



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND COMMODITY REPORT

OCTOBER 26th, 2009

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT Amsterdam Café



*A favorite for any crowd or any occasion. Come for a party, stay for a party, or start a party – any day of the week.
Enjoy today, the Amsterdam way!*

An Auburn tradition since 1991, newly renovated Amsterdam Café offers a little bit of everything for everyone. With Van Gogh inspired theme and artwork, Amsterdam is a restaurant that evolves with the need – casual, upscale, down home or black tie, they offer a stylish, yet comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. Menu highlights include Crispy Calamari with Fried Sage, Chicken Salad Melt, Center-cut Filet Mignon, Sesame Soy Seared Yellowfin Tuna, Rum Salmon Salad, Chilean Sea Bass and their award-winning Crab Cake and Avocado sandwich.

Amsterdam Café hosts live music events on Monday nights, and is a great option for private events with a separate dining area for private parties.

Amsterdam Café
Executive Chef: David Bancroft
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Auburn, AL 36830
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www.theamsterdamcafe.com



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WEATHER REPORT

In Central California, a drastic cool down is on tap with high temperatures in the mid 70s to low 80s Monday cooling to the mid 60s Tuesday with very strong winds expected into the latter part of the week. Winds in the 20-40 mph range with gusts into the 60 mph range are expected over the next few days. The desert regions will also see breezy conditions and cooler temperatures by mid week. Highs in the 80s Monday will cool to the low 70s mid week with overnight lows reaching the mid 40s through the week. In the Southeast high temperatures in the high 70s to mid 80s with a chance of showers through the week look to be the norm.

MARKET REPORT

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS VOLATILE, PRICES UP

Bell Peppers	Blackberries	Blueberries	Broccoli	Carrots	Cauliflower	Celery
Oranges	Cucumbers	Grapes	Leaf Lettuce	Iceberg Lettuce	Squash	Tomatoes

ITEMS TO WATCH -- MARKETS GOING DOWN/STEADY

Apples	Asparagus	Avocado	Cantaloupe	Green Onions	Honeydew	Kiwi	Lemons
Onions	Pears	Potatoes	Raspberries	Stonefruit	Strawberries		

APPLES/PEARS

Supply shortages continue on small sized fruit and the market remains strong. Beware of 'low priced' fruit as it could be core frozen and will not see the affects until well after arrival. Small sized apples in all varieties remain extremely tight and pre-sized bins are coming in peaking 88's and larger. This looks to continue throughout the entire season with carton counts expected to be down at least 5 million boxes total from last year out of Washington State. California is still packing mainly Pink Lady Apples with a few light supplies of Granny Smith also available. There are other areas in the Northeast (including the Carolina's, Virginia, Michigan and New York) going on red 'typed' apples, and demand for those is very good as well, especially with the limited supply of small sizes. Anjou Pears are going with better supplies in Washington this week and Bartlett pears are still going strong. There are also now varietal pears including Bosc, Seckel, Concorde, Comice and Red Pears.

ASPARAGUS

This market continues to be stable. Peruvian product continues to be loaded out of Miami or Los Angeles at a sharper price compared to Mexican product. Good production numbers continue to be had on jumbo sizing out of Peru.

AVOCADO

Mexico and Chile is going with good steady supplies. We are seeing higher maturity levels from both countries.

- **Mexican Fruit:** Supplies are good, but still peaking on 48's and 60's. Larger sizes are starting to pick up slowly.
- **California Fruit:** Next years crop looks much larger than this year's, and should be ready to begin late December / early January.
- **Chilean Fruit:** Chilean fruit supplies are steady with sizes peaking on 50's and 60's.

BELL PEPPERS

Eastern Bells: Market remains very strong with Georgia and Florida having limited volume.

Larger size is mostly available. Volume should increase in the next few weeks, but it is very limited right now.



