

TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of
August 7, 2012



Market Report

With August in full swing, summer is winding down and schools will be starting in a few weeks. That means back to school shopping and brown bag lunch planning. Which also means an influx in easy to eat fruits- like Apples.

And as we know, when it comes down to supply and demand, retail will get first dibs most times. This means Apples might be a little tight in foodservice in the upcoming weeks. Make sure you stay ahead and prepare so that you're not short. Apples are excellent right now with Reds, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, and Gala all being good options. If you are in need of replacing Apples temporarily, Pears are a great option! The market is steady and there are plenty of options: Bartlett, Bosc, and Stark-Crimson Pears just to name a few.

Asparagus is good quality right now and the market is quite active. Shippers are only packing 11# cases and Jumbo sizing is still light in availability. Avocado is excellent right now and the market is higher. Peppers are steady- Greens are trending up slightly and supply is good. Reds are trending up as well, with steady demand; but some growers will be coming off slightly in productions this week. Gold Peppers

are the same situation as Reds. Michigan Bell Pepper volume is good.

Now on to Berries: Straws are struggling with a few quality issues but it is improving; however volume is a little lower. Raspberries are just fair quality but we are seeing tight markets in the next few weeks as we are in a demand exceeds supply situation. Blackberry supplies are finally catching up with demand, but still not 100%. Blueberries are good supplies and good quality.

Broccoli is steady as things firm up this week and pricing is competitive- Quality looks good. Carrots are in good supply and sizing is steady. Cauliflower is steady with larger sizes being less available. Some light spotting is still coming up; shippers continue to deal with this issue. Celery is steady and quality is good- the best availability is in larger sizing.

As for the world of Citrus: Lemon supplies are steady and quality is looking good. Valencia Oranges are steady and peaking on larger 72's/88's. Good demand with light supplies is keeping the market firm. Limes have good supplies on all sizes and are beginning to see a shift back to 230/200/175ct.

Market Report, Cont'd...

Cucumbers are trending up with lighter supplies on fancy fruit. The warm weather has impacted production on the west coast. Supplies out of Michigan have increased and quality has been excellent, however there has not been much demand so the market is on the floor. Eggplant is trending up and supplies are light on large and fancy sizing. Michigan volume has increased and the quality has been fair- bringing the market down reasonably.

Red Grapes are steady with light demand, and quality is excellent. Sugarones, Perlettes, Thompson, and Princess Grapes are all available. Black Seedless and Red Globes are both in good supply as well. Stone Fruit is steady and running large overall. California Peaches are running large with limited availability of Vol-Fill fruits. Nectarines are available, Plums are limited, Cherries are good quality with good availability, and Apricots are still around.

Green Onions are steady but quality still has a few issues with decay upon arrival; pencil sizing has the best availability. Yellow Onions are steady in both California and New Mexico but availability is still a little spotty. Reds are available and so are Whites, both are good quality and good supplies.

Leaf Lettuce is higher. Romaine has seen more active pricing and has reports of fringe and tip burn, both on Hearts and Carton. The Lettuce market is steady overall. Some gaps in demand is causing slightly higher pricing and quality issues have been a problem: light-weights, decay, pink ribbing, and brown outer leaves are things to look out for.

Cantaloupe is going strong and quality is excellent with all sizes available. Plenty of fruit

is available. Honeydew Melon is going strong- peaking on 5's and 6's but all sizes are available. Squash is trending up on Italian and Yellow Straightneck and some growers are reducing production because of low markets. Weather has been a factor on production as well, especially on the west coast. Squash out of Michigan has been decent volume and quality is excellent. Watermelon markets are steady and pricing is expected to trend upwards. Availability on seeded watermelon is sporadic.

Potatoes are doing pretty well- the markets are higher and quality is excellent. Russets are good in all areas, Reds, Whites, and Golds are available as well. Tomatoes are steady with pretty good quality.

Produce Quiz

A native of the New World, I was introduced to Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century and am now also naturalized in parts of the Mediterranean, Africa, Asia, and Australia. My plant produces a fruit and me, a vegetable. You may call me by my Spanish name, but I am usually sold under a botanically incorrect term, as I am actually the tender oval pads or new growth joints of my plant's stem. I'm crisp, with slipperiness like okra and a flavor like green pepper, string beans and asparagus, with a tangy edge. I'm around from early spring to late fall, but I peak in mid-spring. Buy me bright and firm, and then remove any pricklers or eyes before you chop, dice or slice me. Serve me raw or cooked -- steam, sauté, or add me to soup or stew. My plant was named the state fruit/vegetable by Texas in 1995 and I'm a favorite food of the kangaroo rat. Acitrones are me, candied, packed in sugar syrup, and available in cans or jars. I have large amounts of vitamins A and C, as well as B and iron and my mucilage is valued by the cosmetics and medical industries. You used to have to go "South of the border, down Mexico way . . ." as an old song says, to enjoy these.

Last Quiz Answer: Cattail Shoots



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