

Good Buys

Cantaloupe and Honeydew!

There are half a dozen reasons to praise melon this summer. First, both cantaloupe and honeydew have continued to hit the sweet spot for weeks showing outstanding quality and significant volume increases.

Second, these tender, juicy fruits are just too talented in the kitchen. One minute they're transforming sweet caprese salads, the next they're spicing up the joint with zests and chili seasonings by their side.

When looking to jump on the melon wagon, be sure to look out for signs that you've got a good one. The cantaloupe or honeydew should be heavy for its size and the side opposite the stem (the blossom end) should yield to slight pressure. Look for a firm rind without bruises or cracks, and a peel under the webby exterior that's golden. Then, you'll want to give a good sniff to detect that familiar sweet, almost floral scent. That's how you know you have a winner.

Itching for grill marks on your menu this summer? Try tossing on a few cantaloupe or honeydew wedges! The grill intensifies their sweetness adding an unparalleled smokiness. Melt a little more complexity into the grilled melon by pairing with some salty prosciutto and creamy mozzarella. Don't worry, the recipe is below. ;)

Grilled Cantaloupe or Honeydew with Prosciutto and Mozzarella

Ingredients

- Extra-virgin olive oil, for brushing and drizzling
- One 2-pound cantaloupe or honeydew, halved, seeded, cut into 1-inch wedges and peeled
- Kosher salt
- Pepper
- 4 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto
- 3/4 pound fresh mozzarella, thinly sliced
- Finely chopped parsley, for garnish

Directions

Light a grill and brush with oil. Brush the melon wedges with oil and season generously with salt and pepper. Grill the melon over high heat, turning once, until lightly charred, about 5 minutes. Transfer the wedges to a platter and top with the prosciutto and mozzarella. Garnish with parsley, a large pinch of pepper and a drizzle of oil and serve.

Fruits & Vegetables

Avocados: ESCALATED (60 AND 70CT #1'S) The market has made a turn, particularly on #1 60 and 70 count fruit as supplies have dried up on these sizes and grades. We are also experiencing a major interruption in avocado supply from Mexico through our southern border due to heavy rainfall in the region as well as central Mexico. We are expected to receive product, though we could see pro-rates. In order to keep the supply chain full and flowing, we are asking customers to substitute sizes where necessary and place orders with enough advanced notice for ripening purposes as inventories will be very slim. We will keep you posted with any further updates.

Bananas: Demand on this item remains firm; however, prices will continue to ease. Quality will remain inconsistent due to weather that has impacted the growing regions in Guatemala, Mexico, and Costa Rica. This only further complicates an already short banana market across the country due to virus impacts. Due to improving inventories, we should no longer see ripening issues.

Pineapples: Demand remains firm, quality is good, and supplies are stable. FOB quotes at the port are mostly unchanged.

Grapes: This is a mixed market at the moment. The Chilean season is over while Mexican volume is down because of low yields and ongoing quality issues due to weather impacts. Coachella is ramping up and drawing a premium on all sizes, colors and grades. This market is projected to stabilize as Coachella continues to ramp up and Arvin being on the horizon.

Kiwi: New Crop, Chilean fruit is available. Supply and quality are both good.

Berries

Blueberries: Availability is steady, Georgia blues started last week in a very small way, they are a few weeks behind due to the rain which is causing some shortages in supplies. Prices are higher.

Blackberries: The market on blackberries is extremely short in supply. We are seeing very high prices with little fruit available.

Raspberries: We are seeing some shortages in supply in this market, quality is good.

Strawberries: The market is tightening up again because of rain. Supplies are steady, but not as plentiful.

California / Arizona Citrus

The lemon market is getting tighter. Upcoming issues with weather may potentially create issues with supply and quality. We will keep you posted. The demand for CA navels has far exceeded supply. Markets will remain high until the domestic Valencia market kicks in.

