

Fresh News

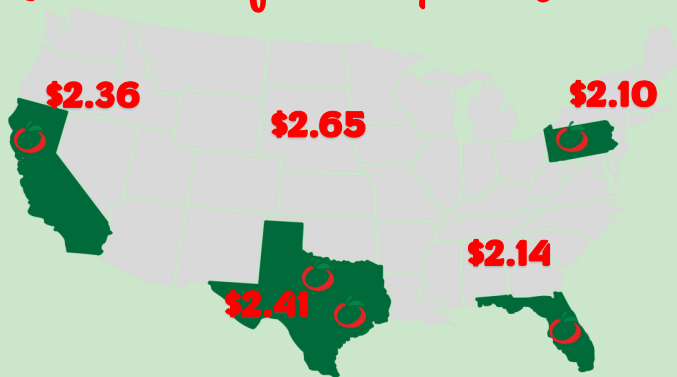


Market Alert

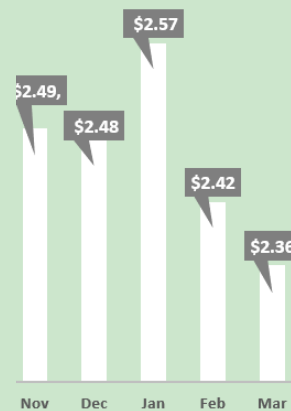
- ◇ Bell Peppers
- ◇ Lettuce (Various)
- ◇ Tomatoes
- ◇ Watermelon



National Reefer Rate per Mile (Last Week per DAT)



Trend



Weather Alerts

+76° +78° F +57°
Yuma
 Saturday, 23

Sunday	+68° +54°
Monday	+76° +50°
Tuesday	+74° +57°
Wednesday	+79° +55°
Thursday	+80° +58°
Friday	+70° +55°

See 7-Day Forecast

+57° +59° F +47°
Salinas
 Saturday, 23

Sunday	+55° +47°
Monday	+59° +48°
Tuesday	+61° +48°
Wednesday	+64° +46°
Thursday	+56° +46°
Friday	+52° +45°

See 7-Day Forecast

+92° +94° F +62°
Culiacan
 Saturday, 23

Sunday	+85° +59°
Monday	+78° +56°
Tuesday	+85° +53°
Wednesday	+90° +54°
Thursday	+95° +57°
Friday	+88° +58°

See 7-Day Forecast

+80° +80° F +65°
Immokalee
 Saturday, 23

Sunday	+78° +61°
Monday	+81° +63°
Tuesday	+84° +63°
Wednesday	+86° +66°
Thursday	+79° +65°
Friday	+76° +58°

See 7-Day Forecast

+53° +57° F +47°
Yakima
 Saturday, 23

Sunday	+59° +44°
Monday	+56° +40°
Tuesday	+57° +40°
Wednesday	+47° +40°
Thursday	+55° +38°
Friday	+55° +41°

See 7-Day Forecast

A Fresh Take on Value-Added Distribution

Tomatoes

Alert

Florida

Availability on Roma tomatoes in Florida is still scarce, but should start to improve, weather permitting. The Ruskin / Palmetto areas should start production around the middle of April, which will provide an influx of products as overall planted acreage increases over the winter plantings. On crown fruit, quality is better; on any second or third pickings, quality is average.

Although volumes are sufficient, grape tomato yields have been slightly lower than expected, partly because more fruit was graded out on later selections than planned. Over the next few weeks, as we begin more fresh plantings, yields should start to increase.



Mexico

For the next few weeks, growers of Roma tomatoes will keep working both new and current fields, in an effort to meet current demand and fill the pipeline. The Sonora and Baja areas are on schedule to start harvesting in early to mid-April, although Baja's larger volumes won't be available until May or June. Many factors are affecting Mexico's supply, but overall production should become more stable as new fields become active, with an increase in jumbo and xl sizes. However, if water rations are implemented, there's a chance that the season will end sooner than expected and/or that volume would decrease dramatically. Several growers have either declined in acreage planted or chosen to not plant at all, which coupled with the weather related events is the reason for the decline in overall availability this season. Grape tomato supplies from Sinaloa have been moderate and are expected to stay at current levels through the month of May. Depending on the grower, the field, and the product selections, the quality has varied.



