

## WEEKLY MARKET REVIEW

*Items to watch – Markets volatile, quality spotty, prices up*  
Asparagus, Cucumbers, Zucchini, Yellow Squash, Eggplant, Strawberries

Weather is improving in most growing areas with temperatures becoming more seasonal. Markets are unsettled because of holiday and weather interruptions last week. It has now temporally affected a good portion of the available commodities. Production and availability ought to improve next week and thereafter.

**Asparagus:** Prices are still at extremely high levels, but more supplies starting to come in from Mexico and Peru will most likely push prices down for next week.

**Melons:** *Watermelons* are scarce and quality fair at best until new summer crops start in about 3 months. Expect high prices and sizing will be on the smaller side. *Cantaloupe* and *Honeydews* from Mexico and California are done for the season, so all products are starting to come from Central America (Guatemala and Honduras). We will see a slight pressure in supply for the next 2 weeks, so prices will increase temporarily. Quality and sizes look good.

**Lettuces:** The lettuce market is steady. Warmer temperatures in the growing regions are enabling better yields at harvest time. *Romaine lettuce* is showing epidermal peel and blister caused from this past week's freezing temperatures. *Iceberg lettuce* carton weights continue to be 40-45 #s on the average. The availability is moderate and demand is light. *Romaine hearts* are a good deal next week.

**Cucumbers:** Prices are going up due to a supply gap caused by weather and harvesting problems in the local growing areas. Offshore product will start to come in next week and this will ease the pressure on prices. Quality is good.

**Peppers:** Peppers are still very active for all colors: Red, Yellow, and Green. Prices on Red are still very high and Yellow are also high. This is due to the fact that supplies have been extremely limited the last few days due to the recent cold snap that affected South Florida. While prices will remain high and the market active, there will be increased supply this week that will drive the prices down by the beginning of next week.

**Broccoli, Cauliflower, Celery and Carrots:** The market is steady with good supplies coming from the fields and average-to-good quality overall.

**Tomatoes:** The cold snap that hit the Immokalee/Naples & Palmetto/Ruskin regions last week will surely influence prices for the next couple of weeks. The damage assessment is yet to be known, but the crops appear to be affected. However, with the holiday demand being lower than expected and new Mexican product coming in, prices will likely remain steady. Most growers are picking product early and because of this there is potential for little coloring present. Quality is good on medium to big sizes.

**Eggplant, Zucchini and Yellow Squash:** As with peppers, these 3 items were particularly tight last week due to the low temps in South Florid last week. Prices will remain high for at least one more week, but there will be product available. Quality may suffer due to the high winds and low temperatures experienced. With the current warm weather, the market should start to return to normal next week.

**Berries:** *Strawberry* supplies are recovering from last week's cold front, but rain in the past few days has slowed harvest operations. Market is very active and prices are going up next week. Quality is good. New California crops will start in February and this will help with availability and price. *Blueberries* and *Blackberries* are in plentiful supply and prices are at low levels. *Raspberries* have good quality and prices are steady.