Navels/Valencia's: ACT OF GOD Our Valencia growers in the San Joaquin Valley were affected by extreme heat which caused post bloom conditions in our fruit. As a result, this has caused a lighter crop and there is virtually no small fruit available. At this time, our growers suggest moving to a larger size Valencia. We also have one supplier that will not have any small fruit at all and has evoked an **ACT OF GOD**. We apologize for this disruption and recommend that you take oranges off your menu or change to a larger size at this time. We are monitoring this situation closely and will update you with more information regarding Valencias as the week continues. Thank you again for your support and understanding.

Lemons: ESCALATED This is a very active market. Prices are still higher than normal, but quality is good. Imports start in June.

Limes: WATCH LIST The market will be mostly stable for the next few weeks.

Grapefruit: Texas grapefruit is available. Florida Star Ruby/Red is available. California grapefruit has started.

Specialties:

- Pink Lemons are available.
- Gold Nugget mandarins are available.
- Ojai Pixie Tangerines are available.
- Only a few Minneola's are left.
- Domestic Blood oranges and Cara Caras are available showing good quality.
- New Zealand Meyers are available.
- Halos and Cuties are available.

California Lettuce

Butter: Demand is good, quality is average and supplies are normal.

Green and Red Leaf: Red leaf quality and demand are average and supplies are normal. Green leaf supplies exceed demand and quality has been good with occasional fringe burn.

Iceberg Lettuce: Supplies are short, the market is very active and the quality is outstanding.

Romaine: Produce Alliance continues to purchase CA product only. Supplies exceed demand and quality is good.

Romaine Hearts: Supplies exceed demand and quality is very good.

Eastern and Western Vegetables

Green Bell Pepper: The green bell pepper market continues to improve as South Georgia will have impressive harvest numbers for approximately two more weeks whereas the Carolinas will ramp up over the next week or so. In the West, we are seeing good numbers out of the desert, while finishing up the transition to the Central Valley has begun. Quality in the West is very nice while East Coast product is a hit or miss.

Red Bell Pepper: The market is snug and expected to remain this way for a few days pushing FOB prices up on all sizes this week. Quality is good through Coachella and starting in Bakersfield. Product out of Nogales is now done for the season while Hot House product is crossing through McAllen.

Yellow Pepper: Production has tightened up and markets are active. Quality is very nice.

Mini Sweet Pepper: Good supplies are available. These are excellent for fajitas and stir fry, call for deals on mini sweet peppers!

Eggplant: This market is good through South Georgia; quality is very nice and improving daily, we should be in full production by the first of the month from the region. Out west, Nogales is quickly winding down while Coachella is experiencing perfect harvest conditions. The Central Valley is also just days away from getting started. Quality is outstanding in California.

Cucumbers: Cucumber prices are stable this week due to good quality and supply from South Georgia, Baja through Otay, and Sinaloa through Nogales. New Jersey production is beginning to keep a continuous supply chain in the East.

Green Beans: Markets in the East will get tight as Georgia production finishes up and the Tennessee program is slower than expected to start. FOB prices in the East are pushing up. Quality is also an ongoing issue due to the continuous rainfall in the region. In the West, good supply and higher FOB prices are being driven as demand increases from the East. Quality is very nice in the West.

Zucchini and Yellow Squash: FOB prices are mostly unchanged this week as supplies remain stable out of South Georgia and the Carolinas. In the West, good supply is available out of Santa Maria, Selma and finally Baja. Quality is good in all western regions.

Herbs

We usually have what we call “JUNE GLOOM” weather patterns this time of year with early morning fog followed by afternoon sunshine. This year, June is starting off with warm mornings and hot afternoons. This affected the **DILL** crop a few weeks ago and this week the heat is affecting the **CHERVIL** crop. Dill is starting to recover, but there will be limited supplies on chervil this week and next.

So far, **BASIL, MINT AND PARSELY** have not been affected, but we will keep you posted if there are any changes. These three fresh herbs usually do well with the warmth.

