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

A Weekly Produce Report for Our Produce Buyers

August 2, 2010



GENERAL OUTLOOK: Favorable weather conditions this week will boost production of most fruits and vegetables. The general “fresh” market is soft due to local gardens starting to yield product--not only here, but around the country. Although overall demand is down, great deals continue to be available as shippers lower pricing in an effort to stimulate more demand. We will keep you abreast of future deals as they develop.

*** TIGHT ITEMS ***



RASPBERRIES: Good demand and light supplies are keeping this market tight and expensive. We continue to stock both a #1 shipper label and the premium Driscoll label. We are still a short while away from California’s second flush. When this hits, there will again be good deals and promotional opportunities. We will keep you posted.

ORANGES: California NAVELS are finished! New crop California VALENCIAS have arrived and the quality is excellent. It’s hard to believe that we sold out of domestic navels on July 31st.

CHERRIES: This season is nearly finished. The only player left is the Flathead Lake area of Montana and most of this crop is not expected to be marketed in our area.

*** PROMOTIONAL ITEMS ***



BANANAS: We continue to stock “Dole” brand fruit from Ecuador and “Chula” brand fruit from Mexico to insure uninterrupted supplies for our customers. Pricing is stable which means that bananas remain the best fruit value even though they are grown in and shipped from the tropics. Back-to-school promotions will start soon!

CANTALOUPE: New plantings in the Central San Joaquin Valley have finally kicked in and market pricing has suddenly dropped. Besides low prices, the eating quality is some of the best of the season.

HONEYDEWS: New crop ‘dews from Central California continue in good supply and now are promotionally priced as well. The best value is with the popular 5-size pack.

WATERMELONS: California is still our source of supply this week for the SEEDLESS variety. Local SEEDED melons will start soon, but until then, these seedless melons are sweet and tasty. Promotional deals are available—especially in multi bin lots.

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STONE FRUIT: California PEACHES continue to be the best value again this week. Local peaches won't start until the fourth week of August—two weeks behind schedule. Until then, these CA beauties are large, sweet and priced right. Their bumper crop is your gain. NECTARINES and PLUMS are also available but not in quantities or not as reasonable as peaches. PLUOTS are slow in starting.

BROCCOLI: Good supplies and little demand have driven pricing below the breakeven level for growers. Shippers are making deals to move extra product. Promotional pricing is available on CROWNS and BUNCH packs.

CAULIFLOWER: This market usually follows its broccoli cousin, and now in no exception. Prices aren't quite as low as broccoli, but quality, supply and price are all good.

LEAF VARIETIES: There are plenty of RED LEAF, GREEN LEAF and ROMAINE available at promotional pricing. With outstanding quality and low prices, now is a great time to feature all three.

ICEBERG LETTUCE: Salinas growers cut back 20% of last year's acreage in an effort to better manage costs and pricing. Still, light demand has pricing near the breakeven point this week. Now is the time!

CELERY: Low summer demand and good volume are the reasons for the present bottom end pricing. Summer prices won't get any better than right now!

*** FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES ***



DRY ONIONS: California harvesting continues out of the Huron/Stockton area. REDS and WHITES remain plentiful while WHITES are in short supply and higher priced. Walla Walla YELLOW SWEETS continue to come from the Tri-City area of Washington (Kennewick, Pasco and Richland). Utah onions are still about a month away. The cool, wet spring put most western states about two weeks behind schedule.

POTATOES: Some Idaho shippers are finishing their 2009 storage crop, leaving the bulk of what remains in the hands of a few large shippers. Market pricing remains active and strong on the remaining supplies. Idaho NORKOTAHS may start the week of August 23rd, with BURBANKS not being harvested until after Labor Day. Quality is still adequate considering that the spuds have been in storage since October. REDS and YUKON GOLDS continue to come from the Stockton, CA area. Mt. Vernon, WA will start harvesting around Labor Day.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS: New fields in California are coming on as prices begin to slip.

SEEDLESS GRAPES: Prices and quality continue to be steady this week in Central California. Larger sizing is commanding top dollar prices.

STRAWBERRIES: Demand and supply seem to have matched up this week at current levels. Last week was only the second week since mid March that production per week was below 5 million cases. It is estimated that 50 million flats will yet be harvested this season in California.

*** RECIPES ***



PICNIC POTATO SALAD: Summer family get-togethers are in full swing with barbeque season, and how better to accompany your main dish than an old time favorite. Substitute olive oil in this picnic potato salad for a healthy option.

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