



Fresh Is Everything

Weekly Market Review February 21, 2025

Overview

We are hitting a good stride in production out of South Florida on several items, with good quality and availability across multiple commodities. **Mixed Hot Peppers**, particularly **Shishitos** and **Serrano**, remain the lightest in supply. Similar availability and quality are observed through Nogales and McAllen.



























Markets remain tight on **Yellow Squash** and **Eggplant**. The offshore **Table Grape** season has improved, with stable supply. **Melons** have also turned the corner, showing excellent volume and quality out of the ports as well as crossing through Nogales. **Pineapple** availability remains limited across all sizes.

After two weeks of limited **avocado** harvest in Mexico, the market is stronger across all sizes. Due to the current size curve, large fruit remains at a high premium with less availability. Current field conditions are resulting in a high percentage of grade 2 fruit out of Mexico, which is expected to continue. California's harvest also remains low after several days of rain over the past two weeks. Additionally, Mexico's expected crop volume for the remainder of the 2024-2025 crop season, anticipated to end around late June, has decreased by approximately 20%. However, AFM meetings will occur this week, during which updated crop estimates will be reviewed. More details will come next week, but for now, we can plan on the size curve continuing to trend small and the overall market remaining high-priced as weekly volumes for the season continue to track lighter than projections. Colombia's Principal Crop continues, with arrivals focused on the East Coast. The transition to the Traviesa Crop is estimated to begin in a few more weeks with smaller sizes and a lower dry matter percentage.

Morning temperatures in Yuma remain chilly, but the warmer weather is on the horizon. The cooler mornings are still contributing to icing as a potential problem for some commodities, but things are improving. We are still dealing with icing and blistering conditions that have been observed on **Cilantro**, **Arugula**, **Iceberg**, **Romaine**, and other **Leafy Greens** across the Yuma Valley. Despite the cold mornings, quality has improved for most other wet vegetable items. Even with the freeze/ice, the afternoons have warmed up, and crops are starting to see more growth.

Overall, supplies are looking stable. **Endive**, **Escarole**, **Cilantro**, **Fennel**, and **Spinach** remain escalated, with supply shortages driving market conditions. Spinach is still being closely watched and could potentially sustain frost damage. **Bok Choy** and **Leeks** remain at the extreme trigger level. **Red Cabbage** is still slightly escalated, though overall **Cabbage** supplies have improved. Once warmer weather and rain arrives next week, soil temperatures should continue to rise, and conditions should start to normalize. While it will still be a few weeks before things fully level out, better supplies and quality are on the horizon. While the cool weather is moving out, the warm weather will likely attract insects. This will be something that the fields will battle throughout March. Aphids seem to target **Arugula**, **Kale** and **Cilantro** so we will be monitoring those items closely. We will keep an eye on those items and all leafy greens and keep everyone updated on any issues.

MARKET ALERT

EXTREME	 Bok Choy	 Fennel	 Leeks			
ESCALATED	 Asparagus	 Avocados	 Cabbage Red	 Celery Organic	 Cilantro	 Endive & Escarole
	 Herbs	 Hot Peppers Shishito & Serrano	 Napa	 Parsley Italian & Curry	 Spinach	
WATCHLIST	 Arugula	 Banana	 Broccoli	 Cabbage Green	 Cauliflower	 French Beans
	 Iceberg	 Kale	 Limes	 Pineapple	 Romaine	 Snow & Sugar Snap Peas

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Avocados: ESCALATED A 56.4M pound harvest was reported for week 7, and 41.8M pounds were shipped to the U.S. Jalisco currently represents 9.2% of the volume sent to the U.S. from Mexico. Mexico's expected crop volume for the remainder of the 2024-2025 crop season, anticipated to end around late June, has decreased by approximately 20%. Small fruit is expected to continue making up the majority of the size curve for the duration of the season—aligning with the adjustment in crop volume. Due to the extended rainy season, there is a high percentage of grade 2 fruit. The Main Crop currently has a dry matter estimate of 31.9%. The USDA continues to restrict packhouse production hours industry-wide, contributing to limited packhouse capacities.

Pineapples: WATCHLIST Pineapples will remain tight and are not expected to improve until the end of February, with peak volume hitting in May. Flexibility in sizes will be necessary over the next 3-4 weeks.

