

## Overview

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With Easter this week, along with the impacts of a new border crisis, we expect to see a very volatile market on items that were previously short which include **limes, avocados, and hot pepper**. Once the border crisis is resolved there will be a backlog of thousands of truckloads of produce that will need to cross, and our shippers are doing everything in their power to cross as many loads as possible. Items immediately affected will remain active or short through the holiday weekend at a minimum, once the border crisis dissolves, we should see improving volume next week after Easter. Lime market will remain extreme and possibly stay this way through the remainder April, particularly on large sized fruit. Tomato and squash markets seem to be stable and should remain that way over the next two weeks. Banana and pineapple volume continues to be steady through the ports and we are anticipating no issues through the weekend barring any unforeseen delays. We are still seeing active and/or triggered markets on cucumbers and bell pepper and this will continue for the next 10-12 days as growers start picking newer fields and increase production. Corn market is split right now with higher priced product in the west and good volume being harvested out of Belle Glade Florida. We expect to see some new crop South Georgia products begin to be harvested over the next 12-14 days, cabbage first, then pepper, squash, and cucumber. Table grape volume is good on storage fruit with deals being made. **Transition is almost complete with GreenGate being the last to transition, starting in Salinas the week of April 24<sup>th</sup>.**

## Market Alert

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- Avocados – **ESCALATED**
- Bell Pepper (Green) – **ESCALATED**
- Cantaloupes – **ESCALATED**
- Carrots (Jumbo) – **ESCALATED**
- Cauliflower – **ESCALATED**
- Cucumbers – **ESCALATED**
- Garlic – **EXTREME**
- Ginger – **EXTREME**
- Honeydews – **ESCALATED**
- Hot Peppers - **EXTREME**
- Limes – **EXTREME/FORCE MAJEURE**
- Mushrooms – **ESCALATED**
- Oranges (88's/Smaller) - **EXTREME**

## WATCH LIST

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- Asparagus – Large Sizes
- Corn
- Green Beans
- Tomatoes- EAST
- Snow Peas
- Sugar Snap Peas

## Transportation

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DAT national load to truck ratio has returned to the levels we were seeing prior to the December/January spike with March 6th reporting a 10.94 load to truck ratio. This reduction in truck demand has also brought the average cost per mile reported by DAT back down from \$3.61 in January to \$3.47 as of March 10th. The \$3.47 average is the same average as December '21. The conflict in Ukraine has brought supply uncertainty to the crude oil market. This uncertainty along with sanctions on Russia has increased crude oil prices from \$86 per barrel in January to \$124/b in the first week of March. This increase in crude oil has caused the average diesel cost to increase from a \$3.72/gal average in January to \$4.84/gal average as of March 7th.

## Weather

### OXNARD, CA:

Thu 4/14	Fri 4/15	Sat 4/16	Sun 4/17	Mon 4/18	Tue 4/19	Wed 4/20	Thu 4/21
65°   48°F	64°   51°F	62°   49°F	63°   49°F	67°   51°F	68°   50°F	65°   51°F	65°   50°F
							
Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy/Wind	Sunny	Partly Cloudy

### CULICAN, MX:

Thu 4/14	Fri 4/15	Sat 4/16	Sun 4/17	Mon 4/18	Tue 4/19	Wed 4/20	Thu 4/21
97°   59°F	98°   61°F	102°   61°F	104°   63°F	100°   63°F	95°   61°F	96°   61°F	95°   62°F
							
Partly Cloudy 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0 in 4 PM	Partly Cloudy 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0 in	Sunny 0 in	Mostly Sunny 0 in	Sunny 0 in

### IMMOKALEE, FL

Thu 4/14	Fri 4/15	Sat 4/16	Sun 4/17	Mon 4/18	Tue 4/19	Wed 4/20	Thu 4/21
91°   67°F	90°   67°F	91°   66°F	91°   67°F	88°   66°F	87°   64°F	86°   66°F	88°   66°F
							
