

Market **OUTLOOK**

Week 9: February 26 - March 3, 2024



Market ALERT

- Arugula
- Berries: Raspberries & Strawberries
- Broccolini
- Cauliflower
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Grapes
- Green Onions
- Herbs: Basil, Dill & Oregano
- Mushrooms
- Onions White (*Extreme*)
- Oranges
- Peppers Bells
- Snow Peas (*Radar*)
- Squashes
- Tomatoes: 20 lb, 25 lb Rounds & Cherry

transportation

Nat'l Diesel Avg: \$4.109 →

Last Year: \$3.842 ↓

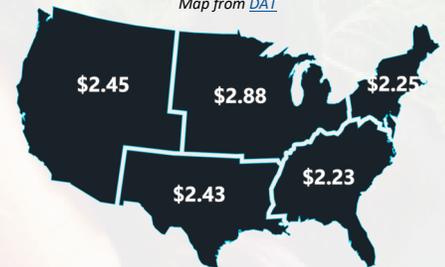
Nat'l Fuel Surcharge: \$0.52 ↑

Shortages: Freight rates is flat

- extreme - none
- slight - WA

National Posted Rate per mile

previous week's average outbound reefer rate for each region
Map from [DAT](#)



weather **OUTLOOK**

Oxnard, CA: Partly cloudy and showers with highs in the 60s and lows in the 50s.

Salinas, CA: Partly cloudy and showers with highs in the 60s and mid-50s and lows in the 40s.

Yuma, AZ: Partly cloudy and sunny skies with highs in the 70s and lows in the low 50s.

Immokalee, FL: Cloudy and sunny skies with highs in the 80s and lows in the 60s with PM thunderstorms on Sunday.

Idaho Falls, ID: Cloudy, snow showers, and rain with highs in the 30s and 40s and lows in the 20s and 30s.



Market UPDATE

apples



The Washington State crop is showing good quality and supplies through Q1, with most varieties up in volume due to a small crop except for Galas. Peak sizes are trending toward foodservice sizes (125/138s) except Red Delicious, with lower volumes on 125s and smaller.

asparagus



Mexico is in full production, with availability on all sizes. Increased production from Mexico has caused a decrease in the markets. Mexico's quality has been good, and it is expected to remain active until the end of April.

avocados



The harvest from Mexico is mature, has a nice oil content, and the market is steady. Regular elevation and bloom changes will impact March fruit size and field cost patterns. Expect today's price point as the base, with a more hectic market if California prolongs harvesting good volume.

bananas



The disruptions in Guatemala are more under control and allowing trucks to pass, resulting in an improved supply chain and a return to its pace. There are no major issues at this time.

beans



Green Beans: Prices are back to normal with steady demand. Supplies are improving in Florida and Mexico.

Snow peas: **RADAR** Guatemalan production will begin to suffer from a shorter season as a result of frost in December.

berries



Blackberries: Prices are slightly down, with steady production from Mexico and good quality.

Blueberries: Prices are slightly down in Chile, with good quality and increasing volume, while Oxnard experiences rain. Mexico also shows good quality and is increasing volume.

Raspberries: **ALERT** Prices are stable, with steady supplies and good quality from Mexico.

Strawberries: **ALERT** Rain is impacting production in various regions, causing 80% of fruit to be discarded in Oxnard due to damage and soggy conditions. Santa Maria field crews are collaborating with farmers to assess damage and adjust harvest schedules. Florida has discarded 25-75% of its fruit along with new blooms due to wet blocks, and Mexico has experienced rain this week.

broccoli



Broccoli: Supplies are steady with good demands from Santa Maria, Yuma, and Mexico. There are signs of brown beads. Expect supply and market pricing to be steady for the next few weeks.

Broccolini: **ALERT** Supplies are limited with good demands, and quality is only fair due to previous rain in California and Mexico, causing harvest delays. They anticipate fields being in better condition, allowing them to resume normal harvest schedules. Market pricing is expected to increase due to limited supplies.

brussels sprouts



The supply is improving, with fair quality and strong demand, despite quality challenges due to previous freezing temperatures. Market prices are expected to continue to improve along with supply.



