



General Produce

Delivering Goodness since 1933.

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GREEN ON GREEN

Springtime shifts energy towards **regeneration, growth** and **renewal**. This is most evident in new sprouts and leaf buds popping out all over.

This promise of new beginnings is represented by the **color green** throughout orchards, fields, and vineyards.

Green is the **color of life, optimism, and vitality**. As winter thaws, the seasonal food focus turns to lots of **green vegetables** coming into peak of season.

Asparagus, artichokes, and peas are harbingers of April produce in the United States. There are many other verdant choices in the produce department this month.

California avocados are generally available starting in early spring and will harvest until late summer. Their decadent **creamy texture** boosts flavor to almost any breakfast, lunch, dinner or snack.

Added to **salads** and **sandwiches**, avocado slices are a game changer. This **heart-healthy fruit** is a party favorite for taco night and nacho bars. Keep them on hand for a quick step up to any meal.

While available year-round, local **asparagus** comes on the scene in April, depending on weather and where one lives. These **tender spears** work for both hot and cold sides, and plays well off of other fresh ingredients.

Roast, saute, or grill asparagus to bring out the best texture and taste. Try not to overcook the



vibrant stalks. **Sheet-pan oven roasted** spears, in just ten minutes, holds the integrity of this delectable vegetable.

Artichokes are no longer just a west coast thing. The popular Mediterranean way of eating has put this globed veggie in the spotlight.

Stuffed, marinated, dipped and dressed, the **leaves** and **hearts** are ready for the plate.

Arugula, fennel, broccoli, and baby bok choy lend their shades of green to any number of dishes with a seasonal flair.

Messages have been unrelenting about mixing all the **colors of the rainbow** to appreciate the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables.

Permission granted to fly all the shades of just one color once in awhile. A **bowl full of green** can be very satisfying. Layers of leafy choices, like **kale or spinach**, comingled with compatible other green things, such as **avocado, edamame** and **pea tendrils**, build a mountain of vibrancy.

Fresh herbs notoriously check all the aromatic and color green boxes. **Cilantro, Italian parsley, chives, and rosemary** liven the look and announce their arrival all at once.

Wake up to spring. Bitter **dandelion greens** in a soup, salad, pesto, or juiced drink aid detoxification and cleansing. **Spring cleaning** goes deeper than opening the windows. Take stock of wellness goals with a reset to green.





Mother's Day Floral—We've got the variety and selection ready for all preferences. Please send your order by **2 pm Wednesday, April 3rd**. gpfloral@generalproduce.com

Apples & Pears: This year's **apple** crop was at near record levels and shippers pushed promotions and sales heavily in the fall. Due to that effort, spring supplies are lighter than normal. Supplies between now and the new crop will be slim. Keep promoting late storage apples for good basket rings before stone fruits begin.

Small **Anjou pears** (110's and smaller) are tight; small Bosc are readily available. **California Bartletts** won't start until mid-July.



Avocados: Markets are still climbing due to less harvesting occurring in *Mexico* due to Holy week. New crop **California** fruit is still just at the start any real volumes. We won't see relief until mid-April.

Berries: After last weekend's rain, **California strawberry** production numbers are falling due to stripping and clean up being done on most ranches in *Santa Maria* and *Oxnard*. Availability is becoming limited. Cooler weather has combined with the rain event to slow plant growth rates.

Baja experienced the same rain event which affected the **California** regions. Numbers coming into the U.S. are down considerably. Holy Week observations will have an adverse impact on both available labor for harvesting and border crossings through to Easter. **Markets** will continue to firm up to the mid-to-high teens as we are expecting more rain this weekend with projections calling for up to an inch in **California** and *Baja*.

Blueberry supplies have become more limited from all regions— *Central Mexico*, *Baja* and *Peru*. Markets are up slightly. *Central Mexico* and *Baja* are still the main **raspberry** growing areas. Like the **blackberry** situation, raspberries will continue to be tight due to labor disruptions and border crossings being delayed due to Holy Week.

Citrus: As of now, 72s and larger navel oranges are most plentiful; 88/113/138s are extremely scarce and will remain so throughout the navel season. The fruit will continue to grow in size as the season progresses due to low fruit sets and rain events. As we navigate this shorter Navel season, please be flexible with sizes and grades. **Organic navels** are wrapping up for the season.



Blood oranges will be winding down shortly, as other specialty

citrus items like **Cara Cara oranges** remain steady.

The overall peak size on lemons is currently 140s and larger. The main growing region is District 1; 165s and smaller are extremely tight. **Meyer lemons** are out.

Due to the holiday, most lime shippers wrapped up harvests mid-week. Smaller fruit 230/250s are priced lower. Quality is good. *Offshore* fruit is available and has kept the market from escalating. **Star Ruby** and **Rio red grapefruit** are going out of District 1 and 2. Size leans towards fancy 40s/36s/32s.



Grapes: While there will be brief periods of adequate supplies, the empty pipeline and pre-committed program volume will keep the market priced high. This is expected to continue until the *Mexican* grape deal starts in mid-May. Shippers are saying they don't see much relief in April now either. Quality

has been good.

Melons: **Cantaloupe** markets are strong and demand is increasing. Easter, spring retail promotions, and loading delays have kept pricing up. Expect good quality with minimal scarring and solid fruit. Plants are in the ground in *Yuma* and the growers are waiting for the plants to bloom. 9s and 12s are peaking.

