

**CONFIDENCE**  
IN EVERY CASE.



## Highlights

- Markon First Crop® (MFC) Premium Iceberg weights are higher on average than the rest of the industry (44 to 48 pounds compared with 43 to 47 pounds).
- Periods of rain and heat over the last few weeks have caused quality problems in lettuces and leafy greens. Current forecasts call for temperatures in the low to mid-80s, which will continue to accelerate maturity as well as quality concerns.
- Strawberry prices will climb this week. Production is winding down in Florida and Mexico, while rain will hit California's main growing regions.

# Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF MARCH 15, 2020 | CANADIAN EDITION

## 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:** Spring is the season many specific produce items become available. What is your favorite spring item and how do you showcase it?

**A:** I like to incorporate apricots and arugula into as many dishes as possible. An example of this is grilled apricots with Burrata cheese, Tasso ham, and Ready-Set-Serve® (RSS) Wild Arugula.

- Char halved and pitted apricots, dip in honey and char on a grill; serve with grilled poultry, RSS Wild Arugula, and fresh blackberries.
- Brush roasted chicken breasts with apricot jam and Dijon mustard, then top with sliced almonds; serve with grilled apricots and RSS Sweet Baby Broccoli.
- Add bitter notes to flatbreads and pizzas with RSS Lemony Arugula tossed in garlic olive oil.

*Chef Gary Hill, 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.



## Barley-Mushroom Salad

This hearty grain salad gets umami from mushrooms, sweetness from Kabocha squash, and bright notes from lemon. Serve warm in cold months or chilled when it starts to heat up.

**Get the full recipe >**

## Tips for Serving Green Beans

- Add steamed RSS Trimmed Green Beans to feta cheese omelets.
- Roast with MFC Mushrooms and serve on top of creamy polenta.
- Toss charred RSS Trimmed Green Beans with corn, MFC Tomatoes, MFC Basil, and a garlicky vinaigrette.
- Lightly steam until al dente; serve with radishes, RSS Baby Carrots, and dips such as French onion, hummus, or baba ghanoush.

**Browse additional usage tips >**





Mix your favorite wings' flavors in a much healthier, modified salad version great for watching every sport, every season.

## Produce Highlights

### Avocados

- Prices have peaked; supplies of large fruit are slowly increasing.
- New crop fruit continues to take one to two days longer to ripen—or as many as five full days, depending on the level needed.

### Broccoli & Cauliflower

- The market is climbing. The Arizona/California season is ending, while Mexican fruit is decreasing.
- Expect limited stocks for the next several weeks.

### Tomatoes

- Mexican supplies have increased; prices are low.
- Rain in February caused bloom drop in many plants; markets may inch up soon.

# Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF MARCH 15, 2020

## Apples



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| MI, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| WA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices for large sizes (56- through 72-count packs) are climbing; storage stocks are tightening. Smaller sizes (100- to 138-count) are more plentiful. Washington MFC Braeburn, Fuji, Gala, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, and Red Delicious Apples are on the market. Specialty varieties such as Autumn Glory, Braeburn, and Honeycrisp are also available. 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 overall market is weak due to high volume in Mexico. Peruvian supplies are limited. Quality is good: stalks are firm yet pliant, tips are tight, and flavor is mildly grassy. MFC Asparagus is available.

## Avocados



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX     | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices have peaked; supplies of large fruit are slowly increasing. New crop fruit continues to take one to two days longer to ripen—or as many as five full days, depending on the level needed. Quality is very good. RSS Avocado Chunks, Halves, Pico de Gallo Guacamole, and Pure Pulp are available.

## Bells: Green



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| FL, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX     | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is steady to slightly higher than last week. Mexican growers are transitioning to new regions. Quality is average: softness and scarring are occasional problems. MFC and Markon Essentials® (ESS) Green Bell Peppers are available.

## Bells: Red and Yellow



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| FL, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX/AZ  | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices are steady to slightly higher than last week; growers are moving to new harvesting regions. Quality is good: softness and scarring are minor issues. MFC and ESS Red Bell Peppers are available.

## Blackberries



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX     | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is stable. The majority of orders are being shipped from Mexico, but California growers are also packing in Oxnard and Santa Maria. Quality is excellent: color is deep indigo and flavor is mildly floral and sweet. Sugar levels range from 12 to 13 Brix.

## Blueberries



| Region | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|--------|----------|---------|--------|
| CHILE  | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX/TX | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| PERU   | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices are high. Mexican stocks are limited; Chilean and Peruvian supplies are being imported as well, but volume is low. Quality is very good: berries are plump and flavorful. Sugar levels range from 12 to 16 Brix.

## Broccoli



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| AZ, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX/TX  | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is climbing. The Arizona/California desert season is winding down, while crossings from Mexico into McAllen, Texas are decreasing. Expect limited stocks for the next several weeks. Quality is very good: florets are deep green with earthy flavor. MFC Broccoli Crowns are available.



# Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF MARCH 15, 2020

## Cantaloupe



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

Prices are unchanged; offshore yields are high on both coasts. Quality is very good: sugar levels vary from 11 to 13 Brix. MFC Cantaloupe Melons are not available during the import season.

## Cauliflower



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| AZ, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| CA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is climbing. The Arizona/California desert season is winding down. Expect limited stocks for the next several weeks. ESS Cauliflower is available.

