



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

NOVEMBER 16th, 2009

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT



Firefly Panama City Beach, FL

Firefly is a unique casual, fine dining experience located in Panama City Beach, Florida. Not your typical beach restaurant, Firefly patrons can dine under a grand old oak tree that makes the ambiance more Mediterranean bistro than coastal beach getaway. The ever-changing menu is based on fresh, locally caught fish as well as exotic imported fish and fresh seasonal vegetables. All meals are prepared with a passion for food and a personality for presentation.

Menu highlights include:

Roasted Eggplant Napoleon
Arugula & Watermelon Salad
Mint Pesto Crusted Australian Rack of Lamb
Tortilla Crusted Gulf Grouper and Seared Diver Scallops
Mrs. C's White Chocolate Crème Brulee.

Firefly provides full service catering for any size event, as well as the convenience of their own private dining area called the Canopies Room.

Find out more information about Firefly at
www.fireflypcb.com
535 Richard Jackson Blvd.
Panama City Beach, FL 32407
850-249-3359



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WEATHER REPORT

Cooler temperatures are on the way out west as a couple of storm systems approach California this week. Temperatures in the low 70s today will moderate into the low 60s by late Tuesday into the weekend. A very slight chance of rain is forecast for late Tuesday however this system is expected to remain to the north of the Salinas region for the most part with another more powerful system expected to bring rain to the area the latter part of the week. The Southwestern Desert region temperatures in the 90s last week will cool to the mid 70s this week as these storm systems roll through Northern California. Rain will not be a factor however clear and cool overnight conditions leave the possibility of morning frost in these regions this week.

In the Southeast temperature highs will be in the mid 70s in the Northern regions of Florida to mid 80s in Central and Southern Florida with a slight chance of showers through the week. Overnight lows generally in the 50s look to be the norm this week.

COMMODITY ALERTS

- Tomato supplies will be diminished through November
- Small sized apple supplies are very limited with crops peaking on 64/72/80 ct
- Naval orange supplies remain very limited on small size fruit
- Strawberries are limited and will be for the next month

Romaine- Issues on this commodity continue to include fringe burn, tip burn, decay, brown butts, rib discoloration, and brown spotting on outer leaves. These quality defects are industry wide with all suppliers and these defects will continue throughout this week with product being purchased from the Salinas Valley. Yuma production began the 9th of November with light production numbers to start. Escalator pricing has occurred.

Romaine hearts- Characteristics of this commodity continue to include severe twisting, fringe burn, internal burn and decay. These are defects reported to be seen upon arrival. Again this is industry wide problem and all suppliers are dealing with these issues. Expect these defects to be seen over the next two weeks until we can start production in Yuma. Escalator pricing has occurred.

Lettuce- Issues on this commodity continue to include lightweights, rib discoloration, poor shelf life, and pale color. These defects are industry wide with lettuce being harvested out of Salinas and Huron. Yuma began production lightly this past Monday. Volume is not expected to be good on this commodity until after Thanksgiving.

Spring Mix- Spring mix production will continue to be light in production due to adverse weather conditions. There was tremendous growth after the rains. The rain caused bacterial leaf spot on the current spring mix which made it difficult to harvest due to specific specs that needed to be met. Mildew is also prevalent in the spring mix because of the humidity which has also caused a loss of acres of spring mix. Further more, the new fields that should have been cut last week and this week are behind because the bed tops sealed up leaving no air to get to the roots and the cool weather has stopped growth.

Spinach- Spinach availability will continue to be light industry wide. The quality is fair with bruising and mechanical damage seen upon arrival. Fill rates have begun with a few suppliers.

Cauliflower- Supplies continue to be light as we transition into Yuma. Contracts are being covered in full and open orders currently are being filled in full. Most suppliers are reporting the quality as being moderate to good with light brown spotting being seen from certain lots. Salinas and Santa Maria production is light and Yuma will be light in production to start. Yuma is expected to have product available the third week in November.

Broccoli- Supplies will continue to be light over the next three weeks out of Salinas and Santa Maria growing regions. Yuma production will be light to start. Production is expected to begin the third week in November in Yuma. Some defects that have been seen out of Salinas and Santa Maria include pin rot, pale color and slight mildew.



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MARKET REPORT

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP

Cucumbers Grapes Honeydew Iceberg Lettuce Leaf Lettuce Squash Tomatoes

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY

Apples	Asparagus	Avocado	Bell Peppers	Blackberries	Blueberries	Broccoli	Cantaloupe
Carrots	Cauliflower	Celery	Green Onions	Kiwi	Lemons	Onions	
Oranges	Pears	Potatoes	Raspberries	Stonefruit	Strawberries		

APPLES/PEARS

Small sized apples in all varieties remain extremely short. This will be a season long issue for the Washington State apple crop. Overall crop shortages attributed to early and late growing season freezes (upwards of 5 million cartons over the season) will also contribute to the low levels of small fruit available. There are other areas in the Northeast (including the Carolina's, Virginia, Michigan and New York) packing red 'typed' apples, and demand for those is very good as well, especially with the limited supply of small sizes. Anjou Pears are in excellent shape with better supplies in Washington and Bartlett pears are still going strong. There are also varietal pears available including Bosc, Seckel, Concorde, Comice and Crimson Red Pears. Special apples, including the famed Honeycrisp variety, are in good supply.

