



market update



25 January 2023

North Island

This week's story is similar to last weeks in that the supply and demand is reasonably balanced, with sufficient fruit that promotional activity is occasionally been undertaken. Prices as seen in the supermarkets are holding with plums coming back a little and cherries increasing a little as the market tidies up.

The sentiment from the major markets is that it's a little quiet, a function of cooler weather and the need to start purchasing back-to-school supplies. Some of the selling floors are also said to be a bit quiet.

Fruit quality out of Hawkes Bay is as might be expected, scruffy due to the weather conditions and without the flavour normally expected. Rots are not showing as the issue on shelves as they have in past years, but can be found on occasion. The weather conditions ahead are more of the same with mild temperatures and some more rain over the weekend. This last week has seen more evapotranspiration than rainfall so a little drying has occurred on the orchards.

Supply should be good for another 2 weeks before tapering off.

South Island

Central Otago has had perfect fruit growing weather with no rain, lots of sunshine, a few hot days, and a few warm days so that managing harvest is not too much of an issue. Growing degree days are, like last week, as good as they have been in recent years.

Mostly there are enough people to do the necessary work. As more cherry blocks finish labour can move to apricots, nectarines and peaches as those crops are now picking mainstream varieties.

To amuse myself I did a comparison of growing degree days and apricot harvest timings across two districts, Bay View and Roxburgh east – the earliest and latest regions. Today Roxburgh is coming to the end of Sundrop harvest and are nearly into Clutha Gold. They are on 545 units today. Bay View was on 545 units on the 18th of December and was about to start Clutha Gold picking. Interestingly, Cromwell had that level of accumulation on 13th January and was in the same scenario.

cherries LOW MED HIGH

- There are plenty of cherries available, both fresh-picked and stored. More and more orchards are finishing picking with only a handful expecting to be picking this time next week.
- Logistics issues may see more export fruit arrive in the local market – but this story is yet to be told.
- Quality is said to be generally magnificent, and with the super high volumes calming down prices have lifted.

apricots LOW MED HIGH

- The lift in the supplied volume has seen reasonable quantities on shelves. Sundrop harvest will end soon with continued harvest of Clutha Gold for another 2 weeks across the Central Otago districts. There is also some Vulcan available and growers are stating to think of the Nevis varieties becoming available.

nectarines LOW MED HIGH

- Hawkes Bay is looking to the end of the nectarine programme in a couple of weeks' time. Varieties available in include the end of Red Gold, Mid Star and Honey Royale. Orin and Fantasia, Late Star and some Honey's are being picked and packed currently. There are but a few white fleshed or Pearl nectarines available.
- Central Otago is supplying Spring Bright, Spring Red, Orange Red, Kay Pearl and Ruby Diamond. Bright Princess is starting now with Mid Star due to start at the end of this week.

peaches LOW MED HIGH

- Golden Belle is nearing the end of supply from Hawkes Bay with Tatura Star about to get under way from the early blocks. The eating quality of these firm-flesh peaches has improved as we have moved away from the larger rain events. The firm fleshed whites, Scarlet O'Hara and Coconut ice can still be found. Flamecrest and similar classic yellow peaches are all but complete.
- Central Otago is picking and selling Flatto white fleshed peaches. Varieties that are anticipated soon include Flamecrest, Coconut Ice and Southern Ice. Earlier areas are picking Sweet Dream, Blazing Star and Rome Star.

plums LOW MED HIGH

- Primetime and Fortune plums have generally sold out two weeks earlier than normal and the next expected varieties, Autumn Honey and Amber Jewel have light crops. Angelino and Freedom should be about a week away from harvest.
- Central Otago has or has had some Purple Majesty, is starting Black Amber and anticipating Greengage in a week or so.
- The plum market is expected to firm from now on. Pre-packed smaller fruit is less available due to lower fruit set and therefore generally larger sized fruit.

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 Note: The information supplied is based on communication with summerfruit growers, marketers, retailers and other relevant industry parties Information supplied on cherries, apricots, nectarines, peaches and plums can alter after publishing due to unexpected weather events, market forces, and other events relevant to the industry. Seek daily advice on supply from your summerfruit supplier.