Thunderstorms 0.38 in PM	Thunderstorms 0.47 in PM	Thunderstorms 0.12 in PM	Thunderstorms 0.18 in PM	Thunderstorms 0.17 in Scattered	Partly Cloudy 0 in	Mostly Sunny 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0 in

### JALISCO, MX:

Thu 4/14	Fri 4/15	Sat 4/16	Sun 4/17	Mon 4/18	Tue 4/19	Wed 4/20	Thu 4/21
87°   57°F	88°   58°F	90°   60°F	89°   59°F	85°   57°F	83°   57°F	85°   57°F	85°   56°F
							
Partly Cloudy 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0 in	Mostly Sunny 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0 in	Sunny 8 AM 0 in	Sunny 0 in	Sunny 0 in	Sunny 0 in

### YUMA, AZ:

Thu 4/14	Fri 4/15	Sat 4/16	Sun 4/17	Mon 4/18	Tue 4/19	Wed 4/20	Thu 4/21
87°   54°F	89°   61°F	89°   57°F	93°   61°F	99°   72°F	96°   64°F	94°   62°F	94°   63°F
							
Sunny 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0 in	Sunny 0 in	Sunny 0 in	Mostly Sunny 0 in	Partly Cloudy 11 AM 0 in	Sunny 0 in	Mostly Sunny 0 in

### SALINAS, CA

Thu 4/14	Fri 4/15	Sat 4/16	Sun 4/17	Mon 4/18	Tue 4/19	Wed 4/20	Thu 4/21
62°   50°F	65°   47°F	62°   41°F	64°   42°F	66°   50°F	63°   44°F	65°   49°F	64°   47°F
							
Cloudy 0 in	AM Clouds/PM Sun 0.18 in	AM Showers 0.05 in	Mostly Sunny 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0.06 in	AM Clouds/PM Sun 0 in	Partly Cloudy 0.02 in	AM Showers 0.3 in

## Good Buys

Commodity	Market Update	Expert Tip
Green Leaf & Red Leaf	<p><b>Green Leaf:</b> Green leaf is now shipping from Salinas and quality is very good. Good time to promote.</p> <p><b>Red Leaf:</b> Red leaf is now shipping from Salinas and quality is very good. Good time to promote.</p>	<p>What do they say... we eat with our eyes? Well, there is nothing more beautiful than an array of colors on the plate created by some beautiful leaf lettuce, and a variety of bell peppers. Create a bed of lettuce with green and red leaf lettuce, and drizzle with a mixture of champagne vinegar, olive oil, fresh herbs, salt, and pepper. Then, slice up some red and yellow bell peppers and layer them on top of the bed of lettuce and sprinkler with some feta cheese, and a little bit of minced garlic. Drizzle with the dressing again and enjoy! Simple, and delicious!</p>
Red Bell Pepper & Yellow Bell Pepper	<p><b>Red Bell Pepper:</b> Supply remains lighter than normal in the east and improving in the west with good crossings in Nogales. Overall quality in the west is good and fair in the east. We are starting to see a few growers begin to start out of Canada and expect good volume to increase over the next week. Peaking in XXL sizes this week and next.</p> <p><b>Yellow Bell Pepper:</b> Good volume and quality available crossing through Nogales. We are also seeing a few growers begin to start out of Canada and expect good volume to increase over the next week. Peaking in XXL sizes this week and next.</p>	

## Fruits & Vegetables

**Avocados: ESCALATED** Last week's projections fell short by more than 17 million pounds and Mexico fell short of projections by almost 20 million pounds this week. Also, this week, multiple issues are occurring; we are seeing limited harvests out of Mexico due to Holy Week and the blockade by Mexican truck drivers. Standing inventories are down to 44.9 million pounds and are expected to continue decreasing as avocados are consumed faster than they can be replenished. This week, we saw a considerable increase in pricing which likely remain higher as the industry readies itself for the Cinco de Mayo pull. We should expect a significant gap in supply.

