



Fresh Is Everything

Weekly Market Review March 7, 2025

Overview

President Trump has now confirmed that tariffs under the USMCA (United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement), including produce, will not take effect until April 2nd. With that, we will continue to see strong production out of South Florida on several items, with good quality and availability across multiple commodities.

Mixed Hot Peppers, particularly Caribes, were the lightest in supply. Similar availability and quality are observed through Nogales and McAllen. Markets are firmer today on **Roma tomatoes, yellow squash and green bell peppers**. We will see this continue as transition in the west from Sinaloa to Sonora ramps up on several spring items.

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.

Banana and Pineapple availability remains limited; shippers are asking we continue to be flexible in pineapple sizes. Industry supply remains limited, and the market is tightening as supply stabilizes.

Avocado supply is tighter this week due to lighter harvests in Mexico, leading to continued high prices and limited availability. Large fruit remains at a premium, while smaller fruit is being retained in Mexico to meet increased domestic demand for Lent. The market continues to experience a high percentage of grade 2 fruit from Mexico, a trend expected to persist. Meanwhile, California's supply is projected to increase despite recent weather-related reductions in harvest volumes. Overall, industry supply is expected to remain limited, with elevated prices anticipated in the near term. Smaller-sized fruit is expected to dominate the size curve for the remainder of the season, aligning with the adjusted crop volume. An extended rainy season has resulted in a higher proportion of grade 2 fruit,

further impacting overall availability. USDA-imposed restrictions at the packhouse continue to limit industry-wide packing capacity, adding pressure to supply. Meanwhile, the U.S. market will face increased competition from Mexico, where domestic demand is rising during Lent (March 5 – April 20). Additionally, tariffs went into effect for Mexican avocados imported into the U.S. on Tuesday, 3/4/25. There are many unknowns in this unprecedented avocado market; we will work with growers and the information at hand to remain ready to pivot as needed to continue offering a secure supply.

Unfortunately, the warm weather did not continue in the desert region. We have a cold front that has moved in and will once again give us those chilly mornings. We are also seeing high wind gusts. The combination of those 2 things, along with the potential insect pressure, could cause some issues as we get into March.

Overall supplies are looking good, but now we have to keep an eye on the temperatures and see how the cold mornings will once again affect all the commodities. We know that bugs will be a potential issue, especially on **Cilantro** and **Kale**, so we will keep a close eye on that. Overall, supplies are looking stable. **Broccoli** has been added to the alert list since some growers have increased the price due to very limited supplies. **Endive, Escarole, Cilantro, and Spinach** remain escalated, with supply shortages driving market conditions. **Bok Choy, Fennel and Leeks** remain at the extreme trigger level. **Red Cabbage** is still slightly escalated, though overall **Cabbage** supplies continue to improve.

The cool weather could once again cause epidermal peel and frost damage, while the warm weather in the afternoons will likely attract insects. Insects will be something that the fields will battle throughout March. Aphids are likely 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

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| MARKET ALERT | EXTREME | | | | | | | | | |
| | ESCALATED | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| WATCHLIST | | | | | | | | | | |
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FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Avocados: ESCALATED In this unprecedented avocado market, there are many unknowns; while we work with the information at hand, we remain ready to pivot as needed to continue offering a secure supply. Last week, volume closed at a steady 59M pounds. However, this week is tracking much lighter - harvest is down 25%. Tariffs will certainly result in reduced demand, so coming in under the projected 60M pounds is ideal. Out of California, rain is forecast for late this week & next, which will limit harvest volumes. Volumes are expected to ramp up for week 12 production. The crop estimate remains set at 355M pounds for the season, like last season, which closed at 346M pounds. April will bring larger, more consistent volumes that are expected to last into September. The size curve will favor 48s and smaller for the first few months, with additional larger sizing available in the late season. The dry matter is roughly 33% for Mexican fruit.

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 several weeks.

