



## MARKET UPDATE

**Tomatoes:** South Florida's tomato crops seem to have escaped major frost/freeze concerns with the recent bout of cold weather. The possibility of bloom drop could affect availability and yields later on down the road, but it's really too early to assess with any accuracy. Overall volumes on all items are picking up, as most of the major growers are now back in the mix of things. Round sizing has been on the small side, but should begin to improve over the next few weeks as warmer weather settles in and the fruit has the opportunity to size up. Although plantings are relatively light, four major growers are now harvesting romas. Grape volumes are also improving. Quality is good on all varieties, and should get even better as we settle in to better growing conditions.

Culiacan/West Mexico's round and roma tomato production is increasing as new acreage comes online. Baja and East Mexico are still shipping fruit, but are down to very low volumes as the season comes to an end. Grape tomatoes are finally coming into Nogales in stronger numbers with good availability expected for the next few weeks. Quality is not an issue on any of the Mexican fruit.

**Bell Peppers:** Yields are light this week, thanks to last week's cold weather, but there are light to moderate volumes available in Florida. Sizing is nicely spread and quality has been nice. In the West, both Sonora and Sinaloa continue to come in with strong numbers on bell peppers but Eastern and Mexican national demand are keeping availability at moderate levels. Quality is still great with good color and strong walls.

**Cucumbers:** Though Mexico's availability was limited over the weekend, supply seems to be improving this week. There's good weather in the growing regions and fields that were replanted due to mildew should be back up and

running in the next few weeks. Eastern markets are seeing light numbers out of Honduras but more volume is expected over the weekend. Quality has been hit or miss.

**Summer Squash:** Considering the loss of Plant City's crops, lighter plantings in the Southern part of state, and the cold weather.... you guessed it... squash is on the short side in Florida. Weather is key to the recovery on squash. With nice weather, there could be better volume coming in the next few weeks. Multiple growing areas in Mexico are increasing in squash volumes as more growers come online and better weather settles into the growing areas.

**Green Beans:** South Florida's cool weather has slowed bean production down. As well, some growers have reported bloom damage, which will reduce yields in the not-so-distant future. Although there is product available, the market is tight. Without crops from the Lake area (damaged by freeze), this situation could continue for a while. Mexico's bean production is expected to increase slightly over the next 7-10 days but product will remain scarce as Eastern demand impacts availability.

**Eggplant:** South Florida has very nice quality, but light volumes on eggs. Mainland Mexico has a steady supply as all fields are in production.

**Hard Squash:** Eastern hard squash is mostly a Mexico mixer program, but there is a handful of local product in Florida. Honduras should get up and running later this month. Meanwhile, Mexico is experiencing a slight hiccup in production as newer plantings are behind schedule. Quality has been just okay with moderate to heavy scarring on spaghetti, more ground lay visible on acorn and more misshapen butternut.

**Chili Peppers:** Eastern chili peppers have really tightened up and there's very little product available. Both Sinaloa and Sonora are into strong volumes on chilies with the better quality coming from Sinaloa.

## TRANSPORTATION FACTS

\*The National Diesel Average continues to inch upwards and has now reached \$3.00 per gallon, up almost \$.03 over last week's price.

\* The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$.40 higher than the same time last year.

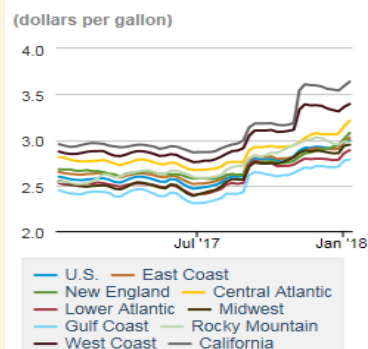
\* Prices rose in all reporting areas except the Rocky Mountains, where the cost remained stable at \$2.97 per gallon.

\*As usual, California is the high price leader for diesel fuel at \$3.64 while the Gulf Coast region continues to offer the best bargain at \$2.79 per gallon.

\*The WTI Crude Oil price jumped 4.3% this week, moving from \$60.37 to \$62.96 per barrel.

\*Trucks remain short and rates remain high as the trucking business finds its balance with the new electronic logging requirements.

