Poultry
Whole birds are up. Jumbo breasts were up. Medium and small breasts were steady. Wings were steady but with very strong demand. Jumbo tenders were up. The back half of the bird was up based on increased export demand.

Pork
Butts saw a late increase in demand last week from foodservice and retail. Expect this market to move up. Retailers are also showing more interest in loins for ads in March, so expect the market to move higher. As warmer weather approaches, demand for ribs continues to grow with tight supplies. Bellies and hams are both on the rise with lower harvest numbers.

Grains / Oil
Soybean oil and Canola moved higher again last week as stocks continue to be tight. Palm oil prices moved higher as the Chinese traders are back from the Chinese New Year holiday. Expect more increases for commodity soy, Canola, margarines, and mayonnaise.

Dairy
The cheese markets shifted downward week over week. The butter market increased week over week; however, has since begun to decline. All shell egg sizes have increased by $0.05/dz over the past week with the exception for smalls who saw no change.

Seafood
The jumbo sized farmed raised whites and tiger shrimp in all forms are a great value now compared to the other sizes. They are ideal to be featured in the menus for the Lenten period. Groundfish imports slowed down following port delays and closures in China. Domestic Catfish production was shut down by winter weather.

Beef
Disruptive winter storms across the South constricted the supply chain, and packers were able to increase pricing on most items. Feeder and ranchers were not as fortunate, as slow kills allowed bids to hold steady and not run side by side with the case prices. Look for higher cost through March 8th deliveries.

Hot News

Vegetable Oil
Heads up on continuously higher vegetable oil markets, which are moving shortenings, oils, mayo's and margarines higher again this week.

Chicken Wings
Wing demand continues to be high while availability is scarce, and prices continue to rise. Demand is expected to continue through March as wings continue to be a hot commodity in both food service and retail.
Asparagus
Market is mostly steady with good supplies coming from Mexico. Quality is good to very good.

Avocados
Mexico: Strong volume, particularly on the smaller sizes. Size curve peaking on 48’s, 60’s and 70’s. Excellent supplies of #2’s. Field prices are steady to stronger. California: Season has officially started. Limited quantities and sizes available for the next couple of weeks as it is still early in the season. The crop will be smaller this year due to lack of rain as well as recent winds. Growers are reporting small sizes even on young trees. Expect the size curve to be heavy on 60s and smaller.

Green Beans
Florida bean supply is good, quality is good, and the market is lower. Mexico volume is moderate and should remain steady all week.

Carrots
No major quality concerns, thanks to pleasant weather down south. Supplies have improved for now on snack pack carrots.

Mixed Berries-Alert
Raspberries and Blackberries: The market remains challenged as we finish February and head into March. Blueberries are more active this week as supplies have started to be reduced. There is added concern due to rains out of Chile that supplies in the coming weeks could become more challenging.

Strawberries
The market on strawberries has been helped by slower demand. CA is starting to see some stronger numbers out of Oxnard and Santa Maria. Florida and Mexico continue to have product but have been challenged by weather events in their regions. If all demand were to turn back on, harvest would be lower than needed out of all growing regions.

Celery
The market on commodity celery has calmed with better supplies now being seen in CA, MX, and FL. Very good quality out of Oxnard and Yuma both, with lookout for light insect damage.

Lemons / Limes/Oranges
Lemons- Market is steady with good supply. Oranges- Demand is slow. Supplies are good. The size is increasing making smaller sizes less abundant. Quality is good with color and sugar improving weekly.

Limes- ALERT The current crop cycle is ending. Fruit is tired and has a shortened shelf life. Low yields on U.S. grade #1 fruit. Approx. 70% of the current crop consists of 110’s & 150’s. New production harvest 250s and undersized fruit. New crop cycle will produce low yields across the sizing spectrum. Overall supplies are expected to remain tight throughout the month of February and March. Medium sizes will continue to be tight and higher priced.

Mushrooms-Alert
Supplies have been impacted by the lack of labor available to harvest all needed products to keep up with demand. Expect possible disruptions as suppliers work through the current labor challenges.

Leaf and Lettuce
Ample supplies of all leaf and lettuces are available. Transition back to the Salinas, CA growing regions is on the horizon with about 4-6 weeks away from its start. Iceberg: Quality continues to be fair to good with occasional mixed sizing. Jumbos, and weight from 39 to 47 lbs. Trim lettuce is good. Leaf: Quality remains good, occasional insect activity and inconsistent sizing. Romaine: Quality continues to move towards good overall, watching insect damage, mildew, and burn. Cutting remains a challenge.

Peppers
Florida green bell supply is plentiful, quality is good, and demand is slow. Market is low across all sizes. Red bells are plentiful, quality is good, and the market is low. Yellow bells are short in supply. Mexico green bells remain in good supply with no change in demand. Red bell supply moderating with better demand. Yellow bell supply remains active.

Melons
Cantaloupe demand is good. Prices are lower on all sizes of cantaloupes as volume begins to increase. With promotions in place and volume being lighter than expected, prices are looking to remain elevated. Smaller sizes are lower due to light demand from foodservice. Honeydew prices are increasing due to lighter supplies. Quality is fair to good.

Tomato
Markets continue to improve both East and West on all varieties (rounds, roma’s, grapes, & cherries). Quality remains good. Expect quality and availability to continue to improve in the coming weeks.