ASPARAGUS

This market currently is stable. Supplies are light out of Mexico. Heavier supplies are coming from Peru and Chili and better pricing exists. Heavy past rains has caused for low yields in the Mexican growing region.

AVOCADO

Mexico shipments are lighter this week and Chile continues with good steady supplies. We are seeing higher maturity levels from both countries.

- **Mexican Fruit:** Shipments are again a little lighter this week as growers are looking to try to firm pricing. The size curve is evening out some with larger fruit crossing.
- **California Fruit:** California fruit should begin with light harvest sometime in December. This year's crop forecast looks much larger than last year's.
- **Chilean Fruit:** The majority of the fruit is still 50's and 60's. Chile is expected to continue through January with shipments.

BELL PEPPERS

Eastern Bells: Volume in Florida remains good, with the market remaining steady from last week. Larger sizes remain strong on price, with deals to be made on off-grades. Quality has been good.

BERRIES

- **Strawberries:** Strawberries are still being harvested in Salinas/Watsonville, Santa Maria, Oxnard and Mexico at this time. Supplies remain tight out of the South (Oxnard and Santa Maria) again this week with cold weather in place. The limited supplies will be the case for the balance of this month. Quality is fair to good. Mexico is still light on their production and will remain that way this week. Florida strawberry production will not start up till the first part of December. Look for the current markets to remain high with limited supplies. Rain is forecasted for later this week so get ahead of your needs before supplies drop off again.
- **Raspberries:** Raspberry production remains consistent and quality remains good. Raspberries are being harvested in California and Mexico at this time. Quality is good.
- **Blackberries:** Blackberries supplies continue to increase out of Mexico. Quality is also starting to improve as each week moves on. Market is steady
- **Blueberries:** Supplies steady this week and arrivals of offshore fruit are still somewhat sporadic. The main pack still available is the 4.4 oz. As production continues to increase look for more of the 6oz. pack to become available.



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BROCCOLI

Supplies have tightened up in Santa Maria and Salinas. Yuma will not begin production until the 23rd of December so trucks will be going to Yuma and Salinas for this week, depending on the order. Expect this commodity to be light in availability over the next few weeks as we transition into Yuma. Salinas will continue production for the next two weeks. Issues on this commodity include yellowing, knuckling, and pale green appearance. Processors are purchasing as much product as can be had and this will cause shortages in availability for carton business.

CARROTS

California carrots coming out of Bakersfield are sizing slower due to cooler weather. Jumbo market is firm.

CAULIFLOWER

Supplies are much tighter on this commodity in Salinas and Santa Maria. Yuma will begin production on the 23rd of November with early forecasts indicating lightly. Salinas will continue to harvest for the next two weeks. Expect the availability on this commodity to be sporadic over the next few weeks as the transition to Yuma begins. Some reports of brown spotting have already begun to be seen upon arrivals.

CELERY

This market continues to be stable. Some suppliers are attempting to raise the pricing due to holiday ads that are in progress. Overall, the market is stable with production in Santa Maria, Oxnard and Salinas. The quality continues to be strong with no major issues to report.

CITRUS

- **Lemons:** Supplies are good on all sizes and grades. The Desert crop is 30 to 40 percent lighter this year and quality is very good.
- **Limes:** Supplies remain lighter this week due to the rain on 2 weeks ago in Mexico. Quality remains good.
- **Oranges:** Navel quality continues to improve. Supplies remain tight on choice 113's and 138's of both grades. Demand continues to exceed supplies on smaller fruit. Small fruit looks to be tight for the season as this years crop is heavy to big fruit.

CUCUMBERS

Eastern Cucumbers: Supplies on some sizes are limited, and the market has reacted by moving higher. Quality in Florida is good. No problems from last week's storm.

GRAPES

The Thompson Green Seedless crop is all but finished for the season with the exception of a few lots with diminished shelf life. There are also a few Autumn King Green seedless left as well but those are extremely limited in supply with high FOB pricing. There are, however 18# Brazilian Festivals (only located on the East Coast) available, and they can be delivered to most mid-western and eastern locations. Overall supplies on green seedless look to remain very low for at least the next 3 weeks. Looking forward, Brazil and Chile have received cold weather and rainfall which will have a significant affect on upcoming supplies, in this transition period. Chile also looks to be pushed back about 7-10 days due to the early and late season cold weather. Domestic California Red Seedless grapes (Crimson) are still available, but they are starting to wind down rather quickly. Demand is strong again this week for red seedless and the market is higher. Market levels for green seedless will continue at higher levels this week and into next.