BERRIES

Strawberries: Strawberry production across key growing regions faced varied challenges due to weather conditions contributing to a decline of fruit out of the west. Rainfall in Santa Maria has hindered harvests this week. Growers are seeing quality fruit emerge, though smaller sizes and some water-related damage persist. Production is expected to steadily improve as weather conditions stabilize, with March projected to bring above normal volumes. We will continue to see limited fruit out of the west through the remainder of the week. In Mexico, high temperatures and wide temperature swings are causing uneven ripening, and overall production is in a steady decline as the season nears its end. Smaller growers have already ceased operations, and fruit size is trending smaller. Quality concerns, particularly bruising and soft skin, remain a focus for shipments arriving out of Mexico. Florida has experienced fluctuating temperatures with light rain, but no significant damage has been reported. Cooler weather is expected to slow production in the short term but may improve fruit quality in the long run. Peak production is still anticipated in early March, though there is a risk of rain damage if heavier rainfall occurs. Across all regions, growers remain proactive in managing quality concerns and adjusting harvesting strategies to optimize supply and maintain fruit integrity. In Mexico, high temperatures and fluctuating conditions are causing uneven ripening, and overall production is steadily declining as the season nears its end. Some smaller growers have already ceased operations, and fruit size is trending smaller. Quality concerns, such as bruising and soft skin, remain a key focus for shipments. Additionally, Mexico's supply was impacted by newly imposed tariffs further contributing to market constraints and potential pricing fluctuations. This development adds to the existing supply challenges, reinforcing the need for close monitoring of availability and market conditions in the coming weeks.

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.

Meanwhile, Florida has experienced fluctuating temperatures and light rain, though no significant damage has been reported. Cooler weather may slow production in the short term but is expected to enhance fruit quality in the long run. Peak production remains on track for early March, though the risk of rain damage remains if heavier rainfall occurs. Across all regions, growers are proactively managing quality concerns and adjusting harvesting strategies to optimize supply and maintain fruit integrity.

Blackberries: Blackberry quality remains strong, with medium to large sizing, good sheen, and firm fruit. However, some challenges persist, including red cell regression, attached calyx, and occasional soft or leaking berries. Volume is holding steady at peak levels through July, though a slight decline is expected toward the end of February. Organic production is tapering off earlier than anticipated as the season nears its conclusion.

BERRIES - continued

Raspberries: Raspberry quality remains strong, with vibrant red color, good firmness, and mostly medium-sized fruit, with some larger berries mixed in. While some overripe and crumbled fruit is present, crews are diligently working to exclude them from packs. Volume is expected to remain at a consistent peak through April, with a slight decline anticipated toward the end of February. Organic production is performing well, with steady availability expected as we move into peak production, ensuring decent supply through March.

Blueberries: In Mexico, warm temperatures persist, with conventional production at its peak, expected to last through mid-April before steadily declining into May. Organic production has concluded for the season, with a supply gap anticipated until August. Quality remains excellent, though some redberries,

soft fruit, and shriveling are being observed. Chile is wrapping up its season earlier than expected due to high heat and rain events, though arriving fruit has shown excellent quality, size, and color. Conventional shipments will continue through March, with limited open-market availability due to reduced Chilean estimates. Organic shipments will also remain consistent through March. Oxnard is seeing favorable weather, and organic blueberry production is ramping up with excellent size, flavor, and bloom. Volume is increasing quickly, with peak production expected in late March. Florida is set to begin conventional blueberry production in the second week of March, though recent cool and wet weather on the Mid-East Coast has slightly reduced early-season estimates. Despite this, the region is expected to start strong, with good quality and solid Jumbo berry volume.

CITRUS

Oranges: 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 the overall market is stable.

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: ESCALATED ON SOME SIZES The Lime market is slightly stronger with pricing on some of the smaller sizes escalated. Current demand has increased due to much better weather across the country. We continue to see presence of oil spots and styler-end breakdown from the rains a few weeks ago, 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.

WEST COAST LETTUCE

Iceberg: WATCHLIST Lettuce supplies and quality look good. Weights have improved but we are already seeing some premature pinking with the stress of the new hot temperatures. We have also had some reports of internal burn.

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 good. Supplies are steady and are improving with the warmer weather. Organic Romaine Hearts are slightly escalated due to limited supplies from the previous frost damage.

Romaine VA: Quality and supplies are good.

EASTERN AND WESTERN VEGETABLES

Green Bell Pepper: Lighter supply available in Nogals and South Florida. Quality is mostly good.

Color Bell Pepper: Good supply available in Nogals 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. Caribes are the shortest this week.

