



# ORGANIC OUTLOOK

NOVEMBER 10 - NOVEMBER 17, 2017



WWW.FSPRODUCE.COM 10 LB

## ORGANIC BRUSSELS SPROUTS SEASON



**Organic Brussels Sprouts** are expected to be in good supply through Thanksgiving out of California. New York growers have adequate supplies of **Organic Brussels Sprouts**, but their season will likely end just before Thanksgiving.

**Organic Microwave Bagged Brussels Sprouts** out of Mexico are limited.

**Organic Brussels Sprouts on the Stalk** are also available in limited supply.



### OG CALIFORNIA CITRUS

**Buck Brand Organic Specialty Citrus** is expected to begin early this coming week with: **Buddha Hand, Variegated Calamondin, Finger Limes, Key Limes, Centennial Kumquats, Pink Variegated Lemons, Makrut (Keefer) Limes, Satsuma Mandarins** and **Sweet Limes**.

**Organic Navel Oranges** continue in better supply with good flavor, but expect some green and oil spotting with this early gassed fruit.

**Organic Satsuma Mandarins** continue to be available, but they also have some greening and oil spots. Prices are decreasing slightly.

**Organic Grapefruit** supplies are now pretty decent. Expect prices to lower.



### OG TOMATOES

Some deals are available out of Mexico on **Organic Cluster Tomatoes**. Canadian product is tighter in supply and priced higher. PA grown **Organic Cluster Tomatoes** are in decent supply.

**Organic Hothouse Tomatoes** are more limited out of Canada and Mexico. 2-Layer Organic round Tomatoes are now available from Mexico and coming in with good quality and color.

**ALERT!** **Organic Grape** and **Cherry Tomato** pricing has jumped up this week sharply. Mexico reports very light supplies and Florida won't get started until the end of November due to Hurricane Irma wiping out early plantings.

**Organic Roma Tomatoes** are in good supply and growing out of Mexico.



### OG APPLES

Washington **Organic Fuji, Gala, Golden, Granny Smith, Honeycrisp, Jonagold, and Red Delicious Apples** are in excellent supply with markets continuing to ease. Promotional opportunities are available, especially on 3 lb poly bags and 2 lb pouches.

New crop Washington **Organic Jazz Apples (bulk & 2 lb pouch)** are set to arrive this weekend.

**Organic Opal Apples** out of Washington continue in firm supply. These delicious apples are slow to brown when cut. Be sure to enter the display contest.

Washington **Organic Pinova Apples** continue in limited supply and will transition this week to Stemilt's proprietary **Piñata Pinova** variety.



## OG ONIONS

Local **Organic Sweet Onions** are winding down and supplies will transition to Nevada-grown for Thanksgiving.

**Organic Red, Yellow, and White Onions** will be premium product from Nevada for the rest of November.



## OG GREEN BEANS

**Organic Green Beans** from California are in very tight supply as only a couple of shippers have product. Mexico has still not begun harvesting. Prices are high.

**Organic Trim/Wash Green Beans** in microwave bags will be available, but producers are recommending pre-books for Thanksgiving demand.



## OG DATES

A great selection of **Organic Medjool Dates**, **Date Rolls**, and **Dried Figs** is available for the Thanksgiving season! These delicious treats provide a great complement to the dessert tray or a great natural sweetener to any smoothie!



## OG BROCCOLI

**Organic Broccoli** is increasing in supply out of CA and AZ. Pricing has adjusted down a little. Supplies are better on **Organic Broccoli Crowns** as well. Quality has been good to very good.

Local PA & NY **Organic Broccoli** is virtually done for the season.



## OG HASS AVOCADOS

**Organic Hass Avocados** continue to be in great supplies and are promotable through Thanksgiving. Quality has been very good.

48 and 60ct **Equal Exchange Fair Trade Organic Hass Avocados** will be available for mid-November.



## OG SWEET POTATOES

Premium **Organic Sweet Potatoes** out of California are ready for holiday promotion! #1 grade bulk, 10/3lb bags, and even microwave packs are available for your Thanksgiving displays.

**Organic Stokes Purple Sweet Potatoes** are also in peak season.



## OG KALE

**Organic Kale** is a promotable item for Thanksgiving in terms of quality and availability.

Lady Moon Farms in Florida has started harvesting **Organic Green, Red, and Lacinato Kale**.

