

# On The Horizon

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## Market Update

**Tomatoes:** With South Carolina in the clean-up phase of the season, Eastern tomato production has transitioned to Virginia, Tennessee, and other local growing areas. Overall volume is expected to be lighter than usual for the next few weeks, as most of these areas have seen significant weather events during the growing cycle.

California growers expect a slightly diminished supply of rounds over the next few weeks. Water and bloom drop issues may affect overall availability in the area during August, but Baja expects to continue crossing quality fruit for the remainder of the season. Romas are available in good supply and quality, as three separate areas are sourcing fruit. Grape tomato availability is down slightly this week as harvests transition in some areas and other growing regions are experiencing cool nights and reduced production.

**Bell Peppers:** Eastern markets are still looking for relief on bell peppers this week. Most local deals and growing areas are seeing reduced yields, quality, and sizing due to excessive heat and rains. With Michigan seeing cool, wet weather, New Jersey looks to be the best bet to improve availability slightly in the next few weeks. The West is also struggling to meet demand this week, as Bakersfield has finished for the season and Brentwood and Stockton are just getting started in a light way.

**Cucumbers:** Cucumber availability should improve somewhat in the East when Michigan growers are able to get into the fields. Wet weather has delayed harvests but there is a lot of fruit on the vines. Other Eastern growing areas have been struggling with quality and volume. Western markets are seeing solid volume and quality from

Baja. However, growers are beginning to see a lot of offgrade fruit in their harvests. Washington State's production has slowed due to hot weather. Numbers should increase when production transitions from Eastern to Western parts of the state later this month.

**Green Beans:** Rains in Michigan and Tennessee are keeping farms from harvesting beans and will likely affect quality in the short term. Although some new local deals are starting up, volume is minimal compared to the main production areas and won't have a significant impact on overall availability in the East. In the West, Brentwood is getting back underway after coming out of a gap period. They should be in steady production for the next few weeks, as will Orange County.

**Eggplant:** Hot weather continues to take its toll on Eastern eggplant production with tighter supply reported this week. In the West, Fresno is in a gap for 7 to 10 days, creating a temporary shortage.

**Summer Squash:** Western supply of summer squash is improving as growers get into new blocks. However, the East is experiencing an extremely tight market, especially on yellow squash. Growing areas that we normally count on have been pummeled with rain and extremely high temperatures, which has caused crop loss and reduced quality. Zucchini has fared slightly better in the weather conditions but is still tight.

**Chili Peppers:** California's chili production has transitioned from Bakersfield to Fresno and Santa Maria. Volume is light but quality has been very nice. Baja has been steadily shipping all varieties with really nice quality to round out availability in the West. Eastern growers are coming to the table with light volumes and steady quality.

## Transportation Facts

\*The National Average Diesel fell \$.02 this week, dropping from \$2.83 to \$2.81 per gallon.

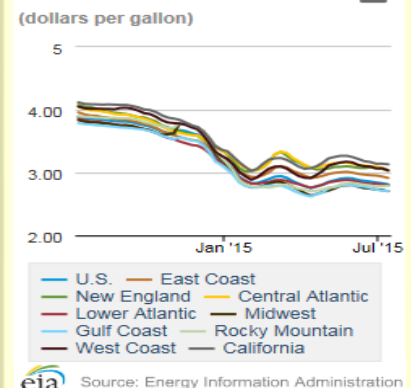
\*The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$1.08 lower than the same time last year.

\*Fuel prices declined in all areas of the country except for the Rocky Mountain region.

\*As usual, the most expensive fuel in the nation is reported in California where a gallon of diesel is \$3.13 per gallon. The fuel bargain of the week can be found in the Midwest and Gulf Coast areas where the price is \$2.70 per gallon.

\*The WTI Crude Oil Price continued its downward descent and now stands at \$51.41 a barrel this week, a 1.8% decrease from last week's \$52.33 price.

### On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices



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## Restaurant Industry News IS MOBILE THE KEY TO DIGITAL ORDERING SUCCESS?

By: Noah Glass, [www.fastcasual.com](http://www.fastcasual.com), July 14, 2015

Digital ordering has gone through several waves of evolution over the past 15 years, starting with online ordering as the only ordering channel and now spanning multiple ordering channels, with mobile shining in the spotlight. But is mobile the key to digital ordering success? The brief history of digital ordering helps to shed light on the rise of mobile and its role in digital ordering today and in the future.