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BERRIES

- **Strawberries:** We are going to be in a very tight supply situation on Strawberries now thru the month of November. The Salinas/Watsonville growing area is on its last legs. The next major storm that comes thru this area will put this area to bed for the season. Quality is fair. The Oxnard fall crop growing area is only 10% of the volume compared to the Northern growing areas which will not be able to handle the demand. The next area to come into production will be Mexico which has started in a small way but will not be in full production till the middle of November. Florida strawberry production will not start up till the first part of December. Once Florida gets started we should slowly see supplies start to meet the demand. Look for the market to be high with limited supplies thru November. All shippers will be in a fill rate situation due to the limited supplies. Rain is in the forecast for Friday/Saturday.
- **Raspberries:** Raspberry production remains consistent and quality remains good. There is some California production in Watsonville and some of the southern areas. We can expect continued light production in Oxnard. Mexico has started in a light way. Quality is good.
- **Blackberries:** Blackberries supplies limited due to weather that went thru the growing areas last week. Quality is fair with a firm market.
- **Blueberries:** The supplies are still very limited the start of this week with a firm market. Supplies should slowly build later this week into next. The main pack size will be 4.4oz and will move into the bigger packs as production increases. Market very firm

BROCCOLI

Suppliers have started out the week on the light side on both bunched broccoli and crowns. This market will be active throughout the week as supplies will be on the light side. Santa Maria has tightened up its availability as well as the Salinas Valley. Broccoli crowns have sized up better due to warm temperatures over this past weekend. Yuma will not begin production until approximately the second week in November.

CARROTS

California carrots coming out of Bakersfield are sizing slower due to cooler weather. Jumbo market is firming up.

CAULIFLOWER

Supplies have started the week on the light side with many suppliers. Expect the availability on this commodity to be sporadic over the next month as we make the transition to Yuma. Pricing will be stronger. Santa Maria and Salinas are the growing regions expected to cover orders through the month of October and most of November.

CELERY

This market continues to be active. Demand exceeds supplies on all sizes. Santa Maria continues to comparative to Salinas pricing. The Oxnard region will not begin production until the first week of November. Suppliers are closing the gap on the sizing available as most sizes are close to each other in production numbers. The quality continues to be strong with no major issues to report.

CITRUS

- **Lemons:** Supplies of 95's are limited. Availability continues to be good on 115's and smaller.
- **Limes:** Supplies are good. Sizing on pack outs are good on all sizes. Demand is good. Quality remains good.
- **Oranges:** Valencia season has come to the end. Numerous shippers have begun packing Navel's this week. More will begin by the weeks end and next week. Supplies are limited this week, and demand is strong.

CUCUMBERS

Eastern Cucumbers: Market is very strong. Limited supplies in both Georgia and Florida is generating good demand and keeping the prices high.



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GRAPES

Green Seedless grape supplies continue to wind down in the Central California area for storage fruit. There are 16# Thompson, very few 16# Autumn King and now 18# Brazilian Festivals (but only located on the East Coast) available. Supplies on green seedless look to remain very low and there continues to be only light supplies available compared to the demand. Looking forward, both Brazil and Chile have received rainfall and upcoming supplies, especially on green seedless in the transition period will be extremely light! Chile also looks to be pushed back about 1-2 weeks due to early season cold weather. Currently Red Seedless grapes look to remain steady again this week with Crimson being the predominant red variety available now and until the end of the domestic season. Demand remains strong for both red and green seedless, and supplies will remain light. The market will continue strong for the balance of the domestic grape season.

GREEN ONIONS

This market continues to be stable. Supplies are moderate to good on Mexican grown product. Pencil sizes are still the largest volume available. The quality continues to be good with no significant problems to report. Processors have had minimal problems with the raw product available.

KIWI

California Kiwi supplies are still very good. The market will remain steady with strong demand, and quality is very good.

LEAF LETTUCE

We are at the tail end of the Salinas deal. Pricing is ranging 3-4 dollars due to suppliers all having different availabilities. Fringe burn has been an issue on all leaf items. Suppliers have bypassed Huron for growing leaf items. Yuma will begin production the first to second week in November. This market looks to get stronger throughout the week with any kind of demand. Romaine hearts continue to be light in availability. Fringe burn is still being seen upon arrivals. Due to weather conditions, some growers are reporting that translucent water spots are seen on all leaf items. There have also been reports that the chopped romaine is not as strong as in past months. Things have not changed with this product.

LETTUCE

This market has tightened up. Supplies are definitely lighter compared to the previous week. Light weights will be an issue with lettuce shipping out this week. Weights have been reported out of Huron to be 36-38 lbs. This will continue likely throughout the week. Yuma will begin production for some suppliers the first week in November.

