



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

MARCH 30th, 2010

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT



The Shrimp Basket is a family friendly restaurant that originated in Gulf Shores in 1993, and now has 8 locations in the area - Perdido Key, Foley, AL; Davis Highway Pensacola, FL; Navy Boulevard Pensacola, FL; Milton, FL; Bay Minette, AL and Orange Beach, AL.

They are grillin', steamin', and fryin'! Their menu has a great variety of seafood and local favorites. It ranges from shrimp, fish, crab claws and crawfish to po-boys, chicken and sandwiches, and the Roasted Red Pepper Bama Sauce over angel hair pasta!

All You Can Eat Fried Shrimp – All day Wednesday & Sunday

All You Can Eat Fried Fish – All day Monday & Thursday

All You Can Eat Steamed Shrimp – All day Tuesday

25¢ RAW Oysters - Tuesday Nights

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WEATHER REPORT

Approaching storm systems out West will bring a drastic cool down, strong winds and rain to much of the western growing regions this week. The first weak system arrives early Tuesday followed by a powerful system expected Wednesday into Thursday. These cold systems will keep temperatures in the High 50s to low 60s in Central and Southern California through the week. Precipitation in the 1-2 inch range is expected in these regions with hail also possible with these cold systems. This will hinder growth rates and may damage crops (hail, mold, mildews) in the transition regions of Central California this week. In the desert regions temperatures in the 90s today and Tuesday will fall to the 60s to low 70s mid-week. As these systems roll through they will bring strong winds (24-45mph) and a 20% chance of showers to the region.

Showers and breezy conditions in southern Florida will exit the area by tomorrow afternoon. A high pressure system moves into the area mid-week bringing a gradual warm up of temperatures (70s early this week to low 80s late in the week) the latter half of the week. Long range forecasts show a chance of showers returning over the weekend.

****WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW****

- **Green bell peppers remain very short and quality is only fair. Red and yellow bells are also becoming very tight.**
- **Tomatoes in all areas are in short supply.**
- **Bartlett pears are finished for the season.**
- **Nappa cabbage is still extremely light in availability due to excessive seeder in the fields.**

MARKET REPORT

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP

Avocado Bell Peppers Blueberries Onions Pears Potatoes

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY

Apples Asparagus Blackberries Broccoli Cantaloupe Carrots Cauliflower Celery Cucumbers Grapes
 Green Onions Honeydew Iceberg Lettuce Leaf Lettuce Lemons Oranges Raspberries Squash Strawberries
 Stonefruit Tomatoes Watermelon

APPLES/PEARS

Washington shippers are still looking for help to move large reds and golds while they struggle to get the smaller foodservice fruit. Mexican export demand is up and supplies of the smaller Gala variety are lower, so expect deal prices on the other small varieties to dry up. Galas are going up as the smaller shippers finish packing. There are still some tremendous deals on 48/56/64's in most varieties too as most are large and heavier to the premium grades. Please consider varieties other than Red Delicious for your foodservice orders that require smaller sizes. D'anjou pears are in excellent shape with good supplies in Washington and are also mostly large. Bosc, Seckel, Concorde, Comice and Red Crimson varietal pears are available as well although supplies are low as the varietal pears finish for the season.

ASPARAGUS

This asparagus market is firm. The Easter pull continues to keep supplies on the light side. All sizing is light in availability. Peruvian product is still available on the East and West Coast. Quality of Mexican product continues to be good. California production can be loaded in Salinas and Yuma.



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AVOCADO

California growers continue to improve their harvest volumes. Fruit is beginning to size up. Chilean fruit has finished. Mexico's volume is lighter as growers continue to hold off on production.

- **Mexican Fruit:** Mexico still represents the bulk of the avocados on the market. Growers continue to slow their harvest to firm their market.
- **California Fruit:** Growers are harvesting good supplies as fruit is sizing up.

BELL PEPPERS

Eastern Bells: Little to no bell peppers is available in Florida. Rain this week and last is making matters more difficult, and the cold weather that went through Florida has kept plants from growing. This will not change for the next few weeks. Look for product to remain tight, and prices high, as Nogales also has limited availability. Prices have not been this high on peppers in twenty years or more.

BERRIES

- **Strawberries:** Florida was hit with some heavy rain over the weekend which has limited supplies coming out of this area the start of this week. The forecast is for clear warm weather the balance of this week out of Florida which will improve supplies as this week moves on. Quality is fair. The weather is changing in California this week with rain in the forecast Tuesday thru Thursday and then again this weekend. This will tighten up supplies as this week moves on. Market is slightly firmer with good quality fruit.
- **Raspberries:** Supplies are still light with a firm market. Driscoll is still the main supplier of raspberries at this time. Quality is good.
- **Blackberries:** Better supplies coming out of Mexico is causing this market to weaken slightly. Quality is good.
- **Blueberries:** Supplies and demand are light with a steady to slightly stronger market. If demand picks up the blueberry market will firm up quickly due to light supplies. Quality is fair to good.

BROCCOLI

This market is softer. Supplies currently exists in Salinas, Santa Maria and the desert region. Yuma supplies are lighter and shippers are trying to move orders to the other regions. The heads sizing on crowns has been much better as good weather has been had for this past week. Rains are expected in the Salinas Valley over the next 5-6 days so things may change in terms of volume availability.

CARROTS

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

This market is soft. The best pricing available is coming out of Salinas. Santa Maria and Yuma will have production as well. There has been little to no complaints on quality this past week. Good supplies from shippers has made pricing very competitive.

