



## WEATHER UPDATE

**Yuma** - Sunny to partly cloudy with chances for rain early next week. Highs in the 60s and lows around 50. **Oxnard** - Partly cloudy with chances for rain most of next week. Highs around 60 and lows around 50. **Mexico (Culiacan)**- Mostly sunny with a chance for rain mid week. Highs in the 80s and lows in the 50s. **Florida, Southern**- Sunny to partly cloudy; highs in the 70s and lows in the 40s. **Idaho** - Sunny skies turn cloudy mid week with snow on the way. Highs around freezing and lows in the single digits next week.

## TRANSPORTATION

The National Diesel Average has been recorded at \$3.013 down \$0.035 a gal from last week and up **\$0.017** 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

Celery  
Cauliflower  
Cabbage  
Asparagus  
White Onions  
Tomatoes  
Bell & Chili Peppers  
Green Onions

# MARKET OUTLOOK



## Apples



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

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

**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Asparagus



The asparagus sourcing for the majority of North American consumption is currently in a transition phase from Peru to Mexico. This is a typical transition for January however this year there have been unforeseen weather conditions in both production regions that have greatly affected supply and costs. In Mexico, where we would have started seeing volume pick up by now, production has been delayed because of colder than normal weather. Peru, on the other hand, had shut down production in many fields due to lower markets and demand in December and in anticipation of Mexico starting. Additionally, the warmer weather came a bit earlier this year causing many fields to close because of premature flowering. Costs on air freight from Peru has also increased dramatically this month. The result of all of these conditions is a current total market shortage of more than 75% of normal volumes with a projection from Mexican growers that volumes will not normalize until the first week in February.

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Avocados



**Mexican avocado industry concerned over fuel shortage in run-up to Super Bowl** A scarcity of fuel in Mexico could impact the country's avocado exports to the U.S. in the run-up to the Super Bowl, during which a huge amount of the fruit is normally consumed. Ramon Paz, the spokesperson of the avocado packers' association APEAM, told Fresh Fruit Portal that some regions have experienced shortages over recent days as a result of a government initiative to try and reduce theft from ducts. "Michoacan has been one of the most affected states by the fuel shortage," he said. He explained that so far its impacts on the avocado sector have been minor, there have been some difficulties in transporting farmworkers to the orchards and also in getting the fruit to the packhouses. The shortage comes at a time when Mexico typically boosts its exports to the U.S. in the lead up to the Super Bowl, taking place on Feb. 3. A statement released by APEAM on Wednesday said that while it expects operations will continue as normal over the coming weeks, if transport were limited or delayed there would potentially be significant losses. A Mexican packer, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said: "If the situation persists, it is likely that it will affect avocado operations, from the orchards through to shipping". "Although so far there have not been any major problems, there would be deep concern if things got worse," it said.

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Bananas



Bananas are showing high quality and unlike the 1st part of last year, supplies are good and should remain steady.

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

## Berries



**Blueberry** --Pricing trending higher. Quality good. Supplies remain tight. Chilean and Argentina blues have started. **Blackberry** ---Supplies remain tight. Quality is improving to good. Pricing trending higher. **Raspberry** -- Availability is tight and expected to remain so through January. Pricing is steady to higher.

# MARKET OUTLOOK



## Broccoli



Supplies are much lighter, due to the cold and rainy weather in all areas. Some shippers sold out. Market is firm, some processed items are triggered, crown market not even quoted now but was close to \$22.

## Brussels Sprouts



This market tightend up, a lot of suppliers out early in the week. The market is up and supply is short. Could get worse into prorates, but not there yet.

## Cauliflower



**MARKET ALERT**



Supplies very light. With freezing temperatures last week, which caused fewer harvesting hours. The crop is moving slowly with minimal holdover available. The market is active with FOBs around \$26.

## Cantaloupes



The cantaloupe has continued to settle following the holiday period. The first cycle in Guatemala (the growing region affected by the whitefly) has finished. New production has started from secondary regions of Guatemala, Honduras and Costa Rica. We anticipate a shift in sizing by the end of next week away from the smaller sized cantaloupes (12/15s) and more to 9s and larger. Quality has been very good to date and we anticipate stronger internal quality once we get into these new fields.

## 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.

**MARKET ALERT**



## Celery



Oxnard is finishing up. A little Mexico product this week, but total volumes are still very light. The market will stay high. More MX product should be in next week.



## Corn



Corn is in good supply and steady across the market out of MX and FL.

# MARKET OUTLOOK

## Cucumbers



Cucumber production in both Sonora and Sinaloa are on the lighter side this week due to cool weather. Most Sonora growers will be winding down the season over the next few weeks, leaving supply to Sinaloa. Quality is fair from the older crops in Sonora, but much better out of Sinaloa. The primary concern is sizing as there are very few SS, select and large cucumbers crossing this week. In the East, Florida's crops are winding down with current harvests producing about 50% offgrades. Honduras imports have been steady with mostly good quality.