Bananas

Ports in Pennsylvania, Florida, and Texas are seeing ships on time; California is seeing a slight delay, but nothing significant. The quality of the fruit is good, and increased supplies are anticipated in the upcoming weeks. Color stage delays may occur in very unusual instances.



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Fruits

Apples



With the exception of Galas, most types have increased in volume as a result of the modest harvest, and the Washington State crop is demonstrating good quality and availability through Q1. With the exception of Red Delicious, whose peak sizes are heading toward foodservice sizes (125/138s), with lower volumes on 125s and smaller.

Berries—Blackberries



Fruit from Mexico continues to be of acceptable quality, despite sporadic flaws such as regression and overripeness. Mexico is still the primary producing region, and as summer approaches, supplies there will continue to rise steadily. There won't be much coming out of Oxnard during the next three weeks.

Berries—Blueberries



The quality is generally good, and production is growing even though the sizes differ. This pattern will persist till the end of March. Mexico is currently at the height of its output, and over the coming weeks, consistent amounts are anticipated. As the Peruvian season draws to a close, lower numbers are anticipated. As anticipated, Florida is only getting started with a small number of players.

Berries—Raspberries



We anticipate that the volume will con-

tinue to gradually increase over the next weeks. Over the following four to five weeks, there will be a consistent increase in the Baja region's population. Over the next few weeks, Mexico's production is expected to reach its high. Although most fruit exported from Mexico has been in acceptable condition overall, there may be instances of green, crushed, or overripe fruit in select shipments. Over the next three weeks, the Oxnard area continues to have low population levels.

Berries—Strawberries



In Watsonville and Salinas, a small number of organic strawberries have begun to be harvested for the first time. Reports of some rain-related damage exist. Next week, conventional fields in these locations will start to pick with high cull rates. April is predicted to see a sharp rise in volume. The weather is usually nice, with highs in the upper 50s to low 60s. Oxnard: Pleasant weather is anticipated, with no rain in the forecast. The quality of the strawberries is still outstanding, and in the upcoming weeks, there should be an increase in volume. Plants are laden with fruit and flowers at different phases of development, with counts ranging from 12 to 18. Warming temperatures in the Santa Maria region are helping to preserve the quality of traditional strawberries, while there are a few small problems like distorted fruit and little pinrot. Strawberries that are organic are bigger and have vibrant colors. April is predicted

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to see a sharp rise in volume. The Florida season is coming to an end as the volume drops. Fruit that has been organically grown is consistently of higher quality. The range of basket counts is mid-20s to high teens. Rain and cold fronts may have an impact on when the season ends. Everywhere in Mexico is seeing sunny weather. Strawberries are becoming less high-quality, with some overripe fruit and some bruised fruit. The Mexican strawberry season is almost over, with the last transfers scheduled to arrive shortly. In Texas, the supply of bushberries will remain scarce.

Citrus—Lemons

Sizes 115 and greater are available in good supply in fancy and select grade. This week's supplies are consistent. Smaller fruit sizes 140 count and larger are not widely available. In spite of this disparity in sizes, all sizes exhibit great quality.



Citrus—Limes

Prices This last week saw a further increase in limes as fewer people crossed from Mexico. Bigger sizes present unique challenges. Although the market continues to feature both Mexican and offshore fruit, no one category is so dominant that present demand isn't being met by any means. There have been reports of some scarring, blanching, and spotting, but overall quality is inconsistent. Packers face difficulties during the holidays since their crews are small. It won't get better with the labor issue until after Easter. Random and intermittent rains are also being recorded, which prevent workers from entering orchards until the fruit is suffi-



ciently dry to harvest. Our suppliers have informed us that relief might arrive in a few weeks. As Cinco de Mayo draws near, demand is likely to rise even more by the middle of April.

Citrus—Oranges

Due to a lack of little navel oranges, we advise consumers to think about choosing larger sizes, particularly 72 count and greater. The percentage of oranges packed in sizes 113 and 138 is less than 10%. Thankfully, huge oranges are readily accessible. Excellent quality with good sweetness and color is present in most sizes.



