

Same Informative
Report with a
Fresh New Look!

FRESH DIRECTIONS

WEST CREEK FRESH

An informative weekly produce trend report.

December 2013

APPLES ↔

New York is running Empires, Macs' Romes, Red Delicious, Galas, Fuji's, Macouns, and Courtland's. The New York fruit is larger than normal and most varieties are still peaking between 88's and 100's. Michigan is still pacing Red Delicious, Fuji's, Golden Delicious, Gala's, McIntosh, Jonagolds, Jonathans, and Red Romes. Most of the Michigan fruit is peaking on 125's and 138's for all varieties. Washington Red Delicious are fairly steady and are still peaking on the larger sizes in the Washington extra-fancy #1 grade. Smaller reds remain short. Golden Delicious are steady and are still heavy to 80/88's in the Washington extra-fancy grade. Granny-Smith is steady to higher in Washington and are heavy to 88/100's and extra-fancy fruit. 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 to start the week is stable. Suppliers continue to have light to moderate supplies from Mexico. Peruvian production is good and can be loaded out of Florida if desired. This will obviously cut down on freight compared to west coast freight. Extra Large and Jumbo asparagus is 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 steady on larger size bells. Crops are currently shipping from Southern California, Nogales, and from Baja. Most Mexican growers are harvesting more medium/smaller fruit than larger sizes. Mexican green bells are light in larger sizes due to hurricane Manuel. Some opportunities on choice

green bells but sizing would be med/small. Coachella is currently in production. Nogales will see increased crossings in the next coming weeks. Open field colored Red bell market are beginning to settle slightly as Coachella is starting new lots. High FOBs will continue even though Coachella has started their volume will not offset the demand. Mexico will start until first/middle part of December. We ought to see relief on markets in the next couple of weeks as new lots start up. Demand still exceeds availability from Southern California. Tardiness in Coachella and Mexico startups will keep markets on the high end for the next couple of weeks. Gold bells markets continue steady availability depends on growing district. Demand exceeds as Mexican production has not yet started in earnest.

Eastern Bells: ↑ Pepper has tightened up with most of Georgia now pulling the plug on pepper and south Florida really not into good volume just yet. Look for market to nudge up slightly by the end of the week.

BERRIES

Strawberries: ↑ The strawberry market will remain active for the next couple weeks as we hit the lowest production point of the year. Supplies are coming out of California, Mexico and Florida. California supplies are winding down out of Santa Maria and Oxnard for "Fall Crop". California growing regions have a chance of light rain on Tuesday and Wednesday followed by some very cool temperatures getting close to freezing. This will tighten up supplies as this week moves on. Many Florida shippers are starting to ramp up with limited supplies. Expect to see supplies to get better out of Mexico and Florida in the next couple weeks. McAllen, TX is where the best quality and price for our business currently, but we know most of our members cannot load in Texas. Sizing continues to run very small and quality is marginal out of all growing regions.

Raspberries: ↑ The raspberries market will get slightly firmer as California is winding down and Mexican production not up to speed yet. The main growing are currently is Mexico with some light supplies still being

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harvested in Oxnard. Shippers are only 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 tight the start of this week with good demand and moderate supplies. The weather in Central Mexico has been nice past week which should help supplies later this week. Market is firm with fair quality depending on the lot.

Blueberries: ↔ Blueberries are transitioning from Argentina to Chile. The first boat shipments out of Chile will hit the U.S. this week. The main pack size will be 6oz with very limited supplies of 4.4oz. Quality is being reported as good. This market will remain steady with moderate demand and good supplies.

BROCCOLI ↓

The broccoli supplies are strong. Growing regions include Salinas, Santa Maria, Yuma and Scottsdale. Better pricing continues to load out of the Salinas valley. Yuma production will pick up this week at much better numbers. Demand is steady, overall. Shippers are listening to all offers so promote as much as possible.

CARROTS ↔

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

CAULIFLOWER ↔

The cauliflower market continues to have strong supplies, but demand is off. Overall, this market is steady. Yuma production has light supplies with more expected in the next few weeks. Salinas and Santa Maria continue to have good supplies available. Like broccoli, many shippers are looking to move volume type orders and are listening to offers.

CELERY ↔

The celery market is steady, overall. Production is occurring in Santa Maria, Salinas, and Oxnard. Shippers are transferring to Yuma for a fee. Expect supplies to remain moderate throughout the week on all sizing. The quality is reported to be good in all the growing regions.

