

CONFIDENCE
IN EVERY CASE.



Highlights

- Markon First Crop® (MFC) Premium Romaine Lettuce weights are higher on average than the rest of the industry (36 to 42 pounds compared with 32 to 38 pounds).
- After a long stretch of exceptional quality and high case weights, lettuce crops in the Arizona/California desert experienced a sudden spike in mildew pressure caused by warm, humid conditions.
- Extremely low temperatures will continue to affect the produce supply chain this week. Heavy ice, rain, snow, and windstorms across the Southwest, Midwest, and Northeast will cause delays and late deliveries.

Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 21, 2021 | 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: Pizza continues to reign supreme through the pandemic. What pies do you suggest that incorporate more fresh produce?

A: Top crust made with Ready-Set-Serve® (RSS) Cauli Creations with caramelized MFC Red Onions, grilled MFC Asparagus, and fire-roasted MFC Red Bell Peppers. Once cooked, I like to dress with RSS Lemony Arugula tossed in olive oil and a Balsamic reduction.

- Use a wider variety of produce, such as roasted eggplant, asparagus, caramelized shallots, wild mushrooms, Butternut squash...even tender potato rounds with white sauce and bacon.
- Remember that most customers are flexitarian, so bits of salty meat can enhance the flavor of a veg-focused pie.

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.



Blistered Broccoli and Seared Scallops

The Asian flavors of lemongrass and ginger add contrast to this entrée of seared scallops and blistered broccoli.

Get the full recipe >

Tips for Serving Broccoli

- Roast RSS Broccoli Crowns tossed with olive oil, salt, and pepper; serve aside steaks with grated Parmesan cheese.
- Top cheesy polenta with sauteed RSS Broccoli Florets, RSS Peeled Garlic, and chopped hot Italian sausage.
- Toss RSS Triple-Washed Spinach with RSS Orange Rounds, RSS Bite-Size Broccoli Florets, candied walnuts, and crumbled blue cheese.
- Make broccoli pesto by combining steamed and chopped RSS Broccoli Crowns, RSS Peeled Garlic, pine nuts, Parmesan cheese, and olive oil; toss with orecchiette.



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Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 21, 2021



This chia berry pudding is delicious option to oatmeal and other warm breakfast cereals—pile high with fruits, nuts, and seeds.

Produce Highlights

Limes

- Prices are escalating; all sizes continue to tighten.
- Expect elevated markets through March.

Mixed Berries

- Raspberry and blackberry prices are elevated; supplies are limited.
- Increased blueberry markets are forecast for late February when harvests in South America wind down.

Onions

- Mexican red, white, and yellow stocks are limited in South Texas.
- Texas-grown MFC Onions were scheduled to hit the market in mid-March; however, recent freezing weather is expected to negatively affect the crop.

Apples



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

The market is stable; storage stocks remain plentiful. Washington MFC Fuji, Gala, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, Honeycrisp, and Red Delicious varieties are available. Quality is excellent: sugar levels range from 12 to 14 Brix.

Asparagus



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

Mexican prices are weak; the Caborca season is in full swing. The Peruvian season is winding down. Quality is excellent: stalks are uniform and tips are firm. MFC Asparagus is available.

Avocados



| Region | Supplies | Quality | Price |
|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| CHILE | ^^^ | ***** | \$\$\$ |
| COLOMBIA | ^^^ | ***** | \$\$\$ |
| MEX | ^^^ | ***** | \$\$\$ |

The market is steady to slightly lower than last week. Mexican volume is high, particularly 48-, 60-, and 70-count sizes. Colombian and Chilean imports are tight due to port delays. New crop production will start in California in mid-March. Quality is very good: texture is creamy, while flavor is subtly nutty. RSS Avocado Chunks, Halves, Pico de Gallo Guacamole, and Pure Pulp are on the market.

Bells: Green



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

Prices are near the bottom of the market. Demand is weak while supplies are abundant on both coasts. Production is in full swing in Sinaloa, Mexico and Florida. Quality is very good. MFC and Markon Essentials® (ESS) Green Bell Peppers are available.

Bells: Red and Yellow



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

The market is weak; stocks are ample in all growing regions. Yellow bells are increasing, but growers planted fewer acres than red bells, keeping supplies snug. Quality has improved: warm weather has aided the ripening process. MFC and ESS Red Bell Peppers are available.

Blackberries



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

Prices are elevated; expect tight supplies for the next week or so. Availability will start to increase in late February/early March; supplies will peak in late March/early April. Quality is very good. Sugar levels range from 12 to 13 Brix.

Blueberries



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

Increased markets are forecast for late February when harvests in South America wind down; stocks are tightening. Quality is very good: sugar levels range from 12 to 16 Brix.

Broccoli



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

Prices are low; supplies have increased in the Arizona/California desert growing region. Quality is very good: sporadic bracketing is being found in some lots due to recent warm weather. Overall weak prices are forecast to persist through the month. MFC Broccoli is available.



Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 21, 2021

Cantaloupe



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

Prices are high. Imported stocks remain limited due to major port delays, especially on the West Coast. Sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix.

Cauliflower



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

The market has stabilized. Quality is very good: size has increased. ESS Cauliflower is available.

Celery



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

Prices are a bit lower than last week; supplies are ample. MFC Celery is available.

