



## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup> 2009

### RESTAURANT SPOTLIGHT

**The Summit Club  
Birmingham, AL**



The Summit Club of Birmingham was established in 1989, in the tradition of the most distinguished American and English city clubs.

Located in the heart of downtown Birmingham the Summit Club is the premier business and social center among the professional elite of Birmingham. But even beyond the refined dining and business amenities, the intangibles are what complete the club experience. The sense of belonging, the way the staff anticipates your needs and your wants, the way other Members welcome you, the enduring friendships – these are the attributes that make the Summit Club *your home away from home.*

The Summit Club is committed to establishing a tradition of fine food and personal service. Creative chefs produce an inspired variety of Continental and American cuisine. Attention is given to include a variety of light and tasty items plus daily features. Selections vary by season to capture each ingredient at the peak of freshness and flavor.

The Summit Club also presents a broad range of special functions and "clubs within the club" to appeal to its Members. Wine tastings, theater events, business networking groups, children's parties and programs for single Members are but a few of the events offered each month.

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**MARKET REPORT**

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

Asparagus  
Strawberry

Lemons

Blackberry

Blueberry

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

Raspberry  
C/T Green Beans  
Lettuces

Broccoli  
Cantaloupe  
C/T Sno Peas

Cauliflower  
Honeydew  
Sugar Snap Peas

Potatoes  
Watermelon

**APPLES/PEARS**

California Gala Apples are going strong now with good supplies and Washington new crop Galas are increasing in supply as well. California Granny Smith apples are going in a light way and gearing up for better supplies later this week. Red Delicious supplies continue tight in Washington, and will remain so until new crop starts (may be as early as next week). There are many other areas going on red 'typed' apples, and demand for those has eased. Gold apples are now packing supplies in the Ginger Gold and Early Gold varieties. Bartlett Pears are going with better supplies in Washington this week. Bartlett Pears from WA and CA will fill any gaps on green pears. California Bartlett Pears remain in excellent supply and will continue to be heavy with volume on the smaller sizes. Also shipping from California are the Bosc, Golden Russet Bosc, European Bosc, Seckel Asian and Stark Crimson Pears with good supplies.

**ASPARAGUS**

The market for Mexican product currently is stable. Pricing continues to be stronger on Mexican product compared to Peruvian product loading out of Miami direct. Mexican grass will continue to be light supplies on all sizes. Peruvian grass has had a gap in production due to weather. The transition to the Southern region is producing smaller quantities of product. This will continue for another two weeks.

**AVOCADO**

California's season is over. Mexico and Chile has is going and will have good and steady supplies. We are at early-season maturity levels from both countries, so ripening will take longer and checked boarding will be a problem. This will improve as maturity levels get higher over the next two months.

- **Mexican Fruit:** Heavy rains have disrupted harvest this week and crossing this week. Volumes will be lighter through next week. Crop is still sizing to 48's and smaller, with larger fruit very limited. Please note that early new crop oil content will be low and require additional time for ripening.
- **California Fruit:** California is done for this season. Next years crop looks much larger than this year's, and to begin late December / early January.
- **Chilean Fruit:** Chilean fruit supplies are good; with smaller sizes still the peak volumes and larger sizes are improving slowly. Fruit has early season characteristics, but will steadily improve in eating quality as we get further into the season.

**BELL PEPPERS**

**Eastern Bells:** As the Northern most growing regions begin to wind down the quality will begin to suffer and the supplies will diminish. Pepper will not be as dramatically affected as the other commodities but there will be a gradual rise in this market over the next few weeks.

**BERRIES**

- **Strawberries:** Product continues limited as we come off a very hot weekend and in all aspects a warm week. We are still experiencing moderate bruising and very red berries at shipping point. The days are now getting shorter, the plants are "past peak" and we can expect quality to be fair with production moderate compared to prior months. We are getting close to the southern growing areas to come on line again, as we get more detailed information in regards to a start date, we will let you know.



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- **Raspberries:** Raspberry production remains steady. Most to all shippers have good supplies. There are no major happenings with production or upswings with pricing. Local production quality has been good.
- **Blackberries:** We are continuing to see irregular local California production in the Salinas and Watsonville areas, but are expecting a bit of a decline, Mexico and Guatemala are not sending enough fruit up to ease the demand. . All growing areas have slowed and shippers are cutting back orders...
- **Blueberries:** Oregon and Washington are done harvesting a bit early due to excessive heat, so production in the Northwest has been disrupted. British Columbia continues to produce at a lower than normal rate due to some recent rain slowing things down. There is still good quality and supplies in Michigan. Things may become a bit tight until we start to see the offshore fruit arrive around mid September. We can expect to see higher fobs.

