



Fresh Is Everything

# Weekly Market Review December 20, 2024

## Overview

The impacts from Hurricane Helene and Milton are expected to be felt across the entire Southeast through the end of the year and as we approach the Holidays, we continue to keep those in harm's way in our thoughts and prayers. We expect to see the supply of fresh produce from Florida to be extremely volatile through the end of the year. Commodities still feeling the impacts are the following: *Citrus, Corn, Cotton, Tomatoes, Bell Pepper, Eggplant, Peanuts, Pecans and Mixed Hot Pepper*. We are currently harvesting from regions that saw tremendous losses; some growers are in Force Majeure still as they deal with poor quality, 50% plus loss to crops and limited availability. This should all slowly improve as we move further south into the Immokalee districts between now and January.

California is now done for the season on *table grapes* and we have transition to the offshore season; we could see GAPS supply over the coming weeks on the West Coast as most of the offshore fruit on the front end of the season loads in the East. Fortunately, some growers are able to transfer fruit to maintain supply. Markets will be hit and miss through the first week of January. This should start to improve by Late December as more offshore fruit fills the supply chain. *Pineapple* volume is slowly improving; we need to be flexible on sizing to navigate the shortfalls. *Honeydew* will be a challenge over the next three weeks; transition combined with delays due to weather in South America have limited availability and quality fruit. Flexibility is very important during this transition to limit the portions of honey being served or outright subs if there are any shortages. Supply should improve over the next three weeks.

In the West, tighter supply available to market on *mushrooms*; weather impacts and viral pressure have caused supply shortfalls across the region on all varieties.

The holiday season has arrived, and increasing industry demand is driven by upcoming holiday promotions. *Avocado* availability has improved to meet this demand, with stable prices and a narrowing price gap between sizes 48 and 60. The next few weeks present strong promotional opportunities across large, medium, and small fruit. Demand is expected to remain high through February, with stable-to higher prices anticipated during the final two weeks of the year. However, Christmas and New Year's both falling on Wednesdays

will impact weekly harvest levels. Strong field demand this week aims to ensure adequate supplies for the holidays. While select sizes may offer hot-buy opportunities, the overall market is expected to remain strong into the new year. Christmas is right around the corner and transition is wrapping up.

We are finally starting to see some relief from the heat damage we had in Yuma and Salinas. Quality and supplies are improving across the board. *Broccoli* is still escalated but is no longer at the extreme trigger. Quality and supplies are looking good but we do still have some growers holding to averages. *Endive, escarole, leeks, cilantro and fennel* are still escalated and look to remain that way through the year. *Bok Choy, Cauliflower and Artichokes* have stayed at the extreme trigger. All of these items are still very light in supplies. Growers will be holding on to averages and you may still see some prorates. *Spinach* is still escalated but will likely be back to normal pricing after Christmas. *Broccolini* is finally seeing some relief and growers should be able to fill orders in full. Some will still be holding to averages but supplies have improved.

*Green cabbage, Red Cabbage, Celery and Brussels Sprouts* are still escalated. Supplies will be limited on all cabbage items, but things are definitely improving. Brussel Sprouts are in higher demand with the holidays and some growers are starting to be tight on supplies. Transition threw us a few curve balls, but we are starting to see relief. Broccoli and Cauliflower will remain a bit of a roller coaster until we get into Q1. Some growers are struggling with supplies since the mornings are still cold and they are not getting the growth they need to catch up on supplies yet. The Cauliflower market has actually continued to go up. Those cold mornings are also still affecting *Lettuce* so you can expect to see the light weights and smaller heads throughout the remainder of the year.

Happy Holidays everyone! No report next week due to the holiday.

