

# On The Horizon

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## Market Update

**Tomatoes:** Several Eastern states are in full-swing production, providing steady tomato volume to the market. Virginia is roughly half way through the season, while Tennessee is just beginning to ramp up volume. North Carolina, New Jersey, and Alabama are also shipping fruit, with quality reports good in all areas. Romas have been spotty, but there are more on the way from various areas. We could see a decrease in grape volume over the coming weeks, as a few major growers are in a harvesting lull.

California's mature greens are coming in steady volume this week, although smaller sizes are tight. The extreme heat is making fruit color up quickly and has affected condition. Roma availability is also good, as long as you don't mind some color. Grapes are plentiful, with supply from both Central CA and Baja.

**Bell Peppers:** Pepper availability in California has improved somewhat, but will still be short for the next few weeks. The Bakersfield season is winding down early due to quality/weather issues which will limit any improvements in market volume. The Eastern pepper market is now seeing volume from Michigan and New Jersey, with larger sizes more prevalent. The mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee are also getting into solid harvests. With other local deals popping into production, the pepper situation

should begin to ease up.

**Cucumbers:** With new growers coming online in Baja and Michigan seeing better weather, cucumber volume has improved throughout the country. For the most part, quality is good, although there are some lots with weather-related quality concerns.

**Green Beans:** Virginia, New York, Michigan, North Carolina and Tennessee are all harvesting their share of green beans, despite some skips from rain during the planting cycle. Beans continue to be short on the West Coast.

**Eggplant:** While the East waits for Michigan to get going with volume, North Carolina and New Jersey continue to ship nice-quality eggs. California supply is light, as growers work through weather and transitions.

**Summer Squash:** The coastal regions of Central California are the main source of squash for the West this week. Availability is light as fruit in some areas have suffered the effects of humid, warm temps and high winds. Despite several Eastern areas in harvest season, yellow and zucchini squash availability is somewhat limited due to weather-related crop damage.

**Hard Squash:** All three hard squashes are available in steady supply in both the East and West this week. Most fruit looks very nice despite some reports of small sizing in the South Central US.

## Transportation Facts

\*The National Average Diesel dropped \$.06 this week, moving from \$2.78 to \$2.72 per gallon.

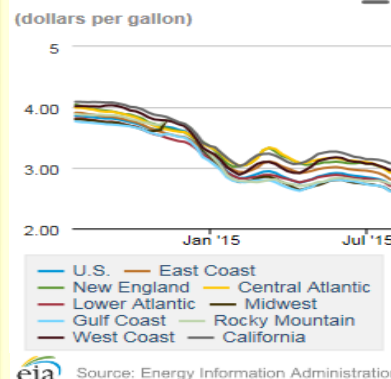
\*The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$1.14 lower than the same time last year.

\*Fuel prices declined in all areas of the country with the most significant decrease in the Central Atlantic region (down \$.07).

\*As expected, the most expensive fuel in the nation is reported in California where a gallon of diesel is \$3.07 per gallon. The fuel bargain of the week can be found in the Gulf Coast region where the price is \$2.61 per gallon.

\*The WTI Crude Oil Price continued its downward descent and now stands at \$48.79 a barrel, a 0.8% decrease from last week's \$49.19 price.

### On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices



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## An Apple a Day AMERICANS ARE FINALLY EATING LESS

By: Margot Sanger-Katz, [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), July 24, 2015

After decades of worsening diets and sharp increases in obesity, Americans' eating habits have begun changing for the better. Calories consumed daily by the typical American adult, which peaked around 2003, are in the midst of their first sustained decline since federal statistics began to track the subject, more than 40 years ago. The number of calories that the average American child takes in daily has fallen even more — by at least 9 percent.

The declines cut across most major demographic groups — including higher- and lower-income families, and blacks and whites — though they vary somewhat by group. In the most striking shift, the amount of full-calorie soda drunk by the average American has dropped 25 percent since the late 1990s.

As calorie consumption has declined, obesity rates appear to have stopped rising for adults and school-aged children and have come down for the youngest children, suggesting the calorie reductions are making a difference. The reversal appears to stem from people's growing realization that they were harming their health by eating and drinking too much. The awareness began to build in the late 1990s, thanks to a burst of scientific research about the costs of obesity, and to public health campaigns in recent years.

