



# Specialty Crops Market News Division

## U.S. Mexico Canada Agreement

### Seasonal Perishable Products Weekly Update

Agricultural Marketing Service

Issued Weekly

Friday, March 15, 2024

#### **Update for Week March 10-16, 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.

**Value of Fresh Vegetables rise 6 % in 2023.** According to Tom Karst, with The Packer, USDA trade numbers total value of U.S. fresh vegetable imports totaled \$10.8 billion in 2023, up 6% from 2022. U.S. imports of fresh vegetables with double-digit monetary increases in 2023: carrots 23%, cucumbers 17%, endive 15%, beans and radishes 12%, okra 11%, and tomatoes 10%. U.S. imports of fresh vegetables showing significant declines in monetary value include lettuce 12%, onions 7% and cabbage 4%.

By commodity listed in this report, 2023 imports of fresh vegetables, with the percentage change from 2022:

|           |                         |           |                         |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Cucumbers | \$1.32 billion, up 17%. | Tomatoes  | \$ 3.2 billion, up 10%. |
| Peppers   | \$ 2 billion, up 5%.    | Asparagus | \$634.5 million, up 2%. |

Asparagus from Mexico crossing through Calexico, California and San Luis, Arizona and Arizona continue to see more supply than demand. The good news is there is an increase in retail demand, setting up ads as prices continue to fall 2.29-.99 per pound. Shippers hope this will entice shoppers to buy asparagus which is not their normal purchase. Some shippers found a boost in sales for the open market. Production noted little change as optimal weather conditions increased yields. Growers continue to curtail harvest even as most growers are in peak production. Movement is expected to remain about the same. Trading is very slow. Prices are generally unchanged. 28-pound cartons/crates bunched large are mostly 11.75-12.75, standard are mostly 10.75; 11 pound cartons/crates bunched jumbo are mostly 8.75, large are mostly 10.75, standard are mostly 10.75; organic large are mostly 12.75, standard are mostly 12.75.

Avocados from Mexico crossing through Texas are experiencing a shortage of small fruit sizing 60s, 70s and 84s, while larger fruit is readily available. Some shippers are not selling the smaller fruit unless the buyer also will take larger sizes to make up a load. Prices have trended higher this week for the small fruit sizes. Movement is expected to remain about the same. Trading early was moderate; late 70s-84s active, others moderate. Prices of organic 48s are generally unchanged, others are higher. Cartons 2 layers Hass 32s are mostly 44.25-46.25, 36s are mostly 43.25-45.25, 40s are mostly 42.25-44.25, 48s are mostly 42.25-44.25, 60s are mostly 35.25-37.25, 70s are mostly 27.25- 28.25, 84s are mostly 22.25-23.25; organic 48s are mostly 48.25-50.25, 60s are mostly 40.25-42.25, 70s are mostly 30.25-32.25.

Green Bell Pepper movement from Mexico crossing through Nogales, Arizona is expected to increase slightly. Trading is active. Prices are much higher. 1 1/9 bushel cartons Green jumbo and extra large are mostly 26.95-28.95, large are mostly 24.95, medium are mostly 16.95; Place Pack extra large are mostly 28.95, large are mostly 26.95; irregular size fair quality are mostly 14.95-16.95. Quality variable. Movement from Central and South Florida is expected to slightly increase. Trading is fairly active. Prices of extra-large and fair quality are higher, others are generally unchanged. Prices

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Include palletizing and precooling. 1 1/9 bushel cartons Green jumbo mostly 20.35, extra-large mostly 20.35, large mostly 16.35, irregular sized fair quality mostly 14.35. Quality generally good.

