

On The Horizon

www.lipmanproduce.com/news-and-events/newsletters/

Market Update

Tomatoes: A few Western Mainland Mexico farms are beginning to cross rounds and romas, but volume remains very light. Most growers are a good 7-10 days behind their normal harvest schedule due to cool and rainy weather, shifting normal seasonal volumes to the second week of January. Grape tomato supply is also limited for the same weather-related reasons.

Florida tomatoes are also quite short this week. Farms are picking from older fields, which are yielding very small fruit and minimal production. Reports suggest that it will be two more weeks until round and roma volumes begin to build back.

Bell Peppers: Bell pepper availability remains steady on all sizes out of Florida, although quality issues such as sidewall and stem decay continue to show up on fruit. Production in Mexico continues to increase slowly and steadily with nice quality.

Green Beans: Green beans remain very short in both the East and West for the holiday

week. Growers in Mexico should begin harvesting new crops next week which will bring a little more volume to market. Florida doesn't expect to see a substantial amount of new crops until after January 15th.

Eggplant: Eggplant availability has tightened up slightly in Florida due to spotty rains but quality remains solid. Mexican growers are beginning to cross slightly more volume now.

Cucumbers: Florida farms continue to pick cucumbers with fair quality as they are on the tail end of crops. Honduran import volume is beginning to ramp up, which should improve supply to the East eventually. With continued weather issues, Mexico's volume has remained light. Good weather will help to help bring more cucs to market.

Summer Squash: Squash is also short this week. Florida is beginning to see a little more zucchini but yellow is very scarce. The Western market and availability mirrors the East. Warm, dry weather is needed!

Transportation Facts

*The National Diesel Average fell another \$.05 this week, just in time for holiday travel. The price is now \$2.28 per gallon.

*The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$1.00 lower than the same time last year.

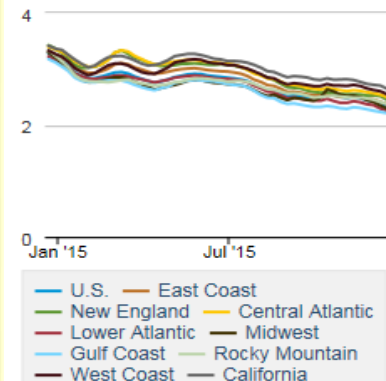
*Diesel prices dropped in all areas of the country with the largest price decrease in the Rocky Mountains (-\$.07).

*As usual, California reported the highest-priced diesel fuel of the week at \$2.61. The fuel bargain in the nation is in the Gulf Coast area at \$2.18.

*The WTI Crude Oil Price dropped another 2.2% this week, moving from \$35.52 to \$34.74 per barrel.

On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices

(dollars per gallon)



Source: Energy Information Administration



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Restaurant Industry News

11 TRENDS THAT WILL IMPACT RESTAURANTS IN 2016- PART 2

www.restaurant-hospitality.com, October 26, 2015

6. The rise of "new-ish Jewish" cuisine will continue.

There's a resurgence of Jewish food. We're talking about chef-driven modern Jewish cookery (or even modern Jewish heresy) rather than heavyweight Eastern European dishes. How come now? Because chefs everywhere are today exploring their roots and cuisines.

"Heritage cuisines" are being expressed with stories behind them. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren are reinventing dishes and foodways that second-generation immigrants turned their backs on (except at holidays).

7. Acai bowls: Pulp, not fiction.

Move over, smoothies. Acai bowls are the next big hipster food. Using a fruit from Brazil, they're migrating from Hawaii and spreading cross-country. It's fundamentally a big-bowl smoothie, made from frozen acai pulp and soy or other milk plus bananas, bits of other fruit and lots of ice, with toppings like granola, chia seeds, chocolate chips, coconut flakes and peanut butter. You eat it with a spoon and it tastes fairly close to ice cream. You also pay about \$10. Google searches for acai bowls have more than doubled this year.

8. The obsession with fried chicken will grow.

Nashville hot is a cult favorite that's spreading across the country. It's meant to burn your lips for days on end. Like buffalo wings, Nashville Hot Chicken is dunked in hot sauce after frying; but it ain't plain old hot sauce. This is a thermonuclear paste of melted lard, sugar, sadistic quantities of cayenne, sugar and each chef's secret spices. It is showing up in fried chicken joints and sitdown restaurants.