## MARKET ALERT

EXTREME	ESCALATED					WATCHLIST
Artichokes Bok Choy	Asparagus	Avocados	Bell Peppers Green, Orange, Red, & Yellow	Broccoli Florets, Crowns	Brussels Sprouts	Broccolini Cantaloupe
Cauliflower Corn	Cabbage Green	Cabbage Red	Celery	Cilantro	Endive & Escarole	Limes Large Sizes Snow & Sugar Snap Peas
Leeks Tomatoes Rounds, Roma & Snacking	Fennel	French Beans	Honeydew	Hot Peppers	Lettuce Boston	
	Limes Small Sizes	Napa	Parsley Italian	Pickles	Spinach	
	Strawberries	Table Grapes				

## FRUITS & VEGETABLES

**Avocados: ESCALATED** Last week's harvest closed at 46.1M pounds, a 20% decline from the prior week, partly due to a holiday in Mexico. This week marks the final full harvest week of the year, with strong volumes projected and extra supply needed to stabilize the pipeline before reduced operations in the following two weeks. The Main Crop shows a dry matter estimate of 28.4%. Field availability favors smaller sizes, while sizes 40 and larger remain in tighter supply. An extended rainy season has increased the proportion of grade 2 fruit.

**Bananas:** Supply remains stable at the moment and shortages were averted as the strike has been postponed. Over quality remains good across the country.

## BERRIES

**Strawberries: ESCALATED** Supplies are increasing out of most growing areas. Santa Maria's weather remains mild, with daytime highs in the low 70s and cool nights. Light rain this week and next is not expected to impact production significantly. Fruit quality is improving, with reduced decay, though variability in size persists. Overall volumes are stabilizing but will gradually decline through December. Organic fields under tunnels maintain production, while spring crop fields show promising early growth with anticipated harvests starting late December or early January. Mexico continues to see warm daytime temperatures support steadily increasing production, but quality remains a concern with issues like bruising and white shoulders upon arrival in Texas. Warmer temperatures in Florida boost production and quality, though green tips remain from earlier cold snaps. Production is ramping up significantly, with specialty packs now in limited production.

**Blackberries:** Out of Mexico, quality is strong, with medium to large berries showing good sheen and firmness. Some red cell regression and soft fruit are noted. Steady volumes are expected for the rest of the year, with transfers to Texas maintaining freshness.

## CALIFORNIA CITRUS

**Oranges:** We are entering the heart of the Navel season. Quality from California is very good with sizing still running heavy to 88s, 113s and 138s. 72's and larger continue to be in lighter supply although availability of larger sizes continues to improve.

**Lemons:** Lemon supplies are plentiful with very good quality out of the desert growing regions. District 1 and District 2 Lemons have also started with very good quality as well.

**Imports/Specialties:** California Mandarins and Grapefruit are seeing much better supplies with very good quality. Cara Cara volume is increasing with promotable volume through December. Blood Orange volume continues to increase.

**Pineapples:** Supply will remain very light for the foreseeable future due to harvest shortfalls; we need to be flexible on sizing as 5-6ct fruit is very short with 7-8's plentiful. The need to be flexible on sizing may be necessary to maintain consistent supply. Quality is good.

**Table Grapes: ESCALATED** Current table grape supply out of California continues to dwindle and should be done by the end of the month; some shippers sooner than others. Greens will be out first. We could see supply GAPS over the next several weeks on the West Coast as most of the offshore fruit on the front end of the season loads in the East. This should start to improve by Late December as more offshore fruit fills the supply chain. Quality will be mixed for the next several weeks, we will see elevated shatter, amber in any lingering greens in the market and shorter shelf life.

**Raspberries:** Out of Mexico, quality is good, with strong color and firmness, though occasional overripe or crumbled fruit is noted. Volume remains steady, with transfers to Texas ensuring freshness through the season.

**Blueberries:** Out of Mexico, volume has passed its first peak and is gradually declining, with another peak expected in February. Organics experienced a gap due to cold weather but will recover next week. Conventional and organic volumes remain relatively steady, with minor quality issues like shriveling and leakage. No shipments this week out of Peru, but arrivals are expected next week, featuring high-quality fruit. Production is slowing, with final shipments anticipated in January. Out of Chile, cooler weather supports steady production, though volume is decreasing in northern regions. Peak exports are expected by mid-January. Quality remains high with large, firm, and sweet berries, despite occasional slow-ripening issues. Delays at ports are noted. Organic blueberry production is expected to begin in January out of Oxnard, CA.