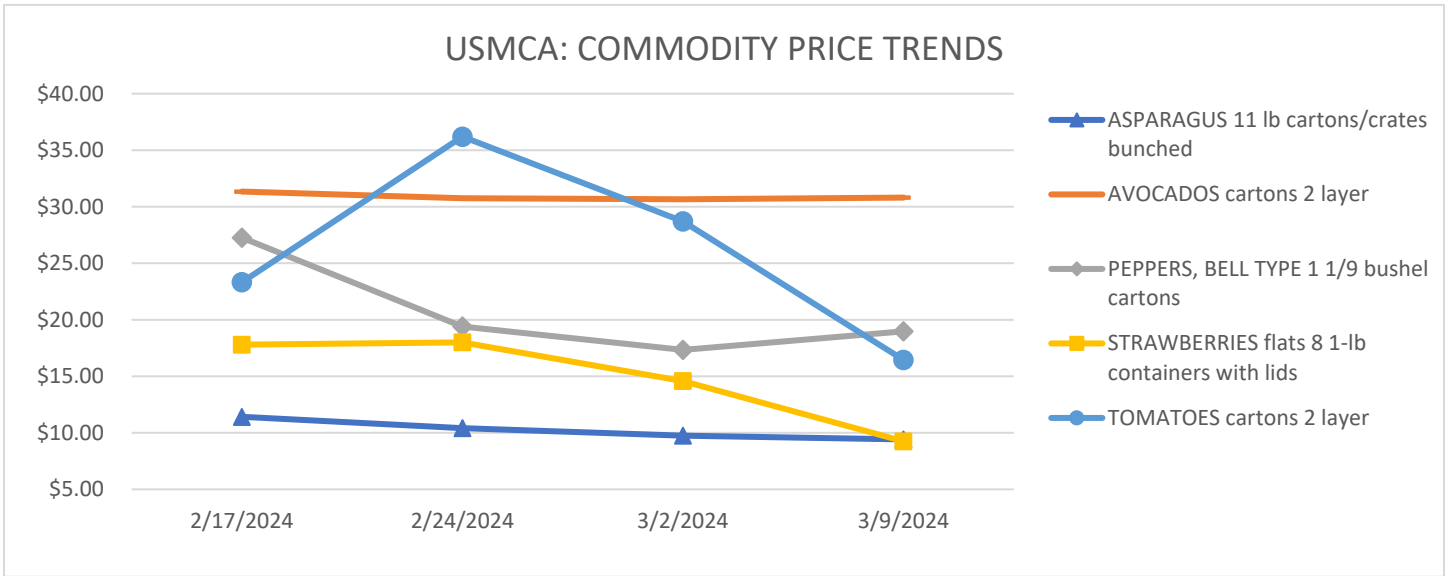
Strawberry field conditions in California are drier and more conducive to normal packing operations. Shipments have significantly increased between March 6-11. Supplies are available and becoming more plentiful. Quality also improved. Prices in California are steady; however, prices are still lower than usual due to increase pressure on lower strawberry markets in Florida. Shipment numbers are expected to increase within the next two weeks. Shippers are expecting large yields prior to the Easter holiday. Movement from Oxnard District, California is expected about the same. Trading early was slow, late is moderate. Prices are lower. Flats 8 1-pound containers with lids large-extra large (wide range in prices) are mostly 8.00-12.00; organic large-extra large are mostly 10.00-12.00. Quality generally good. Some sales booked open with price to be established later. Most present shipments from prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Movement from Santa Maria, California is expected to increase seasonally. Trading early was slow, late is moderate. Prices are lower. Prices flats 8 1-pound containers with lids large-extra large (wide range in prices) are mostly 8.00-12.00; organic large-extra large are mostly 10.00-12.00. Quality is generally good. Some sales booked open with price to be established later. Most present shipments from prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Movement from Central Florida is expected to remain about the same early, decrease late. Trading is slow. Prices are lower. Price includes palletizing and precooling. Flats 8 1-lb. containers with lids large are mostly 6.00-8.00. Quality generally good. Production in Eastern North Carolina is expected in the Coastal Plains region by the week ending March 22. Producers in the Piedmont region estimate harvest to begin week ending April 19. Movement from Mexico crossings through Texas is expected about the same. Trading is slow. Prices are lower. Flats 8 1-pound containers with lids medium are 8.00-10.00; organic medium are mostly 8.00-10.00. Quality is generally good. Many sales booked open with prices to be established later. Most present shipments from prior bookings and/or previous commitments. Movement from Mexico crossings through Otay Mesa, California is expected about the same. Trading is slow. Prices are lower. Prices flats 8 1-pound containers with lids large-extra large are 8.00-10.00; organic large-extra large are 8.00-10.00. Quality generally good. Some sales booked open with price to be established later. Most present shipments from prior bookings and/or previous commitments.

