

Commodities

Market Prices as of 2/28/10

(Source: www.tradingcharts.com)

Commodity	Current	2 Wks ago	8 Wks ago	6 Mos ago	1 Yr ago
Copper	\$3.27	\$3.06	\$3.27	\$2.83	\$1.52
Silver	\$16.50	\$15.49	\$18.46	\$16.15	\$13.08
Crude Oil	\$79.66	\$74.13	\$82.75	\$69.95	\$44.76
Natural Gas	\$4.18	\$5.47	\$5.79	\$3.98	\$4.19

Metals

Copper: With the resolution to the European credit market, investors started putting money back into commodities, and the 18% copper decreases reversed. Prices are right where they were at the start of the year. The last 8 weeks shows how the market is controlled by the economy and investment money, and not traditional supply and demand. That makes things very volatile and hard to speculate.

Silver: Silver rebounded from the decreases, too, just not quite as much as copper.

Refrigerant

A raw materials shortage came to a head this month. First, R134a became very short and producers increased prices immediately with no pre-buy. Last week, the materials shortage increased and all blends were increased immediately. Past disruptions have brought both challenges and opportunities, depending on your inventory situation. There is no good information to predict how long the supply issue may last.

For R410a, this blend increase should reverse the sell price decreases. Pallet prices have been all over the place. We should be in a good position for April's free manifold promotion. It's hard to predict how much "low cost" inventory is out there.