



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Red and Gold Bell Peppers remain very short in supply

Bartlett pears are finished for the season

Strawberry Quality is fair again due to rain Monday/Tuesday and supplies are tight

Nappa cabbage is still extremely light in availability due to excessive seeder in the fields



The Source

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Weather: *Tim Lynch*

A fairly powerful winter type storm system will move into California tonight bringing another round of rain to the region over the next couple of days. This cold system will bring strong winds, rain and cool temperatures throughout California. High pressure building over California following this system will bring dry weather with warming temperatures to the western growing regions the latter part week. Temperatures in the low 60s are expected through the week. Mid range forecasts show another storm system approaching California early next week bringing cooler temperatures (Low 60s) and another chance of rain. Current forecasts are unclear about the exact track and moisture content of this system at this point with numerous growing regions in the line of fire.

A series of low pressure systems setting up over the Gulf will slowly slide southeast through mid-week. This will bring the Southeast a chance of showers through Wednesday. Clearing skies along with warm temperatures, into the mid 80s are forecast into the weekend. A slight (10%) chance of light showers is possible early next week in long range forecasts.



Freight: *Mike McIntire*

The availability of eastbound trucks in California and Idaho remain fairly tight. Apple trucks in Washington remain steady. Crude oil prices are currently at \$83.95. The diesel price for this week is up slightly to \$3.074.

Commodity Updates

APPLES/PEARS *John Tole*

Washington packers still are still heavy to large reds and golds but demand is up. The smaller foodservice reds and gold's remain very limited in all grades and will get even tighter as the eastern apples dry up. Please consider varieties other than Red Delicious for your foodservice orders that require small fruit since the reds are large. Granny Smiths are still short on the larger fruit and the lower grades. Export demand from Mexico is still strong and they are looking for deals so expect the cheaper prices on lower grade fruit to go fast. There are some good deals in most variety's on 48, 56, 64 size fruit. Braeburns, Galas, Fuji's, and Pink Lady varieties are left, while Cameos, Jonagolds, Honeycrisp, and Romes are essentially finished for the season. D'anjou pears are in excellent shape with good supplies in Washington and are also mostly large but the prices are up as they are the only variety left. A few Red Crimson and/or red D'anjou pears are available as well although supplies are very limited.

ASPARAGUS *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

The asparagus market is active. Mexico production is just about finished. Supplies are light out of Washington. Peruvian product is still available on the East and West Coast. Expect supplies to be light out of California throughout the week.

AVOCADO *Tim Kelley*

California growers continue to improve their harvest volumes. Fruit pack outs are running to smaller sizes. Mexico's volume is lighter as growers continue to hold off on production.

Mexican Fruit: Growers continue to slow their harvest to kept prices firm.

California Fruit: Growers are harvesting good supplies, but the pack outs are heavier to 60's and 70's. Demand is very good.

BELL PEPPERS *Tim Kelley*

Western Green Bells and Colored Bells:

Mexico supplies are winding quickly. Availability, size, and quality are dropping. The California desert has started harvesting green bells in light volume and will continue to ramp up production over the next 2 weeks. Red and yellow bells from Mexico are extremely limited, as they are coming to their season end. The

Commodities at a glance...

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Quality</u>	<u>Market</u>
Apples	Excellent	Steady
Asparagus	Good	Higher
Avocado (Mexican)	Good	Higher
Avocado (California)	Good	Higher
Bell Peppers (Western)	Fair	Higher
Bell Pepper (Eastern)	Good	Higher
Berries: Strawberries	Fair	Higher
Berries: Raspberries	Good	Steady
Berries: Blackberries	Good	Steady
Berries: Blueberries	Fair	Steady
Broccoli	Good	Steady
Carrots	Good	Steady
Cauliflower	Good	Higher
Celery	Good	Steady
Citrus: Lemons	Good	Steady
Citrus: Oranges	Good	Higher
Cucumbers (Western)	Good	Steady
Cucumbers (Eastern)	Good	Lower
Grapes	Good	Steady
Green Onions	Good	Steady
Lettuce: Leaf	Good	Steady
Lettuce: Iceberg	Good	Steady
Melons: Cantaloupe	Good	Steady
Melons: Honeydew	Good	Steady
Onions	Good	Higher
Pears	Excellent	Higher
Potatoes	Good	Steady/Higher
Squash (Western)	Good	Higher
Squash (Eastern)	Good	Higher
Stone Fruit	Good	Steady
Tomatoes (Western)	Good	Steady
Tomatoes (Eastern)	Fair	Steady
Watermelon	Good	Steady

Commodity Updates *continued*

California desert crop for colored bells will start early to mid May, with volume by the first week of June. One grower in Baja has light supplies of new crop colored bells.