Tomato movement from Mexico crossing through Texas is expected about the same. Trading early was fairly slow, late is slow. Prices are much lower. Vine Ripes cartons 2-layer 4x4-4x5s are mostly 10.95, 5x5-5x6s are mostly 12.95; 25-pound cartons loose 4x4-4x5 sizes are mostly 12.95-14.95, 5x5 size are mostly 11.95-14.95; 5x6 size are mostly 12.95-14.95. Quality is generally good. Movement from Mexico crossing through Nogales, Arizona is expected to increase slightly. Trading early was fairly slow, late is moderate. Prices are much lower. Cartons 2-layer Vine Ripes 4x4-4x5s are mostly 10.95-12.95, 5x5-5x6s are mostly 10.95. Quality is variable. Movement from Central and South Florida is expected to decrease. Trading is fairly active. Prices 6x6 size are higher, others are generally unchanged. Extra services included. 25-pound cartons loose Mature Greens 85 percent U.S. One or better 5x6 size are 28.95-29.00, 6x6 size are 30.95-31.00, 6x7 sizes are 27.95-28.00. Quality is generally good.

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

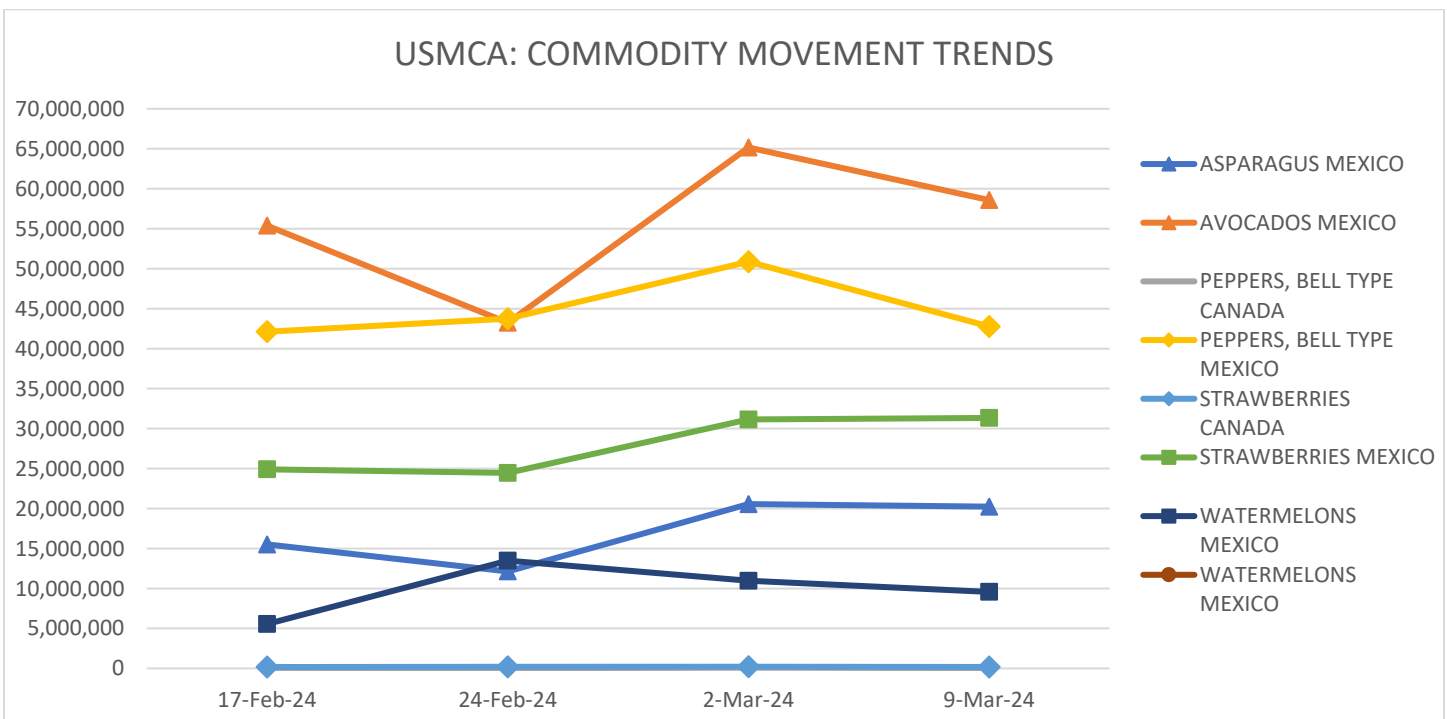
#### Four Week Price Trend in U.S. Dollars

