



Weekly Market Review December 20, 2024

Overview

The impacts from Hurricane Helene and Milton are expected to be felt across the entire Southeast through the end of the year and as we approach the Holidays, we continue to keep those in harm's way in our thoughts and prayers. We expect to see the supply of fresh produce from Florida to be extremely volatile through the end of the year. Commodities still feeling the impacts are the following: Citrus, Corn, Cotton, Tomatoes, Bell Pepper, Eggplant, Peanuts, Pecans and Mixed Hot Pepper. We are currently harvesting from regions that saw tremendous losses; some growers are in Force Majeure still as they deal with poor quality, 50% plus loss to crops and limited availability. This should all slowly improve as we move further south into the Immokalee districts between now and January. California is now done for the season on table grapes, and we have transitioned to the offshore season; we could see GAPS supply over the coming weeks on the West Coast as most of the offshore fruit on the front end of the season loads in the East. Fortunately, some growers can transfer fruit to maintain supply. Markets will be hit and miss through the first week of January. This should start to improve by Late December as more offshore fruit fills the supply chain. Pineapple volume is slowly improving; we need to be flexible on sizing to navigate the shortfalls. Honeydew will be a challenge over the next three weeks; transition combined with delays due to weather in South America have limited availability and quality fruit. Flexibility is very important during this transition to limit the portions of honey being served or outright subs if there are any shortages. Supply should improve over the next three weeks. In the West, tighter supply available to market on mushrooms; weather impacts and viral pressure have caused supply shortfalls across the region on all varieties. The holiday season has arrived, and increasing industry demand is driven by upcoming holiday promotions. Avocado availability has improved to meet this demand, with stable prices and a narrowing price gap between sizes 48 and 60. The next few weeks present strong promotional opportunities across large, medium, and small fruit. Demand is expected to remain high through February, with stable-to-higher prices anticipated during the final two weeks of the year. However, Christmas and New Year's both falling on Wednesdays will impact weekly harvest levels. Strong field demand this week aims to ensure adequate supplies for the holidays. While select sizes may offer hot-buy opportunities, the overall market is expected to remain strong into the new year. Christmas is right around the corner and the transition is wrapping up. We are finally starting to see some relief from the heat damage we had in Yuma and Salinas. Quality and supplies are improving across the board. Broccoli is still escalated but is no longer at the extreme trigger. Quality and supplies look good, but we do still have some growers holding to averages. Endive, escarole, leeks, cilantro and fennel are still escalated and look to remain that way through the year. Bok Choy, Cauliflower and Artichokes have stayed at the extreme trigger. All these items are still very light in supplies. Growers will be holding on to averages and you may still see some prorates. Spinach is still escalating but will likely be back to normal pricing after Christmas. Broccolini is finally seeing some relief and growers should be able to fill orders in full. Some will still be holding to averages but supplies have improved. Green cabbage, Red Cabbage, Celery and Brussel Sprouts are still escalated. Supplies will be limited to all cabbage items, but things are definitely improving. Brussel Sprouts are in higher demand with

the holidays and some growers are starting to be tight on supplies. Transition threw us a few curve balls, but we are starting to see relief. Broccoli and Cauliflower will remain a bit of a roller coaster until we get into Q1. Some growers are struggling with supplies since the mornings are still cold and they are not getting the growth they need to catch up on supplies yet. The Cauliflower market has continued to go up. Those cold mornings are also still affecting Lettuce so you can expect to see the lightweights and smaller heads throughout the remainder of the year. As a reminder, some growers are still loading out of Salinas and Oxnard and there will be transfer fees on some items with some growers. Please be aware that you may see some of these fees if you are loading in one location. Some growers have items that do not transfer to Yuma so they will have fees throughout the Yuma season. Happy Holidays everyone!

