

ORGANIC MARKET NEWS (USDA)



SEPTEMBER 18 - 25, 2020

ORGANIC SWEET POTATO PEAK SEASON



Now is a great time to start thinking about big fall Organic Sweet Potato displays! All varieties are now new crop out of California and in plentiful supply!

We offer a full complement of items including bulk 40lb with PLU stickers of Organic Garnet, Jewel, Oriental, Stokes Purple, and Hanna Sweet Potato varieties, as well as some value added options, such as the 10/3lb Garnet Bags, 12/2ct Microwavable Jewel Trays, 48ct Wrapped Jewels, and the 18/11b baby mix trays.

Be sure to use all of these items to fill out your fall display and add some incremental sales for this margin generating category \$\$\$.

WEST COAST HEAT WAVE/FIRES

Last week we reported about California, Oregon, and Washington experiencing difficulties from wildfires during the late summer of 2020. Additionally, serious heat waves continue to push temperatures well over 110F in some areas. The forest fires continue to rage in parts of the Pacific Northwest and very dramatic impacts are starting to be experienced throughout the produce and logistics industries.

Smoke clouds blocking sunlight and dropping ash onto plants are impacting the growth and maturity of various produce crops. The poor air quality is limiting workers length of time they can be in the fields and orchards. In some areas, being outside is like smoking 18-20 cigarettes a day.

Throughout the week of 9/14, we began to hear about more and more difficulties from our grower shipper partners out west.

ALERT! Here is what growers are warning us about for the rest of September and into October:

- Severe shortages on Strawberries and weaker quality
- Lighter color and delayed harvest on many Apple varieties
- Quality issues from heat stress on many row crop Vegetables
- Delays in packing and harvests due to shorter days in the field from smoke
- Delays at packing houses waiting for Apples/Pears to come out of the orchards
- Higher freight rates due to drivers not wanting to load in these regions.
- · Higher freight rates due to delays in loading at wildfire-impacted shippers









OG GRAPES

California **Organic Black**, **Green**, and **Red Seed-less Grapes** continue in peak season with good color and green stems. Now through mid-October should be a great time to promote.

Organic Thomcord Grapes continue in season. This seedless cross between a Thompson and Concord Grape has a good following.

New California **Organic Sweet Carnival Grapes** are in season. These yellow/green grapes are similar to the popular Cotton Candy Grapes.



OG BERRIES

NOTE: Organic Blueberries are headed up in price as supplies wind down at the end of the domestic season. Driscoll's will be transitioning out if pints and into 6oz in late September and moving forward.

Driscoll's **Organic Raspberries** are in decent supply for the rest of September.

Organic Blackberries from Driscoll's are limited, however there will be some affordable supplies from Naturipe out of Mexico - just not in abundance.

ALERT! Due to extreme heat and smoke from wildfires, **Organic Strawberry** supplies will become very limited. Expect higher prices, occasional supply gaps, and weaker quality headed towards October.



OG MANGOS

NOTE: The week of 9/20, we'll have one lat shot of 6ct and 8ct late season **Organic Mangos**. Get these while you can!

Then, **Organic Mangos** will be out of season from Mexico and gap until Ecuador starts their new crop fruit in mid-October.



OG FALL FRUIT

Organic Pomegranates from CA are available again. Quality to start the season has been good!

Organic Pom Arils are coming back into production and will be in stock the week of 9/28.

Coming soon - Organic Fuyu and Hachiya Persimmons! Look for this fall fruit at the end of September.



OG GRFFN BFANS

Local **Organic Green Beans** from Elizabethtown, PA are seeing steady supplies in mid-September. Expect this trend to continue throughout the remainder of the month and into early October before the local season comes to an end in mid-October.

Look for promotional opportunities to arise throughout September.



OG SWEET BABY BROCCOLI

Organic Sweet Baby Broccoli tightened in supplies quickly in mid-September, resulting in pricing to rise very fast. Expect this trend to continue the remainder of September.



OG PINEAPPLES

Organic Pineapple supplies will be great for late September! We will have 6ct and 8ct fruit available. Quality has been good coming out of Costa Rica.



OG HASS AVOCADOS

Organic Hass Avocados prices dropped a little bit more as increased volumes continue across the border. Both Mexican regular Organic and Equal Exchange Fair Trade Organic Hass Avocados will be available for late September!



OG FIGS

Organic Black Mission Figs have gone into a bit of a stall in harvest and supplies were limited. Growers are expecting more fruit towards the end of September.



