



MARKET UPDATE

Tomatoes: Palmetto/Ruskin's tomato production and size options will drop significantly after this week creating a short supply situation in the East. These market conditions will persist until the first week of June when Quincy, FL, South Georgia and South Carolina get rolling. Romas will remain snug for a longer period, as there is significantly less acreage planted in Quincy this year. Grapes are following the same pattern as other tomato varieties and look to be short for 10-14 more days. Despite the shortage, overall quality remains fairly good this week.

With Western Mainland Mexico at the tail end of crops and cooler weather affecting new growing areas (Eastern Mexico and Baja), tomatoes are also in short supply in the West. Baja has mostly larger fruit from crown picks and should see more volume on rounds and romas as more growers come on board and weather patterns warm up over the next few weeks. Eastern Mexico has also been slow to come to volume, but expects to see harvests pick up over the next 7-10 days. Grape tomato production is light from all growing areas, but Baja should see a temporary uptick in production next week. Full volume is not expected from this area until the second week of June.

Bell Peppers: Although Plant City and North Florida farms are seeing harvest numbers decline on green bells, multiple areas in Georgia are beginning to come to market with fruit. Early crown picks have very nice quality and are heavier to larger sizes. Overall volume is still light but should increase as farms get deeper into their crops. The West is looking to the California desert for good quality and retail-friendly sizing on bells. Mainland Mexico will continue to cross fruit through the month, but sizing is limited and quality has declined, as is common at the end of the season.

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Cucumbers: Cooler weather has slowed production in both Mainland Mexico and Baja, making for a tight supply of cucumbers this week. Fortunately, Baja expects to see volumes improve over the next 7-10 days. Overall quality is better from Baja, as Mainland farms have seen alternating hot and cool weather, which can take a toll on the plants. Eastern cuc production is moving up to Georgia where farms are just starting with 1st picks. Volume is still light but should pick up next week as more growers and fields fall into the mix. Florida farms are still harvesting, but have moved past peak and have few supers available.

Summer Squash: Georgia's yellow and zucchini squash production is off, likely due to the latent effects of the late freeze. Growers are eager to sell and are picking daily, bringing mostly fancy sizing to market. Plant City and North Florida are still harvesting but are in the seasonal decline. Quality is mostly good from all Eastern areas. Western squash is very short as production transitions from Northern Mexico to Baja and domestic areas in California. Baja, Fresno and Santa Maria are just starting to pick and should see more volume at the end of next week.

Green Beans: With strong supply and excellent quality, Georgia is the spot for beans this week. Western markets may look East, as production is tight during the transition from the California desert to Brentwood and Fresno.

Chili Peppers: Sonora's chili production is winding down and quality has become an issue on many varieties. New production in Central Mexico and Coachella has started, but varieties are limited in each area. Western buyers will have to piece together loads to get all varieties for the next month or so. Chilies are sparse in the East, but there is some very nice-quality fruit coming out of Plant City. A few Georgia growers have broken into fields with more to come.

TRANSPORTATION FACTS

* The National Diesel Average fell over \$.02 this week, moving from \$2.57 to \$2.54 per gallon.

* The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$.25 higher than the same time last year.

* All areas reported decreasing diesel prices with the most notable drop from the Gulf Coast (down \$.028 per gallon).

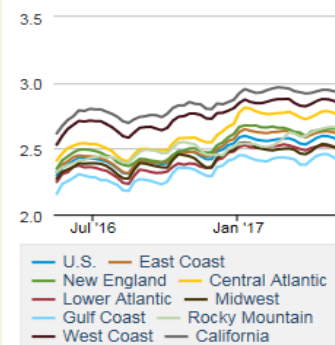
* California remains the high price leader for diesel fuel at \$2.90 while the Gulf Coast region continues to offer the best bargain at \$2.38 per gallon.

* The WTI Crude Oil price jumped 6.1% this week, moving from \$45.88 to \$48.66 per barrel.

* Central/South Florida and Mexico/Texas crossing points report slight shortages, but all other areas have adequate levels of transportation available.

On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices

(dollars per gallon)



Source: Energy Information Administration

AN APPLE A DAY

How Does Getting Nutrients from Fortification Compare to Whole Food?

By: Michael O. Schroeder, www.usnews.com, May 11, 2017

It would be hard to put a nutrition label on a strawberry – and not just because it's small. In fact, much is known about what makes this such a nutrient powerhouse in a small package: A single cup of strawberries can provide a person's daily recommended allowance of vitamin C. And food science tells us that berries are a great source for antioxidants, which research shows may boost immunity and help build and repair tissues in the body.

