



**Del Bene
PRODUCE**

Market Update

For the week ending April 21st, 2018

SUGGESTED BUYS:

Asparagus, corn, eggplant, yellow squash, zucchini, round tomatoes, roma tomatoes, melons

TIGHT AND EXPENSIVE:

English peas, leeks, romaine, raspberries, blackberries,

NEW ON MARKET:

California Orchard Morels, black trumpets, ramps, western fiddleheads (preorder only), mixed color shepherd peppers, fava beans, black mission figs (1/2 flats), RecoveryPark spicy greens and edible flowers

ASPARAGUS: MARKET DOWN

The season in Mexico should conclude this week in both Caborca and San Luis. The new growing area in Mexico is now Obregon, which has just started and will pick up volume throughout the month. Meanwhile, Gonzalez, CA is now in the middle of their season and improved weather is bringing better production. Production is also increasing in the new growing areas of Peru with warm daytime temperatures and cooler nights. The local Michigan crop is projected to be ready by late-April, which is all dependent upon a consistent two-week span of nice weather. We will follow up once we have a better idea as to when Michigan asparagus will be available. Jumbo asparagus and white asparagus are also readily available.

BERRIES: Strawberries and Blueberries – MARKET DOWN; Blackberries and Raspberries – MARKETS UP

Strawberries – Overall strawberry supplies are showing improvement this week allowing for more reasonable pricing. Santa Maria and Oxnard were hit with much less rain than originally expected last weekend, so supplies have kept relatively steady and quality has been excellent. Production and availability are expected to gradually improve throughout April, as will prices. Salinas/Watsonville, however, did receive some significant rain this past weekend, which is delaying harvest for another week.

Blueberries – Prices are still higher than average due to the transition from offshore berries to domestic supplies. The season in Chile has finished up, while new crop blueberries from Mexico, California, and Florida are becoming more readily available with each passing week. Florida is projected to have a smaller crop than normal this year because of a cold winter. Georgia is next in line to begin harvesting with good volume expected in approximately two weeks.

Blackberries – Supplies have been decreasing for consecutive weeks now and prices are starting to reflect that. Mexico is past their second point of peak production, while we wait for domestic production to pick up. That leaves the market in a demand exceeds supply situation. Expect to see higher prices for the next week or two until new crop ramps up.

Raspberries – Like the blackberry market, there are limited supplies coming out of Mexico while we await the domestic season to begin out of California. Demand now exceeds available supplies with higher prices lingering for the next couple of weeks.

LETTUCE: Iceberg, Romaine, and Leaf - MARKETS UP

Iceberg – Supplies in Yuma, AZ are decreasing and most likely finishing up this week because of high temperatures. Huron, CA is starting to increase production more each week. Santa Maria also has some product to ship, although somewhat limited. Salinas has started its season in a light way with better improved supplies expected for next week. Some discoloration has been reported on the transition lettuce, but overall quality has been pretty good. We are near the end of the growing area transition from the desert to California, but light supplies have prices higher for the coming week.

Romaine – Romaine along with red and green leaf lettuce prices are higher heading into mid-April. Yuma, AZ is finished for the season and Huron, CA is only producing light volume at this point. Salinas and Santa Maria both also have limited production thus far. Romaine hearts continue to command a higher price as well. Quality is improving with less blister and peel being reported. It looks like we are still a couple weeks away from a stable market.

STONE FRUIT:

Sweet cherries are projected begin around the last week of April. We will see limited supplies to start with high prices. Bing cherries will start around the same time and are expected to peak in availability around the first week of June. The first supplies of California apricots are expected to hit the market by the end of April or the first week of May. Domestic peaches, plums, and nectarines should become available around the same time, by the beginning of May.

TOMATOES: MARKETS STEADY

Tomato prices have just about bottomed out across the board on all varieties with Florida and Mexico both in full production. Roma tomato prices have fallen to almost half the price they were a few weeks ago, while grape and cherry tomato prices are the lowest of the year. Colder temperatures that recently hit Florida may disrupt production, but it's not expected to drastically affect pricing. The Palmetto/Ruskin growing districts continue to be the main point of shipping with production moving north as April progresses.

RECOVERYPARK FARMS: LOCALLY GROWN IN DETROIT

Production is picking up on several items as we progress into Spring, despite the recent cold and snowy weather. Several varieties of edible flowers (nasturtiums, viola, marigolds, nasturtium leaves) are available and a great addition to any Spring menu. We are also getting nice quantities of the Knockout Mix Greens (spicy greens), Asian mixed greens, cutting celery, and baby beets. Call your sales rep for more details.

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