

# Fresh DIRECTIONS



An informative weekly fact sheet for the produce procurement professional.

October 17, 2013

**Apples** ↔ New York continues packing McIntosh, Galas, Red Delicious, Empires and Courtland's. The New York fruit is all larger and they are peaking on 88/100's. Michigan continues to pack Reds, Golds, Gala's, and a few McIntosh and all of the Michigan fruit is still small. New-crop Reds are mostly steady and are still peaking on 48-72's in the Washington extra-fancy #1 grade. Smaller size Red supplies are still limited. Golden Delicious continues to peak on 80/88's and the extra-fancy grade. New-crop Washington Granny-Smith is steady and continues to yield more of the smaller sizes. California Granny-Smiths are still available and remain heavier to the smaller sizes but as well. Washington Gala's are heavier to 88/100's and the market is steady. Washington Fuji's are fairly steady and most packers are peaking on larger sizes. Washington Honeycrisp is available and is peaking on 56-72's. Washington is starting to pack the first Pink Ladies this week.

**Asparagus** ↑ Supplies out of Mexico and Peru are lighter in availability. This market is up. The best sizing continues to be in the standard and large in terms of quantities. Supplies have picked up on jumbo sizing if loading in LA. Peruvian product continues to have moderate availability and can still be loaded out of Miami if desired. The overall quality continues to be reported as being good in both growing regions.

**Avocado** ↔ Demand still remains very strong on all sizes. Mexico's supplies are now increasing. Sizes are mostly 48's/60's. Smaller sizes (70's) still tight as maturity levels still too low to harvest many, and larger sizes (40's/36's) have not grown up. With continued good weather, supplies should slowly start to build. The California supplies are dropping greatly as we can see this week is for many shippers their last week of packing and the end of their season coming to the end. Chile has yet to bring much to the US with Europe take most of their fruit. Market is steady to lower.

**Bell Peppers — Western** ↑ **Eastern** ↔ Western: Green bell market is indicating an uptick in fobs. Crops are currently shipping from Southern California from Baja. Bells are wrapping up in Fresno, Gilroy. Supplies are lightening up. An expected cooling trend may press markets slightly higher as this is slowing down production. Coachella expected to start bell peppers by late October. Nogales will see sporadic

crossings next week. Open field colored Red bell market is firming up slightly as cooler weather approaches this week. Demand still exceeds availability from Southern California. New districts are set to come online by month's end (Coachella). Gold bells markets continue steady availability depends on growing district. Extreme demand exceeds. Eastern: Pepper in the northern growing regions is finished and Georgia is going strong. Quality has been excellent and markets appear to be steady for the next several days. We are still another couple of weeks away from Florida pepper.

**Broccoli** ↔ The broccoli market is firm. Demand continues to exceed supplies and this will likely continue throughout the week. Averages are being watched by all suppliers, whether the order is for value-added or carton business. Escalated pricing is in effect on contracts as well as value-added items. Salinas and Santa Maria are the main growing regions with light availability in Mexico as well.

**Cauliflower** ↑ The cauliflower market continues to gain strength. Many suppliers are sold out first thing in the morning. The quality continues to be hit and miss amongst the different suppliers in the valley. This is again due to adverse weather conditions in past weeks. This market is expected to get stronger throughout the week with most suppliers.

**Celery** ↔ The celery market is firm. All sizing is priced very closely. Production is expected to be light to moderate for the entire week. Production continues to be out of Santa Maria and Salinas. The overall quality is reported to be good, overall. Oxnard is expected to begin production in approximately two weeks.

**Citrus — Lemons** ↔ **Oranges** ↔ Lemons: Demand still exceeds supplies on all sizes from all shippers. This will continue on for another 2 to 4 weeks as the new crop Desert fruit builds inventory. The Ventura crop is basically done and what is left is old and tired. Oranges: The Valencia orange supplies will go through the end of October. There is a good mix of sizes. New crop California Navels look to start in limited production next week and should see all shippers going by the first week of November.

