



WWW.PRODUCEPLUS.NET

# MARKET OUTLOOK

Call Today! 530-581-1525

## THE DROUGHT OF 2014



"What's up with the drought?" is a question we get asked a lot lately. The short answer is "we don't know", but we have done some research and here is what we found: Farmers up and down the state are being forced into some tough decisions-which crops to water and which to let die as California faces the worst drought in history. As California gets

drier and hotter, no one is more vulnerable than farmers and no one is likely to have to do more to adapt to what many experts fear will be a more drought-prone environment. Paul Wegner, head of the California Farm Bureau Federation says "It's going to be difficult," he said. "We're going to see a lot of farmland retired." Some Central California farmers have decided not to plant water-demanding alfalfa, which is used to feed beef and dairy cattle. We spoke to several of our local farmers and here is what they had to say: Camellia Enriquez Miller of **Twin Peaks Orchards** says even though the water agency cut back her water by 40%, she uses only 50% of her allotment due to an efficient drip irrigation system that was installed several years ago. She goes on to state that the orchard looks great and is expecting a good stonefruit crop this year. **Dave Vierra** is worried about his Watermelon crop as rumors are brewing of damming the Sacramento River Delta, removing his ability to farm the land. Tim Mueller of **Riverdog Farms**, a 500 acre organic farm in Yolo County, says he doesn't anticipate any change for spring crops. However, summer crops will see a reduction of 25%. Sweet Corn will not be planted at all this year and summer staples like Eggplant, Peppers, & Cucumbers will see a slight reduction. Where the real concern lies, in Tim's opinion, is in the fall and winter crops like Bloomsdale Spinach, Chards, and Kales that are planted in July/August when the water table is at its lowest. Tim will have no choice but to let entire fields go unplanted as its important to "not out plant our water supply". He goes on to say that in all his years of farming, this is by far the worst he has ever seen. A sentiment shared by Suzanne Ashworth of **Del Rio Botanical**. "I have never seen the water table this low at this time of year". Del Rio doesn't expect major problems with the upcoming Spring or Summer crops. Suzanne's main concern is with her staple Winter crop-Heirloom Winter Squash. Heirloom Winter Squash needs to be planted soon and then cared for and watered until harvest in October. She plans to plant all varieties of squash this year but admits if things don't get better soon, it will have to be the first crop she lets die, putting an end to a seasonal favorite. **'Uncle' Ray Yeung**, our local grower of Heirloom Tomatoes, says he plans to plant even more varieties this year. The season may be a little shorter and availability may be a little tighter, but the quality of the tomatoes should not be affected, in his opinion.

**"Farm to you overnight"**

MARCH 13, 2014

## Sausalito Springs

This week we are offering a rather unique edible plant- **Sausalito Springs Organic Watercress**. Sausalito Springs is a small family farm located in **Sonoma County** and watercress is their only crop. Watercress is an aquatic, succulent leafy plant that roots and grows wild in clear, shallow streams. Sausalito Springs grows their watercress in fresh well water and harvests only the tops of the plant which are then triple washed, hydro cooled and hand packed loose leaf, rather than bunched, in clear, plastic bags. Watercress is a prominent member of the mustard family and contains a volatile mustard oil with compounds similar to those in radishes, which gives the plant its unique peppery flavor. Sausalito Springs watercress is a live product and certified organic. Moisture is added after packaging to promote continued growth. When properly handled, shelf life is 10-14 days. It is best stored in original bag, kept flat and turned daily. Optimum temperature is 38 degrees. When used in restaurant containers, keep covered with wet towel. Sausalito Springs watercress is excellent in salads and sandwiches, pairs well with fish and would make a flavorful and delicate pesto or puree. 2# bag/ \$37.75