Eggplant: WATCHLIST Lighter domestic supply and quality is mixed. Good supply and excellent quality out of Mexico this week.

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: Excellent supply available, and quality is good crossing through Nogales as well as loading in Florida.

French Beans: WATCHLIST As growers continue to face vessel delays, shortages of certain pack sizes are expected. While quality and condition vary, they remain generally good. Prices remain stable with no significant changes at this time. In Mexico, supply is limited due to adverse weather conditions, impacting overall availability.

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

HERBS

ESCALATED Basil quality and supply have improved, while imported chervil remains limited. Tarragon continues to face supply challenges due to lower-than-normal yields from Colombia and Mexico, with availability expected to remain limited for the next several weeks. However, overall herb conditions are projected to improve within the next two to three weeks as temperatures stabilize. Arugula and Cilantro are also in limited supply due to frost damage, resulting in small, uneven bunches, purple stems, and mechanical issues. Some growers are implementing prorating because of these challenges.

| 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 |

MELONS

Stable supplies from Guatemala, cantaloupe pricing continues to settle as do the honeydew. We may see some lighter volume later in the month as easter demand increases at retail.

Cantaloupe: Cantaloupe arrivals continue to show optimum quality characteristics with very nice higher color fruit. Sizing will be peaking on reg 9s followed by jumbos then 12s. With increased supplies there should be a good percentage of all sizes to work with. Internally brix levels are maintaining a solid range of 13-15% with an excellent flavor profile.

Watermelon: Seedless watermelons continue to move higher with less fruit from both Guatemala and Mexico over the past two weeks. Demand is finally surpassing supply, which is pushing the market close to the \$30 level on cartons and \$300 on bins with limited arrivals expected.

Honeydew: Honeydew production from Honduras continued to peak over the past week but will see a rapid drop from new arrivals over the next seven days as they begin to gap. Sizing has been peaking on 5/6s which is allowing for all orders to be covered without issue. Some Honduran fruit has had some age on it from being in storage but is quickly being rotated out. We expect to see increased numbers begin by this coming Friday, which is highly anticipated from what has been in the market for the past few weeks. Brix levels are expected to be mostly in the 12-14% range based off post-harvest QC reports.

MIXED VEGETABLES

Artichokes: Supplies and Quality are both good.

Asparagus: **ESCALATED** Mexican production remains strong, as the Peruvian season has now concluded, and reporting has ceased. However, with new tariffs now in place, prices are expected to rise. Quality remains high, with consistent sizing, particularly in large and jumbo fruit.

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.

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

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 are very good, but we have had some reports of weaker texture causing mechanical damage.

Celery: Quality and supplies are looking good. Organic Celery is triggered 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: Supplies have improved, and quality is good, 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 but there have been some initial reports of light supplies going into next week for some markets.

Mushrooms: Supply stable and quality is good.

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

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 seen some reports of weak texture, discoloration, wilting and there have been some initial reports of some insect damage.

Snow Peas and Sugar Snaps: **WATCHLIST** Supplies from Guatemala remain strong and steady, though vessel delays may impact availability. Prices have decreased, reflecting current market conditions. Snows and Sugar snaps Mexican production is steady.

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.

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 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.

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 firm up a touch this week. Quality is excellent.

Snacking Tomatoes (Cherry, Grape and Medley): Lighter supply and higher demand has put upward pressure on FOB pricing this week. Quality remains good.

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,

MEXICO

Round 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.

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 firm up a touch this week. Quality is excellent.

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.

DAIRY:

Nearly all dairy prices across all the major markets were down during the first half of the week, but have bounced a little mid-week. I think global demand is still a bit soft, and domestic demand in the U.S. doesn't feel great either (at least on cheese). While the data this week shows the recovery in U.S. milk production is still on track, recent production data in Europe continues to weaken but it isn't clear how bad (or decent?) things are due to some data issues with Germany and Italy. Only one person knows when or if the U.S. will be putting additional tariffs in place, and I'm not even sure he knows. I've talked about it before, but the retaliatory tariffs in 2018 didn't have much of an impact on the U.S. dairy markets, maybe they won't in 2025 either.