The encouraging data does not mean an end to the obesity epidemic: More than a third of American adults are still considered obese, putting them at increased risk of diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Americans are still eating far too few fruits and vegetables and far too much junk food, even if they are eating somewhat less of it, experts say. But the changes in eating habits suggest that what once seemed an inexorable decline in health may finally be changing course. Since the mid-1970s, when American eating habits began to rapidly change, calorie consumption had been on a near-steady incline.

The eating changes have been the most substantial in households with children. Becky Lopes-Filho's 4-year-old son, Sebastian, has always been

at the top of the growth chart for weight. Ms. Lopes-Filho, 35, is the operations manager of a pizzeria in Cambridge, Mass., and her son, like her, loves food. As he has gotten older, she has grown more concerned about his cravings for sweets. Instead of a cookie every day now, she said, she has been trying to limit him to one a week. "If he was given access, he would just go nuts," she said. "He, I think, would tend to be a super obese kid."

There is no single moment when American attitudes toward eating changed, but researchers point to a 1999 study as a breakthrough. That year, researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a paper in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* that turned into something of a blockbuster. The paper included bright blue maps illustrating worsening obesity rates in the 1980s and 1990s in all 50 states.

Researchers knew the obesity rate was rising, but Dr. Ali Mokdad, the paper's lead author, said that when he presented the maps at conferences, even the experts were gasping. "People became more aware of it in a very visual and impactful way," said Hank Cardello, a former food industry executive who is now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, a conservative policy center. "That created a lot of attention and concern."

Shortly afterward, the surgeon general, Dr. David Satcher, issued a report — "Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity." The 2001 report summarized the increasing evidence that obesity was a risk factor for several chronic diseases, and said controlling children's weight should be a priority, to prevent the onset of obesity-related illnesses.

Slowly, the messages appear to have sunk in with the public. By 2003, 60 percent of Americans said they wanted to lose weight, according to Gallup, up from 52 percent in 1990 and 35 percent in the 1950s.

The Obama administration has increased pressure. The Affordable Care Act, passed in 2010, required

chain restaurants to publish the calorie content of their meals. The federal government has also changed requirements, making school lunches healthier, although the effort has created some backlash.

Still, the timeline of the calorie declines suggests that people started eating a little less before policy makers got involved. The anti-obesity public health campaigns have focused on one subject more than any other: beverages. Americans, on average, purchased about 40 gallons of full-calorie soda a year in 1998, according to sales data. That fell to 30 gallons in 2014, about the level that Americans bought in 1980, before the obesity rates took off.

Outside of beverages, there are few clear trends. Experts who have examined the data say the reductions do not mean that Americans are flocking to farmer's markets and abandoning fast food. Consumption of fruits and vegetables remains low. Instead, people appear to be eating a little less of everything.

The calorie reductions are seen across nearly every demographic group, but not equally. White families have reduced their calorie consumption more than black and Hispanic families. Most starkly, families with children have cut back more than households with adults living alone, further evidence, experts say, that the public health emphasis on childhood obesity is driving the changes.

The recent calorie reductions appear to be good news, but they, alone, will not be enough to reverse the obesity epidemic. A paper by Kevin Hall, a researcher at the National Institutes of Health, estimated that for Americans to return to the body weights of 1978 by 2020, an average adult would need to reduce calorie consumption by 220 calories a day. The recent reductions represent just a fraction of that change. "This was like a freight train going downhill without brakes," Kelly Brownell, dean of the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, said. "Anything slowing it down is good."



## THE TOP TEN Facts About Bell Peppers

1. The bell pepper is the only member of Capsicum genus that does not produce capsaicin, a chemical that can cause a strong burning sensation (or simply the hot taste) when it comes in contact with mucous membranes. The absence of capsaicin in bell peppers is related to a recessive form of a gene that gets rid of capsaicin. It is actually why they are called sweet peppers at times.
2. Peppers are actually fruits. Why? Simply because they are produced from a flowering plant and contain seeds, though, most people think of them as vegetables.
3. Peppers were named by Christopher Columbus and Spanish explorers who were searching for peppercorn plants to produce black pepper.
4. The peppers have different names. In many Commonwealth of Nations countries, such as India, Canada, and Malaysia, as well as in the United States, they are called bell peppers Australian and New Zealand natives call the fruit Capsicum, the British simply call it Pepper while the Japanese call it 'パプリカ'(paprika)
5. The pulpy white inner cavity of the bell pepper (usually cut off and discarded) is a rich source of flavonoids and can be eaten.
6. Bell peppers can be eaten at any stage of development. However, recent research has shown that the vitamin C and carotenoid content of bell peppers tends to increase while the pepper is reaching its optimal ripeness. Bell peppers are also typically more flavorful when optimally ripe. But remember the sweeter the bell pepper, the more calories it will have. Red pepper has the highest number of calories.
7. Freshness is key when cooking and eating bell peppers. Storage for up to a week in the refrigerator is recommended. However the green belly pepper is known to last a little longer. The taste of ripe peppers varies with growing conditions and post-harvest storage treatment; the sweetest are fruit allowed to ripen fully on the plant in full sunshine, while fruit harvested green and after-ripened in storage are less sweet.
8. Bell pepper is an excellent source of vitamin C at 117 milligrams per cup. (That's more than twice the amount of vitamin C found in a typical orange.) Simple math: one green bell pepper is equal to two oranges.
9. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) used bell peppers as a natural treatment for certain medical conditions relating to digestive issues and blood circulation such as indigestion, loss of appetite, swelling frostbite (injury or destruction of skin and underlying tissue) and stagnation
10. Red bell peppers are sweeter than green ones because bell peppers sweeten as they ripen. Green peppers are less sweet and slightly bitterer than all the other color varieties.

### PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



### August Calendar

**All Month**  
National Sandwich Month  
**First Week**  
Simplify Your Life Week  
**August 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
National Watermelon Day  
**August 4<sup>th</sup>**  
Single Working Woman's Day

### Exmore, VA Weather

Thu Jul 30	Fri Jul 31	Sat Aug 1	Sun Aug 2	Mon Aug 3	Tue Aug 4	Wed Aug 5
88°F	90°F	90°F	86°F	88°F	88°F	86°F
73°F	72°F	77°F	77°F	77°F	77°F	70°F
S 15 MPH	N 14 MPH	S 13 MPH	S 10 MPH	SSW 12 MPH	SSW 12 MPH	SSW 12 MPH
Precip 40%	Precip 40%	Averages	Precip 20%	Precip 20%	Precip 20%	Precip 30%
Averages	Averages	Averages	Averages	Averages	Averages	Averages
87°F/70°F	87°F/70°F	87°F/70°F	87°F/69°F	87°F/69°F	86°F/69°F	86°F/69°F





## Keep Your Eye on the Consumer WHAT HEALTHY MEANS AND WHY FRESH MATTERS

By: Emily Byrd, [www.qsrmagazine.com](http://www.qsrmagazine.com), July 27, 2015

When researchers at the NPD Group started looking into changing consumption patterns, they noticed something odd and unprecedented: though Millennials are in a stage of life when people traditionally opt for convenience over freshness, this generation of consumers is increasing its consumption of fresh foods more than any other age group. That means fewer frozen pizzas at home, and more meals with ingredients like eggs, vegetables, and grains.

A thorough understanding of the factors driving this trend may be the key to catching this increasingly important demographic and getting them back out to restaurants as the economy recovers and consumers have more disposable income for dining out. One thing is certain: Millennials still want the convenience afforded by limited-service restaurants, but they are looking for fresh items that fit their evolving definition of health, which is more focused on food quality, sourcing, and freshness than it is about low-calorie or low-fat foods.

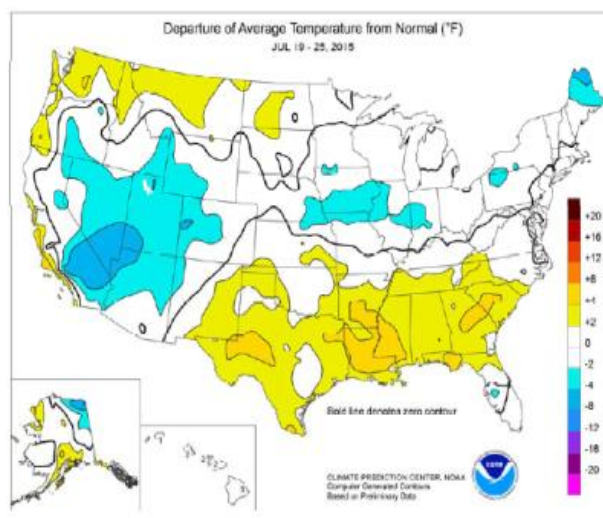
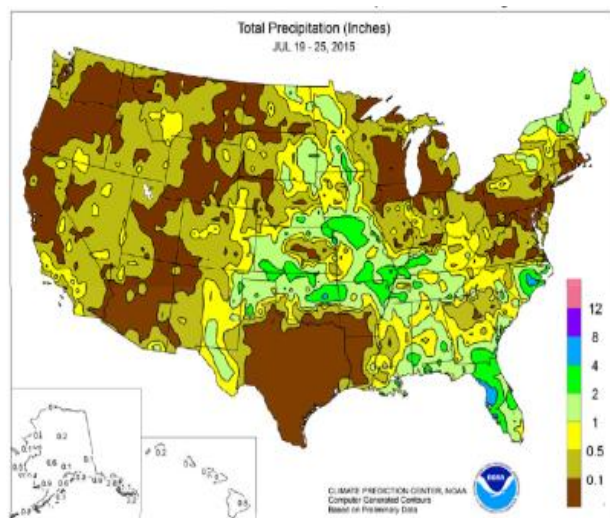
Restaurant industry analyst for the NPD Group, Bonnie Riggs, says that build-you-own fast casuals are doing a good job of showcasing the quality of ingredients and allowing consumers to dictate portion sizes, but that the segment has also had the effect of turning customers off from frozen or heat-lamp-warmed ingredients. Still, she says quick serves have plenty of open avenues for capitalizing on this trend. She suggests new promotional strategies that harken back to Domino's 2010 marketing campaign in which the brand trash-talked its own pizza to show its new commitment to improving the quality of its ingredients by tracing and showcasing its product all the way back to its farmland roots.

