

ORGANIC MARKET NEWS

APRIL 30 - MAY 7, 2021

ORGANIC MELON SEASON RETURNS



Organic Melons are back, but this May will be a little bit different than others.

Organic Cantaloupes and **Honeydews** are expected to have decent volumes from Mexico through late May. The first arrivals have looked good, with the melons cutting nice and high brix (sugar levels). Then, new crop Southern California **Organic Melons** will start around during mid-May, so we should not see any gaps in supply.

Organic Mini and **Full-Size Seedless Watermelons** have returned from Mexico. Quality has been exceptional so far with great color and sugar. Prices are higher than normal as product is limited at the beginning of the season and freight rates continue to climb.

Overall, there is less acreage planted this season as growers and shippers have not had great success the past few seasons. Prices are expected to stay strong with light availability throughout the season. Mexico plans to harvest full size **Organic Seedless Melons** to Memorial Day. California will start mid-June, so there is a gap expected between growing regions.



NATIONAL TRUCK/DRIVER SHORTAGE

ALERT! The cost of freight to bring product in from produce growing regions is on the rise and will continue to go up headed into the summer.

For example, refrigerated loads from the West Coast coming to the Northeast were costing \$7,000-\$8,000 at this time last year versus the \$9,000-\$10,000 we're seeing right now. We're already getting higher quotes than that for May.

These higher freight rates can be adding \$1-3 more dollars per case to the cost of goods depending on how many cases are on a load. Even more impactful is the availability of trucks to get perishable product loaded and moved in a timely fashion.

Why are freight rates up and availability of trucks so tight?

- Massive backlog of goods to move around the country backed up at ports and manufacturers
- Consumer demand is strong
- E-commerce and home delivery activity is gobbling up driver capacity
- Professional driver workforce is aging and not enough drivers are entering the industry
- National driver shortage has climbed 30%



OG TOMATOES

Organic Grape Tomatoes from Lady Moon Farms grown in Florida continue to be promotable as the farm continues to flush with product. Quality has been exceptional. The Florida farm is expected to harvest until late May depending on weather, and then will transition to Georgia by early June.

Organic Cherry Tomatoes from Lady Moon Farms continue to be promotable out of Florida. Quality has been excellent. Organic Rainbow Cherry Tomatoes will be available, but supplies are slowing down out of Florida. Expect steady supplies and quality has been excellent.

Organic Heirloom Tomatoes from Mexico continue to be available. Supplies and markets are steady with great quality.

Organic Roma Tomatoes will be available from Florida and Mexico. Markets and supplies are steady, and quality has been good.

Organic Beefsteak and **Cluster Tomatoes** grown in Canada continue to be promotable and quality has been excellent.



OG BERRIES

Organic Raspberry harvests are now steady. Growers expect stable volumes through mid-June, though prices are not expected to drop off dramatically.

Organic Blackberry volumes are finally starting to improve. Expect better availability for May. Pricing is not at promotable levels yet, but may recalibrate as harvests get better.

Organic Blueberries were a major struggle during April, but things are on the cusp of changing. Better supplies are expected to ramp up out of California and Georgia during May, and then it will take a couple of weeks for the supply chain to fill up and prices to come down.

ALERT! Organic Strawberry supplies were hampered by cold, then heat, and other poor weather. Growers continue to see quality problems in the fields and slow maturity. Volumes are way lower than expected.

Expect high pricing and poor fill rates through early May, followed by incremental improvements each week until growers hit better harvests in June.



OG CAULIFLOWER

ALERT! Organic Cauliflower yields have drastically decreased during late April for many shippers. With less supplies, poor quality (bruising, discoloration, aphids), and demand remaining strong, pricing has quickly risen and is expected to stay elevated through mid-May.

ALERT! Earthbound Farms is prorating their fresh cut bagged product that includes Organic Cauliflower for the reasons noted above. Organic Cauliflower Florets and Rice products will be in short supply through mid-May.



OG BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Organic Brussels Sprouts supplies continue to remain strong with good promotability as May kicks off.

