

Weekly Market Review

March 12, 2021

Overview

Growing weather has been ideal and most commodities continue having good quality and volume. We do not anticipate any changes next week if the weather continues. Overall quality remains very good. Grape and cherry tomatoes are tighter this week due to bloom drop and field transitions. Corn out of Florida seems to be improving but could get short at the end of the month once the Homestead finishes up. Banana markets remain firm due to the Force Majeure being declared by major global banana suppliers. Growers have suffered major damage to crops and infrastructure, causing a large ripple in the supply chain. We expect an escalated banana market through at least the first quarter of 2021. Limes are very short, and we are in a Force Majeure with our supplier. We expect very active lime markets through the middle of April. Avocados are also getting extremely tight due to higher demand, and lower volume estimates are coming out of Mexico due to yield loss. California estimates were also revised down and expect a very active market until Peruvian fruit arrives late May.

Market Alert

- Apples – **EXTREME**
- Avocados – **ESCALATED**
- Bananas – **ACT OF GOD/FORCE MAJEURE**
- Cauliflower – **ESCALATED**
- Garlic – **EXTREME**
- Ginger – **EXTREME**
- Limes – **ACT OF GOD/FORCE MAJEURE**
- Pickles – **EXTREME**
- Grape Tomatoes (Florida and Mexico) – **ESCALATED**

Watch List

- Raspberries & Blackberries in California
- Eggplant
- Cherry Tomatoes (Florida and Mexico)
- Transportation

Transportation

Freight rates are at record highs due to high demand for trucks nationwide. Equipment remains extremely short, further adding to the issue. LTL trucks are currently difficult to source. National fuel prices are steady. The east coast is averaging \$2.48/gallon, while California's average for diesel remains the highest at just under \$3.25/gallon.

Weather

OXNARD, CA:

Thu 3/11	Fri 3/12	Sat 3/13	Sun 3/14	Mon 3/15	Tue 3/16	Wed 3/17
55° 41°F 	59° 42°F 	61° 44°F 	61° 46°F 	61° 46°F 	62° 48°F 	65° 50°F 
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny

YUMA, AZ:

Thu 3/11	Fri 3/12	Sat 3/13	Sun 3/14	Mon 3/15	Tue 3/16	Wed 3/17
64° 46°F 	65° 46°F 	72° 47°F 	78° 50°F 	78° 51°F 	77° 52°F 	78° 54°F 
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Sunny

IMMOKALEE, FL

Thu 3/11	Fri 3/12	Sat 3/13	Sun 3/14	Mon 3/15	Tue 3/16	Wed 3/17
84° 58°F 	85° 57°F 	86° 58°F 	86° 62°F 	86° 63°F 	88° 66°F 	90° 66°F 
Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny

HERMOSILLO, MX

Thu 3/11	Fri 3/12	Sat 3/13	Sun 3/14	Mon 3/15	Tue 3/16	Wed 3/17
75° 49°F 	73° 46°F 	73° 45°F 	80° 49°F 	84° 49°F 	83° 49°F 	85° 49°F 
Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Sunny

CULIACAN, MX:

Thu 3/11	Fri 3/12	Sat 3/13	Sun 3/14	Mon 3/15	Tue 3/16	Wed 3/17
91° 55°F 	92° 53°F 	88° 48°F 	88° 47°F 	87° 49°F 	87° 49°F 	87° 48°F 
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny

Good Buys

Commodity	Market Update	Produce Expert Tip
Bok Choy	Supply is expected to be plentiful for the next three weeks. Quality is good.	Let's cook bok choy using a simple stir-fry method to create beautifully browned edges and crisp-tender stalks. In a bowl, combine soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil, and red chili flakes. In a nonstick pan, heat oil over high heat and cook the bok choy until lightly browned. Transfer to another plate, then add garlic, ginger, and green onions and then the sauce mixture. Add the bok choy back to the pan and cook until glazed. Enjoy!
Cantaloupe	Production has started to hit season highs. With businesses opening and improving weather conditions, promoting cantaloupe is a great opportunity. We anticipate promotable	Cantaloupe sorbet is a delicious and underrated treat! In a small saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until it thickens. While the sugar syrup cools, cut the melon into cubes and blend until puréed. Add the syrup to the purée and chill overnight.

	volume through late April. Brix levels are as high as 15% and quality is outstanding.	
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Fruits & Vegetables

Avocados: **ESCALATED** Volume will continue to tighten up, pushing FOB prices higher as we see lighter numbers crossing from Mexico due to revised volume and higher demand. We continue to observe the spring crop as we see losses due to freezing temps in the region earlier in the year. Revisions to the California avocado estimates have been down. We expect active markets until we see relief from Peru in late May.