HERB	SUPPLIES	QUALITY	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
Arugula	Steady	Good	USA
Basil	Steady	Good	USA/MEXICO
Opal Basil	Limited	Good	USA
Thai Basil	Limited	Fair	USA/MEXICO
Bay Leaves	Steady	Good	USA
Chervil	Steady	Good	USA
Chives	Steady	Good	MEXICO
Cilantro	Steady	Good	USA
Dill	Steady	Good	USA
Epazote	Steady	Good	MEXICO
Lemongrass	Steady	Good	USA
Marjoram	Steady	Good	USA
Mint	Steady	Good	USA
Oregano	Steady	Good	USA
Italian Parsley	Steady	Good	USA
Rosemary	Steady	Good	USA
Sage	Steady	Good	USA
Savory	Steady	Good	USA
Sorrel	Steady	Good	USA
Tarragon	Steady	Good	MEXICO
Thyme	Steady	Good	USA/MEXICO
Lemon Thyme	Steady	Good	USA
Lavender	Steady	Good	USA
Lime Leaves	Steady	Good	USA

Melons

Cantaloupe: The cantaloupe market is easing up as we see volume continue to increase in the West with weather conditions near perfect. Sizing is still leaning on the larger side, quality on the new crops is outstanding, and brix levels are at 12-14% with occasional higher levels with a good external appearance showing even netting and full slips.

Honeydew: The honeydew market is improving with increased numbers in the desert over the past weeks. New crop honeydew in the Valley will be right behind the cantaloupe harvest this week. Quality remains good on domestic honeydew and sugar is outstanding.

Watermelon: Seedless watermelon market is very active on all sizes as product remains short due to continued harvest delays across the Southeast and Texas due to rain.

Mixed Vegetables

Artichokes: Quality is excellent, and demand is good.

Arugula: Quality and supply are fair due to the recent wind damage.

Asparagus: The market is steady showing good quality and prices.

Bok Choy: Quality is average, and we are seeing some higher quotes on WGA cartons.

Broccoli / Broccoli Florets: Supplies look to be steady for the next few weeks. Demand is good and the market is steady.

Brussels Sprouts: Supplies are light and quality is good. Prices are steady.

Carrots: We are seeing both good quality and volume.

Cauliflower: Supplies are steady and quality is very good.

Celery: Supplies are steady and quality is good.

Corn: Good volume continues on yellow and white out of the desert. Georgia sweet corn (yellow, white and bi-color) market is marginal; quality has been hit or miss due to the recent rains. We expect a spike in demand over the next several days due to retail ad pulls for 4th of July ad.

Cilantro: Supplies are good. Quality is fair.

Fennel: Supplies for the week will be good and quality is good.

Garlic: We are about 50% done with the 2017 crop. Supplies will remain tight between now and July. Prices remain high.

Ginger: Chinese ginger markets are mixed, but quality is good. Also, product is available at higher costs from Brazil, Costa Rica and Honduras and Peru with no major quality issues being reported.

Green Cabbage: Supplies have improved in the southeast as well as in the West. FOB calls are down, and quality remains very nice.

Green Onions: The market remains firm due to reduced crossings from Mexico in the past week. We will most likely see lighter crossings the remainder of the summer, due to local deals just starting in eastern growing areas.

JICAMA: Markets remain firm due to ongoing short supplies and will continue to see some quality and shelf life issues.

Kale (Green): Quality and supplies are good.

Mache: Availability is adequate.

Mushrooms: **ESCALATED** Mushroom growers are still recovering from the severe damage in the South and Southeast, as well as Puerto Rico. Hurricane Harvey and Irma have resulted in a tightening market, and the American Mushroom Institute has said it expects supply to be affected for several months. We are starting to see some improvement of supply and will keep you informed of any changes.

Napa: Supplies and demand are steady. Quality is good.

Parsley: (Curly, Italian) Quality is fair and supplies are good.

Rapini: Supplies have improved, and markets are steady. Quality has improved.

Radishes: Supplies are steady, and quality is good shipping through Arizona and Florida.