There is a tight market for **honeydew melons**. Vessel delays and low yields on *Mexican* fields is keeping prices up for limited fruit. Due to growing issues in *Honduras* and *Mexico*, the **watermelon** market is at a ten-year high. Currently, demand exceeds supply. Approximately a couple weeks more of offshore supply and the domestic season is likely to begin in the middle of April. There is a heavy demand and pricing impact on both bins and cartons. Expect expensive and short supplies for the next month.



Seasonals: We're about one month out from the first **California cherry** harvest. The last week of April will be sporadic in packing. By the first of May, we'll be getting up to speed with Brooks variety and organics packing. By the 3rd week (May 6-12), there looks to be retail promotional opportunity. Bing variety will be targeted after Memorial Day. **Apricots** will be around the corner as **California** tree fruits are blossomed and growers are eager to watch for start dates. More *Mexican* **pineapple** will start arriving soon. Post Easter, there will be a lot more pineapple around from *Mexico* and *Costa Rica*.

Tomatoes: **Round** and **Roma tomatoes** are escalating again. As both regions transition north, Florida rain and a lack of labor are putting pressure on markets. The quality is fair. There are more snacking tomatoes available, such as **grapes** and **cherries**. Cluster/TOV's are good, prices remain low. **Organic TOV's** and **Romas** are improved.



At this point, Mother Nature is still in charge, with upcoming weather patterns affecting supplies and quality as growers continue the transition to California coastal regions. Rain events and cold temperatures continue to move through.

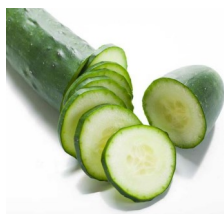
Asparagus: Supplies are in a demand exceeds supply situation, after strong Easter pulls. Look for this market to stay tight going into next week. The quality is good.

Broccoli, Cauliflower & Celery: Lower yields and rains are affecting the *Salinas Valley* **broccoli** harvests; supplies are tight. Going into the weekend, expect this market to rise. **Cauliflower** supplies continue to be consistent and stay steady.

There are stronger **celery** markets in northern and southern California. All sizes will be less available. *Yuma's* production is over

Lettuces: *Yuma* and *Huron* are currently experiencing light to moderate **iceberg** production. *Salinas* and *Santa Maria* production is light, but better availability is expected next week. Lightweights, discoloration, and misshapen heads are reported out of *Yuma*.

Processors continue to impose escalating prices on value added leaf items- **romaine**, **green**, and **red lettuce**. Quality is fair, with lightweights, fringe burns, and discolorations reported. Light supplies of **romaine hearts** will continue with *Salinas* and *Santa Maria* production expected to be better next week.



Mixed Vegetables: **Cucumbers** are still tight with no warming to growing districts in Mexico. There has been a rise in **English cucumber** production in *Canada*, which has taken some of the demand off of *Nogales*. **Persian**

cukes have improved greatly on supply and quality. Good quality overall.

Conventional **Brussel sprouts** are starting to tighten up on volume. **Organic Brussels sprouts** out of *Mexico* have limited volume and starting to show some quality issues. As spring **squash** crops start coming on, there are some great deals to be found, especially on **zucchini**. The lack of labor in *Mexico* this week will lighten supplies until next week.

Nogales has a moderate **green bell pepper** supply. With a new crop coming on, *Florida* supply is steady. The quality is okay. *Coachella* will begin in a light way in April. **Colored bell pepper** market is adjusting downward as *Canada* has started.

Onions & Potatoes: **White Onions** out of *Mexico* are still expensive, but are down slightly in price and not with a lot of extra volume around. Quality on *Pacific Northwest* and *Nevada white onions* are not very good right now. **Yellow onions** are stable but the

Jumbo Red Onions have moved up in price as shippers are trying to stretch their crops into April. The desert onion deal should start up in late April.

Vidalia onions will begin the week of April 22nd. We'll partner with Shuman Farms this season for a high graphic overlay on a netted bag. This attractive packaging I svery eye-catching to entice retail sales.

Colored potatoes will continue shipping out of the *Pacific Northwest* through April/May. *Florida* will be starting shipping **red, gold** and **white potatoes**.

Russet potatoes are steady. Demand is moderate, promote with confidence. All varieties of **organic** and **conventional sweet potatoes** and **yams** are shipping with good sizes available.



CRISPY GARLIC PARMESAN ASPARAGUS

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds asparagus washed, dried and wood ends removed

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

2 tablespoons olive oil

5 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese (or Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese)

1/2 cup Panko breadcrumbs

2 teaspoons parsley, finely chopped

Salt and pepper, to taste



METHOD: Preheat the oven to 400°F Lightly grease a baking tray or sheet with non stick cooking oil spray. Place the trimmed asparagus in a bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients and use your hands to evenly coat onto the asparagus.

Transfer the asparagus and breadcrumb mixture onto prepared baking sheet and arrange into one even layer. Bake for about 10 minutes, or until the asparagus are just tender. Broil/grill for 2-3 minutes until breadcrumbs are golden browned and asparagus has reached desired doneness. Serve warm.

SERVES 4

Recipe courtesy of **Café Delights**



Enjoy this week's update



MARKET REPORT

For updated prices and availability contact

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“Despite the forecast, live like it’s spring.”
— Lilly Pulitzer