**Bananas:** Availability is picking up and so is the quality. The weather is improving and the issues in Europe are increasing the supply as less fruit is being shipped there. However, we are seeing price increases this quarter due to skyrocketing fuel prices

**Pineapples:** Pineapple availability continues to be okay. The size profile is trending to size 5 and 6 cts and availability on 7 cts remains limited.

**Grapes:** Weather in Chile is ideal for grapes and has been for a few weeks, which is increasing the supply imported into the U.S. Red Grape pricing continues to be fairly low with plenty of supply. Green grapes remain higher as fewer supplies have been shipped.

## Berries

**Strawberries:** Overall we expect volumes to increase as Oxnard is approaching peak volumes. California saw rain last week, ranging from .75 to 2 inches, which impacted supply. However, California has received

favorable weather, which will likely promote good plant development. Furthermore, while California's production increased, Central Mexico's production decreased.

**Blackberries:** Supplies saw an increasing trend compared to previous weeks. However, this week's supply is lower due to the religious holiday in Mexico but expect to begin increasing towards the middle of next. The quality is good.

**Raspberries:** Volume is expected to continue to trend upwards for the next six weeks towards the spring peak. Mexico continues to produce the majority of the volume. Watsonville and Salinas should begin harvesting in early May.

**Blueberries:** Central Mexico volume is beginning to decrease seasonally. Florida will be entering their peak weeks of production, and Georgia lightly began production, but will continue to increase weekly. Out of the west, Baja production continues to increase toward its spring peak season.

## California

### Citrus

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**Oranges:** **EXTREME (88's/smaller)** Availability on small sizes have gotten extremely tight, with market pricing in the low to mid \$20s. Some shippers have started Valencias, but market price will remain high through May. Size structure is peaking 72/88/56, mostly fancy grade.

**Lemons:** Are in full swing, quality has been good.

**Limes:** **EXTREME/FORCE MAJEURE** Between the border strike interrupting supply as well as a very volatile year for limes, and we still are seeing unprecedented conditions. As we have shared, the grower community expected improvement in supply by now, however, the new crop limes are simply not sizing up. Growers continue to cut ahead into the smaller fruit to keep the supply chain full and we hope to see some relief over the next 2-4 weeks as volume increases, and new regions start harvesting. In the immediate future, we do expect to see some supply interruptions due to the border crisis this week which will further complicate the next week's availability and we will continue to see challenges on sizes. **Please be flexible on size, consider scaling back on portions, removing temporarily, or even subbing to lime juice or fresh lemon where possible.**

**Grapefruit:** Ruby grapefruit now available. Size is peaking on 32s and larger fancy and all small sizes 36s and smaller are tight. Texas is expected to start very late.

**Imports/Specialties:** Blood oranges are available in good supply. Murcotts / minneolas are available in good supply as well.

### West Coast Lettuce

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**Butter Lettuce:** Now shipping from Salinas, and quality is very good. Market is steady

**Green Leaf:** Now shipping from Salinas and quality is very good. Good time to promote

**Red Leaf:** Now shipping from Salinas and quality is very good. Good time to promote

**Romaine and Romaine Hearts:** Transition from Yuma to Salinas is complete, and quality is very good. Prices on romaine hearts are still in the high teens but prices on romaine 24ct are not as active.

**Iceberg Lettuce:** We still have a few shippers shipping out of Huron but most everyone has transitioned to Salinas. Quality is very good, and the market is slightly weaker.

### **Eastern and Western Vegetables**

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**Green Bell Pepper:** **ESCALATED** Production remains tight out of Florida and FOB prices were higher this week. We expect up and down markets over the next several weeks due to crop loss and bloom drop resulting from damages by the freeze early last month. We should see some relief over the next week as new crop will start to become available. In Mexico, there was cooler weather last week that will slow down production but expect the season to wind down over the next several weeks. Quality is mixed by region in Mexico and depending on what fields are being harvested, we are seeing much better quality in newer acreage. Coachella is expected to start on fruit in 2-3 weeks.

**Red Bell Pepper:** Supply remains lighter than normal in the east and improving in the west with good crossings in Nogales. Overall quality in the west is good and fair in the east. We are starting to see a few growers begin to start out of Canada and expect good volume to increase over the next week. Peaking in XXL sizes this week and next.

