



WEATHER UPDATE

Yuma - Sunny to partly cloudy next week with a slight chance of rain on Wednesday. Highs in the 70s and lows in the 50s. **Oxnard** - Cloudy and rainy this weekend. Sun comes out Monday and the rain returns on Tuesday with more rain the rest of the week. Highs in the 60s and lows in the 40s. **Mexico (Culiacan)**- Sunny to partly cloudy with highs in the 90s and lows in the 50s for the upcoming week. **Florida, Southern**— Sunny to partly cloudy with a slight chance for rain on Tuesday. Highs in the 80s and lows in the 50s. **Idaho**—Sunny to partly cloudy this weekend. Rain and snow returns for the rest of the week. Highs in the 40s and lows in the teens.

TRANSPORTATION

The National Diesel Average has been recorded at \$3.048 up \$0.042 a gal from last week and up \$0.041 gal from last year. NPC continues to monitor and track diesel fuel averages by state as well as reported truckload freight rates on a weekly basis. **Transportation continues to work through its most significant structural changes in years in regards to new laws and regulations stressing available truck volume and controlling drivers. Trucks are in good supply across the country.**

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MARKET ALERT

- Bell Peppers
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Iceberg Lettuce
- Romaine Lettuce
- Green & Red Leaf
- Green Onions
- Salad Mixes & Blends

MARKET OUTLOOK



Apples



As we enter Q1 - the only 2 apples with any concern are the granny smiths and golds. These 2 varieties are still very tight especially on small sizes - 100s and smaller. Good supplies of reds, galas and fu-jis. Demand is solid with prices steady. Internal pressures and flavor has been one of the best years.

Asparagus



Mexico continues to have lower yields due to past cold weather. However expecting to see an improvement in supply going into this weekend as the weather warms up. Quality out of Mexico is good. Markets firmed up a little this week as there were lighter supplies to start the week. Overall demand continues to be steady on both coasts.

Avocados



Markets are steady. Demand is light, but supply isn't too heavy either. Small fruit is very tight, with 60's and 70's being the tightest size. 48s and larger are the sizes to be promoting in the next few weeks. The California crop is delayed and won't get started until the end of March, some growers may start a little earlier, but there has been a lot of rain that usually doesn't happen, in the last month. #2's remain steady and should be consistent going forward.

Bananas



Supplies will be tighter than usual for the next couple of weeks although it looks as if we have made it out of the worst. Difficult growing conditions are affecting the stubbornness of the fruit. Fruit is still taking longer than normal to ripen.

Berries



Blackberries - Supplies have been tight. Quality is good and pricing steady. Expect same conditions through March.

Blueberries— Chilean and Peruvian supplies looking good. Seeing some smaller size on the imports which is typical. Mexico quality improving with the much more favorable warmer temperatures. Pricing steady to higher. Florida blues coming on end of March.

Raspberries - Quality improving out of Mexico. Supplies are steady, and improving into March. Pricing steady to higher.

MARKET OUTLOOK



Broccoli



Supplies are very light this week. Prices will start to escalate. Weather is going to be the main factor in higher markets the next few weeks. Growers are reporting quality concerns with epidermal peel and blistering. We are expecting a transition back to Salinas in mid-March, which will be a challenge this year.

MARKET ALERT

Brussels Sprouts



Supplies are better this week with good demand. Growers are reporting fair quality at best and in some instances less than fair. Expect prices to be steady for the next few weeks.

Cauliflower



Supplies are extremely light this week, low yields harvested due to weather. Expect to see higher prices on Cauliflower and Cauliflower Florets the next few weeks. Quality is been reported as only fair at this time. We are expecting a transition back to Salinas in early March. The transition will be a challenge this year.

MARKET ALERT

Cantaloupes



The cantaloupe market remains mostly steady as second cycle production from Guatemala begins. Honduran and Costa Rican production will gap over the next two weeks. Sizing on new fruit from Guatemala is leaning more to the larger sizing (9s and larger) which should allow for a slight premium to be fetched on the smaller fruit. Very large retail promotions are in place to begin pulling by 2/28 which should keep the market in a strong position. Current quality is the best we have seen all year with very good external color and strong internal qualities. Brix levels have been in the 11-14% range with very good flavor.



Carrots



Currently harvesting in Bakersfield, demand is very strong with Canada wrapping up production and is driving prices up. Demand is starting to exceed supply. Will start our Imperial Valley harvest in March, depending on yields when we arrive down there the market could continue to adjust upward as this is the most expensive harvest location of the year. We are also seeing minimum wage increasing and have increased our precooling cost charge to growers so these factors will also put upward pressure on prices.

Celery



Supplies are very light this week, the weather is the main factor for the escalated markets. There is a high demand for Celery at the moment, quality has been reported as only fair at this time. Supplies will be short for the next few weeks. Product is loading out of Oxnard and Yuma AZ.

MARKET ALERT

Corn



The market is weakening. Corn is limited but expect better quality and supply as south Florida's spring crop comes on board in the next 3-7 days.

