

# TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of  
**April 30, 2012**



## Market Report

Testa has always featured locally grown produce and again this year we are going to expand to even more farms. With our new farms we have new opportunities for different local items to sell. For next week, a good friend of mine offered me Berkshire Hams for Mother's Day. Now, we only have very limited numbers of these hams, but we cooked one and they are fabulous. These delectable Berkshire Hams are derived from humanely raised, 100% Berkshire stock from Iowa. The hams are bone-in, applewood smoked, honey glazed, and spiral cut. Berkshire Hams are known for their marbling and flavor. We are happy to offer them on a first come first serve basis but when they are gone, they're gone. If you want more, we will be able to get them on a regular basis but we want to see how you like them first. They come in various sizes and weights and would make an excellent flavorful menu addition. Call your sales rep for pricing info and availability.

This will be a busy week with the Restaurant Show in town and every restaurant going crazy; but we love the business and we hope you all do well. The summer fruit crop is right around the corner and things were looking good till the hail hit and now things aren't looking as good. Grow-

ers sustained damage on Nectarines, Peaches, and Cherries. Most of the damage was to early varieties but that means volume will not be up to par till later in the season and some varieties may not be around long. The early Peaches and Nectarines always need more time to ripen so your best choice for this weekend would be Mexican Peaches, which are Organic and have good flavor. We are working on getting some Cherries but prices will be very high. TDEs are available and they are an outstanding piece of Citrus. Also Cara Cara Oranges are available, Kumquats are around, and New Zealand Figs are available but extremely pricey. Blueberries are getting better, Raspberries are still up there, Blackberries are steady, and Stem Strawberries are slowly coming in, and I mean slowly. High priced regular Strawberries have gone down in price but rain in California and cold weather might put a damper on the Mother's Day pull. Small size Apples are getting tighter by the day so certain varieties are not going to be available shortly.

Grapes are also a big issue for the next few weeks; California product is not ready. Prices for Green Grapes have reached over \$50 per case and quality is just fair. Red Grapes are more reasonable but I also think quality is just fair. Black Grapes are available and much higher priced, but quality is better. Cantaloupe is steady but Hon-

## Market Report, Cont'd...

eydew is very tight and very high priced. New Mexican product is coming but Brix content is always an issue with new fields. Mangos, Papayas, and others are all available so use different items on your breakfast to keep it interesting.

Asparagus is going up, and quickly, but local Grass starts the week of May 6. We will see how the crop goes but expect six weeks of product. Growers tell us the cold weather slowed the field down so that's why they didn't have product this week, and some won't start for two weeks. Ramps are available and they have been terrific if you use them. Lots of different recipes are available with Ramps but they are only around for a short period, so use them now. Beans are steady but Wax Beans are still a problem child. Growers are always having issues with Wax and this year is no different. Cucs are much higher, Seedless are steady, Celery is steady, Cauliflower is higher, Broc is higher, Green Onions are higher, Spanish Onions and Red Onions are much higher, Eggplant is higher, and Japanese Eggplant is still not available.

The Pepper market is on fire. Red Peppers are very expensive, Yellows are very pricey, and Green Peppers are also high priced on all sizes and grades. Potato prices continue to be a challenge. Prices are stable for now but that could change fast. New Fingerling crop is about to start from California but it won't be available for 2 weeks and prices will be higher. Bee Potatoes and A Red Potatoes are higher and Yukon Golds are steady. Kennebecs are down and new crop started. Hard Squash are still pricey but quality is better.

Zucc is down again in price, which makes it a good buy this week. Yellow Squash is also down next week but not as much.

The Tomato market is steady with lots of product available, but a few are high priced. Regular sizes are fine and price is down. We have a few Kumatos, Camparis, and Cherry-on-the Vine available; also, VR Tomatoes 4x4 and 4x5. Yellow Tomatoes are available, Green Tomatoes, Heirloom Tomatoes, Yellow Grapes, and Yellow Teardrops are available but very high priced. Red Teardrops are super tight and super high priced. Plum Tomatoes are all over the board but priced to sell.

## Produce Quiz

A native of southeastern China, I am also very common in Vietnam and central Asia. My Chinese name means eight points. Late in the sixteenth century, Europeans actually used me widely as bait in mousetraps, leading to my latin name "Illicium," meaning lure or bait. I grow on an evergreen tree of the magnolia family and my pretty reddish-brown woody fruit is picked prior to ripening, then sun-dried. Each of my fruits' points contains an oval seed with longitudinal ridges. Chewing my seeds freshens your breath with a licorice-like taste. In addition to being used in oriental cuisine, I flavor liqueurs, chewing gum, and confections. I'm very familiar in a famous spice mixture -- ground-up with four other spices, specifically fagara, cinnamon or cassia, fennel seeds and cloves, along with cardamom, dried ginger or licorice root -- where my pungent, sweet flavor dominates the powder. I am said to be diuretic, carminative, stomachic, antispasmodic, digestive, and expectorant, and a stimulant, so use me to tone up the heart, stimulate digestion, combat flatulence, and soothe coughs and asthma. My essential oil contains anethole, a substance also found in fennel (whose seeds taste similar to mine). Thousands of years old, I am, perhaps best recognized for my shape, but there's never been a sidewalk ceremony for me.

**Last Quiz Answer: *Monstera Deliciosa* or Ceriman**



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