CELERY

This market is steady. Better supplies exist on larger sizing, 24s in particular. Production is stronger in Oxnard and Santa Maria compared to previous weeks. The quality continues to be good from all the growing regions. There is no product available in Salinas at this time.

CITRUS

- **Lemons:** Supplies are good on 115's and larger, with 165's and 200's becoming better in supply. 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 remains steady. Crop continues to peak on fancy 72's, 56's and 88's.



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CUCUMBERS

Eastern Cucumbers: The end of the off shore deal in Florida means scarce supplies and marginal quality. With weeks of bad weather holding up the spring domestic crops, we can expect a gap in supply in another week or so. Currently, suppliers are anxious to unload the last of their Honduran cukes and have dropped the price gradually over the last few days.

GRAPES

Demand is still light and shippers are looking to keep product moving with deals. There are Crimson, Rubies and still some Flames available. The Greens, Sugarones and Thompsons are still the most prevalent. Black seedless are in lighter supply and excellent quality. Red Globes with very good quality and good availability.

GREENONIONS

This market continues to be steady with no real changes to report. Demand is light. Pencil sizes continue to have the largest availability. There have been some issues on light yellowing on processed items. Suppliers are working on fixing this problem as quickly as possible.

LEAF LETTUCE

The leaf market is steady. Huron and Yuma are the two growing regions active. Production in Yuma is expected to go into the second week of April with some suppliers. Salinas has not begun production. Most suppliers are entering new fields so product quality has been good.

LETTUCE

This market continues to be steady. Production numbers have increased in Huron. The weights of lettuce in Huron are better compared to this past week. Yuma is expected to be harvesting product through the month of March and part of April. There continues to be a few issues of pink ribbing, discoloration, and mechanical damage seen upon arrival.

MELONS

- **Cantaloupe:** Better availability with good demand. Honduran and Guatemalan product are both coming into the US along with a little from Costa Rica. 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.
- **Honeydew:** Better supply this week but still running large to 5's and 6's on the West Coast. Offshore fruit is still arriving into Florida, California and New Jersey. Product quality is getting better. Nogales is receiving Mexican fruit with limited availability and fair quality.

ONIONS

Yellows & reds are steady to slightly lower with less available in the northwest. Demand is only fair and seems to have dropped off a lot. Most shippers are still managing their storage inventories to insure supplying contracted and regular customers into April. The Northwest yellow sizing remains heavy to jumbos and larger while mediums remain very short. Although mediums are slightly cheaper, the quality is holding nicely. Mexico has continued to consume most of its own yellow and white onion crop rather than sending it to the US, although they are crossing a little more now. Domestic whites are still very limited and a 'demand exceeds supplies' situation but the market has stabilized. The Mexican onions are peaking on mediums and pre-packs in all three colors, so the volume of jumbos is relatively low. The quality from Mexico is good to fair on all colors. The Texas crop is supposed to start by the end of this week in a light way and should increase its volume by next week.



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POTATOES

The Idaho market is steady on the smaller counts but higher on the larger sizes. Burbanks are still heavy to 90/100's and are producing a lot of number-twos while the Norkotahs are heavier 60's and 70's. Very few shippers are packing Norkotahs as most Idaho suppliers finish in March and April and the demand for larger counts is very strong. Washington Norkotahs are up slightly on all counts due to stronger demand on the larger sizes and a lack of the smaller. They still have excellent quality and are peaking on 70's and 60's. Wisconsin and Colorado shippers are also packing Norkotahs and have a stronger market and increased demand, especially on the larger counts. The quality in Wisconsin ranges from poor to good while Colorado potatoes are mostly good. Mount Vernon, Washington continues with excellent quality on reds but is done with Yukon-golds and will only have reds for another week or so. North Dakota continues to pack reds and golds but the availability is way down and they are pricing day-of-shipment. Idaho packers are going with reds and golds as well but the demand is very strong! Red supplies are down and the market is up for sure in all areas. California packers have lighter supplies of all colors. They will get back into better volume in April. South Florida is going with reds and yukons but the volume remains light due to the freezes.

SQUASH

Eastern Squash: Squash volume continues to increase in South Florida and the market is falling fast as many shippers are eager to gain back months of business lost to Nogales. However, weeks of heavy rains may lead to quality issues in the coming days and keep that market from dropping too far.

STONE FRUIT

Off shore Peaches, Nectarines and Plums are all available with good quality and availability.

TOMATOES

Eastern: Florida continues and will be a non-factor in the tomato supply chain. A few shippers were anticipating some fruit to become available from what very light production there actually is, But the fruit is not coming on fast enough and is too immature or just has too many quality issues. Compounding the already poor situation, Florida had received a slow moving rain system that passed through last weekend which will further hinder production. Shippers are now saying possibly the middle to the end of May before supplies increase to normal production levels. There are a couple of shippers who are coming up with some fruit but the quantities are small and insignificant in the big picture. We can expect to see higher than normal fob's probably up through the spring accompanied with shortened supplies.

WATERMELON

Light supplies continue on both seeded and seedless product as demand continues to exceed supply. Quality on the Mexican fruit is fair at best. The mini seedless are in better supply and quality is good, the market is higher.

VALUE ADDED

On value added items, production will be available in Salinas and Yuma, pending which shipper is used. There will be a two week gap before all suppliers will be in Salinas, so please be aware. Green onions have been reported to have some slight yellowing upon arrivals.