



ATTN MID/WEST FRESH CUSTOMERS  
PRODUCT UPDATE  
2/24/10

AS YOU MIGHT HAVE HEARD, THERE IS A VERY REAL SHORTAGE OF FLORIDA GROWN PRODUCT, ESPECIALLY TOMATOES BUT ALSO INCLUDING BEANS, SQUASH AND PEPPERS. THE REAL DAMAGE WAS DONE OVER A MONTH AGO AS RECORD LOW TEMPERATURES HIT MOST OF FLORIDA GROWING AREAS FOR AN EXTENDED TIME. UNFORTUNATELY THE NEWS COVERAGE FADED BUT THE DAMAGE INFLICTED HAS NOT BEEN REALIZED UNTIL NOW.

BASICALLY, THE COLD KILLED OFF THE YOUNG PLANTS THAT WOULD NORMALLY BE HARVESTED NOW. THIS CREATES A GAP IN SUPPLIES, AS THE GROWERS HAVE TO REPLANT THE FIELDS. THE WEATHER SO FAR HAS REMAINED UNUSUALLY COLD, SO TO ADD TO OUR PROBLEMS THE PLANTINGS ARE GROWING SLOWER THAN NORMAL. OUR SUPPLIERS HAVE INDICATED THAT THERE WILL BE TIMES WHEN NO PRODUCT WILL BE AVAILABLE. THIS SITUATION WILL AFFECT ALL WHOLESALERS, DISTRIBUTORS, GROWERS, RETAIL AND FOODSERVICE CUSTOMERS. TOMATO PRICES ARE ALREADY PREDICTED TO BE OVER \$50.00 FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD, WHICH COULD BE UP TO SIX WEEKS.

TO COMPLICATE MATTERS MORE, THERE IS NOWHERE TO GO FOR RELIEF. THAT WOULD INCLUDE OTHER SUPPLY AREAS AND/ OR CHANGING TO DIFFERENT TOMATO PRODUCTS. THE SUPPLY GAP CUTS ACROSS ALL TOMATO ITEMS: ROMAS, CHERRY, GRAPE AND ALL SIZES OF ROUNDS. WE HAVE ALREADY BEEN SUPPLYING YOU WITH MEXICAN PRODUCT THE LAST FEW WEEKS. UNFORTUNATELY THEIR SEASON IS WINDING DOWN SO REAL GAPS OF NO PRODUCT AVAILABILITY ARE ANTICIPATED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

AS ALWAYS WE WILL STRIVE TO FIND THE BEST SUPPLIES AVAILABLE BUT QUALITY WILL BE AN ISSUE TOO. IN THESE SITUATIONS OUR SUPPLIERS REQUIRE US TO ACCEPT CONDITION UPON ARRIVAL. ONCE WE SIGN FOR PRODUCT IT IS OURS AS IS. WE WILL ASK THE SAME FROM YOU, UPON DELIVERY IF YOU WANT TO REFUSE PRODUCT WE UNDERSTAND, BUT ONCE YOU ACCEPT AND SIGN FOR IT, NO CREDIT PROCEDURES WILL COVER THE PRODUCT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS AND UNDERSTANDING, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR SALES REPRESENTATIVE IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS.

