



**PRODUCE NEWS  
DECEMBER 2019  
THINK FRESH**



## Market Alerts

### **Berries (Strawberries):**

Wet weather is on the way this evening expected to bring substantial rain, production will definitely be impeded in the Santa Maria and Oxnard Growing areas.

### **Grapes (Red):**

New Peruvian red grapes are expected to arrive the second week of December. Prices will be higher.

### **Grapes (Green):**

New Peruvian grapes will arrive next week, but supplies will be very limited for the next month. Prices will be higher.

### **Stone Fruit:**

New import fruit is expected to arrive the week of December 9th. Volumes will increase later in December.

### **Bell Peppers (Eastern)**

Green Bell Pepper is transitioning to Florida.

**Potatoes:** Markets steady to slightly higher. Larger sizes and #2 grade remains limited. Lead time needed on all russet orders, up to 7 days advised.

**Potatoes (colored)** Markets remain steady but elevated. Holiday demand is slowing

## A Peek at Peak Seasons

**Onions:** Northwest storage onions are in full swing with excellent supplies and quality



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# Apples

Market  
Steady

Quality  
Excellent

## Washington

Markets are active on certain varieties. Foodservice sized Granny Smith apples are snug; shippers aren't not coming up with smaller sized fruit. Gala deals seem to have gone away with shippers caught up on inventory and firming up their prices. Smaller, foodservice sizes (125ct/138ct) remain plentiful on Red Del. Quality is excellent with good shelf life. The ever so coveted Cosmic Crisp should begin hitting the streets during the first/second week of December. Many shippers are confirming that sizes will be BIG (100ct being the smallest). On the off chance that small fruit is available, few shippers will offer a 113/125/138ct tray pack (again, supplies will be extremely limited).

# Bell Peppers

Market  
Steady

Quality  
Good

Most of the bell pepper supply is coming from Florida. Georgia growers are continuing to harvest and will until the temperatures get too cold. South Georgia is shipping a consistent supply of product with good quality and are firm with excellent color. Florida is harvesting in all districts, from Plant City south to Immokalee and east to Pompano, growers are producing good quality and steady volume. Sizing in Florida is trending to the smaller side and shippers will not pack big volume until the first week of December. Early product in Florida tends to be on the smaller side after growing through hot weather. The next blocks of bell pepper that start will have grown in more seasonable temperatures and overall quality will be better. The forecast early next week is calling for some cold temperatures, cold enough to finish Georgia for the season and slow production in Florida for at least a few days.

# Strawberries

Market  
Higher

Quality  
Good

The strawberries are very light in supply right now with the numbers out of Santa Maria trending down and Oxnard yields are lower due to significantly cooler weather in the growing regions. Florida numbers have not yet begun to produce in any meaningful way. Baja Peninsula and Central Mexico are in production but that increase in the overall numbers is not expected to counter the decrease in California leaving a very firm winter market in all areas. Quality has been good in all locations thus far.

# Broccoli

Market  
Higher/Steady

Quality  
Good

The Broccoli market continues to slow down as supplies are up and running now in Yuma. Quality has slightly improved with slight purpling, some mechanical damage, and occasional yellow cast. Look for Broccoli to continue to adjust going into next month.

# Carrots

Market  
Steady/Higher

Quality  
Excellent

The California carrot market is still a steady go on most pack styles saved for the Jumbo category. Jumbo carrots are very light due to the inclement weather we received in late summer. Several days in a row reached 100 degrees plus weather causing stunting in growth and maturation. The results were the reduced size on the front end of the Bakersfield harvests. Canadian storage carrots are still available and should remain so through December. Mexican jumbo carrots are in fair supply out of Texas. Look for the markets to remain steady and the California jumbo market to remain elevated through the next several weeks.

# Cauliflower

Market  
Lower

Quality  
Good

The cauliflower market continues to come off as supplies are continuing to come on in Yuma. The quality is good with slight bruising and yellow cast with weights in the 25 to 28-pound level. Look for the market to continue to adjust going into next week.

# Celery

Market  
Lower

Quality  
Good

The major part of the holiday shipping is over. The market is softer with all shippers. Expect steady supplies for the week. It should be noted that large sizing is not as readily available as small sizing. This will likely continue for the rest of the week. Oxnard/Santa Maria will be the main growing regions for this commodity. Production in Salinas will continue through this week. Yuma is expected to have production the first to the second week in December. Mexico will have supplies as well. The overall quality of this commodity continues to be good.

# Lemons

Market  
Lower/Steady

Quality  
Good

All 3 districts are currently packing. The sizing profile is peaking on 140, 115, 165 and 70/30 ratio from fancy to choice. The large sizes 75/95 continue to come out with very light supplies but are projected to be more readily available after the New Year. As we head into December we can expect good supplies with steady markets and good quality.