Bananas: **ACT OF GOD** Weather is getting better in the topics, which should increase quality. Supply is still lower due to the hurricanes in 2020.

Pineapples: Volumes are picking back up. Quality is excellent.

Grapes: Red volume continues to increase. Green grape market is elevated slightly. Availability will be lower until the MX season starts.

Berries

Strawberries: We continue to see good quality out of CA and Florida. There was light rainfall in the growing areas of California this week with more in the forecast through the weekend. Depending on the rainfall, we could see a slight bump in the market, but it remains steady. We look for the market to strengthen as we approach the Easter pull.

Blueberries: Mexican production continues to be stable. Volume from Baja will see a slight increase. The Florida season is starting with low volumes. Good overall quality.

Blackberries: **WATCH LIST** Supply will continue tracking low for another week or two. We expect supply to begin ramping up in three weeks as we approach the spring peak. Majority of the volume will be produced from Central Mexico. California regions will wind down.

Raspberries: **WATCH LIST** Supply is starting to increase this week due to favorable temperatures in Mexico and will continue to ramp up each week as we approach spring peak. Baja and Oxnard supply will remain stable.

California / Arizona Citrus

Navels: Taste and quality are great. Small sizes remain moderately tight.

Lemons: Minimal issues with quality. Peak sizes are 140/115/165ct.

Limes: **ACT OF GOD/FORCE MAJEURE** The lime market continues to rise as fruit becomes limited and demand increases as businesses reopen. This is pushing our growers to secure additional fruit, when available, at market. Quality and rain-related issues have impacted the older crops, which is where the current fruit is being harvested. Political issues are also impacting the supply routes through Mexico and we expect very active markets for the next several weeks. Should these conditions worsen, we could face pro-rates and force majeure pricing. Lemon substitutions may be necessary over the next several weeks. We recommend scaling back the usage of limes as a garnish and using thinner slices for beverages.

Grapefruit: Texas grapefruit has ended abruptly due to the freezing temperatures. California grapefruit will be available mid-week and small volume this week as Central Valley ramps up harvesting. This is a very early start for some California growers. Some blocks are not ready, however the heat this week will help things along. Fruit is peaking on the smaller sizes (40/48/56s).

Imports/Specialties available:

- Cara Caras – Small sizes are very tight. Good supply on larger Sunkist/fancy grade.
- Blood oranges – All sizes available.
- Minneolas – All sizes available.
- Mandarins – All sizes available.
- Gold Nuggets – Loading this week.

West Coast Lettuce

Butter: Steady volume and quality.

Green Leaf: Good volume and quality.

Red Leaf: Good volume and excellent quality.

Romaine & Romaine Hearts: Good supply and quality continue, although market is up slightly. Look for pricing to remain firm into next week as shippers are moving areas and demand is increasing.

Iceberg Lettuce: Supply has dropped due to very uneven fields, sizes, lower yields, and volatile weather. Quality is good. The market is up from last week due to lighter supply. Better than normal demand and will continue to be active heading into next week. The desert season is several weeks away from being finished, but shippers are preparing for the transition with some reports of a few shippers starting in Huron the week of March 22nd (possibly a few days earlier). Most shippers will transition sometime in April. Please see the list of transition schedules attached.

Eastern and Western Vegetables

Green Bell Pepper: Normal volume and good quality out of Florida. Good volume continues in the West crossing through Nogales and McAllen. Quality is outstanding.

Red Bell Pepper: Promotable volume available out of Central Mexico. Quality is outstanding.

Yellow Bell Pepper: Promotable volume available out of Central Mexico. Quality is outstanding.

Mini Sweet Pepper: Excellent supply and quality crossing through Nogales.

Mixed Chili Pepper: Supply remains firm in the east on Jalapeños, Long Hots, Cubanelles and Hungarians while volume and quality are outstanding from Mexico crossing through McAllen and Nogales on key items: Jalapeno, Tomatillo, Anaheim, Serrano and Poblano. Red Fresno supply remains limited.

Eggplant: **WATCH LIST** Below normal supply expected out of Florida as the transition to newer blocks is underway. Mexican crossings are lighter this week due to cooler weather. This should improve over the next week as warmer temps settle back in over the region. We will see higher demand for Eggplant as lent approaches.

Cucumbers: Improving volume from Honduras, loading in Miami, and local crops ramping up have brought FOB prices down this week. Mexican crossings have improved. Quality overall is outstanding.

English Cucumbers: Markets remain flat; however, volume has tightened with cooler weather. Quality is great.

Pickles: **EXTREME** Market remains extremely light from Mexico due to rain-related bloom drop and will be short for the next several weeks.

Green Beans: Volume domestically has improved. Nogales supply has improved leading to a stable market. Quality is mostly good.

