



PRODUCE NEWS

“Where Your Patronage Is Never Taken For Granted!”

NOVEMBER!

Not many in the produce industry are going to miss this California season. There certainly was not much to brag about. Our local growers were plagued with plague, on all fronts. It was a massive undertaking for the facilities to be redesigned under the COVID-19 guidelines with social distancing in mind. Harvesting equipment and farm workers were reset for more distancing as well. Who had a play book on this? We will all be experts when this thing is behind us. Kind of like the Monday morning quarterback. Another aspect that the farmers had to cope with was that COVID got more attention in the suburban areas but not in the fields. The farms had little access to testing, or general guidance for that matter. Just one example, the citrus growers, talk about a triple whammy. Their exports to China have struggled with tariffs, an ongoing problem which has been a costly one for some time. This year's growing conditions, weather and pest took their toll, then COVID. One of the main issues all farmers faced was housing.

California arguably has accommodated farm workers better than most areas in the world, but not enough now. And to accommodate the new needs means to build more housing in the most expensive place in the world. We have all had our struggles, every one of us in one way or another. It is such a powerless feeling not being able to help. Kind of makes you wish you were a politician and had the right answers. More great work being done right here in Alameda County. Bay Cities produce is back feeding families. Under the direction of Pastor L.J. who has been assisting those in need for years in the Bay Area we are making food boxes for his outlets. And Trybe, Trybe of Oakland has much the same program going on, we are very fortunate to be a part of that as well. Please keep everyone safe this Thanksgiving but enjoy.

We are thankful for your patronage.

Steve Del Masso
President

Nap Thyme

Nap Galvezzzzzzzzzz

Red, Green, Butter, & Iceberg Lettuce – availability continues to be less than normal and costs much higher than normal. We will rely on Huron, a traditional stop on the way to Yuma, more so this year than in years past. The “two-ish” weeks where the season makes a temporary stay is going to be invaluable this year. Prices shall gradually descend as more product hits the open market and the transition is completed by the end of the month.

Romaine & ♡♡♡'s of Romaine – Supply is still quite limited and costly! I'm still dealing with pro-rating issues and tight delivery schedules. I don't expect to see any relief until the Yuma growing season is in full swing which will occur around the end of November.

Cauliflower – Price points are going to be firm to high through Thanksgiving then fall off immediately after to very reasonable levels.

Broccoli – My dire predictions of last month did not hold up past the 2nd week mark. Salinas and Santa Maria are finishing up with better supply than expected and there will not be any gapping issues to tackle. Prices are projected to remain reasonable through Thanksgiving and into December.

Red & Green Cabbage – is a fairly easy commodity to buy with supply remaining very stable with more than enough product to go around.

Celery – In comparison to what we had to endure last year, this year is a veritable “cakewalk”. There is an abundance of good quality Celery out there and growers are primed and ready for the big Thanksgiving push.

Green Onions – If we experience any sort of price increases this month, they will be gentle and short lived. Growers in Mexico are doing a superb job filling our need for Green Onions.

Red, White & Yellow Onions – The Northwest crop is fully harvested and safely concealed in atmospherically controlled storage facilities. The 2020 harvest was respectable in both quantity and quality. Costs are forecast to stay fairly constant over the next 3-4 months.

Root Vegetables – With the Winter months and cooler weather creeping upon us, the NW/Oregon Root Vegetable season starts to come into play. There is a generous amount of beautiful Root Vegetables of all sizes and varieties to select from.

Russet Potatoes – Suppliers are saying, pricing and supply are going to be very even over the next 3-4 months.

Small Potatoes Fingerling – Now is the time to take full advantage of the abundance of NW Fingerling Potatoes that are in inventory waiting to be used. They also are a fun item to feature and promote.



Yams & Sweet Potatoes – are fully harvested and stored away. Pricing will remain stable for the next few months.

