

TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of
May 21, 2012



Market Report

Memorial Day is coming next week and it's a traditional barbeque and picnic weekend. Corn is a biggie for that weekend and there should be plenty available and price is steady. Also, Watermelon is a big picnic favorite next week and supply looks very good also; the only issue is flavor, early in the year you don't always get the best flavor.

Asparagus is getting started from Michigan and quality is excellent, prices are higher than usual for this time of year. The season usually goes for about 6-7 weeks so take advantage of it while you can. Local crops are starting to get going more and more as the warm weather gets crops going earlier. That is a double-edged sword because they finish earlier also. Some crops are hurt by warm weather early, that's what happened to the Michigan Apple crops; the birds came early and then they got caught in a freeze, which dropped all the birds, but now the crop estimates have been cut by 60-70 percent. Which is going to be a problem later.

Beans are down, Cucs are steady, Eggplant is higher, Celery is higher, and Seedless Cucs

are also higher. Peppers are coming down on all sizes and colors, which is good because Peppers are excellent for grilling on Memorial Day. If you are really adventurous you could try grilling Hard Squash. When done right, Hard Squash is awesome grilled.

Potatoes are steady on boxes for now but its early summer so you have your choice of Red A's and B's from several different growing areas and prices are steady from both. You also have Fingerlings available, which come in a variety of sizes and also go great with any entre. Don't forget Sweet Potatoes (my favorite) those are also a good side dish and you can do a lot with them. Of course for grilling: Zucchini and Yellow Squash on a Kabob is a staple, and with beef and chicken you can't go wrong. Lastly, don't forget Tomatoes for your summer salad. You have your choice of several different Tomato varieties starting with VR Beefsteaks from Mexico, On-the-Vine from Canada, Yellow On-the-Vine, Cherry Tomatoes On-the-Vine, and Campari On-the-Vine, Kumato Tomatoes (excellent with Mozzarella), Heirloom Tomatoes (some Organic and some Canadian), Plum Tomatoes (excellent on a grill), Cherry Tomatoes, Grape

Market Report, Cont'd...

Tomatoes, Regular Yellow Tomatoes, and all different sized Tomatoes including 4x4, 4x5, 5x6, 6x6, and 6x7 to name a few. You should have no problem getting a good Tomato for your salad this weekend.

Of course you will need Lettuce and don't worry, you will have plenty of Lettuce and its very reasonable in price. Head Lettuce is steady, Romaine is steady, Boston is higher, Leaf is a touch higher, and Mesculin is steady. Quality on all Lettuces is excellent.

Summer fruits are in. Peaches, Plums, Nectarines, Apricots, Cherries, and Summer Melons are all starting. The first crop is usually hard as a rock but you can ripen them up if you leave them out at room temp for a day or two.

Strawberries are getting better. Stems are still a problem- growers are not harvesting them because they are not big enough. Raspberries are going down and quality is getting better. Blues are going strong and prices are dropping also, and most growers are switching to full pints.

Produce Quiz

I'm not so much exotic looking as exotic in origin. I am a native of India, my thanks to Missionary Brewster for bringing me with other family to North America. You'll find me growing in Thailand, China, Hawaii, Southern Florida, Southeast Asia, Mexico and other tropics. Don't be fooled by my appearance. I may look plain and dull, a bit rough on my smooth shaped outside, but inside, you'll be awed by my aril. Explore my aura. Split my shell at the stem end and peel back my thin shell to find transparent to translucent white flesh enclosing a large smooth inedible seed. I'll feel like a soft fibrous grape to the tongue and taste juicy, sweet, delicate, tropical, pineapple, grape . . . my taste and texture challenge description -- mellow-er in taste than my better-known close relatives and more modest in appearance (no warts, spines, hairs, or bumps), I'm equally good in their recipes. Chinese make shampoo from my seeds which they call "eye of the dragon" because of a white eye-shaped spot on the dark brown seed. I grow in clusters high in an august ornamental evergreen shade tree whose family is called soapberry because of our high saponin content. I'm most delightful eaten out of hand or served mixed with other tropicals, rice, vegetables, salads, or lightly cooked in sauces, poached or added to stir fry. I'm also preserved in syrup or dried to look like a large raisin. Or just freeze me in the shell. I bring you Vitamin C and potassium, magnesium and copper. If the birds and bats don't eat us all, you can most easily find me in Asian markets in July and August or imported throughout the year with other tropical fruits. And, that's the ----- --d short of it.

Last Quiz Answer: Chives



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