

Weekly Market Review

August 23, 2018

Overview

Most commodities are steady. Valencias are still in an **ACT OF GOD** with higher prices and shortages in supply. Lemons are also in an **ACT OF GOD**, but Romaine commodities remain good buys.

Market Alert

- Cilantro – **EXTREME**
- Green Onions – **EXTREME**
- Lemons – **ACT OF GOD**
- Mushrooms – **ESCALATED**
- Oranges (Valencias) – **ACT OF GOD**

Watch List

Avocados: Markets are easing back as inventories begin to improve and relieve pressure on the markets. Sizing is still mixed and shorter on the smaller grades. We expect this condition to continue through the first week of October. This is due to a shorter than expected startup of the Flora Loca crop combined with a very short California season. We ask that you continue to be flexible on sizes and origins where possible and will need to sub to Peruvian fruit as soon as possible to ensure order fulfillment until we are clear of any potential interruptions.

Limes: The market is improving, prices seem to be dropping, and quality is fair.

Green Beans: The bean deal out the East remains firm due to weather-related quality issues. West coast supplies are hit or miss as ongoing heat-related issues are impacting production. Some supplies are crossing through McAllen; however, they are hit or miss on the actual arrival dates. Pricing continues to rise while quality remains fair at best. We are not expecting relief until mid-August.

Transportation - EXTREME

With full implementation of the ELD now in place as well as a nationwide shortage of available trucks on the market, rates are expected to continue to be above normal through the remainder of the summer. We are seeing an average increase of 15 to 20 percent over last year's comps.

Weather

ASHVILLE:

Thu 08/23	Fri 08/24	Sat 08/25	Sun 08/26	Mon 08/27	Tue 08/28	Wed 08/29
86° 63°	87° 67°	88° 69°	91° 70°	92° 71°	92° 70°	92° 71°
						
Clear	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Clear	Partly Cloudy	Clear	Chance of a Thunderstorm

JALISCO:

Thu 08/23	Fri 08/24	Sat 08/25	Sun 08/26	Mon 08/27	Tue 08/28	Wed 08/29
82° 61°	81° 61°	80° 61°	80° 62°	80° 61°	80° 61°	79° 61°
						
Chance of a Thunderstorm						

SALINAS:

Thu 08/23	Fri 08/24	Sat 08/25	Sun 08/26	Mon 08/27	Tue 08/28	Wed 08/29
69° 57°	68° 54°	67° 52°	67° 54°	66° 55°	66° 54°	66° 54°
						
Partly Cloudy						

SELMA:

Thu 08/23	Fri 08/24	Sat 08/25	Sun 08/26	Mon 08/27	Tue 08/28	Wed 08/29
93° 57°	92° 57°	94° 59°	94° 58°	90° 58°	89° 59°	89° 60°
						
Clear						

HUDSONVILLE:

Thu 08/23	Fri 08/24	Sat 08/25	Sun 08/26	Mon 08/27	Tue 08/28	Wed 08/29
80° 58°	76° 64°	80° 68°	89° 71°	87° 73°	85° 70°	83° 67°
						
Clear	Mostly Cloudy	Chance of a Thunderstorm	Partly Cloudy	Chance of a Thunderstorm	Mostly Cloudy	Chance of a Thunderstorm

Good Buys

Dragon fruit!

A little sweet and a little sour, pitayas, or dragon fruit, are easy to love and easy on the eyes. This fascinating fruit has been picking up much popularity in the tropical fruit kingdom lately. Some may say even it's been the summer of dragon fruit with its fresh, exotic flavors appearing in smoothies, fruit salads, and everything under the sun!

According to the PA Procurement team, growers are stocked with ample supply on both domestic and international product. In fact, it is now readily available year-round, whereas compared to years prior it has been contained to the warm-weather seasons.

Dragon fruit's sweet and relatively quiet flavor traditionally pairs well with other tropical and citrus fruit because it compliments their strong tart flavors with its mildness.

However, when looking to implement into early fall season features, turn to butternut squash! This **Dragon Fruit Salad with Lemony Chicken & Butternut Purée** may just be the ticket to holding on to tropical trends for a smidge longer, while also introducing commodities that are just starting their season. Enjoy!

