

Commodity Updates

APPLES/PEARS *John Tole*

Washington packers still need help moving big reds and gold's especially in the higher grades. The smaller foodservice reds and gold's are still very limited in all grades but the lower grades are the tightest. 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 strong and they are looking for deals so expect the cheaper prices on smaller fruit to disappear. There are some good deals in most varieties 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 in volume. A few Red Crimson and/or red D'ajou pears are available as well although supplies are very limited. Bosc, Seckel, Concorde, & Comice are done for the season.

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 good.

BELL PEPPERS *Tim Kelley*

Western Green Bells and Colored Bells:

Mexico supplies have lightened on green bells. What they are getting is small in size. There are growers harvesting new fields and other growers stretching out the harvest of their last crops. The California desert has started harvesting in light volume and will continue to

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	Higher
Berries: Blackberries	Fair	Steady
Berries: Blueberries	Fair	Higher
Broccoli	Good	Steady
Carrots	Good	Steady
Cauliflower	Good	Higher
Celery	Good	Steady
Citrus: Lemons	Good	Higher
Citrus: Oranges	Good	Steady
Cucumbers (Western)	Good	Steady
Cucumbers (Eastern)	Good	Steady
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*

ramp up productions. Red and yellow bells from Mexico are extremely limited, as they are coming to their season end. The California desert crop for colored bells will start early to mid May. One grower in Baja has light supplies of colored bells.

Eastern Bells: *Janine Baird*

The pepper market in Florida could trend back up over the weekend as supplies drop off. Many of the Florida suppliers were eager to take advantage of the recent increased demand on Florida product and cleared their coolers and fields of available product. The next several days will see slightly elevated markets, most noticeably in the larger sizes.

BERRIES *Mike Gorczyca*

Strawberries: We have strawberries being harvested in Oxnard, Santa Maria and Salinas/Watsonville areas. Oxnard has hit its peak with volume and quality about two weeks ago. Quality is fair to good with medium to small fruit size. Santa Maria has the best size and quality with volumes still building. Salinas/Watsonville has medium size fruit with fair to good quality. Volume is limited out of this area and is about a month away before they start to peak. Demand is good out of all areas. Quality has improved but could get set back if the forecast is correct with Rain starting again Tuesday/Wednesday of this week. Market is still firm.

Raspberries: Supplies are very light with a firm market. Supplies will slowly improve in the next two weeks. Quality is good.

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: 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 supply is not expected to exceed the demand, keeping markets from dropping too much. Spot deals should be available through out the spring depending on loading location.

Commodity Updates continued

GRAPES *Amy Grolnick*

Demand remains light. Chilean green grapes have finished coming to 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.

GREENONIONS *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 are expected in the growing regions on Tuesday which will cause for slow 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 South American product on the West Coast out of the LA area and some fruit coming into New Jersey as well. Quality is excellent. Mexican Cantaloupe will be starting soon within the next 1-2 weeks.

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 almost finished. Only one or two shippers still have onions in Idaho/Oregon. The current yellow and red markets are way up and demand is very strong due to a lack of supplies. The white market is steady but high. The Texas market is very strong. They were forecast to get rain most of this week but may only get a little tonight, so the end of the week could bring an increase in availability. The red and yellow markets are both up again as the available supplies are extremely limited right now. The white market is stable to slightly lower for now but supplies are also limited due to the weather so they could also move back up. Stay ahead on all colors as we are definitely in a demand-exceeds supplies situation on all colors. The quality is fair to good. California and Vidalia, Georgia are scheduled to start packing early next week.

POTATOES *John Tole*

Larger counts remain limited in Idaho while the smaller sizes are more abundant. 40-60 counts are so tight that many suppliers are asking for 48 to 72 hours lead-time to cover larger quantities. Burbanks will be the main variety for the rest of the storage season and they will continue to peak on 80's and smaller. The 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 counts although they are very limited on 90's and 100's. They still have excellent quality and are peaking on 70/ 60's. Wisconsin and Colorado shippers continue to pack norkotahs as well. The Colorado market

Commodity Updates continued

is slightly stronger due stronger demand and the lack of size in Idaho. Wisconsin is coming to the end of the season and is higher on all sizes due to lighter supplies. The quality in Colorado is mostly good while Wisconsin ranges from poor to good. North Dakota continues to pack reds and gold's but the availability is way down and they continue to price day-of-shipment. Idaho packers are going with reds and gold's as well but the demand is very strong and they are pricing day-of-shipment as well due to a lack of supplies. California packers are still packing all colors and are getting increased volume now from Bakersfield. The California quality is good on all colors although their reds can be a little light in color. South Florida is still running reds, Yukon, and whites, and has increased their volume as well. They also have good quality but better red color than California.

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*

The squash market is on its way back up in Florida. Recent heavy rains have led to quality issues and decreased volume. Expect green and yellow to jump over the weekend.

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, anticipating some fruit to become available from what very light production there actually is. There was rain over the weekend that will slow production this week, but even with the added weather shippers are starting to mirror

the pricing we are seeing out of Nogales as many shippers do not want to get loaded up with inventory due to high priced fruit. 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 lower.

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.