

TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of
April 2, 2012



Market Report

The Easter Bunny is coming this week and if you're a chocolate lover you are in heaven: chocolate eggs, chocolate bunnies, and chocolate baskets.. to name a few edible delicacies. Of course Easter brunch is also on everyone's list and of course it's going to be a beautiful day- the weather looks great. Holidays spent with your family and a couple hundred people eating family style is always a special treat; especially those wonderful children screaming at the top of their lungs that they don't want to be at a restaurant eating. Having had four children and been in that spot, it is always amusing to see how parents react to the child. The child can get the parents to do or give them anything they want at that point. If I had known that I could have gotten a lot more stuff, but unfortunately for me my mom had a different approach. It was called a whack on the ass and if that didn't work, a whack on the ass from Dad. Which if you had to choose, mom was 5'4" and 110 pounds and Dad was a lot bigger and stronger- No contest. And there was no negotiation involved. Sit down and shut up, that was your only option.

Produce prices are steady for the most part but growers are transitioning to new fields so product and trucks are a big problem. Old fields are being dished under and new fields are just getting started, so quality is an issue.

Beans are good; and for Easter beans are a big seller, so make sure you order early. Wax Beans are still

tight and high priced. French Beans are reasonable and make a great side dish for the holiday. Baby Veggies are always a favorite for holidays but don't wait till last minute to order them, supplies will get tight towards the end of the week. Asparagus is steady; California is staring, but very high prices till after the holiday. My suggestion is wait till after Easter and then you can start with California Asparagus.

We got everyone excited about English Peas 3-4 weeks ago because we gave you a super special price for two weeks and everyone started to use them; but now product is very tight and very high priced so getting them has proven to be a challenge- I am sorry about that. I did not expect they would triple in price in a week. I must have done a really good sales job! I am looking at the supply for this week and they are still really high priced. I will get some but not till Tuesday or Wednesday. I will have Fava Beans and they are a lot cheaper if you're interested. When we put sale items out there, they are just that, sale items. We sometimes only have a limited amount because the shipper just wants to move a certain amount. Because we deal with highly perishable product we cannot bring in truckloads and keep it on the shelves (it doesn't work like that in produce) so we try and give you a good value for at least a short time and hope that helps your bottom line.

Carrots are down, Celery is still cheap, and Cuc are down. If you're a salad lover, Cuc are a must. If you are Peter Testa, Cuc are a never- to each his own. Green Onions are a popular Easter vegetable; my guess is because it goes with everything. Spanish Onions and

Market Report, Cont'd...

Red Onions are going up; shippers are starting to run out of storage product and new fields are just getting started, so supply is pushing on demand.

Italian Parsley and regular Parsley are holiday favorites. Rapini is an Easter tradition in some families and sales usually exceeds supply, so order early. Mustard Greens, Turnip Greens, and Kale are all available and make a great addition to your holiday dinner. They are all considered in that super high 'important for your body' type of food. Personally I know they go great with fish. Peppers are coming down on Red (maybe), Yellow are higher, and Green Peppers are all over the board but I think the market is weaker. Good quality is back in Tennessee, Georgia, and Texas so hopefully it will drive the prices down.

Cauliflower is down and so is Broc, which are two holiday favorites; this does not happen too often, so take advantage. Head Lettuce, Romaine, Leaf Lettuce, Boston, and Mesclun are all in good supply; so don't be afraid to use them. Salad Spinach is still the same and so is Baby Spinach. Baby Organic Arugula is a little short and we have had to sub some conventional at times.

Box Potatoes are going up and next week is their first big jump. The market is getting much tighter on supply and certain shippers have finished up or are holding back supplies for certain customers. Box Potatoes will continue to go up most of the summer.

Tomatoes have come down and supplies have gotten better. Grape Tomatoes are still a bit tight but supply looks better next week.

Strawberries will continue to be challenging for the next few weeks due to light supply, rain damage, cold weather, and lack of good growing conditions. All growers are having these problems, some worse than others. Raspberries are very tight; it is a 'demand exceeds supply' issue and will stay that way all week. Blackberries are OK and price is reasonable. Blues are running OK; domestic supply is about to start and that will help with price. One thing I have to bring to your attention: as much as we taste test all Berries, we cannot control how they will taste. We

switch growers to try and get the best tasting product but we do not have a crystal ball to gauge all Berries. Seedless Watermelon is still very expensive, Regular Watermelon is steady, and personals are still excellent.

Bananas have come down. Clementines are still available. California tree fruit is right around the corner and hopefully starts early. Figs are starting to trickle in. Grapefruit is still excellent and Limes are steady. Oranges are good for both Navel and Juice. Avocados have gone up in price this week and that is strictly being done by demand, which has gone crazy.

Easter is this Sunday. There are plenty of brunches to choose from so go out, eat, and enjoy your day.

Produce Quiz

The 18th century French dramatist and critic, Mercier said of my ancestors and me that we were an "inestimable gift to the numerous class of the needy" and that we were "to have the greatest influence on Man, his liberty and his happiness." Even though many other European countries were cultivating us, many people of Mercier's time thought we caused leprosy. But later that century, as a result of the French Revolution, it became a sign of patriotism to uproot your roses and replace them with us. By this time, and despite the initial rejection of my species, there were over 40 varieties of me. Now there are hundreds of variations of me. My ancestors originated in the Peruvian Andes and in the 16th century the Spaniards brought us to Europe. Although it is a mystery how we came to North America, the earliest recorded date of my cultivation was in New Hampshire in 1719. Suffice it to say that I'm as American as apple pie because Americans consume approximately 138 pounds of my relatives and me a year. I, in contrast to my relatives, am always getting left behind. Dug up along with my elders, yes, but then I pop out, get run over, or fall through the harvester. I inch along, just don't make the grade. But I get the last laugh as I'm much more premium than my counterparts. I am harvested by human hands and get wonderfully delicate treatment. I can't do anything to help your coffee, though my name might imply it. You could probably tee off with me, as my size is appropriate, but most likely I would explode before landing. Rarely skinned like my older relatives, I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy as I grow in red, white, or blue. I'm excellent roasted, grilled or cooked in the microwave. I can be halved, and scooped then filled with caviar, sour cream, cheese, bacon etc. I can be sliced thin and served under a cheese sauce. I am high in potassium and vitamin C, and contain eleven other vitamins and minerals. With me, as with your answer, size does matter!

Last Quiz Answer: Seville or Sour Orange



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