



MARCH 2ND 2009

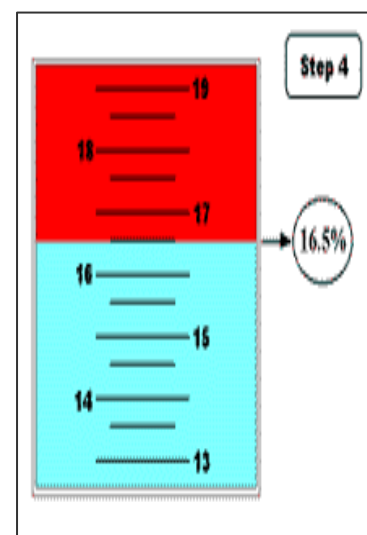
Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.

Author William A. Foster

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP			
Iceberg Lettuce	Leaf Lettuce	Romaine Lettuce	Blueberry, Raspberry, Blackberry
Watermelon	Green Beans Bushel	Yellow Peppers	Red Peppers
Yellow Squash	Yellow Corn		
ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY			
Asparagus	Strawberry	Celery	Onions
Broccoli	Cauliflower	Oranges	Red Grapes
Cantaloupe	Honeydew	Acorn Squash	Tomatoes

THIS WEEK'S BRIX READINGS

BRIX READINGS TABLE		Expose the refract meter measuring surface by lifting the surface cover.
CANTALOUPE 12ct	10.5	
CANTALOUPE 15ct		Carefully place a drop of the sample being measured onto the measuring surface.
HONEYDEW	9	
PINEAPPLE	12	Look through the eyepiece while holding the refract meter up to a light source.
RED GRAPE	17.75	
GREEN GRAPE	17	Read where the contrast line (difference between light and dark areas) crosses the scale. Record the brix value.
STRAWBERRIES	8	
RASPBERRIES	11.5	
BBLACKBERRIES	11	Brix is the measure of % sugar in a given sample. The instrument which is used to measure brix is called a refract meter.
BLUEBERRIES	15.5	





COMMODITY REPORT

APPLES/PEARS

Controlled atmosphere storage apples remain in excellent quality. The predominant size range continues to peak in the 100/113ct Washington remains the leading production area for apples and will so through the spring and summer months. Regional production areas including Michigan and New York continue shipping light supplies of storage apples; demand remains light for those. Washington and Oregon Pears continue production from storage including Anjou, Bosc, Golden Bosc and few other varieties.

ASPARAGUS

This market continues to stay steady. Supplies are slightly less out of the Mexico region compared to the previous week, and are expected to be heavier on standard and large sizes. Extra large and jumbo sizes seem to have the lightest supplies. Peruvian asparagus has gained some strength in the marketplace with good supplies coming into the East Coast.

AVOCADO

- **Mexican fruit** – Mexican shipments are increasing into the states and supplies are adequate. Demand is very good.
- **Chilean Fruit** - Chilean season is coming to the end. Supplies are very limited.
- **California Fruit** - Harvesting has returned to normal but remains light. No heavy supplies are expected until April.

BELL PEPPERS

- **Eastern Bells:** With temperatures in Southern Florida warming up and no rain in the forecast, pepper prices should continue to come off. High prices in the west will prevent too much of a market decline here. Quality has been good

BERRIES

- **Strawberries:** California strawberry production continues this week with low production due to recent rain. Growers had to strip plants of poor quality rain damaged berries, slowing production. After stripping, the plants need 7 to 10 days to reproduce fruit. We are now seeing plants loaded up with various stages of fruit, flowers, green, salmon, and almost ripe. Next week will be a different situation with more shippers and better California production. Florida continues inconsistent with production and will be for the remainder of the month. Some shippers have expressed that March will have much better production. McAllen TX production is slowing down with most shippers except Driscolls. We can expect McAllen to start finishing up sometime in March.
- **Raspberries** Raspberry production continues tight this week due to diminished transfers from Chile and Mexico. There has been some local California production, but with the current rain patterns, the numbers have fallen greatly. We can expect tight supplies for the foreseeable future.
- **Blackberries:** Blackberry production is slowing down with less transfers arriving from Mexico. There are some shippers in much better shape than others but definitely less product than in previous weeks.
- **Blueberries:** Blueberry transfers are slowing down from Chile and some shippers are looking for higher fobs. We are seeing less fruit arriving on vessels, and taking longer to be released. Shippers are expecting one more shipment then all blues will be flown up. Some shippers are expressing that we may see the end of Chilean product by the end of Feb.

BROCCOLI

The cold weather has suppliers in fair production numbers but demand has fallen. Although pricing has lowered, this market could turn around with a little push in sales. Mexico continues to produce good production numbers on Asian crowns with excellent quality. Some of the production in Yuma has reported small heads on crowns and some yellowing. This weather will make this market go up and down for the next weeks ahead.

CARROTS

Quality and availability continue to remain steady on the West Coast.

CAULIFLOWER

This market has slowed down due to light demand. Again, cold weather and rain have altered the harvesting of this commodity. Pricing will likely get stronger daily as some suppliers are lighter than others.

CELERY

Supplies are ample in Oxnard to fill orders and there are suppliers in Yuma with good production numbers. Business has been slow and suppliers are interested in keeping this commodity moving. The rainy weather in Oxnard has slowed down considerably. This market has definitely declined.