Market Alert List

- ***Asparagus – ESCALATED***
- ***Artichokes – EXTREME***
- ***Avocados – ESCALATED***
- ***Bell Pepper (Green, Red, Yellow and Orange) –ESCALATED***
- ***Bok Choy – EXTREME***
- ***Broccoli, Florets and Crowns – ESCALATED***
- ***Brussel Sprouts-ESCALATED***
- ***Cabbage, Green – ESCALATED***
- ***Cabbage, Red – ESCALATED***
- ***Cauliflower – EXTREME***
- ***Celery – ESCALATED***
- ***Cilantro – ESCALATED***
- ***Corn – EXTREME***
- ***Endive and Escarole – ESCALATED***
- ***Fennel, Anise – ESCALATED***
- ***French Beans – ESCALATED***
- ***Hot Peppers (Habanero, Shishito) – ESCALATED***
- ***Leeks – EXTREME***
- ***Lettuce, Boston– ESCALATED***
- ***Limes – ESCALATED ON SMALL SIZES***
- ***Melon – Cantaloupe – WATCHLIST Honeydew –ESCALATED***
- ***Napa – ESCALATED***
- ***Parsley (Italian & Curly) – ESCALATED***
- ***Pickles – ESCALATED***
- ***Spinach –ESCALATED***
- ***Strawberries – ESCALATED***
- ***Table Grapes – ESCALATED***
- ***Tomatoes (Rounds, Romas and Snacking Tomatoes) –EXTREME***

Watch List

- 1. Broccolini***
- 2. Ginger***
- 3. Snow Peas & Sugar Snap Peas***
- 4. Limes – Large Sizes***

Fruits & Vegetables

Avocados: ESCALATED Last week's harvest closed at 46.1M pounds, a 20% decline from the prior week, partly due to a holiday in Mexico. This week marks the final full harvest week of the year, with strong volumes projected and extra supply needed to stabilize the pipeline before reduced operations in the following two weeks. The Main Crop shows a dry matter estimate of 28.4%. Field availability favors smaller sizes, while sizes 40 and larger remain in tight supply. The extended rainy season has increased the proportion of grade 2 fruit.

Bananas: Supply remains stable now and shortages were averted as the strike has been postponed. Over quality remains good across the country.

Pineapples: Supply will remain very light for the foreseeable future due to harvest shortfalls; we need to be flexible on sizing as 5-6ct fruit is very short with 7-8's plentiful. The need to be flexible on sizing may be necessary to maintain consistent supply. Quality is good.

Table Grapes: ESCALATED Current table grape supply out of California continues to dwindle and should be done by the end of the month; some shippers sooner than others. The greens will be out first. We could see supply GAPS over the next several weeks on the West Coast as most of the offshore fruit on the front end of the season loads in the East. This should start to improve by Late December as more offshore fruit fills the supply chain. Quality will be mixed for the next several weeks, we will see elevated shatter, amber in any lingering greens in the market and shorter shelf life.

Berries

Strawberries: ESCALATED Supplies are increasing out of most growing areas. Santa Maria's weather remains mild, with daytime highs in the low 70s and cool nights. Light rain this week and next is not expected to impact production significantly. Fruit quality is improving, with reduced decay, though variability in size persists. Overall volumes are stabilizing but will gradually decline through December. Organic fields under tunnels maintain production, while spring crop fields show promising early growth with anticipated harvests starting late December or early January. Mexico continues to see warm daytime temperatures support steadily increasing production, but quality remains a concern with issues like bruising and white shoulders upon arrival in Texas. Warmer temperatures in Florida boost production and quality, though green tips remain from earlier cold snaps. Production is ramping up significantly, with specialty packs now in limited production.

Blackberries: Out of Mexico, quality is strong, with medium to large berries showing good sheen and firmness. Some red cell regression and soft fruit are noted. Steady volumes are expected for the rest of the year, with transfers to Texas maintaining freshness.

Raspberries: Out of Mexico, quality is good, with strong color and firmness, though occasional overripe or crumbled fruit is noted. Volume remains steady, with transfers to Texas ensuring freshness through the season.

