

Produce Market Advisory

For the week of April 4, 2016

Foodbuy
INNOVATIVE PROCUREMENT

Market Alerts

Recommended Items to Avoid

The movement of growing regions from the Yuma, Arizona area back north to Central California has begun. Many of the products you use year-round are affected during this time, which normally lasts from mid-March to early May. Affected crops include all lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, berries and more. "Transition", as it's usually called, often comes with more frequent quality issues, shorter shelf life, and sometimes less available product.



BLUEBERRIES The current shortage of blueberries is expected to continue for the next 2-3 weeks. Chilean berries are done for the season, and domestic product is not starting up as quickly as expected. Most blueberries during this time will come from Mexico's growing areas, and will not keep up with demand. Pricing is higher than normal, with good quality reported.



BELL PEPPERS Green bell peppers are in short supply due to weather-related growing conditions in Florida and California. Quality is fair at best, with smaller, elongated bells, discoloration and scarring reported. Pricing is higher than normal. Red or yellow peppers may be a better quality option.



TOMATOES Florida's growing region is currently transitioning from the Immokalee area to Ruskin/Palmetto and will be complete within two weeks, at which point the market is expected to stabilize. Pricing continues to be higher than normal, particularly for rounds and grapes. Romas and cherries may be a better cost option. Quality is good to fair.



SQUASH Yellow squash is in very short supply and pricing is higher than usual. Quality is good to fair. Green (Zucchini) squash is plentiful with good quality, and will be a much better cost option for the next few weeks.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Red Grapes: The Chilean crop has mostly finished, with the majority of grapes now coming from Mexico. Quality is very good, particularly for red grapes, and pricing is at normal levels. California grapes will begin harvesting in late April/early May.



Asparagus: We are seeing great supplies of domestic asparagus. Harvest will continue out of Mexico as well. All sizes are available. Quality is excellent, and pricing is steady. Pencil-sized asparagus is the preferred spec for Compass locations.



Pears: Spring pears are in peak season and make great hand fruit options—D'Anjou, Bosc and Bartlett are the most common varieties and are available in most sizes. Ask your distributor for these and other varieties.



Strawberries: The California strawberry harvest is increasing, with the Salinas, Watsonville and Santa Maria growing areas all producing steadily. Recent cooler weather has helped produce firm, consistently sized berries, and very good quality is reported. After a winter full of quality issues, it's a great time to highlight strawberries on your menus again.



Produce Meter

● Good ● Fair ● Caution

Commodity	Quality	Market
Apples	●	●
Asparagus	●	●
Avocado (California)	●	●
Avocado (Mexican)	●	●
Bananas	●	●
Bell Peppers (Western)	●	●
Bell Peppers (Eastern)	●	●
Berries: Strawberries	●	●
Berries: Raspberries	●	●
Berries: Blackberries	●	●
Berries: Blueberries	●	●
Broccoli	●	●
Carrots	●	●
Cauliflower	●	●
Celery	●	●
Citrus: Lemons	●	●
Citrus: Oranges	●	●
Cucumbers (Western)	●	●
Cucumbers (Eastern)	●	●
Eggplant (Western)	●	●
Eggplant (Eastern)	●	●
Grapes, Green	●	●
Grapes, Red	●	●
Green Onions	●	●
Lettuce: Romaine / Leaf	●	●
Lettuce: Iceberg	●	●
Melons: Cantaloupe	●	●
Melons: Honeydew	●	●
Melons: Watermelon	●	●
Onions	●	●
Pears	●	●
Potatoes	●	●
Squash (Western)	●	●
Squash (Eastern)	●	●
Tomatoes (Western)	●	●
Tomatoes (Eastern)	●	●

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(continued)

Commodity	Market
Apples	WA, MI, and NY are harvesting a variety of apples. Quality is good.
Asparagus	Most product coming from Peru and Mexico, quality is good and pricing is lower than in recent weeks.
Avocado	Mexican harvest is in full swing, great quality and pricing for #1 and #2 grades.
Bell Peppers	Supplies are lower for green bells, with higher than normal pricing. Red bells may be a better buy.
Berries: Blackberries	Quality is poor, pricing is steady.
Berries: Blueberries	Quality is fair, pricing is higher.
Berries: Raspberries	Quality is fair to poor, pricing is steady.
Berries: Strawberries	Quality is very good, pricing is steady.
Broccoli	Quality is good, pricing is lower than in recent weeks.
Carrots	Good quality reported, with higher than normal pricing on some sizes.
Cauliflower	Quality is good, pricing is lower than in recent weeks.
Celery	Supplies have stabilized, quality is good and pricing is steady.
Citrus: Lemons	Supplies are very limited, quality is good.
Citrus: Limes	Old crop is finishing and quality is fair. New crop has good quality, the size is smaller.
Citrus: Oranges	Supplies are improved, Florida harvest has begun. Quality is good.
Cucumbers	Pricing on field-grown product is higher than usual. Quality is good to fair.
Eggplant	Quality is good to fair, pricing is slightly higher than normal.

Commodity	Market
Garlic	An extreme shortage in imports for several months has driven prices up dramatically for both domestic and imported fresh garlic. Quality is good, and domestic product is the best value.
Grapes: Green	Quality is fair, pricing is steady.
Grapes: Red	Supplies and quality have improved, pricing is steady.
Green Onions	Supplies are sporadic. Pricing also varies based on availability by supplier. Quality is hit and miss with some brown and yellow tops.
Lettuce: Romaine / Leaf	Quality is good and pricing is lower than usual.
Lettuce: Iceberg	Quality is good and pricing is lower than usual.
Melons: Cantaloupe	CA's "West Side" valley is peaking on 12ct and 15ct. Quality remains excellent.
Melons: Honeydew	CA's "West Side" valley is now trending toward large sizes with less small sizes. Quality is excellent with good sugars.
Melon: Watermelon	Most product is shipping out of the Nogales growing region. Quality is very good.
Onions	This year's crop is running to smaller sizes, most notably with red onions. Quality is good.
Pears	CA and WA are shipping Bartletts, Crimsons, and Bosc pears. Quality is good.
Potatoes	This year's crop is running to smaller sizes on Idahos. Quality is good.
Squash	Yellow squash is fair quality. Green (zucchini) is the better buy for cost and quality.
Tomatoes	Short supplies and higher pricing continues on most round and grape tomatoes in the East. Romas and cherries are the best buys.