



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

FEBRUARY 9th, 2010

WEATHER REPORT

The West Coast is bracing for another couple of Pacific low pressure storm systems set to impact California this week. Rainfall totals in Southern California could reach the 1/2 to 1 inch range with up to 1/4 inch possible in the desert locals as this first system moves east. The end result will be cool, breezy conditions and a chance (20%) of rain for the Western growing region this week. Another system set for late this week looks to remain in Central California and north in latest forecasts. A slight warm up is expected late in the week but overall temperatures will remain 5-10 degrees below seasonal norms through the week.

Low pressure pushing through Florida will bring a chance of showers to the region before moving out mid week. High pressure behind this cold front will usher in cooler temperatures and breezy conditions through the end of the week. Low temperatures in the mid-30s in the north to mid 40s south, with highs in the high 60s to mid 70s look to be the norm. Another low pressure system enters the mix with a chance of showers late this week.

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

**Bartlett Pears are finished for the season.
Blueberry and honeydew supplies are limited.**

MARKET REPORT

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP

Apples Blackberries Blueberries Cantaloupes Honeydew Lemons Pears

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY

Asparagus Avocado Bell Pepper Broccoli Carrots Cauliflower Celery Cucumbers Grapes
 Green Onions Iceberg Lettuce Leaf Lettuce Onions Oranges Potatoes Raspberries
 Squash Strawberries Stonefruit Tomatoes Watermelon

APPLES/PEARS

Red delicious, gold delicious and granny-smith, along with most all varietal apples, remain in short supply on small sized fruit. The larger sizes are abundant. The market will continue to increase gradually on the smaller fruit throughout the season. This will be a season-long dilemma and each week the supplies will get lighter causing market pressure until the apple harvest commences in the late summer. Demand continues to be very strong on small fruit and will continue to be very strong in comparison to the available supply. Deals remain in the larger sized fruit, and quality is excellent on all apples. Specialty apples including the Honeycrisp variety, are still available and in adequate supply. D'Anjou pears are in excellent shape with good supplies in Washington. Bartlett pears are finished for the season. Varietal pear varieties are available including Bosc, Seckel, Concorde, Comice and Red Crimsons. Please consider varieties other than red apples for your food service orders that require small fruit.

ASPARAGUS

The asparagus market has softened. Supplies are good on standard sizing, and jumbo production has increased from product coming out of Mexico. Peru still has supplies coming into the East and West Coast. Prices remain steady with availability on all sizes. The Quality of Mexican product continues to be good.



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AVOCADO

Rain in Mexico and southern California slowed harvest last week. California growers will continue to slow their harvest to let fruit size up. The over all supplies remain good at this time. Demand is good.

- **Mexican Fruit:** Mexico still represents about 2/3 of the market at this time. They continue to have excellent quality.
- **California Fruit:** Shippers will remain with limited harvest over the next couple of week as they let the fruit size.
- **Chilean Fruit:** Chilean fruit season is approaching the end. Quality remains very good.

BELL PEPPERS

Eastern Bells: Off grade peppers are still hard to come by but the market appears to be holding steady. The end of the week will see more limited supplies and a higher market. Quality is fair.

BERRIES

- **Strawberries:** California Strawberry growing areas received 1 to 2 ½ inches of rain over the weekend. As a result, harvest volumes will be negatively impacted again this week. All growers will be going into their fields stripping damaged fruit. Quality will remain problematic with white shoulder, bruise, pin rot, mold and water damage likely to be prevalent as fields recover. Rain is forecasted to start again Tuesday/Wednesday of this week and could further result in a decreased harvest and availability. The Valentine's Day pull for strawberries is in full swing. The main issue still showing up in the packs are 10% to 20% white shoulder. Florida has started hitting a gap from the freeze they had a month ago. Volumes are very limited out of this area and will be for the next two weeks. Market has firmed up out of Florida. Mexico received rain last week which has affect supplies crossing the boarder. Market is active.
- **Raspberries:** Supplies and demand are steady the start of this week. Quality is being reported as good. Driscoll is the main supplier at this time of the year. Market is steady
- **Blackberries:** Blackberry supplies are still limited with fair quality and firm market.
- **Blueberries:** Blueberries are hitting a gap due to cool and rainy weather that Chile received the month of January. Quality of the blueberries over the last few weeks has been hit and miss and the growers are clamping down on the specs to make sure all fruit that goes out is good. The growers expect to rebound a little but not back up to volumes we had in the past few months. This week will be the lightest arrivals, and then we should see the slight rebound the week of February 15th. Market is very active with limited availability.

BROCCOLI

The market has softened on this commodity. Supplies continue to be strong with most suppliers on bunched and crown product. Shippers are looking to move volume orders to begin this week and they have come out very aggressive on bunch and crown product. Supplies look to be good throughout the week. The quality is strong, coming out of Santa Maria, Yuma, and Scottsdale. There is some product still being harvested in Salinas and loading is also occurring in Gilroy if desired.

CARROTS

California carrots coming out of Bakersfield are finally starting to size up and there is a little better supply of jumbo carrots.

CAULIFLOWER

This commodity is steady, however it will likely pick up towards the end of the week. Some suppliers are indicating they will be lighter in supplies, especially on twelve counts. Brown and black spotting as well as discoloration continues to be an issue upon arrival and this will likely continue lightly throughout the week. Suppliers are working to pack spot free product, but some will be seen, so please be aware. The past cold weather and rain has caused this.

