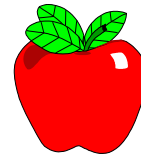


FRESH NEWS

From Pic Rite Management



October 18, 2020

Our goal is to provide up-to-date information about the ever-changing conditions affecting produce. Our weekly produce newsletter uses many sources and markets to track price, availability & quality.

MOTHER NATURE'S DECISIONS

Asparagus supplies are slow from MX but Peru is steady helping eastern supplies. Broccoli quality is ok & prices have dropped but will bounce around for the foreseeable future due to weather & lower yields. Cauliflower is fair with supply & quality. Carrots are steady but jumbo sizes are still on the tight size. Celery is in tighter supply. Corn continues to be very tight & even with GA starting, quality & supplies are fair at best. Eastern cucumbers are in better supply but in the west supplies are moving growing areas & supplies are inconsistent. There is very strong demand for all lettuces & lettuce has many quality issues & nothing will get better this month. Quality issues include light weights, mildew, decay, INSV that we have previously discussed and other issues. Once again, use fresh cut if you can for better quality & more steady prices for now anyway. Green peppers from the east are better but western supplies are tight. There is a production gap and prices are expected to go up but that all depends on demand. Larger potatoes are in better supply but now smaller sizes are tighter due to the USDA box program. Eastern squash supplies are better & western supplies are improving so prices should at worst stay even if not better. Strong demand & tight supplies will keep tomatoes expensive until FL starts.

Berry demand has decreased but blueberries are the tightest. Strawberries are starting to improve in quality & price. Grape quality & supply are holding steady. There is demand for cantaloupes & honeydews but good supplies to cover it. A strike in Costa Rica is affecting pineapple supplies but demand is slow.

COVID's Impact on Transportation

As with most things, COVID has made transportation more difficult and expensive. Freight costs have significantly increased. There is inconsistent access to some regions or slowdowns, scheduling and attendance issues, employee safety and training concerns. It has been estimated that freight costs have increased by 15-25% overall. When COVID first started, New York was considered the epicenter and there was reluctance by drivers to go to NY. Drivers wanted a premium for the risk, if they'd consider the load at all. Things are better now but not by much.

Hippopotamuses can run faster than humans & they can swim faster than humans. Which means the bicycle is your only chance of beating a hippo in a triathlon. Marriage: the only sport in which the trapped animal has to buy the license.

PRODUCE EXCHANGE TRENDS / HARVEST ORIGINS

This section of the Newsletter is designed to give a quick overview of the trends of individual items and the current major harvest areas in bold. "Mother Nature's Decisions" gives you more info on specific items.

Tomatoes – CA, MX, TN. Globes are fairly steady this week, grapes are higher & cherry are higher & plum are higher.

Potatoes – ID, WA, WI & CO. Bakers are steady & red are lower.

Lettuces – CA, MX. Lettuces all have quality issues. Leaf is climbing fast. Iceberg is lower but you might consider fresh cut & Romaine is higher & like iceberg, consider fresh cut.

Cauliflower – MX, AZ. Prices are a bit higher again.

Broccoli – MX, CA. Prices are much lower.

Grapes –CA. Green & red are steady with both having decent quality.

Strawberries – CA, MX. prices are steady this week with quality issues & tight supplies due to heat.

Melons –CA, AZ. Dews & loupes are steady. Go with larger sizes if possible.

Lemons– CA, AZ. Good supplies of choice lemons but go with the smaller sizes for the best deals.

Squash – FL, CA & MX. Yellow & green are lower but still expensive.

Peppers – FL, MX. Green is steady.

Celery – CA, MI, MX. Prices are higher this week.

Cucumbers – MX, FL, Honduras. Prices are lower.

Asparagus – MX, Peru. Prices are higher.

Avocados –MX, Peru & Dominican Republic. Prices are steady to a bit lower this week.

PICS WORTH A LOOK - Each ↑↓ = 8-12% change

GOOD VALUES

Avocados
Cantaloupe
Carrots
Celery
Honeydew
Onions
Watermelon
Peppers
Grapes, Red
Cauliflower

WATCH OUT-CAREFULLY CONSIDER

Corn
Tomatoes
Raspberries↓
Grapes, Gr
Romaine↑
Green Leaf↑↑
Squash, Gr↓↓
Squash, Yell↓↓
Cucumbers↓
Iceberg↓
Strawberries
Broccoli↓↓
Asparagus↑
Plum Tomato↑
Grape Tom
Cherry Tom