## Eggplant



With cooler temps, Mainland Mexico's eggplant supply has lightened up this week. Quality is fair to good. Florida farms are also seeing lighter production this week as older crops finish up and new plantings have light yields so far.

## Grapes



Grapes this week are very tight as California is just about finished. Most customers are switching to imports. Peru and Chile are both running late and light. Demand is starting to outpace supply. This should last for about 10-14 days until Chile starts to arrive with some decent volume.

## Green Beans



Green beans are readily available in both Eastern and Western markets this week and quality is nice.

## Herbs



Quality and supply is looking good across the board. Mint and rosemary are a bit smaller based on the cool weather and basil quality could be questionable.

## Honeydews



Honeydew production has significantly decreased which has again created a demand exceeds supply situation. Honduran honeydew production is late in starting and new Guatemala fields are not yet ready for harvest. We anticipate this shortage to continue another 10-14 days. Sizing is mostly in the 5/6ct range with very few jumbos currently hitting the market.

# MARKET OUTLOOK

## Iceberg



QUALITY



SUPPLY



Field freeze has affected harvest. Shippers selling out. A firm market is expected into next week against light to moderate industry numbers. Epidermal peel and blister is evident and should be expected on arrival. Market today is in the mid to high teens with some not quoting.

## Kale



QUALITY



SUPPLY



The kale market has improved in regards to supply and demand. Quality is still in question at times.

## Leaf



QUALITY



SUPPLY



Romaine / Romaine Hearts – Good supplies over the coming weeks. A firm and slightly stronger market is expected into next week. Epidermal peel and blister is evident and should be expected on arrival. Leaf – Light supplies are expected to continue, especially on red leaf, over the coming few weeks. A firm and slightly stronger market is expected into next week. Epidermal peel and blister is evident and should be expected on arrival. Labor and weather have been an issue.

## Tender Leaf



QUALITY



SUPPLY



**Arugula, Parsley, Kale Blends, Spring Mix, and Spinach** - Supplies are fair to good on all items. Quality is in question though due to the recent cold weather.

QUALITY



SUPPLY



## Lemons & Limes



**Lemons** When life gives you lemons - promote them! Lemons are starting on export and fruit is awesome. Seeing good quality, demand, and steady market. FOBs in the mid 20s on choice, high 20s and low 30s on fancy. **-Limes—**Limes took a jump this week for sure. Seeing FOBs hit up to \$20. Its that time of year, will keep an eye on this market for sure.



# MARKET OUTLOOK



## Onions



**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

If you're a user of white onions of either size, pricing is up almost ten dollars from a week ago and probably closer to fifteen. Why is this happening? There are a few different reasons, the simplest way to put this is white onions are not grown in significant volumes in the United States. We have reports that Mexico has had problems with their white crop this season. Yellows and reds are steady to slightly higher around \$6-7.

## Onions, Green



**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

The market remains extremely active, due to lack of volume crossing from Mexico over the last two weeks. Holidays and cold weather have reduced total volume by over 50% as well. This week the market will remain snug. Look for this to improve in a week or so possibly.

## Oranges



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

**California** - Rain tomorrow and another storm predicted for end of week will hamper picking, we are ahead right now - please put orders in early. **Navels** Done gassing, fruit is looking good! Export is starting! Fruit size continues to be a concern - making lots of small fruit. **Florida** - dipping into jacket weather at night now. **Navels** still going, fruit quality is excellent! Peaking on 48s/56s so far some of the best eating fruit out there!

## Pears



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

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.

## Peppers, Bell



**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

South Florida's Fall pepper plantings have been picked over and have pretty much come to an end. Most of the product available this week is from newer, Winter crops and are crown picks. Sizing is on the larger end of the spectrum with little choice product available. Yields have been affected by bloom drop and fruit loss from prior weather, which intensifies the already light supply situation caused by a significant reduction in acreage. Mexico's volumes are coming out of Sonora and Sinaloa where cool weather has slowed production and limited availability on larger fruit this week. Quality is nice, despite some rain in the growing regions.

## Peppers, Chili



**MARKET ALERT**

QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Mexico's chili peppers continue to be in a critical supply position with jalapenos and serranos especially tight. Poblano supply is a little better than other varieties, as are tomatillos. However, there are quality concerns on tomatillos, with reports of yellow husks. On a side note it's a troubling time for shishitos as well.

# MARKET OUTLOOK

## Pineapples



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Similar to last week; Pineapple supply remains stable and sizing is trending towards the 7/8 sizes. Market pricing is on the rise on the especially on the larger sizes.

## Potatoes



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Potatoes took another jump this week hitting close to \$12 on all burbanks with smaller spuds around \$9 and #2s around 7. Norks aren't too far behind with most spuds around \$9-11. Seeing good demand and quality.