# Oranges

Market  
Steady

Quality  
Excellent

We'll have good supplies on Navels available for the Holiday weekend and heading into the first week of December. We have a high demand and markets have started to soften to keep inventory moving and staying fresh. All arrivals have been received with good feedback, so our suppliers are staying focused on pushing volume. Sizing profile is peaking on 88's and smaller. Our suppliers are still packing a heavier percentage of fancy to choice fruit. We're hearing positive feedback on with good quality. On Specialty citrus keep pushing mandarins, quality has been looking solid and markets have been steady. Grapefruit will be transitioning in the Central Valley in the next week along with Cara Cara and blood oranges.

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# Cucumber

Market  
Steady

Quality  
Good

Cucumber supplies are tight and cooler weather has slow production in south Florida. The number one product is much tighter than selects or carton 24's. Quality varies greatly from shipper to shipper and early-season product was light in color and did not have a very long shelf life. Shelf life and color are better now but high winds last week are creating some scaring issues. Cucumbers should grow out of these issues by next week. Florida will continue to produce in steady volume through the end of the year. The first imports from Honduras should start to arrive in the first week of December.

# Green Grapes

Market  
Higher

Quality  
Fair

The domestic green grape storage crop is very limited. Shippers are trying to stretch it as long as possible by raising prices, but even at slow movement, we are looking at only 2-3 weeks left of availability. The storage volume is considerably lower this year than last. Additionally, the quality continues to decline. Storage green grapes are showing signs of early decay, soft berries, and dark color. Stems are a little dry and there are some loose grapes in the bag. Although we expect Peruvian green grapes to slowly arrive next week, supplies will be far less than demand and prices will be much higher. We expect green grape supplies to be a challenge and markets to remain escalated through the month of December. January will bring some relief as we expect to see more Chilean grapes arrive.

# Red Grapes

Market  
Steady/Higher

Quality  
Good

Currently, we are utilizing only the domestic storage crop to fill orders. There are still good volumes of domestic red seedless grapes in storage. Quality is holding up fine. Shippers will try to stretch the storage crop as long as possible (quality permitting), as market prices will be much more attractive than import fruit. With the estimated 6.8 million cases of storage crop left, shippers expect to service program business through Christmas. Market prices on storage crop are slowly climbing and will continue to do so as supplies lessen. The varieties are Allison, Timco and Holiday. Sizes are heavy on the Large to Extra Large. First arrivals of Peruvian red seedless are expected by the second week of December, but again, prices will be higher.

# Iceberg Lettuce

Market  
Lower

Quality  
Fair

With the holiday pull being over, demand has fallen. Expect supplies to be more available throughout this month. With the issues of the romaine that closed out the Salinas season, there is a possibility that demand will be up the following week as romaine orders could be substituted with lettuce orders. A few shippers were flexing early for Yuma production but then sold out later in the day. Production for this commodity is finishing up this week in Salinas and Huron. Some common defects being reported to include tip burn, mechanical and misshapen heads. Escalated pricing on value-added products is completely off.

# Tender Lettuce

Market  
Steady

Quality  
Good

Tender Leaf market continues to stay steady as supplies have stayed consistent. Curly parsley, spinach, and arugula are now at a steady supply going into next week. Quality is good with occasional yellowing and bruising of the tender leaves.

# Leaf Lettuce

Market  
Lower

Quality  
Fair

With the holiday pull being over, demand has fallen off. Expect supplies to be more readily available throughout this week. With the issues of the romaine that closed out the Salinas season, there is a possibility that demand will be up the following week as romaine orders could be substituted with lettuce orders. This scenario awaits to be seen. A few shippers were flexing early for Yuma production but then sold out later in the day. Some common defects being reported to include tip burn, mechanical and misshapen heads. Weights on wrap have been 38-40 pounds. Escalated pricing on value-added products is completely off.

# Onions

Market  
Steady

Quality  
Good

Onion markets remain steady on yellow and red onions with the exception of medium sizes due to the recent retail demand for the Thanksgiving holiday. White onions also saw a slight upward trend on markets with less volume available. Markets are expected to stabilize as demand will slow and supplies remain plentiful. Quality is excellent and markets will remain steady as we head into December.

# Potatoes

Market  
Steady/Higher

Quality  
Good

Russet potato markets continue to inch up as demand exceeds supply. Consumer bags are limited with retail coming in heavy for the Thanksgiving holiday. Packing sheds continue to run production 4 days per week in order to extend the storage season. Both Norkotahs and Burbanks are available out of Idaho with limited volume. Size profile for Norkotahs leans to the larger sizes while Burbanks are heavy to the smaller range. Washington, Colorado, and Wisconsin markets are also inching up as demand is shifting to those areas for potato coverage. Expect to see much of the same over the next 4-6 weeks as demand will be active for the holiday season. Weather forecasts do not show temps that will slow transfers from cellars to packing sheds at this time.

# Tomato Eastern

Market  
Lower/Steady

Quality  
Good

The Florida tomato market continues to improve as production increases. Roma tomatoes have little acreage committed to the crop. As such, demand exceeds supply as anticipated for this time of year when Mexico usually controls the market. Grape tomatoes have begun to strengthen amongst rising demand. There are also steady volumes of cherry tomatoes in good supply and the market is low.