Digital ordering in the restaurant industry began with pizza. In the late '90s and early 2000s, the big three found a new way to capitalize on the rise of home dial-up by letting hungry customers place orders over the World Wide Web. Online ordering was a natural fit for pizza customers, who were used to calling their local stores and placing orders for home delivery by phone. Instead of dialing in only for the phone to ring and ring, be put on hold, or get the dreaded busy signal, pizza lovers could now log on, pull up the menu and pricing of their local store, build their customized orders and submit for delivery.

The convenience of the consumer experience was only half of the story. The increased efficiency and accuracy of the operational experience was the other half. Together, these created both an improved customer experience and a more profitable restaurant operation. It's no surprise that the big three have all seen digital ordering climb to over 50 percent of their transactions, becoming their primary business channel.

### The VIP Experience

Not all food holds as well as pizza and enjoys such delivery demand, so what about digital ordering for non-pizza restaurants? Fast casual brands saw a different opportunity for digital ordering. Instead of focusing on how digital ordering could improve the experience of the food going to the customer (delivery), they focused on how digital ordering could improve the experience of the customer going to the food (takeout). In an effort to compete with fast food brands on speed of service and convenience while still providing high-quality, made-to-order products, fast casual brands saw that digital ordering could make them faster than their

fast food competitors. Customers could order online and schedule a pickup time. The online ordering platform could fire the order into the kitchen just-on-time, so that the order would be prepped and bagged at the perfect time: synchronized with the customer's arrival at a special pickup area where they could have a VIP experience and skip the line to collect their order.

Contemporaneous to the rise of fast casual brands, Steve Jobs introduced the iPhone in June 2007, and mobile took a great leap forward. The reality of American consumers walking around with web-enabled, location-aware devices in their pockets became very real. Smartphone ownership will hit 85 percent by the end of the year. The smartphone has become the most personal technology device that we have ever known, with smartphone owners checking their phones 150 times per day. And beyond just owning smartphones, customers familiar with services like Uber that allow them to magically hail a car to their precise location at the tap of their screen have come to view smartphones as remote controls for the world around them.

### The final foodservice frontier

In the spirit of the observed exponential growth curve of technology, some suggest that the mobile-led digital ordering of today will propel digital ordering to over 50 percent of all transactions at non-pizza restaurants by 2022 - that is, in half the time that it took pizza restaurants to reach 50 percent digital.

Why is mobile so key to digital ordering success? There are three main characteristics of mobile that make it distinct from online ordering:

1. Smartphone are always with us, on our physical person, at all times of the day (in fact, 83 percent of Millennials sleep with their smartphone in reach). That opens up the ability to use the smartphone to order at any time, not just when one is sitting at an Internet-connected computer.
2. Digital ordering apps are housed on the customer's smartphone and so maintain the customer's logged-in state that gives him/her access to favorite/past orders, payment credentials saved securely on file. That means a more convenient ordering experience that requires fewer clicks, which makes many customers prefer ordering through a mobile app even when they're sitting at an Internet-connected computer.
3. Combined with the smartphone being on the customer at the time just before and at pickup, the fact that the smartphone can communicate its location back to the digital ordering service, and thus stay in sync with in-store operations, enables reimagined experiences for curbside pickup and delivery for restaurants of all kinds.

Despite the ubiquity of mobile, one must remember that desktop ordering still has its place. Catering orders and invitation ordering, one customer starting an order and inviting a large group to join that order (e.g. for a business meeting) are best experience on a larger screen. And interfaces for in-car navigation systems, smart TV's, in-store kiosks, gaming systems, call centers, and wearables all represent emerging opportunities for digital ordering. Digital ordering is about letting customers truly order from anywhere in the new bring-your-own POS world.





**Jasmine Lopez**  
**Associate Breeder**  
**Lipman R & D**



**Jasmine really enjoys**  
**training and racing!**

## GETTING TO KNOW THE LIPMAN TEAM

### Meet Jasmine Lopez!

**Position at Lipman:** Associate Breeder

**How did you become a part of the Lipman team?** I started as the Product Advancement Specialist in 2012 for the R & D Division. I was promoted to Associate Breeder last year.

**What is your favorite aspect of working for Lipman?** We are a very open group that communicates well between/among company employees. Also, Lipman is very supportive in career advancement development and assisting employees to reach their goals.

**What is your favorite vegetable/fruit?** TOMATO! ☺

**What is your favorite type of food?** Puerto Rican food. Rice and beans and roasted pork with some "pasteles" on the side.

**Tell us about your family.** I've been married to my very supportive husband Nino for almost 15 years and we have two absolutely great kids- Leilanis- 12 turning into "15"- and my youngest is Adiel -10 yrs old.

