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**Prices coming down on Bell peppers, grapes, tomatoes;
oranges up**

By

Craig Levitt, managing editor

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Hurricane Agatha was the first named storm of the season, and despite its best efforts the storm had no effects on the major harvesting regions, mainly in southern Georgia. In fact, favorable growing conditions are improving supplies across commodity categories.

According to Mark Campbell, founder and CEO of [ProduceIQ](#), Bell pepper supplies are improving and prices are falling. Crops planted in Georgia after the freeze are ready for harvest as Georgia's pepper production is overlapping with growers in California, north Florida and even a small volume from Mexico. "Current quotes are a weak \$14 for XL and off-grades at \$10 or less. Still, red and yellow supply remains short," said Campbell.

The West Coast's pepper situation is the inverse of the East Coast. "Red and yellow supply is strengthening, and green Bells are expected to remain short for at least two weeks," said Campbell. "Canadian colored pepper is ramping up, and Mexican greenhouse product is still crossing."

Table grape prices continued their sharp decline, down 16 percent over the previous week. "After a period of short supply due to the annual growing region transition, Mexican supply is in full swing and is providing relief for both red and green markets," said Campbell. "This time of year, Nogales experiences an influx of grapes to help fill the coolers and offset fixed warehouse costs."

Regarding tomatoes, supply is still lean but is getting closer to completing the transition to Quincy, FL, on the East Coast and Baja, CA, on the West Coast. Even on thin supply, tomato prices are undergoing price drops across varieties. "Grape-type tomatoes are experiencing the most significant price decreases, 14 percent over the previous week," said Campbell. "Markets are expected to remain unstable for the next couple of weeks until new growing regions find their swing."

Countering general trends for the week, orange prices crept slightly upward: "113 count and 138 count are improving, and quality is good," he said. "The transition from navels to Valencias is nearly complete. Prices are expected to stay elevated above average throughout the summer."

About Craig Levitt |

When his dreams of becoming a professional hockey player came crashing down due to lack of talent, Craig Levitt turned to journalism. He graduated from Hofstra University in 1992 and has covered various areas of the retail food trade since 1996. Craig joined The Produce News in 2017 and is now managing editor. In his spare time, Craig still plays men's league hockey (poorly) and enjoys walking the aisles of his favorite supermarket with his wife and two daughters.

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