



# General Produce

*Delivering Goodness since 1933.*

Volume 42, Week 16

April 15, 2024

## EARTH DAY HOMEWORK

Since 1970, **Earth Day** has been celebrated in the United States on **April 22nd** each year.

The basic principles of sustainability – **reduce, reuse, recycle**, and **refuse** apply to **food waste**.

It's estimated that **forty percent** of food is thrown out in the U.S. each year.

Our **national goal** is to reduce food waste by fifty percent by the year 2030. That's a tall order unless everyone commits to doing their part.

**Food waste** includes every aspect of food production and consumption. Growing, processing, transporting, purchasing, preparation, uneaten prepared foods, and disposal are all contributing factors in our national problem.

**Reducing food waste** at all levels can make a huge difference in addressing the issue. If one isn't on the grower/producer side of the equation, then approach the problem from the **consumer perspective**.

**Shop smart.** Take inventory of the on hand goods in fridge and pantry before shopping. Prevent overbuying. Refrain from impulse purchases and stick to the weekly meal plan.

**Coordinate ingredients.** Utilize like-minded groceries for multiple meals. **Asparagus** as a side for one meal, by example, and as a pasta component the next. Use it all without it going bad.

**Inspect "Use By/Sell By" dates.** These are not always about food safety, rather peak quality.



Many foods are still safe to eat after their dates. Inspect "expired" foods closely by sight and smell before consumption.

**Store foods safely.** Proper light, temperature, humidity, and containers matter. Invest in jars and storage containers to maintain maximum freshness.

**Use portion control.** Overserving large portions creates excessive amounts of food to be consumed and increases the amount tossed away.

**Eat leftovers.** Be creative in taking last night's dinner for lunch or re-inventing how it's reimagined. Share an entrée at a restaurant or take home those doggie bags for another meal opportunity.

**Ends and stems.** Take advantage of every part of fresh vegetables and fruits when possible. Use carrot tips for pesto, stems from parsley, leaves from celery, etc. to maximize use and impart full flavor.

**Use your scraps.** Take a page from Depression era savings Cobble together, soups, stews, casseroles and one pot meals from the tiny bits of rice, beans, pasta and meat s that can be frozen until ready to assemble.

**Compost.** Backyard composting is good for the garden and the waste bin. Most municipalities now offer and encourage **green waste disposal**. Spread it before you send it. Limit the volume.

**Shifting mindsets** regarding how to eat and what to eat is homework we can all get behind. Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.





**BACK IN STOCK~ POM brand**  
Pomegranate Arils

**09967 – Pom Aril 12/4 oz.**

**06863 – Pom Arils 8/8 oz.**



**Apples & Pears:** In April and May, we expect continued good supplies of most apple varieties. **Gala** and **Gold Delicious** are notable exceptions. As shippers reach the end of their storage deal, gold volumes have started to decline. Galas have more storage tonnage to go and are a very popular variety with consistent demand. We should have Galas until the new crop but they will remain tight. In addition, we have promotional opportunities left with other specialties like **Rockit** and **Sugarbee apples**.

Domestic shippers are in the process of packing up on **Bosc pears** and expect to finish by the end of the month. The **Anjou** market is firm and slowly rising. Because there are no other varieties to pack and storage supplies are diminishing, this market will slowly advance and remain tight. **California Bartletts** are in bloom now and will start in mid-July.

**Berries:** *Salinas/Watsonville* **strawberry** growers are still dealing with rain and hail damage. Plants are healthy but recent cool weather is causing the fruit to mature more slowly than expected thereby affecting yields. We hope to see better availability possibly by the end of next week. This season has just begun. Santa Maria and Oxnard have been facing colder weather which is holding back production. Quality in all growing regions will show water damage to some extent after last week's rain. Expect some bruising, softer skin texture and some mildew issues. Shelf life will be limited. Demand exceeds supply.

**Blackberry** supplies remain lean coming out of *Mexico*. Numbers should increase on the West Coast as we move into late April and early May. Warmer temperatures are needed to spur increased production in *Central California*. Like the **blackberries**, **raspberries** are waiting for the weather to warm up in *California* to help increase production. Georgia is expected to begin in a small way next week.

*California's Central Coast* has begun to scratch the surface of this year's **blueberry** crop. Until they ramp up in volume, *Mexico* and *Peru* will be the main contributor.



**Citrus:** With better demand, we are seeing **navel orange** prices firm up a bit. Small fruit remains limited and prices are firm. Current varieties are eating good, full flavor and juicy. Transition to Late varieties from Washington and Spring is ahead

shortly. Fruit is currently peaking on 72s and larger; 88/113/138s remain extremely scarce. Brix are in the 12-14 range; quality is good. Zero gassing at this time.

**Lime** markets are slightly lower. Out of *Veracruz*, the quality is generally good. Large fruit sizes will become more limited. Offshore fruit is available. The overall peak **lemon** size is 115ct and larger. The main growing region is District 1. Sizes smaller than 140s are extremely tight.

Keep the last varieties of **mandarins**, **tangelos**, and **Cara Caras** on the front burner. Citrus is always a fit in school programs and retail promotions.

