



# Specialty Crops Market News Division U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement Seasonal Perishable Products Weekly Update

Agricultural Marketing Service

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## **Update for Week February 18-24, 2024**

This report provides trend analysis of the volume and prices of Seasonal Perishable commodities. Volume represents current week and prices represent open (spot) market sales by first handlers on product of generally good quality and condition unless otherwise stated and may include promotional allowances or other incentives. The charts provide graphic representation of the volume and prices of the major commodities this week based on seasonal volume.

Rainy weather and muddy, saturated fields continue to be an issue in the southern California, western Arizona, Baja California and Sonora, Mexico growing regions. Wet conditions continue to impact the quality of fresh produce, limiting supplies. Truck availability is adequate; however, threats of flash flooding and debris flows remain a concern. Storms are expected to end by Friday, February 23. Foggy conditions continue in the Texas Gulf Coast region, slowing border crossings, even with a slight surplus of trucks.

Asparagus growing conditions from the Caborca, Mexico is optimal. The ten-day forecast predicts highs from 72-85 degrees and 49-60-degree lows. Production is up approximately 37% from weekending February 17. The increase in supplies and lack luster demand has coolers full, and shippers making price deals. Production is shifting into the 28-pound cartons/crates bunched, while 11-pound standard and large sizes are packed to order. Shippers sold some supplies for advertised specials and hot buys, but promotions will not begin until March. Retail demand is expected to increase for Easter near March 13, with Easter falling on March 31. Movement from Mexico Crossings through Calexico, California and San, Luis Arizona is expected to increase. Trading is slow. Prices are lower. 28-pound cartons/crates bunched large mostly 18.75-20.75, standard mostly 18.75- 20.75; 11-pound cartons/crates bunched jumbo mostly 8.75-10.75, large mostly 10.75-11.75, standard mostly 9.75-10.75; ORGANIC large mostly 14.75-15.75, standard mostly 14.75-15.75. Movement of Peru imports through South Florida ports of entry is expected to decrease seasonally. From Peru 11-pound cartons bunched Green supplies insufficient to establish a market. Quality and condition are variable. Supplies are very light and in few hands. Most present shipments from prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Most shippers have received their final containers for the season and are awaiting supplies from other areas. Very light movement is expected until new season begins in mid-to-late April.

Avocado demand was better than expected even as shippers report adequate supply and moderate movement. This is an improvement post-Super Bowl when shippers struggled to move the fruit at higher prices. Shippers are talking with more positively this week, with a little flexibility in prices. Movement of Mexico Crossings through Texas is expected to decrease slightly. Trading early was fairly active, late moderate. Prices of conventional 36s-48s and Organic 48s is higher, conventional 70s-84s and Organic 70s are lower, while others remained generally unchanged. Cartons 2 layers of Hass 32s mostly 44.25-46.25, 36s mostly 42.25-44.25, 40s mostly 42.25-43.25, 48s mostly 41.25- 42.25, 60s mostly 31.25-33.25, 70s mostly 22.25-23.25, 84s mostly 17.25-18.25; ORGANIC 48s mostly 46.25-48.25, 60s mostly 38.25- 40.25, 70s mostly 28.25-30.25.

Green bell peppers from Mexican crossings through Nogales are expected to remain about the same. Prices are coming down from their previous highs. Higher volumes and crossings are bringing down prices to a more normal level. This trend is expected to continue as warmer weather is expected in the growing regions. Trading is moderate. Prices are much lower. 1 1/9 bushel cartons Green (wide range in prices) jumbo 16.95-20.95, extra-large 14.95-18.95, large 12.95-

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16.95, medium 10.95- 14.95; irregular size fair quality Green 10.95-14.95. Quality generally good. Movement from Central and South Florida is expected to remain about the same. Trading is moderate. Prices are much lower. Price Includes palletizing and precooling. 1 1/9 bushel cartons Green jumbo mostly 26.35, extra-large mostly 24.35, large mostly 20.35- 22.35, irregular sized fair quality mostly 18.35-20.35. Quality is generally good.

