



## WEATHER UPDATE

**Yuma** - Sunny to partly cloudy next week. Highs in the 80s and lows in the 50s. **Oxnard** - Sunny to partly cloudy next week with a chances of rain Wednesday. Highs in the 70s and lows in the upper 40s. **Mexico (Culiacan)**- Cloudy over the weekend but mostly sunny the rest of the week. Highs in the 90s and lows in the 50s. **Florida, Southern**— Sunny to partly cloudy next week with chances of rain on throughout the week. Highs in the 80s and lows in the upper 50s. **Idaho**—Sunny to partly cloudy next week with a chances of precipitation late next week. Highs will be in the 50s and lows in the lower 20s.

## TRANSPORTATION

The National Diesel Average has been recorded at \$3.079 up \$0.003 a gal from last week and up \$0.103 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.**

[Follow Us On Facebook!](#)



**MARKET ALERT**

Bell Peppers

Broccoli

Cauliflower

Celery

Limes

Onions

# 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's supply continues to be steady with a slight increase as fields continue to have good yields. Expecting decent volume over the next 7-10 days as the weather outlook continues to be good. Quality is good. The market continues to be steady as there is not much demand and more product is available.

## Avocados



Markets are steady on all sizes. Mexico is trying to take the prices up slowly in the lead up to Cinco. Demand appears to be fairly good and supplies are good as well. All sizes are steady, as bigger fruit has cleaned up at the border and is starting to get a little stronger. There continues to be plenty of #2 fruit being picked and that should continue for the foreseeable future. Many retailers are looking to promote avocado's to go along with March Madness. California is going to try to start picking over the next few weeks.

## Bananas



According to our team in the tropics, the issues we have been experiencing are coming to an end. We are expecting GOOD grade, Excellent quality and back to normal supplies!

## Berries



**BLACKBERRIES**- Quality is good. Pricing steady. Expect same conditions throughout March.

**BLUEBERRIES**- Supplies improving. Pricing steady to higher. Florida blues coming on at the end of March.

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

# MARKET OUTLOOK



## Broccoli



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Supplies remain tight this week. The cool weather & rain expected in Yuma & Salinas will keep supplies tight. We are hopeful the market gets back to normal once the full transition switches back to Salinas. Some quality concerns with mildew & some yellowing. The weather is affecting the start of the Salinas Valley season.

**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Brussels Sprouts



Supplies are slightly improving. The demand is good. Growers are reporting fair quality at best and in some instances less than fair. Expect prices to be steady for the next few weeks. Waiting for the new crop to start out of the Salinas Valley region.

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Cauliflower



Supplies remain tight this week. The cool weather & rain expected in Yuma & Salinas will keep supplies tight. Hopefully the market gets back to normal once the full transition switches back to Salinas. Quality is fair at best.

**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Cantaloupes



New arrivals this week, & projected arrivals for next week, have seen a shift in sizing to larger fruit which will begin to put a premium on the smaller fruit. With many national retailers running melon promotions the larger fruit is quickly moving with a vacuum effect causing the market to stabilize at higher levels. Solid arrivals are expected next week but anticipate a sizable decrease in volume the week of 3/25 which could put additional pressure on an already short market. This decline in volume is directly attributed to the whitefly situation in Guatemala. Quality has been strong with solid brix levels in the 11-14% range.

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## 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.

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Celery



Supplies continue to be short, weather & crop damage is the main factor for the escalated markets. Quality is only fair at this time. Product is loading out of Oxnard & Yuma. Supplies should improve once they transition back to Salinas.

**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Corn



Florida volumes are good, and the market is weakening. Expect improved quality in the next week as southern Florida's spring crop comes on board. Mexico is stable with strong supply on the yellow varieties.

# MARKET OUTLOOK



## Cucumbers



Florida's volume is tight this week due to supply from Honduras winding down. A few early spring crops has started with very light volume, due to a late start planting in most of the state due to the cold & rainy weather. We should see both quality & volume improve as farms move further into the season. Quality has been good. Mexico's volume is steady, but they are picking up the demand from the East. Quality has been good. One shipper in Baja has already started & volume should pick up over the next couple of weeks with a couple other growers right behind them.

## Eggplant



Florida's eggplant supply is tight as old fields are playing out & new fields are slow to come on. Current crops are making a lot of #2 product due to scarring. Supplies will remain short for a few weeks. Fortunately, Mexico's production continues with steady supplies. Good volume expected to continue for the next few weeks. Quality is mostly fair to good.

## Grapes



Red Seedless market is steady in the \$20-24 range. Newer red varieties which are XL & jumbo size are \$25-\$26. Market should remain steady. There won't be the huge crimson volumes that arrives this year. Green Seedless market will rise rather quickly as we head towards April. Chile was finished picking 10 days ago & volumes are light compared to recent years. Prices will be in the \$30's before the end of March. Red Globes market stable & will remain in the \$16-20 range. Mixture of Peru & Chilean available. Black Seedless market is from PAS to \$22 depending on individual shipper's inventory. Market should firm up in April.