Grapes

This week's supply of Red and Green Seedless grapes is currently scarce. This will probably go on for a few more weeks, and the expensive prices won't go down. Mid-April should see an improvement in numbers, although supplies are still anticipated to remain patchy. Considering the small quantity of fruit available, quality has been excellent.



Melons - Cantaloupe

Demand has been weak, resulting in a stagnant market; however, increased demand is anticipated as Easter approaches and retail promotions resume after the holiday. Enhanced demand for larger sizes is anticipated to generate a marginal upward movement in the market during periods of high volume. Recent sizing has been predominantly 9ct, with fruit of vibrant color and brix levels ranging from 12 to 15%.



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Melons - Honeydew



Guatemalan A consequence of restricted supplies traversing Nogales is a shift in demand from the west to the east. At present, the sizing consists predominantly of 5/5Js produced in Guatemala and Honduras, with a minor deviation due to the increased arrival of 6s. Particularly noteworthy is the second-cycle production originating from Guatemala.

Melons - Watermelon

Alert



Demand exceeds supply on the market, and the commencement of the domestic season is not anticipated until the latter part of March. Lower in sugar content and with a lighter hue than during prime season. Due to virus-related issues in Honduras and a diminished supply in Mexico, seedless conditions will conclude with a restricted supply.

Pears



The standard of Bartlett has been sub-

par thus far; however, an improvement in quality is anticipated within the following fortnight. As of July, Anjou is in ample supply and of high quality. The Bosc is of high quality, with a maximum measure of 120/135ct.

Pineapple



A few days of harvest cessation will occur in the tropics as Easter approaches, resulting in reduced volumes. Volumes should begin to increase by mid-April.

Stonefruit

White and yellow nectarines, peaches, and plums from Chile are available, albeit in smaller quantities, as a result of postponed rainfall in cultivation regions. Particularly impressive has been the quality of the tray packets. We anticipate an improvement in supplies in the future weeks due to increased vessel arrivals and enhanced production.



Vegetables

Asparagus



The supply of asparagus in Caborca, Mexico experienced a decline as a result of frigid weather and the closure of fields that had finished harvesting. Prices have increased in response to the reduction in supply. Some transporters are quoting lids for the upcoming weeks in the mid-fifty-dollar range...It is

unknown for how much longer the cultivators will remain in 28's. The Midwest's climate is, or was, exceptionally favorable for closing local transactions in the regions of Indiana and Michigan.

Avocados



Supply constraints are increasing for avocados due to the influence of a few

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holidays that have already affected and will continue to affect harvesting in Mexico. Growers will need to exert considerable effort in order to load the pipeline to a capacity sufficient to meet demand. With the advent of Easter, crews will be scarce during the final days and week of Lent. There will be no harvesting from March 27 until the day following Easter. Achieving optimal management of available produce while also anticipating an impending production gap requires a delicate equilibrium. Production in California has commenced, but volume will not reach its zenith until May/June. Although the weather in California has improved, it is still chilly at night, and there are more showers predicted for later this week. The volume is minimal. Growers will have only a few weeks to begin stockpiling fruit in preparation for Cinco de Mayo; as a result, fruit availability should remain limited.

Bell Peppers

The price of green bells has decreased, whereas the values of red and yellow bells remain high. Growers in Florida anticipate an increase in supply over the next few weeks, whereas supplies in Mexico remain unchanged.

Alert



Broccoli

For the next ten days, crowns will be scarce in all shipping locations. Pricing and demand have both increased, and this trend is expected to persist as the week draws to a close. Although pin rot is still detected in a negligible amount of products from all grow-



ing districts, shippers are attempting to mitigate the problem prior to packaging. While the product is available outside of Mexico, the Mexican market is also quite active.

Brussel Sprouts



The current supply is more favorable in terms of quality and demand, notwithstanding the quality difficulties that arose from the previous low temperatures. With consistent supply, market prices continue to rise.

Cabbage



It is anticipated that the market and supplies will remain stable over the next few weeks, with Oxnard and Yuma providing high-quality products.

Carrots



Fresh carrots is approaching, promising enhanced availability and quality in the future.

Cauliflower



Supply stability is anticipated into the following week. Given the absence of projected growth in harvest quantities, it appears that the market will maintain its present trading levels for the next ten days. There is availability in the Desert, Santa Maria, and Salinas regions, and the quality has been satisfactory.