OG TOMATOES

Organic Vine Ripe Tomatoes from local grower, Christ King, continue to be available, but harvests are slowing down and prices are coming up.

Organic Grape Tomatoes will begin to tighten up. Lady Moon Farms is expected to harvest in PA until the end of September and then gap for about a month until their Florida crop starts up. Supplies should be steady this week and then begin to tighten up at the end of the month.

Organic Roma Tomatoes from PA are slowing down. We will be bringing in product from Mexico to keep supplies steady. Quality has looked nice.

Organic Beefsteak Tomatoes out of Mexico continue to be available. Prices are stable and quality has been nice. Canada's fall production is expected to start sometime in early October.

Organic Cluster Tomato prices continue to fall as more production comes on out of British Columbia and Mexico. Quality has been excellent.



OG BROCCOLI

ALERT! Organic Broccoli from California remains extremely limited through the rest of September.

Factors of extra demand and abnormally high temperatures early in August are impacting the situation. Quality issues are leading to very low yields and high prices on any of the good stuff left to harvest. Growers are leaving product in the field that have dehydration, hollow core, and pin rot.

Quebec-based shippers are targeting late September to be back on track with availability.

ALERT! Organic Broccoli Crowns have been more of a struggle than the 14ct because of sizing issues and especially the hollow core.



OG CUCUMBERS

Locally grown **Organic Cucumbers** are coming to a close for the season as supplies lighten and plants yield less. Expect to see pricing rise in mid-September as supplies are limited from other areas. Mexican product has had a slow start to the season, causing prices to be elevated and Lady Moon Farms Florida crop is not set to start until late September.

Organic Euro Seedless Cucumbers continue to rise in price and availability remains fairly limited. Expect to see this trend continue for a few weeks.

ALERT! Organic Mini Cucumbers are either out or limited in supply. Prices continue to rise. Prepare to see gaps.



OG MELONS

ALERT! We are suffering with the rest of the industry with light supplies of **Organic Cantaloupe** due to past and current weather events. The smoke continues to be the ongoing story and is affecting the maturing of the crops. With that said we should make a comeback on some volume later this week and next. We will continue **Organic Melons** until then.

NOTE: Organic Watermelons are finished for the US season. Mexico is going to start sometime in mid-October on full size.

NOTE: Organic Mini Seedless Watermelons remain tight this week. New fields in CA are expected to start for a late season harvest until Mexico starts up. Expect some gaps and shortages this week as we wait for the new fields to begin harvests.



OG LETTUCES

Organic Green Leaf and Red Leaf Lettuces have seen much improved pricing and quantities. California and Quebec best shippers are seeing better yield numbers from their fields. Lady Moon Farms will gap until their Florida farm starts in mid to late November.

NOTE: Organic Romaine Lettuce has not seen the recovery in quality, pricing, and quantities. Expect supplies to be limited throughout September as abnormal heat has caused defects such as internal burns, sun scalding and dehydration. Quebec base suppliers expect to see their quantities and quality improves on Organic Romaine and Romaine Hearts in late September.

ALERT! Organic Romaine Hearts from California continue to be light in supplies, and unfortunately, it's expected to worsen as September continues. Limitations and pro-rates have already begun to take place.



OG APPLES

ALERT! Our **Organic Apple** grower/shipper partners are warning us about harvest and packing delays with all the smoke in Washington from wildfires. There will be some supply chain disruption and we may see some lighter color on the varieties that have not been picked yet.

Organic Gala, Granny Smith, and **Fuji Apples** from the new crop Washington season are in season for late summer and fall in 80/88ct, 100ct, 12/3lb bags, 12/2lb pouches, and 8/5lb pouch bags.

Organic Honeycrisp and **SweeTango Apples** are in season and in high demand. Promote while you can!

Arriving 9/22:

- OG McIntosh
- OG Smitten Apples

The first of the season Oregon grown Heirloom Orchards Cortland Apples are in stock, and Cox Pippin will be in stock the week of 9/21.



OG GREENS

Organic Collards, Red Kale, Green Kale, and Lacinato Kale from Lady Moon Farms in PA has begun for the season in good harvest numbers.

Organic Dandelion, Chards, and **Parsleys** are also starting up from **Lady Moon Farms in PA** and will be available through mid-October.



OG HARD SQUASH

Time to increase your space and variety for the **Organic Hard Squash** category.

From the up and coming new **Organic Honeynut Squash** to the staples like **Organic Acorn, Spaghetti,** and **Butternut** — we have them!