Potatoes of Color – The 2020 NW harvest was a very good one with an overabundance of solid quality Red, White and Yukon Potatoes.

Oranges – All news in the Orange world is positive news. The California Navel season out of SoCal has started and flavor, color and brix levels are first-rate. Pricing, of course, is starting out high but should quickly drop down as the season progresses.

The Satsuma Tangerine and Mandarin Orange seasons are officially underway. Initial lots are very good in quality and flavor. Growers are saying this year's crop should be bountiful. The city of Sanger, just outside of Fresno, is the first area shipping out product.

SoCal California Grapefruit – The SoCal season is hanging on a bit longer than usual because foodservice demand has been so low. Now that the Texas season has commenced, there is an overstock of Grapefruit and prices are at highly promotable levels. I am running across a bunch of great offerings.

Lemons – The Lemon season has returned to California. 1st up is SoCal. Then Bakersfield. And eventually followed by Fresno.

Carrots – Landing pallets of Jumbo Carrots that are consistent in size and truly fit the description of a jumbo size Carrot has been a tough challenge. Once we get through the Thanksgiving Holiday the market should settle back down to a steady flow of a reliably sized and priced product.

Asparagus – We will be dealing with holiday pricing for the next two months. In other words, costs are going to be on the upper end of the price spectrum from today through the 1st of the year.



Round & Roma TOMATOES – The California Round Tomato season is about to come to an end and the struggle and challenges are about to begin finding sufficient and applicable product to service all of our customers' needs. I am not harboring any delusionary thoughts or hopes this year will be any less challenging and difficult than in previous years. A quick synopsis of what to expect is thus: the first one or two weeks we will be utilizing whatever acceptable Tomatoes we can hustle from California growers. Then, it starts to get iffy and problematic as we wait for the Mexico season to get up to full production mode. I anticipate tapping Florida shippers for a week or possibly two in order to fill in supply gaps. The market is not expected to settle down until the first or 2nd week of December. Until then, prices will be in the higher ranges.



Roma Tomatoes - All Mexico. All Baja origin until December. Then the growing season moves over into Central Mexico/Nogales. As is normal every year, Round Tomato gapping allows Roma growers to push up their FOB price points.



Varietal TOMATOES (SMALL) –

The California Small Tomato season has finally fizzled out and we are now firmly committed to Mexico grown product. An interesting and unexpected bit of news is Mexico supply is below last year's which has bumped prices to a higher base point than in the past. I am guardedly optimistic that some relief shall come by December.

SQUASH – Squash prices have dropped to their lowest point of the year. This has been brought about by an early and very abundant Mexico harvest and continued health and bountiful supply from California growers. November prices are penciled in to hold fast in the reasonable zone.

Butternut Squash (Organic &

Conventional) – The news is all wonderful and good for local grown Butternut Squash. Quality is excellent and storage facilities are full to capacity.

EGGPLANT – The Fresno growing season is coming to an end and the move down south will begin. The season will make a final one to two week stop in Coachella before settling in Mexico for the next few months.

Red, Green, & Yellow, Bell Peppers –

Bell Peppers are on the move! The transition will make its way through Oxnard, then Coachella and then move on down to Mexico for the duration of the winter season.

CHILI PEPPERS – All Chili Pepper prices have increased and quality sagged since leaving California. Prices are holding firm and above last year. I'm trying to be optimistic that a step or two back in cost will occur by the end of the year.

BLUE LAKE GREEN BEANS – At this juncture, we are sourcing all of our fresh Green Beans from Coachella. Also referred to in the industry as "Desert Beans". Around the middle of the month, Mexico will jump into the market in anticipation of the Thanksgiving/Holiday season. With all of the Covid challenges who knows what sort of demand will unfold for Thanksgiving. Prices could be very reasonable or very high.

CORN – I once again applaud Dwelley Farms from another incredible job keeping us stocked with the freshest and finest Corn in California. *(And of course, Green Beans)* All of us here at Bay Cities Produce send our thanks! With the local season now over, I will be relying on shipments from Coachella until around the end of the month after which the season moves down into Mexico.

