

TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of
April 23, 2012



Market Report

It's almost May and sure enough, the weather comes into play again. We go from 80's to 30's in 24 hours. Mother Nature, like most people, can't make up her mind what she wants to do. These cold snaps are screwing up the local farmers because some planted early when the weather was so nice, and now the early sprouts are getting wiped out with the cold weather. My wife told me that you are not supposed to plant anything till after May 15. She says usually after that you are OK. I guess she was right again and that's why I married her- mostly for her brain (not) but she has many other great attributes!

The weather is going to cause issues all summer, and in the fall we could see a major effect on Fruit and Apples out of Michigan. In the mean time, we have issues all over the board. But some good news, Asparagus is on sale next week, but only 1 kind of box (28#) and 1 size (Small/Standard) is on the sale sheet. If you order any other size or box you will not get sale price. Just so you understand its only on one kind of size and one kind of box.

Beans have come down on Regular but Wax are still tight. French Beans are slightly higher. Cucs are steady but Seedless are still cheap. Carrots are higher in California but Texas is starting and

price is much cheaper. Brussel Sprouts are steady and price is still over \$30 for good quality. Broc is steady, Cauliflower is steady, Celery is moving higher, and Green Onions are steady. Escarole and Endive are proving to be challenging this week, supplies are yellowing and not a lot of produce is making it into the box. Growers are scrambling to find #1 product and a lot of product is being disked under. This is the same problem facing Frisee. Growers are having a terrible time right now because they can't get good bleached product and fields are looking like crap. (And to think I could have been a rocket scientist and make a lot more money and got to go to the moon.) Cabbage is steady on Green but Red took a big jump this week. Green Peppers are still high priced and look to stay that way all week. Joining them are Red and Yellow, which now have gone up double.

Not far behind are all of the specialty Peppers: Shishito, Jalapeno, Banana, and Anaheim which are all going up. All of your Greens: Mustard, Turnip, and Collard are the same. Romaine is going up fast and so are Romaine Hearts for that matter. You can expect all Row Crops to take a jump because of weather and supplies. It's going to be a good spring for business but bad on prices and supplies. You cant have everything, but at this point I would take 70's and sunny.

Head Lettuce is much higher, Leaf is going up,

Market Report, Cont'd...

Boston is up, and Mesculin so far has not changed, which is a good thing. The Baby Lettuce has gone up and Herbs are also going up. Hard Squash is still high priced but have come down from stupid prices. Salad Spinach is another very tight item- Last week every shipper cut everyone's order in half, which sent everyone scrambling for product. When that happens we usually get 100 new friends that need Spinach, of course all our old friends get product first and if we have any left over our new friends get some. Zucchini and Yellow Squash are always fun items in spring. The produce changes prices faster that you can change pants; but that's what happens every spring- quality has been very good.

The Tomato market is going along just fine. You have good supplies of everything, prices are down, and quality is up.

Strawberries are trying to get better but the weather is what needs to improve to get better Berries. Raspberries are extremely tight and very high priced. Blues are still a tough item, and price is going up daily. Blackberries are getting better but slowly.

California and Mexico have started with Peaches, Nectarines, and Plums- more items will follow very quickly. Cantaloupe is still high priced but quality is very good. There is going to be a problem with Honeydews. Shippers are very tight on product and rainy weather in the growing areas is causing major headaches for growers. My shippers tell me they think they are going to be short and a gap could occur with supply; which means prices are going to go up quickly and sizes are going to get tight fast. If you are using Honeydew, you might have to use a different size because that may be the only thing available. Mother Nature does not care that you only like certain sizes, she decides what is going to grow and sometimes it's all up for grabs. When product gets really tight, it always makes me realize

just how powerful Mother Nature is. She can wreck a market in a second with a hail storm or wind damage, and at the same time bring gorgeous weather early and surprise you with great produce before you are ready for it. The power she has can never be underestimated.

Spring is always a fun time in my business and this year we will be adding a ton more local product! So next week we will tell you about some new partnerships we will have with some familiar friends and hopefully it will add value to your operation.

Produce Quiz

As the fruit of the Swiss Cheese plant, but I don't go well with ham. I am a member of the Arum Lily family. My large beautiful sturdy leaves make me a very suitable houseplant. Originally from Mexico (called Mexican Breadfruit, later known as the shingle plant) my survival techniques have allowed me to thrive around the world. We are very complicated to eat, but worth it. I will not ripen evenly! The green scales of my almost foot long lizard tail shaped body will loosen to expose my off-white colored, banana/mango/pineapple flavored spadix. When unripe, my oxalic acid and sharp calcium oxalate crystals will irritate and often numb the membranes of your mouth, tongue, and throat. Not to worry, you will only FEEL like you can't breathe. To avoid this breathless possibility I am often wrapped in plastic so I will ripen more quickly and evenly. Excellent in fruit salads or eaten out of hand, I am also stunning in a cornucopia or fruit display.

Last Quiz Answer: Fava Beans



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