Mesh bag Organic Brussels Sprouts are now available! Add this as a wonderful grab and go option for customers!



OG CELERY

ALERT! Organic Celery and Celery Hearts have seen a dramatic change during late April as supplies became extremely limited. The biggest issue is poor quality with black heart and decay in the middle of the stalks.

As a result, pricing has drastically increased. Expect market conditions to continue like this before it improves in late May.



OG BROCCOLI

Promote Organic Broccoli while you can in early May as supplies are plentiful, there's peak quality, and good pricing will be available. Colder temps in California's Organic Broccoli growing region during mid-April are expected to slow harvest production and drive pricing up for mid-May.

Organic Sweet Baby Broccoli continue to produce strong supplies.

Organic Broccoli Rabe has remained stable. Expect pricing to rise slightly and supplies to tighten throughout early May.



OG ARTICHOKES

Organic Artichokes continue to have stable supplies from Mexico and California to promote on 18ct.

Wholesum Organics is in season until June. Supplies from Ocean Mist and other California shippers continue to improve weekly as we enter May. Both availability and pricing have improved in the April from California.

AV Thomas is changing their boxes and box de-

scriptions for their Natural Beauty Organic Sweet Potato line. Here's how Four Seasons has edited



OG SOUASH

Organic Zucchini supplies from Lady Moon Farms continue to be abundant and promotable, with great quality, from their Punta Gorda, FL operations in early May. Also, Lady Moon's Bainbridge, GA facility is set to begin harvesting as well!

Organic Zucchini and Yellow Squash from Mexico decreased in supplies in April, while seeing pricing rise. As May begins, expect to see domestic supplies begin to ramp up in volume with improved quality and pricing.



OG GREEN BEANS

Organic Green Beans from California and Florida are experiencing light supplies and expensive pricing. Florida supplies remain limited due to inclement weather during early April. This issue will last through mid-May.

Cal-O's spring program is very nice, but just not enough to make a difference in the overall high market.

OG SWEET POTATOES

NEW BOX OLD BOX

41660 OG Sweet Potatoes White Hannah **40lb Natural Beauty Hannah**

41650 OG Sweet Potatoes Red Garnet #1 **40lb Natural Beauty Garnet**

our codes:

- 41652 OG Sweet Potatoes Orange Jewel #1 **40lb Natural Beauty Jewel**
- 41649 OG Sweet Potatoes Japanese Oriental #1 40lb Natural Beauty
- 41822 OG Sweet Potatoes Purple **40lb Natural Beauty Stokes**



The new cartons are 8 per layer and 56 per pallet, and have colors that align with the new descriptions.



OG SWEET CORN

Organic Bi-Color Sweet Corn is right around the corner as Cal-O is expected to begin harvests in early May, with arrivals to the East Coast by the week of 5/9.

Organic White Corn from Double D Organics is also set to begin in May. Expect **White Corn** to start after **Bi-Color**. Get ready for summer with these items coming back into season!



OG EGGPLANT

Organic Eggplant from Lady Moon Farms in FL remains in plentiful supplies as May begins. Continued superb quality, with promotional pricing and volumes, is the perfect combination for a promotion.

Combine warm vegetable items on one display to capitalize on nice weather and spring grilling season!



OG CUCUMBERS

Organic Cucumbers from Mexico continue to see supplies improve as May begins! Look for promotional opportunities to arise in early May. Lady Moon Farms production from Bainbridge, GA is expected to begin in mid-May.

Organic Euro Seedless Cucumbers will be available, and prices are steady. Canada has little production and Mexico continues to harvest strong numbers. Quality has been very nice.

ALERT! Organic Mini Seedless Cucumber prices are very high. Growers had to replant, and new crops have not started yet, leading to a short gap.



OG PEPPERS

Organic Mini Sweet Peppers from Mexico will see increased supplies and promotable pricing as May kicks off!

Organic Green Pepper supplies are steady with new crop Coachella, CA product beginning, but Florida growers have experienced a dip in production due to inclement weather. Expect supplies and pricing to remain stable for early May before Southeast supplies improve.