French Beans: Good volume and light demand has increased downward pressure on pricing this week. Quality is excellent.

Zucchini/Yellow Squash: Markets in Florida have firmed up a bit as supply has tightened. Good volume crossing from Mexico. Quality is outstanding on zucchini however we are seeing more scarring on the yellow.

Herbs

Basil: Supply has gotten a little tight due to cooler weather the past two weeks.

HERB	SUPPLY	QUALITY	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
Arugula	Steady	Steady	USA
Basil	Steady	Steady	MEXICO
Opal Basil	Limited	Marginal	MEXICO
Thai Basil	Steady	Marginal	USA/MEXICO
Bay Leaves	Steady	Steady	COLOMBIA
Chervil	Steady	Steady	USA
Chives	Steady	Steady	MEXICO
Cilantro	Steady	Steady	USA
Dill	Steady	Steady	USA/MEXICO
Epazote	Steady	Steady	MEXICO
Lemongrass	Steady	Steady	USA
Marjoram	Steady	Steady	USA
Mint	Steady	Steady	USA
Oregano	Steady	Steady	USA/MEXICO
Italian Parsley	Steady	Steady	USA
Rosemary	Steady	Steady	USA/MEXICO

Sage	Steady	Steady	USA/MEXICO
Savory	Limited	Marginal	USA
Sorrel	Steady	Steady	USA
Tarragon	Limited	Steady	MEXICO
Thyme	Steady	Steady	USA/MEXICO
Lemon Thyme	Steady	Steady	USA
Lavender	Steady	Steady	USA
Lime Leaves	Steady	Steady	USA

Melons

Cantaloupe: Production has started to hit season highs. With businesses opening and improving weather conditions, promoting cantaloupe is a great opportunity. We anticipate promotable volume through late April. Brix levels are as high as 15% and quality is outstanding.

Honeydew: Honeydew supply from Guatemala and Honduras has dropped during the transition period. Both countries have seen a dramatic shift in sizing towards smaller sizes (8ct), leaving larger dews very close to a demand exceeds supply situation. Quality has improved significantly over the past few weeks with clean external quality and solid brix levels.

Watermelon: Improving supply this week crossing through Nogales and Texas while offshore arrivals were steady. Quality is good.

Mixed Vegetables

Artichokes: Quality is excellent. They are showing a little purple color near the base but are free of any frost damage. We expect fair volume to continue through the month of February. Prices are steady.

Arugula: Supply and quality are good. We may see some discoloration due to weather.

Asparagus: Good supply continues with very good quality.

Bok Choy: Supply is expected to be plentiful for the next three weeks. Quality is good.

Broccoli/Broccoli Florets: Supply is steady, and quality is fair. Market is slightly higher.

Brussels Sprouts: Quality issues due to insect pressure and discoloration. These challenges are impacting supply.

Carrots: Good availability on all packs with very good quality.

Cauliflower: **ESCALATED** Lighter supply continues as we approach the transition. Quality is good. Cauliflower floret prices are escalated.

Celery: Supply and quality are good. Market is steady this week.

Corn: Corn prices have lowered with decent supply available. This is expected to turn by the end of the month as Homestead finishes up for the season. We will be transitioning to new growing regions that were affected by cold weather earlier in the year. Yields are yet to be determined however we expect supply to tighten back up. In Nogales, better numbers are crossing on bi, yellow, and white corn.

Cilantro: Volume will be plentiful this week. Quality is good.

Fennel: We will continue to have good supply on fennel for the next couple weeks. Quality remains strong overall.

Garlic: **EXTREME** The market for domestic garlic remains high with good quality.

Ginger: **EXTREME** Ginger is very volatile due to very inconsistent supply and market is higher. Supply remains tight for the foreseeable future.

Green Cabbage: Supply and quality are good.

Green Onions: Supply and quality are good this week. The market is steady.

JICAMA: Steady supply available crossing through McAllen.

Kale (Green): Bunched kale supply is expected to be plentiful for the next few weeks.

Mushrooms: We are seeing a stable market and good supply.

Napa: Supply continues to be plentiful. Quality is good.

Parsley (Curly, Italian): Great quality with good supply.

Rapini: Strong quality with good supply.

Red Cabbage: Supply is lighter. Quality remains consistent.

Snow Peas: Steady volume. Good quality.

Sugar Snap Peas: Steady volume. Good quality.

Spinach (Bunched): Supply and quality are good. We may see some discoloration due to weather.

Spinach (Baby): Supply and quality are good. We may see some discoloration due to weather.

Spring Mix: Supply and quality are good. We may see some discoloration due to weather.