CITRUS

- **Lemon:** Supplies remain very good on 95's thru 140's. There are good supplies of 165's, with 200's being a little on the tight side.
- **Oranges:** Harvesting has been affected in the Valley by rain again. In the long term, look for good supplies available through March. Peak sizes are 48's through 88's.

CUCUMBERS

The cucumber market is easing just a bit. A steady flow of containers from Honduras and a reasonable Nogales market should keep the prices at current levels



COMMODITY REPORT CONTINUED

GRAPES

Chilean Flame red seedless grapes continue to wind down, but there is still good volume through the transition into Crimsons. Demand continues strong. Green seedless supplies are much better and will be decent going into next week. There are currently only fair supplies of Black seedless and seeded Red Globes, but overall grape quality is very good!

GREEN ONIONS

Supplies continue to be excellent out of the Mexico growing region. The market remains steady with very inexpensive prices. Defects have been minimal.

KIWI

Italian Kiwi supplies are decent and demand is only moderate. Quality remains very good and with the fair demand the market will remain unchanged.

LEAF LETTUCE

This market is showing some strength on romaine and green leaf. Supplies on green leaf have lowered in production numbers. Most shippers are ahead of their projected harvesting times. Quality continues to be above average. Quality defects continue to include epidermal peel, fringe burn, tip burn, and wind burn.

LETTUCE

The lettuce market continues to be stable. Supplies seem to be average but some shippers are coming into the next day sold out. Strong winds left debris and dirt on a number of lots of lettuce. Also there will be epidermal peel due to the lettuce ice from last week. Supplies will be light to average with most suppliers throughout the week.

MELONS

- **Cantaloupes:** Supplies on the East and West Coast for Cantaloupes remain excellent and the market will stay at lower levels well into next week. Larger sized melons (9's & 12's) dominate the volume being shipped into domestic ports and that will continue. Florida and California alike are receiving very good numbers on Cantaloupes and shippers are looking to move fruit. Quality has been very good with excellent taste and high sugar levels.
- **Honeydews:** Very good supply continues to arrive on most all sizes and on both coasts. Volume concentrations will be in the smaller sized melons (6 & 8ct) and that is where the deals are. Quality has been decent and sugar levels are high giving way to very good taste

ONIONS

There are good supplies of all colors and sizes of onions in Idaho and Washington. Idaho will have product available through the end of April. Mexican product is now in Texas with good supplies of all colors, quality is good.

POTATOES

Most shippers are back into packing both Norkotahs and Burbanks. The market looks to be strengthening for loading next week. We are trying to get all requests for a particular varietal fulfilled, by time of shipment Burbanks and/or Norkotahs may be the only product available. Wisconsin and Colorado still have good supplies and quality. Colored potatoes are loading out of North Dakota and Wisconsin with Washington cleaning up for the season. California has good quality and supplies of colored potatoes.

SQUASH

- **Eastern Squash:** Despite warm sunny weather in Florida, the yellow squash market continues to hold at the higher levels as there is strong demand from both coasts. Quality has been fair. Green squash should remain at current levels for several days.

TOMATOES

- **Eastern:** Tomato production in Florida is lower than Mexico but demand is keeping the playing field level. There has been no major upswing to pricing even with lower production. There seems to be more of the bigger fruit than smaller due to the fact that smaller fruit has been affected by the recent cold temps more so than the larger fruit.

WATERMELONS

Watermelon supplies continue to improve from Southern Mexico and the market is considerably lower going into the weekend. Quality has also improved. Honduras is also bringing Seedless Watermelons in from offshore and quality is very good there as well. There are now a few seeded watermelons available from Mexico. With the increased supplies from Mexico and steady supplies arriving in the offshore fruit, the market will remain soft.

Weather:

Pacific low pressure storm systems will continue to roll into California this week and into next week. Forecasts anticipate the bulk of the energy to remain in the northern part of the state with just a slight chance of rain forecast for Southern California late this weekend. Warm temperatures (5-10 degrees above normal) look to continue in the Desert growing regions of California and Arizona into next week when passing storm systems bring a very slight chance of rain to the region. Warmer temperatures have returned to the Southeast following the latest round of cold temperatures last week. Intermittent showers and seasonal temperatures are expected into next week



SUPER FOODS

Spinach

In popular folklore, spinach is a rich source of iron. In reality, a 60 gram serving of boiled spinach contains around 1.9 mg of iron -- many green vegetables contain less than 1 mg of iron for an equivalent serving -- hence spinach does contain a relatively high level of iron for a vegetable, but its consumption does not have special health connotations as folklore might suggest. Popeye the Sailor has a strong affinity for spinach, becoming much stronger after consuming it. This is partially due to the iron content being mistakenly reported ten times the actual value, a value that was unchecked during the 1930s.

However, researchers have identified at least 13 different flavonoid compounds in spinach that function as anti-cancer agents -- many of these substances are flavonoids known as methylenedioxyflavonol glucuronides -- the anticancer properties of which have been sufficiently impressive to prompt creation of specialized spinach extracts that could be used in controlled studies. These spinach extracts have been shown to slow down cell division in stomach cancer cells (gastric adenocarcinomas), and in studies on mice, to reduce skin cancers (skin papillomas).