



# Trendspotting

*WITH CRAIG LEVITT*

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**Trendspotting: Unfavorable weather plaguing suppliers**

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By

Craig Levitt

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Navigating hurricane season can be tricky for growers as Mother Nature continues to have her way with the nation's crops. Hurricane Hilary was "devastating and heartbreaking," according to Kathleen Nave, president of the California Table Grape Commission, which expects California to produce fewer than 75 million 19-pound boxes for the first time since 1994.

Most of the folks in Florida were a bit luckier, as Hurricane Idalia's impact wasn't nearly as severe. Next up is Hurricane Lee, and while most expect the storm won't impact major harvesting regions in the Southeast, it is worth keeping an eye on, particularly in the Northeast.

"We expect continued market firmness as an overall lack of plantings and unfavorable weather plague suppliers," said Mark Campbell, president and CEO of [ProduceIQ](#). "Elevated markets persist for apples, pears, pineapples, limes, lemons, squash and asparagus. On the other hand, potatoes are finally taking a price dive with the new crop."

Strawberry prices are notably low at around \$10. Campbell expects strawberry prices to firm up as quality may not be perfect. With that in mind, he said, "Don't change your promotion displays just yet; there is still time to promote the berry before prices rise again." That \$10 price is the second lowest price for week 36 in 10 years.

Also of note are cauliflower prices, \$22 for a 16 count out West. Campbell reported that cauliflower prices have risen for the fourth straight week as supply is hampered by quality and sizing issues. "We're entering the time of year known for volatility, and early indications are that it'll be another wild ride," he said.

[Craig Levitt](#)

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## 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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