### BROCCOLI

Supplies are stable as is the market for this commodity. This market is expected to get stronger towards the end of the week with any kind of demand. For now, supplies exceed demand. Sharper pricing out of the Santa Maria region continues. The quality overall continues to be good.

### CARROTS

California carrots are coming out of Bakersfield with good supplies and quality.

### CAULIFLOWER

This market continues to be stable. Expect cauliflower to get more active towards the end of the week as supplies are reported to be lighter with many suppliers. The quality continues to get better in terms of quality and texture. Santa Maria and Salinas continue to be the main areas of production. Pricing is competitive in both areas.

### CELERY

The availability continues to be strong with most suppliers on all sizes. The 24 counts continue to have the largest volume. Large volume orders can still demand a sharp price. Michigan supplies continue to keep the California market stable. The supplies from this region should be good thru the week. The quality continues to be strong in all growing regions.

### CITRUS

- **Lemons:** Supplies of large sizes continue to tighten. Availability continues to look good on 140's and smaller. Summer demand continues to keep prices firm.
- **Limes:** Sizing on pack outs are running to smaller sizes. Large sizes (110's and 150's) still limited. Demand is good. Quality remains good, with lighter color which is a characteristic of the summer crop.
- **Oranges:** Demand is continues very strong, and demand is exceeding supplies on 113's and 138's and expect it to stay this way until navels start in November. Supplies are peaking on fancy 72/88's.

**CUCUMBERS Eastern Cucumbers:** The cucumber market should be up considerably by the weekend. Quality has begun to suffer due to rain and the cooler weather has slowed production. There will be a jump in the market by the weekend and continuous rise over the next few weeks when Georgia is into decent volume.

### GRAPES

Don't forget to promote grapes this month and there are very good supplies available! Red Seedless are going strong with the Crimson, Ruby and Un-named Red seedless varieties. Green seedless varieties (few Princess and mainly Thompson) continue to produce very good supplies and quality is excellent. There are also beautiful Black Seedless and Red Globe Seeded grapes available. Temperatures were hot over the weekend, but have already cooled back down. Cooler nights this week will keep quality in good shape. Demand remains strong for both red and green seedless, but supplies are strong as well. The markets should remain steady into next week.

### GREEN ONIONS

This market has become much stronger. With constant regulations and product being held by custom officials, suppliers simply are not getting the raw product needed to fill orders completely. Pencil sizes are still the largest volume available. The quality continues to be good with no significant problems to report.

### KIWI

New Zealand Kiwi is still going strong and they are in good quality and supply. Chilean Kiwi remains available but in light supply as we start September. The market will remain steady again this week.



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### LEAF LETTUCE

Suppliers continue to be light on romaine. Expect supplies to be short throughout the week on this commodity. Romaine hearts will continue to be tight in availability, especially forty-eight counts. Expect small numbers in production throughout the week. There is good availability on all other leaf items. The Salinas Valley had extremely warm temperatures this past weekend and this will inevitably cause some defects such as internal burn to surface in the next week.

### LETTUCE

This market continues to be stable to start the week. Some suppliers are heavier in production than others, and this has caused a variance in price anywhere from two to three dollars. Supplies look to be moderate throughout the week. Product availability will tighten up with a big push but for now the market is stable. Some puffiness will be seen to lettuce this week due to high temperatures in all the growing regions that was seen this past weekend. Expect some tip burn issues to surface.

### MELONS

- **Cantaloupes:** Hot weather over the weekend has brought supplies of the smaller fruit, but temperatures are already relatively cooler for the balance of the week in the Central Valley. Fruit will continue to pack out heavier to the big fruit (12's and LARGER) but there will be a decent manifest of all sizes to finish this first week of September. There continues to be regional melons available, but only in light supply and not in demand like the Westside deal. The market has eased off slightly for the remainder of the week, and a direct result of light demand especially in the retail sector. Fruit quality remains very good with high sugar levels.
- **Honeydews:** Honeydew supplies look to remain steady to finish the week and demand is only moderate. The larger sizes (5ct and JBO 5ct) are still more readily available and there are deals available. Quality continues to be very good in honeydews.

### ONIONS

Idaho/Oregon with very good availability this week on red, yellow and whites. Greening will remain a factor for the next couple of weeks. Quality is good but the skins have not completely set to the nice dark Idaho product we are used to. They will continue to get better over the next few weeks. Huron is done for the season. Washington supplies are getting better but with export coming in and loading heavily they are a little more limited. There are supplies available out of Colorado and Utah as well.

