



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

MAY 11th, 2009

*Ability may get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there.
John Wooden*

MARKET REPORT

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Cauliflower | Celery | Avocados | Boston Lettuce |
| Red/Green Leaf Lettuce | Red Fresno Peppers | Brussels Sprouts | Yellow Wax Beans |
| Parsnips | | | |

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY

- | | | | |
|------------|----------------------|---------------|------------|
| Blackberry | Blueberry | Strawberry | Raspberry |
| Asparagus | C/T Green Beans | Broccoli | Corn |
| Eggplant | Red,White,Blk Grapes | Pineapple | Watermelon |
| Cantaloupe | Honeydew | Yellow Squash | Zucchini |

BRIX READINGS TABLE

CANTALOUPE 12ct	12	GOOD
CANTALOUPE 15ct	NA	NA
HONEYDEW	11	AVERAGE
PINEAPPLE	15	EXCELLENT
RED GRAPE	20.5	EXCELLENT
GREEN GRAPE	18	EXCELLENT
STRAWBERRIES	11	AVERAGE
RASPBERRIES	13	AVERAGE
BBLACKBERRIES	8	POOR
BLUEBERRIES	12	EXCELLENT

Within a given species of plant, the crop with a higher refractive index will have higher sugar content, higher mineral content, and 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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APPLES/PEARS

Gala Apples remain very tight in the Northwest and there are only light supplies of New Zealand fruit arriving on the East Coast. Red Delicious Apples in the lower grades (lighter color) remain in limited in supply as controlled atmosphere storage fruit is coming out high in color. Small sized Granny Smith and small sized varietal apples continue to be excellent choices Washington and Oregon Pears continue light production from storage and now only Anjou pears are available to finish the storage pear season. Both Washington and Oregon are shipping all #1 fruit from here until the end of the storage season due to quality concerns.

ASPARAGUS

This market is still strong with limited supplies coming from California. Peruvian asparagus is in good supplies off of the east coast. Washington is in full swing production and they are priced competitively if you can load up there. With the cool temperatures expected for this week, suppliers expect production to stay moderate at best.

AVOCADO

Mexican supplies are light, but steady coming into the states. The supply pipe line looks to start catching by the end of the week as demand eases this week.

BELL PEPPERS

Central Florida is seeing very good supplies and quality on but not much in demand, keeping the market at the lower levels. The market should start to gather some strength at the beginning of the week in preparation for the Memorial Day pull and continue strengthening up through the holiday. At that point in time, pepper will be starting in South Georgia and Mississippi where the market is expected to start off on the higher end due to recent flooding.

BERRIES

- **Strawberries** California production is picking back up after the shot of rain we received last weekend. We are now in the first day of a warming trend forecasted for the week, which should give the plants a little boost to bring on the volume. Oxnard is getting close to wrapping up operations, some shippers sooner than others. Some shippers have expressed that they will be done by the end of May. Size and quality are FAIR at best in Oxnard. Santa Maria continues with good quality and size. Salinas / Watsonville continue to gain momentum.
- **Raspberries:** Californian production continues to increase. Both Oxnard and Salinas / Watsonville are producing and we are seeing much better availability as more shippers are coming on line with new fruit and fob are reflecting this. New crop quality is good.
- **Blackberries:** Blackberry production is steady with consistent transfers arriving from Mexico. There continue to be shippers in much better shape than others. We continue looking at local production to increase but are currently dealing with predominantly transferred fruit from Mexico. Watsonville is producing small quantities, but is inconsistent at this point. 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 production continues to slowly increase in California and will slowly increase over the next two weeks. The Central Valley will be the primary area of production to start then we will see some in Oxnard and Watsonville. This week the Central Valley probably will only harvest minimal volume. The initial assessment of the crop was a bit premature; we are seeing a lot of green fruit. Florida has and has a good jump on the west and has much better volume and availability.

BROCCOLI

This commodity has tightened up in supplies with most suppliers. Broccoli crown production as well as bunched product will increase in price throughout the week. In the Santa Maria region, production also has lightened. The quality on all broccoli items is good.

CARROTS

California carrots are now coming out of the new fields in Bakersfield. Size and quality is much better than the ones from the Imperial Valley. Georgia has good availability and quality on the East Coast.

CAULIFLOWER

Supplies are still very limited and will remain the same way for the rest of the week. Prices are very high. Demand is still strong and most shippers are trying to source product on the outside. This is causing the market to remain tight. The quality has been average. Santa Maria and Salinas both have product available.

CELERY

This market is stronger on all sizes. The quality is still very clean with good weights. Demand has increased. Expect this market to be active throughout the week. Large sizing has diminished rapidly from the previous week. Some of the lots have shown seeder. Suppliers expect moderate production throughout the week.