BERRIES

Strawberries: In the eastern and midwestern regions, volumes remain steady; however, supplies are limited on the West Coast. Significant rainfall has caused supplies out of the west to be very limited. Due to the rainfall, production volumes are expected to fluctuate over the next few weeks. Once the weather warms and field conditions stabilize over the next few weeks, weekly production increases should resume, with March volumes expected to be higher than usual. The plants continue to display healthy, rich, dark green canopies and strong emerging flower sets, although production gaps may occur in the coming month due to cold temperatures stalling flower development or causing unseen damage. While rain presents short-term challenges, affecting fruit quality, disrupting harvest schedules, and creating unpredictable production patterns—it also offers long-term benefits by controlling mites, leaching excess soil salts, and promoting overall plant vigor. These factors will ultimately support strong fruit production through the spring and summer peak seasons. Daily temperatures out of Mexico have been high, with daytime readings in the high 80s to low 90s and nighttime lows in the mid-40s to low 50s, leading to uneven ripening. We are anticipating potential rain next week, and as production has passed its peak, volumes are expected to decline rapidly toward the end of February through early March. Overall fruit sizes are beginning to drop, as plants show signs of fatigue in the later stages of production. The weather this week out of Florida remains warm and sunny, echoing last week's conditions with daytime highs in the 80s and nighttime lows in the high 50s to low 60s. Forecasts indicate less than an inch of rain this Sunday. The sustained warm weather contributes to steady production improvements, with daily gains in both size and quality. Although peak production is still expected in February, recent challenges—including a hurricane, cold temperatures, rain, and freezing nights—have led to a stunted peak. Next week, slightly cooler temperatures are anticipated, with highs in the 70s and lows in the 40s, which could slow production in the subsequent week.

Bananas: WATCHLIST Banana imports remain light but will improve slowly over the coming weeks as more vessels arrive from the Tropics. A combination of cooler and poorer-than-desired weather in the tropics as well as logistic challenges impacted the global supply over the past three weeks. We could see minor pro-rates across the network but that should subside this week. Overall, banana quality has been good despite being in the winter cycle. We are advising distributors and customers to keep a close eye on ripeness; there may be some need to store fruit in warmer locations or wrap fruit. With inventories being light, we see higher turns at the port and ripening centers; some of the fruit may not reach optimum color prior to arrival.

Table Grapes: Stable supply is available on whites, reds, globes and black varieties, and we hit a stable production cycle on grapes from Peru and Chile. Quality is good.

Despite these potential setbacks, pack counts are consistently ranging from 12 to 18 per case, with the fruit maintaining good firmness, color, and flavor, although growers are beginning to observe issues such as over ripeness, soft skin, botrytis, and bruising.

Blackberries: The quality of blackberries remains strong, with medium to large sizes, an attractive sheen, predominantly black color, and good firmness. However, some issues are being observed, including red cell regression, attached calyx, and occasional soft, leaking fruit. Overall volume is steady at a consistent peak through the end of July, although we anticipate a slight decrease in production toward the end of February.

Raspberries: The raspberries exhibit a robust red color with strong firmness, with most berries being medium-sized and occasional larger ones are present. While there is some overripe and crumbled fruit, crews are actively ensuring that these do not make it into the packs. Production volumes remain at a consistent peak through the end of April, although a slight decline is anticipated toward the end of February. Meanwhile, organic production is performing exceptionally well, and as we enter peak production, we expect favorable availability through March.

Blueberries: Overall supplies remain steady. Warm temperatures (highs in the 70s-80s, lows in the mid-40s) out of Mexico are driving a rapid increase in conventional blueberry production, with volume expected to grow week-over-week until a small peak in March. A steady supply is anticipated through the remainder of the year. Overall, the quality remains excellent. Some redberries, soft/leaking fruit, and shriveling are present due to a frost event in late December-early January. Peru has finished production for the season. High temperatures (daytime 80s-90s, nighttime mid-50s) out of Chile have significantly reduced current and future production. Quality remains good. Chile is in its peak domestic shipping period for February, but open market availability will decline sharply after February due to heat-related supply drops. Both organic and conventional blueberries from Chile are expected to be available through March.

