

Same Informative  
Report with a  
Fresh New Look!

# FRESH DIRECTIONS

WEST CREEK FRESH

An informative weekly produce trend report.

November 2013

## APPLES ↔

New York is packing Empires, Macs' Romes, Red Delicious, Galas, Fuji's, Macouns, and Courtland's. New York fruit is still producing mostly 88/100's for all varieties. Michigan is still packing and shipping Red Delicious, Fuji's, Golden Delicious, Gala's, McIntosh, Jonagolds, Jonathans, and Red Romes. Much of the Michigan fruit is peaking on 125's and 138's. Washington Red Delicious is steady and they are still peaking on the larger sizes in the Washington extra-fancy #1 grade. Smaller size reds remain limited. Golden Delicious is steady and is peaking on 80/88's in the Washington extra-fancy grade. Golden's are spread evenly across the size spectrum. Granny-Smith is steady in Washington and is heavy to 88/100's. Galas are still heavier to 88/100's and the market is split between regular storage and C.A. fruit. Washington Fuji's are steady and most packers are still peaking on 80's and larger. Honeycrisp, Braeburns, Pink Ladies, Cameos, and Jonagolds, and the other varieties are available.

## ASPARAGUS ↓

This market is softening as there are better inventories on Peruvian product. Supplies out of Mexico are moderate, with supplies heavier to standard and large sizing. Extra Large and Jumbo asparagus are still very limited from either growing region.

## AVOCADO ↔

Demand is good and steady on all sizes. Mexico's supplies are steady with sizes running mostly 48's and smaller. Chilean fruit is arriving in limited volumes. Market is steady.

## BELL PEPPERS

**Western Bells:** ↔ Green bell market is higher on larger size bells. Crops are currently shipping from Southern California, Nogales, and from Baja. An expected cooling trend may press markets slightly higher as this is slowing down production. Mexican green bells are light in larger sizes due to hurricane Manuel. Coachella is currently in production. Nogales will see increased crossings in the

next coming weeks. Open field colored Red bell market is definitely Higher as cooler weather approaches this week. High FOBs will continue even though Coachella will start soon their volume will not offset the demand. Mexico will start until first/middle part of December. Demand still exceeds availability from Southern California. Tardiness in Coachella and Mexico startups will keep markets high. Gold bells markets continue steady availability depends on growing district. Demand exceeds.

**Eastern Bells:** ↔ The market remains steady with fairly strong demand. Pepper supplies out of Florida are plentiful and Georgia is still working in a very small way as well. Market should remain steady through the weekend.

## BERRIES

**Strawberries:** ↑ Strawberry availability is going to be challenging for the next couple of weeks and maybe longer. All of the Strawberry growing regions have received rain this past week and forecast is calling for more rain this week. This market will remain active until Florida and Mexico get up to speed. Stem berries will be very limited for the foreseeable future. Sizing continues to run very small and quality is marginal out of all growing regions. Currently, McAllen, TX is where the best quality is being shipped but we know most of our members cannot load in Texas.

**Raspberries:** ↑ The raspberries market will get slightly firmer as California is winding down and Mexican production not up to speed yet. All regions have received rain this past weekend which will not help supplies for the rest of this week. The main growing are currently is Mexico with some light supplies still being harvested in Oxnard and Watsonville. Shippers are covering regular business, but don't have any additional fruit available to ship this week or next. Good quality being shipped currently.

**Blackberries:** ↑ The blackberry market is in a demand exceeds supply situations due to heavy rains the past



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couple weeks in Mexico. Transfers to the U.S. are being delayed by the harvest crews not being able to get into their fields. Expect to see delays at all coolers. Mexico is still suffering from weather, but next couple weeks are forecasting for normal temperatures which will help supplies and weaken the market. Quality is still fair depending on shipper.

**Blueberries:** ↑ Blueberries are in a short gap as Argentina is winding down and Chile is starting out very slow due to the freezes in Chile a couple months ago. Argentina is expecting some rain in the growing regions which will not help out supplies for the rest of the week. Quality is good currently on both coasts.

## **BROCCOLI** ↓

The broccoli market is steady on bunched product as well as crowns. Better pricing is coming out of the Salinas valley if trucks can make the trip. Yuma production will pick up next week. Demand is steady, overall. Santa Maria also has production available.