MARKET OUTLOOK



Cucumbers



Cucumber prices are mixed this week. Florida is seeing an increase in pricing due to the lack of imports from Honduras. Volume is on the light side. They should go another 3 weeks which is the time Florida is projected to start. Despite the slow-down, quality is holding up nicely on the Honduran product.. Mexico has good volumes, allowing prices to be flat this week. Quality is good out of Mexico. In the West, there are a decent amount of cucumbers available, but most are selects and 36's. Supers are in short supply this week.

Eggplant



Eggplant harvests are light in Florida, but we should see production begin to ramp up in a few weeks. Mexico's supply and quality continue to improve, just in time for the Lent season.

Grapes



Green Seedless remain tight. We do not see much relief coming the rest of the season with increased volumes. Red Seedless pricing is starting to come down on new varieties and the few flames, perlons that are around. Pricing may come down to normal levels as we get into the crimson crop towards the end of March. Black Seedless remains abundant in the industry. FOB pricing is \$26-22 with moderate movement. Look to sub Blacks for Reds if that is an option. Red Globes are mostly from Peru, mostly Jumbo and XL sizing available.

Green Beans



Mexico's volumes are expected to remain steady for the next few weeks, barring any weather issues. Florida yields are down due to past weather, but there's an adequate amount of product available to meet the market's light demand. Quality is good from both areas.

Herbs



Quality and supply is looking fair to good on most herbs. **Basil**– Supply will be light this week with quality marginal in some growing areas. **Tarragon**- supplies remain tight & quality has been fair. **Lime & Bay Leaves**– Supplies remain tight & quality has been improving.

Honeydews



Honeydew production has increased causing the market to finally settle off of its highs. New fields are leaning very heavily to the larger sizes which should create demand for the smaller fruit over the next 3-7 days. Honeydews have been very clean, good brix levels.

MARKET OUTLOOK

Iceberg



Supplies are light this week. The weather is causing some quality issues on Iceberg, you will find epidermal peel and blistering as the main quality concerns. Demand has increased this week, expect lighter supplies the next few weeks. Expect to see lighter weights on the whole case liner lettuce and cello Lettuce. The transition will be a challenge this year.

QUALITY



SUPPLY



MARKET ALERT

Kale



Supplies have improved this week. The market has started to come off this week as more supply has become available. Quality is fair with full bunches, with only an occasional yellow leaf being reported.

QUALITY



SUPPLY



Leaf



Romaine- Supplies are light this week. The weather is causing some quality issues, you will find epidermal peel and blistering as the main quality concerns. Expect markets to increase over the next few weeks with less Iceberg lettuce available. **Leaf** - Green leaf, butter lettuce and red leaf supplies are light this week. Slightly better demand for leaf lettuce this week, weather is causing some quality issues with discoloration and mildew, an industry-wide issue. Expect markets to increase the next few weeks with less leaf lettuce available. Transition will be a challenge this year.

QUALITY



SUPPLY



MARKET ALERT

Tender Leaf



Cool wet weather in the growing areas is causing supply and quality challenges. Order fill rates has be good to date but customers could see some supply disruptions over the next few weeks. More rain is in the forecast for next week. That will delay the crop recoveries thus make supplies tighter.

QUALITY



SUPPLY



MARKET ALERT

Lemons & Limes



Lemons - Pricing remain the same as last week. California volumes are coming along nicely and quality is good. There is a ample supply of 115ct. & larger. Due to recent weather the smaller size fruit 140's & smaller is looking tight for the next couple of months. Arizona's volume is limited & looking to end this week.

Limes—The market has leveled off a bit due to shipments from Mexico back up however border crossing are forecasted to dip again this week, expect to see higher pricing. Quality remains fair to good. New crops coming in with mostly small counts.

QUALITY



SUPPLY



MARKET OUTLOOK



Onions



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Weather across the country has caused a lower demand which has caused the market to stabilize across the board. Size profiles remain heavy to jumbos and colossal, with mediums remaining tight. White onions pricing has escalated with limited supply & fair quality. Reds remain more plentiful. Typically during this time we begin to see Mexican product crossing, which usually creates downward pressure on pricing. However, because Mexico is keeping their supply for their local market, we are not seeing supply increase.

Onions, Green



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Supplies are light coming from Mexico. Weather has affected the Green Onion supplies. Market is showing signs of improvement.

MARKET ALERT

Oranges



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

There is a steady amount of CA navel supplies. Most suppliers made sure to pack ahead to get in front of the next storm. Harvest could be delayed depending on the amount of rain. Domestic supply will be limited as long as rain is in the forecast. Fruit continues to peak on 72ct/88ct/113ct. Supplies on extra-large fruit will continue to be limited over the next few weeks. Color and flavor is excellent, brix averages are climbing to 13-14. Majority has been fancy grade, with limited choice grade availability. Oranges from Florida and Texas are also on the market.

Pears



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Pears are in good supply. Barts should go through February - Bosc should go through April. Red Anjous should go through June while Anjous through July - first part of August, just in time for new crop barts.

