



fresh Directions

January 5, 2012

An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

Apples ↔ Washington availability is down on all varieties right now because of limited pack time over the holidays. Red Delicious are peaking on 88/100's, they are still high in color, and producing a lot of higher grade fruit. Lower grade reds are limited. Golden Delicious continue to peak on 88/100's and are still producing mostly extra-fancy grade fruit. Granny-Smith is also heavy to the higher grade fruit and is peaking on 88's and 100's. Galas are still peaking on 88's and smaller and are also packing out heavy to the higher grades. Gala demand remains strong and the supplies are limited. Washington Honey Crisp is also peaking on 88/100's but the availability is really light. Most packers will be finished with Honey Crisp in early January. Cameos, Pink Lady's, Jonagolds, Fuji's, Braeburns and the other varieties are all still available.

Asparagus ↔ This market has started the year firm on all sizes out of Mexico. Extra large and jumbo sizes continue to be extremely light out of Mexico. Standard and small sizing will be available. Peruvian product has a better price compared to Mexican product, and extra large and jumbos continue to be available.

Avocado ↑ Mexico harvest will start to pickup as we move through the week. Market is firm and looks to stay this way until after the Super Bowl pull concludes. Chile's volume coming to the US is slowly

increasing as the demand in Europe for their fruit drops.

Bell Peppers Western ↔ Bell pepper production is steady. Most production is heavy towards large fruit with light supplies on medium size. Colored bells are starting to trickle in but, mostly in hothouse variety and packs. Conventional colored bells continue demand exceeds. Cool weather has hampered open field bells and has delayed normal production schedules. Markets remain strong and do not foresee relief for another couple of weeks. **Eastern** ↔ With demand slightly off this week and for the second week in a row, the bell pepper market out of Florida has slipped. Off grade peppers are plentiful and inexpensive. The larger sizes, while still relatively inexpensive, are more difficult to come by. This market should remain inactive through the week but gain considerable strength by the front of next week. Quality has been good.

Broccoli ↔ Demand is light and availability is moderate at best. All orders will be filled to its entirety. Expect supplies to be stronger towards the end of the week. The growing regions are getting warmer temperatures compared to past weeks. Salinas continues to have light production and some suppliers continue to transfer to Yuma. There continues to be supplies available in Scottsdale if the need arises.

Cauliflower ↑ This market is stronger. Availability is expected to be light to moderate throughout the week in Yuma. Growers are dealing with brown spotting and yields have been affected. Supplies will be light out of Santa Maria. Suppliers continue to have better availability on sixteen count sizing. The overall quality has been fair. Yuma production is expected to be light to moderate at best.

Celery ↑ This market is stronger on large sizes. Suppliers continue to have good supplies on the smaller sizes, mainly 30 and 36s. Santa Maria as well as Oxnard looks to be the main areas of production. The quality is good with no major issues to report at this time. Suppliers are willing to take product to Yuma for an extra charge. Expect large sizing to be light in availability for the entire week.

Citrus Lemons ↑ Demand is exceeding supplies of the small fruit (140's, 165's, 200's, and 235's). Tight supplies will go through December and January. The fruit is sizing up quicker with the lighter crop hanging on the trees of the Desert crop this year. **Oranges** ↔ The Navels are in full production. Quality looks very nice and fruit is gaining better color with the cool weather we are now getting. Pack outs are running heavy to Fancy grades.

Lettuce Leaf ↔ The romaine market is steady and blister continues to be an issue with all suppliers. This is an industry wide issue. Demand is light to start the week. Blister, tip burn and epidermal peel are issues

we will be dealing with for the next couple of weeks. Green and red leaf will have similar issue as romaine, but not as drastic. The main growing area is in Yuma. The Thermal area has picked up in production numbers. Supplies out of Santa Maria are light in availability. **Iceberg** ↔ The lettuce market is steady. Warmer temperatures in the growing regions will allow suppliers to harvest earlier compared to past weeks. Epidermal peel and blister are going to be issues caused from this past week's freezing temperatures. Lettuce carton weights continue to be 40-45 #s on the average. The availability is moderate and with demand down, all orders will be filled to its entirety.

Melons Cantaloupes ↔ Offshore fruit is available for loading in Florida, California and limited supplies in Houston. Quality is very good and the sizes are peaking to 9's and 12's. Getting orders in early on this offshore fruit will help to insure availability on the day you are looking to load. Mexican fruit is all but done for the season. **Honeydew** ↔ Offshore fruit is very good quality and running to large size fruit mostly 5's and 6's. Nogales has Mexican fruit still crossing with good quality as well.

Onions ↔ The yellow onion market remains steady in all areas. Many of the volume discounts in Idaho/Oregon & Washington have going away due to lighter packing over the holidays but some are still there. Colorado supplies remain limited and product is split between the eastern side and the western slope. The yellow quality has been excellent in all areas. Washington still controls the red onion volume and the market and they are steady

with some flex. Idaho/Oregon reds are still higher than Washington and also steady to lower with some flex for volume. White supplies are limited but steady along with the market.

Potatoes ↔ The Idaho potato market hasn't moved for either variety. Small norkotahs remain higher priced than the larger. Large Burbanks are higher than the smaller counts with many packers now. Demand has been light for all sizes and both varieties. Washington's market is steady on all sizes and they continue to peak on the larger counts. Colorado is still peaking to 70-count and larger. Russet quality has been excellent in all areas. Bakersfield, California is now packing reds, golds, and whites from California. Pricing is steady on all sizes. Washington & North Dakota continue packing reds and golds and both areas are heavier to A-size. Wisconsin is also packing reds, whites, and golds and their market is also flat. Idaho is also packing reds and golds and they are also peaking on A-size. Quality has been fair to excellent in all areas...

Tomatoes Eastern ↔ The size profile of the mature green tomatoes being picked in the Immokalee/Naples & Palmetto/Ruskin districts in Florida remains heavy towards the large & medium sizes, and consequently this has caused a price spread between the x-large and those sizes. Add very good weather & holiday markets to the overall situation, and the result has been sluggish movement over the last few days. Look for yields in the northern areas to taper off in mid-January, but also look for increased size

with new fields starting harvest. However, forecasts for this week show cold weather moving into the state of Florida, with possible sub-freezing temperatures on the morning of January 5th. **Western** ↔ Mexican Roma tomatoes have been in production crossing at Nogales for the last couple weeks, but cold weather right before the holiday has pushed back the start time for appreciable volume, and consequently the Roma market has remained firm throughout this time period. Harvest of round tomatoes in 25# ctns should commence after the New Year, with the beginning of volume the week of January 9th.