9. Sometimes heat alone will not be enough.

America's pepperheads are (finally) discovering that heat is not enough ... that food also has flavors. So we're watching an interesting shift from just-plain-incendiary to aromatic and flavorful spice blends and sauces, including:

- Piri-piri peppers blended with tamer spices, herbs, citrus peels, used as bbq rubs or as bases for piquant sauces.
- Sweet-spicy gochujang, a thick Korean bbq sauce made from malted barley, fermented soybean flour, red pepper and rice flour.
- Shichimi-togarashi, a blend of red chili pepper, black pepper, sesame seeds, dried orange peel, seaweed flakes and poppy seeds. Also called Japanese Seven-Spice, it starts out hot then shifts to complexity, plus a bit of crunch.
- Berbere, a highly fragrant but hot Ethiopian mix that makes a great rub or mix for braised food: cardamom, hot peppers, paprika, cumin, clove, cinnamon, fenugreek, nutmeg, turmeric, ginger.

10. Retailers will renew their attack on restaurants.

In our 2014 forecast we highlighted how U.S. retailers are building revenue by luring shoppers into stores for snacks and meals. Retailers, we said, were discovering what we call the magic of "dwell time" ... the longer you keep a shopper on the premises, the more the shopper will buy per hour of stay.

- Outdoor World, owned by Bass Pro Shops, has installed large-scale Islamadora Fish Co. restaurants in its hunting, camping and recreation departments.
- Lexus has a lifestyle showroom in Tokyo called Intersect, with a street-level cafe and a bistro

upstairs serving a global French-Japanese-Mexican mishmash with lots of pretention

11. Snacking will suggest new trending flavors.

We seem to be moving from three meals a day to none! Snacks are obliterating meals. It's not just Millennials or dashboard diners; growing numbers of Americans snack four or five times daily. Snacking increased 47 percent from 2010 to 2014. We raise this because snack flavor profiles are changing:

- The ground is shifting away from sweet to savory, and from high-carb to nutrient dense high-protein indulgent snacks. Even when sweeteners are involved, they're often combined with spicy.
- Spicy-salty-savory ethnic snacks are afternoon favorites and meal replacements: hummus variations, flavored popcorns (like seaweed-and-sesame), chili-citrus potato chips, mango-chili-lime chips.
- Sour is replacing sweet. Consumers are seeking deep contrasts to richness, which explains why fermented condiments (like kimchee and house-pickled vegetables) are popular on menus. Tart + bitter is also rising in popularity with new kale, crunchy broccoli and other vegetable chips.
- Bitter is also gaining momentum, especially in beverages like coffee and tea.

Part 1 of this article appeared in last week's edition of *On the Horizon*.

**Ripe
Bites
are
in
season
now!**



CRAVEABLE
ripe bites

Crave the "flave"

Created by Lipman's research and development team, **Ripe Bites** are craveable, snack-sized tomatoes with deep red color, high brix content and extended shelf life. This new variety is grown exclusively in Lipman's Naples, Fla.-based retractable-roof greenhouse, which makes them available throughout the Florida growing season. These high-flavor, poppable tomatoes stand alone as the star of a great snack, are excellent when roasted, and pair well with salads and side dishes.

Besides being delicious and nutritious, Ripe Bites are a sustainable variety – using less water and inputs in the growing process.

Standard packaging options are below, but some options may be customized. Contact your local sales manager to learn more about Lipman's Ripe Bites.



PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Good	Steady
Cucumber	Fair-Good	Steady
Eggplant	Fair-Good	Higher
Green Beans	Fair	Higher
Lettuce-Iceberg	Fair	Steady
Jalapenos	Good	Higher
Onions	Good	Steady
Potatoes	Good	Steady
Squash	Fair-Good	Higher
Tomatoes	Fair-Good	Higher

December Calendar

All Month
National Human Rights Month
December 26th
National Thank You Note Day
December 29th
National "Get on the Scales" Day
December 31st
New Year's Eve

Estero, FL Weather

Wed Dec 23	Thu Dec 24	Fri Dec 25	Sat Dec 26	Sun Dec 27	Mon Dec 28
84° F	88° F	86° F	84° F	82° F	82° F
70° F	70° F	70° F	70° F	68° F	70° F
SSE 11 MPH	SE 12 MPH	E 8 MPH	E 9 MPH	SE 9 MPH	ESE 9 MPH
Precip 20%	Averages	Averages	Averages	Precip 20%	Averages
75° F/54° F	75° F/54° F	75° F/53° F	75° F/53° F	74° F/53° F	74° F/53° F





