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Trendspotting: Prices for several produce items at 10-year highs — and climbing

By

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The supply for one of the most popular products in the produce aisle, berries, is improving — slowly, according to Mark Campbell, founder and CEO of [ProduceIQ](#).

“Grape supply is constricting at a time usually marked by declining prices. Peruvian production is on the decline, while Chile is just beginning,” he said. He reported that at an average of \$35, grape prices are at a 10-year high and may climb higher over the next three weeks.

Also at a 10-year high are cucumber prices. This is being driven by cold weather in Mexico and light yields from growers in Honduras. ProduceIQ reported that markets are up 38 percent over the previous week and may explode further as growth slows due to the recent cold weather in Mexico.

At \$30, squash prices are high as well. “With plenty of upward momentum left in the tank, be prepared for severe price volatility over the next few weeks,” said Campbell.

Cold weather in Florida has kept tomato plant growth slow, which will likely “keep supply lean for a few more weeks as fields need to warm up and dry out,” said Campbell. Along with cold weather in Mexico, pricing on most tomato varieties is rising.

Out west the freezing weather has turned to rain, with a forecast for more today — about 0.75 inches in the Arizona and California desert growing region. The rain may negatively impact crop quality. Specifically, field inspectors from Markon are on the lookout for bottom rot; decreased case weights for commodity lettuce items; discoloration and/or decay on epidermal blistering and peeling; dirt/mud on the product; increased mildew pressure; premature pinking in some value-added salads or washed and trimmed leaf lettuce packs; reduced shelf-life potential; and yellowing leaves/discoloration.

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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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