**Lettuce — Leaf** ↑ **Iceberg** ↑ Leaf: The romaine market continues to get stronger. This will continue throughout the week. The green leaf availability is moderate and pricing has risen. There continues to be arrival issues that include tip and fringe burn, especially on romaine. Romaine Hearts will be moderate in availability for the week. Red leaf production is moderate but with little demand, there are no issues with availability. Iceberg: This market is active. Demand exceeds supplies with all shippers. Light weights are an issue out of Salinas. Weights are averaging 32- 36 pounds depending on the supplier. There continues to be quality issues including tip burn, some mechanical damage, and pink ribbing. Many suppliers are ahead of fields trying to keep up with demand. This has caused lighter weights to occur. Production in Huron is expected to begin tomorrow in a light way. Weights are reported to be 40-42 pounds if loading in Santa Maria.

**Melons — Cantaloupes** ↑ **Honeydew** ↑ Cantaloupe: The Westside has finished packing for the season for the most part. There is some limited availability of California fruit still available north of Sacramento. The Phoenix, AZ area is just starting up with extremely limited availability and shippers struggling on sugars. Product remains demand exceeds. Yuma shippers should start next week. Honeydew: The Westside, like Cantaloupe, have finished packing but there is also product available in a very limited way up north. Nogales is crossing over Mexican dewes but they are struggling on sugars as the domestic fruit is as well. The sugars should increase in the next couple of weeks and we should have better volume starting as well. Market remains demand exceeds.

**Onions** ↓ Yellows in Washington are steady on all sizes and Supers remain extremely short. Idaho/Oregon is mostly lower on jumbos and larger and steady on mediums. Most of the Washington shippers are finished harvesting and several of the Idaho/Oregon shippers are done or are close. Washington is peaking on jumbo & medium yellows while Idaho/Oregon is producing mostly jumbos. The Colorado yellow market is also steady to lower and they are also peaking on jumbos. Red onions are steady in all three areas. Washington still has the most volume of reds. Whites are steady in all districts and on all sizes. The quality has been good on all colors in all areas.

**Potatoes** ↔ Idaho cartons are mostly steady on all sizes and both varieties. There are some volume deals on the larger counts and number-tuos. Norkotahs are producing mostly 50-70's while the Burbanks have ranged from large too small. Most of the Idaho packers have put their Burbanks into storage and are currently packing Norkotahs. Washington cartons are steady and they continue to peak 80's and larger. Nebraska and Colorado are steady and they are both peaking on the larger counts. Wisconsin russet prices are also steady and they are still heavy to the smaller counts. Bakersfield, California still has Reds, Golds, and Whites from Washington. Their market is steady on all sizes. Western Washington reds, whites, and Golds are all peaking on A-size. The Washington market is slightly lower. Wisconsin red potatoes are mostly steady on B's and C's with some flex on A-size. Minnesota red potatoes are steady on all sizes. Minnesota will also flex on volume orders of Red A's.

**Tomatoes — Eastern** ↑ **Western** ↔ Western: A lack of rain in California that is typical for this time of year has allowed some growers to continue harvesting, perhaps until the end of the month. With new crops in the east being delayed, rounds in California are looking more appealing with larger sizes available in abundance. However, these late crops are presenting condition defects and posing challenges during long transit times. Roma tomatoes are limited in California with more coming across the border from Mexico this week. The winter crops scheduled to harvest from Mexico will be a huge factor in the tone of the market through the rest of the year as California finishes and Central Florida starts late. With more offerings south of the boarder, grape and roma prices will be driven by supply in the west since the east is expected to be light in weeks to come. Eastern: Some growers in Quincy Florida have already moved into 2nd and 3rd pickings this week causing larger size fruit to become scarce. Depending on demand, prices on rounds are expected to be on the rise as Quincy finishes up near the end of next week with Ruskin not expecting to come on until the second week of November. During this 2 week gap, grape and cherry tomatoes are also expected to demand a premium with early crops presenting challenges that may carry though November. Roma prices have began trending downward as demand has been lost due to high premiums over the past several weeks and will continue to do so as long as Mexico is able to carry the market through the winter.

