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# Food Service Report

August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019

## Tomatoes

**California** Growers are struggling with too few supplies to cover demand across the country. Extremely hot weather in June effectively removed much of the bloom that should have grown into tomatoes currently set for harvest right now. The effect is impacting both roma and round tomato varieties. Markets have increased due to extreme demand on too few supplies. Quotes are currently in the high teens and could breach the \$20 barrier. This week, temperatures will average 105-110 degrees. This could further impact tomato supplies in mid to late September.

**Tennessee, Alabama, Virginia, North Carolina:** Virginia is being pummeled by rain this week. Smaller tomato crops in the southeast are struggling with quality. Supplies are extremely limited with markets in the high teens.

**Outlook** With two large growers having exited the summer tomato growing deal in California this year and ones that did come back reducing their planted acreage way back, has triggered a demand exceeds supply situation for August. Late fall rains during plantings followed by extreme heat during the growing cycle have reduced yields by up to 40 percent.

## Weather Update

**California** Strong high pressure out west will continue to generate warmer temperatures, particularly for the inland valleys into Thursday. A cooling trend will begin Friday as an upper level low from the northeast going into the weekend.

**Mexico** Tropical Moisture to the south will continue to bring isolated showers and thunderstorms across Mexico with seasonably warm temperatures throughout the region.

**Florida** A low pressure systems stalls in the southeast coast keeping a moist flow across the Florida Peninsula with daily showers and thunderstorms. Heaviest accumulation expected Friday and Saturday over the Central and Northern counties.



## Lettuce

**Iceberg Lettuce** Although schools have started up again across the nation the market has remained steady. Shippers have seen an increase in business but have kept pricing steady due to good volume and yields. Ideal weather conditions have made this commodity readily available. Early forecasts indicate there will be ample supplies to fill all orders for the remainder of the week. Quality continues to be reported above average. Some minimal defects include puffiness, insect damage and mechanical issues. Weights are averaging between 41-44 pounds.

**Leaf Lettuce** The market continues to gain strength. Supplies will remain tight for the remainder of this week. Quality is strong with minimal defects including mechanical/insect damage, and fringe burn. Weights are averaging 36-42 pounds per case. The quality on green, and red leaf as well as butter have been reported strong. Reports indicated minimal issues of fringe burn, mildew and insect damage. Weights on green and red leaf range from 23-27 pound per case.

# Citrus

**Lemons** Supplies are plentiful this week with most of the fruit being imported out of both coasts. Offshore supply continues and has helped to offset domestic supplies. Good quality reported on export.

**Limes** The market remains firm while demand exceeds supplies on 175ct and larger. This is due to the presence of fewer crossings and decreased availability for this time of year. Rain in Veracruz and Michoacán this week have put an even greater damper in a an already tight market. These trends will remain consistent until late August/early September when the new crop officially begins. With fewer trucks crossing and less product available, layovers and loading delays are to be expected.

# Squash

**Baja/California** Italian and yellow squash continues to be harvested in Santa Marias, Fresno and Baja. The market on soft squash has increased slightly. Quality from the California growing districts is fair to good due to the recent heat. Good quality reported out of Baja. Moderate supplies are expected on both varieties through the week.

# Bell Peppers

**Eastern Supply** Green bells remain extremely tight although some new regions have started production. New Jersey has passed its peak but still has steady supply. Some quality issues have shown from the rain up and down coast followed by high temperatures. Michigan and Ohio have started with light supply and good quality. Expect supplies and pricing to remain steady through the week.

**Western Supply** Production continues to transition between growing areas, including some that are trying to catch up from pollination and harvest issues. Gilroy has started with light volume and variable quality. Numbers should improve as we move into August and Stockton starts for the season.

# Avocados

**California** Production continues to taper off and growers anticipate they will finish by the end of this month. Fruit quality has been excellent. With California and Peru finishing up their season, we will transition into Mexico as the only source for fruit until Chilean fruit arrives late fall.

**Mexico** The current Mexican crop is peaking on smaller fruit as large fruit is holding at a premium. Flor Loca crop should start winding down by the end of this month as the Aventajada variety is set to be harvested mid-August. With California and Peru approaching the end of their seasons, expect Mexico to drive the market back up.

# Onions

**California & New Mexico** Winding down for the season and dropping prices to push out the remaining product and make way for the transition.

**Northwest** Production has started up with a few suppliers and will continue to ramp up over the next few weeks with more shippers coming into the mix. Limited volume on yellow and white onions, leaning towards jumbo sizing. Red onions are in excellent supply. Good overall quality to start off the Northwest season. Expect markets to continue declining over the next several weeks while California and New Mexico wind down for the season.

# Cucumbers

**Baja/California** With the local season in full swing availability is plentiful. Regional deals on both coasts can fulfill local demand and volume is abundant. Quality is a little inconsistent and expect this situation to remain the same for the next 7-10 days. Promotional volume will be available for the next couple weeks. Supplies anticipated to start getting tighter towards the end of August.



Back-to-School