This kind of marketing—with a focus on food narrative and quality—can help re-wed health food and satisfaction, so consumers can feel good about what they're eating without feeling like they're depriving themselves.

"Chipotle is not low-calorie by any means," Riggs says. "But it has a lot of good-for-you things in it, and their positioning is fresh and healthy—they've really found a way to express the 'realness' of the food in a way that resonates."

By giving consumers the convenience they want while still allowing healthy, customizable, and affordable options, quick serves can catch up to fast casuals, and fast casuals can give more new customers a break from their home kitchens.

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation





## News in the Grocery Trade TIME TO RETHINK THE PRODUCE DEPARTMENT?

By: Liz Webber, [www.supermarketnews.com](http://www.supermarketnews.com), July 24, 2015

The thing about produce departments is, they kind of all look the same. "And not even from an assortment standpoint. Even just a merchandising strategy," said Jonna Parker, director, Nielsen Perishables Group.

"It's an important department, which obviously is growing really, really well, so you almost don't want to break something that's not broken. But it is, of all the fresh departments, it's not as easy as I think sometimes we like to think that it is. Or not as one-size-fits-all potentially as retailers often think it is."

Fruit and vegetable sales at retail totaled an impressive \$42.1 billion in the 52 weeks ending May 30, according to data from Nielsen Perishables Group. Sales of vegetables were up 4% while fruit sales rose 3.6% in the past year.

However, not all produce categories are growing. "And that's actually really sad to me because it certainly could be, if we thought about less of category infighting and more about produce's importance in the store," said Parker.

Pulling off that kind of growth could be tricky, however. FMI's first Power of Produce report, released this year, found 99% of households buy vegetables and 98% buy fruit. "Adding more people to our category is nearly impossible. But we can strive to increase the frequency of consumption," Anne-Marie Roerink, principal, 210 Analytics, and the author of the report, said in an FMI webinar about the Power of Produce this week.

About 25% of consumers say they only shop the produce department sometimes, compared to two-thirds who do so frequently.

"So what if we could move some of those people from just sometimes to frequently? That could be a huge boost to our category," said Roerink, adding that men and lower income households would be two demographics to target.

What changes might retailers make? Roerink noted that customers said produce departments were weak on things like helpful or knowledgeable associates, stocking specialty items and generally providing helpful information, such as recipes or serving suggestions. "So it is really about helping that shopper make an easier decision or try something new," said Roerink. One example from the webinar showed a serving suggestion for tomatoes that included bread, cheese and basil.

Similarly, Nielsen's Parker suggested retailers need to think more about "positioning produce at the center of that shopping trip," and what kind of strategy that looks like for a value or mainstream grocer vs. an upscale, fresh-focused grocer. "Literally every retailer and every consumer demographic, produce is essential," said Parker.

### Mark Your Calendar & Pack Your Bags



**August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**The United Fresh Start Foundation's**  
**Tip Murphy Legacy Golf Tournament**

Oasis Golf Club  
Loveland, OH

[www.unitedfresh.org/events](http://www.unitedfresh.org/events)

**October 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**Restaurant Innovation Summit**

Westin Gaslamp  
San Diego, CA

[www.restaurant.org/events](http://www.restaurant.org/events)

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