OG BOK CHOY

ALERT! Organic Bok Choy and Baby Bok Choy from California remain extremely limited and very elevated in price. Look for this to continue throughout September before supplies improve in early October. Although limited, local supply will begin in mid-September. Expect to see product sourced from New Jersey and Pennsylvania throughout the remainder of September.



OG KIWI BERRIES

Organic Kiwi Berries are in season through mid-October!

Due to anticipated high demand and the impacts of wildfire smoke, it is expected that this season will be shorter and wrap up quickly. So, be sure to promote this snackable mini kiwifruit while you can!



OG PEPPERS

Organic Red, Yellow, and **Orange Bell Peppers** aremain expensive from Holland and Canada. Look for both growing regions to begin to wrap up in mid to late October as we transition to Israeli & Mexican supplies.

Organic Green Peppers from Lady Moon Farms in PA have been in steady supply, but as we head towards late September, expect supplies to begin to wind down. As local weather changes and temperatures get colder expect yields to slow dramatically into late September.

NOTE: Organic Mini Sweet Peppers continue to see limited availability and will see supply gaps as well as elevated pricing from Mexican based shippers. Look for Ohio or PA product in limited supplies, but colder temperatures will slow and end this season quickly.



OG SQUASH

Local **Organic Zucchini** and **Yellow Squash** are winding down for the season or have finished harvesting. Colder temps have caused the plants to slow down and end.

Not to worry, Lady Moon Farms has kicked off their Florida **Organic Zucchini** crop in mid-September and should be a pretty seamless transition. **Organic Yellow Squash** however is going to be limited for a few weeks and will begin to be procured from Mexico or South Carolina as their season is set to begin in mid-September as well.

• NOTE: California Organic Valencia Orange • Organic Celery and Celery from Cali

- supplies have tightened up significantly again. It looks like we are going to see a very early end of the season as fruit quality in the fields is poor so volumes getting into a box are slim to none. We hope **Organic Navel Oranges** will have a good
- ALERT! Organic Grapefruit will gap until new orchards come into season later in October.

start sometime in October as expected.

- Organic Celery and Celery from California continues to yield strong harvest numbers in September. Expect to see great availability, excellent quality and steady pricing in the month of September.
- We are still about two weeks away from new crop Canadian grown Organic Red and Yellow Potatoes. Expect prices to remain high until we get into the Manitoba-grown potatoes.
- We have made a smooth transition over to some gorgeous Nevada grown Organic Red Onions.
 Pricing has remained steady through this transition.
 All other Organic Onions are steady at the moment.
- Look for pricing to take a slight tick up and less promotional opportunities to arise on **Organic Cauliflower** in mid-September. Quebec-based shippers are targeting late September to be back on track with availability.





JOIN US TO CELEBRATE LOCAL FARMERS!

"Thank a Local Farmer Week" recognizes the vital and unique role local farmers have filled during a time of immense market disruption and a public health emergency.

To celebrate "Thank a Local Farmer Week", Four Seasons Produce will be donating a portion of profits from produce sold from September 19-26 to PASA Sustainable Agriculture.

Normally, Four Seasons does a donation event with our partners during Earth Week, but due to COVID, we rescheduled to "Thank a Local

Farmer Week" here in September.

By supporting these PA brands through Four Seasons Produce, you can help raise additional funds for PASA.







Joining us with their own efforts to support PASA during "Thank a Local Farmer Week", we applaud these retailers:











For more information about PASA and this event, check out their website: pasafarming.org/thank-a-local-farmer-week







2020 GOLF OUTING REPLACED WITH FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

After much consideration for the safety of our customers, suppliers, and associates, the tough decision has been made to not move forward with an in-person Four Seasons Family of Companies Customer Appreciation Golf Outing & Dinner for the Make-A-Wish Foundation this year.

We love to have fun, to network, and to fellowship face-to-face with our customers and vendors, all while raising money together to help grant wishes to children with life-altering health challenges. It's a special day we look forward to annually, and together we've raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for Make-A-Wish. However, with all of the travel restrictions, social distance protocols, and unknowns of September, we're planning to do something a little different for 2020.











