

Movement of Navel oranges on the U.S. East Coast was moderate during week 26 despite light volumes available on the market, according to Capespan North America CEO Mark Greenberg.



In a week 26 market report, he said the first South African bulk reefer arrived and discharged her cargo in week 25, while the first of Chile's navels entered the following week.

He explained that timing was an important factor explaining the relatively low uptake.

"Navel oranges importers are used to overlapping with California for at least a few weeks. Retailers are not used to a gap between the end of California's crop and the start of the imported navel orange season," he said.

"So while the gap officially ended last week, retailers were focused on summer fruit for the July 4 holiday and not on navel oranges. The result is moderate (although consistent) demand for imported navels and pricing that is robust if perhaps softer than one might have anticipated."

However, he expected to see interest in Navels pick up in week 28 "when all retailers should be on board."

The market is seeing arrivals of heavier volumes of small-caliber fruit from South Africa and is expecting the same from Chile, he said, which suggests that the 9 x 3 lbs bag price will quickly come down from its "lofty US\$28-30 level."

The Chilean harvest had been proceeding slowly, and will likely slow down even further due to rains over recent days. South Africa, however, is loading "consistently", with the second bulk vessel expected to arrive on the East Coast late in week 27 followed by the third bulk vessel in week 29.

## **Easy peeler market remains "virtually unfazed"**

For easy peelers, Greenberg said the market remains strong despite his predictions that prices could fall during week 26 on the back of rising supplies and increasing volumes of domestic summer fruit.

"Remarkably, demand continues to run very close to supply and the easy peeler price has remained stable if perhaps a bit lower than last week," he said.

Chilean sources continue to load heavily with tonnage shipped through Week 25 almost 50% greater than last season, he said.

"South African and Peruvian easy peelers are also adding their tonnage to the available product. Yet the market remains virtually unfazed. The gap in navel orange supplies is likely a factor in helping to hold the easy peeler market stable, but so is the increased appetite for the product."

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