

# TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of  
**December 12,  
2010**



## Market Report

Did you ever get the feeling things are bad and they are going to stay that way for a while? Well I have that feeling, and I've had it all week, when it comes to produce prices. Things are not going well in growing areas- some of it is short term and some long term. Florida got a shot of cold weather this week and of course the sky is now falling in Florida and all the prices are going to go up- at least that's what they want you to believe- but one shot of cold weather does not make a crisis; a week of below freezing would do it, like last year. They did get some damage, how much- we'll see in the next 4-6 weeks. Prices for Peppers, Yellow Squash and Zucchini all went up from Florida and Tomatoes are right behind them. You will see increases on Tomatoes next week and Plum Tomatoes have gone up the most.

I knew they were going to raise the price of Asparagus, I just didn't know when, now I do- Right now. Supply is very light out of Peru. Mexico finished earlier than expected so Peru is everyone's choice. But the farmers in Peru didn't like the return they were getting from the fresh market so they sent most of their product to processors for freezing or other uses; the fresh market got really tight, really fast so prices are now in the thirties and will stay that way all through the Holidays. Another reason is air freight out of Peru is really expensive and not a lot of air space is available, so it's hard to get product here quickly so price is going up.

Next on our list of stupidly high prices product- Cau-

liflower. If it wasn't for the Holidays, it wouldn't be an issue, but it is. Product is in a 'demand exceeds' situation- that means there is no product and everyone wants it. Also, some chain store has it on ad somewhere and is taking all of the supply. In either case, we are screwed because we are being cut on every order we put in. So I'm trying to buy it on the open market and even they don't have any, and if they do they want \$48.00 for it. Price of Cauliflower is about as high as I have ever seen it and supply is nil. If you can use something else- do it- but if you can't, you have a problem.

Now if that 'something else' is Broccoli- bad choice. That market is also on fire and you will see the highest prices on that item next week. Also, growers don't have product, and most of what they have was earmarked for retail ads for the Holidays. When they put product on ad, they must protect the supply to retail so food service takes it in the shorts 98% of the time- the 2% is us paying through the nose for what's left. It's so much fun being in the produce business this time of year. The only good thing about Broc being tight is it grows fast so hopefully it won't be a long term deal- but at least a week or two. Of course when you talk about Holiday meals you will at some point want to use Celery- either for dicing or sticks- and you can expect to pay more for that also, but not at crisis mode yet.

If I had to pick a theme for this Market Report it would be-depressing. Strawberries are not helping out mood either. They have been a pain in everyone's ass for the last 3-4 weeks and look to stay that way next week also. One of our major suppliers sent me a note and

## Market Report, Cont'd...

said, "Have gone ice fishing because that's what's happening with Strawberries." Cold weather is only good if you like winter sports- which if you talk to most produce guys and girls, it not their favorite season. Most are into hot and sunny, which is why we are not having a good fall/ winter season, we are not getting enough 'hot and sunny' in growing areas and its causing major headaches for the produce field. So if you need a career change, don't pick produce wholesaler, unless you like to be depressed during the Holiday season. Oh wait, I forgot a biggy, Limes have triples in price in 2 days. Want to know why? The big reason is supply and the non-existent supply of Limes that is. A disease called Sweet Orange Scab, or SOS for short, is causing a major issue in Mexico. The Florida Orange growers are scared to death this disease may get in the U.S.- it would devastate the Citrus industry in the U.S., so every truck with Citrus (Limes) is being stopped at the border and being sent back to Mexico to see if they think they're a potential problem. This is causing no Limes to cross and driving up price very quickly and very high. You are also correct when you realize it couldn't come at a more inopportune time with New Year's right around the corner- so don't expect to see them drop prices anytime soon.

Want some good news? You can now take Cialas for daily use, just in case you need to be ready at a moment's notice. The logic of this escapes me- if you have that good of a sex life, you don't need Cialas, you need a rolling bedroom and a stand-in, and neither of them would be cheap. So my suggestions is forget daily use and stick to special occasions- you will be better off and not as tired.

Did you hear the one about the son who told his dad he wants to be a truck driver and the dad said he wouldn't stand in his way.

Most of my truck drivers can see objects in front of them- it's the not hitting them that has been an issue lately.

If you need good Hard Fruit, a couple of other items showed up this week- Nectarines and Peaches from Chile but they need ripening- Apricots, Cherries, Galia Melons, Crenshaw Melons, and Orange Flesh Melons, Tangerines, Clementines, Satsuma Mandarins to name

a few.

Don't forget the staples: Lettuce (much cheaper next week), Romaine (major issues with peeled product, not a lot of clean product around), Green Leaf and Red Leaf are still high. Boston Lettuce is really high priced still so try and stay away from that if you can.

All kinds of great Potatoes are available at great prices- that may be the way to go if you need a good stable item. Just remember- its Christmas time and everyone is in a giving mood, and that mood in my industry is usually not a pleasant experience at this time of year. (And yes, I would have said that the more provocative way but its Christmas, little kids read the market report this month!)

## Sale Items

Pinneapple, Case 8ct \$14.90

Potatoes, 100ct Local Case \$14.75

Melons, Orange Flesh, Case \$15.00

Mesculin Mix, Case 3# \$8.95

**Testa Item #31603**

**Testa Item#35165**

**Testa Item# 25355**

**Testa Item # 23370**

Quantities are Limited.

Available While Supplies Last!

**BE SURE TO USE THESE ITEM NUMBERS!**

## Produce Quiz

I won't stab you in the back, I can't. Although I am crispy, I'd probably break first. As the main ingredient in a king's salad, I don't come very far. But whether to have me before or after a meal is a debate that has gone on since the time of Augustus. Some say I originated in the Aegean others say in parts of Asia. I am a member of the sunflower family of plants. Originally grown for the oil in my seeds, now people like me for my heart. I usually remain loyal green and large leafed but the modern day yuppies pluck us as babies and often grow us red. Now they rip us apart and stack us up like junked cars. They put a liner around us and they think that makes up for the violence. As if! Each year Americans eat about 30 pounds of my relatives and me. And it's no wonder, because people can do so much with me: I can be used as a bed on a plate, served with fruit or anchovies, pickled in a jar, or cooked in soup. At home with croutons or anchovies we are also the crisp bit you yearn for in your favorite sandwich. The myth that my siblings and I provide almost no nutritional value is not quite true, because I contain folates, vitamins A & C, potassium and fiber.

**Last Quiz Answer: Akebia**