



Market Update

May 27th, 2020

Let the sunshine in! We are forecasted to hit temperatures in the 80's this weekend! We all know what that will do to produce sales. Let's take a look at what is available and timely to promote.

Asparagus: Washington grass is still available and looks great. Prices are high. Keep displays turning. We won't have much season left, so capture those last sales of the season during the next 2-3 weeks.

Crowns & Cauli: Crowns are still cheap. Cauli on the rise.

Carrots: Supplies have leveled off. We will be in California product until early July.

Corn: Eating quality is excellent! Memorial Day ads drove sales like never before. New challenges have crept in the harvest of remaining Coachella corn. COVID-19 has taken many workers out of the workplace and new procedures for social distancing during harvest has slowed production down dramatically. We expect to move north during the 4th of July pull, so we'll see what develops when we get there.

Salads: We have been experiencing many prorates from all salad companies. New regulations and procedures have changed the way they operate and created some shortages along the way. We hope to be in a better spot in a couple of weeks.

Onions: No big change here. We will continue with Vidalia's as our sweet onion.

Peppers: It has been an unusually cool and wet season in the desert region this year. Green bells are expensive and of fair quality at best. We do not expect a change until Bakersfield kicks in in mid-July. The Canadian hot houses have also experienced less than optimum conditions resulting in a lower yield than anticipated.

Potatoes: No new news.

Tomatoes: Roma's and layer have been very reasonable, but they lack staying power. This is the last of the Nogales product, so we will load Baja tomatoes next week and expect significant improvement. Roma's have been very promotable. TOV & beefs are in the same shape as colored bells in that we are still waiting for improved production.

Apples: Keep going! Product is excellent and prices are reasonable.

Soft Fruit: We have apricots, nectarines, peaches, and plums on hand now. Size is mostly medium, but product gains size every week.

Berries: We look to have some consistency in the strawberry market going forward. Great for promotions. Blues and raspberries are great for a weekend berry push.

Cherries: The California cherry crop will wind down this week. Perfect timing for switching to the Washington crop that expects to start around June 4. The Washington crop is forecasted to be a bit smaller than last year with large fruit. July 4th ads will be perfect for a cherry ad!

Avocados: California is underway, and Mexico is also in production. This has brought the market down somewhat, especially on 60ct.

Grapes: We have new crop Mexican grapes, good size and good flavor. Our first venture into reds out of Coachella has been mediocre. Reds out of the desert typically run small. We will source the biggest fruit we can find, but right now we are glad to get our needs covered.

Melons: Watermelons have cut very nice and are great to promote. Cants are very nice, with good color and flavor. Sizing is running small out of the desert so far.

If you haven't done so already, now is the time to transition your department into summer selling mode. Spread out on melons and tree fruit, salad fixings and tomatoes. As more communities open up, people are going to make up for lost time and gatherings. Although small, it will start to happen again.

Remember that your customer still wants to get in and get out of your store as quickly as possible. Plan your displays and schematics so that your department is user-friendly, while merchandising it to maximize sales and profit. Remember, the little things matter, like full bag racks, twist ties, and good signage.

We don't have baseball back yet, so we'll need to get our spring and summer thrills another way. It's not the same thrill as having the crack of the bat or seeing a sleek double play, but selling produce has always been a favorite pastime of mine.