Market UPDATE

cabbages



The market is more active due to the transition, with steady supplies and good quality from Oxnard and Yuma.

carrots



New crops are on the horizon, with improved supply and quality going forward.

cauliflower



Supply is limited due to previous rainfall in California and Mexico, causing harvest delays and quality challenges. Growers anticipate better field conditions next week, allowing for normal harvest schedules. Market prices are expected to rise due to the limited supply.

celery



Supplies and market pricing have improved with good quality from Oxnard, Santa Maria, Yuma, and Mexico.

citrus



Limes: The market increased slightly and is expected to continue due to favorable weather and increased middle-sized crops. Big fruit may become tighter, but the quality of the fruit is good, allowing it to hold.

Lemons: Production is strong in all sizes, with a smaller percentage of choice over fancy. Increase volumes in the coming weeks.

Oranges: **ALERT** In 2023, the California citrus region faced intense weather conditions, including excessive rain and sun, which led to a decline in small orange sizes. As the crop continues to develop, small sizes will become limited, and the remaining season and the

upcoming Valencia season will be challenging. It is recommended to open specs or switch to apples.

corn



Prices are down, with supplies being tight in the East and West. Supplies are expected to increase with lower prices in the coming weeks. Quality is typically fair this time of year, and the sizes are smaller than in the summer.

cucumbers



Prices are escalating due to volatile Honduras volume, with Florida starting in the second week of March. Mexico's volume is impacted by the cool weather, and production is expected to be light for the next few weeks.

grapes



Imports are not arriving smoothly, leading to record high markets and short volumes, with no relief for at least two weeks when all fruit in transit on the boat arrives.

herbs



ALERT (Basil, Dill, & Oregano) Rain in the growing region continues to affect supply and quality.

Cilantro: Supplies are light, with fair quality and improved market pricing from Oxnard and Santa Maria. Quality and supplies are impacted due to rain earlier in the week.

kale



Supply is steady with good demand and quality. Supplies are expected to be steady for the next few weeks.



Market UPDATE

lettuce



Arugula: **ALERT** Supplies are limited and demand is good, but quality is only fair to poor due to past freezing temperatures and recent rain. Better supplies are expected in the next week

Green & Red Leaf: Supplies are steady, but quality is only fair due to fringe burn, and epidermal peel caused by early morning frosts and freezing temperatures. Early morning frost has impacted the harvesting schedule, with hopes for better supplies in the next week.

Iceberg: Light supplies with fair quality are expected, with lighter weights and smaller heads. Cold temperatures and rain are causing epidermal peel and cosmetic issues. Due to low supplies, supplies will be light along with increased prices for the next few weeks.

Romaine: Supply is steady with fair quality, but early morning frost and freezing temperatures are causing quality issues like fringe burn, blistering, and early epidermal peel. Market pricing is shifting due to lower supplies, harvest delays due to labor, and cosmetics issues. Expected light supplies for the next few weeks.

Tender Leaf: The supply is steady, with good demand and good to fair quality due to previous rains and freezing temperatures. The supply is expected to improve in the coming weeks, and market pricing is expected to remain stable.

melons



Cantaloupe: Over the previous week, fewer fruits have made it to market, which has assisted in eliminating some of the lower prices. The Zacapa region in Guatemala has begun harvesting, primarily 9s and larger fruits. The Honduran first production cycle has slowed down significantly, and the next four weeks will see light supplies. Spring-time quality fruit is starting to emerge as

daylight hours extend. Current fields are producing larger, higher-shelled fruits with brix levels in the 13-15% range, with some peaking at 17%, and a strong flavor profile.

Honeydew: Guatemalan production is steady, with stronger arrivals from Honduras. Primary sizing remains 5/5J, with some 6s and a few 8s. Quality is improving in new growing regions, showing clean external characteristics with brix levels ranging from 12-14%.