**Yellow Bell Pepper:** Good volume and quality available crossing through Nogales. We are also seeing a few growers begin to start out of Canada and expect good volume to increase over the next week. Peaking in XXL sizes this week and next.

**Mini Sweet Pepper:** Supply is good loading in Nogales, as well as Canada, and quality is very nice.

**Mixed Chili Pepper:** **EXTREME** We will continue to see marginal quality and light supply out of Florida due to the freeze and we will need to re-evaluate daily as losses are expected to be particularly high on chilies. We do expect improving availability once we transition to Central Florida in 3-4 weeks. In McAllen and Nogales, prices are much higher this week, mainly due to a combination of the border delays and transition. Once the delays and backups at the border crossings subside, we hope to see better volume over the next 2-3 weeks as newer regions ramp up production.

**Eggplant:** Good supply available out of Florida and Mexico. Georgia and Coachella are about 5 weeks from starting.

**Slicer Cucumbers:** **ESCALATED** Florida supply continues to ramp up over the next 2 weeks, while in the west we continue to see lighter crossing and higher demand from the east keep FOBs higher out of McAllen and Nogales.

**English Cucumbers:** Lighter supply out of Mexico and Canada.

**Pickles:** Supply was lighter this week crossing through Nogales and quality is very nice.

**Green Beans:** **WATCH LIST** We are seeing a split market this week mostly due to a spike in volume and lighter demand out of Florida while volume remains light in the west. The overall quality is better despite weather related pressure out of Florida, and the Mexican FOB prices are expected to remain elevated over the next few weeks due to lower volume and lack of labor for harvesting.

**French Beans:** Excellent supply and quality out of Guatemala

**Zucchini/Yellow Squash:** Improving supply out of Florida is pushing prices down this week, however we need to watch availability closely as weather continues to hit the region. Unfortunately, we are seeing a lot of quality issues in the fields on yellow squash, and we hope to see a few new fields break. Projections call for hit and miss volume over the next several weeks barring any additional weather-related events. Zucchini supply is good, and quality is much better than yellow. In Mexico, supply is improving daily as we transition north to Sonora and quality is outstanding.

## Herbs

Good availability and consistent supply on all herbs, except CHERVILL

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

Lime Leaves	Steady	Steady	USA
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## Melons

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**Cantaloupe: ESCALATED** We are experiencing record levels for this time of the season. Spring volumes typically peaks in late March through April with heavy retail promotions and currently volume is down compared to previous seasons. There are rumors of whitefly pressure out of Honduras, which growers will be able to determine if accurate within two weeks. With longer days of sunlight and warmer temperatures, growers are experiencing a shift in sizing to mostly 9cts and larger. This will leave 12/15cts in a more limited position in the next couple of weeks.

**Honeydew: ESCALATED** Honeydew is hitting record pricing levels due to the high demand. This trend will not slow down for at least the next month when Mexican crossings increase. Sizing is heavy to 5cts and larger, which means the lower percentage of smaller-sized fruit (6/8cts) will leave those in a very limited position.

**Watermelon:** Seedless watermelons (offshore crop) are gapping this week and early next week out of Guatemala due to a high windstorm two weeks ago that has impacted harvesting last week and this week. We hope to be back on schedule by later next week and ride out the rest of the month until our season finishes. Mexican supply is drastically reduced and expected to stay this way over the next few weeks.

## Mixed Vegetables

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**Artichokes:** Quality has improved significantly, supplies are lighter, market continues very active

**Arugula:** Quality has improved with much better available supplies, market is steady

**Asparagus: WATCH LIST** The Oregon region has started, but production is still low. Although standard asparagus is very prevalent, the bigger sizes are becoming limited, especially on large asparagus. Peruvian production continues to increase every week, and we should see this trend continue. The market has become active with Easter ads starting, Caborca/San Luis region winding down, and Peru not at full production. It's looking like there will be a 2-week gap between the transitioning regions. During this time, shippers may be asking to sub alternate sizes until production in the new growing area increases.