## Squash



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

With Plant City out of the picture now, Eastern squash production is limited to South Florida. As normal during the Winter season, production and yields are down, which means farms are not picking as frequently. They are picking every other day, which creates a larger percentage of medium fruit. Scarring and scuffing is evident on the fruit that's available (especially on fancy) as a byproduct of the Winter weather patterns that include wind. Mexico's squash supplies are also very limited this week. Many growers are very light due to older fields being hit by the cold and frost during the first week of January. The cooler weather has also affected the newer fields, slowing maturity. Yellow squash sizing and quality is an issue and will continue to be over the next 14 days.

## Strawberries



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Pricing is slowly coming down as supplies are slowly increasing. Quality and berry sizing varies greatly depending on the growing area and farm. Sizing out of MX still on the smaller side; 22-26ct. Still about 10 days to 2 weeks out to see some good volume and sizing out of MX. Florida is improving in volumes, so this should put supplies in much normal pattern in the next week. Rain expected in Oxnard for the next 10 days; not helping yields. Santa Maria is finished up now.

## **MARKET ALERT**

## Tomatoes



QUALITY  SUPPLY 

Florida's overall tomato volume is relatively light for this time of year, as some growers have stepped out of the deal and others are transitioning from remaining Ruskin crops to the Homestead area. However, Naples/Immokalee round and grape production has been mostly steady, with farms packing some really nice fruit with excellent quality and size. Although most of the fruit is coming from crown picks, even 2nd picks have had good sizing and quality this week. Some of the older fruit out of Ruskin is reported to be a little challenged quality-wise but overall industry quality should sharpen up as new Homestead crops come to market. Roma volume continues to be very limited due to the minimal number of acres planted. **Cold weather has slowed volume increases that normally ramp up in Mainland Mexico during this time of the season.** Warmer temperatures are in the forecast, so better volumes are expected on all varieties in the next 10-14 days. Although the Mainland's roma season is off to a slightly better start, there's a lot of product crossing with **light color**. Warmer weather should help to resolve this concern and boost volume.



# MARKET OUTLOOK

## MARKET ALERT

**Green Cabbage**—Due to the cold weather, there will be lighter supplies for the next two weeks. Prices are up, especially on processed. Will keep you in the know!

## FDA seeks way to resume more inspections during shutdown

“The Food and Drug Administration has stopped routine inspections of fresh produce and other food facilities because of the partial government shutdown, but Commissioner Scott Gottlieb says plans are underway to somewhat remedy that by mid-January.

Inspections of imported food continues, according to the agency, and recall and outbreak investigations, including the E. coli outbreak that sickened 62 people in the U.S., are also ongoing. Gottlieb has taken to Twitter to allay food safety concerns during the shutdown, but he bluntly admitted the shutdown does have an effect on the FDA’s mission.

“It’s not business as usual, and we are not doing all the things we would do under normal circumstances,” Gottlieb told NBC News. “There are important things we are not doing.” On Twitter, he said the agency should have the “mechanisms” should be in place to increase high-risk inspections by the week of Jan. 14. “We’re taking steps to expand the scope of food safety surveillance inspections we’re doing during the shutdown to make sure we continue inspecting high risk food facilities,” he tweeted Jan. 9. “(Thirty-one percent) of our inventory of domestic inspections are considered high risk.

That includes leafy greens and some other produce eaten raw, according to the FDA. “There’s discussion today that we’ve ‘stopped’ high-risk food surveillance inspections,” he also tweeted Jan. 9. “Fact: We’re working to continue those inspections. It’s true in (the) 2013 shutdown, those inspections were stopped. We’ve taken a different posture based on sound public health and legal rationale.” On Twitter and in a Jan. 9 notice on the end of the E. coli outbreak linked to romaine lettuce, Gottlieb praised federal workers. He also noted that the nation’s network that alerts health officials to a possible outbreak remains in place.

“Upholding the safety of the foods we eat and feed to our families is a critical element of the FDA’s public health mission,” he said in the E. coli update. “We routinely work with local and state health departments to monitor emerging safety signals possibly indicating when a food available for purchase in the U.S. marketplace may be unsafe for public consumption. This ongoing work continues, even during this partial lapse in federal funding.” Our ability to monitor for and respond to emerging food safety issues is maintained through the efforts of a very dedicated workforce that’s fully committed to this mission,” Gottlieb said in the notice.

The United Fresh Produce Association, responding to a question about the government’s shutdown’s effects on inspections, released a statement. “We continue to encourage Congress and the administration to resolve the funding issues before them and reopen the government,” according to the statement. “There are important agencies such as USDA, FDA, EPA, Department of Labor, that provide critical services to our member companies in their daily business requirements.”

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!  
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