CITRUS

- **Lemons:** The Central Valley is 90% picked. Ventura County is supplying the bulk of the volume. Supplies are peaking on 140's, and followed by 165's. Larger fruit will tighten up in the coming weeks.
- **Limes:** Supplies are running heavy to smaller fruit. Larger fruit is limited, but looks to start improving in a couple of weeks. Quality is good.
- **Oranges:** Navel supplies continue to tighten as growers begin to finish for the season. Late navel varieties will continue into June. Valencia production is increasing. Quality is very good, with brix levels in the 11-12 range. Sizes are running 88's, 113's, and 138's.



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CUCUMBERS

Georgia will not be starting cucumbers until the end of next week and Plant City is beginning to experience weather related quality issues. Next week will see the cucumber market take a jump up and continue to climb until after the Memorial Day push is over and Georgia is into decent volume.

GRAPES

Thompson green seedless grapes are winding down quickly and there are only limited supplies of decent quality storage fruit. New crop Perlette Seedless grapes are being packed and shipped out of Mexico and finishing this week also out of Coachella. Red seedless (Crimson) grape supplies remain light this week and will get quickly lighter as we move into next week. Few Flames have started out of both Mexico and Coachella. Look for higher pricing this week on red seedless as we approach the end of the Crimson deal and the start of the Mexico/Coachella Flames. Red Globes are still available, but Chilean Black seedless is all but finished for the season.

GREEN ONIONS

This market has remained steady. Supplies continue to be strong from the Mexican region. Expect this market to be stable throughout the week. The quality continues to be good, with little to no problems reported.

KIWI

Kiwi quality remains excellent and movement is steady. The market will remain steady again this week.

LEAF LETTUCE

The romaine and green leaf market is stronger with all suppliers. Cool temperatures in the Salinas Valley have slowed production down. The quality has been average at best. Some quality defects that continue to surface include insects, fringe burn, tip burn, and wind burn.

LETTUCE

The lettuce market has picked up steam with light supplies. Most suppliers still have to fill orders with 30 count lettuce. This is because lettuce is not sizing up properly. Las Cruces, Mexico is in full production now for those interested. Growers continue to be behind in scheduled harvesting in Salinas for at least 7 more days. This is due to cold temperatures and windy conditions in the Salinas Valley from previous weeks. The Salinas Valley over this past weekend still had cool temperatures and rain. Yields continue to be low on this commodity.

MELONS

- **Cantaloupes:** Offshore cantaloupe supplies from both Guatemala and Honduras are winding down as we approach the finish of the deal. Shippers are still looking to move fruit, but supplies have shortened up, especially in the small sizes (15/18's)*. Quality is still very good for offshore fruit and sugar levels remain at optimal levels, so keep the orders coming! Mexico Cantaloupes are light in supply and they only have a little time left in their short window. Mexico production looks to be steady through this week, but drop off next week as the CA/AZ desert deals kick off. The offshore fruit supplies will be significantly lighter over the next 7-10 days and we're looking for a relatively smooth transition into new crop CA/AZ fruit. The East Coast (Florida) ports continue to dominate the supply line for offshore fruit and the West (L.A.) supplies remain low with MINIMAL direct vessel shipments.
- **Honeydews:** The offshore supplies will continue to decline in number over the next 7-10 days but Mexico honeydews coming into Nogales will be increasing. The market looks to be steady for the balance of this week and into next week, all depending on demand pressure. Quality remains very good and sugar levels very good!

ONIONS

Most of the Idaho/Oregon shippers have finished up. We will have some of cold storage product available through the end of May up north. There are load volume deals on Reds out of Washington they will continue with availability through the middle to end of May with limited supplies of yellows. Southern Texas is finishing up with a few shippers moving up to the Wintergarden area. Good supplies of carton Texas 1015's. Vidalias are going strong with good availability. The California Imperial Valley region has started with good quality and availability of all colors and sizes.

POTATOES

Burbanks are the only varietal available and are running small. The quality is still very good on the Idaho storage crop. Wisconsin and Colorado have good supplies and quality. Colored storage potatoes are loading out of North Dakota and Wisconsin. Washington still has some light supplies available. California new crop available with very good quality. Northern and Southern Florida now with availability on new crop colored potatoes.

STONE FRUIT

The Chilean fruit deal is all but wrapped up with the exception of a few pallets of black plums. New Crop, domestic, California tree fruit is going in a light way with Yellow/White Peaches, Yellow/White Nectarines, Apricots and Cherries. Early production is very good and color is excellent! Mild weather prevails and optimum for high colored good eating fruit. Cherry quality is very good and sizing is LARGE (9/10 ROW)*. Supplies will continue to increase after this week. Prices to start with on the early fruit are high, but demand and increasing volumes will soon bring them down.

TOMATOES

Tomato production in Florida continues to increase as new growing areas are producing good numbers and predominately larger sizing. Grape tomatoes are continuing to be a bit tight.



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WATERMELONS

Watermelon supplies will remain steady, yet demand continues only fair. Fruit continues to arrive from Northern Mexico into Nogales and South Texas. Demand looks to remain light and the market will continue level this week and into next on both seeded and seedless watermelons. Fair weather prevails and overall Watermelon quality is very good!

