



**ADAMS**  
A Fresh Produce Distributor



## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup> 2009

If you choose to go voluntarily into the fire. The blaze might well destroy you. But if you survive, every blow of the hammer will serve to shape your being. Every drop of water wrung from you will temper and strengthen your soul.

-Margaret Weis

### ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP

Blueberry                      Raspberry                      Iceberg Lettuce                      Boston Lettuce  
Red/Green Leaf Lettuce      Yellow/White Corn                      Red Fresno Peppers

### ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY

Blackberry                      Broccoli                      Broccoli Crowns                      Cauliflower  
Celery                      Oranges                      Red Grapes                      Pineapple  
Cantaloupe                      Honeydew                      Potatoes B Red                      Russet Potatoes

### BRIX READINGS TABLE

CANTALOUPE 12ct	NA	GOOD
CANTALOUPE 15ct	11	GOOD
HONEYDEW	10.5	AVERAGE
PINEAPPLE	14.5	GOOD
RED GRAPE	21	EXCELLENT
GREEN GRAPE	17	EXCELLENT
STRAWBERRIES	10	AVERAGE
RASPBERRIES	12	AVERAGE
BBLACKBERRIES	12	AVERAGE
BLUEBERRIES	13	GOOD

Within a given species of plant, the crop with a higher refractive index will have a higher sugar content, higher mineral content, and a higher protein content. This adds up to a sweeter tasting, more mineral-nutritious food with a lower nitrate and water content and better storage characteristics. As a broad generalization, produce over 12 Brix is considered good



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### COMMODITIES REPORT

#### **APPLES/PEARS**

Lower grade (light colored) Red Delicious Apples are getting tight. Demand continues strong for the smaller sized reds. Continue to promote Granny Smith and Fuji Apples in the small and mid-range sizes. Washington and Oregon Pears continue light production from storage including mainly the Anjou and Bosc varieties. Be aware, the Fancy pears are drying up and coming from storage now are mainly #1 fruit for suitable shipping condition.

#### **ASPARAGUS**

The market is still strong and supplies from California will be light. Expect prices to remain strong until after the holiday. Mexican production is all but finished. Supplies coming out of California have become much tighter due to the holiday pull and cold night time temperatures.

#### **AVOCADO**

**Mexican fruit** – Mexican supplies are short this week. Supplies look to stay shorter over the next 2 weeks as workers take off for Easter. Mexico is currently supplying the bulk of the avocados on the market. This reduction in supply is driving the market upward. Demand continues to be very good.

#### **BELL PEPPERS**

**Eastern Bells:** The Florida market on bell peppers is working its way up this week due to better demand and the shift of growing regions. Quality on bells looks good. Market should continue to climb as fewer peppers are available and the transition north begins.

#### **BERRIES**

- **Strawberries:** Strawberry production in California continues to gain momentum with Oxnard having the volume out of all growing areas in California now producing. We have received some rain in the California growing areas and will break today and Thursday and be back in with some more light rain (predominantly in the north) by Friday. Rain has slowed production for Salinas / Watsonville, but not badly affected in the south. Oxnard and Santa Maria will be the strong spots as Salinas and Watsonville are only producing a couple of pallets a day, but with the passing rain most shippers are now going to be stripping plants. We can expect Salinas /Watsonville to be on the lower side of production for the next 7 – 10 days. We are now in the tail end of the Easter pull, and shippers are doing their best to maintain their prices. Driscoll's will be transferring Californian fruit to Florida with a week in advance notice.
- **Raspberries:** Raspberry production is very low and will continue to be snug with Mexico encountering hot weather and California just not being up to speed yet. Overall production is close to nothing out of Mexico. We can expect to see orders cut and loading dates to be affected as well. There should be a second push from production by mid April that should increase volume significantly.
- **Blackberries:** Blackberry production is steady with respectfully consistent transfers arriving from Mexico. There continue to be shippers in much better shape than others. We are now looking at local production to increase but are currently dealing with predominantly transferred fruit from Mexico. There are some shippers currently putting out some aggressive pricing in anticipation of a big push in volume over the next couple of months.
- **Blueberries:** Blueberry transfers are slowing down tremendously from Chile and some shippers are getting higher prices. We are seeing less fruit arriving on vessels, and see the end of boat fruit soon. Most to all Chilean fruit is now airfreight, meaning less fruit on each transfer. Some shippers are expressing that we may see the end of Chilean product by the end of the month. There are small quantities of local Californian blues with great size and quality. There are reports of Floridian Blueberries (new crop) now available, but commanding a premium price. We can expect a gap as the Eastern early varieties were affected by early frost damage.

#### **BROCCOLI**

This market is softer as more supplies come from the California growing regions. The strong prices have slowed demand tremendously. Prices will start to soften up through the week. Expect plenty of supplies by the week's end.

#### **CARROTS**

California carrots have moved into new fields in Imperial Valley. Size is running small right now as cool weather has slowed growth. This has lighted supplies of jumbo sized carrots. Size is expected to come back in April. Quality remains good. Georgia has good availability and quality on the East Coast.

#### **CAULIFLOWER**

Demand has fallen off as supplies have increased from most shippers. The market is weaker with some shippers offering deals. Supplies look good for the rest of the week. Quality is still fair with some lots showing yellow discoloration.

