



Week of September 7, 2009

Market News, See What's Cropped Up!

We have some Texas grown Zucchini going out this week if you haven't noticed. Check your cases and look for the "Go Texan" logo or a locally grown sticker. We will have more locally grown product available as the weather begins to cool down. So just hang tight for the moment. California's **Avocado** season is over. Heavy rains in Mexico have disrupted harvest this week so supplies are lower and prices are higher. The crop is still sizing to 48's and smaller, with larger fruit very limited. Please note that early new crop oil content will be low and require additional time for ripening. **Celery** is up, **Peppers** are going up, **Blueberries** are higher, **Blackberries** are higher, **Strawberries** are going higher, but **Raspberries** are the same. Strawberries are looking to creep upwards over the next week. The weather in the grow-

ing areas has not been good and the berries are not holding up as well. We are seeing tender berries and shelf life that is nil. This will probably be the last week of pint blueberries. All shippers are switching to the 6oz size and soon we will be switching to off shore fruit.

Watermelon are steady, **Seedless Watermelon** are steady and are grown in Texas. **Head Lettuce** prices are steady, but **Romaine** and **Romaine Hearts** continue to have issues. **Cauliflower** is steady, **Broccoli** is steady for now, but we may see some movement towards the end of the week. **Cantaloupe** and **Honeydew** are steady and may also see some movement late this week. It's also time to start planning for Autumn! The pumpkins are coming!!!!



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Seasonal Sensations

Kabocha Squash

Acorn Squash

Banana Squash

Butternut Squash

In the Spotlight

Tentation Apple

One of the most unique flavoured apples in the world. With its striking appearance, a light golden green apple with an attractive orange flush and fabulous aromatic anise flavour, biting into this apple is a real taste sensation. A modern variety from France, blushed apples are becoming increasingly popular - in appearance the Tentation is quite similar to the Pink Lady, except it is flushed orange rather than pink. Hmmm... I wonder if it's a U.T. fan.



Do you have the ripe stuff?

Despite seasonal growth patterns, most types of squash are available year-round, though winter squash is best from early fall to late winter.



Winter varieties, such as those with dark skins that are too hard and thick to eat, include acorn, buttercup, butternut, calabaza, Danish hubbard, spaghetti, and turban. Look for smaller squash that are brightly colored and free of spots, bruises, and mold. The hard skin of winter squash serves as a barrier, allowing it to be stored a month or more in a dark, cool place.

An added bonus: Beta-carotene content actually increases during storage.



High-quality pumpkin crop expected

Andy Nelson - The Packer: Grower-shippers are expecting abundant supplies of high-quality pumpkins this Autumn season.

Temperatures in California pumpkin growing regions have been in the 90s, which, while high, weren't too high to hurt plants, said Ryan Van Groningen, sales manager for Van Groningen & Sons Inc., Manteca, Calif. Pollination was excellent, and growers have no concerns about mildew, he added.

Van Groningen said he expects average yields, but acreage in the Golden State could be down slightly this year, he said.

"Everyone came in to this season a little hesitant about the economy," he said, citing the reason for a possible acreage decline.

Van Groningen & Sons began harvesting on a limited basis Aug. 24, but "we won't really get going" until mid-September, Van Groningen said.

Jackson Melons Inc., Henderson, Texas, expects to begin shipping pumpkins from near Plains, Texas, by about mid-September, slightly earlier than usual, said Kevin Green, salesman.

Green reported a dry growing season and good quality and size profile, though high heat could keep some pumpkins from gaining size.

Capac, Mich.-based Mike Pirrone Produce Inc. began

shipping Aug. 29 and will begin ramping up volumes in mid-September, said Joe Pirrone, president.

The company plans to harvest about 1,000 acres this year, up 100 from last year, Pirrone said. He reported a "bumper crop" with excellent quality and a good mix of sizes, with abundant supplies of 30-35-counts.

Jackson Melons expects to sell pumpkins harvested on about 200 acres this season, Green said. The company's acreage has varied between about 180 and 240 in recent years, he said.

Green said expects good demand and a continuation of the stronger markets of recent years, with per-bin prices likely in the \$90 range.

"We had had the same price for years, but the last couple of years we've finally got it up to where it needs to be," he said.

While Van Groningen said there's a risk of growers slashing prices late in the deal to move product, he was optimistic that prices would remain steady and similar to last year's levels. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in mid-Sept. last year, bins of Virginia pumpkins were \$90-\$110.

Pumpkin prices would likely be a little higher this year to reflect the higher costs paid by growers for fertilizers and other inputs, Pirrone said.

Autumn is upon us! Some Fall festiveness for your table?

- Large Indian Corn
- Small Indian Corn
- Mini Orange Pumpkins
- Mini White Pumpkins
- Cannon Ball Pumpkins

- Gourds
- Large Hay Bales
- Mini Hay Bales
- Corn Stalks
- Wheat Bundles

Coming Soon.....

- Fairytale Pumpkins aka Calabaza de Castilla
- Cinderella Pumpkins
- Jarrahdale Pumpkins
- Ghost Pumpkins
- Big Mac Pumpkins