

# TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of

**January 9,  
2012**



## Market Report

The holidays are over and all the gifts have been opened, but you still get the gift that keeps on giving: credit card interest. Long after Christmas you will not forget what you spent because you will see it every time the bill arrives; unless your like my wife who pays the bill right away because she hates credit cards and likes credit debt even less. I agree with her whole-heartedly. If more people paid off their debt you would have more money to spend in the long run. Its too bad people don't realize just how bad personal debt is. One of my sales gals told me she read an article in a woman's mag that said if a guy, or girl for that matter, is in debt when you meet them and is going to be that way for a while, you should not get involved with them because of the debt. I think this new date night question should be asked the first minute you pick them up and it should go like this: "You look beautiful, did you buy that outfit on credit or pay cash? How many credit cards do you have and does the balance get paid off every month or not? What is your total debt and how much money do you make?" For a gal it's a different #1 question: "How much do you make?" If the answer is over \$250,000 a year all other questions are not necessary.

Winter weather is always unpredictable and this year is no different. In Chicago we've had no snow of any sort and its already January; somehow I get the feeling we are going to get slammed again like we did last year. Prices are always high at this time of year. You will see prices for Beans higher, Asparagus is

stable for now but I think it will be lower towards the end of next week. Cucs are higher on all sizes, Seedless Cucs are fine- our supplier says he will be OK for this month. Leafy Greens are having issues- Romaine has a lot of peel in the leaves along with smaller heads. The weather has been very cold and that brings on big problems for all leafy Greens. Head Lettuce is lightweight and smaller heads, same goes for Red and Green Leaf- small heads, light weight.

Broc is up, and then its down, then its up again. I sometimes think growers have no idea what the market will do on any given day. Cauliflower is going back up quickly and Celery is going up also. Romaine Hearts are a good deal next week, Green Onions are down, and Carrots are steady. A word about Carrots: we have gotten a lot of calls asking 'why are your Carrots higher than the broad liner?' The big difference in Carrots is where they come from and how they cook. We usually switch to California product at this time of year because of flavor, taste, and size. But California Carrots are more money than Mexican and Canadian; those Carrots tend to be more woody and super big, which doesn't work well for Carrot sticks because the centers are too hard. The difference in price is anywhere from 4-8 dollars per sack. If you need cheap Carrots we will get them for you, just contact your sales rep.

Peppers are still very active for all colors: Red, Yellow, and Green. Prices on Red are still very high and Yellow are also high, but now Green are joining their

## Market Report, Cont'd...

ranks, mostly because of the cold weather in the south- but prices have jumped up \$6-\$8 per box.

Box Potatoes are steady for now. The problem that happens with Potatoes during the winter is if it gets too cold the shreds have a hard time packing Potatoes, also getting into the shreds becomes a problem if it snows too much. Sweet Potatoes are still down in price and are a good buy. Don't forget Fingerling Potatoes- excellent Potatoes for a variety of menu options and you have a good selection of choices: Red Thumb, Purple, Russian, Banana, French, and Assorted Pee Wees.

The Tomato market is a little goofy right now. We are getting wild swings in prices on certain types of product. Tomatoes on the Vine are extremely tight and price has skyrocketed. An excellent sub would be Kumato Tomatoes- its about the same size and it's a better Tomato for eating. Yellow Teardrops are very tight and expensive. We have Yellow Grape Tomatoes available. Good Vine Ripe Tomatoes are also a little tight, most growers are picking product early because of weather, and product is not coloring up as well as it should.

Zucchini and Yellow Squash are both higher next week.

Strawberries are steady for next week. Driscoll is switching most of their supply to Florida and Southern California and everyone else is doing the same. The quality of the Berries is a day-to-day deal. Raspberries are still tight and growers are holding customers to averages. Blues are plentiful and price is down again. Blackberries are also a good deal.

Good Grapefruit is available and price is steady. Navel Oranges are getting better by the day. Blood Oranges are coming back but mostly on the small side. Florida Tangerines are available and Clementines are still around and excellent quality. Some very expensive Plums are available from Chile, also Satsuma Mandarins are available and those are great.

Don't forget Heirloom Apples. We have two or three types in house. Crenshaws are available but not a lot of supply, maybe 20-30 cases. First come, first serve.

Bosc, D'Anjou, Bartlett, and Asian Pears are all available. If you need something a little different, don't forget the following: Baby Bananas, Buddah's Hands, Cactus Pears, Cara Cara Oranges, Cherries (\$), Kumquats, Meyer Lemon, Fuyu Persimmons, Pomegranate, Pummelo, Sugar Cane, Black Garlic, and Key Limes. If you have an item you might need, call and we will look for it or tell you its availability.

## Produce Quiz

In one form or another I am the most popular fruit of the New Year. Together we comprise the world's single largest fruit crop. It all began over 7,000 years ago somewhere around the Caspian Sea area, Asia Minor or Armenia. Today my family has over 10,000 relatives! (You can't possibly imagine what family reunions are like. (All that inbreeding really shows.) My flavor and quality depend very much on the area and type of land I am grown on, the amount of water I receive, the amount of sunshine I get, and how I am harvested. Indeed it was a prohibitionist who first made me into a lowly juice, making communion a significantly more sober experience. The dusty film on my skin that is often mistaken for pesticides is actually a natural waterproofing produced by my cells in or near my surface to prevent my skin from cracking. I come in green, red, purple and black, covering all shades in between. I am sweet and tart and you can find me in sizes ranging a quarter to a pea. My seeds are used as oil and I can often be found without them. Most popular as a drink or eaten out of hand (it's a toss up), I am also bottled and used as a vessel christener, a souring agent, a snack, a friend on a lonely cold evening, jellies, jams, life savers, cereals, and numerous baked goods. My juice is even used to marinate apples. I am "sour". I am the "wrath". I am a good source of potassium, considered a diuretic, energy food, tonic, laxative, and cleanser.

## Last Quiz Answer: Leeks



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