VALUE ADDED

The lettuce supplies are still on the light side. Processors continue to acquire larger amounts of acreage due to the smaller heads of lettuce being harvested. This will have a direct affect on the quality of finished product. Harvesting crews are way ahead of fields harvesting younger lettuce. Good quality continues to be reported on chopped Romaine. Complaints have been minimal on green onions also.

Produce Spotlight

White Asparagus

White asparagus comes from the process of [etiolation](#), which is the deprivation of light. Dirt is kept mounded around the emerging stalk, depriving it of light. The plant cannot produce chlorophyll without light, thus there is no green color to the stalks.

White asparagus is considered to be slightly milder in flavor and a bit more tender than green asparagus. All varieties and colors may be used interchangeably in recipes.

Asparagus has a long history going back as far as the first century. We have records of it growing in ancient Greece and Rome. Egyptians over 2,000 years ago cultivated asparagus for medicinal reasons and legend has it that it was so revered they offered it up to gods in their rituals. It was surely first discovered growing wild A wild asparagus has thin shoots thinner than a pencil and is much different than the asparagus that you find in your grocery counter. Through selective breeding and growing techniques they developed a thicker stem with more edible flesh. It was cultivated in gardens in ancient Rome some as far back as the first century AD. Varieties produced such big shoots that they were 3 to the pound

The Ancient Greeks and Romans used a Persian word "asparag" which meant shoot. the term sperage became popular for many years and in the 16th century we find the term "sparagus" used in English speaking countries. the peasants would call it "sparrow grass". During the 19th century Asparagus took over about the same time that cultivation of asparagus started in the United States.

Creamy White Asparagus Soup

A little nutmeg and Creole seasoning enhance this delicately flavored soup

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 bunch green onions, about 6 to 8 green onions, thinly sliced, with about 2 to 3 inches of green
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 pound white asparagus, peeled and cut in 1/2- to 1-inch pieces
- 1 to 1 1/2 cups diced potato (Yukon gold or red-skinned, peeled)
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 scant teaspoon Creole seasoning
- 1 small bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon dried leaf thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- freshly ground nutmeg, to taste
- 1 cup heavy cream
- fresh chopped parsley, optional



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Preparation:

In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium-low heat. Add the green onions and cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute longer. Add the asparagus, potato, chicken broth, Creole seasoning, bay leaf, thyme, and sugar; bring to a boil. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are very tender. Carefully blend the hot mixture in small batches. Add cream and the nutmeg, to taste; heat through. If desired, sprinkle with a little fresh parsley. Serves 4 to 6.

Healthy Eating “Superfoods”

What classifies a food as “Super” basically it’s a food with high levels of certain “phytonutrients” the compounds in plants that promote our health by stimulating our immune systems, protecting our cells from oxidation, repairing our DNA damage, killing cancer cells, or detoxifying our bodies of carcinogens

Phytonutrient Phenomenon

Phytonutrients are thought to be responsible for much of the disease protection provided by eating fruits and vegetables. Brightly colored “superfoods” high in certain phytonutrients may target specific ailments, but lighter fruit and veggies are also full of disease fighting compounds. Since the effects are still being studied, currently there is no recommended RDA for phytonutrients, but a diet high in fruits and vegetables is your best bet for adequate intake. Are phytonutrients better than vitamins? More like a partner, For example, while vitamin c accounts for only .04% of an apples antioxidant activity, that apple may contain over 100 different phytochemicals.

Phytonutrients, Health Claims & Food Sources

Flavonoids aka Polyphenols: Over 5000 naturally occurring Flavonoids have been identified in various plants. Anthoxanthins and Allicin lower blood pressure and protect against stomach cancer.

- SUPER WHITE - Cauliflower, Mushrooms, Onions, Magnosteen

Anthocyanidins: Reduce heart disease risk by prevention of clot formation, lower cancer risk.

- SUPER PURPLE - Super Purple! Acai, Goji, Blueberries, Red and Concord Grapes, Prunes

Carotenoids: Combine with fat for better absorption. Alpha-carotene, Beta-carotene, and Beta-cryptoxanthin help prevent lung, esophagus and stomach cancer, lower heart disease risk, improve immune function,

- SUPER ORANGE - Pumpkins, Carrots, Plantains, Sweet potatoes, Cantaloupes.

Lycopene: Wards off lung and prostate cancer it’s more available after cooking or processing so don’t ignore tomato paste!

- SUPER RED - Tomatoes, Pastes, Sauces, soups, Juices, Watermelon, Guavas, Pink Grapefruit Red Peppers.

Lutein: Reduces heart disease and stroke risks, guards against age-related macular degeneration (vision loss)

- SUPER GREEN - Spinach, Kale, Turnip, Collard, Mustard, and Dandelion Greens, Peas

Glucosinolates: Remove potential carcinogens and increase tumor suppressors to help prevent lung and colon cancer

- SUPER RAW - Brussels Sprouts, Kale, Turnips, Cabbage, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Bok Choi

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