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## All Things Produce—News, product features, recipes and more.

June 14, 2019

All Things Produce is your new resource for produce market news. Join us weekly, to catch up on everything that affects the supply, quality and price of fresh produce. It's everything from weather and region changes to the latest information on Mexican tariffs. Along the way we'll introduce you to some product features, menu ideas and recipes. This newsletter is sponsored by Sofo Foods exclusive line of fresh produce, Altissima Qualita.



### Weather:

Very hot inland temperatures continue across the Central Coast today with the return of the marine layer bringing a cool down to the coastal fields. Gradual cooling of the inland valleys to seasonal temperatures is expected by the weekend. A similar cooldown is a forecast for Southern California into the weekend. Isolated to scattered showers and thunderstorms look to continue across Central Mexico with the potential of heavy downpours within some thunderstorms. Hot temperatures continue across Northern Mexico and the Sonoran Desert Valleys with gradual cooling to seasonal norms by early next week. Scattered showers and thunderstorms look to continue across Florida through next week with seasonal temperatures prevailing.



### Bell Peppers:

**Eastern:** Bell pepper supply is coming from Georgia with South Carolina starting light supplies. Georgia is the big player in bell pepper production this time of year, South Carolina has a couple of large shippers but total acreage is small. The Georgia pepper crop has been hurt due to very hot weather, a lot of pepper has not been packed because of sun scald and a high percentage has turned suntan reducing the amount of green choice or number 1 pepper. North Carolina is about a week away from starting their season, like South Carolina there is a small number of shippers but they have big volume. **Alert: Supply has been reduced due to extreme heat.**

**Western:** Green Bell Pepper- Good supplies of green bell pepper being harvested in Thermal, CA. Both retail and choice grade continue to be packed. Quality of green bell pepper from this district remains good. Green bell pepper supply currently meets demand. Market on retail and choice grade has risen slightly to steady. Green bell pepper harvest has also started in Fresno, CA with mostly large retail size.

Red Bell Pepper- Light supplies of Red bell pepper continue to arrive in Nogales from Mexico this week. The quality from Mexico is fair to good. Mostly choice grade being packed from this district. The market on red bell pepper has maintained in the high teens as red bell production continues in Thermal, CA. More retail grade than choice grade on domestic product. Domestic quality is good. Steady production expected in Thermal through the week. Light supplies of red hot-house bell pepper continue to be harvested in Baja California.



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### Citrus Lemons:

Lemon supplies continue to remain tight on 165's and smaller. Market prices continue to climb weekly, looking at mid \$30's on choice and fancy fruit. Supplies continue to peak on the large sizes 75ct/95ct/115ct. Quality is looking decent with the warmer weather we've been experiencing in the Central Valley we're getting reports of soft fruit, however, the interior looks great.

### Lettuce Iceberg

A planting gap has occurred with multiple suppliers both in Salinas as well as Santa Maria/ Oxnard. Many shippers were sold out of this commodity by the end of last week and expect light availability all this week. Demand exceeds supplies and this will continue for the week. Quality issues include bruising, big veins, puffiness, mechanical, misshapen heads and insect damage. Expect average quality for the week. The weights on liner product have been reported at 40-43 pounds.

### Lettuce Leaf:

The romaine market, as well as all leaf items, has firmed up in the marketplace. Supplies look to get tighter throughout the week. Currently, supplies are moderate at best. The weather in the growing regions have been warm and mildew will become an issue with romaine as well as green and red leaf and butter. The warm temperatures also contribute to insects latching on to plants. There have been reports to this already. There have been defects like mechanical and fringe burn as well. The weights on romaine are averaging 31-37 pounds while green and red leaf has been 20-24 pounds.

### Onions:

Onion markets are higher this week as rain in New Mexico curtailed harvests at the front end of the week and demand shifted to the California Valley. New Mexico continues to produce all three colors and will slowly ramp up in production this week as the weather will improve with highs in the mid-to-upper 90's. California Valley has had a slow start due to rain in May and will expect to be in full production by next week. California desert, for the most part, has finished and Uvalde, TX has limited supplies left with fair quality. Expect to see strong markets into next week as demand continues to be active and New Mexico recovers from the recent storm.

### Potatoes:

Markets on larger size Idaho Burbank's continue to inch up as supplies are lighter. Burbank profile for the remainder of the season will be heavier towards 80 counts and smaller so expect markets to continue to bump up on the larger 40-70 count sizes until new crop begins in August. Burbank quality is good with the exception of a few lots showing some shoulder bruise and occasional hollow heart. Washington, Colorado, and Wisconsin continue to run Norkotah's with steady to higher prices. Wisconsin quality remains fair. crop harvest begins in August.