Eastern Bells: *Janine Baird*

The pepper market has tightened back up a bit, mostly in the larger sizes. Rain and wind in Florida's growing areas have led to decreased supplies. With Nogales finishing up now we could see the market rise over the next week or so. The first of May should see better volume as new fields in central Florida begin to break.

BERRIES *Mike Gorczyca*

Strawberries: The California strawberry growing areas were hit again with rain and some hail Monday/Tuesday. This has hurt harvest volumes and quality of the strawberries going into the weekend. The forecast is for clearing into the weekend and rain again next week. Let's hope that the weather forecast for next week is wrong. The Mother's Day pull which starts next week will be a very challenging one. Harvest numbers that should be going up keep going down due to the wet weather we have been getting the last three weeks. Quality out of all areas will be fair. It will take some time for fields to recover and produce quality fruit. Quality issues to be aware of are white shoulders, green tips, bruising, pin rot, mold and water damage likely to be prevalent as fields recover. Market is firm and supplies are short and will be thru the Mother's Day pull.

Raspberries: Supplies are slowly improving each week. Market is steady with good quality.

Blackberries: Better supplies coming out of Mexico are causing this market to weaken slightly. Quality is good.

Blueberries: Light supplies are still coming in from Chile with a firm market. Quality is just fair. The next area to start up is Florida followed by California. Both areas have started but with very limited supplies and shippers are keeping the product local. We will see both areas increase supplies quickly the first and second week of May.

BROCCOLI *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This market is firm on bunched product and stronger on crowns. Overall, supplies are on the light side, especially in the southern California growing regions. There continues to be ample supplies for contract business on bunched product and crowns but many

suppliers are scrambling to cover open business. Harvesting is occurring in Salinas, Santa Maria and there is still some slight production in Arizona.

CARROTS *Tim Kelley*

California carrots are coming out of Bakersfield for the next week or two weeks with good supplies. Yield and quality are good and there should not be any gaps for the next couple of months.

CAULIFLOWER *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This market continues to be active with all suppliers. The past rains and lack of product in the field has made this commodity very tight. Expect availability to be very tight throughout the week. Santa Maria will have little production for the week. Yuma is finished. Expect pricing to be very active throughout the week.

CELERY *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This commodity is stable in the marketplace. The twenty-four count celery continues to have better availability and offers can be made for large orders. Supplies are coming out of Oxnard predominantly. The quality continues to be good in terms of color and texture. Salinas has not yet begun production.

CITRUS *Tim Kelley*

Lemons: Demand is steadily increasing, pricing remains steady. Quality is very good.

Limes: Limes are very short and expect them to stay short until mid May when the new crop is expected to start.

Oranges: Rain has stopped harvest for the end of this week. The supplies of harvested fruit are light and may continue the way into next week as more rains are projected. Demand is strong and pricing has firmed up. Crop continues to peak on fancy 72's, 56's with 88's and smaller getting tight.

CUCUMBERS

Western Cucumber: *Tim Kelley*

Mainland Mexico production is good. Baja growers expect good production through the month.

Eastern Cucumbers: *Janine Baird*

As domestic supplies increase, the cucumber market is softening just a bit. However, with so few growers planting cucumbers this year, the

Commodity Updates continued

supply is not expected to exceed the demand, keeping markets from dropping too much. In fact, a small, brief jump in the cuke market could be seen as early as this weekend, particularly in the super selects.

GRAPES *Amy Grolnick*

Demand remains light. Chilean green grapes have finished coming into port there are still some fresh grapes around but storage grapes have started on both red and green with a higher market price. There are Crimson, Rubies and very few Perlons for red seedless with a lower market on the Rubies. The Greens, Sugarones and Thompsons, have begun to lighten up and will lessen over the next few weeks, there have been some sporadic quality problems with decay. Black seedless are in good supply with excellent quality. Red Globes with very good quality and good availability.

GREEN ONIONS *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This market is stable. Labor issues are in better control in the wake of last week's earthquake. Pencil sizes continue to have the largest availability. There continues to be a few issues on light yellowing on processed items.

LEAF LETTUCE *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

The leaf market continues to be steady. Huron and Salinas are in production. Yuma production is finished. Huron continues to have gnat issues and this will not go away. This issue will likely continue throughout the week with all suppliers producing from this growing region so please be aware. Rains have been in the growing regions on Tuesday and Wednesday which has caused for delays in harvesting.

LETTUCE *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This market is stable. Some small insects continue to be seen on lettuce in Huron and this will continue to be seen throughout the week. Salinas has begun production in a light way and will be better next week. The sizing is up and down in consistency with small and misshapen heads seen in all the growing regions. The issues of pink ribbing, discoloration, and mechanical damage are still seen upon arrival. Heavier lettuce is coming out of Huron.

MELONS *Amy Grolnick*

Cantaloupe: Good availability with good demand. Honduran and Guatemalan product are both coming into the US. Product is coming into Pompano and Manatee, Florida. There is product on the West Coast out of the LA area and some fruit coming into New Jersey as well. Quality is excellent. Mexican Cantaloupe has started in a light way.

