



Week of October 12, 2009

Market News, See What's Cropped Up!

The market on several items has gone a little crazy. Let's start with **Blueberries**. As I said last week Argentina has just gotten started, so prices are in the high forties. After a few weeks, the price will drop and they will be somewhere in the twenties or low thirties, which is OK. The supply right now is extremely tight. Next on our list of problems, **Broccoli** is extremely short supply and price has skyrocketed, growers are in a demand exceeding supply situation and will not be fulfilling all their orders. We will watch and see what we get delivered to us before we short any customer. **Cauliflower** is in the same boat, very, very tight and prices are up there. The growers are having major problems with weather, it has been very cold and now rain is about to hit them as well. The type of weather pattern effects a lot of items, **Spring Mix, Baby Lettuces, Baby Spinach** might all become a problem, the early winter season could prove to be very challenging for produce this year. **Asparagus** is steady and very reasonable for next week. Purple and White Asparagus are available as well. **French Beans** are OK, no big moves there for awhile. French Beans during the winter are mostly off shore and price is mostly effected by freight and weather in South America. **Cucumbers** are steady, **Eggplant** is good, **Yellow Onions** and **Red Onions** are settling down as well. **Hard Squash** are down in price and there is a good selection available. **Green Peppers** are on the rise and will probably

go up again towards the end of the week. Red are following their lead and also going up. Large **Heirloom Tomatoes** are still coming in from California and are still a really good deal, so try some next week. **Head and Leaf Lettuces** are going up next week. **Romaine** is going to go up as well, as always it's weather related. We are also reaching the end of the season and shelf life is notably shorter due to the crop being tired. Quality is fair at best. We expect to move into Yuma around the second week of November so you can expect things to be a little rocky until then. **Strawberry** growers are going to have a problem this week. The weather man is predicting rain for three days and if that happens this late in the season, that will knock out production from Salinas, which means everyone would go to Oxnard and there are not enough berries to cover everyone until Florida starts, so it seems big problems are about to hit and it could get ugly fast. California **Grapes** are excellent - Red, Green, and Black seedless. **Clementines** are available, a few figs are left. **Asian Pears** are in, and there are some **Cactus Pears** are around. Fresh **Cranberries** are available, **Kiwano Melon** are in, **Persimmons, Pomegranates, and Passion Fruit** are available. **Lady Apples** are just getting started and so are **Crab Apples**.



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Seasonal Sensations

Texas Gala Apples

Texas Pumpkins

Texas Herbs

Corn Stalks

In the Spotlight

Fuyu Persimmons

Somewhat resembling a tomato, Fuyu persimmons have a thin reddish-orange skin and soft flesh. Ripe fruit offers a pleasant, spicy, sweet flavor and is tannin-free. Described as having a flavor compared to a blend of mango and papaya, some say it has an apricot overtone. Others say it tastes like an apple and orange mixed together. Melt-ingly soft and sweet, persimmon halves are delicious served with a wedge of lemon or lime and eaten like a melon. Luscious texture and sweetness are given to green salads and fruit salads with the addition of the persimmon. Spices that enhance the flavor or the persimmon are cinnamon, allspice, cloves and nutmeg. This fruit may be used similar to the banana. Ripen fruit in a paper bag at room temperature. Ripe fruit may be refrigerated up to one week in a plastic bag.



So, what's in season that's different?

Bee Pollen
Chestnuts
Green Olives
Turban Squash
Red Kuri Squash
Delicata Squash
Wintermelon



Yu Choy Sum
Yali Pears
Quince
Jack Fruit (limited)
Yuzu (limited)
Kyoho Grapes (limited)
Longan Fruit (limited)



Health, menu ethics among long-term foodservice trends

Ashley Bentley - The Packer ST. HELENA, Calif. – Although the suffering economy is painting the short-term picture of American foodservice business, the longer-term trends are world flavors, health and wellness and sustainability and menu ethics.

"The future of American cooking is going to be fundamentally about world cuisines," said Greg Drescher, executive director of strategic initiatives for the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone, during a seminar on menu research and development strategies for today's economy at the Flavor, Quality and American Menus leadership retreat Sept. 9-12 in St. Helena, Calif.

That doesn't mean the recession isn't going to leave its mark, though.

"The recession will end, though consumer spending won't likely snap right back," Drescher said. "Restaurants are down a bit, but at the end of the day, people want someone else to cook for them, and if they can figure out a way to do that, they will."

One world cuisine trend that is starting to really make a niche is the street food revelation, Drescher said.

"Street food is fun, casual, inexpensive ingredients, and it's low overhead for the operator," Drescher said. "Since it's not part of a regular meal, it fits the profile of a 'one-dish wonder.'"

Drescher said the trend toward world food is partly due to changing demographics in the U.S., but not completely.

"There used to be this huge divide between who cared about food and who didn't, but now that much more motivated," Drescher said.

With world flavors comes a much bigger focus on produce, Drescher said.

"There's inspiration from produce traditions, Mediterranean, Asian, Latin American cuisines, especially," Drescher said.

Drescher mentioned the July announcement of the Produce Marketing Association's partnership with the National Restaurant Association and the International Foodservice Distributors Association, which is gearing up to double produce use in foodservice by 2020.

"They went from a defensive position to an offensive position," Drescher said of the National Restaurant Association. "And I'm really glad they did."

When it comes to the health initiative, he said those in the foodservice business are being much more proactive, instead of reactive, as used to be the case. The upcoming review and rerelease of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines in 2010 could mean big things for the industry, he said.

The responsibility of chefs, he said, is to make healthy food sexy and craveable, instead of just making it taste better.

Have you decorated your harvest table?

- Fairy Tale Pumpkins
- White Ghost Pumpkins
- Texas Grown Pumpkins
- 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
- Scarecrows
- Fall Leaves
- Small Funny Face Pumpkins



*Funny faces may vary from picture