**Organic Kale** is in good supply out of NY and OH. CA growers have abundant supplies of all varieties.



## OG CUCUMBERS

Mexican shippers report increasing supplies of **Organic Cucumbers** – it's a good time to promote. Supplies out of Florida are adequate, and increasing. Prices are lower.

**Organic Hothouse Cucumbers** out of CA and Mexico are in good supply. **Organic Mini Seedless Cucumber** packs are limited from CA and Mexico.



## OG CELERY

**Organic Celery** prices are up markedly this week and will remain high through Thanksgiving. We do expect to have abundant supplies of **Organic Carton Celery** for Thanksgiving.

**Organic Celery Heart** prices have moved up as well.

**Organic Celery Root (Celeriac)** is in good supply out of CA.



## OG ASPARAGUS

**Organic Asparagus** is expected to be more limited for Thanksgiving, but pricing is steady.



## OG CRANBERRIES

**Organic Cranberries** remain in peak season out of Quebec, Canada in both bags and bulk. Supplies are expected to be lighter than usual this fall and may end shortly after Thanksgiving.



## OG POTATOES

**Organic Count Russet Potatoes** from all regions have been limited, and securing trucks out of the Northwest and Colorado has also been particularly challenging. 10/5lb packs, however, are abundant.



## OG FALL FRUIT

**Organic Hachiya** (high cone shape) and **Fuyu (flat) Persimmons** are now in season. **Organic Hachiya Persimmons** should be ripened into a soft, gooey state before consumption, while **Organic Fuyu Persimmons** can be eaten right away when hard like an apple.

Whole Wonderful variety **Organic Pomegranates** are back in better supply in both cases and wooden bins. Convenient **Organic Pomegranate Arils** continue in good supply.



## OG BERRIES

Driscoll's **Organic Blackberries** and **Raspberries** are expected to be steady for November. Non-Driscoll's **Organic Blackberries** continue to improve in supply and pricing each week.

Driscoll's **Organic Blueberries** are steady this week with very high prices. South American **Organic Blueberry** supplies are improving daily and prices are lowering out of Argentina and Chile.

**ALERT!** **Organic Strawberry** volume is dwindling and markets are on the rise. Expect gaps and very strong pricing to continue through the holidays.



## OG CARROTS

**ALERT!** CA shippers are limited on larger sized **Organic Carrots** because of the extreme heat earlier in the season.. This has resulted in limits on **Organic Cellos** and **Jumbo Carrots**. Pricing remains higher than usual.

Quebec shippers report adequate supplies of 5lb and 2lb **Organic Carrots**.

**Organic Rainbow, Orange, and Purple Bunch Carrots** are in adequate supply. Cal-O is packing **Rainbow Baby Carrots** and **Rainbow Shredded Carrots** but not **Whole Rainbow Cello Carrots**.

## OTHER STORIES:

- **Organic Cut Veg** has been improving in supply on some items, but **Organic Cauliflower** continues to be a major issue for Taylor Farms bagged line and Farm Day Organics **Organic Cauliflower Crumbles**.

- **ALERT!** California **Organic Black, Green, and Red Grape** are winding down for the season, driving prices up while quality is on the decline. Shippers are lowering predictions and think supplies will run out in November. Expect pricing to rise and expect small gaps.

- **Organic Mangos** from Ecuador are in good supply. Quality is fair to good. Supplies will be good through the end of November. Container delays have pushed the arrival of **Organic Honey (Ataulfo) Mangos** back a week.

- Florida growers have good supplies of both **Organic Zucchini** and **Yellow Squash**. Both **Organic Squashes** are in abundant supply out of Mexico. It's a good time to promote!

- **Organic Red and Green Leaf Lettuces** are in adequate supply out of CA. Quality has improved over the last couple of weeks with less discoloration on the ribs.

- **Organic Romaine Lettuce** is in limited supply as some shippers are out. Expect to see more quality defects on **Organic Romaine Lettuce** for mid-November. **Organic Romaine Lettuce** is unavailable until December. Lady Moon Farms will start their Florida production of all varieties of **Organic Lettuce** in late November.

