



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

June 8th 2009

MARKET REPORT

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP

- | | | | |
|----------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Avocados | Lemons | C/T Green Beans | Eggplant |
| Parsnips | Green Beans | Tomatoes | Yellow Squash |
| Zucchini | Red/White Grapes | | |

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY

- | | | | |
|------------|----------------|-------------|-----------|
| Blackberry | Blueberry | Strawberry | Raspberry |
| Carrots | Oranges | Limes | Lettuces |
| Watermelon | Vidalia Onions | Cauliflower | Broccoli |
| Cantaloupe | Honeydew | | |

BRIX READINGS TABLE

CANTALOUPE 12ct	12	GOOD
CANTALOUPE 15ct	NA	NA
HONEYDEW	13.5	GOOD
PINEAPPLE	14	EXCELLENT
RED GRAPE	18	EXCELLENT
GREEN GRAPE	18	EXCELLENT
STRAWBERRIES	10	AVERAGE
RASPBERRIES	10	AVERAGE
BLACKBERRIES	14	POOR
BLUEBERRIES	13	EXCELLENT

Within a given species of plant, the crop with a higher refractive index will have higher sugar content, higher mineral content, and higher protein content. This adds up to a sweeter tasting, more mineral-nutritious food with a lower nitrate and water content and better storage characteristics. As a broad generalization, produce over 12 Brix is considered good



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APPLES/PEARS

More varieties apples are winding down their storage seasons quickly including Jonagold, Braeburn and Cameo. This is putting extra pressure on the small Red Delicious crop already on the light side. Gala apples are close to 95% sold in the state of Washington for the season. Demand continues to exceed available supplies and the market remains strong. Retail demand remains strong as we move into June, especially in 3 and 5# bags. New Zealand is still tight on Galas, and their market remains strong. Red Delicious Apples in the lower grades (lighter color) will continue light in supply as the controlled atmosphere storage crop coming out remains high in color. Small sized Granny Smith continue to be excellent choices for someone looking for a 'deal' on apples and there are still very good supplies available. Oregon Pears are winding down their season quickly with possibly only this week left in storage production. Washington will go through the month of June on pears with the Anjou and Red Anjou varieties.

ASPARAGUS

This commodity continues to get stronger in the marketplace. California production should end approximately the end of June. Washington production will finish in approximately 4 weeks. California production is tighter on all sizes and pricing is more active. Product out of Peru continues to be available on the East Coast.

AVOCADO

- **Mexican fruit:** Mexican supplies continue to lighten up. The Mexican crop is on the down side of this year's crop.
- **California Fruit:** California growers are packing good volume, but still lighter than years past, due to the much smaller crop this year. Demand is increasing for California fruit as Mexican supplies decrease.
- **Peruvian Fruit:** Peru is starting to harvest. Quality is said to be very nice although we have not been able to verify this yet.

BELL PEPPERS

Central Florida is still working on shipping out the last of their pepper supplies, mostly off grades, and quality continues to be an issue with those shipments. The larger sized pepper coming out of Florida has been of good quality and they are slowly coming into their off grades. Market should stay steady through the weekend and begin to drop by the front of next week.

BERRIES

- **Strawberries:** California production continues this week a bit sluggish due to cooler temperatures over the past 15 days. The cooler weather is slowing production but we continue to see firm fruit and good quality. Once we get a couple of days to a week of warm weather we will see the volume come on (still waiting). The forecast is calling for continuing cooler temperatures accompanied with overcast skies. We can expect fair production for the week.
- **Raspberries:** Californian production continues to be very strong. Both Salinas / Watsonville are producing and we are seeing great availability as more shippers have increased production in the northern growing areas with new fruit and FOB are reflecting this. With a large volume order you can achieve an aggressive FOB. New crop quality is good.
- **Blackberries:** Blackberry production for the most part is finished in Mexico, and we can expect all Mexican products to clean up within the next week, although there are some clean up loads still popping in. We continue looking at local production as it is increasing. Watsonville is producing fair quantities, and is inconsistent at this point as we are currently experiencing a slight gap in production as growing regions transfer from Mexico to California. We are seeing far less availability and can expect this trend to continue well into or through this week.
- **Blueberries:** Blueberry production continues to increase in California and is getting stronger. The Central Valley is the primary area of production and we are seeing some better production in Oxnard and Watsonville. Fruit is starting to transfer over from the valley. This week we are seeing a better variety of pack sizes, 4.4, 6oz, pints and 18oz. Florida and the Carolinas are making a slow rebound due to recently past rain. We have seen the pressure from the East increasingly focused on the West for fruit.