CITRUS

Oranges: Rain in the Central Valley last week slowed orange harvests, but fruit quality from California remains excellent with very good supplies. Pricing on smaller sizes, 113's and 138's, is firming up as the size structure is switching, but overall market has stabilized.

Lemons: Good supplies and very good quality out of all growing areas in California.

Imports/Specialties: California Mandarins, Grapefruit, Cara-Cara, and Blood Oranges are seeing very good quality.

Limes: WATCHLIST The market is steady as production in Mexico has transitioned to the new crop. Rain in the growing areas of Mexico over the past few weeks has led to increased presence of oil spots and styler-end breakdown, which generally appears after repack/sorting while the fruit is in transit. Sizing is running heavier to smaller sizing, which we expect to see throughout the remainder of Q1 as large sizes will be scarce. Delays at the border are impacting trucks crossing into the US from Mexico so loading delays are expected.

WEST COAST LETTUCE

Iceberg: WATCHLIST Lettuce supplies and quality look good. Weights are still expected to be a bit lighter than normal due to the blistering and peeling we are seeing from the frost, but overall things are improving.

Iceberg VA: Quality and supplies look good.

Green and Red Leaf: Overall quality and supplies look good.

Romaine, Romaine Hearts: WATCHLIST Romaine and Romaine heart supplies are okay. For Romaine, we are starting to see a bit more maturity, but weight may still be lighter than usual due to the issues from the frost. We have seen some clear epidermal peel, blistering and weak tips. Heart material is slowly increasing and allowing for lighter greens and yellows to be seen in the finished product. Supplies are steady and should start to improve as soon as we get some consistent warm weather.

Romaine VA: Quality and supplies are good.

EASTERN AND WESTERN VEGETABLES

Green Bell Pepper: Good supply available in Nogales and South Florida. Quality is mostly good.

Color Bell Pepper: Good supply available in Nogales and South Florida. Quality 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: Jalapeño, Caribes, and Poblano were good this week. Shishitos and Serrano Pepper are the shortest this week.

Eggplant: WATCHLIST Lighter supply and quality is mixed from Mexico; domestic supply is limited.

Slicer Cucumbers: Good supply crossing through Nogales and McAllen as well as Honduras. Quality is good.

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

Pickles: Lighter supply available crossing through Nogales. Quality is outstanding.

Green Beans: Lighter supply available and quality is mixed crossing through Nogales as well as loading in Florida.

French Beans: WATCHLIST Steady supply of French beans out of Guatemala, although container delays persist. Limited supply of French beans out of Mexico due to weather.

Zucchini/Yellow Squash: WATCHLIST Good volume and quality available shipping from all locations on Italian; markets are shorter on yellow.

MELONS

We have finally moved into fields not impacted by Tropical Storm Sara back in November, so more normal yields are being experienced on both cantaloupe and honeydew. After two months of record pricing levels, markets have started to settle as production becomes more normalized for this time of the year.

Cantaloupe: As first cycle production in Honduras begins to wind down, we will see a brief overlap next week with only Guatemala working by the first week of March. Despite the "wind down" we are seeing good supply available on 9's and 12's. We will see less overall volume in coming weeks unlike previous season, which could put upward pressure on markets soon. We are seeing more production from the Zacapa region of Guatemala is providing excellent results. Not only is premium sizing being realized but, the fruit has excellent color and averaging 13-15%.

Watermelon: Stable supply available and demand is light. Fruit is being harvested from Central Mexico as well as Mexico.

Honeydew: Honeydew supply, especially from Honduras, continues with higher numbers this week; the surplus should last about another week before returning to more normal levels. Similar to the cantaloupe, country of origin is impacting sizing. Honduran fruit has been peaking on larger fruit (5/5Js) while Guatemalan fruit has been seeing more smaller fruit (6/8s). Overall quality has been clean with brix level primarily hitting a range of 11-13%.

HERBS

ESCALATED Basil, Sage, and Tarragon supplies remain extremely limited, while other herbs also face constraints. Cooler temperatures and high winds continue to impact quality and slow plant growth. However, with temperatures expected to be warm in the coming weeks, conditions should improve, helping to alleviate these challenges. We are seeing limited supplies on Arugula and Cilantro due to frost damage. It is impacting the growth, and we are seeing small, uneven bunches along with purple stems and mechanical issues. Prorating is occurring with some growers.