**Limes: Small Size ESCALATED / Large Size WATCHLIST**

With the current growing areas finishing, the market is getting stronger, especially on smaller sizes. Currently, Large sizes are prevalent with light volume on small fruit, but we are starting to see that change as growers are reporting much smaller fruit in the new growing areas. As we finish December and head into January, we will see much smaller sizing with light availability on large sizes until mid to late February. As growers transition to the new crop and growing areas, we expect a significant jump in pricing which is anticipated to last through February before we see things start to stabilize.

## WEST COAST LETTUCE

**Iceberg:** Lettuce supplies and quality are improving. Weights are better but are still slightly lower than normal. Yields are improving as the weather warms up in Yuma.

**Iceberg VA:** Quality and supplies are improving. You may still see some growers holding to averages but the market is starting to even out.

**Romaine, Romaine Hearts:** Romaine and Romaine heart supplies have improved. We are still seeing light weights and some growers holding to averages. The Romaine Hearts market is still escalated with some growers.

## EASTERN AND WESTERN VEGETABLES

**Green Bell Pepper: ESCALATED** Markets remain firm this week with light volume in the East expected for some time due to the impact of Hurricane Milton. In the West, light supply is expected this week and should loosen up as we completely transition to Nogales. Quality is mostly good.

**Color Bell Pepper: ESCALATED** Markets remain very high and supply light crossing from Mexico. Orange looks to be the item to sub over to from yellow and red on the spot market. Quality being packed is mostly good.

**Mini Sweet Pepper:** Supply stable this week loading in Nogales.

**Mixed Chili Pepper: ESCALATED** Supplies in general are good across most varieties out of Mexico and California. Jalapeno, Habanero, Serrano and Poblano were lighter this week. Caribes, Fresnos, and Shishitos are the shortest this week. We still expect supply GAPS in the East due to the weather.

**Eggplant:** Tighter supply from all domestic growing regions keeps upward pressure on price; stable crossings in Nogales and McAllen. Quality is good.

**Slicer Cucumbers:** Good supply crossing through Nogales and McAllen. Domestically, we may see some supply GAPS this week due to cold weather in Florida. The best quality is coming from Mexico.

## MELONS

Both cantaloupes and honeydews reached “demand exceeds supply” levels due to the effects that followed Tropical Storm Sara almost four weeks ago. Although we have experienced lower yields on both commodities, to date we have fared much better on the cantaloupe than the honeydew. We began advising three weeks ago of a potential volatile December and that has definitely come to fruition with the honeydews.

**Cantaloupe: WATCHLIST** Quality is very nice on the fruit arriving from Guatemala; sizing is primarily 9s followed by 12s and 9Js while brix levels have been mostly in the 12–16% ranges with some higher. Demand is strong right now and is expected to remain high through January as the rain from Tropical Storm Sara has impacted fields in Honduras and Costa Rica which were scheduled to begin harvesting in four weeks. Shippers with fruit from those regions are already advising customers that no promotional pricing will be provided over the next 2–3 months as there is concern with bacteria in fields negatively impacting yields. We will continue to monitor this situation and provide further input on future updates, but we are expecting higher markets to remain in place both in the short and long term.

**Romaine VA:** Quality is fair, and supplies are still very tight. You will likely see growers holding to averages.

**Green and Red Leaf:** Overall quality and supplies look good. Weights and sizing are still light, but the weather is improving so weights and supplies will get better soon.

**Boston: ESCALATED** Supplies have gotten very tight and will remain that way into December.

**English Cucumbers:** Good supply available this week crossing from Mexico. Quality on new crop out of Mexico was good.

**Pickles: ESCALATED** Improving supply available crossing through Nogales, the Florida season will be altered due to the impacts of Milton; Supply will be hit and miss over the next several weeks.

**Green Beans:** Supply stable and quality expected to be good crossing through Nogales this week. Florida beans are still firm and quality is mixed.

**French Beans: ESCALATED** There is a limited supply of organic and conventional French beans from Guatemala, but Production continues to improve with fair quality. French beans from Mexico are also in short supply due to weather conditions.

