

CONFIDENCE
IN EVERY CASE.



Highlights

- Wet, humid conditions coupled with elevated daytime temperatures have caused mildew and occasional internal burn to develop in all commodity items growing in the desert regions. Crews will be trimming damaged leaves before packing, [decreasing both weights and yields.](#)
- The Cosmic Crisp apple variety is expected to debut in January.
- Zucchini prices are steady; yellow squash markets are a bit higher, as supplies remain tight in Mexico.

Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF DECEMBER 15, 2019

Ask a Markon Chef

Markon has gathered a group of our member- and grower-affiliated chefs to answer your questions about produce.

Ask us your most challenging cooking inquiries online >

FEATURED QUESTION

Q: Hard squashes are packed with sweet flavor and hearty texture. Which is your favorite and how do you serve it?

A: I love to roast squash with Ready-Set-Serve® (RSS) Peeled Garlic and olive oil infused with Markon First Crop® (MFC) Thyme. Dice the squash into small cubes so that it roasts quickly. Garnish with sweet or crunchy elements, like dried cranberries, sultanas, almonds, pine nuts, sunflower seeds, and pepitas.

- Add chunks of Butternut or Delicata squash to white bean and ham soup.
- Bake butter and maple syrup in Acorn squash halves; slice and serve with roasted turkey.
- Mash boiled Butternut cubes with hot cream, butter, and cinnamon; top with chopped pecans and crumbled bacon.

Chef David Evans, Markon member chef



Menu Feature

Every chef needs a few solid recipes in his or her repertoire. That's why Markon has put together a catalog of fresh produce-based recipes that cover it all: day- and menu-parts, the range of seasons, a variety of cuisines, and a diverse list of ingredients.



Hen in Hay

Roasting Cornish game hens in hay is an ancient technique that imparts grassy, earthy flavors to the meat. Paired with robust root vegetables, this hearty meal is perfect for cold-weather months.

Get the full recipe >

Tips for Serving Lemons

- Puree garbanzo beans, RSS Peeled Garlic, the juice of MFC Lemons, RSS Washed & Trimmed Parsley, tahini, salt, and olive oil; serve with pita bread, RSS Celery Sticks, and RSS Baby Carrots.
- Roast branzino with marinated artichoke hearts, MFC Potatoes, slices of MFC Lemons, and MFC Tarragon.
- Heat blueberries, juice of MFC Lemons, and corn starch in a shallow pan until thickened; serve in thin crepes.

Browse additional usage tips >





Unctuous lamb pairs divinely with the mellow flavor of mashed potato and the licorice-like bite of celeriac.

Produce Highlights

Celery

- Although the Oxnard, California season is getting a slow start, yet weak demand is keeping prices stable.
- Quality will improve once new crop supplies enter the market.

Red Bell Peppers

- California production is winding down, while rain has delayed the start of the Mexican season.
- Prices are up.

Strawberries

- Expect reduced shelf-life caused by weather-related quality issues such as decay, bruising, and mold.
- Limited new crop harvesting has begun in Florida and Mexico, but volume will not increase until mid-December.

Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF DECEMBER 15, 2019

Apples



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
MI	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
WA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is stable. Washington MFC Braeburn, Fuji, Gala, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, and Red Delicious Apples are available. This year's crop is forecast to be the largest in history. Specialty varieties like Autumn Glory, Envy, Honeycrisp, Jazz, and Sweetie are also on the market. The Cosmic Crisp variety is expected to debut in January. Quality is excellent: fruit is crisp, crunchy, and juicy. Sugar levels range from 14 to 18 Brix.

Asparagus



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
PERU	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Weak prices persist. Stocks are ample in both production regions; standard sizes are more abundant than jumbo. Quality is very good: stalks are straight and firm, while flavor is slightly bitter, yet grassy. MFC Asparagus is available.

Avocados



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is unchanged; volume is high, especially 60-count and smaller sizes. Quality is very good: fruit is firm, yet creamy in texture with nutty flavor. RSS Avocado Chunks, Halves, Pico de Gallo Guacamole, and Pure Pulp are available.

Bells: Green



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
FL	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices have dipped; stocks have increased in California, Florida, and Mexico. Quality is very good: walls are thick, creating crunchy texture. MFC and Markon Essentials® (ESS) Green Bell Peppers are available.

Bells: Red and Yellow



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
FL	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is elevated; supplies are limited. California production is winding down, while rain has delayed the start of the Mexican season. Quality ranges from fair to good, but will improve once new crop stocks hit the market in one to two weeks. MFC and ESS Red Bell Peppers are not available.

Blackberries



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are up; volume is low due to rain and cold weather. West Coast growers are transitioning from California to Mexico. Quality is average: softness, small size, and bleeding are industry-wide issues. Sugar levels range from 12 to 13 Brix.

Blueberries



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX/TX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is level; stocks are limited in California, but becoming more plentiful in Mexico. Overall quality is good: occasional problems include bleeding, softness, and decay. Sugar levels range from 12 to 16 Brix.

Broccoli



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX/TX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Yields continue to increase in California's Imperial Valley, Yuma, Arizona, and Mexico. Quality is average: pin rot is a slight issue. MFC Broccoli Crowns are available.



Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF DECEMBER 15, 2019

Cantaloupe



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
OFFSHORE	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are fairly steady. Stocks are increasing in Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica; Mexican supplies are being substituted as needed. Quality is good: sugar levels range from 12 to 13 Brix. MFC Cantaloupes are not available for the import season.

Cauliflower



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is a bit higher than last week; production is focused in California's Imperial Valley and Yuma, Arizona. Quality is good: creamy color is a slight issue. ESS Cauliflower is available.

Celery



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The Oxnard, California season is getting a slow start, yet weak demand is keeping prices stable. Quality will improve once new crop supplies enter the market. MFC Celery is sporadic.

Cucumbers



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
FL	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX/AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is firm; low temperatures and rain are tightening stocks on both coasts. Quality is good: soft tips and yellowing are concerns. MFC Cucumbers are sporadic.

Grapes



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are poised to rise. The California season is winding down. Offshore green seedless fruit will begin shipping in one to two weeks. California-grown MFC Lunch Bunch Grapes and ESS Red Seedless Grapes will be on the market through late December/early January.

Green Leaf/Variety Lettuce



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is easing; with no rain in the immediate forecast, stocks are increasing and quality is improving. MFC Premium Green Leaf Lettuce is available.

Honeydew



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
OFFSHORE	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are holding steady; Mexican and offshore supplies are limited. Quality is average: sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix. MFC Honeydews are not available during the import season.

Iceberg Lettuce



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is inching down. Supplies are becoming more plentiful; no rain is in the immediate forecast. Mildew and internal burn are occasional issues; crews are trimming damaged leaves before packing, decreasing both weights and yields. MFC Premium Iceberg Lettuce is available.

Lemons



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices have dipped. Although Bakersfield did receive rain, volume remains high in that region as well as in the Imperial desert area. Quality is very good: the crop's size profile is running large. MFC and ESS Lemons are available.

Limes



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
MEX/TX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is slightly higher than last week; shipments into Texas a bit below normal. Quality is good: styler and scarring are minor problems. MFC and ESS Limes are available.

Onions



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CO	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
ID	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
OR	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
UT	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
WA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are stable; storage supplies are ample. MFC Onions are available in Idaho, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Packer label stocks are being shipped from Colorado. Overall quality is excellent. Sunions, a tearless variety, is now on the market.

Oranges



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
CHILE	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is level. Supplies are plentiful; the California Navel season is in full swing. Color and quality continue to improve: sugar levels are averaging 11 Brix. MFC and ESS Navel Oranges are available.

Pears



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
WA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are steady. MFC Washington Bartlett and D'Anjou Pears are available; stocks are dominated by 110- through 120-count sizes. Quality is excellent: fruit has firm texture, smooth skins, and sweet flavor. Sugar levels range from 12 to 14 Brix. The Bartlett season will run through February 2020.

Pineapple



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CR	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX/TX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Expect low markets for several weeks; supplies are abundant. Quality is very good: fruit is juicy and sweet, yet tangy. Sugar levels range from 13 to 16 Brix.



Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF DECEMBER 15, 2019

Potatoes



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CO	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
ID	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
OR	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
TX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
WA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
WI	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market will remain above normal through the 2020 season due to cold temperatures this past October. Idaho's freeze damaged much of the crop. Both Norkotahs and Burbanks will need to be ordered to prevent shortages. MFC Idaho Burbank and Norkotah Potatoes are available; 40- to 50-count Burbanks are limited.

Raspberries



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are firm. Mexican production is wrapping up; Santa Maria growers will ship through January. The current forecast is for sunny, warm, weather; stocks will increase. Quality is average, but should improve with dry conditions. Sugar levels range from 13 to 14 Brix.

Romaine



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is easing; with no rain in the immediate forecast, stocks are increasing and quality is improving. MFC Premium Romaine Lettuce is available.

Salads & Blends



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices have stabilized. The Yuma region's weather has improved; expect more plentiful supplies. Markon inspectors are closely monitoring finished packs for chunks and cores to achieve the best mix.

Spring Mix



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
AZ	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Improved weather in the Yuma region is increasing stocks and easing the market. Quality is very good. RSS Conventional and Organic Spring Mixes are available.

Squash



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
FL	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Zucchini prices are steady; yellow squash markets are a bit higher, as supplies remain tight in Mexico. East Coast stocks are adequate. Quality is good; scarring and mechanical damage are occasional issues. MFC Yellow Squash and Zucchini are available.

Strawberries



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
FL	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

High markets persist. Expect reduced shelf-life caused by rain-related quality issues such as decay, bruising, and mold. Limited new crop harvesting has begun in Florida and Mexico, but volume will not increase until mid-December. MFC Strawberries are limited.

Tomatoes



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
FL	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market continues to escalate; all varieties are extremely limited. Expect high prices until new crop Mexican fruit enters the market in January. Quality is average; rain-related problems and shortened shelf-life remain issues.

Watermelon



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
OFFSHORE	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are level. Mexican supplies are adequate. Offshore stocks have begun arriving on the East Coast this week. Quality is good; fruit is firm with bright color. Sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix.



Ready-Set-Serve (RSS).
Table-ready fruits & vegetables.
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Markon First Crop (MFC).
Whole fresh fruits & vegetables. Backed by 5-Star.



Markon Essentials (ESS).
No.2 grade value-focused brand. Quality, food safety, and consistency in every box. Backed by 5-Star.



5-Star Food Safety.
Addressing quality and safety at five key points.