



**Del Bene**  
PRODUCE

# Market Update

For the week ending April 4, 2020

## SUGGESTED BUYS

Asparagus – brussels sprouts – tomatoes - blackberries – raspberries – honeydew

## TIGHT AND EXPENSIVE

Avocado - cauliflower – eggplant

## NEW ON THE MARKET

CA Orchard Morels (call to preorder) - Green garlic – English peas – Fava beans – MI rhubarb – spring onions

### ASPARAGUS [market up]

Ideal growing conditions are providing an abundance of asparagus from both the San Luis and Caborca regions of Mexico. This trend is expected to continue through March and into early April. This is the peak production period for Mexico, so quality has been excellent. Demand is only fair, allowing for low prices on both standard and jumbo sizes.

### AVOCADOS [market down]

Although food service demand has fallen off due to restaurants being forced to cut back operations, retail demand is driving the market. There is a slight drop in prices heading into April, but Mexico will continue to pace their harvest to keep prices strong and allow the current crop to last through June. We may see slight increases in this market as we approach Holy Week in Mexico, when there will be no harvesting for that week.

### BELL PEPPERS [markets steady]

*Green Bell* – The Coronavirus outbreak is limiting the amount of labor being used to harvest in Florida, resulting in limited availability. Retailers have bought most of the product that was available. The weather forecast is favorable, but the lack of labor and harvesting will keep supply levels down.

*Colored Bells* – Red, yellow, and orange bell pepper supplies have tightened up with less product crossing from Mexico and Canada still working to increase production. Prices are holding at above average levels for the time being

### BERRIES [markets down]

*Strawberries* – Heavy retail demand over the past two weeks has tightened up the strawberry market coming out of Oxnard and Santa Maria, CA. This is expected to change with grocery stores finally seeing a drop off in consumer demand and food service operations still limited from restaurant closures and reductions. The growing season in Mexico is on the downturn, which will add more pressure to the new fields on the west coast. Florida is also wrapping up harvests within the next week. Overall, supplies are better with lower demand and better pricing.

*Blueberries* – Light supplies continue to trickle in from both Mexico and Chile. Domestically, Florida has begun to ship the first harvests of the season. Georgia is the next area on deck and will start up within the next 2-3 weeks. Prices are starting to improve with fields in California and Florida gradually ramping up.

*Blackberries* – Prices have lowered for blackberries coming out of Mexico and California. There have been better supplies with retail demand finally falling. Quality has been excellent on all incoming product.

*Raspberries* – Better volumes of raspberries are starting to come out of Oxnard, CA, while Baja and Mexico are also continuing to increase production levels. Quality has been fantastic, and prices remain reasonable.

### BROCCOLI/CAULIFLOWER [markets down]

*Broccoli* – Prices have dropped for the coming week, which is a good sign that the transition from Yuma to California is progressing as planned. The market will continue to adjust downward with better production in the Salinas Valley over the front half of April.

*Cauliflower* – Similar to broccoli, cauliflower is transitioning from Yuma to Salinas and Santa Maria. The change in growing areas is not happening as quickly as broccoli, but the market is heading in the right direction. Prices and availability will continue to improve as we progress into April.

### SQUASH [markets down]

Both zucchini and yellow squash production have improved in Florida with more fields opening in multiple regions. Pricing is much improved compared to recent weeks and should continue to adjust downward with better harvests coming from Florida. Quality has been nice on both varieties.

### LETTUCE [markets down]

After a week or two of strong prices resulting from heavy retail demand, price levels have come back down as the grocery stores are seeing a little less action. The food service industry continues to limp along with minimal demand. Shippers are adjusting prices to keep product moving. Lettuce has transitioned to Huron, mostly. Salinas has started with light production, but is expected to pick up in early April.

### TOMATOES [markets down]

Round tomatoes out of Florida continue to improve as growers transition into new fields. Extremely light food service demand has played a big role in getting prices to fall. Availability is expected to remain steady with the Palmetto/Ruskin growing areas beginning to harvest significant volume in early April. Prices are lower on all varieties.

2900 Rivard Street, Detroit, MI 48207 | p:313.567.4658 | f:313.567.0961 | e: info@delbeneproduce.com

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