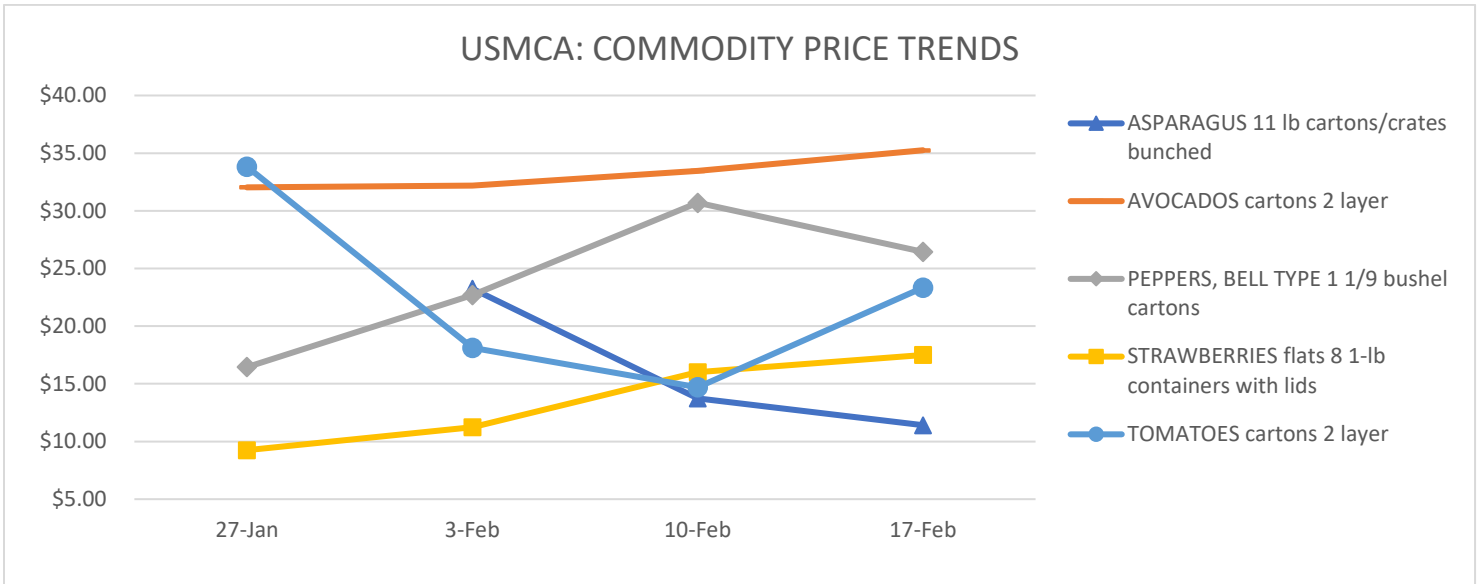
Strawberry production in California has been dealt a big blow via weather. Heavy and constant rains have prevented production and curtailed harvest due to wet fields. Available supplies are very light and most present shipments are reserved for prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Market prices are steady; however, spot market availability is very, very limited. More rain and wet fields are expected again this week. Strawberry harvest in California was supercharged during February 16-19 as field managers strategized to increase production and get ahead of the rain forecasted that was inbound. Growers expect production numbers to increase within the next three weeks, once fields are dry. Field managers are constantly assessing their options to save their crops from deterioration. Movement from Central Florida is expected to remain about the same. Trading is active. Prices of conventional are slightly higher. Prices includes palletizing and precooling. Flats 8 1-lb. containers with lids large-extra large mostly 16.00- 18.00. Organic 8 1-lb. containers with lids medium-large mostly 38.00-40.00. Quality is generally good. Movement from Mexico Crossings through Texas is expected about the same. Trading is fairly active. Prices are slightly higher. Flats 8 1-pound containers with lids medium mostly 16.00-18.00. Quality and condition are variable. Most present shipments from prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Movement from Mexico Crossings through Otay Mesa, California is expected about the same. Supplies remain very light. Trading is moderate. Prices flats 8 1-pound containers with lids large-extra large 18.00-20.00. Quality and condition are variable. Most present shipments from prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Movement from Oxnard, California is expected about the same. Available supplies are light as most present shipments are from prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Trading is fairly active. Prices flats 8 1-pound containers with lids large-extra large mostly 18.00-20.00. Quality and condition variable. Movement from Santa Maria, California is expected about the same. Supplies are insufficient to establish a market. Harvest limited by recent rains. Quality and condition are variable. The first F.O.B. report is expected to be issued by March 8.