The reason a strawberry – and other whole foods of all shapes and sizes – isn't as simple to label as, say, a box of cereal is because of its sheer complexity. For every essential nutrient, like vitamin C, there are many other nonessential nutrients, like phytochemicals including antioxidants, not to mention the texture and structure of the food that experts say often helps the body get the most out of the food. That's true even though cooking and some minimal processing can also be beneficial to help access certain nutrients like lycopene in a tomato.

"In all fruits and vegetables, you're going to get a lot of fiber," says Alicia Romano, a registered dietitian at the Frances Stern Nutrition Center at Tufts Medical Center in Boston. That fibrousness tends to be smoothed out and lost when fruits are processed or turned into juice (save for some pulp, like in orange juice). And while vitamin C is easy enough to deliver through fortification, what remains poorly understood is the longer term health benefits of countless nutrients in whole foods that aren't typically added through fortification of foods.

"The impact of these nonessential nutrients over the very long run – so we're talking years or even decades – is not fully known," says Job Ubbink, head of the Food Science and Nutrition Department at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California. But what's clear is that there are fringe benefits from consuming food in its natural form that may be edged out or obscured when it's simply broken down to

component essential vitamins and nutrients. "By eating the whole food, essentially all of the nutrients come packaged already in balance with the other nutrients," says Melissa Wdowik, director of the Kendall Reagan Nutrition Center at Colorado State University. "The body regulates the absorption, and so if you have vitamins or you have minerals or you have amino acids competing with each other, they do so at a really consistent rate with what the body needs – the body knows what to absorb and how much."

If you get nutrients through fortification, in which vitamins and minerals are added to foods, these are often still well absorbed, sometimes even more readily than in their natural form. But the body doesn't regulate absorption in the same way it does with whole foods, Wdowik says. And, she notes, the form of the vitamin or mineral is often different from how it's found in nature. But that's hardly to say that fortification hasn't provided significant benefit for many worldwide, as in the U.S. – starting with iodine added to salt in the 1920s. That essentially wiped away an epidemic of goiter, enlargement of the thyroid gland, at the time; adequate intake of the nutrient that's found mostly in soil and water in coastal areas is needed for thyroid hormone production. "One of the pros of fortification is that it's addressed public health issues," Wdowik says. "I think historically it has been a really good idea."

"Whole foods should always take priority," Romano says, from fruits and veggies to whole grains, beans and nuts. It's from these type of foods and an overall healthy eating pattern that experts say we should derive the majority of our nutrition.

In addition, if you're choosing a food product that's fortified, independently evaluate whether it's healthy on the whole. Though certainly not true of all fortified foods (think milk, for example), Romano notes that many fortified foods have been highly processed, such as into a cereal or cracker form, with added sugar and salt. "I think that's where some of the fortified foods can get a bad rap," she says – when the fortified nutrients, or fortificants, are "added into foods that are highly processed and really not nutritious to begin with." In that way,

fortification can be leveraged as a marketing tool to provide a sort of health halo for some products that are anything but nutritious. These nutrients may be listed in a prominent way that seems to indicate the products are healthy, even if not explicitly stated as such, Ubbink says – and even if, in fact, it's a cereal that contains as much sugar as a candy bar.

What's also not known is in a land where it's normal to embrace supersized meals to the detriment of waist circumference is the additional impact getting too much of certain vitamins and minerals through fortification could have on a person's health. More research is needed to determine that, Wdowik says.

While other experts recommend using fortification to fill in gaps in a person's diet, she advises that if people need to supplement their diet to get needed nutrients to do so with a multivitamin/multimineral supplement that's taken once daily which provides 100 percent of recommended daily allowance of vitamins and minerals "The reason is, Americans overeat everything – our portions are way too big." Though studies show we absorb less than the full amount of vitamins and minerals when taken in supplement form, she says by taking one it's easier to track how much one is getting, and a person could focus on eating smaller portions (rather than trying to eat more, in an effort to get nutrients through fortification). "Even if your body only absorbs 75 percent of [the nutrients in the supplement], at least you're getting some, and you're not getting too much," she says.

Whatever role fortification might play in your diet – and no doubt it'd be hard not to eat fortified foods, given how common it is to add nutrients to foods – experts agree that whole foods should feature prominently in any healthy eating pattern. And dietitians say it's critical to read the whole label – that is, when your food is labeled – while paying close attention not only what you eat, but how much.





LIPMAN LOCAL IN PICTURES



Frank Grasso of Grasso Farms and David Ackers of Lipman NJ are plotting something good!