| Commodity          | Package                           | 2/17/2024 | 2/24/2024 | 3/2/2024 | 3/9/2024 |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| ASPARAGUS          | 11 lb. cartons/crates bunched     | \$ 11.42  | \$ 10.42  | \$ 9.75  | \$ 9.42  |
| AVOCADOS           | cartons 2 layer                   | \$ 31.34  | \$ 30.75  | \$ 30.66 | \$ 30.81 |
| PEPPERS, BELL TYPE | 1 1/9-bushel cartons              | \$ 27.26  | \$ 19.41  | \$ 17.34 | \$ 18.98 |
| STRAWBERRIES       | flats 8 1-lb containers with lids | \$ 17.80  | \$ 18.00  | \$ 14.58 | \$ 9.25  |
| TOMATOES           | cartons 2 layer                   | \$ 23.33  | \$ 36.20  | \$ 28.70 | \$ 16.45 |

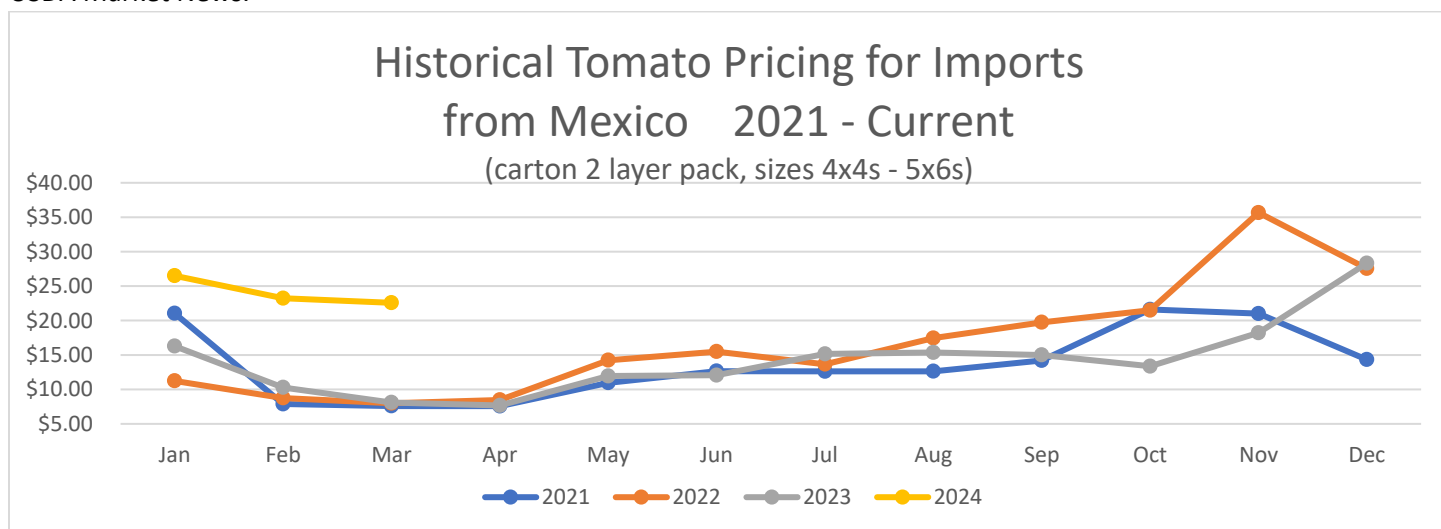


### Four Week Movement in Pounds

| COMMODITY          | ORIGIN | 17-Feb-24  | 24-Feb-24  | 2-Mar-24   | 9-Mar-24   |
|--------------------|--------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| ASPARAGUS          | MEXICO | 15,509,061 | 12,134,296 | 20,555,663 | 20,237,647 |
| AVOCADOS           | MEXICO | 55,389,983 | 43,238,331 | 65,155,075 | 58,582,974 |
| PEPPERS, BELL TYPE | CANADA | 59,472     | 28,933     | 93,264     | 45,335     |
|                    | MEXICO | 42,113,964 | 43,749,437 | 50,871,544 | 42,763,783 |
| STRAWBERRIES       | CANADA | 176,758    | 199,264    | 214,107    | 178,735    |
|                    | MEXICO | 24,909,937 | 24,456,585 | 31,142,269 | 31,332,049 |
| WATERMELONS        | MEXICO | 5,556,895  | 13,484,811 | 10,971,930 | 9,573,173  |



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