Tomato movement of Mexico Crossings through Texas is expected about the same. Trading early is fairly active, late active. Prices are much higher. Vine Ripes cartons 2-layer 4x4-4x5s mostly 32.95-34.95, 5x5-5x6s mostly 30.95-32.95; 25-pound cartons loose 4x4-4x5 sizes mostly 32.95-34.95, 5x5-5x6 sizes mostly 30.95-32.95. Quality is generally good. Movement from Mexico crossings through Nogales, Arizona continued to be hampered by the ongoing wet and cold weather, with crossings expected to remain light but steady. 2-layer vine ripe prices are much higher, and demand exceeds supply. Supplies are very light due less plantings and weather-related events that brought storm after storms in consecutive weeks slowing harvest, affecting yields, quality, and conditions. Trading early was moderate, late very active. Prices are much higher. Cartons 2-layer Vine Ripes 4x4-4x5s mostly 38.95 and 5x5-5x6s 36.95-38.95. Quality is generally good. Movement from Central and South Florida is expected to remain about the same, with continues light supplies. Trading is very active. Prices are higher. Extra services included. 25-pound cartons loose Mature Greens 85 percent U.S. One or better. 5x6 and 6x6 sizes 34.95-35.00.00, 6x7 sizes 24.95-25.00. Quality is generally good.

The following table provides a four-week price trend of the highest traded commodities this week.

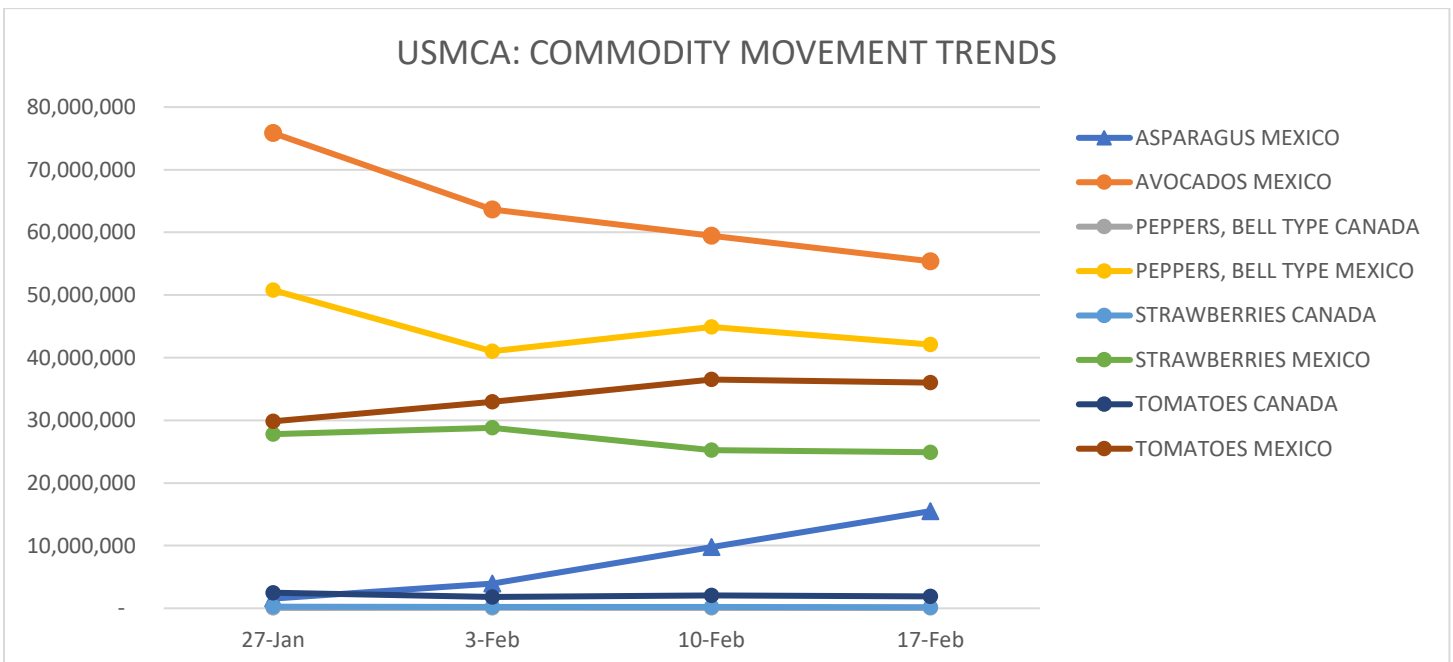
**Four Week Price Trend in U.S. Dollars**