**Broccoli/Broccoli Florets:** Supply continues to improve as broccoli is fully transitioned to Salinas. Quality is very good, and market is steady.

**Brussels Sprouts:** The market is steady and we continue to see good supply with very good supply, color, and density.

**Carrots: ESCALATED** Current demand exceeds predicted supply while lower than average yields caused by cold wet weather has limited availability. Shippers continue to struggle with labor due to COVID and not having enough workers show daily to pack carrots.

**Cauliflower: ESCALATED** Supply continues lighter and will continue into next week.

**Celery:** Supply is slowly increasing out of Oxnard, quality is improving, and market is steady.

**Cilantro:** Good supply with very good quality.

**Corn:** **WATCH LIST** Demand remains strong, and supply is good out of Florida this week, however, still anticipate a very bumpy ride until we transition to Georgia in May. Florida growers in the Belle Glade area are into newer blocks this week and seeing much better yields but still expect some loss over the next several weeks as they continue to hit patches of production that were affected by weather. In the west, supply is still light, however, demand was down leaving a bit more inventory available for market. We should see Coachella corn available in 7-10 days.

**Fennel:** The desert is finished for the season and supply continues to increase out of Salinas. Market is steady

**Garlic:** **EXTREME** Domestic supply is very tight, and shippers are holding to averages but we expect this volatile market to continue through next summer.

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

**Green Cabbage:** Steady availability continues out of Florida and Texas. In the west, weights are improving because of crop movement although we are seeing cone shape heads for this week.

**Green Onions:** Supply is good with very good quality

**Jicama:** Steady supply available crossing through McAllen.

**Kale (Green):** Supply is steady.

**Mushrooms:** **ESCALATED** Quality is good, although supply is down and markets are higher primarily due to a lack of labor, shortages in component of growing such as peat moss and other inflationary pressure. We expect to see this continue to be a challenge until some of the growing costs can get under control of this particularly labor intensive and cost sensitive item.

**Napa Cabbage:** We are seeing decreased availability until we see supply increase out of Salinas.

**Parsley (Curly, Italian):** Parsley supplies are expected to be steady this week.

**Rapini:** Excellent supply this week and next.

**Red Cabbage:** Supply is good as quality remains consistent with sizing and overall appearance.

**Snow Peas and Sugar Snaps:** **WATCH LIST** We will see some challenges in the market as we transition to Salinas and Santa Maria. This will primarily be due to a decrease in supply from Guatemala as well as the Mexico season finishing which will put pressure on the Santa Maria and Salinas growing areas to take on all of the supply. Expect very active markets until Santa Maria and Salinas growing regions are in full production.

**Spinach (Bunched & Baby):** Supply and quality are good.

**Spring Mix:** Supply and quality are good.

**Sweet Potatoes and Yams:** Availability continues to be good out of North Carolina on jumbos, #1's and #2's. Volume has picked up the past few weeks in anticipation of the Easter holiday. The market has been relatively flat all season, but we should expect to see prices gradually start to climb as we enter the summer months.

### **Onions:**

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Product shipping out of South Texas has tightened up significantly this past week due to both challenges with crossing product over the border, as well as the Mexican crop largely finishing up. The majority of the tightness was on red and white onions; however, we did see yellow supplies cut back as well depending on the specific supplier and day of the week, we saw colossal and super colossal size onions tight, and then medium yellows also begin to tighten. With the Northwest continuing to finish up on their remaining storage suppliers, we anticipate we will see the market bounce back up for a bit. Texas is about 50% of the way done with their crop and should ship for approximately another 3-4 weeks. There were a handful of growers that started shipping yellows only in the Imperial Valley, California this week. There will be more shippers that come online next week, and we should start seeing reds and whites beginning to ship toward the back half of next week as well. Early reports are that California has a plentiful crop of yellows and reds. Typically, the Imperial Valley starts around May 1st, so we are certainly seeing them with a much earlier shipping period than normal. This should help to extend their crop and stretch it out a bit more, so the market does not get flooded and push pricing down below growing costs. Trucks have remained plentiful, and rates continue to reflect healthy capacity, with some reduced demand. However, we do expect the rates will take an increase as trucks begin moving to California for the Salinas transition.

