



**THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:**

Green bell peppers remain very short and quality is only fair.

Tomatoes in all areas are in short supply. Demand exceeds supply, fob's are high.

Bartlett pears are finished for the season

Honeydew and Cantaloupe supplies are limited

Grape supplies are extremely limited

Rain and hail in Yuma over the weekend has altered production on many commodities. Product will be light on throughout the week.

# The Source

March 8, 2010

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## Weather: Tim Lynch

A series of fairly weak low pressure storm systems approaching California once again this week will bring a slight chance of rain, strong winds and cooler temperatures to the Southwestern growing regions early this week. Forecast models show great divergence on the track and how much moisture will be associated with these systems at this time. Forecast models continue to differ as to the amount of rain expected however they are in agreement in bringing strong winds to the region. In the desert locals these systems will bring some gusty winds and lower temperatures into the 60s to low 70s through mid-week. High pressure builds mid-week ushering in warmer temperatures into the weekend. As stated above depending on which forecast model pans out we could see no rain or light rainfall in this region early this week.

High pressure over Florida will usher in warmer temperatures this week with a chance of showers possible throughout the week. Temperatures in the low 70s early this week will warm to the low 80s in the south as a series of low level impulses bring a 20-40% chance of showers through the week. This is a welcome relief from the extended cool temperatures this winter season.



## Freight: Mike McIntire

The availability of eastbound trucks in California and Idaho have tightened up in the last week. Apple trucks in Washington remain steady. Crude oil prices are currently at \$81.81. The diesel price for this week is up .043 cents to 2.904.

# Till in good suppliesCommodity

## **APPLES/PEARS** *John Tole*

Washington is packing away and looking for help on larger fruit while still struggling to get the smaller sizes. Expect this trend to continue for the season as the fruit is large this year. Supplies of the smaller fruit will continue to get lighter until new crop starts in late summer/early fall. Demand remains very strong on small fruit and light on larger fruit. There are still some tremendous deals on 48/56/64's in most varieties other than Galas. Please consider varieties other than red delicious for your foodservice orders that require smaller fruit. Specialty apples including the Honeycrisp variety are still available and in adequate supply. Most varieties are also large and heavier to the premium grades. D'anjou pears are in excellent shape with good supplies in Washington and like the apples are mostly large. Bosc, Seckel, Concorde, Comice and Red Crimsons varietal pears are available as well although the varietal supplies are starting to get low.

## **ASPARAGUS** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This asparagus market continues to be steady. Supplies will be lighter on jumbo sizing from Mexico and California. Peruvian product is still available on the East and West Coast. The Quality of Mexican product continues to be good. California production can be loaded in Salinas and Yuma.

## **AVOCADO** *Tim Kelley*

California growers continue to harvest light volumes as they to let fruit size up. Chilean fruit volumes are lightening as season is near the end. Mexico is holding steady with their production. The over all supplies remain good.

**Mexican Fruit:** Mexico still represents the bulk of the avocados on the market. Supplies remain good, but growers are being conservation with their harvest to not flood the market. .

**California Fruit:** Growers continue to pick light volumes as there is not much size to the fruit. With the heavy crop this year, it is causing the crop to size slowly. Shippers will remain with limited harvest for a while waiting for fruit to size.

**Chilean Fruit:** Chile is winding down quickly, with many shippers received the last of their fruit this last weekend. Quality remains good.

## Commodities at a glance...

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Quality</b>	<b>Market</b>
Apples	Excellent	Steady
Asparagus	Good	Steady
Avocado (Mexican)	Good	Higher
Avocado (Chilean)	Good	Steady
Bell Peppers (Western)	Fair	Higher
Bell Pepper (Eastern)	Poor	Lower
Berries: Strawberries	Fair	Higher
Berries: Raspberries	Good	Steady
Berries: Blackberries	Fair	Steady
Berries: Blueberries	Good	Steady
Broccoli	Good	Higher
Carrots	Good	Steady
Cauliflower	Fair	Higher
Celery	Good	Higher
Citrus: Lemons	Good	Steady
Citrus: Oranges	Good	Steady
Cucumbers (Western)	Good	Steady
Cucumbers (Eastern)	Fair	Lower
Grapes	Good	Higher
Green Onions	Good	Steady
Lettuce: Leaf	Fair	Higher
Lettuce: Iceberg	Fair	Higher
Melons: Cantaloupe	Good	Higher
Melons: Honeydew	Fair	Higher
Onions	Good	Higher
Pears	Excellent	Higher
Potatoes	Good	Steady/Higher
Squash (Western)	Good	Higher
Squash (Eastern)	Good	Lower
Stone Fruit	Good	Steady
Tomatoes (Western)	Good	Higher
Tomatoes (Eastern)	Fair	Higher
Watermelon	Good	Steady

# Commodity Updates continued

## **BELL PEPPERS** *Tim Kelley*

### **Western Green Bells and Colored Bells:**

Green bell peppers continue to be very tight coming from Mexico. Production will remain light and size will be running small. Expect this to continue through the balance of the month. The California desert crop will start in April. Demand continues to be very strong with east coast demand the driving force on the market. The spring crop for eastern bells looks to start in April.