**Zucchini/Yellow Squash:** Good volume available crossing through Nogales and available in Florida.

**Watermelon:** Lighter supply available and demand is light. Fruit is being harvested from Texas as well as Mexico.

**Honeydew: ESCALATED** With very limited supply crossing through Nogales and the offshore volume being down 30–50% (depending on field location and the amount of rain received) following TS Sara, there just has not been enough production to satisfy the industry. We will continue to battle this for the next 3–4 weeks and ask for flexibility in sizing and subs where necessary to maintain service levels as we are unclear as to when supply will improve at this point in the season.

## HERBS

Basil supply and quality from Mexico are expected to be marginal due to cold weather, with all other herbs similarly impacted, leading to inconsistent availability over the coming weeks. Imported chervil supply is improving, while chives and sage production continue to be affected by cold conditions in Mexico.

HERB	SUPPLY	QUALITY	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
Arugula	Steady	Marginal	USA
Basil	Steady	Steady	USA/MEX
Opal Basil	Steady	Steady	USA
Thai Basil	Steady	Steady	USA/MEX
Bay Leaves	Steady	Steady	USA/COL
Chervil	Limited	Limited	USA
Chives	Steady	Steady	MEX
Cilantro	Steady	Steady	USA/MEX
Dill	Steady	Steady	USA/MEX
Epazote	Steady	Steady	MEX
Lemongrass	Steady	Steady	USA
Marjoram	Steady	Steady	USA
Mint	Steady	Steady	USA
Oregano	Steady	Steady	USA
Italian Parsley	Steady	Steady	USA
Rosemary	Steady	Steady	USA
Sage	Steady	Steady	USA
Savory	Steady	Limited	USA
Sorrel	Steady	Steady	USA
Tarragon	Steady	Steady	MEX
Thyme	Steady	Steady	USA
Lavender	Steady	Steady	USA
Lemon Thyme	Steady	Steady	USA
Lime Leaves	Steady	Steady	USA

## MIXED VEGETABLES

**Artichokes: EXTREME** Supplies remain limited and will continue to be tight for the next few weeks. The market is still at the extreme trigger. Growers are holding to averages. Quality is good.

**Asparagus: ESCALATED** Southern/Northern Baja production is still low due to seasonality. Northern Sonora (Caborca) has started with very low volume, which will continue until climate warms in the region. Peruvian volume continues to decrease due to quality and seasonality. Markets are extremely active with less production in the market.

**Bok Choy: EXTREME** Quality is good but supplies are still limited. The light supplies are driving the market.

**Broccoli/Broccoli Crowns: ESCALATED** Quality and supplies are improving. Supplies are going to be limited for most growers for at least a few more weeks. It is cold in the mornings in Yuma and that was not helping the broccoli grow but the weather is improving so the supplies are getting better. Floret Mini's are also tight and some growers are extremely short on those.

**Broccolini and Sweet Baby Broccoli: WATCHLIST** Quality is good, but supplies are light with some growers. Expect this item to be an issue throughout the year. Demand is very strong, and supplies continue to be limited but growers are starting to be able to fill full orders. They are just still holding to averages.

**Brussels Sprouts: ESCALATED** Quality looks very good, but some growers have tight supplies and it is driving the market up.

**Carrots: (JUMBOS, MEDIUMS and CELLOS)** Jumbo carrot supplies are light, but supplies remain steady on all other sizes and packs with good quality.

**Cauliflower: EXTREME** Supplies remain tight, and quality is just okay. Yuma has still not been able to get caught up on supplies. Some growers are holding to weekly averages and some growers are prorating. The Cauliflower market is very active and has been steadily increasing. The cold mornings are just not allowing the heads to develop. The weather in Yuma is starting to improve but it will be a few weeks before we see some relief on this item. Caulilini is also affected and is seeing very tight supplies or no product at all.

**Celery: ESCALATED** Quality and supplies are okay. Growers are able to cover contract business. There are some heat issues and insect pressures. Supplies are tight and will continue to be that way into Christmas. The market is very active and is continuing to increase. Things should start to trend down after the holidays.