Peppers, Bell



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

The bell pepper situation has changed significantly since last week. Florida harvests are in between Winter and Spring crops and some growers have lower yields this week due to bloom drop from prior weather. Overall quality is average to good. In Mexico, production is currently on the light side as Sinaloa growers are between sets and new Sonora Spring crops are off to a slow start. Cooler weather has not allowed new crops to size up and older fields are down to medium and choice fruit, so retail-sized volumes are slim. Quality is great. There's just not enough size and shape.

MARKET ALERT

Peppers, Chili



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

The chili pepper market is a roller coaster, mainly with jalapenos and serrano peppers. Mexico farms are still battling poor yields and weather effects. Sonora and Sinaloa are in transition mode, so there's both older and newer peppers in the market. Quality varies from non-shippable to excellent. South Florida is coming on with select chilies in light volumes. However, there won't be significant volume in the East until Plant City gets up and running in a month or so.

MARKET OUTLOOK

Pineapples



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Supplies have tightened up a bit this week as import arrivals are down slightly. This natural dip is expected to increase the market price of fruit moving into the Easter holiday although promotable volumes are expected at retail. Sizing is reflective of a traditions 6/7 sizing.

Potatoes



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

The market has increased demand with very limited availability on all large cartons. Demand is very high and the size profile remains on the smaller side. Smaller sizes remain steady with good volume. Much of the Norkotah variety is winding down, and many growers are moving to Burbanks with higher pricing. Overall, the quality on the Burbanks have improved. Still seeing shoulder bruise on Burbanks & in some Norkotahs.

Squash



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

The cold and wet weather has slowed Mexico's squash production. Expect lighter supplies & fair quality out of Mexico this week. Numbers are expected to rebound slowly as warmer weather moves in. Supplies out of Florida are fair. Unfortunately, the yellow squash has some scarring and softness. Zucchini quality has improved as farms worked past older fields with rain issues.

Strawberries



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Oxnard, CA—Pricing moving upwards. Supplies are tightening up again. More rain is forecasted for Oxnard all next week, dampening production. Seeing some smaller fruit now as the more mature berries are seeing some rain damage. 16-18ct.

Florida—Pricing moving upwards, as Florida taking on receivers that cannot get loaded out of California or Mexico. Rain expected to move into Florida growing regions this weekend and next week. Counts running larger 12-18ct. Good sizing for stems. Quality looks good and looking for a strong finish to the Florida season in the next 3-4 weeks.

Mexico—Mexico is finishing up this next week. Pricing moving upwards. Quality is fair to good.

Tomatoes



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

As expected, Florida's overall tomato supply is lighter this week. The sizing profile on rounds is pretty evenly spread out as growers have been picking from crown sets, 2nd's and 3rd's. Roma volumes are steady, but quality varies by area and grower. Although harvest numbers have declined, there's an adequate supply of grape tomatoes in Florida to meet demand. Quality of rounds and grapes continues to be nice. Look for an uptick in volume on all varieties when spring crops start in mid-late March. Cool weather in Mexico's growing areas have slowed production slightly and brought sizing down a notch. There's still plenty of rounds and romas available and we should see a boost in the numbers in a few weeks. Grape tomato crossings continue to be solid but we anticipate supply to lighten up as we go into March and growers move into the seasonal decline.



MARKET OUTLOOK

Cabbage

Green Cabbage—Supplies are light this week. We will see some quality issues due to weather the next few weeks. With less Cabbage available expect higher prices on whole case product and processed cabbage.

Del Rey Avocado expands operations

“Fallbrook, Calif.-based Del Rey Avocado Co. has added a new facility in Vista, Calif., that adds an additional 43,000 square feet of cold storage and ripening rooms to the company’s existing footprint in San Diego County.

The new Southern California facility comes in the wake of the company’s January 2017 expansion, when the company purchased a new facility in Vineland, N.J., according to a news release.

The new facility, according to the release, will serve customers in the Western U.S., in addition to imports from Mexico. “Our growth and expansion would not be possible without the support of our customers and the tremendous relationships we enjoy with them,” Bob Lucy, president of Del Rey, said in the release.

“In addition to our customers, our employees are the key to our growth and success. Not a day goes by that we don’t counting our blessing.” Del Rey Avocado employs 85 full-time staff in its Southern California facilities, according to the release.

“Opening a new facility has long been our goal and desire to streamline our operations, improve efficiencies and offer us an opportunity to be innovative in meeting the need of our customers,” Bob Siemer, chief agronomist/partner for the company, said in the release.

“The new Vista facility will also provide our growers many benefits as it will allow us to receive fruit faster and get products to market faster.”

If you have any specific questions or concerns on any commodities not mentioned in this report, please feel free to reach out to dforsythe@nproduce.com and we will be happy to give you those current market conditions. Also look for our Spanish version that will be released on Monday and our Midweek Update released every Wednesday. Have a great week!
Keeping You Informed,



Your Dedicated NPC, LLC Staff