

# TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of  
**March 26, 2012**



## Market Report

It's the first weekend of golf and the temp is 69 degrees in March- this is absolutely great golf weather, but all I can think of is what price are we going to pay for this weather. Mother Nature is, by design, unpredictable and she always has a habit of luring you in with great weather one moment and hitting you between the chops later with the shit. But for now, we will take it, and so will the rest of Chicago.

The great weather is helping all of our local growers get started earlier than expected; but they are also cautious because they know a freeze now, with plants in the ground, would be devastating. So only half the crop is being planted and they will wait for the traditional May 15 to plant the rest.

The weather out west has been a mixed bag. California was hit with a lot of rain and that hit the Berries mostly, which could impact Easter ads in chain stores and cause a big tightening in food service. Florida is just about done so Oxnard is your best option.

Strawberries for Easter is pretty traditional but this year could be a challenge. Raspberries

are still very tight and price has stayed high this week. Blackberries are all over the board. Blueberries are still in the mid-20's but I see some movement up. Banana markets are getting better; growers are starting to catch up so prices have stopped going up and actually went down in some markets. Clementines are still excellent and so are Navel Oranges. Star Ruby Grapefruit is outstanding if you're a Grapefruit lover. Don't forget about Papaya and Mango, these two pack plenty of good things to help you on your way to a healthy lifestyle. Remember Blueberries help you stay young; and if you're over 50, Blueberries are a required snack. I know some people over 50 don't need Blues because they have enough money for liposuction and face lifts; the rest of us just eat Blues, you will look better than those phonies. Passion Fruit, Blood Oranges, Meyer Lemons, and Tangerines are all still around so give them a try. We do have offshore Plums so if you really want them we will get them for you. Sometimes they're good but most of the time they're just fair- but to each his own. Seedless Watermelon is still high priced and so-so flavor. Personals eat much better, but cost more.

On the Veggies side of things: Beans are higher, Corn is high, and Cucs are higher. Eggplant

## Market Report, Cont'd...

is steady, Japanese Eggplant is down, and Baby Eggplant is starting up again. Asparagus has gone up on all sizes. Some California product is hitting but much higher price. Easter is big for Grass so don't be surprised by higher prices. Green Onions are also moving up- supply and demand is the main reason. Knob Onions are a great grilling item for summer, so don't forget to put those on the menu. Box Potatoes are moving up again- the market jumped two dollars again this week. Bee Potatoes are all over the board, some are in the high teens and some are lower for marginal product. A Red Potatoes are steady for now. Yukon Golds A and B are steady for now.

Fingerling Potatoes are in a slight gap so prices are higher. Kennicot Potatoes are the problem child. Growers are saying there is a 1 ½ month gap, but that's not exactly true. It's more like 3-4 weeks. There is some product available but it's not as clean as what everyone is used to; so we will wait and see how it goes. We do have a good supply for now!

Zucchini and Yellow Squash are much higher next week. Hard Squashes are still crazy high priced and don't see any break there for a few weeks.

Tomato prices are steady for the most part. Grape Tomatoes are still active but seem to be heading down. Vine Ripe 4x5 and 4x4 are holding their own. Loose 5x6, 6x6, and 6x7 are all steady. Kumatos are back and so are Campari. We also have a good supply of Mixed Medley Tomatoes. Single layer Beefsteaks are also back and color is good. Plum Tomatoes are steady but sizing is an issue. Spring has started and so have Ramps, so pre-order because they go fast and everyone likes

them.

Morels are 2-3 weeks away; we do have a few Pink Oysters if you're in need. Lots of spring menu ideas on our website so check it out. And don't forget we carry a complete line of Roland products and lots of specialty items along with frozen ones. We will sell to anyone, not like some big company that just bought a Chicago Specialty Company.

## Produce Quiz

I originated in China, but was made popular by the Moors who seriously cultivated me in Spain. I am not so very popular today because I am not considered an eating fruit. Britain is my primary user and she imports me from Spain, South Africa, and the United States. It seems I fit in perfectly with all those afternoon teas that are becoming so popular. I have a thick rough skin and my flesh is extremely tart and full of seeds. O.K., so I'm not good in a lunch box, but what about sauce for a duck? Huh? Did you ever think of just how beautifully I would contrast with the rich/fatty flavor of a goose or other wild game? So don't write me off just yet. You will also find me among the refined crowd as they sip their Cointreau, Triple Sec, Grand Marnier, and Curacao. My thick peel makes a quick zest that can be used fresh as a garnish or dried as a seasoning. In the United States much of my crop gets "Smuckered". I am high in vitamin C and I am a good source of potassium. As a pharmafood I have been used as a diuretic, tonic, scurvy cure, and mild laxative. Don't crumpe without me.

## Last Quiz Answer: Thyme



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