EGGS:

National FOB shell egg weighted average prices are steady to mostly sharply lower. The undertone is sharply lower. Demand is light to instances moderate into retail and loose egg channels. Offerings are light to moderate. Supplies are mixed, generally moderate. Market activity is moderate to slow. California weighted average delivered prices are steady to sharply lower with only Large tested. The undertone is sharply lower. Retail and food service demand is light to instances moderate for the light to moderate offerings. Supplies are light to moderate. Market activity is slow to moderate.

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

The bird flu crisis has now entered its fifth consecutive week of price increases. A combination of strong retail demand and supply constraints has kept prices elevated. Typically, January sees a slowdown in egg sales as the post-holiday baking season winds down. However, this year has bucked that trend, with retailers reporting consistent, and at times heightened, order volumes. Despite record-breaking retail prices, which have stayed around \$4.00-\$4.50 per dozen, consumer purchasing activity remains strong, possibly due to the continued effects of broader grocery inflation.

These high prices have not dampened demand as expected. Retailers have kept their shelf prices steady, which has helped maintain consumer purchasing power despite the increase in egg costs. At the same time, disruptions from Winter Storms Blair and Cora have led to stockpiling and replenishment needs, causing logistical challenges like power outages and transportation delays. This has added another layer of pressure to an already constrained supply chain.

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:

Cattle weights remain very heavy compared to last year and the 5-year average. Steer and heifer dressed weights are 40 and 45 pounds heavier respectively YOY. The extra heavy cattle is equivalent to adding another 28k head to the weekly harvest. Cattle futures plummeted Tuesday morning on tariff implementation but moved sharply higher to finish the day up about 1%. Both cattle and hog futures traded in wide ranges. The tariffs are impacting many agricultural commodities beyond beef, pork, corn, and soy. Dairy, wheat, and cotton are also being impacted. 566k head was the harvest last week, and similar-sized harvests are expected through March. Persistent negative packer margins and slow beef demand will likely keep a lid on cattle prices. This week to date, boxed prices have been mostly steady as market participants assess the impacts of the recently enacted tariffs and pending retaliatory tariffs in the protein markets. We expect boxed beef demand to increase as buyers of Canadian and Mexican products source product domestically. This shift in demand may increase prices for domestically produced beef. Ultimately, consumers will decide where prices go. Consumer confidence fell sharply last month as inflation eroded their purchasing power. Many analysts expect consumers to increase their budgetary vigilance amid increasing economic uncertainty.

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 to good, best for deferred shipments. Offerings mostly light. Frozen basted equivalent 8-16 lb. hens offered at 99.00-114 and 16-24 lb. toms 99.00-114 cents FOB for current deliveries. No trading reported for current shipments, moderately heavy for deferred. Open priced frozen basted equivalent Grade A 8-16 lb. hens and 16-24 lb. toms 2025 production traded with price ceilings of 111 cents Fob June deliveries. 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.

PORK:

Early this week, hog futures moved lower as investors exited riskier assets. By Tuesday, they had stabilized and finished the day down 1.15%. Hog prices were off slightly on Tuesday, but the longer-term seasonal trend is expected to play out this year with higher prices through the spring and into early summer. Easter demand for hams will give support to this primal as export buyers assess implications of the tariffs. Bellies are called steady but will see support based on historically low freezer inventories. Steady is the call on butts, loins, trim, and ribs in the short term.

CHICKEN:

Prices are steady to firm for WOGS with three-pound heavier sizes well cleared well; steady for whole fryers. Supplies are moderate for whole fryers; light to moderate for WOGS. Demand is moderate for mid-week trading. Processing schedules are normal. Floor stocks are moderate. Market activity is moderate to active. In the parts structure, prices are trending firm for b/s breasts; steady to firm for tenders, fronts, bone-in breasts and dark meat cuts; wings are weak with discounting noted. Supplies of b/s breasts are tight to short; light to moderate for tenders, fronts, dark meat cuts and bone-in breasts. Wings are ample. Demand is moderate to good. Market activity is moderate.

The market on white trims is steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings short to light. Further processed demand light to moderate. The consumer sized breast market is steady. Demand and offerings light to 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 to light. Hearts, livers and gizzards steady. Demand light to moderate. Offerings light. Mechanically separated turkey is steady to firm. Demand moderate to good. Offerings very light to light. Trading slow.

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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