

Labatt **FOOD SERVICE** *Produce Department*

4500 Industry Park

San Antonio, TX 78297

1-800-324-8732

MARKET REPORT: AUGUST 12, 2011

****MARKET ALERT**** Avocado prices remain high as there is not enough volume to fill the demand. Pineapple will also remain high this week.

We appreciate your business. Please let us know if you have any questions. Have a great weekend!

WEATHER FORECAST IN GROWING REGIONS

A fairly typical summer time weather pattern will continue throughout Central California this week. Night and morning low clouds and fog with gradual clearing back to the coast will be the norm with near seasonal temperatures, 70s inland and low 60s near the coast. In the interior San Joaquin Valley highs in the 90s are expected through the week.

TRANSPORTATION AND FUEL

Trucks in California continue to be tight and expensive due to the lack of freight headed west. Washington and Idaho trucks are coming empty to CA for higher paying loads which leave those areas a little tight. Crude oil dropped over the weekend and is currently at 83.08. The National Average was at 3.937 last week but should trend downward this week with the price of crude oil dropping

PRODUCE NEWS

APPLES

Reds remain heavy to small fruit with high color and the lower grades remain limited. The fancy grade is virtually non-existent but there are a few Washington-Extra number twos. Expect lower grade fruit to remain very short for the rest of the storage crop. Some suppliers are talking about gapping on reds. Golden Delicious is still heavy to larger fruit and the Washington extra-fancy grade. Stay ahead on the lower grades and the smaller sizes due to light supplies and expect the market to continue climbing. Imported Galas are essentially finished for the season. California has started packing Galas and they are peaking on 88 through 113's. There is some smaller fruit but most is going into consumer bags. Granny-Smiths are still heavy to larger fruit and very limited on 100's and smaller. Stay ahead on Grannies as that market is also rising due to light supplies in Washington. Some Washington suppliers may gap on Granny's as well. Most packers will sub larger sizes and higher grades on orders of the smaller sizes.

ASPARAGUS

This market is higher. Mexico's production has begun the week on the light side and this is reflected in higher pricing. Jumbo sizing has been slim to none in availability and substituting into extra large has been an option. Standard sizing is also on the lighter side compared to the previous week. Peruvian product is moderate. The Peruvian availability also is very light on jumbo and extra large sizing.

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AVOCADO

August looks to be the most volatile and confusing month of this avocado season. California harvest is winding down and is 75% shipped. Volume for this week will drop 15% from last week, and 40% next week. We look to be about done with California fruit by the end of the month. Mexico is beginning to increase just a bit this week and slowly increase over the next couple of weeks. We will begin to see some increasing supplies from Chile in the next 2 to 3 weeks, as well as some fruit from Peru enter the market around mid August.

BELL PEPPERS

Western Green Bells and Colored Bells: The California crop on green bells is producing good volume. Good demand is firming the market. Colored bell supplies are good as new crop is into good production.

Eastern Bells: Michigan, Ohio and North Carolina are working Bell Peppers. Quality seems to have improved. Demand is good. Markets are slightly higher for the Bell Peppers in the Northern growing areas. Supplies should pick up in Michigan during the week

BROCCOLI, CAULIFLOWER & CELERY

The broccoli market is firm on bunched product as well as crowns. Expect pricing to be active later in the week. Supplies are on the light side but business is expected to pick up this week. Salinas and Santa Maria are the two main growing regions for this commodity. There have been no issues in terms of poor quality to report at this time. The cauliflower market is firm. Supplies continue to be heavier to the twelve counts. Overall, demand is down and with moderate to good supplies available, no issues are surfacing at this time in terms of availability. There have been no issues in terms of quality at this time as well. Production continues to be out of Santa Maria and Salinas. The celery market is stronger on all sizing. Suppliers have started the week with lighter supplies of small sizing as well as large sizing. Expect this market to get stronger throughout the week. Santa Maria and Salinas continue to be the main growing regions for this commodity. Expect small sizing to be the tightest size available throughout the week.

CITRUS

Lemons: The lemon market continues to strengthen with good demand that is typical for this time of year. 140's and larger are becoming tight.

Oranges: Valencia oranges supplies are shorting up on 88's and smaller as demand for small fruit is starting to increase with schools beginning.

CUCUMBERS

Western Cucumbers: Baja production is lighter and demand is heavy.

Eastern Cucumbers: Michigan cucumbers remain steady. Supplies are starting to strengthen and demand continues to be strong. Better weather will lead to increased production this week. Quality remains good on cucumbers.

EGGPLANT

Western Eggplant: Fresno is going well with their crop and supplies are steady.

