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## Highlights

- Markon First Crop® (MFC) Premium Iceberg weights are higher on average than the rest of the industry (40 to 48 pounds compared with 38 to 45 pounds).
- Broccoli prices are decreasing as volume continues to rise in all growing regions.
- Cold weather has caused multiple days of lettuce ice in the Arizona/California desert region. Anticipated lettuce quality problems include epidermal blistering and peeling.

# Fresh Crop Report

WEEK OF DECEMBER 26, 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:** What special New Year's Eve celebration dishes do you suggest?

**A:** Many Southern-inspired dishes are symbolic to New Year's celebrations. Black-eyed peas, beans, pomegranates, and braised greens find their way into family traditions around the world. Fresh collard or mustard greens, braised gently in house-made broth, baby carrots roasted with honey and rosemary sprigs, and stove-top roasted winter pears are some of my go to dishes served with lamb or pork loin.

- Ready-Set-Serve® (RSS) Collard Greens are pre-washed, chopped, and easy to use. Add them to winter salads, stir-fries, and meat braises.
- Don't forget to use fresh produce to elevated cocktails. Ginger syrup, honey, clove, bourbon, and an orange wedge make for a calming hot toddy.

*Chef Tim Maness,  
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.



### Winter Barley-Vegetable Salad

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

**Get the full recipe >**

## Tips for Serving Winter Squash

- Add chunks of Butternut squash to soups and chilis made with beans, peppers, and ground turkey.
- Bake butter and maple syrup in Acorn squash halves; slice and serve with roasted turkey or ham.
- Toss cooked linguine with roasted Kabocha squash cubes, RSS Peeled Garlic, RSS Washed & Trimmed Italian parsley, and creamy béchamel sauce.

**Browse additional usage tips >**





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*Slightly sweet, subtly nutty—this delicate tart is balanced with the earthiness of mushrooms and the cruciferous flavors of Romanesco. An Instagrammable favorite!*

## Produce Highlights

### Asparagus

- The market is elevated due to strong demand and limited supplies.

### Celery

- Prices continue to rise due to strong demand and diminishing supplies.
- The Oxnard, California season is getting started, but fields have been impacted by fusarium and insect pressure, reducing expected yields.

### Grapes

- South American MFC and Markon Essentials® (ESS) Green and Red Seedless Grapes will become available in mid-February.
- The market will climb as growers transition from California to South America.

## Apples



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

The market is unchanged. Washington MFC Fuji, Gala, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, and Red Delicious Apples are plentiful, especially 88- to 113-count sizes. Quality is excellent: sugar levels range from 12 to 14 Brix.

## Asparagus



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

Prices are elevated due to strong demand and limited supplies. Volume is low in Constitution, Mexico. Caborca production has started in a light way, but will not ramp up until mid-January. The Mexicali harvest is scheduled to start late in December/early January. Quality is very good: tips are firm, color is bright, and flavor is grassy. MFC Asparagus is available.

## Avocados



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

The market is fairly stable with better availability of 40-count and larger sizes. Expect higher prices for small fruit and demand is strong. Quality is very good: texture is creamy and flavor is nutty. RSS Avocado Chunks, Halves, Pico de Gallo Guacamole, and Pure Pulp are on the market.

## Bells: Green



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

Prices are low; overall supplies are abundant. Jumbo and extra-large sizes dominate the Florida crop. Mexican production is focused in Hermosillo and Obregon. Quality is very good: bruising is a minor issue. MFC and ESS Green Bell Peppers are on the market.

## Bells: Red and Yellow



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

The market is high. California desert production is winding down. The main Mexican field-grown season has started; volume will rise through January. Quality is average: scarring and odd shape are slight issues. MFC and ESS Red Bell Peppers are available.

## Blackberries



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

Prices are steady. The California season is wrapping up. Mexican supplies are increasing. Quality is very good: green shoulders are an occasional problem. Counts range from 18 to 24.

## Blueberries



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

The market will ease through January. Mexican crops are at their peak. Peruvian and Chilean fruit has begun shipping. Quality is excellent: the average berry size ranges from 15 to 17mm. Flavor is sweet with pleasantly tangy undertones.

## Broccoli



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

Prices are decreasing as volume continues to rise in all growing regions. Mexican stocks have rebounded following unseasonable cold weather. Quality is good: hollow core is an occasional issue. MFC Broccoli is available.



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## Cantaloupe



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

Prices are level; stocks are sufficient in both growing areas. Quality is very good.



## Cauliflower

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

Supplies are starting to make a comeback. The market is slightly lower. Quality is very good: expect bright white color and minimal mechanical damage. ESS Cauliflower is available.



## Celery

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

Markets continue to rise due to strong demand and diminishing supplies. Oxnard, California fields have been impacted by fusarium and insect pressure, reducing expected yields. MFC Celery is available.



