting 40# cartons and sack mediums. The Red onion market is steady as well but red supplies are even lower than the yellows so expect the market to remain strong. 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 the Burbanks are steady to lower. Most suppliers are packing Burbanks but a few have Norkotahs. Idaho is still producing mostly 70's and larger. The weather is warmer so they can haul bulk now. Demand for both varieties remains strong. Washington is steady on all sizes and they are also heavier to the larger counts. The Colorado market is steady on all sizes and they continue to produce more of the larger counts as well. The russet quality has been good to excellent in all areas. Bakersfield, California continues packing reds, Gold's and Whites. All three California varieties are heavier to A-size. Washington, Wisconsin, and North Dakota continue packing red & gold potatoes and they are all mostly steady. All areas have better availability on A-size. B-size is limited in Idaho for both varieties. North Dakota is coming to the end of the season. The colored potato quality has been fairly good to excellent in all areas.

**Tomatoes — Eastern ↔ Western ↔** In the western market, cold weather has slowed production in Mexico but there are still steady volumes of rounds crossing the borders. Quality is reported to be good on all sizes but smaller fruit is harder to come by. The Roma market is also stronger in the west with mixed quality but expected to soften when warm weather returns to the region. Grape Tomatoes are also expected to show better volume and quality with the withdrawal of cold weather in the area. Eastern: Farms are beginning to bring crown picks to market as the Eastern growers move to new fields. The quality and volume for rounds have continued to improve with a steady abundance of grape tomatoes. The Roma market is slightly stronger with average supply and mixed quality.