Danny McConnell, located in Hendersonville, NC, does a great job with squash & cucs.



Dexter Gilbert of Marianna, FL is excited to join Lipman Local this year. Welcome!



Joel Wilson of Cedar Point Farms discussing his KY pepper crop with Scott Rush.



Perrytown Produce in Scottsville, KY grows a wide variety of products for our programs.

PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Wide range	Higher
Cucumber	Good	Higher
Eggplant	Fair to Good	Higher
Green Beans	Fair to Good	Steady to Lower
Jalapenos	Varied	Higher
Onions	Good	Steady
Squash	Good	Higher
Tomatoes	Good	Higher



MAY CALENDAR

All Month

National Salad Month

Fourth Week of May

National Pickle Week

May 21st

National Waitstaff Day

May 25th

Eat More Fruits & Vegetables Day

May 28th

National Hamburger Day

Ruskin, FL Weather

Fri May 19	Sat May 20	Sun May 21	Mon May 22	Tue May 23
93°F	91°F	90°F	88°F	88°F
77°F	77°F	77°F	75°F	73°F
E 11 MPH	E 10 MPH	ESE 9 MPH	SE 7 MPH	VNNW 8 MPH
Precip 60%	Precip 50%	Precip 40%	Precip 30%	Precip 30%

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

Study: The Experience Counts in Quick Service

www.qsrmagazine.com, May 12, 2017

A new report by Catapult Marketing finds the experience-driven marketplace includes consumer selection of where to dine out. By using proprietary research methods to uncover the drivers of brand preference in the quick-service and fast-casual restaurant industry, Catapult's "Unmasking The Drivers of Brand Preference in QSR" sheds light on a variety of experiential factors that are likely to determine the winners in the category. For more information and to download the study, visit catapultmarketing.com

"The back and forth about 'where to eat?' isn't a rational or functional conversation. There are deeper emotional layers that drive brand selection," says Doug Molnar, VP, senior director of planning at Catapult. A two-part research study isolated the stated intent of restaurant selection from the true drivers of brand choice. In phase one, a Catapult ShopperLab survey of over 1,000 U.S. consumers, revealed a pattern of selection driven largely by practical factors such as type of food, choice of cuisine, location and affordability. In phase two, a SolutionScan survey of over 2,000 diners, many of those factors fell to the wayside, replaced by a variety of influences related to the type of experience that diners were seeking.

"Universally, people claim that the primary drivers of restaurant selection are affordability, great tasting food and a satisfying meal," Molnar explains. "But when we determine what actually drives brand preference, those attributes are replaced by factors such as offering traditional flavors and a home-made taste (for lunch), and seeking new food options or a trendy place (for dinner)."

The research revealed that diners in the millennial and younger age groups are a complex target for restaurant marketers. On the one hand, these are particularly cost-conscious consumers, placing affordability at the top of the list of stated purchase intent. However, the SolutionScan survey revealed deeper experiential forces (e.g., seeking a trendy place to eat) driving the restaurant choices of Millennials.

"Millennials came of age in an experience-based culture, so their expectations with regard to customer experiences are much higher than those of other groups, and that is part of what's driving them to constantly try new things," says Brian Cohen, EVP, senior group director and head of digital integration at Catapult. Cohen contends that quick-service chains need to think about ways to dial up the "experience and experiment" factor in order to win over today's younger consumers. That can be achieved through menu innovation or by making the order-ahead process more fun and expedient through an exciting new mobile program. Quick service and fast casual chains can also look to the broader food industry for ideas—such as promoting healthier menu items—that will appeal to millennial customers.

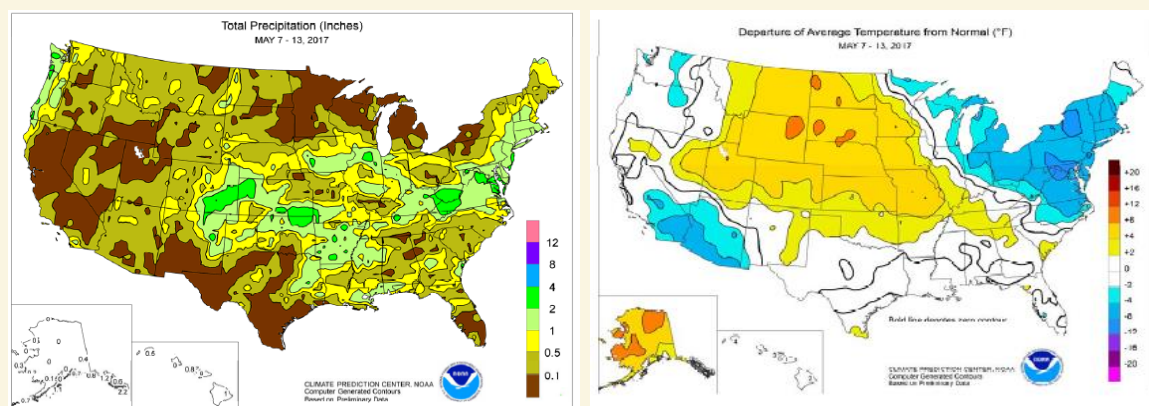
The takeaway for the quick service and fast casual category is, put simply, it's not just about the food. We live in an experience culture, and the dining out experience must live up to the standards that consumers have set in all aspects of their lives. With that in mind, here is a summary of the imperatives for marketers in the category:

