



General Produce

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EDIBLES

The word "**edibles**" may immediately conjure up the notion of any food substance that has been infused with cannabis.

There are other **culinary edibles** that come from the plant or herb world that can be equally euphoric.

Edible flowers add a special touch of **playfulness, elegance** and **charm** to appetizers, cocktails and beverages, soups, salads, desserts and main dish garnishes.

The scope of edible flowers runs the gambit from **delicate** and **soft** to **powerful** and **flavorful**. Some go as far as **peppery** or **pungent**. Some have herbal properties. Some are scented. All of them are delightful.

To **name favorites** would definitely result in overlooking an important flower not meant to be ignored. **Hibiscus, rose, pansy, peony, marigold, carnation, sunflower** and **chrysanthemum** lead the roll call.

Lavender, zucchini blossoms, nasturtiums, and violets all have a purpose in the kitchen. The tiny flowers of culinary plants in the **mint family** are perfectly edible. **Basil, rosemary, lemon balm, and mint flowers** are small but deliberate additions to enhance culinary creations.

Those pesky **dandelion flowers** we see as weeds popping up in lawns are very edible. Actually, the entire plant is edible: **flower, leaves, and roots**. The taste resembles that of a spicy arugula.

Use **fresh** or **dried dandelion petals** as a garnish in salads and desserts. Young dandelion flowers



have a **honey-like** flavor. More mature blossoms are bitter, but still nutritious and attractive.

Little known **borage** has edible leaves and **bright blue flowers**. This happy little plant will reseed itself in the garden and deliver joy by floating a flower in a wine glass.

Many flowers will need the **stamens** and **styles** removed before eating

because the pollen can cause allergic reactions. For some of the smaller flowers (**violas, pansies, honeysuckle, and clover**), there is no need to do this. Do not assume all flowers are edible.

For a great **flavor boost** and **sustainable use of the entire plant**, use those *end of season flower bolts* of chive, chervil, dill, sage, cilantro, and basil on the plate. Interesting and unexpected, these **bursts of color** add celebration to the table.

There are **annuals** and **perennials** among the blossoms cultivated for culinary uses. Add some glamor to **frozen confections** and **ice cubes**. **Baked goods** like **cakes, cupcakes and cookies** get dressed up with an seasonal flower topper.

Jellies, jams, preserves and **butters** get made over by the floral treatment. Keep them in mind once summer fruits get turned into glistening jars or rolls of home made specialties.

For best results, use flowers immediately after picking or purchasing. The next best thing is to refrigerate in a plastic bag or clamshell to hold their properties. Dried or frozen flowers are best used in infusions or cooking.

Flower power gets us to next level wining and dining.



Apples & Pears: Apple markets are steady as slowly decreasing supplies meet slowly decreasing demand. There are still some available lingering retail deals for interested parties.

We are having a very strong finish to the **USA pear** season. Excellent availability still remains on **green** and **red Anjous** and **Bosc pears**. Like apples, bagged promotions continue to add value to the consumer and incremental profits to retailers.



Avocados: Supplies are better this week coming out of *Mexico*. Markets are lower with better supplies, but this is expected to be short lived. *Peru* is right around the corner and *California* is going. Cinco de Mayo demand was

strong, but we're going to stay in a strong demand situation.

Berries: We are still experiencing the tail end of the Mother's day **strawberry** pulls. Open market fruit is in short supply. Many shippers are pushing orders forward where possible to facilitate filling orders. Quality is good, berry size large.

Blackberry supplies are steady. *West coast* production should begin to ramp up over the next few weeks as we see warmer weather. Blueberries from the *Central Valley of California* has begun so volume will increase. The market should remain flat through next week. *California raspberry* production is still a couple of weeks away

Citrus: Navel orange supplies on 113-138's continue to be limited on both grades. Markets are steady at higher levels on all sizes. Expect strong markets during the transition from Navels to Valencias. **Valencia oranges are now** the primary variety as we transition. Peak sizes on both varieties are 56/72/88's. The good news is that new crop Valencia quality is very good.

District 1 (Central Valley) is the main **lemon** growing region right now. It typically runs through May. Current peak sizes are 95/115's. District 2 (Ventura County) will trickle in, but shelf life tends to be shorter due to growing conditions in this region. Choice grade fruit will dominate the marketplace; Fancy grade markets will increase. This region will ramp up late-May/Early-June with peak sizes 140/165's.



Lime prices continue to slide. Overall supply is improving with large sizes (110-150 counts) still relatively snug. Supplies much heavier on small size fruit 230-250 counts.

California mandarin supplies remain extremely tight as the season winds down in the next two weeks. *Chilean mandarins* are expected to start end of May. **Gold Nuggets** are a good option in place of mandarins; peak sizes are Jumbo/Large.



Sunkist is shipping **Star Ruby grapefruit** variety. Sizes are peaking on fancy grade 40's and larger. **Bee Sweet** is peaking on 36 count and larger in the *Central Valley*. **Blood oranges** are currently peaking on 72/88/113's and running through mid-June. **Cara Caras** and **Pixies** are finished.

Grapes: **Green grape** markets are firm on both coasts. Some lots are showing considerable ambering. Better quality varieties are, of course, commanding a premium. Red grape markets are better. Most of the distressed fruit has been dealt with causing the market to slowly rise from the bottom.