HERB	SUPPLY	QUALITY	COUNTRY OF ORIGIN
Arugula	Limited	Marginal	USA
Basil	Very Limited	Marginal	USA/MEX
Opal Basil	Very Limited	Marginal	USA
Thai Basil	Very Limited	Marginal	USA/MEX
Bay Leaves	Steady	Steady	USA/COL
Chervil	Limited	Limited	USA
Chives	Steady	Steady	MEX
Cilantro	Limited	Marginal	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	Very Limited	Marginal	USA
Savory	Steady	Limited	USA
Sorrel	Steady	Steady	USA
Tarragon	Steady	Steady	MEX
Thyme	Very Limited	Marginal	USA
Lavender	Steady	Steady	USA
Lemon Thyme	Steady	Steady	USA
Lime Leaves	Steady	Steady	USA

MIXED VEGETABLES

Artichokes: Supplies and Quality are both good.

Asparagus: ESCALATED Caborca/San Luis volume continues to improve. This trend should continue through the end of March. Peruvian volume is very low due to seasonality. Markets are less active with Valentine's ads finished.

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

Broccoli/Broccoli Crowns: Quality and supplies look good. Floret Mini's are still tight, and some growers are still short on those.

Broccolini and Sweet Baby Broccoli: WATCHLIST Quality and supplies look okay but some growers are extremely light on supplies. Expect to be held to averages in some markets.

Brussels Sprouts: Quality and supplies look good.

Carrots: (JUMBOS, MEDIUMS and CELLOS) The Desert growing regions have started with good supplies and very good quality. Expect steady supplies through the end of the desert season which will run into late April or early May.

Cauliflower: WATCHLIST Supplies, and quality are good. Weaker texture is still being reported and there is some mechanical damage and occasional bruising. Shelf life is showing overall good quality.

Celery: Quality and supplies are improving. There has been some weak texture reported causing some mechanical damage. Growers are covering contract business, but some growers are short 30ct and have been subbing 24ct. To ensure contracts are covered. Organic Celery is at the Extreme Trigger due to light supplies.

Corn: Stable supply and good quality available this week out of Mexico and Florida.

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

Kale: WATCHLIST Supplies have improved, and quality is good, but we are adding it to the watchlist due to the possibility of insect pressure.

Leeks: EXTREME Leeks are very tight right now and some growers are holding to averages. The market remains escalated.

Garlic: California Garlic is showing very good quality with lighter supplies. Demand is good.

Ginger: Supplies and market are steady.

Green Cabbage: WATCHLIST Supplies and quality look good.

Green Onions: Supplies and quality look good.

Mushrooms: Supply stable and quality is good.

Napa Cabbage: ESCALATED Quality and supplies are improving but there is some insect pressure, and the cooler weather has really slowed down the growth.

Parsley (Curly, Italian): ESCALATED Supplies and quality look good.

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 still escalated in some markets. Quality is good but supplies are still light with some growers. The market remains very active.

Spinach: ESCALATED Supplies and quality are good. We have still seen some reports of weak texture, discoloration and wilting.

Snow Peas and Sugar Snaps: WATCHLIST Market conditions are trending downward. Guatemalan snow peas and sugar snaps are experiencing good production, although high humidity in the growing regions contributes to quality issues. Production of both snow peas and sugar snaps in Mexico remains steady. Meanwhile, market conditions are trending downward.

ONIONS:

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 cast 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.

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.

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.

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 and Roma Tomatoes: Harvesting is now in full swing but may slow as a cooler weather pattern remains in place this week. We do expect to see markets remain stable. Quality is excellent.

Snacking Tomatoes (Cherry, Grape and Medley): Good supply and strong quality available.

OTHER FRUIT:

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,

DAIRY:

Dairy prices were generally steady to lower across the major dairy exporters this week (with the exception of U.S. cheese). There was very little for new dairy data. The Trump administration has been talking about "reciprocal" tariffs which means charging the same tariffs that the U.S. faces when exporting to other countries. If the EU has an 1,896/MT tariff on U.S. butter, then the U.S. will charge an 1,896/MT tariff on imports of EU but ter. It could make things complicated for a lot of companies. We also got confirmation this week that there has been another spillover event from wild birds to dairy cows, this time in Nevada with the cows being infected by a slightly different version of the virus than what has been circulating in the dairy industry.