## Celery



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| FL, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices are weak; supplies are abundant on both coasts. Quality is very good: stalks are straight and flavor is zesty. MFC Celery is available.

## Cucumbers



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| FL, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX/AZ  | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is steady to slightly lower than last week; stocks will increase when growers transition to new fields in one to two weeks. Quality is average: skins are evenly colored and smooth, while flavor is refreshing. MFC Cucumbers are available.

## Grapes



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

The Chilean green and red seedless markets are level. MFC Lunch Bunch Grapes and Grape Escape stemless stocks are available. Quality is very good: fruit is firm and sweet. Green seedless sugar levels range from 18 to 19 Brix, while red seedless vary from 18 to 20.

## Green Leaf/Variety Lettuce



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| AZ, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices are low; volume is high. Quality is fair: supplies will exhibit sporadic quality and shelf-life challenges over the next two weeks. Recent freezing morning temperatures combined with this week's rain are causing minor frost damage, growth cracks, internal burn, sporadic mildew damage, and weak tips. MFC Premium Green Leaf Lettuce is available.

## Honeydew



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

The market is weak; stocks are plentiful. Quality is average: sugar levels range from 10 to 13 Brix. MFC Honeydews are not available during the import season.

## Iceberg Lettuce



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| AZ, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices are low. Recent freezing morning temperatures combined with this week's rain are causing minor frost damage, growth cracks, internal burn, sporadic mildew damage, and weak tips. MFC Premium Iceberg Lettuce is available.

## Lemons



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is weak; supplies are plentiful. Quality is very good: color is deep gold, skins are smooth, and flavor is sour. MFC and ESS Lemons are available.

## Limes



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

Prices are slightly higher than last week; small sizes are limited. Expect elevated markets for the next three to five weeks. MFC and ESS Limes are available.

## Onions



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| ID, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX/TX  | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| OR, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| UT, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| WA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is near the bottom. Fresh-run red, yellow, and white supplies from Mexico (into South Texas) and the Northwest are ample. MFC Onions are available in Idaho, Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. The Colorado season has ended. Quality is excellent.

## Oranges



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| FL, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices are high. Stocks are dominated by large sizes (56- and 72-count fruit); 113-count and smaller sizes are scarce. New crop California Valencia harvesting will begin in late April/early May. Quality is very good: sugar levels range from 12 to 12.5 Brix. MFC and ESS Navel Oranges are available.

## Pears



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| WA, USA | ^^^      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is stable. Washington D'Anjou pears are dominated by 110- through 120-count sizes. Sugar levels range from 12 to 14 Brix. MFC Pears are available.



# Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF MARCH 15, 2020

## Potatoes



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CO, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| ID, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| OR, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| TX, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| WA, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| WI, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Expect elevated prices in Idaho, particularly for 40- to 70-count stocks. Washington's Norkotah market is stable; demand is shifting, but all markets will continue rising through the rest of the season. There is a wide range of quality on the market. MFC Idaho Burbank and Norkotah Potatoes are available.

## Raspberries



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CA, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| FL, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX     | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market has eased; volume is high in all regions. Quality is very good: sugar levels range from 13 to 14 Brix.

## Romaine



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| AZ, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices are low; volume is high. Quality is fair: supplies will exhibit sporadic quality and shelf-life challenges over the next two weeks. Recent freezing morning temperatures combined with this week's rain are causing minor frost damage, growth cracks, internal burn, sporadic mildew damage, and weak tips. MFC Premium Romaine Lettuce is available.

## Salads & Blends



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| AZ, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is level. Iceberg and romaine supplies are abundant. Markon inspectors are closely monitoring finished cartons for chunks and cores to achieve the best packs.

## Spring Mix



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| AZ, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is steady; supplies are adequate. Quality is good: issues include mildew, discoloration, and mechanical damage. RSS Conventional and Organic Spring Mixes are on the market.

## Squash



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| FL, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX     | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices continue to inch up; stocks are limited. Quality is good: scarring and mechanical damage are problems. MFC Yellow Squash and Zucchini are available.

## Strawberries



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| CA, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| FL, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX     | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Prices will climb this week. Production is winding down in Florida and Mexico, while rain will hit California's main growing regions. Quality will be erratic in remaining Mexican supplies as Baja and Central Mexico have also experienced rain. MFC Strawberries are available from California and Florida.

## Tomatoes



| Region  | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| FL, USA | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| MEX     | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

Mexican supplies have increased; prices are a bit lower than last week. Rain in February caused bloom drop in many plants; markets may inch up soon. Quality ranges from good to very good due to dry weather and high temperatures.

## Watermelon



| Region   | Supplies | Quality | Price  |
|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| MEX      | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |
| OFFSHORE | ▲▲▲      | *****   | \$\$\$ |

The market is elevated; Mexican and offshore volume is low. Although flavor is mild, texture is firm and color is vibrant. Sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix.



**READY-SET-SERVE**  
by MARKON

Ready-Set-Serve (RSS).  
Table-ready fruits & vegetables.  
Backed by 5-Star.



Markon First Crop (MFC).  
Whole fresh fruits & vegetables. Backed by 5-Star.

**MARKON ESSENTIALS**

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.