### **Eastern Bells:** *Janine Baird*

Pepper pricing in Florida seems to have dropped just a bit, not necessarily due to increased supplies but more in an effort to pull business away from Nogales. Quality is still fair at best but with warmer, drier temps moving through Florida we should see an improvement there and another week or two will bring increased supplies.

## **BERRIES** *Mike Gorczyca*

**Strawberries:** California Strawberry growing areas received light to moderate rain fall over the weekend. This again will hurt the quality of the fruit being harvested this week; quality will be problematic with white shoulder, bruise, pin rot, mold and water damage likely to be prevalent in the packs. Markets are slightly stronger the start of this week. Once Mother Nature will give us a break, quality and volumes will pick up quickly out of California. Florida strawberry market is steady to slightly weaker. If the weather stays warm for most of this week we could see a flush of fruit coming on out of this area. Quality is fair to good

**Raspberries:** Light supplies and demand is causing a steady market. Quality is good.

**Blackberries:** Better supplies are causing this market to weaken the start of this week. Quality is good to fair

**Blueberries:** As all of you are aware, the earthquake in Chile was devastating. We still do not have a whole lot of information on what effect this will have on the Blueberry market. There is tremendous damage to the major highways, but are open. All the blueberry growers in Chile will be struggling to move fruit out to the ports and airports. At this point the packing, loading of ships and clearing the fruit from the USDA will be restricted for the next 7 to 12 days. The ports are currently working at half speed and the airports are open but movement is slow. We will not feel the effects

of any shortage of fruit until 7 to 12 days from now. Currently the markets are slightly active with moderate demand.

## **BROCCOLI** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This market is active on bunched product as well as crowns. Contract business is being covered first by suppliers. Open market business will be very light in availability. Expect supplies will be light throughout the week. The quality continues to be good, coming out of Santa Maria, Yuma, and Scottsdale on bunched product. Crowns are small in head size compared to previous weeks. Light supplies on bunched product is available in Salinas.

## **CARROTS** *Tim Kelley*

California carrots are coming out of Bakersfield for the next week or two weeks with good supplies. Yield and quality are good and there should not be any gaps for the next couple of months.

## **CAULIFLOWER** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

The availability is very tight on this commodity and this will be the case for the entire week. Some discoloration has been seen upon arrival but not as extensive as in past weeks. Salinas has started some production with a few suppliers. The quantities have been light in Salinas and Yuma will be light throughout the week. This market will only be stronger throughout the week.

## **CELERY** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This market is stronger with all sizes, especially on small sizing like 30s and smaller. Production is lighter in Oxnard and Santa Maria and suppliers are scrambling to fill all orders. There continues to be a few shippers of celery in Yuma. The quality continues to be good from all the growing regions. Book orders early as demand looks to increase throughout the week.

## **CITRUS** *Tim Kelley*

**Lemons:** Supplies are good on 115's and larger, with 165's and especially 200's are less available with pricing firming. Quality is very good.

**Limes:** Large sizes are shorter due to past rains in Mexico. Expect good supplies this week on 175-200's. New crop looks to begin in 3 to 4 weeks.

# Commodity Updates continued

**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**

**Western Cucumber:** *Tim Kelley*

Mainland Mexico production is improving slowly. New fields have started with others coming on over the next 2 to 3 weeks. There are a few cucumbers starting to come out of Baja.

**Eastern Cucumbers:** *Janine Baird* The Florida cucumber market is reacting to the loss of business over the past several weeks by dropping prices. There is some increased availability because of the lack of demand but the quality is still not quite all the way there. As demand continues for Nogales product, this market should continue to trend downward.

**GRAPES** *Amy Grolnick*

The grape market has leveled out at very high levels. Several shippers on the west coast are waiting for product that will not be released until the end of the week as one of the main vessels that was supposed to be in over the weekend is late. The east coast also has very limited supplies on all seedless grapes. Crimsons are just starting to come in, flames will be finishing up over the next couple of weeks. The greens, Sugarones and Thompsons, will be the most prevalent but they are also in short supply at this point. Black seedless are in short supply and the only thing that seems to have any availability are the seeded red globes.

**GREEN ONIONS** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

This market is steady with product coming from Mexico. Demand is light. Pencil sizes continue to have the largest availability. There have been some issues on light yellowing on processed items. Suppliers are working on fixing this problem quickly.

**LEAF LETTUCE** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

The leaf market is steady to start the week, but look for this market to get stronger towards the middle of the week. With the rain and some hail in Yuma over the weekend, some suppliers decided to pass on harvesting. A few growers have had issues on romaine to where certain fields were passed on due to quality. Yields are down. Romaine and romaine hearts are

showing fringe burn lightly. Green and red leaf have been clean, but expect pricing to increase in the middle of the week.