News in the Grocery Trade BOWL-ING FOR ADDITIONAL PRODUCE SALES

By: Armand Lobato, www.produceretailer.com, December 01, 2015

In markets large and small, you notice the grocery store sales phenomenon sometimes called the “pre-game rush.” Whether the event is a college or professional game, to be watched at home on television or at the venue after a tailgating get-together, one common necessity is, of course, food. Traditional game fare such as chips and beer will always be popular. However, effective produce merchandising will reap extra sales and profits as bowl games increasingly draw customers into the produce department — as they look for alternative, healthful snack ideas. The trick is to help your customers see the many ways produce items fit in the bowl game menu. Here are a few thoughts to help maximize the related sales and profits this kind of sales rush can produce.

Think: Avocados. Steady availability and quality has boosted avocados to one of the top 10 items that customers purchase on a regular basis. Add in the companies or distributors who offer preconditioned avocados to retail stores, and you have a winning combination. Offer your customers both ready-for-today and greener fare (for later in the week) for best sales. Build large, prominent displays prior to a big sport-related weekend such as bowl or playoff games. Rotate and cull often, and consider building multiple displays to handle customer traffic.

Think: Party Platters. If your operation includes an in-store cut fruit and vegetable program, you might consider selling platter combinations of partial- or all-produce creations. Relish-type vegetable trays with sliced summer squashes, cucumber, green onions, cauliflower and broccoli florets, cut celery, multicolored bell pepper strips and baby carrots, all cut and arranged nicely, will attract the shopper looking for that extra something to grab before the game that is tasty and healthy. Offer the same with fruit platters filled with sweet grapes, berries, and apple, citrus and melon slices. Prepared in-store, fruit and vegetable platters offer customers the freshest value, generate brisk sales and command a premium price point with matching gross profits to match — all reasons to invest in the labor to keep the shelves full. Finally, offer a range of party platter sizes to capture optimum sales.

Think: Salsa Ingredients. Consider building a salsa-dedicated display with a large allocation of tomatoes at the heart of it all. Imagine all the ingredients that go into this popular condiment, and offer them fresh — as many shoppers are learning how fast and easy salsa is to prepare. Group and use color breaks to include items such as chili peppers, garlic, onions, cilantro and tomatillos. Post a sign or recipe showing how to prepare salsa, and create even more sales.

Think: In-Store Demos. Seeing (and tasting) is believing. Arrange for pre-game time slots with your in-store demo-sample manager to have the demo staff show your customers how easy it is to cut strips of sweet colored bell peppers or sweet teardrop tomatoes that many haven't yet tried. Perhaps they can mix up a batch of salsa or guacamole. No matter what item you select to demo, have staff emphasize the ease of preparation so customers don't miss any game time; stress the high quality and flavor that only fresh produce can deliver.

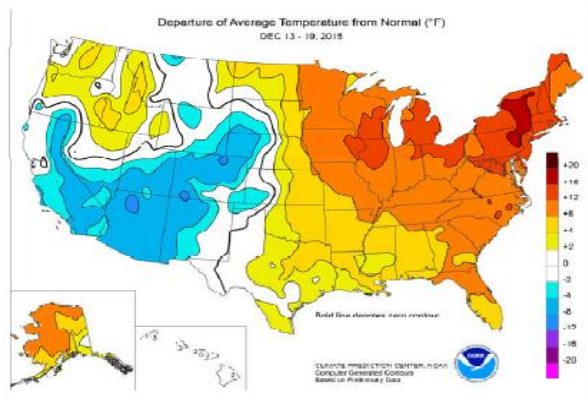
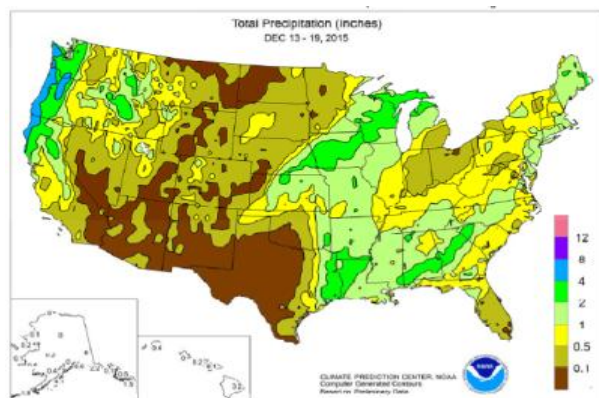
Think: Tie-Ins. As much as many produce managers may suspect it takes away from fresh sales, sometimes it pays to tie-in some non-produce items in order to sell additional fresh product. Having a small, representative rack of tortilla chips next to the avocado display or including a block of cheese near the apple or grape displays helps with the power of item-pairing suggestion. The flip side of this, of course, is to push for display space in the front lobby. Large tie-ins of chips and avocados, tomatoes, and more will generate plenty of pre-game sales.