CELERY

This market is softer. Production continues to stronger on large sizing. The gap in pricing is minimal now as suppliers have become much more competitive in pricing, especially on large sizing. There are a few shippers having product in Yuma if Oxnard and Santa Maria is not desired. The best deal is on 24 count and deals can be made on volume orders.



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CITRUS

- **Lemons:** Supplies are good on 115's and larger, with 165's and especially 200's becoming tight. Quality is very good.
- **Limes:** Rains in Mexico have lightened supplies this week, and are very tight. Sizes are peaking on 200's and 230's.
- **Oranges:** Demand remains steady. Crop continues to peak on fancy 72's, 56's and 88's. The supplies of choice grades remain tight.

CUCUMBERS

Eastern Cucumbers: The off shore supplies are gradually increasing but quality is still marginal. The market rising in Nogales will keep demand strong out of Florida, thereby holding the market steady.

GRAPES

The snow storms in the East have limited the vessels off loading in the Philly area. Reds and Greens will be limited this week on the East as another storm is set to come in Tuesday/Wednesday. Thompsons and Sugarones are still in good supplies with product peaking to the medium and large size. There will be good supplies for the Valentines Day pull on red seedless. Good availability on the seeded Red Globe with excellent quality. Black seedless with better supplies and very good quality.

GREEN ONIONS

This market is softer as supplies have steadily increased out of Mexico. Demand has definitely fallen off. Pencil sizes continue to have the largest availability. The quality continues to be good with no significant problems to report. Processors continue to have only minimal problems with the raw product available.

LEAF LETTUCE

The leaf market continues to be steady. Red leaf continues to demand a higher price with some suppliers while others have lowered pricing. Romaine and romaine hearts continue to show some blister and epidermal peel from the cold temperature experienced last month out of Yuma. Quality has been average with tip burn and fringe burn showing up in some lots. Weather issues will inevitably cause quality issues towards the end of the week on all leaf items.

LETTUCE

The lettuce market is steady to start the week. There continues to be a variance in pricing by 1-2 dollars with different shippers. The quality has been good with weights in the 45-48 pound range. Florida has started production also. Suppliers are expecting stronger production numbers this week in Yuma. Suppliers continue to push bin lettuce, and deals can be made.

MELONS

- **Cantaloupe:** Honduran fruit is limited and selling out by the end of each week. Getting orders on the books early will help to insure availability. Small fruit 15's and smaller are still extremely limited. Shipping points in Pompano Beach and Port Manatee, FL as well as Los Angeles, CA and Camden, NJ continue to receive fruit, but again sizes are mostly large. The prices remain at higher levels on the small size fruit. There are extremely limited supplies of Mexican cantaloupes crossing through the Nogales, AZ point of entry and quality is fair at best. Overall quality for the offshore fruit is still very good.
- **Honeydew:** Offshore fruit is still arriving into Florida, California and New Jersey with volume supplies mainly in 5's and 6's. Product is limited so getting orders in early will help to insure availability. All sizes are limited at the end of this week out of Florida with better supplies in California. Good supplies of honeydew out of Mexico and the quality is fair.

ONIONS

The Idaho/Oregon yellow onions are slightly lower again and the demand remains light. The export demand remains but it is down and isn't affecting the domestic market. Quality is still very nice and sizing remains heavy to jumbos and larger. Mediums are very short. Reds are steady however we are nearing the end of the storage deal for most packers, so expect a stronger market in the near future. Continue to go heavier on reds. The white onion market is still in a demand exceeds supplies situation as Mexican demand is strong, but the market is slightly lower.



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

POTATOES

Idaho potatoes remain steady with light demand. Most shippers are still hungry for business and continue to peak between 70 and 90 counts. There are deals on certain sizes depending on the shipper and variety. Most packers have finished with the Norkotahs variety so expect a smaller size profile overall. Burbanks and westerns are the two main varieties available now. Quality is good all three varieties. Washington Norkotahs are going strong with good quality and availability but also light demand. Washington shippers are peaking on 60ct and larger. Colorado is going strong steady supplies and quality, with light demand. Colorado is heaviest to 70 & 80 count. Mount Vernon, Washington has good availability and excellent quality on red and Yukon-gold potatoes, while they are done with whites. North Dakota and Wisconsin have good supplies of red & yellow potatoes with few whites. Some California packers have good supplies of reds, whites, and yellows while some are experiencing low pack-outs on the Yukon's.

SQUASH

Eastern Squash: Domestic supplies of squash in Florida have been all but wiped out by the weekend freeze. Most Florida shippers are bringing yellow squash in out of the West just to try to cover. Yellow squash is extremely difficult to come by, demand is high and the quality is poor.

STONE FRUIT

Chilean peaches are still in good supply with very good quality. Demand still exceeds supply on the Nectarines. Both red and black Plums are limited but available.

TOMATOES

Eastern: There has been significant crop loss and supplies out of Florida will be down and won't rebound probably until spring. We can expect to see higher fob's probably up through the Spring accompanied with shortened supplies. Quality issues are appearing with some light spotting and some softer than normal fruit, but for the most part growers are doing a good job packing decent fruit.

WATERMELON

Limited supplies still on seeded watermelon with better supplies of seedless. Quality on the Mexican fruit is fair at best. The mini seedless are in better supply and quality is good.

VALUE ADDED

Things have not changed on the value-added items. Chopped romaine and romaine blended items continue to experience brown and red discoloration on finished product. Suppliers are working diligently to use the best raw material available for the processing facilities. The cold weather Yuma Arizona has been experiencing has resulted in product having a shorter shelf life. The processed cauliflower has had a few issues on brown and black spotting. Again, processors are using the best product available.