Organic Red, Orange, and Yellow Bell Peppers continue to see increased pricing in early May as Israel growers have come to an end and Mexico supplies are very limited. Canada and Holland seasons have begun but pricing is expected to remain elevated in May. Quality from both areas is superb to start the season!

OTHER STORIES

ter supply and will boast some better pricing as we head into May.

• New crop **Organic Red** and **Gold Potatoes** have been delayed slightly and aren't expected until early May. The first dig in California produced a good amount of skinning which then pushed backed the harvest, particularly on Reds. Pricing will also jump up a good bit with the increase in freight from the west coast, as well as much higher



OG STONE FRUIT

California **Organic Cherries** are expected to arrive to the East Coast around May 6. The crop outlook has nice sizing and quality. Expect prices to stay elevated and steady until Washington gets started in late June or early July.

California **Organic Peaches** will ramp up in May. Expect good, steady supplies out of California, but a smaller overall crop at higher prices due to covid issues, lack of labor, and high freight rates.

Organic Apricots from California are expected to start packing the first week of May. A large crop with excellent quality is expected.



OG TROPICALS

Francique variety **Organic Fair-Trade Haitian Man-gos** are available in great supply for early May.

Organic Ataulfo Honey Mangos will be in fairly steady supply as we head into May. Larger 12/14ct sizing continue to be in tighter supply.

Very heavy demand remains for **Organic Tommy Atkins Mangos** from Mexico for early May. Many growers are struggling to keep up. Lack of rain has prevented some fruit from maturing and larger sizing has become a challenge to get.

The **Organic Young Thai Coconuts** supplies remain limited but will be back in stock for the beginning of May. **Organic Raw Drink & Eat Coconuts** will have another arrival the week of 5/9.

Organic Formosa Papayas continue to be in good supply through the end of April and early May. Look to continue to promote!

Organic Hass Avocados are in good supply but smaller fruit, in particular the popular 60ct size, has been tighter.

FOB's – this will be the norm for the next couple of months on **Organic Color Potatoes.**

• ALERT! Organic Tasteful Selections 1-Bite Potatoes continue to gap in supply until the week of 5/24 when California new crop baby potatoes are available to pack for this program.

• NOTE: Superior Fresh Organic Salads will see some prorated volumes during early May due to lower light levels and some other production issues at their Wisconsin aquaponic farm.

• We are into new growing regions in Mexico on the **Organic Acorn**, **Butternut**, and **Spaghetti Squash**. Availability is good on all three with the exception of Butternut, which at the moment is a bit small. **Organic Kabocha Squash** is also in bet-

LEMONADE SEASON IS HERE!



LOCAL LIST





ORGANIC

FLAIM FARMS - VINELAND, NJ

40650 - OG Dandelion 12 ct 40682 - OG Chard Rainbow 12 ct 40685 - OG Chard Red 12 ct 40640 - OG Herb Cilantro 30 ct 40647 - OG Herb Cilantro 15 ct 40726 - OG Parsley Curly 15 ct 40729 - OG Parsley Flat Leaf (Italian) 15 ct 219525 - OG Herb Mint 12 ct 40208 - OG Arugula PREM 24 ct

LANCASTER FARM FRESH COOP - LANCASTER, PA

40900 - OG Spinach Bunched 24 ct 40208 - OG Arugula PREM 24 ct 41160 - OG Lettuce Green Leaf 24 ct 41165 - OG Lettuce Red Leaf 24 ct 40864 - OG Radishes Red Bunched PREM 24 ct 40623 - OG Sunchokes White 10 lb

EASTERN FRESH - CEDARVILLE, NJ 40325 - OG Asparagus 11 lb

CONVENTIONAL

FLAIM FARMS - VINELAND, NJ

- 1315 CV Greens Kale NJ 18 lb 1362 - CV Chard Green 12 ct
- 1355 CV Chard Rainbow 12 ct
- 1368 CV Chard Red 12 ct
- 2205 CV Spinach Bunched 24 ct
- 205 CV Arugula 24 ct
- 1170 CV Dandelion Bunch 12 ct
- 1510 CV Herb Mint 12 ct Box

