

TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of
May 13, 2011



Market Report

If you are in the restaurant business you know next week is the Restaurant Show in Chicago. This show is one of the most popular in the city for a lot of reasons but the number one is everyone eats out a lot and the number of different tastes that come to town is amazing. People from all over the world come to Chicago to see new and updated equipment, ideas on new foods and all kinds of products, and some old ones that still are going strong. I love this show mostly for how busy the town gets, but also I look for new ideas for customers- you never know, you might find a cool idea and make some money also.

Of course good things don't last forever- the same goes with cheap prices. We have a few loose cannons next week. Lets start with Celery- price is over \$38 a box and its looking pretty strong all next week, so don't go too crazy with inventory; hopefully prices will change, but don't hold your breath. Next on our 'going up list' is Cauliflower. This one never went down and now you are looking at \$26-\$28 per box and possibly higher later in the week.

Also on the way up, the Head Lettuce market got very strong toward the end of last week and supposedly it will be that way for three weeks. Green Beans took a jump as well this week. Corn is steady, Cucs are down, Broccoli took off and it's heading for over \$20 a case. The main reason everyone is giving is weather, but very high demand for Easter on Cauliflower and Broc caught a lot of growers by surprise- and that's the other reason. Green Leaf and Red Leaf Lettuce are steady.

Carrots are still very expensive but there is light at the end of the tunnel- Local production will take price down but we have to wait at least another month or two.

Boston Lettuce is still high; Romaine is your best Lettuce for next week. It is in good supply and price is steady. Romaine Hearts are also in good shape. Rapini is steady, Radishes are down, and Eggplant is back to normal, so every Italian Restaurant can breath a sigh of relief from stupid prices. There are also a lot of Baby, White, Japanese, and Chinese Eggplant available and that makes a wonderful change if you know what to do with it- if you don't, forget I said anything.

Green Peppers are all over the board right now- Jumbo and XLarge are in the high twenties, Medium and Large are not much better, Suntan are the cheapest and most abundant. Red Peppers are super expensive this week and are showing no signs of going down any time soon. Yellows are also right up there and are going to stay that way all week. The Squash market is also strong. Yellow is actually cheaper than Zucchini and that doesn't happen too often- Zucchini is much higher this week. The Onion market is very active- Growers are saying prices are going up shortly because some of the growing areas are finishing up earlier than expected and others are not ready. This could (key word being 'could') cause a major jump in the market later in the season. Anytime growers say 'maybe', its going to happen, even if its just for a week for two.

The Tomato market got caught with its pants down this week and that doesn't mean that Tomatoes are cheaper,

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it means they are more expensive. Here's what happened: Mexico finished up on Rounds but still has Plum Tomatoes. Florida production got cut by 50-60% on Rounds because of bad weather, they had rain and hot weather which brought all production forward by 2-3 weeks, so they sold product at cheap prices and surprise- they are out of product. California is in light production also so now you have a gap, which everyone is saying is going to last 2-3 weeks before Carolina and Florida can catch up, so prices jumped \$5 higher next week and we'll see what happens after that- always a fun business. We have Organic Tomatoes coming in next week so you might see some of those on your order. It will be the same price as conventional but you will love the taste. I don't know how many or what size yet so we will wait and see what shows up.

On the fruit side of things, we are getting ready to kick some ass on fruit. California is gearing up and some stuff is ready- Apricots, Apriums, Peaches, Nectarines, and Cherries are here. A couple of them we are pre-conditioning to get them riper for you, but the first soft fruit usually takes a little longer to ripen because they pick them a little earlier rather than later in the season when they usually ripen more on the tree. New Grapes are in this week- prices are high but will drop after a week or so. Quality is excellent for a change and comes at the right time, just before the Restaurant Show. We still have Clementines available, excellent varieties of Apples are still around, Pears are still available, and Grapefruit is also a good breakfast item and quality is excellent. Figs are back in half trays for now but they will switch to the full trays soon. Figs have a short start up season, then gap for 1-2 weeks, then they come back at half the price- that's the way Figs usually do it, so if you put them on the menu, I would do it later rather than sooner, or do it as a special.

Crenshaw Melon is back and we have the Organic version. We also have a few Organic Honeydews if you need, or Local growers are starting next week. The first item out of the box is Asparagus so look for that early next week.

Back to fruit: the Berry situation is interesting. Mother's Day was huge and the volume of Berries that was taken was a record for most growers. That is wonderful except they need to catch up a little in production, so Strawberries are a little higher next week but still

an OK price. Raspberries are priced right for a change. Blackberries and Blueberries are both cheap and a good deal, so on your menus next week make it a Black and Blue party and you will be in good shape.

Blood Oranges are available, Kiwi, Papaya, Mangos, Tangerines, TDE (best Tangerines you've ever had), Black Grapes, Passion Fruit, Dragon Fruit, Mandarinquates, Fuji Persimmons, Green Plums, and White Peaches are ready for summer. Get the bikini and the short shorts, grab your girl, hop on the Harley and let's ride. OK, OK. Hop in the Chevy, head to 5 Guys, feed the kids, go home and be a couch potato. I am going with #1, but I am looking for someone who has a Harley I can borrow with the girl.

Sale Items

Pineapple, Case 8ct	\$14.95	Testa Item #31603
Carrots, Baby Peeled w/ top, 5#	\$19.50	Testa Item #05084
Blackberries, Flat 12pkg	\$15.95	Testa Item #03800
Honeydew, 5ct	\$13.95	Testa Item #16151
Honeydew, 6ct	\$13.95	Testa Item #16152

Quantities are Limited.

Available While Supplies Last!

BE SURE TO USE THESE ITEM NUMBERS!

Produce Quiz

I'm often called a homely tuber, and being thin-skinned doesn't help. Some people consider me a cross between a potato and an apple. My roots can be traced back to the days of the Aztecs and Incas, and I have always been very popular throughout Central and South America. Today I am also grown in Asia. Although I am a legume, I am grown mainly for my tuberous roots. I have a nubby, pointed end, white juicy flesh, and a thin fibrous dusty brown skin. When full grown I can be as large as one foot in diameter, and weigh as much as 22 pounds, but I am usually dug up when I am about 5 inches in diameter and about 3-5 pounds. Cold kills, so you won't find us in regions that have frost. Don't even think about growing us anywhere north of the Texas Oklahoma border. I have two varieties: pachyrhizus tuberosus & pachyrhizus erosus (the second is the one you usually see). I have a sweet nutty flavor. While I'm watery when young my older, dried up relatives are usually ground into flour. I maintain my crispness when cooked. I get a beautiful tan and taste very sweet when deep fried. I can also be simmered in soup or sliced raw into salads, baked, steamed, boiled, or mashed. Use me like water chestnuts or grate as a passable (milder) daikon radish substitute. Loaded with starch, I am also high in vitamin C, and I have some iron.

Last Quiz Answer: Pistachio