Blueberries: Out of Mexico, volume has passed its first peak and is gradually declining, with another peak expected in February. Organics experienced a gap due to cold weather but will recover next week. Conventional and organic volumes remain relatively steady, with minor quality issues like shriveling and leakage. No shipments this week out of Peru, but arrivals are expected next week, featuring high-quality fruit. Production is slowing, with final shipments anticipated in January. Out of Chile, cooler weather supports steady production, though volume is decreasing in northern regions. Peak exports are expected by mid-January. Quality remains high with large, firm, sweet berries, despite occasional slow-ripening issues. Delays at ports are noted. Organic blueberry production is expected to begin in January out of Oxnard, CA.

Citrus

Oranges: We are entering the heart of the Navel season. Quality from California is very good with sizing still running heavy to 88s, 113s and 138s. 72's and larger continue to be in lighter supply although availability of larger sizes continues to improve,

Lemons: Lemon supplies are plentiful with very good quality out of the desert growing regions. District 1 and District 2 Lemons have also started with very good quality as well.

Limes: SMALL SIZES – ESCALATED / LARGE SIZES – WATCH LIST ... With the current growing areas finishing, the market is getting stronger, especially in smaller sizes. Currently, Large sizes are prevalent with light volume on small fruit, but we are starting to see that change as growers are reporting much smaller fruit in the new growing areas. As we finish December and head into January, we will see much smaller sizes with light availability on large sizes until mid to late February. As growers transition to the new crop and growing areas, we expect a significant jump in pricing which is anticipated to last through February before we see things start to stabilize.

Imports/Specialties: California Mandarins and Grapefruit are seeing much better supplies with very good quality. Cara Cara volume is increasing with promotable volume through December. Blood Orange volume continues to increase

West Coast Lettuce

Iceberg: Lettuce supplies and quality are improving. Weights are better but are still slightly lower than normal. Yields are improving as the weather warms up in Yuma.

Iceberg VA: Quality and supplies are improving. You may still see some growers holding to averages but the market is starting to even out.

Romaine, & Romaine Hearts: Romaine and Romaine heart supplies have improved. We are still seeing light weights and some growers holding to averages. The Romaine Hearts market is still escalating with some growers.

Romaine VA: Quality is fair, and supplies are still very tight. You will likely see growers holding to averages.

Green Leaf and Red Leaf: Overall quality and supplies look good. Weights and sizing are still light, but the weather is improving so weights and supplies will get better soon.

Eastern and Western Vegetables

Green Bell Pepper: ESCALATED Markets remain firm this week with light volume in the East expected for some time due to the impact of Hurricane Milton. In the West, light supply is expected this week and should loosen up as we completely transition to Nogales. Quality is mostly good.

Color Bell Pepper: ESCALATED Markets remain very high and supply light crossing from Mexico. Orange looks to be the item to sub over to from yellow and red on the spot market. The quality of being packed is mostly good.

Mini Sweet Pepper: Supply stable this week loading in Nogales.

Mixed Chili Pepper: ESCALATED Supplies in general are good across most varieties out of Mexico: Jalapeno, Habanero, Serrano and Poblano were good this week. Fresnos and Shishitos are the shortest this week. We still expect supply GAPS in the East due to the weather.

Eggplant: Tighter supply from all domestic growing regions keeps upward pressure on price; stable crossings in Nogales and McAllen. Quality is good.

Slicer Cucumbers: Good supply crossing through Nogales and McAllen. Domestically, we may see some supply GAPS this week due to cold weather in Florida. The best quality is coming from Mexico.

English Cucumbers: Good supply available this week crossing from Mexico. Quality on new crop out of Mexico was good.

Pickles: WATCHLIST Improving supply available crossing through Nogales, the Florida season will be altered due to the impacts of Milton; Supply will be hit and miss over the next several weeks.

