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# MARKET OUTLOOK

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## DOWN ON THE FARM

MAY 29, 2014

Del Rio Botanical



We have contacted several of our local farmers to get crop updates and discuss the status of summer crops and how drought conditions may be affecting the anticipated harvest. Here's what they have to say: **Suzanne Ashworth, Del Rio Botanical**- "There is a drought" was the first quote when asked. There have been variant weather issues resulting in a lack of groundwater

which means increased irrigation from surface water. In this case, the surface water is the Sacramento Water and Suzanne was notified by the Department of Water Resources that her water supply will be cut back by 20%. She has planted less acreage and not planted some crops. Summer crops have started early-she will be harvesting baby squash and some early cherry tomatoes this week. **Ray Yeung, Yeung Farms**- "This is not a normal year." Ray's principal crops are tomatoes, melons and pumpkins. As his farm is just up the road from Del Rio, he faces the same issues and his water supply has also been cut by 20%. He stated that he will have an adequate supply of vine ripe and heirloom tomatoes, but he is not planting melons and may not plant pumpkins, meaning income from his annual Pumpkin Patch will not be there. **Tim Mueller, Riverdog Farm**- "There is a lack of both groundwater and surface water, coming from Cache Creek. I planted 70% of my summer crops, cut back on melons and will not be planting corn as it requires too much water. The effect of the drought will be most evident



in the fall." **Patrick Johnston, Dwelley Farms**-The farm supplies us with several varieties of pole beans plus yellow and white corn. Patrick stated that the first harvest of these crops will begin this week but there are pending issues with successive planting due to anticipated water cutback. "These are 70 day crops and we plant in July and August for fall harvest and water may not be available for these plantings. There is also the issue of salt content in the Delta-if the Sierra runoff is low (and it will be), ocean saltwater is not adequately flushed out from the Delta, which in turn drastically affects crop quality. **Camellia Miller, Twin Peaks Orchards**- "The stone fruit crop is early this year and we have adequate water due to our drip irrigation techniques. However, the trees were stressed in the winter and started to bloom early-we even had some fruit before



leaves, which is completely backwards. We fertilized late leaving more nitrogen in the ground resulting in early fruit and it is ripening quicker after being picked, meaning more flavor but less shelf life." In all, there will be summer crops but possibly a smaller harvest and that will affect the price as farmers will need to compensate for crop loss.



We are now offering organic heirloom and open pollinated varieties of **Baby Summer Squash** from Del Rio Botanicals. Mixed summer squashes vary in size, shape and color. All varieties have tender skin, firm flesh-the seeds have yet to develop-and good squash flavor. Summer squash may be cut for sauté, steamed or roasted whole. 10#/\$29.75. Also from Del Rio, **Squash Blossoms**-The delicate orange-colored, trumpet shaped flowers that emerge on all varietal summer and winter squash during the growing season. When harvesting for culinary purposes, it is important to distinguish between the male and female blossoms. The larger male blossom grow straight up and out from the branches of the squash plant. The somewhat smaller female blossoms form at the end of buds that grow into squash and are often harvested with the baby squash still attached. Squash blossoms have long been popular in both Mexican and Italian cuisine. The blossoms are most often used in one of two ways: chopped raw or sautéed and added to soups, salads, enchiladas and tacos as well as risotto and pasta dishes; stuffed with corn, chilies or mild cheeses, dipped in batter and fried in oil. 35ct clamshell/\$16.75.



"Farm to you overnight"

# MARKET MOVERS



**Avocado**-The market is slightly higher. Quality and flavor consistently very good. **Berries**-Strawberry market is very steady. Sizing and quality are excellent. Blackberries (CA) and Raspberries (CA) high 20's. Blueberries (CA) are outstanding and down slightly into mid 20's.

**Citrus**-Lime market has fallen back to low 30's. Valencia Oranges have had good sugar and great juice content. The Lemon market is slightly higher. **Grapes**-Red and Green seedless from Mexico have been medium to large in size with very good flavor. California market is considerably higher and fruit is very tart. **Melons**-California grown Cantaloupes have been excellent.

The market is in the high teens-low\$20's. Honeydew (Mexico) mid 20's. Quality inferior to Cantaloupes. Casaba, Crenshaw, Galia, Juan Canary, and Santa Claus available by the case only, high 20's. Watermelon market up slightly, fruit is cutting well. **Stonefruit**-Frog Hollow Apricots continue to impress. Tree ripened and ready to eat. Twin Peaks Nectarines and Peaches have been above average for "early" harvested fruit. Pluots from Brentwood continue to be the best option for Plums. **Specialty**-Figs from Coachella are back. The market is very strong-high 50's on 12 pint size baskets. Available by the case or basket. The market should improve quickly. **Artichokes**-Chokes continue to be seasonally challenged. Larger sizes (12's, 18's, & 24's are in the mid 40's. Medium sized chokes (30's & 36's) are very-very limited.



Baby Artichokes are in the high 40's. Pezzini Farms and Half Moon Bay should begin harvesting new fields later this week. **Asparagus**-Warmer weather pushing California season to a quick end. Washington and Mexico are next options. Peruvian imports have already started on the East Coast.

**Beans**-We should have Dwelley Blue Lakes, French, Romano, and Yellow Wax Beans by the weekend. **Corn**-Southern growers are gapping on both White and Yellow. The market is slightly stronger, high 20's. Brentwood White Corn should start this weekend. **Cukes**-The market is slightly higher on Slicing and English varieties. Pickling Cukes are very limited-low 30's. **Eggplant**-The market is strong and California starts slowly, high 20's. **Lettuces**-The market on Iceberg and Leafs continue above seasonal norms. Gaps, mildew and weather damage being blamed. Considerably less acreage being planted due to water restrictions. **Peppers**-Green market continues to be very strong as southern supplies can't meet demand. **Spinach**-All spinach supplies are very limited due to mildew and heat in the fields. Bloomsdale supplies are very limited as well-subbing savoy spinach when needed. **Squash**-Italian and Yellow still in high 20's from Southern California. Local grower Castaneda expected to start by mid June. **Tomatoes**-The market is slightly higher as Mexico starts winding down. **Wild Mushrooms**-Morel quality and shelf life very poor due to heat. We are stocking imported Chanterelles, \$27.75/lb.



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# LOCAL FARMS

## Riverdog Farm

Spring Garlic-10#  
Red Spring Onions-10#  
White Spring Onions-10#  
Dino Kale-12 bunch  
Red Beets-12 bunch case or 25# bag



## Del Rio Botanical

Squash Blossoms-35ct  
Mixed Baby Squash-10#  
Russian Red Kale-2#  
Arugula Rapini-4#-**Gapping**  
Red Frisee Mustard-2#-**Gapping**  
Arugula-4#-**Gapping**  
Mizuna-4#  
Spring Mix-2#  
Braising Mix-4#



## Capay Organic

Nantes Carrots-24 bunch  
Red Beets-12 bunch  
French Fingerling Potatoes-24#  
La Ratte Potatoes-24#  
German Butterball Potatoes-24#

## Dwelley Farms

Blue Lake Beans-30# case or pound  
Yellow Wax Beans-10#  
Romano Beans-10#

## Twin Peaks Orchard

Yellow Peaches-18# case only  
Yellow Nectarines-18# case only

## Frog Hollow Farm

Apricots-24# case

## Sausalito Springs

Watercress-2#

## Delta Queen

Asparagus-28# or pound-**Finishing**

## Solorio Farms

English Peas-case or pound  
Fava Beans-case or pound



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