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## \*\*\* THE A & Z MARKET REPORT \*\*\*

*A Weekly Produce Report for Our Produce Buyers*

August 30, 2010



**GENERAL OUTLOOK:** Typical late summer weather is expected this week along the western growing regions allowing growers to experience another full week of harvest. Often, ideal growing conditions are not a blessing to growers because harvest quantities are huge and prices are low with marginal grower profit. Much of what we are experiencing right now fits this scenario. Also, local gardens are in full production which is limiting demand at retail. An early local freeze would be regarded by some as a blessing as consumers would be forced back to retail produce outlets, and wholesale as well as retail business would flourish. However, to most consumers, an early freeze would not be regarded as a blessing because they would have to leave their gardens and resort back to retail stores of fresh fruits and vegetables. Should we hope for an early freeze or a continuing of the pleasant weather of the past several weeks?

## \*\*\* TIGHT ITEMS \*\*\*



**BLACKBERRIES:** Inventory is struggling to keep up with demand as heat and fog over the last 10 days has hampered California production and Oregon is not producing inventory sufficient for demand. Pricing remains high.

**LIMES:** Rains throughout Mexico have slowed harvesting efforts causing prices to rise on diminished supplies.

**CUCUMBERS:** The general Cucumber market remains tight with limited production coming from Baja, Mexico and the domestic California and Washington growing regions.

**ASPARAGUS:** Product is still tight on limited imports from Peru and Mexico. Quality remains good from both areas.



**AVOCADOS:** The California HASS crop is nearly three quarters harvested. Growers are currently limiting production in an effort to stretch out their crop until imports begin in another month or so. Prices will continue to go higher until out-of-the-country competition forces domestic shippers to begin lowering prices.

## \*\*\* PROMOTIONAL ITEMS \*\*\*

**MANGOS:** One last push from Mexico has given us a final opportunity on inexpensive, quality fruit. Call today for pricing.

**ORANGES:** California summer VALENCIAS are in good supply at very reasonable pricing. Beautiful, new crop Chilean NAVELS are also available at good price levels.

**HONEYDEWS:** This market has not started to react upward yet and continues to be an excellent promotional item. Quality and price are ideal.

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**SEEDLESS GRAPES:** Nice quality fruit is very reasonably priced on RED, BLACK and GREEN SEEDLESS varieties. The California Seedless crop this season is smaller sized which also means the bigger the fruit, the more expensive they are.

**CANTALOUPE:** California production peaked several weeks ago. Even though market conditions are still a little tighter than before, promotional pricing is still available on nice quality fruit. Local production has started, although quality is a little erratic. DID YOU KNOW? Cantaloupes were named after the city of Cantalupo, Italy where this species of muskmelon was first grown. In reality, all melons can trace their ancestry back to Asia, as do many present day fruits.

**BELL PEPPERS:** Huge GREEN production numbers continue to keep pricing near the bottom. RED volume peaked last week--but pricing is still very reasonable. GOLDS/YELLOWS are more expensive.

**BROCCOLI:** Growers are not swimming in supply like they were a few weeks ago. Even though the market has some firmness to it, prices are still in promotional range on both Bunched and Crown packs.

**CAULIFLOWER:** Neither Cauliflower nor Broccoli are really summer demand items. However, promotional pricing is still available this week on Cauliflower, but market indicators are pointing to a much stronger market very soon.



**LITE HOUSE DIPS & DRESSINGS:** Promotional opportunities on DIPS and DRESSINGS continue to be available for promotion. Call today to line up an in-store promotion for the LABOR DAY holiday.

**CELERY:** Although not a demand item in the summer, quality, quantity and price are ideal for promoting especially as a secondary item. Both naked and sleeve packs are available.

## **\*\*\* FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES \*\*\***

**LETTUCE:** Mildew concerns have forced growers to harvest fields on the early side to stay ahead of these quality issues. However, this is also affecting head size and weights. Also, growers normally plant less acreage in the summer because of local production around the country. We are expecting this market to slip toward the end of the week and into next week.

**LEMONS:** The normal gradual summer price increases have been tempered somewhat by consignment product in our market. However, prices are now a little higher.

**TOMATOES:** National prices and demand at retail are decreasing as local production increases. Pricing remains very affordable on all packs and sizes.

**STRAWBERRIES:** Santa Maria is finished and growers are diverting remaining supplies to the processors pushing all focus to Salinas and Watsonville growers. Even though pricing is firm we are getting some deals offered so make sure to call and inquire about ½ to full pallet deals.



**SEEDLESS WATERMELONS:** Fair supplies from Texas, Arizona, California and Washington continue to be available. Arizona is all but finished and Texas is winding down. Washington is slow in starting and our own local (Utah) growers are still a couple of weeks away from offering anything leaving the bulk of production coming from California. Quality is superb and pricing is stable at current levels.

**RASPBERRIES:** Over the last two weeks growers have seen record heat coupled with cool weather and morning fog all of which has wreaked havoc on production. Growers have gone from harvesting 2,000 flats a day to 200 flats. Labor Day Holiday ads start this week and supplies are tight and pricing has jumped even though quality remains excellent.