**Grapes:** Imports remain restricted until the *Chilean* deal expires in early May. According to shippers, *Mexico* will begin shipping in mid-May. There is cautious optimism that there won't be a gap like last year.



**Melons:** Spring retail promotions have increased **cantaloupe** demand and vessel delays. Quality issues persist with a small percentage of good quality fruit with minimal scarring. Due to lower yields from *offshore* growing regions,

**honeydews** are expected to remain tight for a few weeks. There is a decrease in in fields with growers hoping to improve yields by Mother's Day. Honeydews are limited in *Arizona* and are peaking on 6/8s from the region.

The *offshore watermelon* season has ended, and the domestic season has just begun. Quality has been fair and supply has improved from *Arizona*. Warm temperatures are required to get the melon season going.

**Seasonals:** Get ready to roll with *California stone fruits*. **Cherries** and **apricots** will be the first up at the end of April. In May, **peaches** will be followed by **nectarines** (mid-May), and then **plums** in late May. June will bring better volume and varieties.



**Tomatoes:** Demand exceeds on **rounds** and **Romas**. Both quality and production are down. *Mexico's* crops are at lighter levels as the *Sinaloa* region winds down. In a few weeks, there will be new

production from northern areas. *Baja* will begin in May. *Nogales* will run through early June.

**Grape** and **cherry tomatoes**, both organic and conventional, are coming on in good numbers out of *Mexico*. **Tomatoes-on-the-vine** are slow to start in *Canada*. **Conventional heirloom** harvest out of *Central Mexico* is very good going into the week and next week. Stable warmer weather has lifted harvest. **Organics** are improving.

**Asparagus:** *Mexican* production continues to decline due to seasonality. *Peru* has begun with a light production. As we move through April, expect *Peru* volume to increase. *California* production is quiet.

**Broccoli, Cauliflower & Celery:** **Broccoli** and **cauliflower** supplies are steady and improving. Quality is good. As we transition out of *Yuma*, **celery** is steady. Most shippers continue to provide above average quality.



**Lettuces:** **Iceberg** and **leafy lettuce** markets are soft on lighter demand. Supplies are moderate, but still keeping pace with overall lack of sales. Watch for isolated quality issues

from recent rain events. Keep turns and inventory tight. Shelf life will be short.

**Mixed Vegetables:** *Castroville artichoke* season has begun. Large to mid-size artichokes should be in excellent supply for the next three weeks, beginning *the week of April 15th*. **Baby chokes** are non-existent **purple artichokes** are limited at the start of season.

**Italian Parsley** will be very limited for the next few weeks. The rains over the last couple of months have now caused a gap in the *Oxnard* area. The *Salinas Valley* fields are behind due to the cooler weather and recent rains.

**Mushroom** supplies have been good. **Whites** are not coming in super bright and most are being downgraded upon arrival. **Oysters** have been frail and not looking their best. All three vendor sources look similar on arrivals.

The supply of **Brussels sprouts** has drastically improved this week. Look for promotable volume through late April.

Both coasts are experiencing fairly steady **bell pepper** markets. There are some issues with older crops due to rain, but quality is good. *Sinaloa* supplies are adequate, and *Sonora* crops will begin in a few weeks. *Coachella* will follow later this month. The price of **colored bells** is easing.

**Onions & Potatoes:** We are beginning to see *new crop onion* arrivals. Pricing is still high. **Reds** will be *new crop* out of *Texas*. Supply estimates are low so expect pricing to stay strong through the next few months. Skins are looking to be thin, but they are a little sweeter than recent product. **Whites** are *new crop* from *Mexico* and they're looking pretty good, light green tinge but feel solid. **Yellows** will be transitioning into *Mexico* in the next two weeks. Bulk jumbo and mediums are still old crop but consumer packages will be new crop. All **organic onions** are now new crop. **OG Yellows** have some skin issues but



Egg supplies are good. Pricing is still strong as the flocks are recovering from the latest outbreak of Avian flu.

shippers are working through them in sorting and packing. **OG Reds** continue to be problematic— high demand and light supply. **OG Whites** are coming on strong.

**Colored potatoes** will continue shipping out of the Pacific Northwest through April/May. *California* is starting on colored potatoes, volume will ramp up towards end of April. **Russets** are steady and higher priced.



**TIGER SALAD**

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 tbsp unseasoned rice vinegar
- 2 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1 tsp toasted sesame seeds
- Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
- ½ cup cilantro leaves loosely chopped
- 2 celery stalks thinly sliced on a diagonal
- 1 large cucumber thinly sliced
- 2 green onions thinly sliced on a diagonal
- Sea salt and freshly cracked pepper to taste



**METHOD:** Whisk together in a bowl the vinegar, sesame oil, sesame seeds, and red pepper flakes, until well combined. Add the cilantro, celery, cucumbers, and green onions.

Season with sea salt and freshly cracked pepper, to taste; toss to combine. Place into the refrigerator until ready to serve. Enjoy.

*Serve this refreshing and bright salad alongside spicy foods like Sambal chicken or shrimp skewers*

**SERVES 4**

Recipe courtesy of **Bon Appétit**



Enjoy this week's update



# MARKET REPORT

For updated prices and availability contact

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EARTH CLEAN  
AND GREEN**  
HAPPY EARTH DAY