#### **CELERY**

This market is steady in the bigger sized celery. Prices have picked up a little on the smaller sizes. The quality is still very nice with good weights. Demand is also steady. Some shippers have offered deals on 18 and 24 count celery for volume orders.

#### **CITRUS**

- **Lemon:** The Central Valley is 90% picked. Most of the volume is coming out of Ventura County. Supplies are peaking on 140's. There are good supplies of 165's, with 200's being a little on the tight side.
- **Oranges:** There will be good supplies of Navels available into May. Peak sizes are 48's and 56's. There is limited harvest starting on Valencia's.



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### COMMODITIES REPORT CONTINUED

#### CUCUMBERS

**Eastern Cucumbers:** The cucumber market is dropping fast in Florida as domestic supplies become more readily available. Central Florida should be in decent supply in another seven days and we can continue to see a declining cucumber market in that time. Quality has improved from fair to good.

#### GRAPES

Green Seedless grapes are up! Regular shipments of short term storage Thompson green seedless grapes are on the decline and long storage greens will start to be the predominant grape. The market will continue stronger into next week. There are regular storage green seedless lots with problems at shipping point due to lack of movement and limited storage space. Red Seedless (Crimson) grape supplies are still decent and the market will remain steady into next week.

#### GREEN ONIONS

This market will be steady for the front part of the week. But look for prices to increase as the week goes along. Production from Mexico will come to a halt due to the Easter Holiday. The border crossing will shut down on Thursday and will not open back up until Monday. Also there will be no harvest until Monday out of Mexico. Then expect supplies to get back on track late next week.

#### KIWI

Kiwi quality remains excellent and movement is steady. The market will remain steady well into next week.

#### LEAF LETTUCE

This market is active with all leaf items. Huron and Salinas production has begun, but plantings are limited in both regions. Continue to avoid liner packed product as this will create dehydration. This will allow for better arrivals. Some quality defects continue to include insects, fringe burn, tip burn, and wind burn.

#### LETTUCE

The lettuce market is extremely active. Supplies are extremely short out of the Huron growing region. Prices are also active. The Salinas growing region is not yet ready for production. Some processors are looking for fields to secure for processing. The yields are not enough to complete production in the processing plants. This is creating the active market on carton lettuce. Many suppliers still have enough volume to cover orders in full. But expect this market to be active throughout the week.

#### MELONS

- **Cantaloupes:** Cantaloupes will continue strong this week as there are only light supplies available. Small sizes have tightened up and will be shorter into next week as well. The first of the two remaining Guatemala growing areas of the second cycle will finish up after this week. The more mountainous, second growing area coming into harvest is experiencing colder, wet weather and will net lighter supplies over the next 7-14 days. The East Coast (Florida) ports are dominating the supply line and the West (L.A.) supplies remain extremely low with very little direct vessel shipments. Heavy demand pressure will keep the market strong on Cantaloupes into next week. Sugar levels and eating quality remain high.
- **Honeydews:** The market remains strong on honeydews, and it's now the smaller sizes that have tightened up. Only light supplies are available from all ports and that will continue into next week. Similar to the cantaloupes, supplies will remain very light over the next 7-14 days. Quality remains very good.

#### ONIONS

Idaho/Oregon will have supplies available through the end of May with limited shippers. Washington looks like they will go through the middle to end of May with supplies as well. The quality is still good, with several shippers now pulling out of their cold storage. Mexican product is still available out of Texas along with Texas grown onions. There are load volume deals on Texas jumbo yellow onions and good supplies of carton Texas 1015's.

#### POTATOES

Burbanks are now the only varietal available and are running small. The quality is still very good. Wisconsin and Colorado have good supplies and quality. Colored potatoes are loading out of North Dakota and Wisconsin with Washington still with some light supplies. California with good quality but light supplies on some varieties which are getting filled with product out of Washington or Florida.

#### SQUASH

**Eastern Squash:** A little spread in the Florida the squash market this week. Some cheap deals to be had in Homestead with slightly higher markets in other areas. Quality overall is good but sizing as a bit irregular. Stable market conditions are expected to continue.



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### COMMODITIES REPORT CONTINUED

#### **TOMATOES**

Tomato production in Florida is lower than Mexico but demand is keeping the playing field level. There has been no major upswing to pricing even with lower production. Early cooler weather had slowed production and growth. There is more of the bigger fruit than smaller due to the fact that smaller fruit has been affected by the recent cold temps more so than the larger fruit. Roma tomatoes are very tight. Grape tomatoes are starting to get a bit tight.

#### **WATERMELONS**

Watermelon supplies are getting better. Seedless watermelon supplies still remain relatively light but Northern Mexico growers are able to cross more fruit into Nogales and Texas as we progress into the second full week of April. Demand is light as of this week, so that has helped ease the pressure on available supplies. Warmer weather trends are on the way and expect supplies to be getting better within the next one to two weeks.

#### **VALUE ADDED**

Broccoli processors are still having a tough time filling orders and they are holding customers to weekly averages. The lettuce supplies are extremely short. This will have a direct affect on the quality of finished product. Harvesting crews are way ahead of fields harvesting younger lettuce. This is not helping the yields in the plant. So lettuce processors are out purchasing extra fields to help meet the demand. Good quality continues to be reported on chopped Romaine. Complaints have been minimal on green onions also.