

TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of

**January 9,
2011**



Market Report

Its 2011, a new year, time to reflect on what happened last year and what to look forward to in the next year. Last year was tough on everybody we talk to, no one had what I would call a 'stellar year', but next year looks much brighter and I see my customers more upbeat about business. Myself, I think 2012 will be a banner year but 2011 can set us up nicely for it. We do have some bad news in the Chicago produce business news. One of the oldest wholesalers has shut down on the terminal market, the Auster Company, which was a staple for many years, has closed. We are sad to see them go and it makes everyone realize that nothing is forever and bad things can happen to good people. When you lose a wholesaler it makes things a little tougher to get product and your choices are less. I want everyone to do well (maybe not everyone) to keep Chicago atop of the produce world for supply. We are fortunate to have a terminal market that offers a wide variation of product because of lot of cities do not have that luxury.

Prices on some items are completely stupid. Corn over \$40, Limes over \$60, Carrots pushing \$30. There are not only odd ball items,

there are staples that everyone uses and make your food cost go crazy. Trying to switch to alternative items is usually not an option but cutting down or changing pack size could help. If you use a 175 Lime, switching to a 200ct can help; this usually works with Citrus products, not so much with Veggies. It's hard to make a Zucchini into an ear of Corn but if you wish upon a star maybe, or consume mass quantities of alcohol, anything is possible.

When I was a teenager, I got drunk at a party and thought I could dance, one flight of stairs later I found out I couldn't. Beans are still crazy high, Asparagus has come down, French Beans are down also. Cucs are down, Eggplant is higher, Green Onions are going up fast. Nappa and Bok Choy are much higher. Broc is moving back up again and quickly; quality will be an issue with Broc and other Row Crops because of weather issues.

It is going to take weeks or months to dry out fields and during that time, quality issues will persist. The good news is Strawberries are getting better and supply is getting better also. Florida and Mexico are shipping again and that is keeping prices in check. But Raspberries

Market Report, Cont'd...

and Blackberries are tightening up. Blueberries are still a great deal and they make you look young. That's why all my girls at work eat a flat a day, and you should see how young they look, they all can go back to High School soon, with one exception- she can only make it to college. Blueberries are good but they can't do miracles.

Head Lettuce, Romaine, Leaf Lettuce, Boston Lettuce and Flower are all stable but I do not think its going to stay that way. Peppers are steady on Greens. Reds have finally come down and Yellows are a little easier also. Potatoes are steady but extremely cold weather in Idaho is making it difficult to load product. This causes shortages on certain sizes at times and can cause a price spike- just so you know.

Zucchini is a good deal next week, Yellow Squash is steady, Hard Squashes are steady. The Tomato market is moving, and up is where it's going. You will see a slight increase next week on some sizes of Tomatoes, with the biggest jump in Plum Tomatoes. Good deal on Cherry and Grape Tomatoes also.

Hand Fruit is still favoring Pears, Apples and Citrus items. Your best choices in Pears- Comice, Red, Forrelle, and Seckel are great. A huge variety of Apples is available. On the Citrus side of things- Clementines, Tangerines- Honey and Sunburst varieties Navel Oranges, Blood Oranges, and Kumquats are all available. There are Peaches and Nectarines but they require ripening. Also, Apriums are available. Watermelon is coming down. Cantaloupe is going up, Honeydew is going up, Mixed Melons are still available, Meyer Lemons are still available. We have some Figs but scarce supplies.

January and February are usually a slow time for most customers and a good time to clean up or try some new items. We do have our Organic Citrus program going and some of the items are limited- if you want to sample an item, call your sales rep and they will help you.

Sale Items

Pinneapple, Case 8ct \$13.00	Testa Item #31603
Potatoes, 100ct Local Case \$14.75	Testa Item#35165
Honeydew, Case 6ct \$11.95	Testa Item # 16152
Blueberries, Generic Flat 12pkg \$16.50	Testa Item #03850

Quantities are Limited.

Available While Supplies Last!

BE SURE TO USE THESE ITEM NUMBERS!

Produce Quiz

Don't leaf me out, because I'm the main event. Well, okay there is the fruit, but you can't eat it. Maybe you will use its bumpy peel for concentrated aromatic oils in curry, or for some zest in your "jungle soup" (gkaeng bpah), but that's it. I'm what you want! I'm the bay leaf of the Far East. I am a citrus sub-species of the family peapeda. I am a lovely dark green with a glossy sheen. My leaves (often pounded into a jelly or mixed with hot chili paste) grow in couplets, smaller on top, broader on the bottom, and range from one half inch to over three inches long. I'm not an easy pick as my growth is slow and you will fight thorny branches to reach me. In tropical Thailand my tree is a fixture in every countryside home. Often seen out on the town with lemon grass, together we create a mean dtom yam, and often we don't get home 'til dawn. It's my scent that the public craves making me essential in soups, salads, curries, stir-fries, broth or stew. I am a secret ingredient in many fish dishes and I provide an excellent texture, and great presentation. Cut me into slivers to release my seriously tempting aromatic citrus flavor. The more you cut me the stronger I get, until I eventually dominate everything I surround. I also have many household uses. My uses include invigorating shampoos, insect repellents, stain removers, as well as being a tooth and gum strengthener. So if you can find me, don't leaf me behind. Get it?

Last Quiz Answer: Mandarin