Think: Value-Added. In addition to what you produce in-house, other value-added items such as pre-made vegetable trays will sell well prior to the big game. Consider using a mobile, refrigerated or ice display unit for added space allocation. Park this in the front lobby for incoming customers and in view of shoppers that are waiting in line to check out. They may consider that the value-added item is exactly the missing item they need to complete their shopping trip on the way to watch the game.

Like any other merchandising plan, timing is everything. Plan your merchandising space a week or more out, order the produce so it will arrive in time to build your displays and offer at the peak of freshness. Order enough for optimum sales, but take care to not over-order to avoid shrink. Build the displays large enough to attract attention, and plan to disassemble as the event period winds down. Coordinating added produce sales with popular sporting events and associated customer traffic will pay big benefits. Parlay the demand for healthful food with fresh produce offerings. Think about all the produce possibilities listed (and any you have of your own), and see how many you can build upon for added sales and profit.

And, when the plan comes together, the merchandising ball is in play and action begins, as called in football — it's a snap.

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation





An Apple a Day

5 WAYS TO KEEP THE HOLIDAYS—AND EVERY OTHER DAY-- HEALTHY

By: Tanya Zuckerbrot, www.foxnews.com, December 22, 2015

The average person makes over 200 food-related decisions per day. Talk about an onslaught of opportunities to derail your diet!

Following a few basic rules for everyday life sets the stage for healthier eating habits not only during the holidays but every day. Embrace these tips to stay healthy from the moment you wake up to the minute you hit the lights.

Keep the kitchen counter clear

Research shows that leaving the counter stacked with food can leave you stacked with an additional 8 to 29 pounds. The holiday season means extra food is purchased and received. Instead of storing it on top of the counter, transfer the foods and containers to inside your cupboard. Then, fill that newly freed counter space with a bowl of fruit. This easy swap supports mindless weight loss – as much as five pounds in a year!

Pre-plan what's in plain sight

If you see it, chances are you will eat it. Keep Christmas cookies and office party leftovers inside opaque containers. Leave snack-sized veggies and yogurt inside clear ones. Safeguard yourself further by leaving only healthy foods at eye level. Keep a pitcher of water alongside those crudités and veggie-filled containers. To quench your thirst the right way, spruce up the water with attractive and colorful fruit slices.

Leave the candy dish off the desk

Being within arms-length of sugar during the workday is an unnecessary danger. A stressful job coupled with easily accessible candy is a recipe for disaster. Just don't do it. Fill that bowl with useful office supplies or replace it all together with a picture of your loved ones. Seeing their faces will remind you of why you are trying to improve your health in the first place.

Be accountable during action movies

We all know that eating while watching TV is a less than stellar habit. It serves as a distraction, which promotes thoughtless overeating. Recent evidence suggests that *what* we watch can also impact how we eat. Compared to more mundane programming, action-related TV stimulates more eating.

Leave Mother Nature's packaging intact

When eating nuts, which are a great source of fiber, healthy fat and protein, always opt for nuts in the shell. Cracking open their casings while snacking will help to control how much you eat. Not only because of the extra work involved, also because once those shells pile up you see firsthand just how much you have eaten.

As for fruits and vegetables, it is generally best to keep the skins on. The skin of apples, pears and potatoes is the source of most of the vitamins and minerals. So eat it all! No use in (literally) throwing away nutrition.

Mark Your Calendar & Pack Your Bags

March 3rd-5th, 2016
Southeast Produce Council's Southern Exposure
Diplomat Resort & Spa
Hollywood, FL



www.seproducecouncil.com

March 7th-8th, 2016
Restaurant Marketing Symposium
Wisconsin Center
Milwaukee, WI

www.wirerestaurant.org/expo/events

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