Eastern Eggplant: Michigan is now shipping eggplant. Quality is good and the market is stronger. Demand has been steady. Production should start picking up during the next week.

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GRAPES The market on red grapes continues to be steady as availability is good along with demand. Shippers are still struggling with color and sugars. Most of the fruit is large to extra large on all colors. Green grapes are starting to come on with Thompsons, Sugarones and Princess all available. The market looks to remain steady from here. Shippers have good availability on black seedless and red Globe is starting to come on.

GREEN ONIONS

This market continues to be steady. Supplies are steady out of Mexico with pencil sizing having the best availability. Suppliers look to be steady all week for this commodity ample to fill all orders for the week.

LEAF LETTUCE

The romaine market continues to be steady to start the week. Supplies are good and shippers are offering volume discounting. The market continues to be steady on green and red leaf as well. Supplies are expected to be lighter in the middle of the week, but that waits to be seen. For now, offers are still being listened to by most shippers. The overall quality has been reported as good.

LETTUCE

This market is firm. Salinas and Santa Maria production is good. Demand however is on the light side. Weights continue to average 42 to 46 pounds on lettuce. The weights throughout the week are expected to be strong. Promote this item to start the week as suppliers are looking to move load volumes.

MELONS

Cantaloupe: Better volume today on Cantaloupe with product still peaking to 9's. Small fruit will be limited for the remainder of the Westside deal.

Honeydew: Honeydew remains limited. Shippers are continuing to slowly increase their volumes however fruit is peaking to 5's with 6's extremely limited and 8's are nonexistent.

ONIONS California yellows are mostly steady on all sizes. Some suppliers have more mediums and some more colossal but all have good supplies of jumbos. Some shippers will still deal for volume. New Mexico is also steady on all yellows and will also deal for volume on colossal, jumbos, and mediums. California red supplies are starting to drop as we approach the end of the deal and the market is stronger. Most New Mexico shippers are still buying from California and their market remains relatively high because of it. White supplies are also lower in both areas and are also priced higher. Stay ahead on whites and reds until Idaho/Oregon starts packing in early September. Quality in both areas has ranged from fair to excellent on all colors. Temperatures have generally been in 80's to 90's in both areas.

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POTATOES The Idaho market is mostly steady on all sizes but we have one shipper that has started packing new crop so that could change. Number-twos remain steady but could rise as more packers finish for the season. More shippers will finish each week so the old-crop Idaho supplies will drop. New-crop in other areas is still motivating the Idaho suppliers to sell their storage product but supplies are dropping. Idaho's quality is still mostly good but many lots have hollow-heart and internal black spotting. Washington is packing new-crop norkotahs and they are still peaking on 80/90 count. Colorado still has old-crop available but the supplies are light. Kansas & Nebraska are packing new crop norkotahs. Some suppliers have larger counts while others are heavier to 80-count and smaller. Stockton, California continues to pack colored potatoes of all colors and the market is steady. Washington & Minnesota both continue packing reds and golds but supplies are fairly limited. Both areas have good numbers of A's and B's while premiums remain limited.

STRAWBERRIES Unseasonably cool days and cool damp nights continue to take their toll on the strawberries. Although supplies have improved slightly we are still seeing a fair amount of soft and bruising in the fruit. The market has edged off slightly in price but the better quality fruit continues to command a premium in price

SQUASH

Western Squash: Baja has fair supplies. Santa Maria production is light, demand is very strong. Market is very active.

Eastern Squash: Squash tightened up the end of last week in Michigan, increasing demand and driving prices higher. Quality has been good and there should be some more volume this coming week. Medium zucchini and yellow straight neck squash have been hard to come by, with mostly fancy product being packed. Hard squash is also available.

TOMATOES

Western: The first week of August has brought a settling of the mature green market in California, with prices a bit easier, especially on the extra-large sizes. This is partially due to the school programs not being in effect & also the tomatoes that the consumers are beginning to harvest are homegrown tomatoes in their backyards. Conversely, growers in the San Joaquin Valley had in advance backed off on the acreage planted for August harvest, so look for eventual stability in prices.

Eastern: The recent intense heat on the Eastern seaboard has had an adverse effect on the volume being shipped out of the Eastern Shore of Virginia/Maryland, and also the mountain deal in Tennessee. There is less being packed at the sheds, thus the market should be somewhat stable. Homeowners have a few tomatoes in their backyards as well, and prices have slipped somewhat. Recent reports show that the Benton Harbor, Michigan crop is still 10-14 days away from initial harvest.

WATERMELON

Better supplies of seedless watermelon with good to excellent quality. Seeded watermelon is a little light in supply and the market is strengthening. Mini Watermelon is coming on with better volume and shippers are looking to promote volume.