- **Organic Romaine Heart** quality continues to be very good. Pricing has moved up this past week due to demand.

- **Organic Iceberg Lettuce** out of CA is in good supply.

# 2017 Thanksgiving Organic and Conventional Produce Checklist & Merchandising Suggestions



**Thanksgiving is Thursday, November 23, 2017. PLAN NOW while there's still the luxury of time.**

Thanksgiving offers a great opportunity to maximize sales and profits through massive, fresh and seasonal and holiday related displays. Some of your displays will stay up through Christmas. Good planning and strong execution for this holiday will establish the momentum you need to carry you through the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Creativity will encourage impulse sales and maximize profits. Based on our experience, your customers will put a lot of effort into making sure that their Thanksgiving holiday dinner is perfect. Even consumers that "shop around" most of the year prefer to buy all of their ingredients from one store for major cooking holidays.

## 10 IDEAS & REMINDERS to help you ace this upcoming Thanksgiving Sales Period!

**1. Nut and Baking Displays should be built by November 13!** Nuts are not just for baking anymore, they're good sellers as healthy, high energy snacking for both our organic and conventional consumers.

- **What to Include:** In-shell and shelled Mixed Nuts and Walnuts, Raisins, Dried Cranberries, Baking Dates, Medjool Dates, Fresh Chestnuts and Roasted/Peeled Chestnuts and Dried Figs. Pistachios and Almond displays for snacking can be included.

- **Refill:** Initial California shelled and in-shell conventional nut orders have already shipped. Re-order early so you can stay ahead as product sells down. Don't get caught short on the days before Thanksgiving without enough product where you could have your department filled with customers but empty displays. Nut and Baking product will sell well through New Year's.



**2. Convenience and Recipe-Ready Products** save stressed out hosts time and sell great the week before Thanksgiving. Offer ready-to-use products that are washed and trimmed, or peeled and cut, or in a microwavable package

- Trimmed & Washed Microwaveable Green Beans and Brussels Sprouts, Peeled and Cubed Butternut Squash and the best sellers.
- Brands like Taylor Farms Organic and Green Giant Bagged Vegetables and Ocean Mist's Steam & Serve line will be great sellers
- Fresh Cut Vegetables & Fruits along with Veggie & Fruit Trays - whether purchased or store made - either way, have enough in stock!
- Stuffing Mix (Diced Onion & Celery with Herbs) and Soup Mix are good movers too

**3. Build a Big Sweet Potato Display to capture Big Sales!** Promote the full variety Organic and Conventional Sweet Potatoes (Yams) and specialty varietal sweet potatoes with some aggressive pricing too!

**TIP #1:** In areas where "sweet potato pie" is popular, jumbo sweet potatoes are ideal.

**TIP #2:** Post a full case price.

**TIP #3:** Add 3lb Bagged Sweet Potatoes for November.

**TIP #4:** Purple is hot! Add Stokes Purple Sweet Potatoes for consumers that want a conversation-sparking side dish.



**4. Potatoes & Onions – the staples matter.**

This is the time of year to build large displays of Organic and Conventional bagged and loose Potatoes & Onions, shallots and garlic.

- The best varieties for MASHING include: Yellow/Yukon Gold, White potatoes, Red Skin (for skin-on recipes) and Idaho russets (for fluffy texture).
- Fingerling varieties and Baby Potatoes are ideal for ROASTING.



**5. Classic Thanksgiving Ingredients for holiday side dishes drive sales.** Be ready with:

- **Organic and Conventional:** Green Beans are a favorite! Broccoli, Asparagus (green, purple and white), Brussels Sprouts, Cauliflower, Green Cabbage are in peak demand.

- **Did you know?** Thanksgiving week sales are often higher than at any other week of the year for: White Mushrooms, Fresh Cranberries, Brussels Sprouts, Rutabagas, Parsley, Fresh Herbs (including poultry blend), Leeks, Baby Peeled and Whole Carrots, Green Beans and White Pearl and Cipollini Onions.



**6. Pay attention to Fresh Herbs:**

- Pre-book your FRESH HERBS. Don't wait and be disappointed the day before Thanksgiving when you can't get more in.
- Poultry Mix, Thyme, Rosemary, Sage and Chives will be the top 5 fastest moving herb packs for Thanksgiving.