Watermelons: The market pricing is steady, with high demand, excellent quality, and availability through March.

mushrooms



The cold weather is affecting yields, with growers reporting quality issues with compost ingredients. Supplies are expected to be limited in the next few weeks, causing prices to increase.

onions



EXTREME (White) The quality is good in all growing regions, with steady demand. The market prices are increasing, especially on whites. The white onions are extremely tight and nonexistent, followed by medium red and jumbo yellow. Some growers are done with whites for the season and will not have them available again until late April. Imports are expected to start in March. Imperial Valley is expected to start in the last week of April. This will impact the precut.

onions green



Light supply, primarily from Mexico, rain, and cold temperatures have led the market to escalate, but it is expected to improve in the next week.



Market UPDATE

pears



Bartlett quality has been marginal, with better quality expected in the next two months. Anjou quality is good, with supplies through July. Bosc quality is good, with size peaking at 120/135ct.

peppers bell



Prices are decreasing but still high as Florida transitions from winter to spring crops. Improved weather and increasing volumes are expected, while Mexico's past weather events have kept supplies low. Supplies are expected to be tight for the next few weeks.

peppers chili



Prices are mixed, with an upward bias and good quality from Florida and Mexico.

pineapples



Despite a decrease in harvest, the sugar content of our fruit remained high, with 48.6% of samples having a brix greater than 15.5, and the average firmness remained consistent with the previous

week. All fruit quality characteristics were met, but vessel delays were reported on the west coast this week.

potatoes



The market is flat, with good quality. Idaho has plenty of availability due to better yields, making it a good time to promote potatoes.

squash



Yellow and zucchini squash prices are down. Supplies are extremely tight, with Florida expected to remain tight until mid-March. Mexico's production continues to be affected by cool weather, with growers forecasting supply to be tighter than usual for the next couple of weeks.

tomatoes



ALERT (20 lb, 25 lb Rounds & Cherry) Prices for 20 lb, 25 lb round, and roma are up, while grape prices have decreased. Past cold weather events continue to impact volumes in Florida and Mexico. Grape tomato market has come off and is getting close to normal, while the Roma market

commodities alert overview

Early morning frost and recent rains in California have delayed harvesting. Items affected are broccolini, green and red leaves, iceberg, romaine, and tender leaves. Arugula are limited due to cool temperatures and rain. **Arugula** are limited due to cool temperatures and rain. **Raspberries** and **Strawberries** are up due to the cooler weather. **Oranges** will be limited to smaller sizes due to the weather in California; it is recommended to open spec or switch to apples. **Tomatoes** are improving, and prices are starting to drop except for 20 lb and 25 lbs round, and cherry.



Market UPDATE

in the news...

What a consumer survey shows about packaged produce purchasing habits

By TOM KARST | February 22, 2024 | THE PACKER

More than 8 out of 10 consumers polled by The Packer's Fresh Trends 2024 survey said they purchased packed produce in the past year.

The consumer survey of more than 1,100 consumers, conducted October 2023, found that 82% of all consumers said they purchased packaged produce, with 18% indicating they did not.

By income demographic, Fresh Trends 2024 found that 72% of those making under \$25,000 annually said they purchased packaged produce. That is contrasted with 86% of consumers earning more than \$100,000 a year.

By age group, 74% of consumers who are 18-29 years old said they purchased packaged produce, compared with 85% for those 30-39

years old, 87% for those 40-49 years old, 83% for the 50-59 age group and 80% for those aged 60 years and older, according to the survey.

By region, 83% of consumers in the Midwest and Northeast said they purchased packaged produce, up slightly from 81% in the South and 80% in the West.

There was virtually no difference in packaged produce purchases based on family unit, as 81% of consumers with children at home indicated purchasing packaged produce, compared with 82% of consumers with no children at home. However, consumers with three or more kids were the most likely buy packaged produce, with 89% indicating purchases, compared with 80% of



The Packer's Fresh Trends 2024 survey asked about packaged produce purchases. (File photo: Amy Sowder)

consumers with one child.

By ethnic background, Fresh Trends 2024 found that 86% of Asian consumers said they....

[Read full article HERE](#)

produce in **PEAK** *for February*

Apples	Cabbage	Oranges
Avocado	Kale	Parsnip
Brussels Sprouts	Kiwi	Potatoes

If you have any specific questions or concerns on any commodities not mentioned in this report, please feel free to reach out to jhoppe@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. Have a great week!

Your Dedicated NPC Powered by Foodbuy Staff