### POTATOES

New crop Norkotahs are going strong with very good quality. Burbanks are all but done until new crop gets through the sweat, there should be availability at the end of October or November. Norkotahs have a much larger size profile than the old crop Burbanks so there will be much better availability on the larger cartons and the small sizes will hold steady prices. However, with the new crop being so nice the 2's will be limited. All new crop will be Norkotahs. Washington new crop Norkotahs are going strong with good quality and good availability. Colorado has started with new crop as well. California colored potatoes still available with very good quality. There are supplies available out of Stockton. Southern Washington is going with good availability on reds and yellows. Mount Vernon, Washington has started with limited availability.

**SQUASH Eastern Squash:** This market will continue to rise as the supplies wane out of Michigan and the Northeast. Rain related quality issues and decreased supplies resulting from cool weather and old, tired crops will drive the market up. Georgia is harvesting squash but the volume remains very light.

**TOMATOES Eastern:** Demand remains steady and is keeping the market fairly stable despite the shortages we have encountered across the country. Weather has improved in the east allowing the fields to dry out. TN, NC, and VA are back harvesting crown fruit, so smaller sizes will be snug for another week or so.

### WATERMELONS

Regional Watermelons are still available, but supplies are starting to drop significantly. The Bakersfield district of CA is all but done for the season. Other central California volume will drop off again over the next 10-14 days. Mexico is slated to start in mid-October. Markets remain strong and demand strength continues as well. Quality is very good for all available regular and personal sized watermelons.



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### THE SKINNY ON PEARS

Luscious, juicy and sweet — here's everything you need to know to enjoy this healthy delight.

While the cultivation of pears has been traced back in western Asia for three thousand years, there is also some speculation that its history goes even further back and that this marvelous fruit was discovered by people in the stone age. Whatever the origins, pears have been revered throughout time. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries advances in pear cultivation greatly improved taste and quality. In 1850 pears were so popular in France that the fruit was celebrated in song and verse, and the wealthy had friendly contests to see who could grow the best specimen.

Today, much of the world's pear supply is grown in China, Italy, and the United States.

There is something about biting into a pear in its prime: first, the sweet juiciness; then the mild, but distinctive, sensation of texture. Enjoying the perfect pear requires patience; pears are one of the few fruits that don't benefit from ripening on the tree. In fact, pears left unpicked tend to rot from the inside out. So pickers in prime pear-producing states are trained to identify when a fruit's sugars are at their peak and time the harvest so that the fruits reach the market (or arrive by mail-order from companies) just as they achieve the perfect balance of sweetness and texture.

The pear is also a remarkably adaptable ingredient and easily moves between the realms of sweet and savory. Oven-roasted pears, for example, are a study in sweet simplicity. The easy preparation just requires baking and basting with a heady mixture of spices, honey and wine until the skin is delicately crinkled and the flesh—even when under ripe—turns as soft as butter. The savory combination of winter squash and pear in Roasted Pear-Butternut Soup with Crumbled Stilton yields a velvety soup that owes its impressive depth of flavor to oven-roasting all the ingredients before pureeing them with vegetable stock.

**Pears may not have a memorable saying like “an apple a day keeps the doctor away,” but in terms of nutrition, variety and sweet satisfaction they're a smart addition to your healthy lifestyle.**

#### Nutrition

Pears are a good source of dietary fiber, which helps control the absorption of sugar, and digested fats from the intestine into the circulation. People who eat sufficient fiber are less likely to develop an abnormally high blood cholesterol level and less likely to suffer sudden changes in blood sugar level, which can cause a variety of unpleasant symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, and fatigue. Fiber also binds to cancer-causing chemicals in the colon, preventing them from damaging colon cells.

Pears are also a good source of vitamin C and copper. Treat your taste buds to a delectable, juicy pear, and you'll be treating your body to 11.1% of the daily value for vitamin C along with 9.5% of the daily value of copper. Vitamin C and copper are thought of as antioxidant nutrients that help protect cells in the body from free radicals. Vitamin C stimulates white blood cells to fight infection, directly kills many bacteria and viruses. Copper helps protect the body from free radical damage as a necessary component of superoxide dismutase, a copper-dependent enzyme that eliminates superoxide radicals. If not eliminated superoxide radicals can damage cell membranes.

Pears also are a good source of vitamin K, vitamin K is commonly known to aid in blood clotting. Recent studies have suggested that vitamin K can help prevent or treat osteoporosis and the loss of bone density. Vitamin K also prevents the hardening of the arteries, which aids in preventing heart disease and heart failure.