**LETTUCE** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

The lettuce market continues to be strong. Huron production will start with a few suppliers in the third week in March and Yuma will continue through the month of March with most suppliers. There have been some issues of pink ribbing, discoloration, and mechanical damage seen upon arrival. Growers have bypassed certain fields which has caused lower yields to be seen. Expect this commodity to be tight throughout the week.

**MELONS** *Amy Grolnick*

**Cantaloupe:** Product continues to be limited. Honduran and Guatemalan product are both coming into the US. Unfortunately Guatemala has struggled with white fly and have started out very slow. Honduras product is still not prevalent enough to cover demand either. Florida product is coming into both Pompano and Manatee. There is product on the West Coast out of the LA area and some fruit coming into New Jersey as well.

**Honeydew:** Demand continues to exceed supply. Offshore fruit is still arriving into Florida, California and New Jersey with volume supplies still mainly in 5's and 6's. Product quality is fair as we are seeing a lot of sugar netting on the skin of the fruit but the meat quality is not affected and the fruit is eating well. Nogales is getting Mexican fruit in with good availability and fair quality as well.

**ONIONS** *John Tole*

Northwest yellows & reds are up again. Storage supplies are getting lower and are so short that most shippers are managing their remaining onions to cover contracts and regular customers only. The northwest sizing is still heavy to jumbos and larger while mediums are very short. The northwest quality has been holding nicely. Mexico continues to consume most of its own yellow and white onion crop instead of sending it to the U.S. and until they have enough to satisfy their own demand that will continue. Domestic whites are very limited and in a demand exceeds supplies situation. A few whites & yellows had crossed from Mexico

# Commodity Updates continued

but they got some rain over the weekend so expect those numbers to be low for at least the next few days. The Texas crop is going to start in April but expect them to be late due to cool weather and rain.

## **POTATOES** *John Tole*

Small size cartons are abundant in Idaho as burbanks are the main variety now. Only a few shippers have Norkotahs left so expect the smaller size profile to remain for the rest of the season. They are now peaking on 80's, 90's, & 100's. There are still quite a few 70's as well but 60's and larger are very short. Washington norkotahs are steady on all sizes and they are still getting excellent quality while peaking on 70's and 60's. The smaller counts are tight in Washington. Wisconsin & Colorado shippers are packing norkotahs as well and have a steady market with light demand, and are slightly heavier to 70 & 80 count but are spread evenly over all sizes. Mount Vernon, Washington continues with excellent quality on reds and Yukon-golds but they are nearly finished for the season. North Dakota has good supplies of red & yellow potatoes with few whites although a few shippers have finished. California packers have some reds, whites, and yellows but have been limited by weather. South Florida is going with reds and yukons but the volume remains light due to the freezes.

## **SQUASH**

### **Western Squash:** *Tim Kelley*

Mexico production is lighter this week. Growers are in a transition from older fields to new fields. Demand is still holding good.

### **Eastern Squash:** *Janine Baird*

Florida squash is finally coming around. The southernmost growing regions of Florida are reacting to the warmer, drier weather and the volume is increasing. We will continue to see a gradually softening market as the Spring crop kicks in. Quality is good at this time.

## **STONE FRUIT** *Amy Grolnick*

Shippers are looking to move on stone fruit they have on the floor since they currently have little else to sell. Peaches, Nectarines, Red and Black plums are all available with good quality.

## **TOMATOES** *Ryan Frayo*

**Eastern: Demand continues to exceed supply.** Florida continues to be a non-factor in the tomato supply chain. There has been significant crop loss from the early freeze and supplies out of Florida will be down and won't rebound probably until spring. Compounding the already desperate situation, Florida is experiencing more cold weather in the 30's. This will slow an already injured Florida crop. We can expect to see higher fob's probably up through the spring accompanied with shortened supplies. It is looking like the Florida crop may get back into production around late March possibly April.

**Western: Demand continues to exceed supply.** Supplies out of both Nogales and San Diego are drastically diminished continuing with a strong Mexican market. Growers are still trying to catch to demand from the rains as growers continue to get supplies and the pipe line filled again, but it is slow going. Slowly maturing fruit due to the cooler weather and persistent cloud cover is holding growers back. We could see an upswing in production in 2 weeks weather permitting. Fob's continue to rise and could keep on going depending on the supply chain. On the lighter side it looks like the Roma market and availability is easing up.

## **WATERMELON** *Amy Grolnick*

Light supplies on both seeded and seedless product. Quality on the Mexican fruit is fair at best. The mini seedless are in better supply and quality is good, the market has leveled off.

## **VALUE ADDED** *Gabe Romero/Mike Pacheco*

On the value added front, chopped romaine and romaine blended items continue to experience some brown and red discoloration on finished product. Suppliers are doing their best to use the best raw material available to avoid credits. Expect to see some red to pink discoloration on shred and chopped lettuce items as well. Green onions have been reported to have some yellowing upon arrivals.