**7. Pay attention to Stuffing and Filling ingredients:**

- Think about the items your customers add to Stuffings, Filling and to their Turkey:
- Celery or Celery Hearts and Yellow Onions or Sweet Onions are on almost everyone's shopping list. Be ready and fresh
  - Chestnuts, Bunched Parsley, Sage, Apples, Cranberries and Raisins are key stuffing ingredients in many recipes too.

**8. Greens Sell!** Organic and Conventional Collards, Kale, Mustard, Turnip Greens are extremely important for many ethnic and vegetarian holiday dinners.

- TIP #1: Get pre-books in for Washed & Chopped Collards and Kale bags.  
 TIP #2: Get pre-books in for bunched Collards and Kale at stores where that is a in-demand traditional side dish.  
 TIP #3: Post a case price for CV Collards where appropriate.

**9. "Whoops, I forgot these sell so well for Thanksgiving!"** Some items just move surprisingly well around Thanksgiving. Be ready on:

- Artichokes and Fennel (Anise), Cole Slaw mixes, Bananas with a good yellow color are a "MUST" on display, Pomegranates and Pomegranate Arils, Persimmons and Grapes, Jarred fruits and citrus salad; Jumbo and XL Fruit like Apples, Pears and jumbo Citrus, Clementine and Satsuma Mandarins, Fresh Apple Ciders, Pineapples and peeled & cored Pineapples.



**PS.** Tofurkeys are very popular with your vegetarian customers. Natural and Organic Retailers, don't get caught short and disappoint your customers.

**PPS.** Beginning Black Friday, Lettuce and Tomato displays for leftovers are perfect for the weekend after Thanksgiving.

**10. Labor Scheduling and Order Planning can MAKE or BREAK your Thanksgiving Sales.**

**ORDERING TIPS:**

Don't be waiting for your delivery on items that you know will sell heavily for the holiday. PRE-BOOKS on key holiday items are strongly encouraged. You can always back off on your orders following the holiday, but you can't sell what you don't have in your store. Deliveries will be available on Wednesday 11/22, but that should be for last minute fill in and highly perishable only.

**PLANNING BY DELIVERY DAY:**

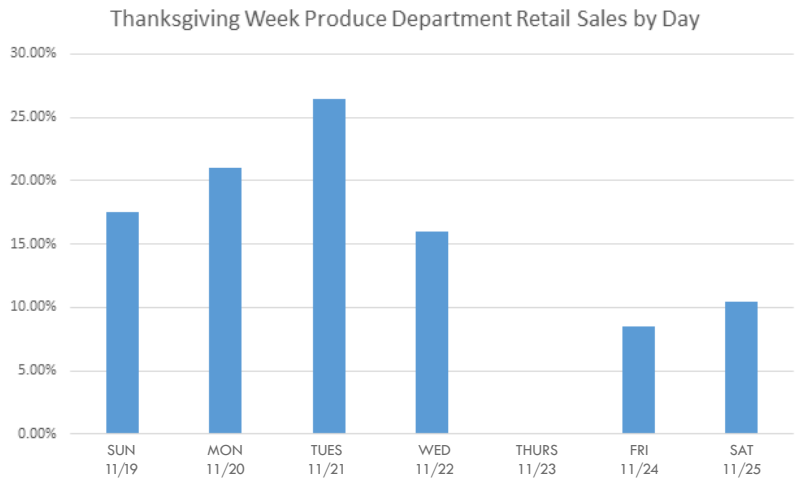
- Thur 11/16, Fri 11/17, & Sat 11/18:** Load up in hard items.
- Sat 11/18 & Mon 11/20:** Load up on fresh items.
- Tues 11/21 & Wed 11/22:** Order for fill-ins and highly perishables. By having product in well ahead of Thanksgiving, you and your staff can be on the sales floor filling shelves instead of being in the back room waiting on and unloading trucks.

**LABOR TIP:**

Your produce department should be set and ready to shop by 9:00 AM Monday through Wednesday for your customers' convenience. Don't get behind the '8' ball or you'll disappoint your customers. Stay ahead and your holiday business will go smoothly. Expect a 5% sales bump the week before Thanksgiving and a 15-20% bump the week of Thanksgiving. Sales will then likely drop 15-25% for the week after Thanksgiving.

