

What to Expect

For approximately the first month of any new harvesting season, prices are typically very volatile.

The Salinas-Huron-Yuma transition takes place from late April to mid-May and from early October until early December. Customers can expect significantly higher or lower prices, depending on how much surplus, if any, remains during the transition.

In order to minimize times when produce items are unavailable between seasons, growers try to overlap these cycles by at least one week. Of course, every season is different. Some years one leg of a harvest may end with a surplus, creating a price dip; other times the same area might finish with tight stocks, causing prices to climb.

Factors such as weather, water supply, insect problems, and worker availability all contribute to the length of time a commodity remains available.

Buying Solutions— Partnering With Markon

Markon works closely with our grower-shippers to ensure the best quality year-round. Our inspectors are in the fields daily to review crops, assessing whether they meet our stringent specifications. Despite these efforts, there are times throughout the year that growing cycles affect availability, quality, and prices.

To advise you of potential substitutions in the event an item is not in stock, we offer our Fresh Crop Report, Updates, and Live From the Fields videos, and encourage you to maintain close communication with your member sales representative who will have current information. Because most potential substitutions are grown in the same regions, there are no definitive options; each season is unique and offers opportunities that Markon passes along to you. Sign up for our informative reports at markon.com, and subscribe to our video channel at youtube.com/markoncooperative.

Download our mobile app using the QR codes below:



Seasonal Harvest Transitions and Their Impact

The *heart* of Foodservice™

Seasonal Transitions

Each year the following products are grown and harvested in California's Salinas Valley:

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Green Leaf Lettuce
- Iceberg Lettuce
- Romaine Lettuce
- Spinach
- Spring Mix
- Strawberries

This fertile region is home to some of the richest, most nutrient-dense soil on the planet. It's also home to Markon and our Ready-Set-Serve (RSS) and Markon First Crop (MFC) grower-shipper partners.



Yearly Harvesting Cycles

Harvesting revolves around a schedule that maximizes growing conditions, resulting in the best quality, highest-yielding crops. These seasons vary: there are times of abundance—and inevitably times when products are scarce industry-wide.

Broccoli/Cauliflower/Lettuces

The main harvesting season typically starts in late-April/early May in the Salinas Valley.

Warm weather, cool breezes, and just enough rain make this area ideal for growing and harvesting spring/summer crops. Growers remain in this region until the weather cools in approximately mid- to late October.

To avoid quality problems that cooler temperatures and rain can cause, most growers move their operations, including equipment and harvesting crews* to Huron, California where the weather remains warmer for a longer period of time. The 45-day season is the shortest within the yearly harvesting cycle.

By mid-November, crops are usually ready to be picked in Yuma, Arizona where mild winter temperatures and less rain are more conducive to this season's farming. Growers move from Huron south to the desert region, including Yuma, Coachella, and the Imperial Valley, where they remain until the next April, when Arizona becomes too hot. The entire cycle begins anew with a move back to Huron and then to the Salinas Valley where conditions are again optimum for the spring and summer months.

*Markon Inspectors follow the harvests, living and working in the various regions to ensure they are in the fields every day, no matter what season.

Celery

Celery harvesting begins its cycle in Salinas. The season starts in early June and runs through November. By December, cold weather has pushed growers south to Oxnard, California and then in January to Yuma, Arizona. The Yuma celery harvest is short—from January to March; the Oxnard season continues through the next June, starting over again in Salinas. Santa Maria has celery available April through December.

Strawberries

By late April, strawberries are ready to be picked in Salinas and nearby Watsonville, California. Growers harvest here until late October or the first significant rain, when crews move south to Oxnard. In December-January, harvesting transitions to Coachella, then on to Santa Maria. In April, growers move back to Salinas.