MEXICO

Round Tomatoes and Roma Tomatoes: Stable supply and good quality crossing through Nogales and McAllen. Quality has been good.

Snacking Tomatoes (Cherry, Grape and Medley): Steady supply available and Quality is good.

Tomato on the Vine: Steady volume available this week.

Pomegranate: Limited availability.

Asian Pears: Peaking in volume. Quality is outstanding.

Cherries: Offshore supplies are steady loading out of Philadelphia.

Tree Fruit: Improving supply on Offshore Peaches, Plums and Nectarines available.

Kiwi Fruit: Supplies fair out of California as well as offshore landing on the east coast.

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

Quince: Limited supply available this week.

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. 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:

National FOB shell egg weighted average prices are steady to higher. The undertone is generally higher. Retail demand ranges moderate to good, while reported as light to moderate for food service movement. Offerings are very light to light. Supplies are very light to moderate. Market activity is active. California weighted average delivered prices are higher, although lightly tested. The undertone is higher. Demand into retail and food service channels is light to moderate. Offerings are very light to light. Supplies are light to moderate. Market activity is moderate to active.

See following page for Bird Flu impact.

BIRD FLU CONTINUES TO IMPACT THE U.S. SHELL EGG MARKET: A 2025 OUTLOOK

The U.S. shell egg market is starting the year under the shadow of a persistent challenge that has plagued the industry for nearly three years—bird flu. As of early January 2025, the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) continues to disrupt production and supply, sending egg prices soaring and straining the supply chain. Despite expectations that the market might stabilize, new outbreaks have intensified the situation, further compounding difficulties in the already tight egg market.

A Continued Strain on the Bird Flu Egg Market

Continued export interest and surfacing Easter demand will keep hams moving higher. (As a sidebar pork exports were up 4% in 2024 to 7.1 billion pounds). Bellies and ribs are seeing an uptick in freezer demand while loins and butts are called steady. Pork is enjoying good retail feature activity as ad writers look for less expensive items that are budget friendly. Overall, the harvest is coming in about 5% lower than expected and that is giving buoyancy to the pork cutout. This production shortfall is particularly apparent in belly prices which are up 30% YOY.

The Impact of Bird Flu on Egg Production

On the supply side, the bird flu continues to ravage production. Since mid-October 2024, the U.S. has lost an estimated 26 million layers due to the virus, with approximately 17 million layers lost by early December. This has driven the national layer population to around 293 million, a significant decline from the 310 million layers at the beginning of December 2024. This reduction in the flock represents the lowest layer count since December 2015, further straining an already tight supply. As the U.S. population has grown significantly since 2015—

from 324 million to 343 million—the reduced layer count is having an even greater impact on the supply chain, making it more difficult for producers to meet the demands of a larger consumer base. The HPAI outbreak has disproportionately affected farms serving the retail market, which has amplified the pressure on shell egg prices. By mid-January, the Midwest large egg price hit a record high of \$6.45 per dozen, a staggering 59.8% increase since the price rally began.

Looking Ahead: The Future of the Bird Flu Egg Market

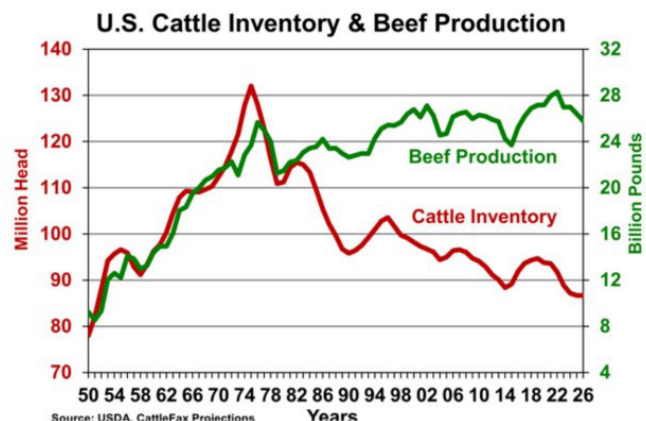
As we approach the three-year mark since the first significant HPAI outbreak in the U.S., the bird flu egg market remains fragile. The ongoing challenges highlight just how vulnerable the supply chain is to such sustained pressure. Tight supplies and elevated prices have become the norm, and stakeholders across the value chain—from producers to retailers—are grappling with the consequences of the outbreak. For the U.S. shell egg market, the bird flu continues to be a dominant force, influencing everything from production levels to prices and demand. While stakeholders throughout the value chain long for stabilization, the unpredictable nature of avian influenza means the market will continue to face challenges well into 2025. As producers, retailers, and consumers adapt to this new reality, understanding the ongoing impacts of bird flu on the egg market will be key in navigating the complexities of the coming months.