### Texas Honeydew Melons

Honeydew melon health benefits include strong vision, strong heart, improved digestion, strong teeth and bones, smooth skin, thick hair, weight loss, strong muscles and strong tissues. It also promotes the removal of toxins from the body, and enhances the functioning of the nervous system. Honeydews are ripe when a full cream color and gives to moderate pressure.

6 ct. Sofo #240230





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### **Tomatoes:**

**Eastern:** Quincy and South Carolina have begun picking in a light way and volume are shrinking into next week. Sizing has been heavy to XL and Lg with little small fruit available. Naturally, sizing will begin to even out as harvest move to incorporate second picks by next week. Until then, heavy rains are anticipated over Northern Florida and South Carolina growing areas halting farm operations and preventing packing. As a result, the market is expected to continue upwards as supply is reduced further from the weather. Rounds are currently steady from last week and already feeling pressure upward as buyers try to get ahead of the rain. As expected, Roma tomatoes are very limited and are forecasted to remain so over the next 5 to 6 weeks through the Quincy season due to the limited acreage planted. After the 4th of July, a variety of regional programs in AL, AR, TN, etc. will spring up to offer relief to the scant supply. Quincy's acreage is largely reserved for round plantings, however, grape tomatoes are in production. South Carolina has begun this week harvesting grape tomatoes to help the market and may help price slide a couple of dollars by mid-month. As the transition progresses to smaller programs in the North, western supply becomes more of a factor, however, it is yet to be determined how subtle or drastic the 17.56% Mexico duty set by the US Dept of Commerce for tomato imports, will affect the dynamic of the market in the weeks ahead.

**Western:** Mexico tomato prices are steady from last week and firming up as supply contracts over the next 2 weeks. Nogales is finishing the remainder of their season while new crops in Eastern Mexico and Baja are underway and have begun to establish the western market in the US for the short term. The supply of round tomatoes in the west through June will mostly be Vine Ripe varieties with very limited domestic Mature Greens until California's Central Valley breaks ground near July. Amidst economical penalties, there has been no significant change in prices from last week outside of the incremental influences occurring during the transition. Tomatoes remain in the low to mid double digits as typical for this time of year. Roma tomatoes have entered the \$10 range of FOB prices as they become more difficult to source in the East. Mainland Mexico is slowly improving Grape tomato harvests while Baja continues to produce better quality.



### **Cantaloupes**

When the time comes for you to slice open your cantaloupe, it's important for you to be equally careful about this process. Risk of bacterial contamination in cut cantaloupe is significant and public health organizations stress the importance of safe handling practices. Be sure to wash your hands and all utensils before and after cutting cantaloupe. We recommend that you rinse a whole cantaloupe under cool running water, gently scrub the rind with a natural bristle brush, and then pat dry before you slice it open. This rinsing process will help remove unwanted bacterial contamination. Next, place the whole cantaloupe on a clean cutting surface. Cut off the top (stem end, where the vine was attached) of the cantaloupe and discard.

**9-12 ct.      Sofo #270160**



### **Driscoll's Strawberries**

Driscoll's strawberries are hand selected for the highest quality! Every day, research confirms that strawberries are an important part of a healthy diet. Eating just one serving of strawberries, or about eight of these sweet fruits per day, may help improve heart health, lower the risk of developing some cancers and lower blood pressure. Strawberries have many menu applications: desserts, salads, sandwiches and salsas.

**8/1 lb.      Sofo #270500**

# Strawberry Basil Salsa

Ingredients	Sofo #	Amt.
Lemon juice	370305	2 Tbsp.
Bellissimo extra virgin olive oil	350221	1 Tbsp.
Salt	370304	1/4 Tsp.
Minced shallots	261090	2
Fresh basil leaves (thinly sliced)	260040	2 Tbsp.
Driscoll's strawberries	261310	1 Pkg. (16 oz.)



## Preparation

1. Place 2 tablespoons lemon juice into a medium bowl.
2. Add 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper.
3. Whisk to combine ingredients.
4. Add 2 minced shallots and 2 tablespoons sliced basil.
5. Stir to combine ingredients.
6. Hull and chop 1 package strawberries.
7. Add strawberries to lemon juice mixture.
8. Stir until evenly blended.
9. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to use.



This strawberry salsa is a perfect accompaniment to grilled meats or fish. Strawberries give it a sweet note while basil and shallots make it assertive enough to be part of a satisfying meal. It's best the day it's made but you could prep ingredients separately one day ahead of time.

*Recipe by Driscoll's Strawberries*

**Driscoll's Strawberries**

**8/1 lb.**

**Sofo #261310**