



Market Update

February 5, 2021

Rain and cold weather has certainly had an impact on the market. These are the times that test produce professional's skills to keep the ball rolling.

Artichokes: Still sporadic availability.

Asparagus: We will transition into 28^{lb} units this weekend. Many retailers jumped on this opportunity for Valentine's ads.

Crowns & Cauli: Market conditions are ripe for promotions.

Carrots: Movement is steady.

Celery: Finally! Celery market is easing and prices will return to somewhat normal levels.

Cucumbers: Quality has been excellent and prices reasonable. Great ad or in store feature items.

Lettuces: Movement is good. Red leaf is back down to the same level as green leaf. Romaine remains very promotable.

Value Added Veg: Check out the new offerings from Mann Packing. Some items are back for a second life, and some are brand new. Ask your sales rep for details.

Mushrooms: Crimini production is still limited without much relief in the near future. All other varieties are available to promote.

Peppers: All colors are dropping in price – time to have a Pepper-Rama!

Potatoes: Nothing new to report here. Seed potato prebooks are out this week.

Tomatoes: Cheap! Pick any variety except cherubs and have a ball! Cherubs are still working through a production gap.

Apples: Sales on apples continue to be strong. Thank you for your tremendous support of the 2021 Apple Cup – it was the best ever! Cosmic Crisp continue to drop in price to a level that will stimulate some movement.

Avocados: Fruit was perfect for the Super Bowl and sales reflect just that. Prices remain steady. Keep pushing!

Berries: Tough sledding here. Demand is always high for Valentine's Day, and supplies are about as low as I can remember. We'll do our best to keep you in the strawberry business. Remember berries will be weaker than normal so good handling practices are a must. Ships with imported blueberries are having a difficult time getting unloaded once they reach the port. Some loads have been a total loss as they were not able to get the fruit off the ship. Consequently, supplies are far below demand.

Limes: All of the limes are now treated with the "Apeel" process. Apeel is a plant-based protector that is applied to limes to extend the shelf life. This means better product longer for you and your customers. Ask your sales rep for more details or "google" it!

Melons: Adverse weather in Guatemala has had a significant impact on cants and & dews.

Citrus: Navels eat great! Exterior color is terrific – almost picture perfect on fancy grade fruit. Halo’s are now murcotts, so you’ll see tighter fruit. Bloods & Cara’s will add to your citrus offering. Grapefruit are steady, we notice huge increases when inserted into ads!

At no time have your customers had “less time to do more” than today. COVID has affected shopping patterns and customers are coming to your store less frequently *and* are in a hurry to get in and out. With the potential opening of schools, families have potential for more stress. Which days do their elementary students attend, and which days for their middle school kids? Is this the Friday we go or don’t go? Did you remember your homework and remember to take your computer to class? And how about lunch? Whew! I’m glad I’m old!

But there is a silver lining opportunity to this hectic pace your shoppers are in. When you offer them a clean, well stalked, well signed produce department you make this shopping experience more pleasant. You also have the opportunity to do some creative selling by where you place additional displays and what you offer on them. Many customers just have “fruit” or “dinner veg” on their shopping list. Do them a favor and offer peak of the season good value products throughout your department. And here is something to offer that no other store has. You! Engage with your customers, share your expertise and enthusiasm about produce. I guarantee you make a difference.

Well, the big game is this weekend. Don’t know if I will watch it. I just hope that 15>12.