Dragon Fruit Salad with Lemony Chicken & Butternut Purée

Ingredients

Purée

- 1/2 small butternut squash, diced
- 5 carrots, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup organic unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 2 tbsp fresh orange juice
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp peeled and grated fresh ginger
- ¼ tsp each sea salt and ground black pepper

Chicken

- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2½ tsp finely chopped fresh thyme
- 2 tsp fresh lemon zest
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- 1/8 tsp sea salt

Salad

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp peeled and minced ginger
- 1 tbsp fresh orange juice
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp raw honey
- 1/8 tsp each sea salt and ground black pepper
- 1 dragon fruit (white or pink), peeled and diced
- 2¼ packed cups frisée, cut into 2-inch pieces (about 4 oz) or mixed greens
- 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh mint
- 1/3 cup roughly chopped toasted unsalted almonds
- 1 shallot, finely chopped

Directions

1. Place a rack in the top third of oven; preheat to 400°F.
2. Prepare purée: Fit a steamer basket in a large pot with water to ½ inch below basket. Place squash and carrots in basket, cover and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium and steam for 20 minutes, until tender. Transfer to a blender along with remaining purée ingredients; blend until smooth. Cover to keep warm.
3. Meanwhile, prepare chicken: Coat chicken with oil; season with thyme, lemon zest, pepper and salt. Arrange on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Roast until chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165°F, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board; let rest for 10 minutes, loosely covered. Cut into ½-inch strips.
4. Prepare salad: In a medium bowl, whisk oil, vinegar, ginger, orange juice, lemon juice, honey, salt and pepper. Add remaining salad ingredients; gently toss. Serve with the purée and sliced chicken.

Fruits & Vegetables

Avocados: WATCH LIST Markets are easing back as inventories begin to improve and relieve pressure on the markets. Sizing is still mixed and shorter on the smaller grades. We expect this condition to continue through the first week of October. This is due to a shorter than expected startup of the Flora Loca crop combined with a very short California season. We ask that you continue to be flexible on sizes and origins where possible and will need to sub to Peruvian fruit as soon as possible to ensure order fulfillment until we are clear of any potential interruptions.

Bananas: Demand on this item remains firm and supplies are expected to remain good through the rest of the year. Quality is good.

Pineapples: Demand remains firm, quality is good, and supplies are lighter on large fruit and expected to be this way through September. Despite a shorter than expected supply on larger fruit, the FOB quotes at the port are mostly unchanged.

Grapes: This continues to be a mixed market out of the Central Valley based on sizing. Deals are being made on smaller fruit while larger sizes continue to draw a premium. We are seeing good volume on the following varieties: Scarlet Royals, Magentas, Krissy, Flames, Princess and Thompsons.

Kiwi: Good supplies available on Chilean product.

Berries

Blueberries: Quality is good and supplies are plentiful.

Blackberries: Supplies are good; however, the heat in the northern growing area of California is causing the berries to mature faster causing some issues with quality.

Raspberries: Supplies are steady; however, the heat in the northern growing area of California is causing the berries to show some quality issues.

Strawberries: The heat in the Northern growing area of California is causing the berries to mature faster than normal. This also causes a drop in size and soft/bruising berries; however supply is good.

California / Arizona Citrus

The lemon market is in an **ACT OF GOD**. We are seeing extreme shortages in supply as well as much higher prices. The demand for Valencias has far exceeded supply as well. Markets will remain high as the domestic crop has come up extremely short this year.

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: ACT OF GOD As stated previously, this is primarily due to the very hot weather which has matured the fruit much faster than normal leaving us with virtually no supply and very standard grade fruit. Please note, prices will be very high, and product will be short until this is resolved. Other contributing factors:

- Arrivals from Argentina into the East Coast are fewer than expected.
- Chile has been sending fruit to locations outside of the US, in expectation of Argentina arrivals into the USA, which as noted above, are not happening at the usual volume.
- Various rain events in Argentina and Chile causing gaps in harvest/packing.
- Uncertain Mexico supply remains in question in terms of total volume for the season due to cold weather which slowed fruit production at the beginning of the year.

Between now and October (when desert production is in full swing), we expect to see severe pro rates. Produce Alliance recommends accepting flexibility in size and grade as a key to mitigating this situation.

Limes: WATCH LIST The market seems to be getting better. Quality is fair due to the old crop, but supplies have stabilized.

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: Supplies are normal, and demand and quality are both good.

Green and Red Leaf: Red leaf quality is good, supplies are normal, and demand is average. Green leaf supplies are normal with good quality and demand has been average.

Iceberg Lettuce: Supplies continue to be lighter. The market has been very active and prices are high with good quality.

