

# Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

February 14, 2013

**Apples** ↔ The larger New York shippers continue to pack Golden Delicious, Red Delicious, Red Rome's, McIntosh, and Empires. The availability is fair. All of the New York varieties are peaking on the larger sizes except the Mac's which are smaller. The larger New York shippers are expecting to pack through March now. Washington Reds are still peaking extra-fancy 88/100's. The smaller size reds & lower grades are limited. A few shippers are packing hail-grade reds but supplies are hit and miss. Golden Delicious is also peaking on 88/100's and the Washington extra-fancy grade. Lower grade Golden availability is fair on 88's and larger and light on the smaller sizes. Granny-Smiths are peaking on 64-80's and the higher grades. Small fruit and the lower grades are still very short. 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! 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 softer. The availability out of Mexico is much better on all sizing. Jumbo sizing has even picked up in production. 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. Supplies look to be good throughout the week.

**Avocado** ↔ Mexico continues with good volume and good demand. The past two weeks we have seen record shipments. Mexico remains the major supplier and supplies are expected to continue every good from Mexico. California is starting to harvest and slowly increase in volume.

**Bell Peppers — Western** ↔ **Eastern** ↔ Western Bells: Green bell market is unsettled; 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. Demand exceeds. Open field colored Red bell market is

settling. Crossing ought to increase as weather improves and new acreage is coming online. Demand exceeds market. Effects of last weather systems are still lingering. Gold bells are indicating an upward trend in FOB's as some are transitioning and gapping. Eastern Bells: This market is coming off a bit this week as demand moves out west. Quality and volume out of Florida are good and should continue to be so through the week.

**Broccoli** ↔ This market is steady on bunched product as well as crowns. The problems of pin rot, and purple cast has all but gone away. Suppliers are listening to offers so promote as much as possible. The quality is good, overall. Supplies should be good throughout the week.

**Cauliflower** This market is steady overall. Some suppliers have lighter supplies and are attempting to be two-three dollars higher than the competition. This is wishful thinking. Many suppliers continue to listen to offers on twelve count-sizing. Supplies are expected to be good throughout the week.

**Celery** ↔ This market continues to be firm. Supplies continue to be light out of Santa Maria, Oxnard, and Yuma. Demand continues to exceed supply. The smaller sizes, mainly the 36 shave a little better availability, compared to the larger sizing. The supplies out of all areas are expected to be light throughout the week.

**Citrus — Lemons** ↔ **Oranges** ↔

**Lemons:** 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. **Oranges:** The 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.

**Lettuce —** ↔ **Leaf** ↓ **Iceberg**

**Leaf:** This market is firm. Supplies continue to be light on romaine and romaine hearts. Blister and peel are still being

reported on all romaine items. Green and red leaf is softer with a few suppliers. Blister and peel continue to be growing issues that all suppliers are still dealing with. Although weather conditions have improved in the desert, crop damage will continue for the rest of the season in Yuma. Escalated pricing continues on all on all romaine items. Iceberg: This commodity is softer with all suppliers. There is a bit of a pricing gap, but this gap has closed from the previous week. The weights on the palletized lettuce have been averaging 40-44 #s in Yuma. There have been complaints on mechanical damage, pink ribbing, and epidermal peel. The complaints however have been less compared to past weeks. The desert region is the main area of production for this commodity.

#### Melons — Honeydew ↔ Cantaloupe ↔

Cantaloupe: Offshore fruit is on the second cycle. Cantaloupes are large sized fruit again with limited small fruit around. East and west coast both have good availability. Honeydew: Offshore dewes are a little limited especially on the small fruit. It will remain limited through this week on both coasts. The market remains strong.

Onions ↔ All northwest growing areas are lower on yellows. Most suppliers are still bullish because of the lower stocks-on-hand and lower yields but the light demand has dropped the market. Both Washington and Idaho/Oregon are producing mostly jumbo yellows. Mexico continues to cross sweet yellows and they are also lower on 40# cartons, sack jumbos, and sack mediums. Mexican yellows are also steady to lower. The Red onion market is also steady to lower due to the lighter demand. The red market remains stronger than the yellows though due to lighter storage numbers. Many Washington shippers are only selling reds with yellows now. Whites are also steady to lower as well due to light supplies. The onion quality has been good in both areas and all colors.

Potatoes ↔ Potatoes are flat in all areas. Several shippers are offering volume deals out to generate movement but the demand remains light. Most suppliers are still packing Burbanks but a few still have Norkotahs. Idaho is still producing mostly 70-count and larger. Washington is steady on all sizes and they are also heavier to the larger counts. Colorado is also steady on all sizes and they continue to produce more of the larger counts. 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. North Dakota is coming to the end of the season. Florida continues to pack red and white potatoes and they are heavier to A-size. The colored potato quality has been fairly good to excellent in all areas.

Tomatoes — Eastern ↔ Western ↔ Western: Mexico has an abundance of larger sized rounds but color may be a little light. Roma and grape tomatoes crossings at Mexico through Texas and Arizona are increasing and quality varies greatly. Cherries of good quality remain available for a reasonable price. Eastern: Florida growers continue to produce good quality and steady volumes of round tomatoes. Eastern Romas are steady and will start to wind down as Mexico continue bringing in volumes mixed of field and shade house grown fruit. Grape tomatoes will also continue to fall in production in coming weeks. The supplies on lettuce have increased from last week. The Romaine supplies continue to be very light in production. Broccoli supplies have good numbers and escalated pricing no longer continues on florets. The cauliflowersupplies are ample to fill all the processors needs.