**LABOR TIP:**

Schedule evening help on Sunday through Tuesday. Have your evening associates fill all hard goods like potatoes, onions and roots, along with semi-perishable product lines such as juices, dressings, dips, nuts, dried fruits, etc. Most of the fruit counters can also be packed-out in the evenings – apples, pears, citrus, pineapples, bagged fruit and melons. Stock your greens, mushrooms, berries and grapes in the morning before opening.



**Be Organized! Be Fresh & Full! And Be Successful! Have a great holiday! And THANK YOU for being our customer!**

*Want more advice? Contact your Four Seasons Produce Merchandiser or Sales Rep!*

# 2017 Thanksgiving Schedule



**Monday 11/20 & Tuesday 11/21** – Normal delivery schedules.

**Wednesday 11/22** – Extra deliveries will be made in most regions. Orders for Friday 11/24 delivery are due at the normal cut-off times.

**Thursday 11/23** – Happy Thanksgiving! Offices are closed for the holiday. No deliveries.

**Friday 11/24 & Saturday 11/25** – Normal delivery and office schedules.



# CONVENTIONAL OUTLOOK

NOVEMBER 10 - NOVEMBER 17, 2017

WWW.FSPRODUCE.COM 12/1 PT

## HURRICANE IRMA TOMATO IMPACT



**ALERT!** Get ready for serious sticker shock on **Grape Tomatoes** as growers are very light in supply and demand is high.

**What's causing the issue?**

Hurricane Irma wiped out all of the plantings of **Grape Tomatoes** in Florida that would have been harvested for this time. Production in Mexico has just not ramped up enough to meet the increased demand. This shortage is expected to last through November.

**Cluster Tomatoes** are steady and quality is good from Canada. **15 lb Beef Tomatoes** are steady and quality is decent.

**4x5 2-layer Tomatoes** are light in supply, but quality is nice. Pricing is higher.

**Roma Tomatoes** are steady and quality is good.

**Cherry Tomatoes** are tight but pricing is steady.

**Cocktail Tomatoes** are steady in volume and price, and quality is good.

**Heirloom Tomatoes** are very limited and shortages are expected.



### CV LETTUCE

**Iceberg Lettuce** is great to promote right now - quality is excellent and pricing will be steady to lower! Product has started from Yuma, AZ.

**Romaine, Green Leaf, and Red Leaf Lettuces** are steady from California. New Jersey supplies will be limited this week.

**Romaine Hearts** are more plentiful, with very nice quality, as Yuma, AZ has started. Expect lower pricing this week!



### CV BERRIES

**ALERT! Strawberry** prices will be higher this week due to increased Thanksgiving demand. Mexican volumes will be steady.

We have received our first few pallets of Florida **Strawberries**. Volume will remain light until we get into December.

**Blueberry** supplies will be more limited this week due to increased demand, and most fruit will be arriving on vessels instead of by air. Chilean fruit is expected to start arriving by the first week of December.

**Raspberries and Blackberries** are in steady supply and pricing this week.



### CV BROCCOLI & CAULIFLOWER

Eastern **Broccoli Crowns** are a GREAT item to promote this week. Harvests are in peak season out of Virginia and South Carolina. Pricing is lower and quality is outstanding.

**Broccoli Crowns** will be one of the more promotable green vegetables for Thanksgiving this year.

**ALERT! Cauliflower** supplies remain extremely limited with pricing that's almost 3 times as high as this time last year. There are a few signs that costs will ease off slightly right before Thanksgiving.



## CV CELERY

**Celery** and **Celery Hearts** supplies are fairly steady with Thanksgiving demand in full swing.

Quality has been good, and shortages are not expected for the holiday.