MAKE-A-WISH FUNDRAISER

FOOD BOX GIVEAWAY

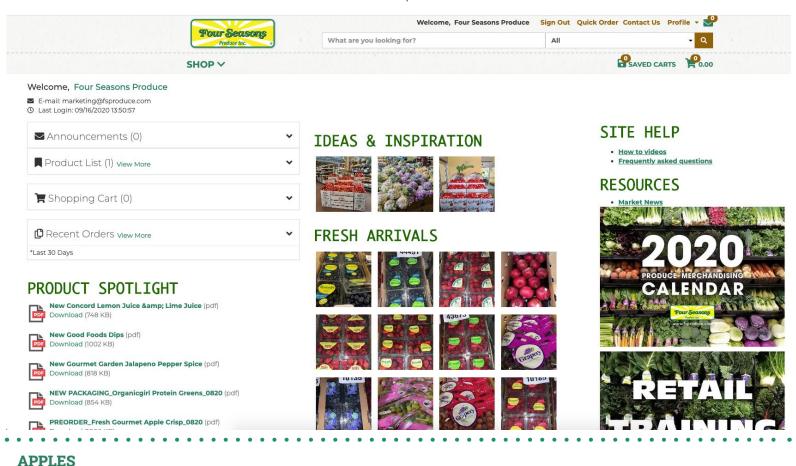
Instead of golf foursome sponsorships or hole sponsorships, this year we are inviting our vendor partners to simply help us raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation with financial support in any increment you're willing to give. These monies will go directly to the Make-A-Wish Philadelphia, Delaware, & Susquehanna Valley chapter. Instead of gathering for a big meal with customers and vendors after a day of golf, this year Four Seasons Family of Companies will be hosting and sponsoring our 2nd truck-to-trunk food box giveaway for those in need in our community on September 22.

COMING SOON! Four Seasons' NEW Online Ordering Portal

We have been working hard to redesign our Online Ordering Portal with you in mind!

The new site will be easy to use on computers, tablets, and smartphones. In addition to being able to place orders and look up information at your convenience, our retailer partners will have access to resources, product photos, sales flyers, invoice and purchase history, and more!

We will be in contact with users of our current site soon, and we will be excited to add new users later this fall.



SHOP / ALL PRODUCTS / Apples Requested Date Approved Delivery Days: Mon Tue Thu Fri Sat 09/19/2020 CV/OG V Brands V SHOP ☐ Actions ▼ Sort by: Ad Specials ■ ■ ■ ⇔ ALL PRODUCTS Apples Case / Unit Extended Case Retail / Retail PLU/UPC Product Code Quantity SRE Gross Profit Price Price Extended Bananas 21.50 0 Berries CV Apples Gold Del. WXF 40 lb 72/88 ct 45.71 % 0.54 Qty In Cart: 0 0.99 CV Apples Red Del. 40 lb 72/88 ct 0.54 45.71 % Melons Qty In Cart: 0 Pears 204834 48.50 79.60 0 CV Apples EverCrisp 40 lb 72/88 ct Qty In Cart: 0 Tropicals & Specialty 34.50 59.60 Cooking & Salad Vegetables Case CV Apples Fuji WXF 40 lb 72/88 ct 42.11 % 0.86 Oty In Cart: 0 38 50 59.60 Garlic, Ginger & Turmeric CV Apples Fuji East 40 lb 72/88 ct 0.96 35.40 % Qty In Cart: 0

Deadline to enter Nov. 30, 2020

Produce Artist Award Series



for merchandisers and specialists, plus a new category for produce managers!

How to enter

- Take 6-10 photos of your best displays of key fall items.
- 2 Email your photos to anickle@thepacker.com by Nov. 30, 2020.
- Congratulations! Your work will be showcased on PMG, and you'll be up for prizes including a customized produce knife, apron, hat ... and, of course, some awesome bragging rights!

Fall Awards



Overall top entry: Merchandiser/specialist category



Overall top entry:
Produce manager category



Best Apple Display



Best Pear Display



Best Squash Display



Best Wet Rack



Judge's Choice





CONVENTIONAL MARKET NEWS

SEPTEMBER 18 - 25, 2020

APPLE SEASON OUTLOOK

Eastern Apples (PA & NY):

Eastern Apple growers have experienced some early season start-up challenges with the delayed harvest/ later pick dates in the orchards. The late start-up along with the struggle to secure enough workers in the field, and especially in the packinghouses, is leading to occasional hiccups in daily availability since there hasn't been any time to pack ahead.

The good news is that growers are seeing beautiful Honeycrisp Apples coming out of their orchards. Gold Delicious Apples are the next variety to come into season to go along with Gala, Ginger Gold, McIntosh, and Red Delicious.