NARDELLI LAKE VIEW FARMS - CEDARVILLE, NJ

1362 - CV Chard Green 12 ct 1475 - CV Leeks Bunched 12 ct

EASTERN FRESH - CEDARVILLE, NJ 357 - CV Asparagus NJ 28 lb

FIFER ORCHARDS - DOVER, DE 358 - CV Asparagus Std 28 lb





VIDALIA ONION DISPLAY CONTEST

May 1 - May 31, 2021

Do your customers have a sweet tooth? Are you looking for a surefire way to "sweeten" your profits! Well then, we have the answer for you to satisfy both of those "sugar" cravings! Vidalia Sweet Onions from Georgia are here, and we are going to kick of the season in style!

Four Seasons Produce has again partnered up with Generation Farms to bring you another super exciting display contest for the month of May! The long awaited, highly anticipated Vidalia Onion season is upon us and your customers will definitely be looking for these precious gems from the south. Vidalia's add great sales opportunities and potential impulse sales for your produce department so be sure to jump in on the fun!



CONTEST CRITERIA:

• Build an amazing display of organic and/or conventional Vidalia Sweet Onions. **Product must be purchased <u>only</u> from Four Seasons Produce.

- 4105 CV Onions Sweet Jumbo 40 lb Vidalia
- 4166 CV Onions Sweet 16/3lb Vidalia Bag
- 41541 OG Onions Sweet 40 lb Vidalia
- 41540 OG Onions Sweet 16/3lb Vidalia Bag
- Participants must order at least 6 cases of product throughout the contest period.
- Vidalia Onion point of sale signage must be included on or by your displays.

• Email all contest photos to Stephanie Mayer (stephf@fsproduce.com) by Thursday, June 3, 2021.

**While not a requirement to qualify, the use of social media presence is strongly encouraged.

PRIZES:





Every qualifying entry will receive a Generation Farms hat just for entering!



MERCHANDISING & HANDLING TIPS:

• Vidalia Sweet Onions are a lower risk display commodity. Go BIG with your displays in high traffic areas and get them seen!

• There are so many items that Vidalia Sweet Onions can be paired with! Corn, peppers, tomatoes, zucchini to name a few but any grilling type vegetable (or fruit!) will ad potential impulse sales to the basket! Cross merchandise and build into your displays from grocery departments, balsamic, hot sauces, lime juice and olive oils; the list goes on. Build your basket size, build your sales!

• Store Vidalia Onions in a cool, dry area. Keep away from any moisture or humid storage areas.

• Add some recipe cards onto your display for quick meal ideas for your customers.

• Cross merchandise a basket or two in your meat department for quick impulse sales and a nice grilling addition to those burgers!



Now its time to build some "sweet" displays with these sweet onions sure to indeed "sweeten" those sales!

For more information, display tips and ideas, contact your Four Seasons Sales Rep or Merchandiser.



1.800.422.8384

www.fsproduce.com





CONVENTIONAL MARKET NEWS

APRIL 30 - MAY 7, 2021

FLORIDA SWEET CORN SEASON



Grilling and picnic season is back!

Sweet Corn prices continue to be promotable out of Florida. Quality has been excellent. Most of the volume will be on **Bi-Color**, but we'll keep White Sweet Corn in stock when available from our growers.

The outlook from growers is that **Sweet Corn** will remain steady out of Florida through Memorial Day. Freight rates from Florida are <u>much higher</u> than other years due to the tight truck market and driver shortage. This is creating a new set of price points for this spring/early summer season.



CV STRAWBERRIES

ALERT! Strawberries will remain in tighter supply as we head into the first week of May.

Growers in California had been expecting much more volume to start by now, but the fruit simply isn't maturing as quickly.