**Corn: EXTREME** Current supply is extremely tight and expected to continue through New Years. In the East the primary regions where production is taking place were damaged by Hurricane Milton and seeing very low yields and heavy crop damage. We anticipate volatile markets through the end of the year. Also want to note that corn will be smaller this time of year as well due to less sun which typically slows the growth of the ears and produces smaller kernels. In the West, supply is stable crossing through Nogales.

**Fennel: ESCALATED** The fields are seeing lower yields and therefore there is a shortage in supply. Pricing will stay escalated until supplies improve.

**Kale:** Supplies have improved, and quality is good.

**Leeks: EXTREME** Leeks are very tight right now and some growers are holding to averages. The market remains escalated and will likely stay that way throughout the year.

**Garlic:** California Garlic is showing very good quality with good demand.

**Ginger:** Supplies and market are steady.

**Green Cabbage: ESCALATED** Supplies and quality are improving. The market is still escalated but it should start to level out soon.

**Green Onions:** Supplies and quality look good.

**Mushrooms:** Supply will remain snug through the end of the year. Quality is good.

**Napa Cabbage: ESCALATED** Quality and supplies are improving but there is some insect pressure.

**Parsley (Curly, Italian): ESCALATED** Supplies are improving but the light supplies in some markets is driving the market. Quality is okay.

**Rapini:** Quality is good, but supply continues to be light. The market is strong and therefore the supplies will continue to be light.

**Red Cabbage: ESCALATED** Pricing is escalated. Quality is good but supplies are tight. Light supplies are expected for at least the next 2 weeks. The market remains very active.

**Spinach: ESCALATED** Supplies are improving. Some growers are still holding to weekly averages, but the market is starting to level out. Relief should be coming soon on this item.

**Snow Peas and Sugar Snaps: ESCALATED** Guatemalan snow pea production is improving this week and is expected to improve further next week. However, sugar snap production remains low due to weather challenges, leading to active market conditions. Domestic supply of both snow peas and sugar snaps is limited, and Mexican production is also low due to adverse weather. The market remains highly active.

## ONIONS:

The onion market has stayed steady. The Northwest is continuing. The Pacific Northwest storage supplies generally take a bit of a price increase in early Q1. While this is no guarantee, we do anticipate this will be the case on white and red onions. White supplies were light to begin with in the PNW, and we do not anticipate relief there until Mexico begins crossing their supply, which should take place around the middle of Q1 in February. They are typically not very big red suppliers, so we may see the continued pattern of reds remaining elevated until we get into the

Spring/Summer months in California. At the moment, all reports are that Mexico will have a healthy crop in terms of quality and volume. Because of this, we are not anticipating the market to be volatile in the near future. However, the Texas crop is still too early to predict. The onions are still far from 'made' that a weather event could still impact their crop. If that were to happen, we would likely see a swift increase on all colors and sizes near the end of Q1.

## POTATOES:

No major changes are expected in the short term. Size profiles remain balanced at the moment, with volume deals on count carton sizes alternating a bit on a weekly basis – meaning one week it will be a 40/50, and the next it will be 80/90. Overall, size does seem to be more plentiful than smaller size count cartons. We will likely begin to see Norkotah supplies taper off toward the end of Q1, with the majority of growers transitioning to Burbanks only during the beginning of Q2.

When this takes place, we anticipate that supply could tighten up some as yields were believed to not be as plentiful in Burbanks as they were in Norkotahs this past year. It remains to be seen just how impacted pricing will be, and on what sizes exactly. However, we do feel confident that we will not see a cheaper market than we are seeing today.

## TOMATOES: EAST COAST

**Round, Roma, and Snacking Tomatoes: EXTREME** We continue to see shortfalls in supply however there is light at the end of this tunnel. We expect to see a slow improvement in production after Christmas as we recover from Hurricane Milton. We still expect volume out of the region to be at 20% or less of the normal levels over the next week then slowly improve. We are hoping by Jan 1 to see a much more stable domestic tomato production outlook.