Commodity	Package	27-Jan-24	3-Feb-24	10-Feb-24	17-Feb-24
ASPARAGUS	11 lb cartons/crates bunched		\$ 23.25	\$ 13.75	\$ 11.42
AVOCADOS	cartons 2 layer	\$ 32.04	\$ 32.18	\$ 33.46	\$ 35.25
PEPPERS, BELL TYPE	1 1/9-bushel cartons	\$ 16.45	\$ 22.70	\$ 30.70	\$ 26.45
STRAWBERRIES	flats 8 1-lb containers with lids	\$ 9.25	\$ 11.25	\$ 16.00	\$ 17.50
TOMATOES	cartons 2 layer	\$ 33.83	\$ 18.12	\$ 14.70	\$ 23.33

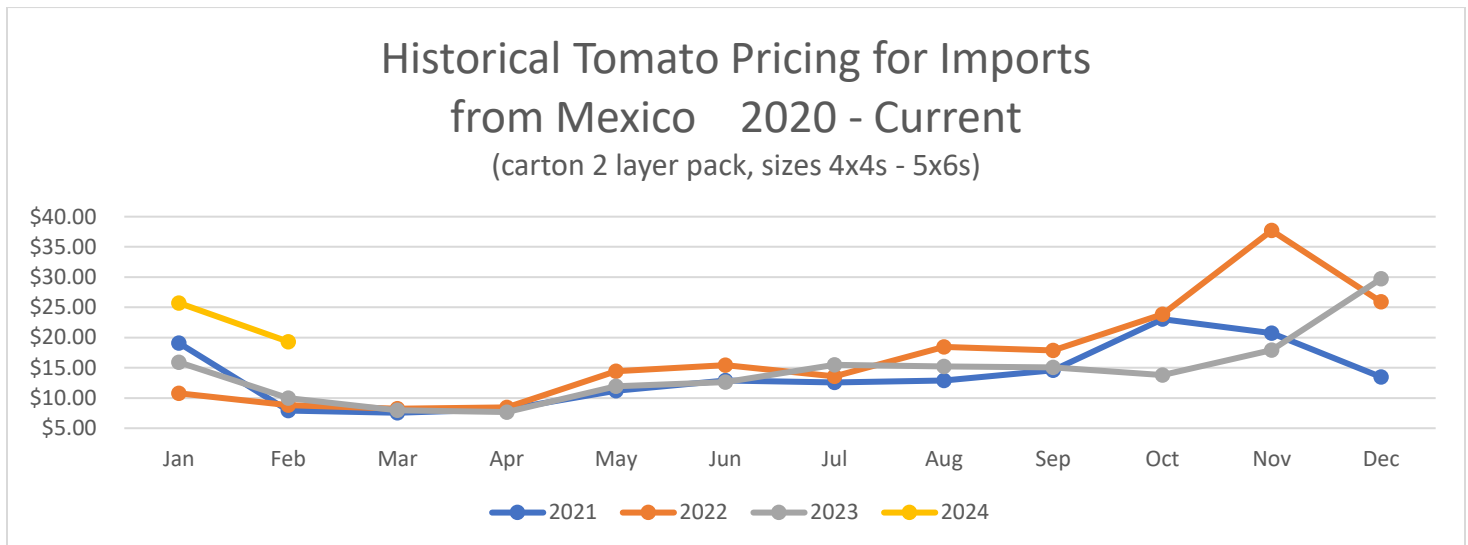


### Four Week Movement in Pounds

COMMODITY	ORIGIN	27-Jan-24	3-Feb-24	10-Feb-24	17-Feb-24
ASPARAGUS	MEXICO	1,551,958	3,918,997	9,760,974	15,509,061
AVOCADOS	MEXICO	75,842,798	63,662,105	59,485,625	55,389,983
PEPPERS, BELL TYPE	CANADA	64,657	86,568	79,538	59,472
	MEXICO	50,774,200	41,028,439	44,914,647	42,113,964
STRAWBERRIES	CANADA	259,310	193,681	194,826	176,758
	MEXICO	27,779,348	28,803,127	25,264,883	24,909,937
TOMATOES	CANADA	2,487,785	1,810,421	2,046,856	1,908,970
	MEXICO	29,845,297	32,966,993	36,511,062	35,995,359



The following chart, *Historical Tomato Pricing for Imports from Mexico*, is a four-year view of Mexican tomato prices at shipping point. Tomatoes are shown as they are the most consistently traded year-round. They have the highest volume of product moving between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada, along with a high level of market coverage of tomatoes by USDA Market News.



To be regarded as "seasonal and perishable," agricultural products must meet the following conditions: (1) the products are fresh or chilled products falling under the following HS2002 tariff codes: 0701, 0702, 0703, 0704, 0705, 0706, 0707, 0708, 0709, 0803, 0804, 0805, 0806, 0807, 0808, 0809, 0810; (2) the products are marketed