## Cucumbers

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

Weak prices persist. Mexican supplies are ample. Florida production is winding down. The Honduras season is underway. MFC and ESS Cucumbers are on the market.



## Grapes

Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA, USA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
OFFSHORE	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market will climb as growers transition from California to South America. Offshore MFC and Markon Essentials® (ESS) Green and Red Seedless Grapes will become available in mid-February.

## Green Leaf/Variety Lettuce



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

Markets are steady to slightly lower; supplies are abundant. Lettuce ice is causing sporadic harvesting delays. Quality is very good: mildew damage is being trimmed at harvest. MFC Premium Green Leaf Lettuce is available.



## Honeydew

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

The market is up; 5-count stocks are tight, but starting to increase. Quality is very good.



## Iceberg Lettuce

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

Prices are weak; supplies are plentiful. Quality is very good, although weights have been hindered by low temperatures. Mildew damage is being trimmed at the field level. MFC Premium Iceberg Lettuce is sporadic; Markon Best Available is being substituted as needed.



## Lemons

Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
ARG	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
AZ/CA, USA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
CHILE	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
MEX	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

The market is stable. Recent rain and lower temperatures have aided growth and deepened color. Domestic supplies are abundant, especially 95- to 115-count sizes. Quality is excellent. MFC and ESS Lemons are available.



## Limes

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

Prices are steady; demand is weak. Stocks will increase through at least mid-January. Quality is very good. MFC and ESS Limes are available.

## Onions



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

Northwest prices remain high. Storage stocks are dominated by medium-size onions. Quality is excellent: skins are cured and papery and inner flesh is juicy with zesty flavor. MFC Red and Yellow Onions are available.



## Oranges

Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA, USA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
IMPORTS	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

California Navel markets are unchanged. Fancy grade 72-, 88-, and 113-count sizes dominate supplies. Recent rain and lower temperatures have aided growth and deepened color. Ethylene gas time has fallen to 24 to 48 hours. Sugar levels range from 10 to 13 Brix with a mid- to high acid ratio.



## Pears

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

The market is low; storage supplies are ample. Quality is very good. MFC Washington Bartlett and D'Anjou Pears are readily available.



## Pineapple

Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CR	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
ECUADOR	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

Prices are stable, but will start increasing again through January. Stocks are tightening; 5-count sizes are extremely scarce. Quality is very good: fruit is sweet, yet tangy.



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## Potatoes



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

Prices are climbing; 70- to 100-count stocks are especially tight. 2021 crop yields are down by 15-20% in the Pacific Northwest (Idaho, Oregon, and Washington). Lower volume is forecast through the rest of the season (July 2022). U.S. No. 2 supplies are limited.

## Raspberries



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

The market is level. Expect sufficient volume through early January. Quality is very good: broken fruit is an occasional concern caused by temperature fluctuations.

## Romaine



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

Prices are fairly stable to slightly lower. Lettuce ice is causing periodic harvesting delays. Quality is very good: minimal fringe burn and mildew pressure is being found in some lots. MFC Premium Romaine Lettuce is available.

## Salads & Blends



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

The market is steady; iceberg and romaine supplies are meeting demand despite inclement weather. Markon's Quality Assurance team continues to monitor quality and processing for the best packs.

## Spring Mix



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

Prices are holding stable, but may inch up in January due to rain and low temperatures in the desert region. Quality is good: mildew pressure is a potential issue. RSS Conventional and Organic Spring Mixes are available.

## Squash



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

The market is weak, but may start inching up in the new year. Florida production is in full swing; zucchini is more plentiful than yellow squash. Mexican supplies are abundant. Quality ranges from very good to excellent. MFC Zucchini and Yellow Squash are available.

## Strawberries



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

High markets persist. California volume is extremely low; rain is affecting yields. The Santa Maria, California season has ended. New crop Oxnard production will start in January. Harvesting is increasing in Florida and Mexico. MFC Strawberries are available.

## Tomatoes



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

Florida round supplies are ample; prices are inching down. Mexican stocks will increase when mainland growers start harvesting next week. Roma volume is rising; peak production will occur in January. Quality is very good. MFC Tomatoes are available.

## Tree Fruit



Region	Supplies	Quality	Price
CA, USA	^^^	*****	\$\$\$
OFFSHORE	^^^	*****	\$\$\$

California nectarines, peaches, and plums are not on the market. Limited quantities of Argentine nectarines are shipping into the West Coast. Chilean peaches and plums will enter the market in late December/early January. The Chilean cherry season is underway.

## Watermelon



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

The market is unchanged. Mexican stocks are abundant; large sizes dominate the crop. Quality is very good: fruit is sweet and juicy.



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