## Green Beans



Supply and quality continue to be strong in Florida and should remain solid for at least the next few weeks. While the Lake area and South Florida are still rolling along, new crops in central Florida are on tap to start this weekend. Mainland Mexico is also expected to provide steady volumes for the next few weeks, barring any weather issues.

## Herbs



The herb market continues to be steady with steady supplies. Improving weather in CA and Baja Mexico will help basil production. There are a few herbs with weather concerns like basil, dill, and tarragon but all other herbs have good quality.

## Honeydews



Honeydew production remains strong and will continue to be for the next few weeks. Sizing has been mostly tiered to the larger sizes (5s) with smaller fruit (8/9s) being very limited. We are anticipating this market to remain stable over the next 7-10 days. Current quality has been very clean externally with brix levels showing a range of 10-13%.

# MARKET OUTLOOK

## Iceberg



QUALITY



SUPPLY



Supplies have improved this week. Expect to see lighter weights on the whole case liner lettuce & cello lettuce. Quality is slightly better, but still seeing some blistering & frost damage. Markets should improve over the next few weeks once they transition back to Salinas.

## Kale



QUALITY



SUPPLY



The market has come down this week as volumes improve with the recent warmer weather in Yuma. Quality has been reported as good with full bunches.

## Leaf



QUALITY



SUPPLY



**Romaine** – Supplies have improved this week, due to better weather in growing areas. However still seeing quality issues with epidermal peel & blistering. Expect markets to remain steady for the next few weeks.

**Green Leaf, Red Leaf, & Butter Lettuce**– Supplies have improved this week. Seeing the same quality issues as romaine. The transition back to Salinas should improve the markets in a few weeks.

## Tender Leaf



QUALITY



SUPPLY



Cooler than normal weather continues to be a factor with tender leaf items including all packaged salads. Supplies are tight. Rain over the last 4-6 weeks in many growing areas caused tighter than normal markets & some quality challenges. The crop transpiration to California is running a bit behind this year. Most growers will start harvesting in CA at the beginning of April. We're waiting for more details from our growers. We will keep you posted as firm dates come in.

QUALITY



SUPPLY



## Lemons & Limes



**Lemons**- Market is steady with good quality. Better volumes on 140-count and larger fruit. Expect the market on small sized to remain active for several weeks.

**Limes**- Market is very active due to the decline in production as most growers transition from the old to new crop. Some markets hitting \$46, supply is short, quality is questionable it's that time of the year when rain and strikes are making things hard to get back on track. Recommend approving subs on sizing to ensure supply.

**MARKET ALERT**



# MARKET OUTLOOK



## Onions



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Onion supplies are very tight. Markets are on the rise as the Northwest is finishing up and Mexico's crossings are minimal. Texas is behind schedule due to prior weather, they are not expected to start until early April. Expecting to see the market remain volatile for the next several weeks. Quality is good on all colors.

**MARKET ALERT**

## Onions, Green



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Supplies are almost back to normal coming from Mexico. Green Onions are showing some signs of recuperating from the winter weather affects. With better weather approaching the desert regions, hope to see better supplies coming in.

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Oranges



The market is steady and a steady supply of CA navels available, with more 72ct & smaller available. Quality is good and will get better as we get further into the season. Sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix. Oranges out of Florida & Texas are also available .

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Pears



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

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Peppers, Bell



The market is extremely high in both the east & west this week as eastern growers are between their winter & spring crops. Expect supplies to remain tight & quality is mixed between fair & good. Don't expect improvement until more growers gradually come on board with spring acreage in the next 2-3 weeks. Out west, growers are seeing warmer weather which should help with volume eventually. However, quality has been a challenge due to prior weather. It will most likely take 3 weeks to see any improvement.

**MARKET ALERT**

## Peppers, Chili



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

The market has eased but remains mixed due to newer fields breaking in central Mexico. Quality and volume continue to improve through McAllen whereas Nogales is seeing lighter volume & slightly higher prices this week. Southern Florida is coming on with improving quality & volume as well.

# MARKET OUTLOOK

## Pineapples



Conditions in Costa Rica are very dry which has resulted on slightly lower volumes than expected for this time of the year. We do expect situation to improve for within the next couple of weeks.



## Potatoes



Pricing has slightly increased this week compared to last week. Supplies on 40-70ct are very limited causing the market increases. Smaller sizes are more available. Most Norkotah crop is winding down and many growers are moving Burbanks with higher pricing. Quality is reported to be good on all colors.



## Squash



Warmer weather & new fields in Florida have bumped up volume this week. Expect volume to increase over the next few weeks. Quality is fair to good. Some of the newer fields have better quality. Mexico's volumes have picked up a little due to last week's warmer weather. However, production is slightly down this week from a short cool front that hit the front part of the week, but should pick up as a warming trend is expected along with more growers beginning their spring crops from the northern growing areas.