Melons: **Cantaloupe** from *Mexico* is priced lower than the *Central American* imports. *California* looks to begin late next week in the *Imperial Valley*. Good volume **Honeydew** volume and quality are crossing in Nogales. **Watermelon** supplies are up from *Mexico* and *Florida* are bringing this market lower. Good quality on both coasts. Get into the bin market.



Seasonals: Both **yellow** and **white peaches** are going now. **Tray packs** are running 48's thru 64's with 64's having the most volume. **Volume filled** packs are currently running to 72's and smaller. Watch for pricing to adjust down over

the next few weeks. **Apricots** are starting to pick up in volume. Quality is very good. Very few **nectarines** are being harvested currently. More volume will be coming online late next week and the week after. **Plums** are still imported product with *California* expected to start in June.

California cherries are going now. The crop this year is reported to be about half the volume of last year's crop. Prices are high and volumes are not promotable. Pallet quantities are available.

Tomatoes: **Markets** are steady. *Ruskin/Palmetto* area is up and running with increased production expected over the next two weeks. *Quincy* is scheduled to start the first week of June. Out west, volume continues to decline as we approach the tail end of the season out of *Nogales*. We expect to see a limited amount of rounds starting out of the *California Desert* next week. *Baja* continues to build volume. **Conventional grape tomatoes** are plentiful, while **organic grapes** still quite short.

Asparagus – Supplies continue to experience a slight gap as *Caborca* supplies are coming to a close. Look for supplies to be on the tighter side over the next few weeks. Markets of all sizes will be slightly elevated during this time.



Broccoli, Cauliflower & Celery: **Broccoli** supplies continue to be very good in *Salinas, Santa Maria, and Mexico*. Look for this market to stay steady going into the weekend. **Cauliflower** supplies continue to be good

in *Salinas and Santa Maria*. Look for this market to continue to stay steady as more supplies fill the pipeline. **Celery** supplies continue to tighten up. The market is being largely driven by *industry wide* seeder issues, as well as some reduced plantings. We hear the seeder issues are fairly wide-spread. The entire month of May could be pretty active.

Lettuces: The **iceberg** lettuce market is starting to firm up. Fields the last few weeks have moved forward with the warmer weather and now suppliers are caught up and on top of their fields. Expect markets to firm up slightly to the mid-teens. Warm weather this week in the *Salinas Valley* should help supplies.

Butter lettuce will be on the light side for the entire week. Good supplies will continue on all other leafy lettuces, including **romaine hearts**. Common defects being reported include tip and fringe burn.

Mixed Vegetables: **Brussels sprouts** have light supply expectations for the next month and a half. *Salinas* production expected to begin the middle of July. Light **red cabbage** supplies are expected for the next two to four weeks. Light plantings compared to past seasons is the direct cause. Shippers are gapping.

Green bell pepper prices are slightly lower. Most growers out of *Coachella* are now online with a slight supply improvement. **Organic green bell peppers** will start around mid-May. **Red bell peppers** from *Coachella* should start next week. Quality is good with sizes more on the larger side. *Nogales* supply continues to dwindle as most growers going for a few more weeks. Limited volume and quality issues continue on **organic red bells**. New growing area starts mid-May. Light supply, but consistent **variety chili peppers** coming through *Nogales*.

Cucumber prices are slightly lower. *Mexican* supply has rebounded out of *Nogales*. *Baja* supply is gradually increasing, expect to see significant volume out of this through May. **Persian cukes** are in good supply. **Eggplant** is steady and solid out of *Nogales*. This crop will run through the month into early June. **Eggplant** is now available out of *Coachella*.

Nogales continues to produce a good amount of **Italian** and **yellow squash**. Promotable volume is available. *Santa Maria* is expected to begin mid-May. Expect the same trend over the next two weeks

Onions: *California* is ramping up with **onion** supply out of the *Imperial Valley*. Quality is decent on **yellows** and **reds**. Temperatures are picking up, which should speed up the drying process. **White onion** quality from *Mexico* has been very good. Expect thin-skinned, bald yellow onions as the new crop short will not have a nicely cured, thick brown skin as we have been used to over the past months.



RADISH TOAST WITH CHIVE BUTTER

INGREDIENTS:

6 thin slices baguette or other crusty bread

3 tablespoons good quality unsalted butter, softened to room temperature*

1 tablespoon minced fresh chives, plus more for garnish

flaky sea salt, such as Maldon, for sprinkling

6-8 small-medium radishes, sliced into paper thin coins
chive flowers, kale flowers, arugula flowers or other small edible flowers for garnish



SERVES 6

METHOD: Place the slices of bread in the toaster or toaster oven and toast until just lightly golden brown. While the bread toasts, mix together the butter and chives until fully combined. Remove the bread from the toaster and allow to cool for a few minutes so the butter doesn't melt.

Divide the butter amongst the 6 toasts and spread out evenly. Sprinkle lightly with sea salt, then arrange the radish slices over top. Arrange the toasts on a platter and sprinkle with a tiny bit more sea salt, chopped chives and edible flowers. Serve immediately.

Recipe courtesy of **Nicole Gaffney**
(Coley Cooks blog)



Enjoy this week's update



MARKET REPORT

For updated prices and availability contact

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“Where
flowers
bloom,
so does
hope.”

-Lady Bird Johnson

