

## MARKET NEWS

**New grape varieties are extending the California grape season** and are becoming key factors for the state's success in the market, according to industry representatives and growers in the region. Autumn King, Scarlet Royal and Autumn Royal varieties are beginning to overtake fields that were once reserved for Thompson and Flame Seedless varieties, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

**Drought conditions shrank winter wheat kernels** in Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington, a region that accounts for a fifth of the U.S. harvest. Northwest growers are worried that the low quality of their product will further decrease already declining prices, reported *Yakima Herald-Republic*. [Full Story](#)

**California processing tomato deliveries totaled 1.7 million tons after the first three weeks**, according to the California Processing Tomato Advisory Board. The industry will not be at capacity for another week. The organic harvest to date is slightly lower than hoped, while diced tomato operation are underway at most packers with, quality meeting specs. [Full Story](#)

**The brown shrimp harvest in the western Gulf of Mexico is predicted at 42.8 million-lbs.**, well below the historical 54-year average of 56.5 million-lbs., according to NOAA. Brown shrimp makes up 68% of the domestic harvest in the gulf as the price of shrimp dropped steeply this year after years of high prices, reported *Houston Chronicle*. [Full Story](#)

**USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack is not ready to declare the Midwest avian flu outbreak over.** The threat hasn't passed, as poultry producers caught a break thanks to warmer temperatures that tend to kill the virus, according to Vilsack. The agency is aware of the need to be prepared in case the disease reappears this fall, reported *Wichita Eagle*. [Full Story](#)

**Breeding chickens were relocated as the outbreak of avian flu developed** in the U.S. Valuable as a genetic source for egg-laying hens, the chickens were moved as far away as Brazil to protect breeding stocks with genetic lines dating back to the early 1900s, reported *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. [Full Story](#)

**New York vegetable growers expect supply gaps** for sweet corn, green beans, onions, potatoes and cabbage following heavy rainfall in June that flooded fields and disrupted plantings. Most packers expect the gaps to be erratic, and prices should rise in response to smaller volumes, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)

**Northwest onions may rise in price early in the season** as Mexico and Texas deal with smaller crop sizes and volumes during the harvest. The early pricing window could be jeopardized by heat and drought later in the



season, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#)

The avian flu epidemic ravaging US chicken farms has caused a reversal of protein economics. Their [surging price](#) has made eggs more expensive on a protein-per-dollar basis than chicken breasts for the first time on record.

Eggs are now a more expensive source of protein than chicken

Latest [figures from the USDA](#) show that at least 48 million US birds have been killed in attempts to contain the outbreak. More than 34 million of those—71%—were egg-laying chickens or chickens used to breed egg-laying chickens, which is why the price of chicken meat has not ascended as rapidly as chicken eggs. The exact number of chickens bred for meat that have been killed because of the outbreak is unclear, but they account for no more than 13% of the currently reported figures.

The prices we're using are a nationwide urban average, which means it's possible that eggs are still the cheaper protein option in some US neighborhoods. (And we're using the price for chicken breast rather than the price per pound for a whole chicken, because that's a way to focus on a comparable price for just edible protein in each item.)

A 60-gram boiled egg—aka “USDA Large”—has 7.55 grams of protein, and a 384-gram chicken breast has 107.67 grams of protein, according to the USDA. One shorthand way to calculate this is that if 7 lbs of chicken breast cost less than 10 dozen eggs in your store, the chicken is a better deal for protein.

**The sockeye salmon run at Bristol Bay broke records every day for five days** from July 13 to July 17, bringing the total sockeye catch to nearly 28 million fish. The projected catch for Bristol Bay is 38 million as buyers put any updated price indications on hold until the Bay run is finished, reported *SitNews.com*. [Full Story](#)

**Corn, soybean and wheat farmers could save an estimated \$1.3 billion annually by using drones** to increase crop yields and reduce input costs, according to a study by Informa Economics and Measure. Corn producers stand to be the biggest beneficiaries of aerial devices, with savings totaling an average of \$11.58 per acre, while wheat is at \$2.57 and soybeans are at \$2.28. Crop yields would increase by about 3.3% for wheat and 2.5% for soybeans and corn, reported *Des Moines Register*.

[Full Story](#)

**The first Iowa turkey farm affected by avian flu moved closer to being restocked.** Most of the 77 farms affected are still weeks away from introduction of new flocks as all birds that died or euthanized were removed, according to Iowa Department of Agriculture officials. Once



cleaned and disinfected, barns must remain unused for 21 days and routine sampling must confirm no virus remains, reported *Des Moines Register*. [Full Story](#)

Meanwhile, **quarantines on farms in four Nebraska counties were lifted**. Dakota, Dixon, Wayne and Thurston counties were cleared after testing failed to turn up more cases of avian flu, reported *Omaha World-Herald*. [Full Story](#)

**The California Department of Food and Agriculture increased the price of Class 4b milk** to \$2 per hundredweight, more than doubling the existing price and bringing it closer to prices mandated by the federal milk marketing order. The increase in price on the cheese-making byproduct was deemed necessary by the agency to help producers deal with increased production costs and the effect of ongoing drought, reported *AgAlert*. [Full Story](#)