### **Potatoes:**

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The potato market has stabilized on all sizes at the moment. It appears to be a bit of a mixed profile depending on the different growers around the state. Some are in a larger size profile, whereas some are heavier to smaller potatoes. Overall, the market has remained relatively 'flat' in terms of pricing this month. However, we are beginning to see the market tighten on large size count cartons throughout the state. We are seeing smaller size profiles on potatoes than we previously had, which is helping to lower the FOBs on those items. Non-size A potatoes, and #2s are more plentiful than they have been in recent months as well. Growers are beginning to get into their last remaining Norkotah cellars and should finish them up over the course of the next month or two. Growers do see a decrease in production when switching from Norkotahs to Burbanks, as the Burbanks do not pack out with the same level of production than Norkotahs do. The concern this year is that the drop off will be significant as the Burbanks were believed to have taken the brunt of the heat wave this past summer. If that does take place, we will see a fast upturn in market pricing across all sizes and grades of potatoes. Processor demand remains heightened and continues to put pressure on the fresh crop as they are offering record prices for bulk product. Growers in all regions are preparing for a very strong April, where product is expected to significantly tighten up and remain snug until new crop in August. Additionally, freight has returned a much more 'normal' state for this time of year. We are seeing rates that we have not seen since early 2020, before the Pandemic. Despite hefty fuel increases, this has not materialized yet in higher rates. Rates are expected to increase in April as we move toward Summer.

## **TOMATOES**

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### **East Coast**

- **Round Tomatoes: WATCH LIST** We are starting to pick from areas impacted by the freeze earlier in the year & yields are impacted. We are seeing production forecasts down 30%, sizing and quality are impacted as well. We now are seeing much smaller size curve, but quality is fortunately good on #1 fruit. We anticipated this would happen, but it is not long term, we expect to see better volume in 2 weeks as some growers transition north to newer acreage. Markets will remain stronger over the next 2-3 weeks.
- **Roma Tomatoes: WATCH LIST** We are starting to pick from areas affected by the freeze earlier in the year and yields are certainly being impacted. We are seeing production forecasts down over 30% and quality is fair at best. We expect shortfalls out of Florida over the next 2-3 weeks but should see some relief once we move to the Palmetto area.
- **Grape and Cherry Tomatoes: WATCH LIST** Lighter volume this week has pushed markets higher. Mainly seeing this as a result of blocks that were affected by weather related pressure. We expect to see this improve in 2-3 weeks as growers break new fields in the Palmetto area.
- **Organic Tomatoes: WATCH LIST** Supply will be limited this week.

### **Mexico**

- **Round and Roma Tomatoes:** Barring no shortages due to the border crisis, we are expecting stable supply to continue as new crop has started in Sonora and the overall pulse on the market is stable. We are seeing good supply available on all sizes this week from the mainland as well as a few tomatoes out of Baja which have been beautiful. Overall quality is outstanding, however need to watch for older fruit in the market which could have high color and quality concerns.
- **Grape Tomatoes:** Strong numbers continue out of all regions and no shortages are expected barring no delays due to the border crisis.
- **Medley Grape Tomatoes:** Improving volume available but high retail demand keep markets higher this week. Quality is outstanding and no shortages are expected barring no delays due to the border crisis.
- **Cherry Tomatoes:** Stable volume and good quality are available this week and no shortages are expected barring no delays due to the border crisis. We are also seeing lighter numbers this week out of Canada due to cooler weather.

## **APPLES & PEARS**

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**Apples:** West coast new crop apples are being packed; however small sizes remain tight. East coast apples are available as well. Market price remains firm on small fruit as local schools take most of the volume.

**Pears:** This year's pear crop was down significantly, with mostly larger fruit available. Growers are trying to drag out supply as best as possible until new crop starts next August.