CUCUMBERS – The Baja to Central Mexico (Nogales) transition transpired without so much as the slightest of hitches, the most minor of hiccups or shallowest of potholes.

My current strategy is to utilize California grown English Cukes as long as possible before I have to consider other areas. When the local season has completely run its course, I will take a close look at what is available from Canada and possibly use their product for a week or two prior to importing Cucumbers from Mexico.

LIMES & the Coconuts – Weather issues in Mexico are no longer a problem. With that said, prices are reasonable and forecast to remain so for the balance of the month.

MARADOL PAPAYAS - Mexico – Prices are holding steadfast and quality, color and flavor continue to be outstanding.

PERSIMMONS – The FUYU Persimmon season is in full swing and it's a respectable one. We are getting in some beautiful looking and tasty Persimmons from Morgan Hill. The best value out there is a 35 lb. bulk pack. Now is the time to promote Persimmons.

ASIAN PEARS – Asian Pears out of Kingsburg are now ample and fine-looking! The two-layer pack is your best value. They represent another highly promotable item for November.

AVOCADOS – From now until April, we are committed to using Mexico grown Avocados. Our shippers are working hard to get us the best quality fruit..

Sal's Produce Snapshot

Spring Mix, Baby Leaf & Cello-

Pack – The transition to Yuma, AZ will take place this month. The whole move will take place over the course of a weekend. All of the equipment torn down and loaded onto trucks to make the trek south. Everything is unloaded and built back up so production can resume. A whole lot of work to keep the salad world moving.

Grapes – I'm still able to take full advantage of pulling great looking California Grapes from cold storage inventories. Sizing remains good and overall quality and flavor profiles are holding fast. I will compare remaining California Grape inventories to Chile Grapes around the third week of the month.



Apples & Pears – For all intent and purpose, the 2020 California Apple season has run its course. Whatever varieties are left are the last remaining odd lots. Looking ahead, we are full into the mighty and massive Northwest crop. And we are talking about millions of pounds of harvested, cleaned, sorted and inventoried Apples. This year, there seems to be a perfect balance of small and large Apples.

All varieties of Pears from the Northwest are plentiful and gorgeous. Some of the minor and more fickle varieties like the French Butter and Seckel will soon be gone. The most dominant and important variety, D'Anjou, are abundant and full of flavor. This year, sizing is trending to the large end of the spectrum.

Mangos – We are now utilizing Kent Mangos from Brazil. The long boat ride between Brazil and here makes them the most expensive Mangos of the year. The switch to Ecuador Mangos should happen around the middle or third week of the month. When that finally transpires, you should realize some savings.

Melons – The availability of California grown Melons is quickly slipping away. The next 30-45 days gets really complicated because the order of interconnected transitional growing areas can be quite a head scratcher. Right now, I'm carefully selecting the best Cantaloupes and Honeydews from the last of the Northern California crop. Any day, I must start considering product from Brawley, Coachella and maybe even Phoenix. While all this is happening, Mexico's season should be getting underway and offering up product. Eventually, after the dust fully settles, I will bring in our Honeydew Melons from Mexico and our Cantaloupes from "offshore"; Guatemala and eventually Costa Rica.

Watermelons – All Watermelons are now coming up from Mexico. The next two months should be pretty good ones for Mexico grown Watermelons. They are, of course, lighter in color than a California Melon but this year, flavor and sweetness is surprisingly good. I'm quite happy with the quality that I am receiving.

Heirloom Tomatoes – The curtain on the California Heirloom season has gone down and risen for growers in Baja. Although not up to a California standard, quality, shelf life, and flavor levels will not disappoint. They represent a good buy.



Holiday Decorations – I'm still responding to all requests for your Holiday Decoration needs. Let me know what you are looking for and I will search the market for the item.

