

TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of

**January 23,
2012**



Market Report

I have lost count of how many Alfalfa recalls I have seen over the years. I understand that when grown properly an Alfalfa is OK but to me the unusual number of recalls has led to Testa not handling this product. We sold 1 or 2 bags per week for all of my customers, so to drop it is not a big deal. But I am sure someone is going to call and tell me they must have it and I will tell them to go to the grocery store and get it- the liability is just too high.

We still have crazy prices on Zucchini and Yellow Squash. The demand is still good and the supply is still bad so you have a big problem for at least another week or two. Guess what, Peppers came down. Gee, I wonder if it had anything to do with the fact they didn't need to go up in the first place. Growers were trying to make an extra profit by scaring everyone with that cold weather. Bullshit. It might have slowed them down a bit but definitely not cause a big supply problem. Beans are much higher this week, Cucs are also much higher, Broc is going back up again, and Cauliflower is down.

Carrots are steady. Finally Brussel Sprouts are

falling in prices, mid-twenties is the market. Eggplant is higher and Corn is much higher. Cabbage is higher on Red and Green. Parsley is higher, Rapini is super expensive, Red and Green Leaf took off and is high priced. Romaine is going back up on Regular and Hearts. Romaine growers are still having issues with peel and low yields. Lettuce is stable for now. Green Onions are steady. Kale is having big issues and mostly it's the weather causing them. It has been cold so Kale is not sizing up; which means growers are not harvesting, which is causing shortage and prices to jump up. Unfortunately Kale has always been a great plate liner and decorative item because it's cheap; well that theory is not working this week. Prices for Kale are double what they were and growers say it will be a week or two till it gets fixed. Pea Pods are down and Sugar Snaps are up. Japanese Eggplant is still tough to get and very high priced. Hydro Bibb is steady. Baby Arugula and Baby Spinach are steady.

Our friends in the Pepper department are having issues mostly with credibility. They tried to, and did, raise prices on a mild freeze but quickly lowered them. Red Peppers are down but only for a short time. Yellow are down also. Green fell this week and hopefully will fall

Market Report, Cont'd...

some more next week if Mexico starts back up. Tomatillos are going up and prices are in the \$50's for the big box.

The Cantaloupe and Honeydew market is much higher next week. The melons have been going up for weeks but finally supplies have tightened up enough that suppliers don't have enough to fill orders. Prices are going to stay high for a while. We do have a few different Melons available but not a lot. We have Crenshaw and Charentias; if you are looking for something different these might work. Strawberries are much better- quality is improving and color looks better. Grapes are getting better also: Black Grapes are back finally and Red and Green are looking good.

Raspberries have tightened up a bit. Blackberries are looking good, Blues are excellent and price is good. Red Bananas and Baby Bananas make a nice addition to any fruit plate but remember Baby Bananas, when fully ripe, go bad in one day so make sure you are using them quickly to allow for this. Flavor-wise it's a great item so just manage the ripeness. Star Fruit is around. Avocados are still going strong but remember during the Super Bowl Avocado use triples and that can spark a high market for a week or two. Don't forget the Organic Citrus in stock- Call or email for the list.

Produce Quiz

Popular throughout the ages in Europe, you may have seen us in paintings by the Dutch and Flemish masters. But, we got a bum rap in the U.S. in the 1920's and are still recovering from that tarnished reputation (we're actually quite shiny, have beautiful taut skin, and travel well). Federal prohibition resulted from fears that we spread a fungus (which doesn't really bother us fruits, but is murder on white pines). The law was changed in 1966, although some states and counties still ban our growth. ("Honest Ag officers, it wasn't even us; it was our relative, the gooseberry.") We come primarily from three species of deciduous shrubs and we fruit in reds or whites. (You may also know our black relative.) Our flowers and fruits are born near the bases of first year stems, and then higher up on more mature plants. We're relatively little fruits, but you'll find a whole bunch of us hanging out together. Pick our entire sprig to enjoy our sweet tart firm berries. If you want to eat us out of hand, leave us on the bush for a few extra weeks to sweeten. Now that we've escaped the law, we're harvested in the States from June to August and we arrive from New Zealand from December to February. Believe us when we say we're unmatched for jelly, pie, and sauces, as well as mixed with other fruits. Our whites make sweet summer table wine; our reds make hearty English mead. In Early America, we could be found preserved and dried in many a pantry. We're low in calories and sodium and contain vitamin C, potassium, and fiber. Don't confuse us with the minute dried guys who look like raisins and come from Greece. (Oh, and that small-sized tomato borrowed its name from us.)

Last Quiz Answer: Purslane



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