Green Beans: Supply stable and quality expected to be good crossing through Nogales this week. Florida beans are still firm and quality is mixed.

French Beans: ESCALATED There is a limited supply of organic and conventional French beans from Guatemala, but Production continues to improve with fair quality. French beans from Mexico are also in short supply due to weather conditions.

Zucchini/Yellow Squash: Good volume available crossing through Nogales and available in Florida.

Herbs

Basil supply and quality from Mexico are expected to be marginal due to cold weather, with all other herbs similarly impacted, leading to inconsistent availability over the coming weeks. Imported **chervil** supply is improving, while **chives** and **sage** production continue to be affected by cold conditions in Mexico.

Melons

Both cantaloupes and honeydews reached “demand exceeds supply” levels due to the effects that followed Tropical Storm Sara almost four weeks ago. Although we have experienced lower yields on both commodities, to date we have fared much better on the cantaloupe than the honeydew. We began advising three weeks ago of a potential volatile December and that has definitely come to fruition with the honeydews

Cantaloupe: WATCHLIST Quality is very nice on the fruit arriving from Guatemala; sizing is primarily 9s followed by 12s and 9Js while brix levels have been mostly in the 12-16% ranges with some higher. Demand is strong right now and is expected to remain high through January as the rain from Tropical Storm Sara has impacted fields in Honduras and Costa Rica which were scheduled to begin harvesting in four weeks. Shippers with fruit from those regions are already advising customers that no promotional pricing will be provided over the next 2-3 months as there is concern with bacteria in fields negatively impacting yields. We will continue to monitor this situation and provide further input on future updates, but we are expecting higher markets to remain in place both in the short and long term.

Honeydew: ESCALATED With very limited supply crossing through Nogales and the offshore volume being down 30 – 50% (depending on field location and the amount of rain received) following TS Sara, there just has not been enough production to satisfy the industry. We will continue to battle this for the next 3-4 weeks and ask for flexibility in sizing and subs where necessary to maintain service levels as we are unclear as to when supply will improve at this point in the season.

Watermelon: Lighter supply available and demand is light. Fruit is being harvested from Texas as well as Mexico.

Mixed Vegetables

Artichokes: EXTREME Supplies remain limited and will continue to be tight throughout the year. The market is still at the extreme trigger. Growers are holding to averages. Quality is good.

Asparagus: ESCALATED Southern/Northern Baja production is still low due to seasonality. Northern Sonora (Caborca) has started with very low volume, which will continue until climate warms in the region. Peruvian volume continues to decrease due to quality and seasonality. Markets are extremely active with less production in the market.

Bok Choy: EXTREME Quality is good, but supplies are still limited. The light supplies are driving the market.

Broccoli/Broccoli Crowns: ESCALATED Quality and supplies are improving. Supplies are going to be limited for most growers for at least a few more weeks. It is cold in the mornings in Yuma and that was not helping the broccoli grow but the weather is improving so the supplies are getting better. Floret Mini’s are also tight, and some growers are extremely short on those.

Broccolini and Sweet Baby Broccoli: WATCHLIST Quality is good, but supplies are light with some growers. Expect this item to be an issue throughout the year. Demand is very strong, and supplies continue to be limited but growers are starting to be able to fill full orders. They are just still holding to averages.

Brussels Sprouts: ESCALATED Quality looks very good, but some growers have tight supplies, and it is driving the market up.

Carrots: (JUMBOS, MEDIUMS and CELLOS): WATCHLIST Jumbo Carrot supplies are light, but supplies remain steady on all other sizes and packs with good Quality.

Cauliflower: EXTREME Supplies remain tight, and quality is just okay. Yuma has still not been able to get caught up on supplies. Some growers are holding to weekly averages and some growers are prorating. The Cauliflower market is very active and has been steadily increasing. The cold mornings are just not allowing the heads to develop. The weather in Yuma is starting to improve but it will be a few weeks before we see some relief on this item. Caulilini is also affected and is seeing very tight supplies or no product at all.