## **CARROTS** ↔

Supplies of carrots are good, with good size on JBO's. Quality is good.

## **CAULIFLOWER** ↓

The cauliflower market is softer as demand has fallen off. Most supplies continue to come from Salinas and Santa Maria. Yuma production will have better harvesting numbers in the first to second week in December. Many shippers are looking to move volume type orders and are listening to offers.

## **CELERY** ↔

The celery market is steady. Supplies are light to moderate out of Salinas, Santa Maria and Oxnard. Expect supplies to remain tight on smaller sizes with most shippers having better supplies of 24 counts. This sizing is where a few shippers are flexing. The quality is reported to be good in all the growing regions.

## **CITRUS**

**Lemons:** ↔ Demand remains very good on all sizes from all shippers, supplies are meeting the demand. New crop Desert fruit supplies are now starting to build some inventory. The new crop Ventura fruit will come on in limited volume by the end of November. Rains in Mexico is slowing or halting harvest of their crop.

**Oranges:** ↔ New crop California Navels are very nice, with color and brix improving weekly. Sizing peaking on 72's/88's/56's, small fruit is extremely limited. All shippers are packing into navels now but the outlook on 113's and 138's looks to become progressively worse as fruit continues to size up. We advise booking all small fruit orders as far in advance as possible.

**Limes:** ↑ Supplies are lighter with the rains in the growing areas of Mexico. Quality will become more of a problem (stylar, Brown spots and lighter color) because of the rains.

## **CUCUMBERS**

**Western Cucumbers:** ↔ Market appears to be settling as Holiday pulls have slowed and tempered demand. Crossings through Nogales are increasing but movement is still brisk. Quality is good and anyone with older inventories is cleaning up. Slightly cooler than normal evenings anticipated rains have passed. Baja California cucumbers are decreasing in supplies as they are slowing wrapping up.

**Eastern Cucumbers:** ↔ South Florida has started in a small way with domestic cucumbers and Central Florida has limited volume at this time of year. With Georgia now totally finished, look for this market to rise gradually in the coming days.

## **EGGPLANT**

**Western Eggplant:** ↔ Market is settling down and supplies are improving. As with other products, the cooler evenings are slowing production down and we foresee some uptick in markets by week's end. Eggplant is also available for loading out of Coachella, CA. Slowdown in holiday pulls and colder weather heading to the Mid West and East will also temper demand.

**Eastern Eggplant:** ↑ Eggplant is finished in Georgia and Florida is working very small amounts of eggplant right now. Supplies will remain limited, particularly on the fancy grades, through the week.

## **GRAPES** ↔

Crimson are the main varietal now with some limited quantities of Vintage red and Scarlet Royals around. The market is still a mixed bag depending on varietal, color and size you need. Several shippers are looking to make deals in order to clean up their fruit and not get stuck with too much in storage. Green grapes are still plentiful with Autumn King the main varietal left. The market



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is steady with light demand mostly larger size fruit available. Black seedless grapes have excellent quality and good availability. Seeded Globe grapes are available with excellent quality.

## GREEN ONIONS ↔

This market hasn't changed as pricing remains steady. Production continues to be good out of the Mexico region. Mexico and California are the major growing regions currently. Supplies will be steady through the week.

## LEAF LETTUCE ↔

The romaine market is steady like the previous week with good supplies in Yuma. Salinas still has some production as well as Santa Maria and Oxnard. Demand is down. There continues to be light flexing with a few suppliers. The green and red leaf availability is good and the market is flat. Quality is nice with light fringe burn in all packs.

## LETTUCE ↔

This market is steady. Yuma is in full swing. There have been issues of light weights, misshapen head sizing, and pinking. Yuma had heavy rains the previous week, and harvest starting this week has been slow, due to excessive water in the furrows. All suppliers halted production last Thursday due to the rains. The temperatures in the evenings were getting into the mid 20's to 30's. The quality will be fair with most suppliers. Salinas and Huron are finished in production.

## MELONS

**Cantaloupe:** ↑ Northern California has finished up. The Arizona grown fruit is a mixed bag of sizes and quality. The availability of Mexican Cantaloupes has tightened up due to them finishing up in the next week or so. Quality is good. Offshore fruit is available on the East Coast but very large starting off. Quality is excellent.