BEEF:

Negative \$187 per head was the estimated beef packer margin yesterday. Steady to weaker is the call this week, as boxed beef demand remains seasonably weak. Even with production curtailed, trading has been slow. Steady to \$1 lower is the expected trade on cattle this week. Until recently, cattle prices and futures prices had been on a two-month rally, and both markets continue to correct. Rounds will see support as grinding materials, so further downside is limited. Grind will find a level and steady out, as it remains the go-to affordable beef item. Middles are the most vulnerable to depreciation until Spring grilling demand surfaces in the weeks ahead.

More Beef Production with Fewer Cattle

This chart illustrates the impact of steadily increasing cattle weights on beef production over time.



PORK:

Easter ham and export demand continue to push ham pricing higher. Bellies are mostly steady so far this week. The bullishness in the pork complex has both demand and supply components. On the demand side, the noted ham demand and solid retail featuring are supporting pricing. On the supply side, the harvest remains below expectations. The divergence in expected and actual hog availability has many reasons, but the two main drivers are the resurgence of PRRS (high mortality) and inaccurate industry hog supply forecasts. Butts will continue to see export interest driven by boneless butt demand from Korea. Hams are expected to ship into Mexico before the next tariff deadline of March 1st. Trim is steady to firm on reduced production.

CHICKEN:

Domestic Market Highlights

Prices are steady for wogs and whole fryers. Supplies are at least sufficient for most sizes of wogs, moderate for whole fryers. Demand is moderate approaching the weekend. Processing schedules are normal. Floor stocks are in good balance. Market activity is slow to moderate. In the parts structure, prices are trending firm tenders and b/s breasts. steady to firm for fronts, and bone-in breasts.

Dark meat cuts and wings are steady to weak. Supplies are tight to short for b/s breasts with jumbo and medium sizes in the best position; light to moderate for tenders and moderate for fronts, dark meat cuts and bone-in breasts. Wings are available and slow to clear. Demand is light to moderate. Market activity is moderate.

Export Market Highlights.

Export demand is moderate to active.

TURKEY:

Domestic Market Highlights

The market on frozen 8-16 lb. hens and 16-24 lb. toms is steady to firm. Demand on frozen Grade A 8-16 lb. hens and 16-24 lb. toms is moderate. Offerings light to moderate, mostly light. Frozen basted equivalent 8-16 lb. hens offered at 93-112 and 16-24 lb. toms 93-112 cents FOB for current deliveries. Trading slow for current shipments, moderately heavy for deferred. Frozen Grade A 8-16 lb. hens 97 fob current, frozen Grade A 8-16 lb. hens and 16-24 lb. toms 101-107 cents fob April-May shipments. Some Grade A fresh hock-lock canner pack hens traded at 110-115 cent fob current. The market on fresh and frozen tom breast meat is steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings short to light. The destrapped tenderloin market is steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings short to light. The market on white trims is steady to firm.

Demand moderate. Offerings light at best. The consumer sized breast market is mostly steady. Demand light. Offerings moderate. Institutional sized breast market is steady. Demand and offerings light to moderate. The market on hen and tom parts is steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings short to light. The thigh meat market is steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings short of needs. Hearts, livers and gizzards steady. Demand light to moderate. Offerings light. Mechanically separated turkey is steady to firm. Demand moderate. Offerings very light to light. Trading slow. The cold weather is resulting in reduced processing schedules for some resulting in delayed deliveries.

Export Market Highlights.

No trading reported. Market steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings short of needs to very light.



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