GREEN ONIONS

This market continues to be stable. Supplies are moderate to good on Mexican grown product. Pencil sizes are still the largest volume available. The quality continues to be good with no significant problems to report. Processors have had minimal problems with the raw product available.

KIWI

California Kiwi supplies are still very good and there is also Italian Kiwi available on the East Coast. The market will remain steady with strong demand, and quality continues to be very good.



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LEAF LETTUCE

This week and next will be difficult to harvest product in Salinas and Santa Maria. The same issues exist like the previous weeks. These issues include romaine having such defects as brown spotting, browning up the rib, brown butts, fringe burn and internal burn. Green leaf supplies are better than all other leaf items. Production in Yuma has started this week lightly with a few suppliers and volume will pick up towards the end of next week. This market will be active over the next two weeks. Romaine hearts are extremely tight and very active. The quality is marginal at best. Fringe burn is still being seen upon arrivals. The hearts are twisted in growth with some suppliers. Continue to expect defects on leaf items over the next few weeks with production from Salinas. Expect truck delays that have leaf items on the order throughout the week.

LETTUCE

This market is getting stronger. Salinas production is finished. Huron is finishing up with most suppliers this week and Yuma has started production on the light side. Contracts are being covered but open business is light with many of the suppliers. Suppliers are dealing with lightweights in Yuma, but mildew and excessive ribbing is not an issue like Salinas and Huron past production. Trucks should expect delays throughout this week and next and product will be arriving to the coolers at a slower than normal pace.

MELONS

- **Cantaloupes:** Arizona continues to produce domestic Cantaloupes and they should go for another 7-10 days depending on weather and yield. The prices are steady to start the week, but look for possible increases as we move through the week and supplies drop. Cooler weather prevails and sizing remains on the small side. The peak sizing is in 12/15ct and will be that way at least another week. Offshore cantaloupes remain available from the Guatemala loading in Florida. 9 and 12ct are the main sizes available, but a few smaller sizes will be available by the end of the week in Pompano Beach. There are still supplies of Mexico Cantaloupes crossing through the Nogales, AZ point of entry, but movement is only fair. Quality on product of Mexico is still improving but supplies have topped out. Overall fruit quality remains decent with moderate sugar levels.
- **Honeydews:** Honeydews supplies out of Mexico have dropped off considerably and the Arizona desert is winding down quickly. The market on Arizona fruit is slightly higher this week as well as that for Mexico fruit. Volume has switched sizes and is now heavier to the smaller sizes 6/8/9ct.

ONIONS

Demand is light with good availability. Product quality is excellent. The market is staying steady with Washington keeping the prices low due to ample supplies and good quality. There are good supplies available out of Colorado and Utah.

POTATOES

With Thanksgiving upon us trucks are extremely limited. Product is available but with trucks no showing shippers may have to limit runs due to shed space. Idaho is steady on supplies with Norkotahs still the main varietal but Burbanks are available. Washington new crop Norkotahs are going strong with good quality and availability. Colorado is going strong with new crop supplies as well. Mount Vernon, Washington with good availability; product quality is excellent. North Dakota and Wisconsin have good supplies of red, yellow and white potatoes.

SQUASH

Eastern Squash: Volume is good, and the market has gotten stronger during the past week, as Georgia has cleaned up on older product. Florida quality has been good.

STONE FRUIT

All domestic stone fruit is finished for the season. Chilean fruit looks to be here with the first air shots starting early next week. There are still excellent supplies of fall fruit items available such as Persimmons, Pomegranates and Quince.



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TOMATOES

Eastern: Supplies in Florida continue to be well below typical levels, with an expected increase in market pricing. Florida growers are experiencing major problems with reduced yields, dropping to 25% from normal averages. Both central and southern growing areas are looking at gradual improvement by early December, but will have to wait till then to see how the market will adjust. The majority of the supply concerns Rounds, Romas, Grape and Cherry tomatoes is directly related to the high temps we encountered at the end of September – early October which caused a bloom drop, thus reflecting in lower yields and reduced volume. The overall quality is good. There is a lack of bigger sized tomatoes. All round and roma supplies are down anywhere from 40-50%.

WATERMELONS

Watermelons are available from Mexico coming up through both Nogales, AZ and Texas shipping points. Supplies continue to be very good on Seedless, but have lightened up on Seeded. Markets look to remain steady again this week.

VALUE ADDED

Processors continue to purchase as much broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce and romaine as possible. Traditionally, the first week of transition is hectic with processors. Yuma will have major processors making their move towards the end of the month. Production will begin in Yuma thru 23rd of November. Until then, production will continue to be out of Salinas. Complaints continue to be reported on the chopped romaine not having as long a shelf life as in past months. As mentioned earlier in the leaf portion, the plants are tired. The cauliflower and broccoli raw product will get even tighter as we wind the season down. Brown spotting on cauliflower florets and yellowing and pale color on broccoli florets will be common issues talked about with these products.