Five must-dos for quick-service chains

1. Offer quality food at a fair value.
2. Move beyond functionality and connect to the unique emotions of the dining experience: It's not just about the food.
3. Introduce value-added content that enhances the overall customer experience.
4. Spread innovation from product development to menu design to staff training up and down the organization.
5. Add subliminal cues to nudge customers inside the restaurant: Atmosphere counts.

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

Supermarkets Shifting from Traditional to Digital Circulars

By: Kristen Cloud, www.theshelbyreport.com, May 12, 2017

Consumers historically have turned to print circulars for grocery shopping decisions. They make shopping lists and plan trips based on the weekly sales and special offers. Today, shoppers are becoming more comfortable with personalized digital communications and coupons delivered to their mobile devices from their neighborhood supermarkets. To attract younger customers, grocers are increasingly investing in digital circulars to complement traditional circulars. The recently released report, "2017 Promotional and Advertising Practices Study Among U.S. Grocery Retailers," published by Aptaris and dunhumby, addresses the shift from traditional to digital circulars and provides these key findings:

Paper and digital circular practices

- While change is under way, weekly distribution of the print circular is still the norm, with per-store distribution averaging around 9,600. Looking forward, retailers are expecting reduced circulation, including lower paid subscription usage and lower or stable total market coverage (TMC) usage.
- Temporary Price Reduction (TPR) and other vendor allowances have the greatest influences when determining items and promotions for the circular. The prior-year issue is the second most common driver for circular item selection.
- Predictions are that perishables, fresh prepared foods and private brands will take a greater share of the items in the flyer in the next three years.
- Having a digital circular has become a must. The level of sophistication, however, varies widely, with larger retailers more likely to offer an interactive version that is searchable, clickable, linked to recipes and connected to an online list-generating tool or ordering.

Reduced circulation and pages, but more fresh items in circular lineup

- Looking about three years out, the majority of food retailers anticipate a circular with fewer or an equal number of pages, sent at the current rate or less, and with a reduced circulation. Most expect item count per page to remain unchanged, but instead foresee significant item type changes, with a greater allocation to perishables, private brands and deli/fresh prepared foods.
- Mid-size regionals are most likely to integrate perishables at a higher rate, whereas larger chains are expecting to emphasize private brands and prepared foods.

Digital circular has become a must

- The high usage of the print circular goes hand-in-hand with an online version—one-store operators being the exception. Most medium and larger chains have digital versions of the circular.
- The level of sophistication of the digital circular varies widely across retailers. Larger retailers, operating 50 stores or more, are much more likely to offer an interactive version that is searchable, clickable, linked to recipes and connected to an online list-generating or ordering tool. One respondent noted, "Right now, our online circular is just a PDF of the paper copy. We need to build a more interactive circular that can actually drive sales rather than serve as a research mechanism only."

Leveraging digital, social and mobile

- According to IRI shopper research, the average shopper spends six hours per day online. Digital, social and mobile media play an opportunistic role in CPG shopping behavior. The good news is that consumers are more likely to search retailer sites than they are to visit manufacturers' sites—offering retailers an important gateway to connect with shoppers pre-, during and post-visit. To date, social media is less influential in shopping planning, but it is a critical partner in education and meal planning, which sets the table for overall sales, says IRI. Millennials are the trailblazers of online shopping and planning. They are more likely to research recipes, compare prices and purchase online.

FRESH

TOMATOES


the best of nature™

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS!

September 12-14, 2017

New England Produce Council's Produce, Floral & Foodservice Expo
 Boston Convention & Exhibit Center
 Boston, MA
www.newenglandproducecouncil.com

September 18-20, 2017

United Fresh Washington Conference
 Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill
 Washington, DC
www.unitedfresh.org/events

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