MELONS

- **Cantaloupes:** Arizona continues on a rollercoaster ride of supplies and sizing. To start this last week of October, supplies are light again! Central Arizona is already past their production peak and will now start winding down fast over the next several weeks. With cold weather in the immediate forecast for this week look for lower than normal supplies and limited sizes available. The peak sizing remains to the large side (12ct)* and will be that way through this week again. There are a few Mexico Cantaloupes crossing through the Nogales, AZ point of entry, but supplies there are somewhat limited and fruit is large. Quality on product of Mexico is only fair at best for now. The market could get very active if the supplies drop dramatically during the cold weather that is expected to start on Tuesday and go through Thursday. Fruit quality remains decent with moderate sugar levels.
- **Honeydews:** Honeydews are in very good supply with both Arizona and Mexico production increasing and volume heavy to 5/6ct. Demand is steady which will keep the market in check.

ONIONS

Idaho/Oregon continues with very good availability this week on red, yellow and whites. The shippers have finished harvest and yields are down a bit from last year so we may see some strength in this market as the storage sheds are not filled. Quality is good. Washington supplies are very good with good quality as well. There are good supplies available out of Colorado and Utah.



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POTATOES

Both Norkotahs and Burbanks are available this week and depending on the shipper they may only have one varietal available. Cartons are a little limited with retail demand down. This will remain the case until the Thanksgiving pull starts. Washington new crop Norkotahs are going strong with good quality and availability. Colorado is going strong with new crop supplies as well. Southern Washington is going with light availability on reds and yellows. Mount Vernon, Washington with good availability; product quality is stellar. North Dakota and Wisconsin with good supplies of red, yellow and white potatoes.

SQUASH

Eastern Squash: Market is still strong on zucchini. Yellow squash also available, but price has increased since last week. Demand is good, and volume is going to increase as more growers in Florida start with product in the next week to 10 days.

STONE FRUIT

Black Angeleno Plums remain available but there are only limited sizes left available and this should be the last week. There are still excellent supplies of fall fruit items available such as Persimmons, Pomegranates and Quince.

TOMATOES

Eastern: Florida growers are harvesting in Quincy in a light way. Volume on Roma, Cherry, and Grape continue to be down, but we may expect to see availability increase by next week as more Florida production comes on line. Palmetto-Ruskin area is starting slowly. Some higher temps in the lower growing areas may slow the fruit from setting and we may see the results of this in about two weeks.

WATERMELONS

Watermelons are available from Mexico coming up through both Nogales, AZ and Texas shipping points. Supplies are getting better on both Seeded and Seedless as we start this last week of October. Markets look to remain steady this week.

VALUE ADDED

Processors have gone back to normal pricing. Complaints continue to be reported on the chopped romaine not having as long a shelf life as in past months. As mentioned earlier in the leaf portion, the plants are tired and this is a common problem that exists with tired product. The cauliflower and broccoli raw product will get even more snug as we wind the season down. This will inevitably cause delays in truck loading. Processors will move to Yuma in late November.



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Grape Tomatoes



Grape tomatoes have taken the produce world by storm. In a few short years they have gone from non-existent in the grocery produce section to a very popular item that is pushing standard cherry tomatoes off the shelf in many areas.

Their smaller size makes them ideal for mouth poppin' snacking. It also means you can munch a tomato without squirting juice down the front of your shirt. They have a firm, "meaty" texture and a unique tasty tomato flavor. Kids even love them because they are sweeter than most cherry types.

Grape tomatoes made their debut on the American scene in 1996 when a Manatee County, Florida, vegetable grower tried them out as a specialty product for ethnic Chinese markets. He began to call them "grape tomatoes" due to their small size and elongated, grape-like shape. The variety he grew was called 'Santa,' a hybrid produced by a Taiwanese seed company. At first they received only mild interest but soon as word spread they began to catch on like wildfire.

The grower trademarked the term grape tomato which prevented other growers, marketers, and seed companies from describing similar type tomatoes as grape tomatoes. In 1999 one of the United States' largest produce companies was able through a lengthy court battle to get them to relinquish the term "grape tomato" for general use.

They were also able to convince the Taiwanese company to give them the exclusive rights on the 'Santa' variety. If you have purchased grape tomatoes from a produce section in the past five years or so, they were most likely the 'Santa' variety, although some other varieties are starting to make it onto the commercial scene.