Celery



The market appears to be emerging from the sluggishness it has exhibited over the past month. The anticipation

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of reduced supplies for the upcoming week has led to a surge in demand, resulting in the emergence of elevated prices. If you require celery, it is advisable to purchase it as soon as possible, as prices have the potential to increase further.

Cilantro



Supplies and quality are satisfactory, and Oxnard and Yuma have increased their market prices. Sufficient supplies are anticipated to persist.

Cucumber



Although prices have decreased, they continue to be elevated as a result of market volatility in the East, where production has shifted from Honduras to Florida and Mexico from Sinaloa to Sonora.

Green Onions



After a stretch of consistent favorable weather, production has recommenced. Despite the persistence of some quality concerns, insect pressure is presently moderate and yields are increasing daily. Supply issues in the coming weeks will be exacerbated by intermittent delays at the frontier and production setbacks caused by the approaching Easter holiday. Make preparations in advance to guarantee comprehensive coverage.

Kale



A constant supply is maintained due to robust demand and high quality. It is anticipated that supplies and market prices

will remain unchanged over the coming weeks.

Lettuce—Arugula

Alert



Good quality and consistent demand are the results of prior precipitation and low temperatures. The supply is anticipated to increase as a result of stable market prices.

Lettuce—Iceberg

Alert



The transition has commenced. Although most transporters intend to maintain production in the Desert, a limited number have already commenced harvesting in their district located in Northern California. Availability, quality, and yields exhibit significant variation among growers due to processors rearranging the deck by purchasing acreage, thereby inciting a transient buying mania and substantially driving up markets despite moderate wholesale and retail demand. Although quality differences will be apparent, overall supplies should improve the following week due to the fact that an increasing number of cultivators will have overlapping production areas; however, a few growers are not scheduled to transition for three more weeks.

Lettuce—Leaf

Alert



There are limited supplies, but the quality is deemed satisfactory as a result of peripheral burn and mildew, which are predominantly attributable to prior precipitation and low temperatures. These issues lead to unsightly ap-

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pearances and reduced crop yields. Despite increased pricing, supplies continue to be adequate, while demand remains moderate. Although the anticipated rise in temperature for the following week may intensify insect pressure and accelerate the transition to growing regions in Northern California, where previous weather patterns will almost certainly have an impact on supplies, ideal conditions should aid in the enhancement of quality.

Lettuce—Romaine

Similar to an iceberg, production has fluctuated as a result of concerns regarding quality. When processors purchased acres to compensate for perceived supply voids, prices increased substantially. Akin to the iceberg, as new districts, the majority of which have increased production quality, emerge, improved supplies should emerge. Color and texture have actually improved, despite the fact that mildew and insect infestations continue to be widespread.

Alert



Lettuce—Tender Leaf

Supply remains consistent, owing to favorable demand and satisfactory to adequate quality resulting from prior precipitation and low temperatures. The supply is anticipated to increase as a result of stable market prices.



Mushrooms

The weather has contributed to an increase in the availability and quality of brown and white, which bodes well for the upcoming months. A favorable time has come to promote.



Onions

The Northwest agreement is nearing its conclusion and consists primarily of contract coverage for the remainder of the season. While certain clean-up agreements may be reached, our primary sources of supply will continue to be the Texas border and Mexico. Currently, the weather is a MAJOR factor as Texas recovers from significant rainfall. An early volume was referred to as "crop failure" by one transporter. Flooding and hail rendered this shipper inoperable for the initial portion of the new harvest. Prices continue have decreased.



Peppers—Chili

Prices are fluctuating with an upward trend, as Florida production is anticipated to be constrained for the next few weeks and commodities transiting from Sinaloa to Sonora in Mexico are encountering difficult conditions.



Potatoes

The market is level and of high quality. Due to increased yields, Idaho has an abundance of potatoes, which makes now an ideal time to promote them.



Squash

Both coasts possess ample provisions. The convergence of Sinaloa and Sonora results in substantial volumes. Additionally, spring crops are emerging in Florida, and there are excellent bargains to be had. Although quality is generally high, this week's precipitation in Florida may impede production.



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Flowers

For 20+ years we have been packing arrangements for online and major brick and mortar retailers. We procure, pack and distribute as the total floral solution.



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