



Market Update

June 18th, 2021

Summer is definitely here and the 4th of July is in our sights. Now is the time to plan your department's layout for the busiest week of the year.

Crowns/Cauli: Prices are as low as they get. Don't pass on promoting these two just because it's summer, sales remain very strong on both. We'll have local broccoli on hand as well.

Cabbage: Moving into green cabbage from Washington.

Carrots: No change, expect Washington product mid-July.

Celery: Still cheap – push while you can.

Corn: Quality is outstanding on this corn out of Mendota, California. Prices are up largely due to the increase in freight expense.

Cucumbers: Watch your retails on cux. Freight expense hits the large case / less per pallet items in a dramatic way.

Lettuce: No changes here. Prices are very promotable. We are very pleased with the quality of leafies out of Washington.

Onions: Walla Walla Sweets can't be beat for the holiday. We will move to California on yellow, red, and white to fill the gap between crops.

Potatoes: Prices are up some – still very reasonable value. We expect to stay in Washington potatoes going from old crop to new crop in the coming weeks.

Tomatoes: TOV's are still the hot ticket.

Apples: It has been a stellar season! Some varieties are winding down.

Soft Fruit: NW apricots are in the house! Peaches, nectarines, and plums have adjusted themselves to reasonable levels and eat great.

Berries: Raspberries and blackberries remain difficult to source. Blues are more promotable, and the king of the category is strawberries. Great item for ads or in store features for the holiday.

Cherries: The “Cherry Cup” is in full swing at the time of this writing. All indications are it is a great success! 4th of July will be the peak time to feature cherries – nothing moves the needle like cherry promos! Don't forget the Skylar Rae & Rainiers!

Grapes: We are off to lukewarm start to 2021 domestic grape deal. We will source out of Mexico and Coachella Valley looking for the best fruit. Size has been a struggle for most shippers. All that said, grapes offer a great value for the 4th.

Citrus: Lemon prices are high. We expect imported fruit to hit the market next week, but do not expect it to have much impact on market pricing. Limes have come down slightly.

Melons: Freight rates on watermelon loads are up around \$2000-2500 per load. That equates to an additional \$44.00 a bin just to get it here! Kiss melons are back in the market place with a new commitment to fulfill demand. These are special flavor melons that can't be found in just every grocery store. We will attempt to buy all fruit in netted bags,

it helps ID at the check stand. Most retailers are selling this fruit by the each, and fruit is stickered with a UPC code. Ask your sales rep for more details.

Prices are up everywhere you look; fuel, lumber, housing, and yes the price of produce. This situation is not going to go away, so we need to address it head on. It is very important that you analyze your retail pricing and adjust where necessary. These expenses will not go away, none of us like raising prices but it needs to be done and we need to adjust our mindset to the change.

But here's the good news! When the price of Tide detergent goes up, all the grocery department can do is hang up a new tag and let it go. In produce you have the ability to excite and delight your customers with creative displays and merchandising. Change things up – move them around. People buy produce through their senses, and sight is #1. A well stacked big display of cherries, peaches, nectarines, plums and apricots that says “buy me” takes price out of the equation. That's what separates the “merchant” for the “stock clerk”!

Taking a phrase out of a movie “Field of Dreams” – “If you build it they will come.” Build that display high and wide, and let them come!

Happy Independence Day!