CITRUS

Lemons: ↑ Demand remains very good on all sizes from all shippers. New crop Desert fruit supplies are now starting to build some inventory on 140's and larger. Smaller fruit 165's/200's/235's is just meeting daily

demand. The new crop Ventura fruit will come on in limited volume by the end of November.

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 (styler, Brown spots and lighter color) with these rains.

CUCUMBERS

Western Cucumber: ↔ Market appears to be settling as the Holiday pulls have finished and tempered demand. Crossings through Nogales are increasing but movement is still brisk. Quality is good and anyone with older inventories is cleaning up. Weather seems to be seasonal but evenings are slightly cooler than optimal. Baja California cucumbers are decreasing in supplies as they are slowing wrapping up.

Eastern Cucumbers: ↔ South Florida's domestic cucumber volume is starting to pick up a bit and Central Florida still has small volume. This market will likely remain at current levels simply to compete with Nogales.

EGGPLANT

Western Eggplant: ↔ Market is settling down and supplies are improving. As with other products, the cooler and possible showers in the evenings may slow down production 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 volume is finally starting to pick up in Florida which is bringing the market down a bit. This downward trend should continue through the weekend, weather permitting.

GRAPES ↑ ↔

Crimson are the main varietal now with some limited quantities of Vintage red and Scarlet Royals around. The market continues to be a mixed bag depending on varietal and color. 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

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with Autumn King the main varietal left. The market is higher 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 ↔

Availability out of Mexico continues to be steady, as pricing has remained flat. Mexico and California are the major growing regions currently. Supplies are expected to be good throughout the week with most suppliers.

LEAF LETTUCE ↔

The romaine market is steady. There is still some availability in Salinas if there is a need. Yuma and Thermal have strong production. Demand is off. There continues to be light flexing with a few suppliers. The green and red leaf availability is good and the market is also steady. Quality, overall is nice with light fringe burn in all packs.

LETTUCE ↔

This market has remained unchanged. The weights are much better with shippers reporting 40-48#s and much better head size and shaping. This commodity is much cleaner compared to past weeks production. Yuma is in full swing and is expected to have good supplies throughout the week. Next week very cool temperatures are expected and this market could turn around.

MELONS

Cantaloupe: ↔ Offshore product has started with good availability on large fruit. Mostly 9's and larger available. Limited on 12's and smaller fruit non-existent as shippers try and cover contracted fruit. Nogales is done with cantaloupe and Yuma is finishing up with limited availability.

Honeydew: ↔ Yuma is finishing up on dews with limited availability. Nogales has good availability of all sizes with good quality. Offshore dews are available but like the cantaloupe are running very large. Small fruit is very limited.

ONIONS ↔

Yellow onions are steady on all sizes in both Washington and Idaho/Oregon. Some Idaho/Oregon suppliers are short on medium yellows. Most shippers are starting the week with light inventories on their floor(s). Red onions are also steady in all districts. Medium red supplies

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

POTATOES ↔

The Idaho market is steady on all sizes and both varieties. Normally it would take a couple days for the Idaho suppliers to build inventories back after the holiday but the cold weather coming in could delay that. We could see a stronger market as the week goes on of the cold weather is bad enough to limit packing. Burbanks are still spread fairly evenly across the size spectrum while the Idaho Norkotahs are heavier to 80's and larger. Washington is also steady on counts and they are still peaking on 80-count and larger. Nebraska and Colorado are peaking 70's and larger as well. Colorado and Nebraska are both steady on all carton sizes. Wisconsin russet prices are also steady on all sizes 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. Bakersfield will have its own white potatoes next week. 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.

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 cooler evenings are slowing down harvesting. Yellow straight neck squash is higher overall than Italian. Northern Sinaloa product has started in light numbers. The passage of holiday pull may temper any potential rise in FOBS but slowing production on yellow s/n squash may keep marketing going upwards regardless.

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.

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STONE FRUIT --

Domestic fruit is done for the season. Chilean cherries are available on both coasts mostly large fruit coming in.

TOMATOES

Western: ↔ Mexico is crossing light volumes of all tomatoes keeping fruit at home to meet local demand. Romas have varied quality, depending on the shipper and growing region. 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: ↔ Productions on rounds out of Florida are light, but volume is improving slightly. The market remains firm with rounds sizing up leaving small fruit on the short side. Yields remain low with gaps occurring in harvests. Ruskin still has some crown picks left and have moved into second picks bringing some smaller sizes back into the pipeline. Immokalee is forecasted to come online by mid December, which will increase the amount of fruit available. Romas are short this week, but quality is very good. 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. New district crops will be at a premium. 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.

