

Market News

Glanbia Nutritionals broke ground on a flax plant in Sioux Fall, SD. The worldwide company, which has its main U.S. nutritionals division in Madison, WI, is constructing a \$29 million plant to process cereal ingredients that will use flax produced mostly in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Canada. The company's president is open to finding more flax-growing partners in South Dakota and North Dakota, reported *Tri-State Neighbor*. [Full Story](#)

Maine farmers got an early financial boost to prepare for growing season by using customers as lenders. At an agriculture fair, locals met the farmers and had the opportunity to sign up for shares in their farms by paying in advance for vegetables, eggs or meat products throughout the season. Most farmers at the event stated early spring typically is one of the more financially difficult times of year, as farms need to invest in seeds, planters and other supplies to prepare for the coming season. For that reason, some farms look to customers for support, rather than using credit or pursuing a loan that will put them into debt, reported *Bangor Daily News*. [Full Story](#)

Good construction weather allowed the newest 30-acre greenhouse at Mucci Farms to be finished early. That meant early planting leading to early harvest, which started Feb. 27 at the Kingsville, Ontario, operation. Tomatoes-on-the-vine from the greenhouse are being packed at Mucci's new 65,000-sq.-ft. production and shipping facility and should be available at retailers almost immediately, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Herndon Farm beefed up its sweet onion deal with increased Peruvian imports, expanded its offerings in other categories and launched a new label for its booming baby Vidalia onion category. Herndon's new bunch onion label, "Lil' Bo's Petite Sweet Vidalia Onions," is designed to promote the increasingly popular baby Vidalia crop, which harvests from December through April, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

FDA sent warning letters to two sprout operations, one in Arizona and one in California, citing concerns about unsanitary conditions and food safety. In letters sent to Arizona Hydroponic

Farming and Alfred Louie, the FDA cited outbreaks and multiple problems with sanitation, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Florida's citrus crop has suffered huge losses this year, with fruit falling from trees and the overall forecast declining about 10%, but the problems should not translate to a price increase at the breakfast table - yet. Experts and growers claim warm, dry weather, too much fruit on each tree, and citrus greening disease are the likely culprits, reported *Delaware Online*. [Full Story](#)

A final suspension agreement with Mexico that sets higher floor prices for tomatoes was not in place early March 4. A final agreement from the U.S. Department of Commerce is due March 4. "Until (the Department of Commerce) puts out something official, with a new effective date, we are advising sellers to operate under the existing agreement that was signed in 2008," stated the president of Fresh Produce Association of the Americas, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Asparagus should be arriving in promotable volumes for Easter, and strawberry volumes also should be up in time for holiday pull. California asparagus shippers were expected to begin shipping the week of March 4, with prospects for promotable Easter volumes good, stated an asparagus and avocado salesman for The Giumarra Cos., reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

After two rough years, Texas onion growers scaled back acreage by 20% this season, but with Northwest storage supplies low and Mexican sweet onions slowed to a trickle, Lone Star State growers are looking at promising markets and great weather that has helped Texas get out of the gate early and make the most out of what is in the ground, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

Quinoa production in Peru is expected to reach 46,500 metric tons (MT) in 2013. Quinoa exports totaled 11,924 MT (\$34.3 million) in 2012 and is expected to continue increasing in the upcoming years. Demand from developed countries has doubled the price of quinoa in the past five years. [USDA Report](#)

Michigan is still recovering from last year's dramatically reduced cherry yields that cost the state an estimated crop loss of \$223.5 million. While there is no guarantee this year's cherry season will be

million. While there is no guarantee this year's cherry season will be better, it does not seem like it can get much worse as not every fruit grower in Northern Michigan can survive another catastrophic season, reported *Petoskey News*. [Full Story](#)

Meanwhile, Michigan officials traveled to Brazil to explore the possibility of exporting apples, dried fruit and other foods or agricultural products to the country, according to *The Associated Press*. The trade mission is part of a broader effort under Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder to increase exports of agricultural products from Michigan. [Full Story](#)

Promotable supplies of Chilean nectarines and plums are likely in March, with lower volumes of peaches expected. While the Chilean peach market has been mostly solid this season, plums and nectarines have been more of a challenge, stated the stone fruit category manager for Jac Vandenberg. Plum volumes were up 10%, which compounded the problem of so much delayed fruit arriving at the same time, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Increases of atmospheric carbon dioxide, rising temperatures, and altered precipitation patterns will affect agricultural productivity, according to USDA's *Climate Change and Agriculture in the United States* report. Projections for crops and livestock production systems reveal that climate change effects over the next 25 years will be mixed. The continued degree of change in the climate by midcentury and beyond is expected to have overall detrimental effects on most crops and livestock. [Full Report](#) (193 page PDF)

Freezing temperatures damaged as much as a quarter of south Florida's spring sweet corn. The temperatures, which sunk into the mid-20s during the overnight hours of March 4, also harmed green beans, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

This year's almond bloom in California appears sufficient to mitigate pressures the industry there has faced from declining bee populations. "We're in the middle of bloom and conditions are very good," stated the associate director of agricultural affairs for the Almond Board of California. The state has about 800,000 acres of almond trees, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Cereal crop levels are expected to pick up strongly in 2013

Cereal crop levels are expected to pick up strongly in 2013, according to a senior economist at FAO. There is a potential for declines in food prices in 2013 after a stabilization in February, but falls may be limited to cereals prices, with meat and dairy prices supported by firm demand, reported *Reuters*. [Full Story](#)

The first week under a new tomato suspension agreement began calmly, with Mexican volumes low enough to keep prices above new market floors. The U.S. Department of Commerce made the new agreement official on March 4, a little over a month after the department proposed increases to floor prices on Mexican tomatoes, reported *The Packer Online*. [Full Story](#)

Blueberry production is ramping up in Florida and this year promises an abundant crop with ample returns to growers, despite a mild freeze in early March that damaged some fruit in the northern part of the state and nipped at the edges of central Florida fields. Chilean growers are pushing their season further with storage shipments that first stretched almost-into and then entered Florida's window, which typically begins in mid-March and extends into early May, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

South Carolina peanut growers shattered state acreage and total production records last year, but over-supply and expected low prices have many wondering how many acres to plant and more importantly, finding the best combination of acres and production to meet market needs. Though peanuts are a relatively new crop in the state, the previous acreage record of 95,000 was set in 1943, when the majority of the crop was used to produce oil for the war effort and to feed hogs. How many acres of peanuts will be planted in South Carolina this year is difficult, at best, to determine, reported *Southeast Farm Press*. [Full Story](#)

The forecast for this year's navel orange production in California is slightly above what it was last year, and with a few months still left in this year's season, growers are reporting adequate supplies and good prices on larger-sized fruit. Though there was a cold snap early in the year, that brought only minimal frost damage, growers have not reported significant damage to this year's fruit, reported *Fresh Plaza*. [Full Story](#)