**Where did you grow up?** I was born in Massachusetts, but raised in San Sebastian, Puerto Rico. I received my Bachelors in Agronomy at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez Campus.

**What do you like to do when you aren't working?** I am training for an Iron Man 140.6 Triathlon that my hubby and I will be participating in November (I want to beat him!). I try to swim & run in the morning before work and bike on the weekends. Afternoons are for kids' activities (flute, taekwondo, ice hockey, etc.) or get-togethers with friends and family.

**Ideal vacation spot?** I would love to go to the European continent.

**If you could have one superpower, what would it be?** My son says I'm super mom- I've got it there! But, I think it would be mind reading.

**Are you a member of any community or charity organizations?** I am involved in different sports communities like Speedsters, Endurance Sisterhood, Tri4Fit, etc. I've organized Relay for Life fundraiser events for our team, and have participated in other teams. I also participate with my daughter in the humane society's junior volunteer program.

**Anything else you would like to share?** I would like to share an article that was published this past month. Thanks to Lipman for their educational assistance and to the head breeder Mark Barineau, I was able to finish my MS in Plant Breeding in June 2014. I was the first student to finish the MS in Plant Breeding through the Distance Education Program. You can read the story here.

<http://stories.cals.iastate.edu/2015/06/varieties-of-success-via-distance/>

## PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



## July Calendar

### All Month

National Watermelon Month

### Third Week

National Independent Retailers Week

### July 20<sup>th</sup>

Get to Know Your Customers Day

### July 24<sup>th</sup>

National Drive-Thru Day

National Tequila Day

## Exmore, VA Weather

Thu Jul 16	Fri Jul 17	Sat Jul 18	Sun Jul 19	Mon Jul 20	Tue Jul 21
82°F	84°F	86°F	86°F	88°F	88°F
68°F	72°F	75°F	77°F	77°F	77°F
N 14 MPH	E 9 MPH	SSE 12 MPH	S 7 MPH	S 11 MPH	S 12 MPH
Averages	Averages	Averages	Averages	Averages	Averages
88°F/70°F	88°F/70°F	88°F/70°F	88°F/70°F	88°F/70°F	88°F/70°F
		Precip 20%	Precip 20%	Precip 20%	Precip 30%





## News in the Grocery Trade

### CONSUMERS INCREASINGLY EMBRACE TECH ON PATH TO PURCHASE

By: Meg Major, [www.progressivegrocer.com](http://www.progressivegrocer.com), July 14, 2015

Customers are on the move and developing more beneficial shopping patterns by harnessing connected technologies to simplify and optimize the path to purchase, according to new shopper research from Blackhawk Engagement Solutions.

Among the key findings of the national shopper research study – which surveyed more than 2,500 respondents to uncover the ways they pre-shop, discover and filter options, as well as explore the devices and influences used along the multiple paths to purchase – the smartphone was found to be the most prevalent digital device, with 71 percent of shoppers using one daily (followed by laptop, 66 percent; desktop computer, 50 percent; and tablet, 43 percent).

Additionally, TV watching and Internet shopping are closely linked. Fifty-eight percent of consumers shop at home while watching TV, and 47 percent of consumers learn about products, special sales and shopping news on TV. Moreover, shopping at work is also significant, according to the Blackhawk Engagement study, which found 37 percent of consumers admit to shopping while at work. Overall, 4–9 p.m. is the peak time for online shopping.

“Gone are the days of retailers only worrying about keeping up with their competitors,” said Rodney Mason, GVP of marketing at Lewisville, Texas-based Blackhawk Engagement Solutions. “Today, the key to winning at retail is keeping up with your customers. By charting where shoppers are landing as they explore new shopping territories,” Mason continued, “retail marketers can position their businesses in front of the competition and closer to targeted and underserved customers.”

Other key findings from the shopper survey include:

**\*Mobile changes how customers shop online and in-store.** Showrooming is now an ingrained behavior, with 19 percent of shoppers reporting that they purchase competitors’ products on their smartphones while standing in store. The first places shoppers go to compare prices on their phones are Amazon (38 percent), Google (32 percent) and retail websites (17 percent). Forty percent of shoppers use phone cameras to demo, compare and share products they find in store.