We will be sourcing the majority of our fruit from South Carolina, as well as Oxnard and Santa Maria, CA for the first week of May, while supplies in the Salinas and Watsonville, CA areas are delayed in their startup.

Local Delaware **Strawberries** are still on pace to get going during early to mid-May.

Driscoll's will be shipping "Berry Bigs" Strawberries for the first time this year. Get ready to add some huge berries packed in 8/1802 cardboard containers to your berry sets! Limited volumes will start the week of 5/9.



CV BERRIES

Blueberries from Florida and Georgia will be in much improved supply as we head into the first week of May.

Pricing is definitely going to drop significantly heading into mid-May, setting up promotional opportunities then. Get ready to promote Eastern **Blueberries**. North Carolina is also right around the corner. Quality has been very nice.

Driscoll's brand **Blueberries** will stay on the more limited side since their Georgia crop was hit with poor weather.

Blackberries and **Raspberries** are in much better volume as we head into the first week of May. Mexico is still the main growing area for now, but California supplies are right around the corner. Quality has been very nice.

The "Limited Edition Sweetest Batch" Blackberries are now finished for the season.



CV TOMATOES

Beefsteak and **Cluster Tomatoes** remain very promotable from US and Canadian grown greenhouses. Quality has been excellent as we are in peak season.

Campari Cocktail Tomatoes are rising some due to labor challenges out of Canada. Greenhouses are battling Covid-19 restrictions leading to issues packing tomatoes right now. Quality has been excellent, and supplies should remain steady but prices are going up so production and catch up.

Grape Tomatoes remain steady out of Florida. Quality has been excellent.

Heirloom Tomatoes will be promotable out of Canada and Mexico. Quality has been excellent.

Roma Tomatoes will continue to be promotable out of Florida and Mexico. Quality has been exceptional.

Snacking Tomatoes from NatureSweet are back in steady supplies, and quality is excellent. Look for spot promotions on the whole line as different varieties flush at different times.



CV CUCUMBERS

Super Select Cucumbers will start to ease off some, however remain higher than normal for this time of year. Florida continues to have limited availability after recent weather challenges. Mexico supplies are steady, and demand is strong. Quality has been excellent.

NOTE: Euro Seedless Cucumber prices will remain high. Demand has been very strong, and harvests still remain limited, keeping prices higher than average for this time of year. Quality out of Canada has been excellent.

Canadian greenhouse growers had to replant their Mini Seedless Cucumbers, causing a short-lived gap, but prices should become more promotable as May continues. There have been some nice spot buys on the snackable "Cutecumber Poppers".



CV LETTUCES

Lettuces are now being harvested out of the Salinas, CA area. On **Iceberg Lettuce**, Dole is trading at a much higher level than the other brands for early May.



CV ASPARAGUS

NOTE: Asparagus prices have jumped significantly as Mexico is now finished with Caborca deal for the season. We are now into supporting locally grown New Jersey and Delaware crops, and quality is excellent, though there is a range of sizing. Prices are expected to be higher until mid-May on the domestic crop.



CV PEPPERS

Green Pepper prices are rising some as we look to transition to new crop California. Florida quality has been hit or miss due to some recent heavy rains and weather. Market prices are expected to be higher in the month of May due to the weather challenges out of Florida.

111b **Red**, **Orange**, and **Yellow Peppers** will start to ease back off to more promotable pricing. Red and Yellow will be the first to fall, and Orange will slowly fall behind them. Quality out of Canada has been excellent and will continue to be as new sets are starting in early May.

15lb **Red Elongated Peppers** are in a brief gap as Mexico starts slow down and California is not expected to start until mid-May. Expect brief shortages until then.



CV CHERRIES

Our first California **Cherries** of the season will arrive in stock for the week of 5/9. These are expected to have good color and flavor, with good size to start out with too (10.5 row and larger). Volume will be better during the week of 5/16.



CV ARTICHOKES

Limited supplies of beautiful **Purple Artichokes** are available from Ocean Mist! Not only do these Roman-style **Artichokes** add a pop of purple color to displays, but they are also known for meatier leaves and a bolder flavor.