## Strawberries



**California**— In a better situation in the upcoming week of loading out of Oxnard and Santa Maria. Pricing steady. There is a lot of fruit coming soon, plants are loading up & a slight warming trend moving into Oxnard this weekend. 70+ degrees will help with production numbers. Sizes out of Oxnard are large & perfect for stems next week. Santa Maria hopeful for clear weather & sunny skies from the upcoming forecast. Still some water damage in the fields, but a new flower set coming in for April volumes!

**Florida**—Pricing steady. Florida taking on receivers as California recovers from back to back weather events, and Mexico is finishing up. Smaller fruit with counts 20-24. Quality looks good and looking for a strong finish to the Florida season in the next 2-3 weeks.

**Mexico**—Most growers finishing up. Quality is fair at best.



## Tomatoes



Round and roma tomato pricing continues to rise this week as Florida's tomato production is light this week as the industry enters Spring growing transitions. Current round harvests are bringing lighter yields due to weather during the growing cycle but there's still a decent amount of product available. Quality is good to fair. Roma and grape numbers are also on the light side, but quality has been good. Overall tomato volumes are expected to stay at reduced levels for 2-3 more weeks until new crops start in southern Florida & growers get started in the Palmetto/Ruskin area.

Mexico's round & roma numbers are light this week as growers wait for new plantings to begin later this month. Round quality is good to fair, with some reports of stem decay and yellow coloring. Western Mexico's roma crops are a little slow due to recent cool weather and crop transitions but anticipate better volumes late this month. Quality is good. Grape tomatoes supply remains steady, with good to fair quality.



# MARKET OUTLOOK

## Cabbage

Markets are escalated due to short supplies. With less Cabbage available expect higher prices on whole case product and processed cabbage. We are hoping markets improve in a few weeks once transition is back to Salinas and Oxnard CA.

## Persistent rain slows Salinas vegetable deals

Frequent rainfall and above-normal amounts in California's key Salinas growing area will likely lower production volumes of spring vegetables this season and delay supplies.

Jeff Hyosaka, sales manager for Salinas-based Pacific International Marketing, said while plantings have begun, January and February rains interrupted what is usually a consistent schedule of planting, so timing for vegetables on the front-end is unknown. "Production yields coming out are more uncertain this year than last year. This won't be a normal situation," Hyosaka said. "We've got more extremes than we've dealt with (in recent years)."

Several days of frost and the frequent rain in Arizona and Mexico desert regions where the company's winter lettuce, broccoli and cauliflower have kept workers out of the fields until later in the morning and hurt planting and growth cycles, he said.

That will probably mean lower volumes than last year, depending on the upcoming weather, he said. "Weather that went through in the desert hampered our ability to get full production from what's in the ground," he said. "It probably won't be a seamless transition."

Winter rainfall in the Salinas area was about 130% above normal, said Art Barrientos, vice president of harvesting for Castroville-based Ocean Mist Farms. Some vegetable crops are maturing slowly, and growth has been uneven, Barrientos said, but the effect overall has been minimal. "However, some plantings have been moved around, which could result in lighter than ideal volumes during late spring or early summer," he said. Broccoli and cauliflower harvest should begin in late March, and that's pretty close to typical years, he added. Volumes should be "fairly close." "However, we are anticipating periods where volumes may be lighter due to rain periods not letting us plant in a timely manner," he said. Barrientos doesn't expect any interruptions transitioning to Salinas from desert growing areas.

In February, the Salinas area received four to eight inches of rain, according to the National Weather Service. Rain fell almost steadily during January, and in early March.

The rain also kept growers from doing necessary cultural practices, such as applying fertilizer, said Martin Jefferson, Northern California production manager for Duda Farm Fresh Foods' Salinas branch. Growers will do multiple plantings in one week during the breaks rather than planting over several weeks, he said, and that could throw off supply schedules. "The start of the Salinas season is likely to be delayed, and there's going to be a lot of disruptions to volumes for a good portion of spring production" of major crops, Jefferson said. Initial harvests will likely be delayed a week or so, he estimated, and volume disruptions will continue. Salad Savoy Corp., Salinas, has experienced only two to three days of disruption with its direct seed crops, such as chard and Tuscan kale, said Seth Karm, Salad Savoy's CEO. But transplants from nurseries, including cauliflower, have been delayed by about two weeks, he said. "That's where we will expect interesting shifts," Karm said, adding that overlap from vegetables in Yuma, Ariz., in April will probably prevent supply interruptions.

<https://www.thepacker.com/article/persistent-rain-slows-salinas-vegetable-deals>

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](mailto: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,  
[www.nproduce.com](http://www.nproduce.com) (800) 213-6699



March 15, 2019 | Page 8  
Your Dedicated NPC, LLC Staff