BROCCOLI

This market continues to be steady. Demand is on the light side and suppliers have only moderate amounts to sell. The quality out of the Salinas valley and Santa Maria growing regions continue to be good. No shortages in product are in the forecast for the entire week.

CARROTS

California carrots are now coming out of the new fields in Bakersfield. Size and quality is much better than the ones from the Imperial Valley. Georgia has good availability and quality on the East Coast.

CAULIFLOWER

Supplies are light to start the week with most suppliers. The market is stronger and will be active throughout the week. Large sizing still has a little sharper pricing, 9s in particular if interested. By suppliers cutting back on acreage of cauliflower, this has created a shortage of product in the industry. The overall quality better compared to previous weeks. Santa Maria and Salinas continue to be the main areas of production.

CELERY

This market is stronger on all sizes. Overall, Oxnard has ample supplies to fill all orders. The seeder issue is stronger in Oxnard compared to Santa Maria. This market should be slightly active throughout the week. Salinas' production is expected to begin in late June to July.



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CITRUS

- **Lemons:** The Central Valley is 93% picked. Ventura County is supplying the bulk of the volume. There are good supplies and that are peaking on 140's, followed by 165's and 115's. Summer demand is beginning to pick up.
- **Limes:** Supplies are remaining steady. Sizes are showing some growth now, but still peaking on 200's, 175's and 230's. The larger sizes remain limited.
- **Oranges:** Late navel varieties will continue into mid June. Valencia production is good. Quality is very good, with sizes running 88's, 113's, and 138's.

CUCUMBERS

Cucumbers are in good supply in Georgia and the quality continues to improve. With Eastern supplies increasing as North Carolina and Tennessee get started, the cucumber market should begin to trend downward.

GRAPES

Flame red seedless grapes are now in a demand exceeds supply situation from both Mexico and Coachella. Recent rains in Mexico have severely shortened the crop there and as it was, they were fighting light color issues and fruit not coloring up before maturity. They are down in total estimated quantities already by over 1 million boxes to date. Nogales crossings could remain limited for the duration of the Mexico crop. Coachella is also short and fighting color from the field. Temperatures have been very hot and not cooling down at night, which enables the fruit to color up properly before maturity. Demand pressure has also increased significantly because of the Mexico crop shortages. These conditions along with the currently strong demand will keep the market strong well into next week and quite possibly for the entire spring deal! Green seedless grapes are shipping as Sugarone from Coachella and Nogales. Perlettes are all but finished for the season.

GREEN ONIONS

This market remains steady. There are no changes to report. Supplies continue to be strong from the Mexican region. This market should remain stable for the entire week. The quality continues to be good, with little to no problems reported.

KIWI

Kiwi quality remains excellent and movement is steady. The market will remain steady again this week.

LEAF LETTUCE

Some suppliers are tighter on Romaine but overall, supplies are ample to fill all orders. All other leaf items remain steady. The quality on leaf reported better. There has been much less complaints on defects like insects, fringe burn, tip burn, and windburn.

LETTUCE

This market is steady. A few suppliers started this week sold out. Expect lettuce to be lighter in supplies throughout the week. The Salinas valley has had a lot of heavy fog that has slowed down the growth of this commodity. The weights for palletized lettuce continues to be reported at 45-47#s. Suppliers may be substituting 30 count lettuce to fill orders towards the end of the week..