Celery: ESCALATED: Quality and supplies are okay. Growers can cover contract business. There are some heat issues and insect pressures. Supplies are tight and will continue to be that way into Christmas. The market is very active and is continuing to increase. Things should start to trend after the holidays.

Corn: EXTREME Current supply is extremely tight and expected to continue through New Years. In the East the primary regions where production is taking place were damaged by Hurricane Milton and seeing very low yields and heavy crop damage. We anticipate volatile markets through the end of the year. Also want to note that corn will be smaller this time of year as well due to less sun which typically slows the growth of the ears and produces smaller kernels. In the West, supply is stable crossing through Nogales.

Fennel: ESCALATED The fields are seeing lower yields and therefore there is a shortage in supply. Pricing will stay escalated until supplies improve.

KALE: Supplies have improved, and quality is good.

Leeks: EXTREME Leeks are very tight right now and some growers are holding to averages. The market remains escalated and will likely stay that way throughout the year.

Garlic: California Garlic is showing very good quality with good demand.

Ginger: Supplies and market are steady

Green Cabbage: ESCALATED Supplies and quality are improving. The market is still escalating but it should start to level out soon.

Green Onions: Supplies and quality look good

Mushrooms: Supply will remain snug through the end of the year. Quality is good.

Napa Cabbage: ESCALATED Quality and supplies are improving but there is some insect pressure.

Parsley: ESCALATED (Italian & Curly): Supplies are improving but the light supply in some markets is driving the market. Quality is okay.

Rapini: Quality is good, but supply continues to be light. The market is strong and therefore the supplies will continue to be light.

Red Cabbage: ESCALATED- Pricing is escalated. The quality is good, but supplies are tight. Light supplies are expected for at least the next 2 weeks. The market remains very active.

Spinach: ESCALATED Supplies are improving. Some growers are still holding onto weekly averages, but the market is starting to level out. Relief should be coming soon on this matter.

Snow Peas and Sugar Snaps: ESCALATED Guatemalan snow pea production is improving this week and is expected to improve further next week. However, sugar snap production remains low due to weather challenges, leading to active market conditions. Domestic supply of both snow peas and sugar snaps is limited, and Mexican production is also low due to adverse weather. The market remains highly active.

Onions: ESCALATED

The Pacific Northwest storage supplies generally take a bit of a price increase in early Q1. While this is no guarantee, we do anticipate this will be the cast on white and red onions. White supplies were light to begin with in the PNW, and we do not anticipate relief there until Mexico begins crossing their supply, which should take place around the middle of Q1 in February. They are typically not very big red suppliers, so we may see the continued pattern of reds remaining elevated until we get into the Spring/Summer months in California. Now, all reports are that Mexico will have a healthy crop in terms of quality and volume. Because of this, we are not anticipating the market to be volatile soon. However, the Texas crop is still too early to predict. The onions are still far from 'made' that a weather event could still impact their crop. If that were to happen, we would likely see a swift increase on all colors and sizes near the end of Q1.

Potatoes:

No major changes are expected in the short term. Size profiles remain balanced now, with volume deals on count carton sizes alternating a bit on a weekly basis – meaning one week it will be a 40/50, and the next it will be 80/90. Overall, size does seem to be more plentiful than smaller size count cartons. We will likely begin to see Norkotah supplies taper off toward the end of Q1, with most growers transitioning to Burbanks only during the beginning of Q2. When this takes place, we anticipate that supply could tighten up some as yields were believed to not be as plentiful in Burbanks as they were in Norkotahs this past year. It remains to be seen just how impacted pricing will be, and on what sizes exactly. However, we do feel confident that we will not see a cheaper market than we are seeing today.