in raw form for consumption without "further processing" ("further processing" refers to e.g. crushing, juicing, canning, or any other process that transforms the product from its raw form); and (3) the products normally are marketed within eight weeks after harvesting.

For information on the imported volume and prices of the remaining Seasonal and Perishable commodities listed below please visit:

<https://www.marketnews.usda.gov/mnp/fv-home>

- Potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Onions, shallots, garlic, leeks, and other alliaceous vegetables
- Cabbages, cauliflower, kohlrabi, kale, and similar edible brassicas
- Lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*) and chicory (*Cichorium* spp.)
- Carrots, turnips, salad beets (salad beetroot), salsify, celeriac, radishes, and similar edible roots
- Cucumbers, including gherkins
- Leguminous vegetables, shelled or unshelled
- Other vegetables, fresh or chilled: asparagus, eggplants, celery, mushrooms and truffles, peppers (*Capsicum* or of the genus *Pimenta*), spinach, artichokes, olives, pumpkins, squash, and gourds
- Bananas and plantains
- Dates, figs, pineapples, avocados, guavas, mangoes, and mangosteens
- Citrus fruit
- Grapes
- Melons (including watermelons) and papayas (papaws)
- Apples, pears, and quinces
- Apricots, cherries, peaches (including nectarines), plums (including prune plums) and sloes
- Other fruit: strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, mulberries, loganberries, black, white, or red currants and gooseberries (other than kiwifruit), cranberries, blueberries, and other fruits of the genus *Vaccinium*, kiwifruit, durians, persimmons,
- Other berries; tamarinds