Red Cabbage: Quality has been hit and miss while sizing remains good. We are seeing some external quality and color issues causing markets to remain firm in the East as well as Texas. West Coast volume is improving.

Snow and Sugar Snap Peas: Snow and sugar snap peas supplies are steady through Miami and prices are higher.

Spinach (Bunched): Quality is fair with some sizing issues due to recent cold weather.

Spinach (Baby): Baby and clipped spinach supplies are good, and quality is fair.

Spring Mix: Supplies and quality are good.

Onions:

Southern California and South Texas are finished but Central California, New Mexico and North Texas are running strong. Yellow onions have leveled off as supply and demand are leveling off. Red onions strengthened significantly from last week as all regions are hitting supply gaps but have seemed to have topped off. This is expected to remain for the next 2 weeks or so. Size profiles across the board are peaking on larger onions creating a surplus of Colossal and Super Colossals.

Potatoes:

The Carton market remains strong. Pricing continues to increase each week and large cartons are sparse. The Burbank crop has much lower pack-outs. Transportation also continues to be challenging and rates have increased significantly.

TOMATOES – EAST

- **Round: WATCH LIST** Weather-related impacts will continue to hamper the North Florida and South Carolina programs. Continuous rainfall is jeopardizing quality and causing a dip in overall production. Markets will most likely remain volatile and quality will be marginal over the next 10 to 14 days. Tennessee is expected to start up over the next 2 to 3 weeks. In general, markets are up this week.
- **Romas: WATCH LIST** Roma prices are mixed but the overall market is short pushing demand to the West. This item will remain volatile for the next 2-3 weeks.
- **Grapes: WATCH LIST** Supplies continue to improve, but the overall market remains tight. Quality will be hit or miss depending on the region due to the rain. We will continue to see firm markets for another 2 to 3 weeks.
- **Cherries: WATCH LIST** Supply is marginal, FOB prices are mixed, and quality will be hit or miss due to the recent rain.

TOMATOES - WEST AND MEXICO

- **Rounds:** Sinaloa continues to wind down while Baja is ramping up and keeping FOBs stable; however, large-sized fruit is short and drawing a premium. Quality is beginning to decline out of Sinaloa as the season ends. Please make sure to manage inventory levels properly. Baja quality is outstanding. The green program out of the Central Valley is now underway; however, it will still need to ripen causing increased pressure on all other shipping points of fresh tomato. Expect a firm market to continue this week.
- **Romas:** Volume and quality are outstanding from all regions and expected to remain steady through mid-July; however, prices are moving upwards as demand from the East increases.
- **Grapes:** Supply is improving and markets are mixed based on quality; Central Mexico continues to produce decent numbers while the summer program out of the Baja is steady. This is causing a split market due to the variances in quality between Central Mexico and the Baja. Overall FOB prices have eased with lower pulls from the East.
- **Cherries:** Mainland production continues to show quality issues while new crop out of Baja is outstanding.

APPLES & PEARS

Apples: We will continue to have good supply of the major varieties of apples through the spring and summer. We have finished packing some varieties of apples for the season so the emphasis for balance during the season will be on the six or seven remaining varieties. The quality, condition, and color on almost all varieties looks very good, and since we normally harvest the late storage apples first in the season I expect the condition on the remaining production to be very good.

Pears: Both Anjou and Gold Bosc pears are available especially on the larger (70's to 100's) sizes, but they are beginning to wind down for the season. Most of the supply that is left in the Northwest will either come from the Hood River Oregon area or from the Wenatchee area in Washington.

STONE FRUIT AND CHERRIES

- **Plums:** Very light supply because the harvest is late.
- **Peaches:** Supplies are ramping up daily out of the San Joaquin Valley as well as the Southeast. Yellow and white peaches are available today!
- **Nectarines:** Improving supplies are available on white and yellow flesh varieties out of the San Joaquin Valley.
- **Cherries:** Quality is hit or miss and supplies are loading out of the San Joaquin Valley.