

Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

March 7 2013

Apples ↔ New York continues to pack Gold Delicious, Reds, Red Rome's, McIntosh, and Empires. The availability is still fair and all varieties are heavier large fruit except the Mac's which have ranged in size. The larger New York shippers still expect to pack for the entire month of March. Washington Reds are steady and are peaking on extra-fancy 88/100's. The lower grades and smaller sizes remain short but there is the occasional deal out there. Some shippers are still packing hail-grade reds. Golden Delicious is also steady and heavy to extra-fancy 88/100's. Lower grade Golden availability remains fair on 88's and larger but light on 100's and smaller. Granny-Smiths are higher and still peaking on 64-80's and the higher grades. Small and the lower grade Granny's are still in a demand exceeds situation. Galas are still peaking on 80-100's and the Washington extra-fancy grade. The Gala market is steady and the 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 higher so continue to look for deals with this variety. Pink-Lady's, Cameo's, Jonagolds, Braeburns, Rome's, Jazz, and the other varieties are still available. Washington D'Anjou's are still peaking on the larger sizes and the US#1 grade. Washington Bartlett's are still producing mostly us#1 110's but supplies are light. Bosc and red pears are still available.

Asparagus ↑ This market is steady. The pricing is competitive on standard and large as supplies have picked up dramatically from Mexico. California has begun in a light way with production. Pricing is higher for California product. Jumbo and extra large sizing will be tight throughout the week. Peruvian grass is available in LA, as well. If loading is an option in Miami, Peruvian grass is available. Supplies are expected to be good throughout the week for Mexican product.

Avocado ↔ Mexico has reached a point in their season where they have moved the heavy volume that they have had this year and are now down to normal volumes for the balance of their season. This means about 20 percent less than they have been crossing. California growers are still waiting to gain size to their fruit and only harvesting limited amounts (about 3 percent of shipments). They will continue to increase volume as we move through the month, but don't expect to see normal volumes

from California until April. The market is currently rising daily, and should start to stabilize next week.

Bell Peppers — Western ↔ Eastern ↔ Western: Green bell market is unsettled; indications market is moving upward on large fruit. Adequate supplies on choice and smaller fruit. Open field colored Red bell market is showing signs of an upward trend in market as some are transitioning or experiencing a small gap. Supplies are adequate and mostly big fruit available as some new acreage comes online. Gold bells are indicating an upward trend in FOB's as some are transitioning and gapping. Extreme demand exceeds current supplies. Eastern Bells: The pepper market has nudged up a bit in recent days as a reaction to Florida's freezing temperatures. This gradual increase could continue through the weekend.

Broccoli ↑ This market is steady overall. Suppliers have picked up on bunched product as well as crowns. There are some suppliers that are better off than others. Santa Maria, Phoenix and Santa Maria are the main growing regions. Demand will dictate where this market will go, but for now, pricing is steady. The overall quality is reported as being good.

Cauliflower ↑ This market is softer. Some suppliers have picked up production numbers and are offering deals for larger volume type orders. Smaller sizing continues to be more readily available and better deals are being offered on sixteen counts. There have been minimal complaints on brown spotting as the product overall has been clean. The availability is expected to be moderate to good for the entire week.

Celery ↑ This market is getting stronger again. Shippers are having lighter availability on large sizing in Oxnard, Santa Maria and Yuma. The smaller sizes, mainly the 36s have decent supplies. The supplies out of all areas are expected to be moderate for the rest of the week.

Citrus — Lemons ↔ Oranges ↔ Lemons: The Desert crop is finished for this season. The Ventura and the Central Valley are now the lemon producing areas. Volume is good on all sizes. Quality is good. Oranges: The Navel crop volume is good. Fruit quality and flavor is very good. Fruit is currently peaking heavy to the Fancy grade and on 88's/72's/113's, with 56's and larger a tightening. Limes: Supplies are light with some quality

issues showing. Cold temps in the growing regions of Mexico have slowed growth. The market is active continues to firm.

Lettuce — Leaf ↔ **Iceberg** ↑ This market is up on romaine. Demand continues to exceed supply. The blister and peel continues to exist on the production of this commodity. 8-10 leaves of blister and 2-3 leaves with brown blister is a common characteristic that suppliers are dealing with. Green and red leaf is plentiful and most shippers are listening to offers. Blister and peel continue to be growing issues that all suppliers are still dealing with. Escalated pricing continues on all on all romaine items. This market is stronger. Many suppliers continue to pack thirty count cartons. The weights on the thirty counts are averaging 39-42 lbs. There continues to be complaints on mechanical damage, pink ribbing, and epidermal peel. This will be an issue for the rest of the Yuma deal. The complaints however have been less compared to past weeks. The desert region continues to be the main area of production for this commodity. Huron is expected to begin production at the end of March.

Melons — Cantaloupes ↓ **Honeydew** ↓
Cantaloupe: Fruit is limited at best with fruit peaking to 12's. They west coast will have very limited fruit over the next week or so with better availability out of Florida. Most Guatemalan shippers are between fields with the majority of the fruit coming out of Honduras and very limited. The market is very firm. Honeydew: Offshore and Mexican fruit is limited. Mostly large fruit is available. The next few weeks will continue with limited availability. The market is very firm.

Onions ↑ The yellow markets continue to drop in both Idaho/Oregon & Washington. Several shippers are offering volume deals on mediums and jumbo's. Some of the smaller shippers in Idaho are coming to the end of their season while the larger suppliers will continue packing through mid April. Jumbo yellows are still the peak size in the northwest. Mexican sweet yellows are slightly lower again and are still being pulled down by the storage market. Northwest Red onions are lower again as well. Storage red supplies remain low but the demand has been light. Mexico is still crossing a few reds and that market is steady. Whites are mostly steady in the northwest due to lighter supplies. Mexican whites are also steady. The onion quality has been good in all areas and on all colors.

Potatoes ↔ The potato market for all districts is flat. Ample supplies are keeping the market low. The Idaho volume deals are still available for number-two's and 40-60's. Idaho continues to peak on 70-count and larger. Most Idaho packers are still running Burbanks while only a few are running Norkotahs. The Washington market is steady on all sizes and they continue to peak on the larger counts. Colorado is steady on all sizes and is also producing more of 70-count and larger. The russet quality has been good to excellent in all areas. Bakersfield, California is almost finished packing reds & Gold's and has finished with whites. Both California varieties are heavier to A-size. Expect new-crop around April 1st. 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 & Washington are coming to the end of the season. Florida is packing reds, golds, and now white as well. They are all heavier to A-size and the market is lower for all colors. The colored potato quality has been fairly good to excellent in all areas.

Tomatoes — Eastern ↔ **Western** ↔ Western: There is a wide range of color and quality crossing the U.S and Mexico border with volumes continuing to be reduced due to previous weather patterns in the area. A cold temperature bloom drop has caused volumes to be off in Mexico and reduced acreage is causing reduction in supply. Eastern: Cool weather and rain in South Florida is taking a toll on the volume of second pickings in the region, and in general has fewer plants in production this year. Romas, cherries and grapes are tighter this week and demand will continue to increase as March progresses.