Romaine: Supplies are slightly below normal, demand is strong, and quality is good with occasional light fringe burn.

Romaine Hearts: Supplies are slightly below normal; however, demand and quality are both good.

Eastern and Western Vegetables

Green Bell Pepper: The market is showing great availability on all sizes across the board. Quality is good with FOBs remaining steady in the East.

Red Bell Pepper: Supplies have lightened up in the West and quality has declined. FOBs have gone up by about \$2-\$4.

Yellow Pepper: Production has eased bringing the market off with deals being made on choice. 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!

Mixed Chili Pepper (Jalapeno, Anaheim, Poblano, Serrano): Supplies remain steady in the East on core pepper varieties while quality in the west is hit or miss as transition on domestic product is slow to start. Baja continues crossing decent quality on the core line of product.

Eggplant: Supplies in the East are light mostly due to rainfall. Quality is fair to good.

Cucumbers: The Eastern market is a bit active, but mostly readily available. Cucumbers look to be in good supply for the next week. FOBs are fairly steady. Quality reports, however, have been a bit scattered and vary by shipper. Some fields are producing great quality, and some are very poor.

Green Beans: WATCH LIST Despite some price relief, beans are still very tight in the East due to rain & quality. Prices have come down slightly in the past week; however, they are still firm. Until weather stabilizes and gives the plants an opportunity to improve quality, expect pricing fluctuations

Zucchini and Yellow Squash: Supply is still very tight with a very active market in the East. Prices are feeling quite a bit of pressure to stay high. Quality is mostly good, with some yellow showing heavy scarring once again.

Herbs

Mother Nature continues to be in the news this week as the US seems to be under a heat advisory. In Southern California, our growers have been doing a great job maintaining the quality of the product and our shipping department has been great at shipping the fresh herbs.

MARJORAM, THYME, AND OREGANO: Supplies remain steady with some occasional flowering.

HERB	SUPPLIES	QUALITY	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
Arugula	Steady	Good	USA
Basil	Steady	Good	USA/MEXICO
Opal Basil	Steady	Good	USA
Thai Basil	Steady	Good	USA
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	Limited	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	USA/MEXICO
Thyme	Steady	Good	USA
Lemon Thyme	Steady	Good	USA
Lavender	Steady	Good	USA
Lime Leaves	Steady	Good	USA

Melons

Cantaloupe: Supplies are plentiful as continued warm weather is pushing the crop forward. Sizing is still leaning heavy to 9's with limited supply on 12's and 15's. Quality on the new crops is outstanding, and brix levels are at 14 to 16 with occasional higher levels, and a good external appearance showing even netting and full slips. Some deals in the east are being offered on the Athena variety in bins.

Honeydew: Supplies are plentiful as continued warm weather is pushing the crop forward. Quality is excellent with sugar levels ranging from 12 to 14. Sizing mix is heavy to 5's with limited supply on 6 and 8's.

Watermelon: Seedless watermelon market has eased back to normal. Supplies are available in Georgia and Missouri with other local regions expected to start soon. There is also a steady supply available out of California.

Mixed Vegetables

Artichokes: Quality is excellent, and demand is good.

Arugula: Quality and supplies are fair.

Asparagus: The weather in Mexico and Peru continues to affect sizing of jumbo asparagus which has been smaller than normal. Expect to see these issues for another few weeks, as well as shorter supplies since Mexican supplies are diminishing faster than expected. Peru will be starting in about a week.

Bok Choy: Quality is average, and demand is fair.

Broccoli / Broccoli Florets: Supplies are steady this week. Demand remains good and the market has dipped a bit.

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

Carrots: We are seeing both good quality and volume.

Cauliflower: Supplies are down due to cooler temps. Demand is slightly better and the markets are slowly going up, and quality is great.

Celery: Supplies are normal and the market is steady with very light demand. Quality is good out of Salinas.

Corn: Good volume continues to become available on yellow and white product out of the San Joaquin Valley corn market (yellow, white and bi-color). Good supplies are also available out of Carolinas, Indiana and Illinois. Good time to promote, quality is excellent.

Cilantro: **EXTREME** Supplies are light due to poor quality.

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

Garlic: The market is about 50% done with the 2017 crop. Supplies are steady and prices remain high on domestic product.

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 continue to improve throughout the Midwest, but the market remains firm. Sizing is still smaller with larger product availability slowly improving. West Coast volume and prices are mostly stable.

