

CONFIDENCE
IN EVERY CASE.



Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF JANUARY 5, 2020

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: Clean eating customers are never more plentiful than the first of a new year. What produce-based dishes do you suggest for the New Year?

A: Although plant-based burgers are trending, I prefer dishes made with real fruits and vegetables. I like serving roasted eggplants stuffed with farro and wild mushrooms, slow-braised multi-colored carrots topped with Burrata cheese, and house-made ramen topped with chunks of winter squash, bok choy, green onions, and an umami-rich mushroom broth.

- Asian bowls like ramen and bibimbap are easy to create as vegetarian options. Load them up with ingredients like kimchi, sauteed spinach, pickled mushrooms, and fried eggs.
- Clean up junk food dishes like nachos and tacos by topping with black beans, chopped avocado, roasted corn, tomatoes, and cilantro.

*Chef Demetrio Marquez,
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.



Borscht

This classic Eastern European comfort soup is gaining popularity stateside. Serve it with authentic accompaniments such as black bread, sour cream, and fresh dill.

Get the full recipe >

Highlights

- Low temperatures, rain, and lettuce ice have decreased iceberg weights. Iceberg 24-count weights have dropped to 36-42 pounds, with some fields reporting weights as low as 25 pounds. Markon First Crop® (MFC) Iceberg Lettuce is not available in 24-count palletized packs.
- Sprouts Unlimited is recalling clover spouts in four-ounce packages because they may be contaminated with E. coli O103. No Markon products are involved.
- MFC Green Grapes will ship next week, while MFC Lunch Bunch Grapes and Markon Essentials® (ESS) Red Seedless Grapes will start the week after.

Tips for Serving Beets

- Arrange grated red and gold beets, chopped hard-boiled eggs, chopped grilled chicken, and crumbled bacon in rows atop MFC Green Leaf Lettuce.
- Roast baby beets until tender; peel and dice; drizzle with pomegranate molasses, then serve with steak or lamb.
- Pickle chopped red and gold beets; serve on charcuterie and cheese platters.
- Serve vibrantly colorful beet ice cream topped with chopped pistachios and candied lemon.



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Vibrantly colored and intensely flavored, this unique shaved vegetable salad with crab can also be served as a healthy pre-meal appetizer.

Produce Highlights

Broccoli

- The market will keep climbing.
- Rainy, cold weather has reduced stocks and caused quality problems such as decay, pin rot, and systemic mildew.

Green Onions

- Cold weather continues to hinder plant maturity, reducing supply levels.
- The market is expected to rise into next month.

Tomatoes

- Expect steady to slightly lower prices starting this week.
- Roma stocks are increasing, but round tomatoes remain limited.

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Apples



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

Prices are steady. Washington MFC Braeburn, Fuji, Gala, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, and Red Delicious Apples are on the market. Specialty varieties like Autumn Glory, Envy, Honeycrisp, Jazz, and Sweetie are also available. The Cosmic Crisp variety will debut this month. Quality is excellent: fruit is crisp, crunchy, and juicy. Sugar levels range from 14 to 18 Brix.

Asparagus



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

The market is elevated; stocks will remain tight until early winter harvesting starts in Mexicali, Mexico over the next week or two. Quality will improve once new crop supplies hit the market. MFC Asparagus is available.

Avocados



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

Prices are stable; volume is high, especially 60-count and smaller fruit. Quality is very good: fruit is firm, yet creamy in texture with nutty flavor. Ready-Set-Serve® (RSS) Avocado Chunks, Halves, Pico de Gallo Guacamole, and Pure Pulp are available.

Bells: Green



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

The market is a bit higher than last week; rain and low temperatures reduced stocks, but this week's dry weather should increase yields. Quality is good: odd shape and scarring are slight issues. MFC and ESS Green Bell Peppers are available.

Bells: Red and Yellow



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

Prices are easing; stocks are becoming more plentiful. The California season has ended, but Mexican production is ramping up. Quality is best in new crop Mexican supplies. MFC and ESS Red Bell Peppers are limited.

Blackberries



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

The market is unchanged. Mexican volume is sufficient. New crop quality is very good: flavor is mildly floral and sweet. Sugar levels range from 12 to 13 Brix.

Blueberries



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

Prices are unchanged; Mexican supplies (into Texas) are ample. Quality is very good: berries are plump and flavorful. Sugar levels range from 12 to 16 Brix.

Broccoli



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

The market will keep climbing. Rainy, cold weather has reduced stocks and caused quality problems such as decay, pin rot, and systemic mildew. The excess moisture has increased size. Quality is poor: growers are removing damaged heads at the field level. MFC Broccoli Crowns are sporadic.



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Cantaloupe



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

The market is level; supplies are plentiful. MFC Cantaloupe Melons are not available during the import season.