Cucumbers



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

Markets are active. Poor weather in Mexico has slowed growth and reduced harvestable yields. Snow and ice in Texas have caused major delays that are affecting crossings from Mexico. MFC Cucumbers are available.

Grapes



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

Prices are inching up; there is a two-tiered market. Supplies are limited; heavy rains damaged many Chilean crops. Offshore MFC Red Seedless and MFC Lunch Bunch Grapes will become available in mid-March.

Green Leaf/Variety Lettuce



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

The market is low; stocks are plentiful. Quality is very good: mildew pressure is a concern, but defects are being trimmed in the field. MFC Premium Green Leaf Lettuce is available.

Honeydew



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

Prices are level; offshore supplies will increase in early March; growers are in a gap caused by seasonal hurricanes. Sugar levels range from 11 to 13 Brix.

Iceberg Lettuce



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

The market is weak. After a long stretch of exceptional quality and high case weights, crops experienced a sudden spike in mildew pressure caused by warm, humid conditions. MFC Premium Iceberg Lettuce is sporadic.

Lemons



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

Prices are unchanged. Winds from the last storm caused scarring, but crews are culling damaged fruit. MFC and ESS Lemons are available.

Limes



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

The market is escalating; all sizes continue to tighten. Mexican crossings are below normal levels, keeping availability limited. Rain is forecast in Veracruz; production will be hindered. Expect elevated markets through March. MFC and ESS Limes are available.

Onions



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

Prices are stable. Mexican red, white, and yellow stocks are limited in South Texas. Texas-grown MFC Onions were scheduled to hit the market in mid-March; however, recent freezing weather is expected to negatively affect the crop. More will be known next week. Northwest MFC Onions will remain on the market through May. Packer label stocks are being shipped from Colorado. Quality is excellent: Mexican onions will have feathery skins and light color/ exterior compared to Northwest storage stocks.

Oranges



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

The market is a bit higher, especially for 113- and 138-count fruit. Quality is excellent: sugar levels range from 12 to 13 Brix. MFC and ESS Navel Oranges are available.

Pears



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

Washington and Oregon D'Anjou pears will be on the market through August. Size is dominated by 80- through 110- count fruit; small sizes (120- and 135- count pears) are scarce. U.S. No. 1 grade stocks are abundant; fancy grade pears are tight. The Washington Bartlett season is winding down.

Pineapple



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

The market is steady; volume is rising. Quality is very good: translucency is an occasional issue. Sugar levels average 15 Brix.



Fresh Crop Report

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Potatoes



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

Prices are level. MFC Norkotah Potatoes are the primary variety on the market. Small sizes are the most plentiful. Norkotah quality is excellent, while Burbank quality is good. Idaho White Russet potatoes are also available.

Raspberries



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

The market is elevated; supplies are limited. Expect stocks to incrementally increase each week until supplies hit their peak in mid-March. Sugar levels range from 12 to 13 Brix.

Romaine



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

Prices are low. Quality is very good: mildew pressure is a concern, but defects are being trimmed in the field. MFC Premium Romaine Lettuce is available.

Salads & Blends



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

The market is unchanged. Iceberg and romaine supplies are abundant. Overall quality is very good, but mildew and mildew pressure are reducing head weights. Markon Inspectors are choosing the highest quality lots to achieve the best packs.

Spring Mix



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

Prices are stable; stocks are ample in Yuma, Arizona. Quality is excellent: incidences of yellowing are minimal. RSS Conventional and Organic Spring Mixes are available.

Squash



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

The market has eased. Mexican volume is high; production is steady in Florida. Quality is very good: skins are smooth, color is deep, and flavor is pleasantly bitter. MFC Squash is available on both coasts.

Strawberries



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

Prices remain elevated; post-Valentine's Day demand is strong, keeping supplies tight. California fields continue to recover from recent heavy rains and strong winds. The Oxnard season will run through April; Santa Maria production has just begun. Freezing temperatures are reducing berry size in Mexico. Although the weather is warmer in Florida, showers are limiting stocks. Stemmed strawberry volume is extremely low in all growing regions. Quality problems such as wind scarring, bruising, and small size are being culled. Cold-chain management remains a vital component in maximizing shelf-life.

Tomatoes



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

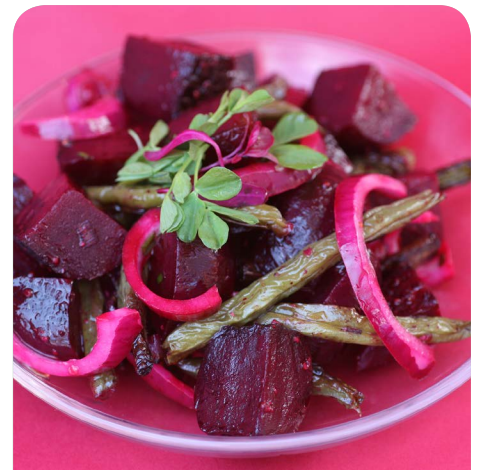
Round tomato markets are weak. Florida supplies are sufficient; large and extra-large sizes are the most plentiful. The Mexican season is in full swing. Grape tomato prices are low; the season is at its peak. Quality is very good: fruit is plump and juicy.

Watermelon



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

Prices are level; Mexican stocks are adequate. Quality is excellent: color is deep red, texture is firm, and flavor is sweet. Sugar levels range from 11 to 12 Brix.



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



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Whole fresh fruits & vegetables. Backed by 5-Star.



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