Tomatoes: East Coast

• **Round, Romas and Snacking Tomatoes: EXTREME** We continue to see shortfalls in supply however there is light at the end of this tunnel. We expect to see a slow improvement in production after Christmas as we recover from Hurricane Milton. We still expect volume out of the region to be at 20% or less of the normal levels over the next week then slowly improve. We are hoping by Jan 1 to see a much more stable domestic tomato production outlook.

Tomatoes: Mexico

• **Round Tomatoes: EXTREME** Lighter numbers this week crossing from all shipping points. Large fruit is the shortest; overall volume will be at seasonal lows in general from all growing regions. We expect to see volatile markets continue. We will see flushes of fruit then tighten back up over the next several weeks. Markets will see added pressure through the Holidays as demand that would be pulling from Florida will shift West due to the devastation caused by Hurricane Milton.

• **Roma Tomatoes: EXTREME** Improving volume crossing through Nogales this week; volume was lighter out of Otag and McAllen as the motion has been set for the Winter transition. There is some fruit out there that is questionable, and deals being made for that supply. Stronger fruit is pulling a premium. Markets will be active throughout the next week as demand remains strong out of the east. Quality is mixed.

• **Grape Tomatoes: EXTREME**- High Demand and short supply expected to keep prices well above normal throughout the holiday season. A lot of this is due to limited supply on the east coast and transition in the west. Quality is good.

• **Cherry Tomatoes and Medley Tomatoes:** Supply is tighter, and markets are firming up. Quality is good.

• **Tomato on the Vine:** Steady volume available this week.

Other Fruit:

Apples: Last year, Washington State Apple growers shipped just over 136 million boxes of Apples. This year's total is projected at 124 million. Prices will likely be higher this year and much more manageable of a crop.

Projections below

- **Red Delicious** – 4 million down from last Season
- **Gold Delicious** – 280,000 boxes down from last Season
- **Gr Smiths** – 1.1 million boxes down
- **Fuji** – 1.5 million boxes down
- **Gala** – 3 million boxes down
- **Honeycrisp** – 5 million boxes down
- **Cosmic** – Up 2.7 million boxes.

Pears: The Northwest Pear Crop (Washington/Oregon) is substantially down from last season due to below average temps in late Feb/early March affecting bud development. The higher elevation areas in Washington were severely impacted, especially the Wenatchee Valley. The Oregon Growing Region was not affected as much as Wenatchee, Washington, but it was still impacted.

- **The Bartlett Crop** out of the Northwest shows 3.8 million shipped last season vs a projected 2.9 million this year for a 14% decrease. It's not substantial in terms of overall volume, but it's still a factor. The cold temperatures will affect the grade, so more Fancy's will be packed than normal. Because the crop is smaller, the size profile has increased by 1 to 2 sizes. Barts to finish by the end of Feb./ first part of March.
- **Anjous** report at least a 30% total decrease, or 1.85 million boxes less than last year. Also, out of the Wenatchee Valley, there will be fancier and, for the first time in many Years, a 3rd grade Anjous packed. When we start to pack Anjous – I will share pics of 3rd grade, this will be your value pear. Anjous to start the week of September 16th, and if growers make it through June I will be surprised.
- **Red Anjous** are down 7% or 47,000 boxes, so it is nothing dramatic like the others. The question on Red Anjous is whether or not we will see smaller pears such as 120/135cts. Red pears are supposed to be 1 to 2 sizes larger out of the PNW. Red pears have started with
- **Starkrimsons** and will transition into Red Anjou from November through May.
- **Bosc** are down 63% out of the great Northwest or 1.38 million boxes. This variety was mostly affected, and markets will be much higher than in previous years. Bosc has slowly started with a potential end date last January/middle of February.

Pomegranate: Good supply available this week.

Asian Pears: Peaking in volume Quality is outstanding

Tree Fruit: Mostly done for the season. Offshore fruit should arrive around Christmas.

Kiwi Fruit: Supplies are tight out of Chile and markets are firming up.

Persimmons: Active markets and quality are good on both Hachiya and Fuyu

Quince: Starting to harvest.