## CV ASPARAGUS

**Asparagus** demand is expected to increase for the Thanksgiving holiday. We will see prices firm up this week.



## CV CUCUMBERS

**Cucumber** quality is very nice from Mexico with steady to lower pricing.

**Cello-wrapped Cucumbers** are more plentiful as Mexican production has kicked in. Pricing will be lower this week.

**12/6ct Mini Seedless Cucumbers** will see a slight decrease in price this week.



## CV BRUSSELS SPROUTS

**Brussels Sprouts** are more expensive than this time last year, but availability is beginning to improve.

**9ct Brussels Sprouts on the Stalk** are available at least through Thanksgiving.

**Microwave Pouch Bag Brussels Sprouts** are also in steady supply.



## CV SPINACH

**Baby Spinach** is in good supply with good quality. We have a nice special on **12/10oz Spinach** heading into Thanksgiving, so please be sure to ask your sales rep for details!



## CV PEPPERS

**Green Pepper** supplies have increased from Georgia, with lower prices as a result.

**15lb Red Peppers** are extremely limited.

**11lb Red, Yellow, and Orange Peppers** are steady.

**11lb Mini Mix Sweet Peppers** remain limited with steady pricing.



## CV DOLE SALADS

**ALERT!** Dole has informed their customers that they are experiencing a packaging film supplier issue during November.

This will impact their ability to produce the following: **American, Italian, Shredded Lettuces, Field Greens,** and perhaps others. We are already starting to see outs and prorates.



## CV GREEN BEANS

**ALERT!** **Green Beans** remain extremely short in supply from Florida, primarily due to Hurricane Irma impacting Thanksgiving plantings. Pricing will be very high for the holiday.

Quality has been good on the 30lb Mexican **Green Beans**.



## CV MELONS

The first off-shore **Cantaloupe** and **Honeydew** vessels will arrive this week. This should help to ease things heading into December.

**Watermelons** are abundant for mid-November.



## CV CLEMENTINES

We have made a smooth transition from South American and South African **Clementines** into California 10/3 lb. bags. “**Halo**” and “**Delites**” are now available.

We’ve been into the 5-lb. import box for a week now with volume picking up next week with prices starting to come down.



## CV HASS AVOCADOS

**Hass Avocado** prices have been steady over the past two weeks and leveled off.

The crop is starting to peak on the 48ct and larger, but still a considerable amount of 60’s and 70’s for the next few weeks. Prices on the smaller fruit are being offered at significant discounts.



## CV SWEET POTATOES

**Sweet Potatoes** out of North Carolina are in excellent supply for Thanksgiving. Quality is strong and pricing is allowing for great promotions.

Load up early and consider adding 3lb bags, along with the #1 grade bulk.



## CV POTATOES & ONIONS

**Russet Potato** demand is very strong in every shipping region. Pricing continues to be steady to slightly rising on all items. With limited trucks available, be sure to place your orders now or risk the potential of not receiving product.

**Onion** shippers across the country are very busy to meet the holiday push. Demand will be very good for the next 10 days. There has been a slight change in pricing but transportation continues to be the big challenge, as the supply of trucks is not sufficient to meet demand



## CV GRAPES

California has plenty of **Red** and **White Seedless Grapes**, and if quality holds, they will carry deep into December. We are already seeing stronger prices on the better fruit and it’s that time of year to pay the shot for good quality.

We have seen imported **Grapes** in the marketplace from Brazil and Peru on **Red Globes** and **White Seedless**, and we should see some **Red** with **Sweet Celebration** in a few weeks. The first Chilean **Grapes** should hit by mid-December.



## CV STONE FRUIT

The **Cherry** harvest in Chile is underway and it looks like an abundant crop. The first **Cherries** will be flown into Miami then trucked up into the Northeast. Fruit should be available in mid-November. Prices will be high until vessel fruit arrives in the Northeast in early December.

We should see **Stone Fruit** by air start around the first week in December. The first vessel will arrive in mid-December and should have **Apricots, Cherries, and Grapes** aboard. We may fly cots in by air the last week of November.

## OTHER STORIES:

- **ALERT!** All colors of **Corn** are extremely tight/ in a gap. Georgia is done and Florida is not expected to start until Thanksgiving or after. Expect shortages on any given day with higher prices. **Tray Corn** is limited as well.

- **Green Onions** are in good supply!

- There are good supplies of **Anise** - promote for Thanksgiving!

- **Collards** and **Kale** are steady from New Jersey. These are two great items to promote for Thanksgiving.

- **Eggplant** remains in short supply with steady pricing.

- **Zucchini, Yellow,** and all **Hard Squashes** are steady.