MELONS

- **Cantaloupes:** Cantaloupe supplies are down dramatically and both CA and AZ desert growers are struggling to get enough supplies to meet current demand. Fruit sizing is all large (9 and JBO 9ct)* and there are severe supply shortages in both major growing areas. The CA Desert melons are struggling with the inconsistent weather patterns as well as very low yields. Arizona desert production has been very sporadic and shippers are coming up well short of their estimates due to low production yields. Cantaloupes will remain tight for at least the next 5-7 days and until growers can get into new fields that are producing better quantities of fruit.
- **Honeydews:** The market remains steady on Honeydews with Arizona, Mexico, and CA going with decent production. Texas grown fruit is all but finished for the season. The CA/AZ desert growing areas remain fairly slow in their production and they have not had any increase in demand to change the market.

ONIONS

The Uvalde area of Texas has very limited supplies as they finish their season. Imperial Valley California is finishing up with limited availability. Huron has gotten off to a slow start but quality is good. New Mexico has also started with new crop onions and should have good availability through July. Quality looks to be good on new crop onions but single centered supers will be limited for the next few weeks.

POTATOES

The quality is still very good on the Idaho storage crop. Retail volume has slowed down so carton packing has slowed for shippers. Wisconsin is becoming more limited with availability. Colorado has good supplies and quality is still good. Colored storage potatoes are loading out of North Dakota and Wisconsin. Washington has all but finished with colored potatoes. California new crop colored potatoes available with very good quality. New crop California Russets should start in the next week to 2 weeks. Northern and Southern Florida now with availability on new crop colored potatoes.

SQUASH

Squash is now readily available as far north as Virginia, volume, and quality out of South Georgia are improving. Demand will stay strong for the next few days but the increased availability throughout the east will bring the market down by next week.



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STONE FRUIT

California tree fruit numbers are still increasing, and warm temperatures prevail! Yellow/White Peaches, Yellow/White Nectarines, Apricots, Plums and Cherries are available in good supply. There is high colored good eating tree fruit available and FOB prices continue to come adjust. Cherry production has been very good and will continue into next week with excellent quality out there. Cherry sizing has started to get a little smaller across the board in contrast to the very large sizes from the start of the season.

TOMATOES

The tomato market (all tomatoes) is going to be a great deal higher next week. Central Florida is finishing up due to wet weather. North Florida will start next week with very light production. Quality is average; there is a lot of damage to the fruit. The shippers are grading extra hard however there are still some shoulder problems and rain check. Food service will be very limited.

WATERMELONS

Watermelon supplies have increased slightly in both the seeded and seedless fruit. CA/AZ desert areas are slowly increasing in production. The market is steady to finish the week and with more production scheduled, the market could adjust again beginning next week, but will be demand driven. Demand remains only moderate on watermelons and Watermelon quality is very good from the Yuma, AZ and CA desert areas.

PRODUCE SPOTLIGHT



SUMMER SQUASH

The delicate flavor, soft shell and creamy white flesh of summer squash is a perfect addition to any summer meal. Once only available in the summer, they are now available throughout the year; however, they are in season between May and July when they are at their best and most readily available.

Description

Summer squash, members of the *Cucurbitaceae* family and relatives of both the melon and the cucumber, come in many different varieties. While each type varies in shape, color, size and flavor, they all share some common characteristics. The entire vegetable, including its flesh, seeds and skin, is edible. In addition, some varieties of the squash plant produce edible flowers. Unlike winter squash, summer squash are more fragile and cannot be stored for long periods of time.

Varieties of summer squash include:

- Zucchini: Probably the best known of the summer squashes, zucchini is a type of narrow squash that resembles a cucumber in size and shape. It has smooth, thin skin that is either green or yellow in color and can be striped or speckled. Its tender flesh is creamy white in color and features numerous seeds. Its edible flowers are often used in French and Italian cooking.
- Crookneck and Straightneck Squash: Both of these summer squashes have creamy white flesh and generally have yellow skins, although sometimes you can find them with green skin. Crookneck squash is partially straight with a swan-like neck. It was genetically altered to produce its straightneck cousin that is shaped as its name implies.
- Pattypan Squash: These small saucer-shaped squash features skins that can either be pale green or golden yellow in color. Its cream-colored flesh is denser and slightly sweeter than that of zucchini.