**Cargill and Naturisa will build a \$30 million shrimp feed facility in Ecuador** through a joint venture. The transaction involves the construction of a shrimp feed mill that will produce 130,000 metric tons annually when the facility is fully operational in 2017. Cargill will own 75% and have managerial control of the day-to-day operation, while Naturisa will retain 25% in the joint venture. [Full Story](#)

**An agreement will transfer the Marine Stewardship Council sustainability certificate** for Alaska salmon from the Alaska Salmon Processors Association to the Pacific Seafood Processors Association by Oct. 1. The transfer, effective for the 2016 fishing season and beyond, will allow anyone wishing to participate to do so, by participating in a cost structure for all those involved, reported *Cordova Times*. [Full Story](#)

**Scientists developed a vaccine that tested 100% effective in protecting chickens from avian flu** with testing underway to see if it protects turkeys, according to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack. If it proves effective, the agency plans to quickly license it for widespread production and is seeking funding from the Office of Management and Budget to stockpile it nationally, reported *Omaha World-Herald*. [Full Story](#)

**U.S. egg production dropped 9% in June** when compared to the same month last year, with a total of 7.4 billion eggs produced, according to USDA. Production included 6.3 billion table eggs and 1.1 billion hatching eggs. Egg-type chicks hatched in the month were up 7% and broiler-type chicks hatched were up 3% when compared to the year-ago period. [Full Report](#)

**Advance prices for Bristol Bay sockeye are at the lowest level since 2001**. The late run abundance pushed prices to nosedive from the \$0.65 per pound reported pre-season to between \$0.40 and \$0.60 per pound,



compared to last year's range of \$1.20 to \$1.33 per pound, reported *Fish Radio*. [Full Story](#)

**Michigan's sweet corn harvest is underway a little later than usual** due to the cool weather. Volume is low, but is expected to increase over the two weeks, reported *Kalamazoo Gazette*. [Full Story](#)

**Nebraska bean growers and processors reported an oversupply** due to a strong U.S. dollar that made beans more expensive globally. Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts asked USDA to bolster the state's bean market through a 25 million-lb. purchase of great northern beans, reported *Miami Herald*. [Full Story](#)

**Colorado's wheat harvest is expected to be higher than the state's 15-year average** after a year of substantial precipitation. Initial harvest reports show a wide range of yields, and farm income will be lower as wheat prices dropped in 2015, reported *The Denver Post*. [Full Story](#)

**Indiana's crops continued to suffer from heavy rains that waterlogged fields**, and local growers are hoping for a dry spell to salvage remaining crops. Twenty-eight percent of Indiana's soybean crop, 26% of its corn crop and 19% percent of its winter wheat crop was rated in poor or very poor condition, according to USDA, reported *Chicago Tribune*. [Full Story](#), [Full Report](#)

**The harvest of brown shrimp season in Texas could drop 24% this year** due to the impact of record rains that hit San Antonio and South Texas. The fresh water damaged the growing cycle, and National Marine Fishing Service data shows a possible harvest drop of 14 million-lbs., reported *KCAT.com*. [Full Story](#)

**California agricultural officials expanded the quarantine in the San Gabriel Valley** after discovering several more trees infected with citrus greening. The quarantine, which extends more than 87 square miles around the city of San Gabriel, prohibits the movement of citrus plants but allows transfer of fruit that is professionally cleaned and packed, reported *Los Angeles Times*. [Full Story](#)

**California leafy green producers received a record low number of food safety citations** in the 2014-15 growing year. Less than a half-percent of 75,000 food safety checkpoints in mandatory government audits resulted in a citation, according to the California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement. [Full Story](#)

**Chilean citrus crops may be available into November**, extending the season beyond the typical October end date. Citrus crops from the country are slightly smaller than average but are of higher quality than in previous years, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#)

**Kandiyohi County in Minnesota was released from quarantine caused by the avian flu** by state animal health regulators. The quarantine is now



by the avian flu by state animal health regulators. The quarantine is now lifted in 18 of the 23 Minnesota counties hit by the virus and about 35% of stricken farms began restocking their farms, reported *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. [Full Story](#).

**Maryland is expecting the avian flu outbreak to arrive in the state this fall**, according to Maryland Agriculture Secretary Joe Bartenfelder. The department issued a quarantine order mandating all hatching eggs and poultry coming into the state to be tested within 10 days unless they originated from a certified clean facility, reported *Daily Times of Salisbury*. [Full Story](#).

**California lettuce growers reported a price drop** in July following high demand earlier in the year. Growers and shippers expect supply and demand to start matching up in early August, leading to a bump in prices, reported *The Packer*. [Full Story](#).

**Envy apple dollar sales rose 20%** when compared to the same time period last year, according to Freshlook Data. Envy apple volume sold also increased 36%. The apple category as a whole dropped 13% in dollar sales and 8% in per pound volume during the same time frame, reported *The Produce News*. [Full Story](#).

**USDA's Risk Management Agency expanded crop insurance plans for fruit and nut producers**. The Supplemental Coverage Option and the Actual Production History Yield Exclusion are now available to fresh fruit and nut producers in select counties beginning in the 2016 crop year. [Full Report](#).