## TOMATOES: MEXICO

**Round Tomatoes: EXTREME** Lighter numbers this week crossing from all shipping points. Large fruit is the shortest; overall volume will be at seasonal lows in general from all growing regions. We expect to see volatile markets continue. We will see flushes of fruit then tighten back up over the next several weeks. Markets will see added pressure through the Holidays as demand that would be pulling from Florida will shift West due to the devastation caused by Hurricane Milton.

**Grape Tomatoes: EXTREME** High Demand and short supply expected to keep prices well above normal through the holiday season. A lot of this is due to limited supply on the east coast and transition in the west. Quality is good.

**Roma Tomatoes: EXTREME** Improving volume crossing through Nogales this week; volume was lighter out of Otay and McAllen as the motion has been set for the Winter transition. There is some fruit out there that is questionable, and deals being made for that supply. Stronger fruit is pulling a premium. Markets will be active through next week as demand remains strong out of the east. Quality is mixed.

**Cherry and Medley Tomatoes:** Supply is tighter, and markets are firming up. Quality is good.

**Tomato on the Vine:** Steady volume available this week.

## APPLES

**Apples:** Last year, Washington State Apple growers shipped just over 136 million boxes of Apples. This year's total is projected at 124 million. Prices will likely be higher this year and much more manageable of a crop.

Projections below

Red Delicious – 4 million down from last Season

Gold Delicious – 280,000 boxes down from last Season

Gr Smiths – 1.1 million boxes down

Fuji – 1.5 million boxes down

Gala – 3 million boxes down

Honeycrisp – 5 million boxes down

Cosmic – Up 2.7 million boxes

## PEARS:

The Northwest Pear Crop (Washington/Oregon) is substantially down from last season due to below average temps in late Feb/early March affecting bud development. The higher elevation areas in Washington were severely impacted, especially the Wenatchee Valley. The Oregon Growing Region was not affected as much as Wenatchee, Washington, but it was still impacted.

The Bartlett Crop out of the Northwest shows 3.8 million shipped last season vs a projected 2.9 million this year for a 14% decrease. It's not substantial in terms of overall volume, but it's still a factor. The cold temperatures will affect the grade, so more Because the crop is smaller, the size profile has increased by 1 to 2 sizes. Barts to finish by the end of Feb./ first part of March.

Anjous report at least a 30% total decrease, or 1.85 million boxes less than last year. Also, out of the Wenatchee Valley, there will be more fancy and, for the first time in many years, a 3rd grade anjous packed. When we start to pack Anjous – I will share pics of 3rd grade, this will be your value pear.

## DAIRY:

Last week was a bit disjointed, I think the trends are more clear this week. Whey is bullish on good demand and tight inventories. Butter and SMP/NFDM are short-term bearish with production increasing in the Northern Hemisphere and demand a bit soft. EU/NZ cheese prices are resetting down toward cheaper U.S. levels, but the U.S. is finding little strength on improved domestic demand and good ex-port orders. Everyone will be squaring up positions and getting ready for the year-end holidays next week (if they haven't already). We will get a lot of new data next week, but the market might not respond to it if there are significant surprises.

**Pomegranate:** Good supply available this week.

**Asian Pears:** Peaking in volume. Quality is outstanding.

**Tree Fruit:** Mostly done for the season. Offshore fruit should arrive around Christmas.

**Kiwi Fruit:** Supplies are tight out of Chile and markets are firming up.

**Persimmons:** Active markets and quality is good on both Hachiya and Fuyu.

**Quince:** Starting to harvest.

Anjous to start the week of September 16th, and if growers make it through June I will be surprised.

Red Anjous are down 7% or 47,000 boxes, so it is nothing dramatic like the others. The question on Red Anjous is whether or not we will see smaller pears such as 120/135cts. Red pears are supposed to be 1 to 2 sizes larger out of the PNW. Red pears have started with Starkrimsons and will transition into Red Anjou from November through May.

Bosc are down 63% out of the great Northwest or 1.38 million boxes. This variety was mostly affected, and markets will be much higher than in previous years. Bosc has slowly started with a potential end date last January/middle of February.