- Reds Available, started this week, sizing towards 88/100 ct no issues with supply
- Upcoming start dates by varieties Early Fuji, Cortland, and Empires to start the week of 9/28; available on or around 10/1 (TBD)
- $^{\bullet}$ SnapDragon® On or around 10/1 Pricing for 12/2 pouches and 27lb Euros will be sent over along with POS/program information
- Honeycrisp Update Size profiles: No problem with 72/80/88ct availability and bag







WASHINGTON APPLES:

NOTE: Wildfires and smoke are having a significant impact on harvests and logistics. Stay tuned for more.

What varieties are growers reducing acreage on?
Jonagold, Braeburn, Cameo, Red Delicious, Gold Delicious

What are the new managed varieties growers are betting big on? SugarBee, Cosmic Crisp, Rockit, plus some LucyGlo and LucyRose

What are some of the other managed varieties that will be promotable later this fall and winter?

Jazz, Envy, Opal, Kanzi, Smitten, Juici, and more

What are those estimated start dates?

Most will be released during November and beyond, but stay tuned each week for specific start dates



CV GRAPES

California is rocking with volume on **Red, Green,** and **Black Seedless Grapes**. Growers have good volume and quality on medium to jumbo and everything in between!

Quality is at its highest level and a notch above years past. Pricing varies depending on size and if it's a proprietary variety.

All colors are still showing strong demand with some very nice quality coming off the vines.

From The Grapery:

Cotton Candy Grapes continue in peak season along with Black Moon Drop and Red Sweet Celebration Grapes.



CV FLORIDA CITRUS

According to growers: Fueled by improved horticultural methods and favorable growing conditions, Florida Citrus is making a strong comeback! Early fruit testing reveals an encouraging trend: Higher brix, better size, and good external quality across all varieties.

Juice Oranges: While the overall Florida crop volume is down: size, internal quality, and external appearance are markedly improved over recent years. We expect stronger brix and better size. Expect to harvest late September with promotable volumes by Oct 10, limited pallet quantities start Oct 5.

Grapefruit: While size continues to be a challenge, we are encouraged by the objective improvement in size vs. previous years. Expect to harvest late September with promotable volumes by Oct 10, Limited pallet quantities start Oct 5.

Navel Oranges: Very excited by strong early tests on Navel Oranges! With the expected dry season and a little help from Mother Nature, will be a special season for high internal quality Florida Navels! Expect to harvest late September with promotable volumes by Oct 10.



CV BERRIES

ALERT! Strawberries are becoming extremely tight in supply. These shortages are all caused by the heat and recent fires in and around the Salinas, CA growing areas. We're also hearing that due to the smoke, harvesters are working an abbreviated schedule.

Growers have sent Act of God letters out, and are warning of heavy prorates, shortages, weak quality, and much higher prices for the rest of September.

Raspberries are in decent supply for September and quality has been nice.

Blackberries will continue to be in tighter supply this week, and the fruit we receive will be from both California and Mexico as we move forward. Quality has been nice on fruit from both areas.

NOTE: Blueberries are in much tighter supply this week. Pricing continues to rise on pints, and growers are beginning to shift from packing pints into packing 6 oz clamshells. We will have both available as we move forward, and quality continues to be excellent on all Peruvian fruit.



CV POTATOES & ONIONS

NOTE: We have seen pricing on all **Potatoes** out of Idaho increase this week in cost due to increased freight prices out of this region. Look for all Idaho counts and Idaho bagged **Potatoes** to increase by a couple dollars this week as a result.

Although we had an abrupt end to the **PA Simply Sweet Onion** program this week due to a crop failure of the late season product out of PA, we will have a seamless transition to some beautiful domestically grown "**Sweetie Sweet**" **Onions** out of Nevada.



CV LETTUCES

ALERT! CA and Quebec Iceberg and Romaine Hearts remain limited on availability, so expect a jump in pricing. CA will be hit or miss on quality, just not the ordinarily top-notch CA quality due to weather and overcast from the fires. CA growers expect to be tighter on supplies for the remainder of the Salinas season with hopes of better crops transitioning into Yuma, AZ. Quebec is struggling to keep up with the increased demand. Vendors are starting to turn away and cap orders.

GOOD NEWS! Local New Jersey fall **Leaf** and **Romaine Lettuces** are right around the corner for the end of September and into October. They are seeing a small delay in fields due to the cooler temps.



CV TROPICALS

Hass Avocado prices from Mexico were slightly lower again this week, and fruit has been in great supplies in both 48s and 60s. Ask about spot buys on XL 40ct out of Mexico.