Cauliflower



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

Prices are elevated; yields continue to tighten due to recent wet, cold weather. Quality is fair: decay, small size, and creamy color are industry-wide issues. ESS Cauliflower is available.

Celery



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

Expect high markets for the next several weeks. Stocks are limited on both coasts due to excess precipitation and low temperatures. MFC Celery is sporadic.

Cucumbers



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

Prices are up; supplies are scarce in Florida and Mexico. Quality is average: soft tips and yellowing are minor problems. MFC Cucumbers are sporadic.

Grapes



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

Expect the market to climb; growers are transitioning from California grapes to offshore fruit from Chile and Peru. MFC Green Grapes will start shipping next week, while MFC Lunch Bunch Grapes and ESS Red Seedless Grapes will enter the market the following week. ESS Green Seedless Grapes and Grape Escape stemless stocks will begin shipping in late January.

Green Leaf/Variety Lettuce



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

Although prices are stable and stocks are adequate, several rain events have caused quality issues such as large ribs, brittle texture, mildew, and mechanical damage. Quality is average: epidermal blistering and peeling will be problems for the foreseeable future. Harvesting crews are trimming leaves to reduce defects. MFC Premium Green Leaf Lettuce is available.

Honeydew



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

High markets persist; supplies are scarce. Quality is good: sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix. MFC Honeydews are not available during the import season.

Iceberg Lettuce



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

Low temperatures, rain, and lettuce ice have decreased iceberg weights. Quality is fair: epidermal blistering and peeling will be issues moving forward. Crews are removing damaged leaves in the fields. MFC Premium Iceberg Lettuce is available.

Lemons



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

The market is weak; supplies are abundant. Quality is very good: rain has increased size. MFC and ESS Lemons are available.

Limes



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

Prices are stable. Mexican supplies are sufficient. Quality is good: styler and scarring are issues. MFC and ESS Limes are available.

Onions



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

The market is level; storage stocks are plentiful. MFC Onions are available in Idaho, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Packer label stocks are being shipped from Colorado. Quality is excellent. Sunions, a tearless variety, are also on the market.

Oranges



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

Prices are stable. California Navel and offshore supplies are ample. Quality is very good: sugar levels average 11.5+ Brix. MFC and ESS Navel Oranges are available.

Pears



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

The market is unchanged. MFC Washington Bartlett and D'Anjou Pears are on the market; size is dominated by 110- through 120-count fruit. Quality is excellent: pears have firm texture, smooth skins, and mildly sweet flavor. Sugar levels range from 12 to 14 Brix. The Bartlett season will continue through February.

Pineapple



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

Prices are weak; volume is high in both growing regions. Quality is very good: fruit is juicy and sweet, yet tangy. Sugar levels range from 13 to 16 Brix.



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Potatoes



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

Expect above-normal prices through the 2020 season; Idaho's October freeze damaged much of the Burbank 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 tight.

Raspberries



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

The market is slightly higher than last week. The Mexican season is starting to wind down. California growers will ship through late January. Dry weather should aid volume. Quality is very good: sugar levels range from 13 to 14 Brix.

Romaine



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

Prices are steady and stocks are adequate, but several rain events have caused quality issues such as large ribs, brittle texture, mildew, and mechanical damage. Quality is average: epidermal blistering and peeling will be problems for the foreseeable future. Harvesting crews are trimming leaves to reduce defects. MFC Premium Romaine Lettuce is limited.

Salads & Blends



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

Iceberg and romaine value-added salads and blends are developing sporadic pinkening and shelf-life challenges. Markon inspectors are closely monitoring finished cartons to achieve the best packs.

Spring Mix



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

Quality and shelf-life challenges are developing in tender leaf items due to rain and freezing temperatures in the Arizona desert growing region. Harvesting and processing plant crews are doing what they can to identify and remove the defects, but most are very difficult or impossible to remove. RSS Conventional and Organic Spring Mixes are sporadic.

Squash



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

Prices are stable; supplies are adequate. Quality is good: scarring and mechanical damage are occasional problems in some zucchini lots. MFC Yellow Squash and Zucchini are available.

Strawberries



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

The California market is up due to another winter rainstorm, but prices are a bit lower in Florida and Mexico; stocks are increasing in those regions. Quality ranges from fair to good: bleeding, bruising, and softness are problems in California fruit due to wet weather. MFC Strawberries are limited.

Tomatoes



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

Expect steady to slightly lower prices starting this week. Roma stocks are increasing, but round tomatoes remain limited. Quality is improving, but rain-related issues and shortened shelf-life are concerns.

Watermelon



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

The market is level. Mexican stocks are sufficient; offshore supplies are increasing. Quality is good: fruit is firm with bright color. Sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix.



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