

SEASONALITY GUIDE:

THE IMPACT OF SEASONALITY ON THE SUPPLY CHAIN

Seasonality...it's a major factor in helping us to forecast and plan for the entire year. As we all know, the transportation industry is heavily influenced by supply and demand. Supply and demand set the tone for rates and capacity, or in brief, the state of the freight market. Market conditions of course vary on a year-over-year basis, however, a consistent pattern is apparent each season. This guide provides a synopsis on the four standard seasons in the transportation industry and the hot commodities and types of produce that are typically moving each month.

FOUR SEASONS

Logistics professionals commonly define four seasons in the freight industry:



Quiet Season (January-March)

Volume is down. The new year has started and the holiday season is over. The weather is not shipping-friendly with the low temperatures that winter brings. Volume starts to increase in March as spring approaches.



Produce Season (April-July)

Volume starts to pick up, causing the market to tighten as carriers have more loads to choose from and can be pickier. Finding a truck becomes more challenging, which causes rates to increase.



Peak Season (August-October)

Produce season is coming to an end, however, shippers will start to prepare for the back to school and holiday seasons. Volume and rates are both at their peak.



Holiday Season (November-December)

Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's are upon us. Shippers are rushing to get everything in or out before the holiday rush and don't want to drag any freight into the new year.

WHAT'S MOVING?

The following pages outline the produce and hot commodities that are typically moving each month. Being aware of what's moving and which regions are at their peak & steady shipping seasons helps to forecast and be on the forefront of market shifts.

JANUARY



PRODUCE: broccoli, bell peppers, cucumbers, squash, potatoes, tomatoes, onions, cabbage, lettuce, strawberries, oranges, pears, and apples



HOT COMMODITIES: flowers, candy, cold weather foods, fertilizer, items that need protection from freezing, and tax season splurge items



PEAK: Arizona & Idaho; steady in Northwest, Texas, Florida, and California

FEBRUARY



PRODUCE: tomatoes, potatoes, bell peppers, cucumbers, broccoli, squash, apples, cabbage, onions, pears, & rhubarb



HOT COMMODITIES: meat & poultry products, liquor/beer/wine, flowers & nursery stock, bottles, and building materials



PEAK: Arizona & Idaho; steady in Northwest, Texas, and Florida

MARCH



PRODUCE: cabbage, squash, onions, apples, lettuce, strawberries, mangoes, honeydew, and mixed Florida produce



HOT COMMODITIES: building materials (brick, plywood, roofing, etc.), packaging materials for produce, landscaping materials, nursery stock, plastics, and paper



PEAK: Florida; steady in California, Arizona, Idaho, Texas, and Georgia

APRIL



PRODUCE: apples, onions, limes, mangoes, lettuce, corn, asparagus, squash, imported melons, strawberries, and avocados



HOT COMMODITIES: landscaping materials, treated lumber, pre-cast concrete, auto parts for retail, glass preforms, plastics, and paper



PEAK: Florida, California, and Texas; steady in Arizona, Idaho, Georgia, and the Carolinas

MAY



PRODUCE: strawberries, squash, chili peppers, limes, grapes, bell peppers, corn, watermelons, cucumbers, and asparagus



HOT COMMODITIES: bottled water, beverages, rubber, sod, mulch, turf, and playground equipment



PEAK: California and Florida; steady in Arizona, Texas, Georgia, and the Carolinas

JUNE



PRODUCE: grapes, melons, limes, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, corn, onions, apples, cherries, and watermelons



HOT COMMODITIES: outdoor furniture, bottled water, decking, pool supplies, charcoal, grilling meats, nutrition supplements, and condiments



PEAK: California and Georgia; steady in Northwest, the Carolinas, and Midwest

JULY



PRODUCE: cherries, apples, tomatoes, mangoes, corn, limes, onions, stone fruit, potatoes, mixed vegetables, cantaloupes, watermelon, grapes, and lettuce



HOT COMMODITIES: East Coast stone, steel, beer, air conditioning units, and plastics



PEAK: California, Texas, Georgia, and the Carolinas; steady in Northwest and Midwest

AUGUST



PRODUCE: onions, potatoes, apples, grapes, limes, corn, pears, sweet potatoes, mangoes, melons, blueberries, and mixed vegetables



HOT COMMODITIES: fertilizer, paper, carpet, candy, fall landscaping products, and seasonal beers



PEAK: Midwest; steady in California, Northwest, Idaho, and East Coast

SEPTEMBER



PRODUCE: potatoes, pumpkins, pears, apples, melons, eggplant, cucumber, stone fruit, gourds, bell peppers, zucchini, and cantaloupe



HOT COMMODITIES: candy, honey, yard maintenance products, plastics, and turkey



PEAK: Midwest and East Coast; steady in California, Arizona, Idaho, and Texas

OCTOBER



PRODUCE: cucumbers, cabbage, pears, oranges, squash, grapefruits, tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, gourds, broccoli, apples, pumpkins, and potatoes



HOT COMMODITIES: Sugar, turkey, ham, candy, dairy, toys, firewood, Christmas trees, and plastic



PEAK: East Coast; steady in California, Arizona, Northwest, Idaho, Texas, and Florida

NOVEMBER



PRODUCE: cucumbers, cabbage, pears, broccoli, oranges, lettuce, gourds, bell peppers, apples, pumpkins, potatoes, eggplant, melons, and mixed vegetables



HOT COMMODITIES: toys, hay, ham, turkey, alcoholic beverages, winter sports equipment, winter clothing, and firewood



PEAK: Northwest; steady in California, Arizona, Idaho, Texas, and Florida

DECEMBER



PRODUCE: oranges, lettuce, apples, cabbage, potatoes, melons, grapes, sweet potatoes, bell peppers, mixed vegetables, tomatoes, cucumbers, and avocados



HOT COMMODITIES: dairy products, canned goods, toys, wreaths, de-icer, wicker baskets, ham, turkey, and alcoholic beverages



PEAK: Northwest and Idaho; steady in California, Arizona, Texas, and Florida



ABOUT SPOT

Founded in 2009 and headquartered in Indianapolis, we started Spot with the belief that there is a better way to move freight. Since then, we have become one of the fastest growing transportation providers in the United States through our proven service, customized logistics, and deep understanding of our shippers' procedures and protocols.