



**Fresh Alert**  
**February 28, 2008 - Bananas**

Hi, this is Jim Naylor with another Produce FreshAlert...from FreshPoint. The Banana boats are not as full these days. Prices have become very expensive for very tight supplies. Over the past year, we have seen increased demand. Storms in the Caribbean curtailed supplies normally destined for Europe. With a stronger Euro over the dollar, European buyers are taking supplies that are normally destined for North America. An increase in the middle class population in Russia has also pressured demand for bananas. Rising fuel costs have magnified those higher prices. Now, recent storms in Ecuador have destroyed many plantations and caused damage to many more. Ecuador is the number one supplier of bananas to North America. Flood waters have not only destroyed plantations, but also damaged infrastructure like roads, bridges, communications, and electricity. This is making it even more difficult to get bananas from the plantations to the port of export. Ecuador President Rafael Correa declared a state of emergency last week. About 62,000 acres of Bananas have been destroyed. Another 200,000 acres have sustained some damage. Most banana companies have been prorating orders. Your FreshPoint salesperson will keep you up-to-date on the rising banana prices.