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*** THE A & Z MARKET REPORT ***

A Weekly Produce Report for Our Produce Buyers

February 15, 2010



GENERAL OUTLOOK: How does warmer temperatures and no rain sound for this week in the western growing regions? Fields will finally dry out with mild weather expected all this week. STRAWBERRY production will benefit the most as growers strip and cull the damaged fruit from the plants, allowing plant strength to benefit undamaged berries. BROCCOLI continues to be abundant from many regions resulting in a buyer's market. Fields near the California Coast received the most rain and consequently are weaker because of water spotting on the heads. The long term effect of all the rain is a positive due to drought conditions over the past 5 years.

*** TIGHT ITEMS ***



GREEN BEANS: Limited western supplies from Mexico coupled with eastern crop damage have made for a very tight market. Product that is being harvested is showing good 'snappy' quality but, because of few supplies, prices are high.

SOFT SQUASHES: The YELLOW market is about as tight as we have seen in a long time. Recent rains and cooler temperatures have also slowed plant growth on the green ZUCCHINI and pushed pricing higher.

GREEN GRAPES: A weather growing gap has finally developed in South America. This gap and plus delayed arrivals from Chile have tightened the market on the green varieties. Also, preset national ads over the next two weeks have really tightened the overall Grape market with green Thompsons and Sugarones being affected the most.

WATERMELONS: Lighter plantings along with the recent cool, wet weather have made for a tight and expensive market.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS: Eastern demand (due to Florida crop damage) and limited western production (due to rain and cooler temperatures) have created a very tight market.

*** PROMOTIONAL ITEMS ***



AVOCADOS: Mexico, Chile and California are all producing. Available inventories are being reported the biggest in history. The Chilean crop will go through March, and the Mexican production is expected to last through June. California will be in the driver's seat during the summer and fall. California's crop is huge compared to the limited volume from last year. Shippers are willing to make deals to move additional product. Call for promotional pricing.

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ICEBERG LETTUCE: Heavy production, nice quality and limited demand due to bad weather on the East Coast have produced our current low-end pricing. Deals are available.

GREEN ONIONS: Good supplies and lighter demand have produced pricing lower. Quality remains outstanding.

POTATOES: No change here – cheap, cheap, cheap! There are also some 20# YUKON GOLDS and REDS available at promotional pricing if you want to supplement something different than the Idaho Russets.

LEAF: All varieties are available in good numbers at low pricing.

*** FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES ***

STRAWBERRIES: There is no rain in the short term forecast which will help the quality of what is being harvested. Plentiful moisture through February and some warm days will equate to big harvesting numbers in March. For now, we will continue to source the very best fruit available. Look for pricing to slowly drop in the coming weeks as more and more supplies become available.



ORANGES: The recent cool wet weather has done wonders to Navel appearance and eating quality. Growers will be harvesting in full force this week. Look for lower/promotional pricing to become available. Call our sales staff with questions.

ASPARAGUS: This market remains stable with supplies continuing from Peru and Mexico. We have been stocking the 28/1# crates from Mexico and quality has been superb. Look for promotional opportunities in the coming weeks.

CELERY: This market continues to remain soft following the record expensive market we have just experienced. Anything under \$20 seems very reasonable when compared to the recent \$40+ market.

MINNEOLAS: Eating quality is superb on remaining supplies. We are currently stocking the 80ct. size in a 38# box.

STONE FRUIT: Chilean PEACHES remain in good supply with excellent quality being reported. There is a demand exceeds supply on NECTARINES and BLACK/RED PLUMS. The product that is available is very expensive.

CUCUMBERS: Lighter supplies from Mexico resulting from cooler, wet weather and a transition from old to new fields have firmed this market and pushed pricing higher.

TOMATOES: Even with significant eastern crop loss, decent supplies from Mexico have kept pricing in check...at least for now. The only variety that is currently tight is Cherry Tomatoes.



GREEN CABBAGE: St. Patty's Day is still about a month away but growers are already predicting some shortages and higher pricing. For now, pricing is on the floor and there are abundant supplies. Head size is large and heavy.

CELLO APPLES: We are currently stocking RED DELICIOUS, GOLD DELICIOUS, GALAS, GRANNY SMITHS and FUJIS in the 12/3# cello bags. Quality is excellent on these smaller apples.

MANGOS: Limited supplies continue to keep this active market priced higher. Quality is superb on available supplies.

BLACKBERRIES: Limited arrivals from South America and Mexico have increased pricing on limited supplies.