Cutting Edge O-rganics®

..... solely about organically grown produce.

Salinas growers have given December 7th as the definitive date they will start shipping Wet Leaf O-rganics® from Yuma. Until then, Salinas and a whole host of small local farms will supply us with all of our requirements.

The transition of Dry O-rganics® to Baja, Mexico is underway. Whatever items are no longer available from California I can easily fill in with product from Mexico and Arizona.

Veggies & Berries

GREEN LEAF CROWNS & BETTER BURGER LEAF® – Product availability will be limited until the Yuma season is in full swing. Until then, prices should remain elevated.

BROCCOLINI - ASPIRATION – is projected to be a “steady go” item throughout the month of November. Steady supply. Steady prices.

BROCCOLI FLORETS – Plentiful and of good sound quality. I am not expecting any supply hiccups in the next 2-3 weeks.



CAULIFLOWER FLORETS – prices are gaining momentum and additional increases are being forecast as we approach Thanksgiving.



SNOW & SUGAR SNAP PEAS – We will continue to avail ourselves of Mexico Snow Peas. Even though Mexico based growing areas are moving back and forth, availability and quality is holding up quite well.

The Snap Pea season has shifted down to Mexico. The extra costs for transportation have bumped up per case costs which is the norm every year. Initial sizing is on the smaller side but will return to a full size as we get further along in the season.

BLUE, RASP & BLACK BERRIES – All three Berries are now coming up from Mexico. Supply is somewhat shaky with production fluctuations randomly occurring but the season will right itself no later than by the 2nd week of the month. Prices should remain high until then.

STRAW BERRIES – There are two points of origin for Strawberries; Oxnard and Mexico. The quality of Oxnard Strawberries is very good with solid red fruit but on the smaller size. Mexico growers have gone “all in” this year in anticipation of moving a sizeable amount of Strawberries during our holiday season. I am somewhat guarded with my thoughts, but I believe they will be a good item to promote and feature.



JEFF'S TRIVIA QUEST



Let us be grateful for what we have, let us be mindful of those who have less. Let us appreciate those who hold a special place in our lives, and make sure that they know it. Let us think about those who cannot spend the holiday with their loved ones, especially the members of our military serving overseas. May your turkey be plump, may your potatoes & gravy have never a lump, may your pies take the prize. And may your thanksgiving dinner stay off your thighs. so laugh, smile and be positive. Let us get to the trivia.

- 1) What is a pilgrim?
 - A) it is a group of escaped convicts
 - B) someone who goes on a long journey
 - C) they are fans of the actor Clint Eastwood

- 2) What did the pilgrims mainly eat on the Mayflower?
 - A) fruit and vegetables
 - B) salted meat and hard biscuits
 - C) turkey, corn, and yams

Fax or email me with the answer and win a great prize. Jeff@baycitiesproduce.com

TRIVIA WINNERS



The answers to last month's trivia was c) leeches a) garlic ice cream

The town of Gilroy, California, calls itself the "garlic capital of the world". Every year there is a huge festival with myriad recipe competitions and things to try. one of the favorites is garlic fries and garlic ice cream is also extremely popular, even though i suspect the fact they give it away for free may have something to do with that. Leeches are being used in medicine to prevent blood clot formation after microsurgery. it was found that exposure to garlic causes them to wriggle around and die.

Congratulations to are winners: Eva @ Millie's Kitchen, Martha @ Executive Inn, Ana @ Ronaker's, Brooke @ Danielsen, Grady @ CoffeeTime and Joanne @ Spike's Produce.

November celebrity birthdays:

Gordon Ramsey	8 th	(54)	chef
Leonardo DiCaprio	11 th	(46)	actor
Whoopie Goldberg	13 th	(65)	actress
Goldie Hawn	21 st	(75)	actress
Tina Turner	26 th	(81)	singer

"when you love what you have, you have everything you need"-happy thanksgiving to all

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