Pineapple are steady in both the 7ct and 8ct lines from Dole.

Brazil **Tommy Atkins Mangos** are available in steady supplies.

Young Thai Coconuts will be steady next week. Pricing is down a bit.



CV CUCUMBERS

NOTE: Super Select Cucumber prices remain strong this week. New production is starting out of Georgia; however, Hurricane Sally just ran its course right through, dumping 7 inches of rain in some areas. We'll have to wait to see what kind of crop damage that caused.

NOTE: Euro Seedless Cucumber prices also remain very strong this week as Canadian production remains low during crop rotations. New picks should begin sometime in late September, and prices will ease in the coming weeks.

NOTE: Euro Mini Seedless Cucumbers also remain tight as they are on the same rotations.



CV TOMATOES

Beefsteak Tomato prices are rising this week. Demand has picked up as Rounds across the US have slowed down on volume. Quality out of Mexico has been very nice. Cluster Tomatoes are coming down some as more harvests out of Mexico continues to get better. Quality has been very nice coming out of Canada and Mexico.

Grape Tomatoes production out of Mexico remain steady. Local harvests are finishing up and the transition will being to Quincy, GA, then to Palmetto, FL in mid-late October.

Local PA **Vine Ripe Tomatoes** remain available this week but prices are up as less product is around. We should continue to have limited supplies grown from high tunnel growers, but field grown is all but finished for the season. Local Heirloom Tomatoes are still coming in very light volumes as well, but expect shortages and gaps.

Roma Tomato prices are stable this week. Quality from CA, TN, and Mexico has been consistently nice from all regions.



CV PEPPERS

NOTE: Green Pepper prices rose quickly this week as local farms continue to finish up due to cooler temps moving in. New growing areas down in NC and GA are not ready to begin harvesting, so supplies will be limited and tight for late September.

11lb **Red, Yellow,** and **Orange Bell Peppers** continue to be promotable out of Mexico. Prices are very weak as more product comes across. Red is the most promotable color, but yellow and orange prices are not far behind. Quality has looked excellent on all new crop.

Ask your sales rep about the Bailey Farms bagged line of **Sweet Peppers** and **Chili Peppers**.



CV CITRUS

ALERT! California **Grapefruit** has finished earlier than expected. Texas and Florida won't start until the end of the month or the first week of October. There will be a gap.

With strong demand and light supplies, Import Navel Oranges are in short supply. Sizes are peaking on 56's and larger fruit with little to none smaller sizes for bagging. Prices are very strong. Midnight Valencia Oranges will start coming in for late September. This is a seedless variety and a good sub for Navels.



CV ASPARAGUS

Asparagus markets remain promotable this week. Mexico continues with strong production leading to promotable volume. Quality has looked very nice as well.



CV BROCCOLI & CAULIFLOWER

Broccoli Crown supplies remain limited. There are increasing numbers of vendors sold out or capping orders. As cooler weather settles, local **Bin Stem Broccoli** will be a great option!

Our main **Cauliflower** supplies will be out of Quebec with beautiful quality. With cooler weather and gloomy skies out west, you might see a slow increase in price. Quebec Bikini-cut Cauliflower has been a great option. Local bin Cauliflower is expected in early October!



CV WATERMELONS

Watermelon prices remain stable this week. East coast fruit is starting to finish up for the season, as that finishes prices will go up as we transition out to New Mexico and transition to more cartons.

NOTE: Cantaloupes are not maturing and there have been some gaps in supply. The market is strong with prices up.



CV ORNAMENTALS

Pumpkins and **Ornamentals** continue to be plentiful at this time. With nice fall weather expected be sure to have your displays ready with all our great offerings! Quality has looked great!



CV FALL FRUIT

Pomegranates from California are steady for late September. The early "Wonderful" variety will be available in 24ct 2-layer packs.

Coming soon - **Fuyu** and **Hachiya Persimmons!** Look for this fall fruit in the next few weeks.



CV GREEN BEANS

Green Bean prices could rise this week as local production could slow down with cooler temps coming in. Quality continues to look great.



CV SQUASH

Green and **Yellow Squash** markets remain stable this week. Local harvests are finishing up, but GA has started, and NC continues to harvest. It's yet to be determined the damage Hurricane Sally caused which could change markets very drastically.



CV BRUSSELS SPROUTS

The big push on **Brussels Sprouts** has come to an end. Prices are starting to jump higher, making their way back to the higher end of 20s.