

FRESH LINK MARKET REPORTS

August 29th, 2024 Fresh-Link Fruit 559.306.6900 | infoFLF@freshlk.com

Market Update for Table Grapes

Week of August 26 – September 1

As we enter the middle point of the California table grape season, there are a few key indicators that now point to a crop that could drop below 85 million total 19# cartons. Firstly, growers are still dealing with some challenges related to the extreme extended heat wave and now volumes are ramping up on mid-season varieties, pointing towards less volumes for the back end of the season. Growers are now at the peak of the harvest, just in time for kids to head back to school and support strong retail promotions in September. Overall quality has improved substantially and with the long-term forecast looking perfect, growers are very optimistic about providing consumers with a better product on the shelf. Retailers have also shown that they are willing to pay higher prices for better quality grapes, which should also add to a positive consumer experience.

Red Seedless

Growers are now packing steady volumes of Scarlet Royal, Krissy, Sweet Celebration and Allison red seedless. Although the Flame crop did its job and helped the industry get to the midway point in the season, the overall quality was not what we had hoped and left consumers wanting for better fruit. With warm days and cooler nights expected for the next three weeks, we can expect quality to improve. Scarlets are packing out well, so we have seen pricing adjust slightly lower over the past 10 days. FOBs have held well on red grapes, ranging from the low to high 20s and we can expect these markets to stay with us through September, although some marketers will offer lower prices to support retail promotions that are still needed to keep the movement steady.

Green Seedless

Growers are mostly done harvesting Ivory, Princess, Timson, and Valley Pearl, though some shippers still have decent supplies in cold storages. The Sweet Globe crop is yielding less than expected, with limited volume so far this season, but we can expect those numbers to pick up over the next two weeks. Great Greens are packing out well and combined with Autumn Kings, they will be the main varieties to get us to the end of the season. We have seen pressure on the spot market, with marketers offering deals to move lesser quality fruit. Although the spot market feels weak now, don't get too comfortable. Pricing on the best quality green seedless will firm again in October, once the industry realizes that we could come up short in November and December. Currently, the spot ranges from the high teens to low 20s.

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Citrus

Nearing the tail end of the Valencia season, the market remains red hot, supplies are down, pack outs are less than 50%, and small fruit is very hard to come by. Supplies remain low as the heat has put a damper on size, color, and now quality. There is about 4 - 6 weeks left however with the weather getting cooler fruit should go back into its normal growth pattern. Growers are still fighting color and re-greening, which will require gassing the fruit for a minimum of 48 hours. Demand will continue to increase until relief comes with October Navels. Offshore navels have limited availability also which will keep the Valencia demand high.

Melons

Bloom drop has caused a significant drop in yields on lopes in the west. Sizing has shifted more towards R9s & 12s, with J9s being very tight. Quality on the fruit is great to excellent.

The desert deal on watermelons is done. The extreme heat we endured for the last 12-14 days cut a lot of growers season short by 10 days or so. Majority of seedless watermelon are coming from Central Valley/Northern California with a few growers still going in Bakersfield. After the 4th of July, the market and demand has significantly softened.