Honeydew: Still very good supplies of Honduran and Guatemalan product with better supplies coming in from Mexico. Offshore fruit is still arriving into Florida, California and New Jersey. Product quality is getting better. Nogales is receiving Mexican fruit with good quality.

ONIONS *John Tole*

The northwest onion deal is done except one shipper. Yellows and reds are steady with fair demand. Whites are finished for the season.

The Texas market is steady to slightly lower on yellows and whites. They were forecast to get rain most of this week but only got a little on Tuesday and are now supposed to be dry through Sunday, so the end of the week should bring an increase in availability. Jumbos and larger are still relatively short while mediums are the peak size on all colors. The red market is strong since Texas is the only area with product so stay ahead. Supplies remain fairly limited and the demand still exceeds supplies on all colors. The quality is fair to good. Vidalia, Georgia has already started packing and is also heavy mediums but has good numbers of jumbos as well. California will start packing yellows next week and they are predicting average size for the first week and then bigger sizes on the later fields.

POTATOES *John Tole*

Idaho is still heavy to smaller counts and short on the larger. 60 count and larger are so tight that many shippers are asking for 48 to 72 hours lead-time to cover bigger orders. Burbanks will be the main variety for the rest of the storage season and they will continue to peak on 80 count and smaller. The remaining norkotahs are still peaking on 60/70's but are in very few hands and the shippers that still have them will finish by the end of April. Washington norkotahs are steady to slightly higher on all

Commodity Updates continued

counts and are still very limited on 90's and smaller. Washington still has excellent quality and is peaking on 70/ 60's. Wisconsin is coming to the end of the season and is higher on all sizes due to lighter supplies. Colorado is up on all sizes but esp. the larger counts because the Idaho spuds are small and they are getting more demand. The quality in Colorado is mostly good while Wisconsin ranges from poor to good. North Dakota continues to pack reds and golds but the availability is way down but their prices have stabilized. Idaho has a few reds and golds left but the supplies are light. California packers are still packing all colors and have better numbers from Bakersfield. The California quality is good on all colors. South Florida is still running reds, yukons, and whites, and has increased their volume as well. They also have good quality and their reds are very dark in color.

SQUASH

Western Squash: *Tim Kelley*

Mexico production is very inconstant. One major growing area was hit with some severe winds which caused the squash to get beat up pretty good. Expect better production in 7 to 10 days. Baja has started light production with volume by the end of next week. Fresno, California could start their spring crop by next week..

Eastern Squash: *Janine Baird*

Squash volume in Florida has dropped dramatically in recent days. Strong winds in south Florida have knocked the blooms off the plants and scarred the existing fruit. Quality and supplies will be hit and miss through the weekend. As newer fields in Central Florida produce more volume in the coming days, we should see this market trend back down by the middle of next week.

STONE FRUIT *Amy Grolnick*

Off shore peaches, nectarines and plums are all available with good quality and availability. Domestic cherries will start up around the first week of May. There will also be some light volume starting on the domestic tree fruit the first week of May.

TOMATOES *Ryan Frayo*

Eastern: Florida continues to have shippers getting a little stronger with production, from

what very light production there actually is. There was rain over the weekend that will slow production this week, with the weather shippers are a little bit higher than the pricing we are seeing out of Nogales. Shippers continue saying possibly the middle to the end of May before supplies increase to normal production levels. The couple of shippers who are coming up with some fruit have quantities that are small and insignificant in the big picture. There have been considerable quality issues with the Florida fruit such as scaring and misshaped fruit. As mentioned volumes will continue to be less than normal, but quality should improve as growers continue to pick and clean up the plants. There has been no change in quality to date. Coming on fairly strong are Grape and Cherry tomatoes. We can expect to see higher than normal FOB's on the round tomatoes probably up through the spring accompanied with shortened supplies.

Western: Supplies out of San Diego continue to be low and diminished with a strong Mexican market. We can expect this trend up until the new Baja crop get up to speed in late May into the front of June. Nogales is a bit unstable with pricing. Romas where fairly cheap and now are creeping back up with low supplies, there is a wide range of pricing due to some of the major shippers having an excess of inventory so some are dropping prices more than others, leaving an uneasy feeling about the market. Production should remain steady (weather permitting) for the next few weeks.

WATERMELON *Amy Grolnick*

Better supplies on seedless product with seeded watermelon in light supply. Prices are at the bottom and it doesn't look like the market will change in the upcoming week. The mini seedless are in better supply and quality is good, the market is flat.

VALUE ADDED *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

On all value added items, production continues to be going strong in Salinas. Some delays at shipping time occurred this past week, but expect better times for this week's shipping. Expect some discoloration on romaine and lettuce items upon arrival. Product quality has been up and down out of the Huron region as well as Salinas on lettuce.