

# TESTA PRODUCE Market Report

Outlook for the Week of  
**November 21,  
2011**



## Market Report

It's Thanksgiving week and everyone is getting ready to stuff the crap out of themselves. Diets be damned this week. The key to Thanksgiving is to try as much stuff you can get your hands on- and by that I mean different foods. Turkey is the main ingredient but look at all the sides that can go with it, the possibilities are endless (unless you have no imagination and live in a cabin). Every year one of my sisters will try something, either a side or a dessert. Some years it's a big hit, other years not so much, but at least they gave it a try. So this year for your dinner try and come up with something to surprise everyone. You may flop but so what, have fun when you cook- it shouldn't be all work and no fun. Plus if it's a big hit, the family will make you do it every year so it becomes work. Who knew Thanksgiving could be so much fun.

If you have been paying attention, you would have noticed prices are going up and fast. Some were expected because they usually go up at this time of year, but some are due to weather and transitions forcing them up. Lettuce and Romaine would be in that category. Growers are moving, supplies are much tighter, and prices have doubled in a week. I suspect it will last through the holiday but we will wait and see. Cauliflower is at stupid prices, it is in the mid-thirties and not moving, but Broc shot up and now it's on the way down- Good news for all

you Broccoli lovers (which includes me), I would say Broccoli would be one of my top choices for veggies. Asparagus is holding steady so it usually goes up, but this year its not moving good news for the holidays. Celery is a little higher, not much so it's still ok for the holiday. Now for you Brussel Sprout lovers: they did go up this week again but not a lot, prices are back in the high thirties but we'll see how long it lasts. My favorite vegetable, Sweet Potato, takes center stage this week and all the way through New Years. If you don't use Sweet Potatoes for Thanksgiving you are not going to ever have me come for dinner. Sweet Potatoes are served at every Thanksgiving in my house and my mom's for as long as I can remember, it's just the way it is. I have my own recipe for Sweet Potatoes and it involves tons of brown sugar, Oranges, and butter. I don't think anything else is needed. The sauce from the Sweet Potatoes makes the best sauce to put on ham you ever tasted, if I say so myself. I am not a chef but it is a killer Sweet Potato.

Beans are one of the biggest holiday favorites. Prices have gone up but not bad at all, so you can still have your Bean casserole and not break the bank. Peppers are steady on Green, higher on Red, higher on Yellow, and prices on all of them are going to change quickly over the next few weeks. I see the market on Peppers getting stronger over the next few weeks. Green Onions are steady so are Spanish, Reds, and Whites.

## Market Report, Cont'd...

Box Potatoes are stronger. Most growers are saying this year's crop is mostly on the larger side and small Potatoes may prove difficult to get later in the season- That would be a reversal of last year when big sizes were tight. Eggplant is steady but Japanese Eggplant is a problem, growers are not getting plentiful supplies and shortages are a problem.

The Tomato market is higher across the board on all products. Growers are switching to Florida as the main gun and color and size are always an issue with the first crops. Around this time is when we watch the weather very closely; if you see any severe cold or prolonged frost in Florida at this time of year, get ready for issues in January, February, and March with Tomatoes. The past few years have been challenging with Tomatoes in the winter months. We are hoping this year we get a break.

Mesclun is higher and this is mostly because growers are moving and product is not holding up as well as they would like. Romaine Hearts are much higher, Boston Lettuce is higher, and Red and Green Leaf Lettuce are both higher.

The fall Citrus is just about to get going. Clementines are back, Tangerines are up and running, Navel Oranges are in, Meyer Lemons are here, Fingerlimes are available, and Kumquats are in. Next week we will have some specialty Citrus arriving but we don't have a passing yet so we won't know what's coming until it gets here.

Strawberries are going to be very difficult for the next few weeks. Growers are having issues with bruising, white shoulders, decay, and size. New fields won't be ready till mid-December and volume won't gear up till the end of the month. Most growers are pro-rating product. Blackberries are plentiful and prices are at their lowest level. Blues are also more abundant and prices are good. Raspberries are tighter and prices are

higher.

There are some Caped Gooseberries available and all kind of Baby Apples: Gala, Fuji, and Granny to name a few. Grapes are higher but quality is still very good, some shippers are having issues with mold but California is still going for now.

Delicious items that are all available are: Pomegranates, Dragon Fruit, Passion Fruit, Star Fruit, Chanterelle Mushrooms, Beech Mushroom, Maitaki Mushroom, Enoki Mushroom, Rambutan, Cherimoya, and Yellow Watermelon, as well as some gorgeous Black Seedless Grapes and Italian Grapes.

## Produce Quiz

I am an orange of the navel variety. I am a freak, a limb sport if you will, a genetic mutation. Nobody grafted me; I simply appeared as a different limb on a regular navel tree growing in Venezuela. Even today, I am considered genetically unstable, and often called a chimera. I've been hanging out with some bloods and mandarins lately, and you wanna talk about unstable? Anyway, here's what makes me cool. First, I often have variegated leaves, which is pretty neat compared to the bland old green leaves of a regular orange tree. But my internal color is what gives me star quality. Not bloody red, but pink, salmon pink, similar to a Star Ruby Grapefruit. In the USA I grow best in California. When I was first domestically cloned in Florida groves, I lacked the rich flavor and the bright color a western exposure would later provide. Finally, and this is what it's all about, my flavor can not be beat. If you are lucky enough to find me, peel me and you will thrill to my wonderfully distinctive, rich, sweetness. Sometimes described as the "tutti-frutti orange", I am available late fall through winter. Grab me while I'm stable, cause you never know what I'll turn into next!

### Last Quiz Answer: Epazote



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