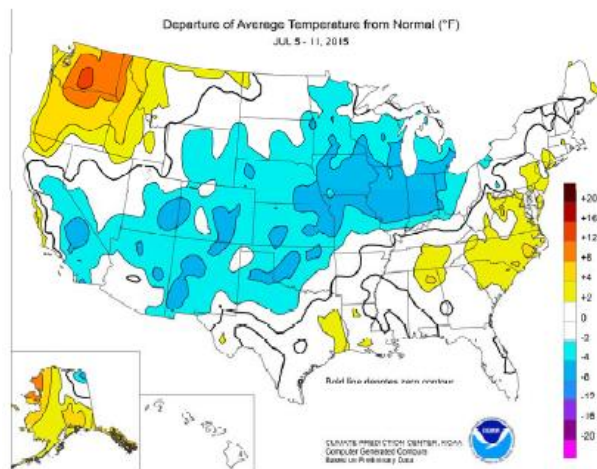
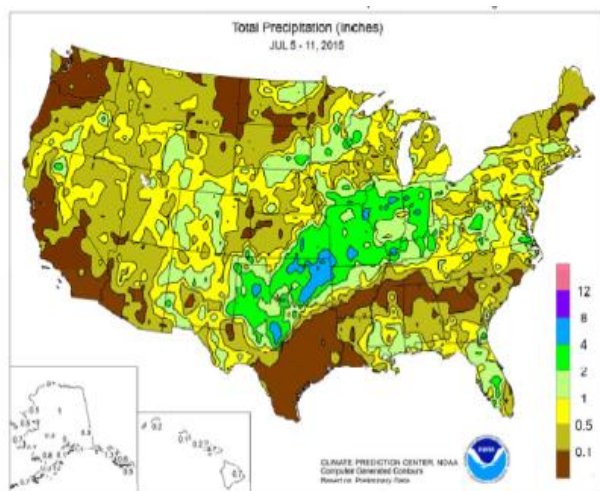
**\*Consumers want proximity-based offers.** Sixty-three percent of shoppers would consider allowing retailers to send offers to their smartphones based on where they are in-store; 59 percent would consider allowing retailers to know who they are and where they are in-store in exchange for special values and savings.

**\*Social media is underutilized in retail.** Marketers and retailers can and should leverage social media to drive promotions, especially since access to special deals is the primary reason shoppers follow brands on social media. Forty-two percent of consumers have used special promotions they found on social media and 89 percent of shoppers that follow brands want special offers from those brands.

**\*Email dominates in digital promo delivery, but social is making strides.** When it comes to taking advantage of promotional offers, the digital delivery method most used is email (73 percent), followed by social media (42 percent), text (37 percent) and shopping apps (36 percent). However, connecting seamlessly across in-store and online is still imperfect. Thirty-seven percent of shoppers have experienced in-store redemption problems with text promotions and 35 percent have experienced problems with email promotions.

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

### Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation





## **An Apple a Day AMERICAN ADULTS STILL AREN'T EATING ENOUGH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**

By: Loren Grush, [www.theverge.com](http://www.theverge.com), July 9, 2015

Americans don't eat enough fruit and vegetables, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC advises adults to eat between one-and-a-half to two cups of fruit each day, along with two to three cups of vegetables. Yet a 2013 CDC telephone survey analyzing eating habits revealed that fewer than 20 percent of adults in the US are consuming these recommended servings. Focusing on these healthy foods may help combat obesity, the agency wrote in its Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

Currently, more than one-third of American adults are obese, according to the latest study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Since eating more fruits and vegetables may help combat this trend, the CDC is recommending that new efforts be put in place to both increase demand and consumption of these foods. The agency says that fruits and vegetables need more competitive pricing, as well as better placement and promotion throughout schools and communities.

The report also found wide variations in fruit and vegetable intake from state to state. In California, 18 percent of adults ate the recommend amount of fruit, the highest of any state; the lowest was Tennessee, where just 8 percent of people ate enough. And only 6 percent met the daily vegetable recommendations in Mississippi, the lowest out of any state, as opposed to a high of 13 percent in California.

Eating enough of these foods is key for getting enough nutrients — ones that are often under-consumed, such as fiber, according to the CDC. "Eating more fruits and vegetables adds nutrients to diets, reduces the risk for heart disease, stroke, and some cancers, and helps manage body weight when consumed in place of more energy-dense foods," write CDC researchers in the Morbidity and Mortality report.

### **Mark Your Calendar & Pack Your Bags**

**July 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**PMA's Foodservice Conference & Expo**  
Monterey Conference Center  
Monterey, CA



[www.pma.com/events/foodservice](http://www.pma.com/events/foodservice)

**September 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**Produce Inspection Training Program**  
USDA SCI Training & Development Center  
Fredericksburg, VA  
[www.unitedfresh.org](http://www.unitedfresh.org)

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