



Week of May 18, 2009

Market News, See What's Cropped Up!

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Yes, we will be open on Memorial Day and it will be business as usual. It's looks to be quite this week in the produce world. Bell **Peppers** have improved on all colors and price is steady. **Berries** are doing much better this week, blueberries and raspberries are lower and blackberries look to be steady throughout the week. The blueberries we've been getting in from Florida have been fabulous. However, they have been swamped with rain for the past several days and can no longer get into the fields to harvest. In contrast California's blueberries have survived triple digit temperatures. We will we have to wait and see what damage has been done on both coasts over the next few days before we can make a guess as to which way the market will swing. **Strawberries** were also in the sweltering heat and we should see if there any negative on the plants soon. **Lettuce** is lower this week on both head and leaf. We are still seeing some tip burn on romaine and green leaf, but quality is good overall. Finally there is some decent stone fruit available. **Bing Cherries** have arrived sweet and juicy! Prices are half of what they were a few weeks ago. We also have **Red Plums, Peaches, Apricots,** and **Nectarines** available. Just a note - growers and packers don't ship ripe fruit. If they did ship ripe fruit by the time it reached us it would be a squishy mess. So, please make sure to

order ahead of time and leave your fruit at room temperature for 2-3 days and it will be perfect. We also have some wonderful **Saturn peaches** that have arrived from our friends at Weiser Farms. Their farm is very small, only 32 acres. They produce some of the best stone fruit around and only produce small quantities so grab some of their Saturn peaches while their still available.

Squash volume has dropped in production and we're seeing a wide range in quality from many lots, prices look to remain high for the next couple of weeks. The Chilean **grape** season is just about done and we will start to both reds and greens from California, prices are steady for now. **Cantaloupe, Honeydew,** and **Kiwi** are all steady this week. **Pears** are higher with the storage season winding down. However, there are still plenty of wonderful varieties available along with several different apple varieties as well. **Persimmon** and **quince** are available. There have been a few **Rambutan** seen on the market as well if you are interested. We still have **black garlic** available, and we hope to see some **Vidalia** onions by the end of the week. Their season was slow to start this year. Hopefully we will see them this week. We will be sure and let you know the minute the arrive!



Spring Sensations!

Lemon Lime Basil

Bing Cherries

Peaches

Pink Lemons

In the Spotlight

Morel Mushrooms

Naturally a bit chewy, fresh morels offer an awesome and addicting nut-like flavor that mushroom fans crave. Releasing a sweet earthy fragrance, morels offer a pleasing texture that is both crisp and chewy. Note: Its specific cap shape is very important as this identifying feature distinguishes it from the false morel, the species known as *Gyromitra esculenta*, which resembles a squashed version of the morel and is poisonous





Pro*Act Specialties becomes Harvest Sensations, expands in to retail

Pro*Act Specialties is changing its name to Harvest Sensations, which is the company's label, and is ramping up its push into retail, connecting directly to consumers through a revamped Web site.

Harvest Sensations will be the official name of the company June 1.

Monterey-based Pro*Act launched Pro*Act Specialties mid-2000 to source specialty produce for wholesale produce companies nationwide. The company launched its Harvest Sensations label in spring 2001 and launched the original www.harvestsensations.com site that November.

Dean Simon, president, and Gwen Gulliksen, director of sales and marketing, were with the firm at the beginning. Gulliksen left the company three years ago, after serving as vice president since its founding. She rejoined in the past month to assist with the site and the company's new outreach to home chefs and consumers through retail outlets.

"The last Web site was really focused on foodservice, but this is for all customers," Simon said. "We have a retail base now."

Simon said the company is expanding fresh-cut items for retail, including hand-peeled baby carrots and hand-shucked English peas. Simon said Harvest Sensations has about 18 items total in retail, including fingerling potatoes, colored cauliflower and baby squash.

Harvest Sensations will continue to operate from Los Angeles and Miami. The Miami location is under new management with Tom Travers, general manager. Travers comes from Birmingham, Ala.-based Adams Produce Co. Inc., where he managed the company's Pensacola, Fla., branch. Travers succeeded Jose Ruano.

"Adams is a Pro*Act member, has been for a while, and Tom's got a great knowledge of the south Florida market," Simon said.

The site's new features include a listing of available products, recipes, seasonal specialties, menu suggestions, food facts and a place to submit questions.

"This is much more interactive," Simon said. "With the economy, foodservice business is down a bit, but retail has picked up and so have people's tastes for specialty and fine food, so we're taking things that worked in restaurants and taking them to retail."

An "Ask the Chef" feature allows users to ask questions about specialty produce or recipe ideas, with a turnaround target of 24 hours. Simon and Gulliksen are chefs, and through their expertise and the help of chef consultants, they are able to answer users' questions about specialty produce.

"I had someone e-mail me who wanted a mojito recipe, which is not something you see normally with produce, but they had heard about our fresh herbs," Simon said.

Simon said within the next few months the site will be an online fresh produce marketplace.

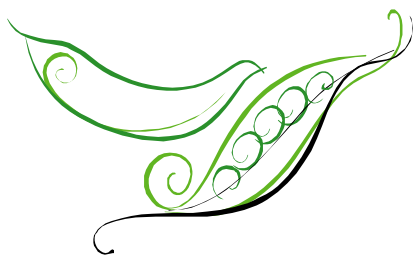
"We ship direct to restaurants and have food distributors across the country, so we can also point them to one of our distributors," Simon said.

Harvest Sensations also introduced a new logo.

During her hiatus, Gulliksen started her own company, Artainable Cuisine, based in Los Angeles.

"I worked with small family farmer friends, many who grow for us still," Gulliksen said. "I helped them set up for (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point programs) and get into farmers markets."

Farmer's Market Fresh



POMEGRANATE SEEDS	3 CASES	TEXAS HEIRLOOM TOMATOES	10 CASES
BING CHERRIES	5 CASES	ROMANO BEANS	1 CASE
BLACK GARLIC	2 CASES	DRAGON TONGUE BEANS	1 CASE
SATURN PEACHES	2 CASES	SEA BEANS	1 CASE
KABOCHA SUQASH	4 CASES	INDIAN EGGPLANT	2 CASES
STARFRUIT	7 CASES	LAVENDER	1 POUND
SUGAR CANE SWIZZLE STIX	8 CASES	FIRESTIX	1 CASE
YELLOW WATERMELON	10 EACH	ROSEMARY SKEWERS 50CT	1 CASE