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MARKET REPORT



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Vol. 30, No. 20

Monday, May 14, 2012

VEGETABLE PAKORAS

Appetizers are favored the world over. India is no exception and, in fact, boasts some of the tastiest and exotic vegetarian options. **Pakor**as are one of the most common food staples in India and as popular there as the hamburger is in the West.



Cumin, turmeric, cayenne, coriander, mustard and pomegranate seeds, fresh ginger and garlic may all be used as base notes for the vegetable mixture. By experimenting with one or two fresh vegetables and an array of Indian spices and herbs allows the cook to compose satisfying and complex flavors.

These **savory fritters**, are often bought from street vendors (in India, Pakistan and now coast-to-coast from Seattle to New York), who serve them wrapped up in a newspaper or waxed paper cones. Like most delectable *street foods*, they transition well into cocktail parties, moveable feasts and celebrations for small crowds.

Traditionally, the much-awaited monsoon rain showers are always a cause for celebration in India. When the rains finally arrive, **vegetable pakoras** are served with tea as a family meal to acknowledge the end of a long hot summer season.

There are as many recipes and variations of **pakoras** as there are chefs. Often, they are served with **chutneys** and **dips** that can be **sweet, tangy, spicy** or a combination of all three. Some popular chutney starters are **tamarind, mango, mint, cilantro, coconut, guava** and **tomato**.

Best served warm, they can be made ahead in advance and then reheated in the oven on a cookie sheet before serving. Pakoras answer the call to that mid-morning or late afternoon hunger attack. They are a good way to increase vegetable consumption for kids.

Cauliflower, eggplant, zucchini, potatoes, spinach, peas, green chilies, root vegetables, leeks, onions—all are natural choices for absolutely *wonderful* tasting pakoras. The mélange of spices that perk up the savory **besan** or **chickpea flour batter** have the ability to meld nearly *any* fresh ingredient. It all comes together into one heavenly bite.

Pakoras are perfect for an *every day* snack, light meal or any *special occasion* party food. They can be used for sandwiches in pocket bread or flat tandoori sheets.

On the hook for planning a **festive menu** for moms, dads, grads or birthday celebrants? **Veggie pakoras** quickly and easily create a festive party solution.



FRUITS

Apples: The **Apple** deal has slid downhill in a hurry with the few domestic storage apples flushing out rapidly. **Premium Galas, Lady Alice, Pink Lady** and **Braeburns** are all finished. **Chilean Galas** are the dominate import with **Braeburns, Granny Smith** and **Fujis** up next. *Prices are much stronger but will go higher by early summer. New Zealand* will have its 1st shipment in about 10 days again with **Galas** being up first. **Again, look for apples to be tight and very expensive throughout the summer!**



Avocados: Very good demand continues to drive the avocado market. **California** volume has increased and is surpassing **Mexican** output. The fruit is

ripening and performing very well. Look for deals on 60's, 70's and 84's. **Mexican** supplies are decent, and growers limiting harvest to spread their harvest through the springtime. Maturity and flavor are excellent.

Berries: **California strawberry** harvests have increased in **Santa Maria, Watsonville** and **Salinas**. **Oxnard** harvests will slow somewhat. Quality is very good in all districts. **Strawberry** sizing has been small this spring and that has caused **stem strawberry** harvests to be very low. **Raspberry** harvests have improved overall. Production in **California** will be the focus as **Mexico raspberries** are on the decline. Next new harvests begin in **Northern California** in mid-May. **Blackberries** are still being harvested in **Central Mexico** and **Baja**. **Blackberry** volumes will be moderate until **California** crop emerges in May. New crop **blueberry** harvests are now occurring **California** and the east. Fruit quality is very good.



Citrus: Demand continues strong on **navel oranges**. Supplies were more available this week, with more run time available as well as no weather to impact harvesting. Size structure is mostly now running 72/88/56's or 72/56/88's. **Navels** will continue to be available in good

supply through mid- June. **Domestic Valencia** production is beginning on a limited basis. All **cara cara oranges** have now been processed for the season.

Movement remains very strong for **California Star Ruby grapefruit**; demand exceeds supply on many

sizes (choice cartons and bags). **Eureka/Lisbon Lemons** are in good supply with both Fancy and choice grades available, pricing is steady; **Meyer lemons** are all but finished for the season. **Limes** and **Kumquats** are steady

Grapes: **Mexican Flames** and **Perlettes** have started in a very light way this week. The market on the **red grapes** is higher. **New crop flames** are small on berry size. **Chilean green grapes** are done coming in with all product now coming out of storage and extremely limited.



Seasonal Fruits: **Apriums** and **apricots** have started with **Tasty Rich** variety on **Apriums** and **Poppycots** on **Apricots**. Fruit is on the small size with some but not huge volume. For flavor the **Tasty Rich** are the ticket but expect to see a bit more bruising

as they soften up. The first of the **cherries** are starting off at *extremely high prices*. **California peaches** and **nectarines** are available.