**Honeydew:** ↑ Domestic honeydew are available but with a higher market price loading in Arizona. Mexican dewes are crossing into Nogales with good volume, quality, and prices. There are offshore honeydew just starting to come into Florida but they are limited with large fruit only.

## ONIONS ↔

The market for yellows is steady on all sizes in all areas. Expect light availability this week since it's a short one. Washington reds are steady and they are steady to lower in Idaho/Oregon due to lighter demand. Medium reds

remain limited in all areas. The White market is strong but steady on jumbos and mediums. Trucks are the tightest thing in the northwest right now. The quality has been good in all areas and on all colors.

## POTATOES ↔

The Idaho market is steady on all sizes and both varieties. There are still volume deals on various sizes in both varieties. Idaho Burbanks are more evenly spread across the size spectrum while the Norkotahs remain heavier to 80-count and larger. The availability for poly and mesh bags has improved. Washington is steady on all carton counts and they are still heavy to 80-count and larger. Washington will still deal on volume orders of 70-count and larger. Nebraska and Colorado are also still heavy to 70's and larger as well. The Colorado/Nebraska market is steady on all sizes. Wisconsin russet prices are also steady and they are still peaking on the larger counts. Bakersfield, California is shipping Reds, Golds, and Whites from Washington. Their market is steady on all sizes but whites are limited. Western Washington reds, whites, and Golds are all peaking on A-size. The Washington market is also steady but many shippers have light supplies of White potatoes. Wisconsin red potatoes are mostly steady on B's and C's with some flex on volume A-size orders. Minnesota red potatoes are steady on all sizes but they also have some flex on volume orders of Red A's.





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## SQUASH

**Western Squash:** ↑ Market is showing signs it is trying to inch up on both Italian and Yellow S/N. Older inventories are cleaning up. Most are new arrivals and pressing markets up. Northern Sonora product has been shipping for a couple months and soon will be on its way out. The upcoming cooler and wet weather this weekend will slowdown harvesting. Northern Sinaloa product has started in light numbers. The slowing down of the Thanksgiving pull possibly will temper increasing markets cold weather heading towards Mid West and East will slow down demand also.

**Eastern Squash:** ↑ As with cukes, squash out of South Georgia is done and the supplies in Central Florida are tapering down, as is typical this time of year. South Florida is starting to ramp up this week, so their pricing reflects the volume and lack of demand, making this almost a two tiered market.

## STONE FRUIT --

Nectarines and peaches are cleaned up for the domestic fruit. California late harvest red plums will be available through this month but will start to clean up next week.



## TOMATOES

**Western:** ↔ Crossings into the States are lighter this week with greater demand for goods in Mexico. Cool weather and strong national demand in Mexico has reduced Roma crossings as well, keeping prices firm this week. Imports are expecting to pick up again after Thanksgiving. As demand comes down in early December, so should the market as harvests in Baja will bring more fruit to market in early December. Grape tomatoes remain in tight supply while growing areas transition and cooler weather hampers yields. We can expect an active market through the holiday season with things calming down near the New Year when volumes are forecasted to be more consistent.

**Eastern:** ↔ The Florida tomato market is firm with rounds sizing up leaving small fruit on the short side. Yields remain low with gaps occurring in harvests. Tomatoes are remaining on plants longer due to slower maturity cycles which are producing larger size fruit with smaller rounds in fewer numbers. Romas are also tight in the east, especially on larger sizes. Volumes are expected to improve in December to help out the short supply of imports from Mexico. Grape tomatoes remain very limited due to elevated demand for the holiday. In early December, prices are expected to come back down as demand falls off and more fruit is able enter the market. Cherry tomatoes are steady this week and offer a price incentive for those who are able to substitute for grape tomatoes.

## WATERMELON ↑

Market is heading up. Crops are sizing down as early crops are going through their paces. Current Nogales crossings are slowing down. Transitions taking place as Sonora crops start slowing down in production and sizing. Quality is good but volume is slowing. Some light supplies of northern Sinaloa watermelons crossing through Nogales. Other districts are limited availability and higher FOBs.