Sweet Potatoes and Yams: New crop harvest starts as soon as next week for some sweet potato growers. We are looking at new crop shipments starting in about 6 weeks after they cure. Last year's crop is starting to dwindle, and inventory is getting tight, but supply should hold to avoid gap.

Onions:

FOB pricing on all colors and sizes begins to increase in the Northwest. Size profiles on all colors lean toward heavier to larger sizes, which will continue as the USDA Farmers to Families program continues for the next two months. Mediums and prepacks in the Northwest have significantly tightened up. White onion supply continues to tighten up in the Northwest, while Mexican white and yellow onions crossing through South Texas are plentiful. The country is beginning to surpass the weather challenges that have hampered demand for the last several weeks. We are seeing orders picking up, and trucks getting back on the road. The focus in the onion world remains on the effects of the freezing temperatures that both McAllen and Uvalde experienced last week. Texas growers are concerned as onions can withstand low temperatures for a short period of time, but any prolonged freeze will negatively impact both the bulb and plant. The effects will likely be unknown for several weeks, but there will be some level of damage. One concern is that onions that look okay upon drying out, but face challenges with bacteria and disease causing them to break down. If that does happen, we will see a big spike in pricing around late March. The Northwest crop is beginning to wind down, and we should start seeing shippers finish up in the coming weeks. With several states fully reopening, and many others increasing indoor dining capacity, demand has begun to improve. Warmer temperatures remain on the horizon, which should help increase demand. Truck capacity remains the biggest challenge, which the entire industry is anticipating to improve. We are seeing a small supply of available equipment in the Northwest.

Potatoes:

The market remains stagnant on all sizes and grades of potatoes. Burbanks, Norkotahs, and White Russets are shipping full steam ahead. Quality currently remains strong on all varieties. Larger-size cartons have been more plentiful than in recent weeks, as the heightened demand on small potatoes for the Box Program is causing large counts to pile up. There are predictions that the program will continue to help keep small-sized potatoes cleaned up over the next three months, which should help the overall market. Demand improved this past week, and we anticipate this to continue. With the announcement that several states are reopening full steam ahead, and many others raising the capacity for indoor dining, things are beginning to pick up all over. With warmer temperatures on the horizon as well, we expect demand to continue increasing as we move toward spring and summer. Other russet growing regions will finish shipping in the coming months, so there will be less overall supply in the market. This will help increase FOB pricing as well. Truck capacity remains the biggest challenge, which the entire industry anticipates to improve. We are seeing a small supply of available equipment in the Northwest.

TOMATOES

East Coast

- **Rounds:** Florida supply is steady this week. Quality is outstanding.
- **Romas:** Florida supply is steady this week. Quality is outstanding.
- **Grape Tomatoes:** **ESCALATED** Florida supply is tight this week and anticipated to stay firm over the next several weeks due to bloom drop and the transition from older fields to newer blocks. We expect this market to remain active for the next several weeks.
- **Cherry Tomatoes:** **WATCH LIST** Florida supply is tight this week and anticipated to stay firm over the next several weeks due to bloom drop and the transition from older fields to newer blocks. We expect this market to remain active for the next several weeks.
- **Organic Tomatoes:** Supply and quality improving.

Mexico

- **Rounds:** Promotable volume crossing through McAllen and Nogales. Quality is outstanding.
- **Romas:** Promotable volume crossing through McAllen and Nogales. Quality is outstanding.
- **Grape Tomatoes:** **ESCALATED** Volume has tightened up as demand shifts from Florida due to lighter volume in the region. The seasonal transition between older and newer sets has begun in Culiacan. We expect improved crossings over the next two weeks.
- **Cherry Tomatoes:** **WATCH LIST** Supply is lighter this week out of Mexico and quality is very nice.

APPLES & PEARS

Apples: EXTREME The Washington Apple community is reporting that the 2020-2021 crop is down this year by nearly 30 million cases for several reasons. At this time, we are also seeing deficits in other regions on a national level. This is due to weather related pressure, late summer and early fall in the Pacific Northwest, and unprecedented demand at retail. Please keep in mind, the USDA Food Box program, as well as other government backed programs, have reduced the overall availability on the fruit. This shortage is impacting the Granny Smith and Gala varieties, which are major food service items. Between the production shortages, which are weather related, unprecedented demand, and COVID-19 restrictions and closures, there will be a continued upward pressure on price. Please note that we are expecting pricing to remain higher until new crop begins sometime in August 2021.

Asian Pears: Asian pear supply is available. Chilean & Argentine Bartlett Pears in LA.

Stone Fruit: Supply improving on Chilean Peaches, Plums and Nectarines that will load in Philly as well as Los Angeles.

Cherries: Limited supply available on red cherries from Chile.

Kiwi Fruit: Steady supply available on both coasts. Californian and Italian Haywards are available.