

New Onion Growing Regions Relieve Low Domestic Crop

Detail Introduction :

The spring season for onions has begun in both Mexico and Texas.

“The quality and demand for onions are both excellent,” says Matthew Gideon, Sales & Commodity Manager at Keystone Fruit Marketing based in Greencastle, PA. “Vidalia is up next and will officially begin April 12th. California is looking good so far and we anticipate a normal year. Then we’ll get started in Walla Walla, WA in June.”



Along with supplies of onions out of Mexico and Texas, other areas coming on with fresh crops include Georgia in April, then California and Washington later this year. Keystone itself is currently shipping from Washington as Mexico and Texas.

“Due to weather issues in the Pacific Northwest last summer, the overall supply of onions is much lower than last. We will wrap up our Northwest storage crop next month and be fully into our new crop onions in the fall,” says Gideon.

Low supplies, strong demand

Not surprisingly, demand is stronger this year for onions compared to last year. “The market is very strong higher than last year. We can attribute this to the lack of storage onions in the Northwest,” says Gideon, noting that the domestic storage crop is at a record low this year.

Meanwhile, challenging the industry are a variety of issues including freight rates at an all-time high and labor shortages. However, Gideon notes that the onion industry was beginning to change before the pandemic and that shift was only accelerated by COVID. “Growers only planting for confirmed sales, labor challenges, the general price increase of onions in stores... all of these factors have drastically changed the planning procedures and outlook when we talk to our grower partners,” he says, noting Keystone includes growers in its decisions regarding its retail partners. Looking ahead, Gideon says with more fresh onions coming into the market, more choices will be available for consumers. Keystone itself has some new offerings available including organic Mexican onions, as well as

expanded supplies of its Walla Walla Rose Red onions and Vidalia onions.

And with spring and summer around the corner, promotions will be too. “Consumers are excited to get out and enjoy warmer temperatures. Grilling, picnics, parties, special events, and holidays are all great opportunities to use our sweet onions and we encourage our customers to promote with confidence,” says Gideon.