Green Onions: **EXTREME Iced** - The market is extremely active due to reduced volumes from Mexico because of the heat and humidity for the past six weeks. **Iceless** - Like the iced market, the iceless market is very active due to the lighter supplies from Mexico attributed to high heat and humidity for the past six weeks.

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.

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: Markets remain firm despite decent supplies out of the Midwest. Quality has been hit or miss while sizing remains good. Central coast production is good; however, with lighter volume in the East, the market has firmed up in the West.

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

Spinach (Bunched): Supplies and quality are fair due to wind burn and heat damage.

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

Spring Mix: Supplies are good and quality is improving.

Onions:

Idaho/Oregon and Washington are now shipping all three colors fresh out of the field. Although quality is strong to start, it is because these are fresh onions without full skin and they will not yet have the shelf life of typical northwest storage onions. Because size is on the smaller end to start, there is not a lot of availability on colossal and super colossal yellows. Size is peaking on medium to jumbo. We are seeing whites remain elevated in price, and reds have begun to become in better supply so we are seeing prices come down there as well. There are still some supplies left in both CA and NM, although it is drying up quick and is primarily mediums.

Potatoes:

Growers are continuing to harvest new crop potatoes and the market is a bit unstable. It is expected that all growers will be in Norkotahs beginning next week. Prices continue to trend down, and the size profile is still unknown. Quality currently has been excellent, and weather has been great during harvest. There has been nothing put in storage yet and everything has been packed and marketed out of the field.

TOMATOES - EAST

- **Rounds:** Tomato supply continues to tighten with light supplies and increased rainfall. Only a handful of growers are harvesting right now, with most being in the middle of a transition period. More growers will start back up in September, but volume is not expected to be significant. FOBs are firmly up another \$2.00. Quality has not been impacted too much by the weather, so the fruit is shaping up nicely.
- **Romas:** Demand and supply both remain light, but steady. FOBs are steady for next week and quality is mostly good.
- **Grapes:** With more supplies available, prices will fall about \$2 as we move forward into next week.

Quality is still a bit of a challenge, with rain and heat being the major factors.

- **Cherries:** Things remain mostly unchanged for cherries. FOBs will remain stable, while quality is still a little unstable.

TOMATOES - WEST AND MEXICO

- **Rounds:** Demand is firm. With light supplies in the East, many are trying to fill the void from the West despite freight rates. FOBs are moving upward another \$2. Quality is mostly good, they typically have a short shelf life and feel very soft to the touch.
- **Romas:** Supplies are snug keeping firm pressure on FOBs. Prices will remain about the same for next week, but could start to rise within the next 10-14 days. Quality is fair at best with most fruit feeling soft.
- **Grapes:** Demand & supply has been mostly steady. FOBs are expected to remain the same. Quality is good to excellent.
- **Cherries:** Supplies remain snug, yet steady. FOBs will remain unchanged. Quality is mostly good, but some shippers are showing light color.

APPLES & PEARS

Apples – Northwest: We will continue to have storage supply of the major varieties of apples through the remainder of summer, and we have finished packing all varieties. The quality, condition, and color on almost all varieties looks very good. New crop gold varieties and galas are starting up this week, followed by Fuji in two weeks. Granny and Red Varieties are projected to ramp up the first week of September followed by pinks in October.

Apples – Northeast: There is light volume on reds out of New York and Chilean Granny Smith through the port of Philadelphia.

Pears: New crop Bartlett pears have started with good supply available especially on the larger (70's to 100's) sizes. Expect to see new crop Bosc and D 'Anjou start first week of September.

STONE FRUIT AND CHERRIES

- **Plums:** Moderate supply and steady demand has kept a firm FOB market in the high teens to mid-20's on the red and black varieties out of the San Joaquin Valley.
- **Peaches:** Supplies are good on yellow and white tray pack as well as volume fill out of the San Joaquin Valley. In the Southeast, ½ Bu's are available on yellow flesh varieties. We expect the summer harvest to finish up mid-September.
- **Nectarines:** Supplies are good on yellow and white tray packs as well as volume fill out of the San Joaquin Valley. Volumes will begin a slow decline this week with the end of season expected sometime mid to late September.
- **Italian Plums:** Production is starting up out of the Northwest. The first sign fall is near!
- **Northwest Yellow/White Peach and Nectarines:** These are now available out of the Northwest as well as California.