



market update



11 DECEMBER 2019

North Island

Summerfruit is now front and center in my local supermarkets and still at reasonably firm retail prices. Of the four that I visited, all the fruit apart from one line of apricots, looked pretty good. Knowing that the fruit is eating well makes me happy to see that the collective system is doing well, with peaches in particular looking attractive. Growing degree days are still high, 50 units better than normal, but Hawke's Bay is potentially entering a cooler and damper period. The main Auckland and Hamilton markets have been warmish and drier in the past week which helps with sales. Harvest dates are now five days ahead of 'normal'. Marlborough fruit has been seen in Hawke's Bay markets.

While the fruit is looking pretty good, we should also remember that many Hawke's Bay growers are facing a distressed financial outlook. The pipelines are not yet full, so not all stores have all categories, but we are expecting to get closer to the ideal this and next week.

South Island

Blenheim has had similar GDD to Hawke's Bay, mid 20°C temperatures and 15mm of rain. The cherry growers think they might not have too many cracked fruits from this last event as the trees were dried quickly.

Central Otago has had low 20°Cs temperatures and little bits of rain in the last week, but nothing like Queenstown and Wanaka areas received. Harvest is tiptoeing to its start. The Christchurch and Dunedin markets have had low and mid 20°C and some rain.

cherries

LOW MED HIGH

- Sonnet and Santina are still being picked and now add Dawson, Rainier, Stella and a few Lapins to the mix. Quality and size is excellent with crop loads just a bit off potential.
- Blenheim cherries timings are very similar to Hawke's Bay if not slightly ahead. The last of the Rosann are coming off, Sonnet is nearing its end and we are now seeing Rainier and Dawson harvest. Santina and Stella are next in the queue.
- Central Otago is now under way with Chelan and the lighter cropping blocks of Rosann. Expect volumes to build after the weekend.

apricots

LOW MED HIGH

- Royal Rosa harvest is now complete, and the fruit is in the markets and mostly looking good. The Sundrop harvest is only just beginning and available volumes should build through this week. Flavour and texture is excellent and the work that has been done on orchard and at packhouse is serving up an acceptable product.
- A response to hail damaged fruit is in the market under a 'Hailstone Heroes' banner. We are all interested to see how this initiative goes. The 'Hailstorm Heroes' campaign run in 2018 worked well for South Australian apple and pear growers.

nectarines

LOW MED HIGH

- Rose Diamond is in the market now. Early Star are being picked as I write and will build in the market this and next week. Diamond Bright will start next week and then be followed by Spring Bright. We are anticipating for a moderate supply running into Christmas week.

peaches

LOW MED HIGH

- Spring Lady, Spring Fire and May Crest are picking still and should be available this and next week. June Lady and Coraline are being picked now. The white fleshed Spring White is also available. Rich Lady is a week or so away. Like the nectarines we are expecting a good flow into Christmas without big volumes. For those that like sweet flat peaches Donut is being picked and packed.
- Nibble picks of Early Crest are heading to a fruit stall in Central Otago, but we really don't expect much until closer to New Year.

plums

LOW MED HIGH

- Red Beaut and Rose Zee harvest and packing is well under way, but volumes are limited as it's still early in the season and for some the hail damage is significant. That said, the plums I saw this morning looked good in the box. Purple Majesty is expected in the week before Christmas.
- There is still a line of tired USA fruit in one store.

Market update by Richard Mills, NZ Market Support, Summerfruit New Zealand, email richard@summerfruitnz.co.nz

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.