History

Modern day squash developed from the wild squash that originated in an area between Guatemala and Mexico. While squash has been consumed for over 10,000 years, they were first cultivated specifically for their seeds since earlier squashes did not contain much flesh and what they did contain was very bitter and unpalatable. As time progressed, squash cultivation spread throughout the Americas, and varieties with a greater quantity of sweeter-tasting flesh were developed. Christopher Columbus brought squash back to Europe from the New World, and like other Native American foods, their cultivation was introduced throughout the world by Portuguese and Spanish explorers. Today, the largest commercial producers of squash include China, Japan, Romania, Turkey, Italy, Egypt, and Argentina.



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Well-Rounded Cardiovascular Protection

The traditional nutrients provided by summer squash are equally impressive. Our food ranking system qualified summer squash as an excellent source of manganese and [vitamin C](#) and a very good source of [magnesium](#), [vitamin A](#) (notably through its concentration of carotenoids, including beta-carotene), [fiber](#), [potassium](#), [folate](#), [copper](#), [riboflavin](#), and phosphorus.

Many of these nutrients have been shown in studies to be helpful for the prevention of atherosclerosis and diabetic heart disease. Summer squash's magnesium has been shown to be helpful for reducing the risk of heart attack and stroke. Together with the potassium in summer squash, magnesium is also helpful for reducing high blood pressure. The vitamin C and beta-carotene found in summer squash can help to prevent the oxidation of cholesterol. Since oxidized cholesterol is the type that builds up in blood vessel walls, these nutrients may help to reduce the progression of atherosclerosis. The vitamin folate found in summer squash are needed by the body to break down a dangerous metabolic byproduct called *homocysteine*, which can contribute to heart attack and stroke risk if levels get too high. Finally, summer squash's fiber has been shown to lower high cholesterol levels, which can help to reduce the risk of atherosclerosis and diabetic heart disease.

A Disease-Fighting Food

The nutrients in summer squash are useful for the prevention of other conditions as well. High intakes of fiber-rich foods help to keep cancer-causing toxins away from cells in the colon, while the folate, vitamin C, and beta-carotene help to protect these cells from the chemicals that can lead to colon cancer. The antioxidants vitamin C and beta-carotene also have anti-inflammatory properties that make them helpful for conditions like asthma, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis, where inflammation plays a big role. The copper found in summer squash is also helpful for reducing the painful symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis. .

HEALTHY EATING SNACKS

Many people think snacks are junk food, though it doesn't have to be that way. Snacking can be part of a balanced diet. Eating small portions between meals provides your body with energy to keep you going throughout the day.

Some other benefits of snacking:

- Healthy snacks provide fiber and nutrients your body needs.
- You can curb the feeling of hunger or starvation right before a meal, which prevents overeating. Snacking may help you eat smaller portions and reduce your calorie intake.
- Though individual calorie needs vary, your body needs fewer calories as you age.
- Eating smaller meals more often may help you stay on track.

Try to keep your snack portions small and less than 250 calories. Spacing out meals and snacks can help prevent weight gain. The Nutrition Facts Label on packaged foods will help you figure the calories and nutrients that are in one portion size.

More foods are now being packaged in single serving portions, making it easier for you to keep track of how much you're eating. But you still want to be careful about what kinds of food you choose to snack on!

Sugary and fattening sweets like cookies and candy lack nutrients. Many salty foods – like chips – can dehydrate you. These foods should be eaten in moderation.



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For healthy and filling snacks, try:

- Fresh or frozen fruit, or a handful of dried fruit, such as raisins
- Raw vegetables – carrots, celery, red and green pepper – cut and portioned in small plastic bags. Try filling celery with peanut butter or low-fat cottage cheese, or dipping your vegetables in low-fat dressing.
- A whole wheat English muffin with apple butter and a cup of herbal tea
- A slice of angel food cake with non-fat whipped topping
- Whole-grain crackers (could be topped with cheese or peanut butter)
- Non-fat cottage cheese or yogurt with honey
- A handful of nuts, dried fruit or trail-mix (or make your own mix by buying the ingredients you like)
- Hummus on whole-wheat pita-bread
- A smoothie (blend nonfat milk and/or yogurt with fruit)

So forget the bag of chips or candy bar and reach for a handful of nuts and raisins. You'll get extra fiber, vitamins, and minerals, all for about 50 calories.

With proper portions and healthy food choices, snacking can enhance, rather than hurt your diet.