# MARKET MOVERS



**Avocado**-California fruit remains very limited and inconsistent. Extreme "checker-boarding" making fruit impossible to ripen evenly. We will stay with Mexican fruit for another 2-3 weeks. **Berries**-Strawberry plants have made an amazing recovery. Fruit is once again large, red, ripe and flavorful. All growing regions including Watsonville will harvest this week. The market is in the low \$20's. East coast demand could cause minor increases. **Citrus**-The Lime market is absolutely ridiculous. Fruit will be very limited and could be in the high 90's by the weekend. Fruit is not crossing the boarder. The Lemon market is steady-high 20's. Oranges remain strong-high 20's. Navels will finish in a week or two. Valencia's have started (not much sugar content) Navels will have an occasional dry cell. Blood Oranges will finish next week. **Grapes**-Chilean fruit has been very good. Red in the mid 30's, Green in the low 40's. **Melons**-Cantaloupe and Honeydew quality is better than normal for season. The market is in the mid 20's. **Pears**-Chilean Bartletts are very green and expensive. We are switching to D'Anjou. Bartletts will be sold by the case only. **Tropical**-Pineapple market is slightly stronger in the low \$20's. Mango market is down slightly. Starfruit is available by the case or piece. **Artichokes**-The market is considerably stronger. 18's & 24's-high 30's, 36's-low 30's.



**Asparagus**-Locally grown "Delta Queen" asparagus has been outstanding. Slightly higher than product from Mexico or Central California, but worth every penny. **Beans**-Bluelake market is slightly higher. Weather causing quality issues. **Broccoli**-The market is climbing into the high teens. Desert region is finishing and Northern California just started. **Brussels Sprouts**-The market is higher. Coastal growers are done and product in Mexico is suffering from heavy rains. **Cabbage**-Green Cabbage market will be in low \$20's possibly mid 20's as St. Patrick's Day approaches. **Cauliflower**-Markets steady on all colors. **Cucumbers**-Markets steady. **Eggplant**-Desert gapping, weather in Mexico. Market will be up slightly. **Lettuces**-Iceberg and Leafs are steady. Heavy rain caused minimal damage. **Peppers**-Green market remains strong in mid 20's. Red market is actually below Greens. **Squash**-Italian and Yellow Squash markets up considerably into mid 20's. California delayed by weather/lack of growth. **Tomatoes**-Market steady on all sizes and shapes. **Onions**-Yellow and Reds remain strong. Relief is still 4-6 weeks away. **Wild Mushrooms**-Only true Wilds with consistency in quality and price are Hedgehogs (high teens).



*"Farm to you overnight"*

# LOCAL FARMS

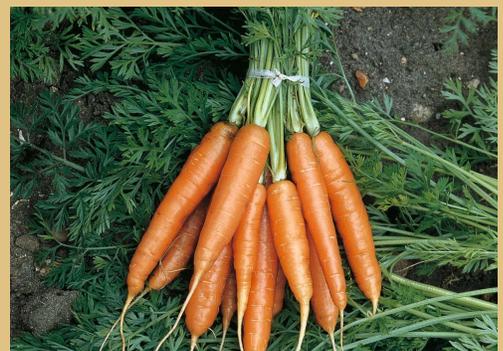
## Riverdog Farm-

- Bloomsdale Spinach-4#
- Baby Red Romaine-
- Red Beets-12 bunch
- Chioggia Beets-12 bunch
- Leeks-12 bunch
- Red Chard-12 bunch
- Black Spanish Radish-#
- Spring Garlic-10#
- Celery Root-12ea
- Red Spring Onions-10#
- White Spring Onions-10#



## Capay Organic-

- Nantes Carrots-24 bunch
- Red Beets-12 bunch
- Gold Beets-12 bunch



## Del Rio-

- Pea Shoots-2#
- Fava Greens-2#
- Nettles-2#
- Wrinkled Crinkled Cress-8oz
- Mache-1#
- Arugula Rapini-4#
- Red Frisee Mustard-2#
- Arugula-4#
- Mizuna-4#
- Spring Mix-2#
- Braising Mix-4#

## Delta Queen

- Asparagus-28#

**Buy Local, Buy Fresh, Buy the Best!**