



Week of April 13, 2009

Market News, See What's Sprouted!

Volume 4, Issue 14

Things have been quiet this week in Produce World, but we can expect that to change next. Mother Nature is always keeping us on our toes. **Asparagus** is looking steady this week. Mexico is finishing up and California supplies are light, but quality is good overall. **Broccoli** and **Cauliflower** both are a little lower. **Cucumbers** are also on their way down. **Eggplant** is still high, but steady this week. **Peppers** are keeping us busy, Green Peppers are still up and prices are also higher on Red Peppers and Yellow Peppers. Sizing and quality continue to be a problem. **Tomato** prices are still nuts on all sizes. Grape tomatoes are tight this week and color has been the biggest issue. The **Squash** market is steady for both Yellow and Zucchini this week. The **Lettuce** market is much more stable compared to last week Head Lettuce and **Romaine** are steady along Red & Green Leaf. Now that Spring has sprung we are starting to see what the industry calls "quality defects" Insects, yes insects are prevalent. Sorry, but we can't kill everything that's out in the fields. If we did we'd have nothing to harvest. Just be aware to thoroughly wash your produce. I've been told adding salt to the wash water will help to get the extra protein free from the lettuce. **Melons** are finishing up offshore, resulting in less available quantity and higher pricing. Sizing is smaller, but quality is good overall. **Raspberries**

have all but dried up and many orders are being cut. However, we should see some improvement next week. **Blackberries** are still in good supply. There are some domestic **Blueberries** around as the offshore season is almost finished. They are on the small size and quality is good. Green **Grapes** are excellent! There is a little amber color on the fruit. This is not a sign of decay, but rather an indicator of high sugar levels. These grapes a super sweet and wonderful to eat. The Chilean grape season is ending and we are seeing lighter supplies overall, but quality remains good on both green and red grapes. California **Stone Fruit** is right around the corner. Growers are saying it looks to be a phenomenal year. We will keep you posted as we get closer to harvest! **Pears** are still available and are excellent along with several different varieties of **Apples**. On the specialties front fresh **Morels**, and **Hedgehog Mushrooms** are available. **Ramps** have started and we have a few cases in stock. Our **Texas Heirloom Tomatoes** are thriving, be sure to reserve your case asap! We also have some beautiful **Tiny Veg** available.



GO TEXAN.

Top Crops!

Texas
Heirloom Tomatoes
Ramps
Green Nira
French Prune Plums

In the Spotlight

Tiny Veggies

What cute veggies! Only about one inch long, these absolutely small sized veggies sport gorgeous frilly attached leaves. Surprising for its tininess, the flavor is fresh and rich, just like its mature counterparts. Diners are truly dazzled by the extraordinary mini eye-catching specialty of Tiny Veggies™! Tiny Carrots, Turnips, Red Onion, White Onions and Celery are available to make a unique crudité. Just how cute can crudités be? This cute!





FDA seeks rapid test for salmonella

By Bob Luder - The Packer

(April 14, 1:20 p.m.) The Food and Drug Administration is looking for a much quicker test to detect salmonella – and it’s looking for help outside the realm of government.

The agency plans to schedule a meeting in late April or early May to solicit ideas from universities and private companies.

“If there’s anything out there that the FDA should know about but doesn’t, the FDA wants to know about it so they can leverage it,” said FDA spokesman Sebastian Cianci.

The agency has grown increasingly frustrated with conventional lab techniques that can take as long as nine days to identify common food bugs and, especially in light of recent outbreaks involving salmonella in peanut products and pistachios, the agency is looking for faster results.

“The FDA is already engaged with the (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), Department of Homeland Security, U.S. (Department of Agriculture), Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and National Institute of Standards and Technology,” Cianci said. “We’ve been looking for rapid tests and ways to leverage things.

“We’ve had our internal meeting in March. Now, we want

to have our external meeting,” he said.

Testing takes time for the FDA and health departments to investigate and locate the source of the pathogens. During that time, consumers grow nervous about eating suspect food products and producers can lose millions of dollars in the process, Cianci said.

“The goal here isn’t to design some sort of ‘Star Trek’ gizmo,” David Acheson, assistant commissioner for food safety at the FDA, recently told the Associated Press. “We’re looking for something that can save us 12 hours here, 12 hours there. If we can shave it to five days, that would be a step forward.”

The FDA hopes to find a private company or academic research facility working on a rapid test for salmonella.

It hopes the upcoming meeting between the agency and private sector can be a first step in that process.

“It’s not going to be a policy meeting,” he said. “It’s to show us what you’ve got.”