Artichoke pricing is coming back down after a quick price increase due to transition gaps.



CV MANGOS

Tommy Atkins Mangos from Mexico are steady with the bulk of the fruit being smaller in size. Fruit will be in lighter supply on jumbo 6ct, but 10ct and 12ct should be more promotable.

Ataulfo Honey Mangos from Mexico will be steady, and beautiful fruit remains promotable for May.

Haitian Mangos will be available again and supplies have been good. Prices continue to fall and should make this delicious fruit promotable for the month of May.



CV CABBAGE

Green Cabbage has transitioned to new crop out of Georgia. Quality looks excellent and supplies are steady.



CV CAULIFLOWER

ALERT! Cauliflower continues to be very limited out of CA and prices are up.

Continuous days of cool temps have really pushed back harvesting. Growers sound hopeful to return to an improved harvest schedule by mid-May.



CV GREEN BEANS

NOTE: Green Beans will continue to be expensive coming out of Florida. Recent heavy wind and rains have damaged the crops. Quality is fair with occasional russeting present. Eat Smart brand is experiencing some prorates due to the same situation on the Microwave Green Beans. Georgia should start around mid-May.



CV BROCCOLI

GA continues to be readily available with **Broccoli Crowns**, SC begins harvesting early May, and CA had some cool temps but has warmer temps in the forecast. Overall, **Broccoli** remains reasonably priced even with the higher freight rates.



CV GRAPES

NOTE: The market on **Green Seedless Grapes** is very strong due to short supply, ending the season from South America. Even with the high prices, demand has been good, plus Mexico won't get going until mid to late-May. There could be a gap.

Red Seedless Grapes are plentiful and quality good. Prices have been steady with good deals on large and medium-large.

Cotton Candy Grapes will be available for the first week of May in 10/2lb clamshells.



CV WATERMELONS

Watermelon prices continue to fall as more growers begin harvests out of Florida. Mexico is also crossing product leading to more availability in the marketplace. Freight rates are so high all-around, that we won't see the deals that we normally would have in a regular year, even with the FOBs. Quality out of Florida continues excellent.



CV SQUASH

Green and **Yellow Squash** continue to be promotable out of Florida and Mexico. Prices have come up slightly due to higher freight rates but remain very promotable. Quality has been excellent from both regions.



CV SWEET VIDALIA ONIONS

The Georgia Vidalia Sweet Onion season is off to a great start with good quality and strong retail sales. Be sure to check out the Four Seasons - Generation Farms Display Contest for May.



CV BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Brussels Sprouts are readily available, and pricing is starting to come off just in time for Mother's Day.



FRESH EXPRESS

ALERT! Fresh Express has had very poor fill-rates on their **Packaged Salads** during late April due to supply chain issues, high demand, and biggest of all, a constrained labor workforce from the lingering pandemic.

The outlook on the labor challenges is not immediately improved for May, so Fresh Express has announced that they will be **temporarily suspending** production of the following items in order to have better fill rates on the rest of their offerings:

- 3884 FE Garden Salad 10/24oz
- 3588 FE Lettuce Trio 6/9oz
- 3907 FE Spinach Cello 6/16oz
- 204438 FE Sweet Hearts Blend 6/9oz
- 3492 FE Five Lettuce Mix 6/6oz
- 3537 FE Spinach & Arugula 6/5 oz
- 3905 FE Chopped Bacon & Bleu Kit 6/10.6oz
- 3941 FE Chopped BBQ Bacon Ranch Kit 6/10.6oz



CV TROPICALS

Hass Avocados remained steady. Prices taking a small dip heading into the beginning of May.

Pineapple supplies have rebounded in time for Cinco De Mayo celebrations. Supplies will be good for next week.

Jackfruit is available in limited quantities.

Black Mission Figs remain in very short supply coming out of Mexico and Chile for the month of May.

Dragonfruit and **Yellow Pitahaya** from Ecuador is becoming tighter as the season has passed its peak. We will see limited supplies.