

# Produce Market Advisory

For the week of April 18, 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.



**LIMES** Supplies of limes, grown primarily in Mexico, are limited and will continue to be for the next few weeks. Quality is good and pricing is higher than normal.



**STRAWBERRIES** Heavy rains over the past week in the California growing region has damaged the strawberry crops. A shortage of product to keep up with demand, and quality issues including soft berries and short shelf life, is expected to continue for the next couple of weeks. Pricing is at normal levels. We recommend you buy only what you need, keep refrigerated and use quickly.

## MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

**Kale:** Quality is excellent on kale, which is a popular menu item and a versatile cool-weather plant. Pricing is at normal levels, and reported quality includes bright, vibrant green leaves and crisp ribs. Ask your distributor if locally grown product is available.

**Tomatoes:** Supplies of tomatoes are much improved from recent weeks, particularly Romas. Quality is good and pricing is lower than it's been for months. Romas are great for dicing and slicing, due to their density and good yield. Round, cherry and grape tomatoes are also improved.

**Stone Fruit:** This spring's stone fruit crop is projected to start early and be very plentiful. Peaches, apricots, nectarines, plums and cherries will all become more available in the next few weeks. Be sure to include them when planning your mid-spring to early-summer menus."

**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.



## 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)	●	●

# Produce Market Advisory

(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	Pricing is returning to normal levels on green peppers. Quality is good for all colors.
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	Supplies are tightening up again, and quality out of California's fields is fair to poor.
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 has returned to normal levels. Quality is good.
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 have returned to normal levels, with good quality reported.
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	Both yellow and green squash quality has improved, with pricing at normal levels.
Tomatoes	Supplies and quality have improved, particularly in the East. Pricing is lower than in recent weeks.