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Haun Packing yields off, but quality good and demand 'great'

By

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September 21, 2021

"Demand exceeds availability," Haun Packing Vice President and General/Sales Manager Herb Haun said about the 2021 onion crop, adding that his Weiser, ID-based operation, like the rest of the Treasure Valley, is looking at reduced yields.



Haun Packing crew members are

President/primary grower Fred Haun, VP Sales Herb Haun, Foreman Joe Snell and Maintenance Manager Ivan Flores.

“Foodservice is the usual market for our big stuff,” he said, adding that this year yields are down, and size is off as well.

However, he said on Sept. 10, “Quality is very, very good across the board. The onions are well-cured after a hot, dry summer, and ours will start going into storage next week.”

Haun continued, “Yields are definitely down, probably about 30 percent. The size is down about the same, heavy to medium. Jumbos are not too far off.”

He said that all three colors “will be tight, short all the way across the board, too. And we’ve had great demand for all three colors, too, with the market stronger and trending upward.”

For several years Haun Packing shipped to a retail/foodservice split of about 30/70 percent. Last year, with the COVID-19 lockdown and the closure of many restaurants, the split was closer to 40/60 in the 2020-21 shipping season as retail called for more product.

Retail demand during the week of Sept. 6, he said, was good. “This week mediums are in very good demand, and foodservice demand has been very good too. As other areas finish, I think people will realize how much smaller this [Treasure Valley] crop is.”

This year’s shorter crop and increased demand could potentially shorten the shipping season, but there’s also the chance it could run into spring as normal. “We’ll know more when we know more,” Haun joked.

He said transportation remains “very tight and very expensive,” but he said, “We’re moving everything we can package.”

Labor, he said, is “adequate,” with the region seeing some COVID-19 cases as well as other illnesses.

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