Plums are about two weeks out with a **Black Beauty** first up, quickly followed by **Flavorosa Plucots** around June 1st..summer is on its way!! Next week is the last week for **off shore melons**. **Mexican melons** are available at this time. **California Desert cantaloupes** are available this week. **California Desert honeydews** are available next week.



Tomatoes: Pricing continues to be aggressive with deals on **Slicers, Romas** and **Grape tomatoes**. **Tomatoes-on-the-vine, Heirlooms** and **mixed Cherry** pricing is stronger. Quality is good with all growers picking with color with some fruit **Greenhouse** grown. Summer tasting tomatoes aren't far off as field grown

fruit out of desert should be available by early June.



End of the OG road~ The season is now finished on the following *organically grown* items:

OG Russet Cartons (until mid – June)
OG Kiwi (until import season begins)
OG Asparagus (heat damage)
OG Navels (end of CA Season)

Ask us for current OG offerings!

VEGETABLES

Asparagus: Continued tight availability in **California**, with light production volume in **Eastern Washington** due to cold weather. Prices have advanced even higher this week. We anticipate a break in the market coming soon.

Broccoli, Cauliflower & Celery: There are sufficient **broccoli** supplies for the week. Quality remains consistent with medium bead size and uniform dome shape and pack. Still some light purple casting on some varieties, but for the most, a nice green color throughout. Fair supplies of **cauliflower** are available. Quality is excellent but size and weights are smaller than the last few weeks. The industry is experiencing *reduced yields* which should bring the market up. The **celery** seeder problem has slowed with most shippers walking around fields with heavy seeder, leaving *less available celery to harvest*; also contributing to smaller sizing and lighter weights. Overall, color and quality are good. Seeders are now around two inches compared to 5 inches

Iceberg & Leaf Lettuces: The **iceberg** market is stronger. Due to *past weather* fluctuations, suppliers are having issues with this commodity. **Pink ribbing, discoloration, decay, brown butts** and **light weights** are issues suppliers are dealing with. Yields are down with all suppliers as packing a consistent box of lettuce has become very difficult.

Romaine demand is good. Overall, quality remains good with some very light and occasional **tip burn** and **light broken ribs**. **Romaine Hearts** have average supplies. Product is growing well from recent nice weather but with light fringe burn on tips of the heads. Mildew is prevalent industry wide; however crews are trimming off to produce clean romaine hearts, facilitating an overall increase in supplies. Supplies are better on **green** and **red leaf** this week; expect lighter supplies for the next several weeks.



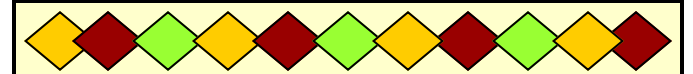
Mixed Vegetables: Local **purple artichokes** are available now. **Green Globe** choke availability is excellent on 12's and 18's sizes. **Green Bell Pepper** demand is strong in the West (**Coachella** and **Nogales**), with a moderate decrease in production volume. Availability has improved for **red** and **yellow bells** in **Nogales**. **Hothouse** production

will continue through early June, with the **Coachella** harvest beginning this weekend.



Kale supplies are increasing daily due to optimal growth conditions. Bunches are averaging 10-14 inches in length with dark green color and very nice texture.

Zucchini continues to be tight with **Mexico** finishing up and **California** coming on. Domestic volumes are increasing daily with promotable supplies anticipated by late May. **Yellow squash** is already **Californian grown**, volumes remain limited, prices steep. Improved **hard squash supplies** are now available.



VEGETABLE PANKORAS

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup besan (chick pea)
- 3 TBSP rice flour
- 1 TBSP coarsely ground coriander powder
- 1 Tsp cumin seeds
- 2 chopped green chilies
- 2 TBSP chopped cilantro (hara dhanja)
- 1 Tsp salt adjust to taste
- 3/4 cup of water (Use water as needed)
- Oil to fry
- 1 small potato, sliced thin
- 8 thin slices of cauliflower
- 1/2 small zucchini, sliced thin



Method: Mix all the dry ingredients together: besan, rice flour, coriander powder, and salt. **Tip: rice flour adds to the crispness.** Add the water slowly to make a smooth batter (batter should be consistency of pancake batter or dosa batter). Next, add the green chilies and cilantro. Mix well. Heat the oil in a frying pan on medium high heat. The frying pan should have at least 1 1/2 inch of oil. **(To check if the oil is ready, put one drop of batter in oil. The batter should come up but not change color right away).**

Dip the vegetable slices in the batter one at a time and slowly drop in frying pan. Fry the pakoras in small batches. The pakoras will take about 4 to 5 minutes to cook. Turn them occasionally. Fry the pakoras until both sides are golden-brown. Repeat this process. The crispy, delicious pakoras are ready to serve.

MAKES 2 DOZEN