## EGGS:

New York prices are up 10 cents for larger sizes and up 5 cents for Medium. Regional and California prices are steady. The undertone is firm to higher. Demand is moderate to instances very good. Offerings are light to very light. Supplies are light to moderate. Market activity is moderate to active. Breaking stock offerings are light to very light for the light to fairly good demand. Light type fowl offerings are fully sufficient; processing schedules are normal.

## **BEEF:**

Cattle futures sold off hard to start early this week. With two short kill weeks ahead and holiday rib orders mostly filled, packers have less incentive to buy cattle at any cost. Most primals have traded near recent levels, but the next move is likely to be lower as we head towards year-end. Prices will be buoyed by back-to-back holiday production weeks, likely helping to side step any steep price declines. Ribs and tenders have the most downside risk, but packers will work hard to avoid sharp sell-offs in other primals to avoid overall lower cutouts. Analysts expect futures to trend lower ahead of the holidays in order to correct the market's current overbought position. Weather doesn't look disruptive to supply chains, as the 7-10 day National forecasts do not indicate any large or impactful weather events.

## **PORK:**

Hams continue to lend support to the cutout as export orders to Mexico are booked. There is little doubt Mexico is endeavoring to build inventory to avoid trade and supply chain issues once the incoming administration takes over. Bellies are steady, but moves higher are not out of the question as demand is solid in the short term. Trimmings, butts, ribs, and loins are called steady this week. Any uptick in the cutout will more than likely be caused by the ham primal.

## **TURKEY:**

Demand is light to instances moderate, best for deferred shipments. Frozen Grade A 8-16lb hens and 16-24lb tom offerings are mixed, mostly light to moderate. Frozen domestic 2024 production Grade A basted equivalent processor offering prices on a national basis for grade A 8-16lb hens are 73.00-110.00 FOB and 16-24lb toms 73.00-110.00 cents FOB for current shipments. No trading reported.

The fresh and frozen tom breast meat market is steady to firm. Demand is light to moderate. Fresh offerings are light to moderate, mostly light. Frozen offerings are very light to light. The fresh destrapped tenderloin market is generally steady, frozen steady to firm. Demand is light to moderate.

We are starting to see more detailed forecasts for 2025 from many analysts. In general, heifer retention and herd rebuilding are not expected to begin until at least late 2025 or 2026. Concerns about trade disputes with our neighbors and how that may constrict the supply of cattle even further have analysts predicting higher average cattle prices for the foreseeable future. The USDA is forecasting the average cattle price for 2025 to be \$188/CWT. We will finish up 2024 with an average cattle price of \$185/CWT. Beef demand remains the wildcard. We all understand beef demand has held up better than anyone expected in the face of high retail prices. For the time being, that is expected to continue.

## **CHICKEN:**

Prices are steady to mostly firm for wogs, steady for whole fryers. Supplies are in good balance for wogs, moderate for whole fryers. Demand is moderate approaching the weekend. Processing schedules are normal. Floor stocks are balanced. Market activity is moderate. In the parts structure, prices are trending at least steady for wings; steady for tenders, fronts, and bone-in breasts. Dark meat cuts are about steady. B/s breasts are steady to weak. Supplies are light to moderate for wings; moderate for tenders, fronts, and bone-in breasts. Dark meat cuts and b/s breasts are moderate to heavy with thighs, thigh meat, and jumbo size b/s breasts noted in the longer position. Demand is light to moderate. Market activity is slow to moderate.

Offerings light at best. The white trim markets are steady to firm. Demand moderate. Offerings very light to light. The market on 4-8lb breasts is mostly steady. Institutional sized breasts are generally steady. Demand light. Offerings on 4-8lb breasts are adequate to longer than desired and institutional sizes are light to moderate. Tom bulk parts market is steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings very light to light. The thigh meat and bone-in markets are steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings very light. The mechanically separated turkey market is steady to instances firm. Demand moderate. Offerings are very light to light. Trading slow. Processors starting to work holiday processing schedules this week through next week.



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