### On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices



eia Source: Energy Information Administration

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## KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

### Why Food Retailers Have a Millennial Problem

By: Gina Acosta, [www.retailleader.com](http://www.retailleader.com), January 4, 2018

Millennials are demanding more fresh food but shopping less at grocery stores, according to a new report from the USDA.

The December 2017 report, "Food Purchase Decisions of Millennial Households Compared to Other Generations," by Annemarie Kuhns and Michelle Saksena shows that millennials are spending more time buying ready-to-eat meals, less time at food retailers, and are less interested in meats and starches than other generations.

The study looked at spending patterns of traditionalists (born before 1946), baby boomers (born 1946-65), gen X (born 1965-80) and millennials (born between 1981 and 1996).

The data show that millennials frequent food retailers the least of all generations. Higher income (per capita) seems to reduce the frequency of food store trips as well. Traditionalists, who spend more on food at home (FAH) per capita, frequent food stores more often.

Millennials consume food in a restaurant or bar around 30 percent more often than any other generation.

Wealthier households tend to buy more primary/unprocessed ingredients, reducing their purchases of processed foods and starchy carbohydrates like pasta and increasing their purchases of fruit and vegetables. Millennial households with lower per capita income have a greater

tendency to make more FAH purchases than do higher income millennial households.

Among all generations, millennials devote the smallest share of food expenditures to grains, white meat, and red meat, the report says.

When partitioning by income per capita, fruit expenditure shares for millennials essentially matched those of traditionalists, who allocate the largest share to fruits. Moreover, as millennials become richer, they apportion more of their FAH budget to vegetables, suggesting that the millennial generation may have a stronger preference for fruits and vegetables compared to older generations.

The report also shows that millennials spend, on average, 12 minutes less eating and drinking than traditionalists, who devote the most time toward those activities at 77 minutes per day. However, all four generations spend essentially the same amount of time in secondary eating (i.e., eating a snack while watching a movie).

Millennials, however, spend significantly less time on food preparation, presentation, and cleanup—55 minutes less than Gen Xers, who spend the most time at 143 minutes. This time observation supports the finding that millennials purchase more ready-to-eat foods; nearly two-thirds of Millennials reported buying some form of prepared food within the prior 7 days,

suggesting a preference for time savings.

"Recession millennials" purchase more FAH overall than "non-recession millennials," even when they have similar incomes. This difference in purchasing behavior may be attributed to changes in earning trajectories due to the recession. However, when comparing higher (per capita) income recession and non-recession millennials, their food spending patterns (FAH and FAFH) are similar, suggesting that the recession may have only affected lower income and middle-income "recession millennial" food shopping behaviors. This could be because higher income millennials were less affected by the recession or were wealthy enough to maintain food purchasing patterns.

The study was conducted using various surveys and stats, including one survey drawing from 116,000 distinct households across the United States. The report also used statistics from the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) and the Healthy Eating Module, 2014, on time use associated with food consumption, preparation, and purchase. The survey includes data for nearly 25,000 individuals selected randomly from a subset of households that participated in the Current Population Survey (CPS).

## Veggie of the Week- Cucumber

### Maturity Indices

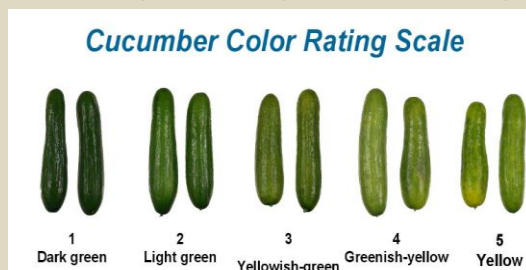
Cucumbers are harvested at a range of developmental stages. Depending on cultivar and temperature, the time from flowering to harvest may be 55 to 60 days. Generally fruit are harvested at a slightly immature stage, near full size but before seeds fully enlarge and harden. Firmness and external glossiness are also indicators of a pre-maturity condition. At proper harvest maturity, a jellylike material has begun to form in the seed cavity.

### Quality Indices

Table or slicing cucumber quality is primarily based on uniform shape, firmness and a dark green skin color. Additional quality indices are size, freedom from growth or handling defects, freedom from decay, and an absence of yellowing. Industry grades and specifications follow the packing conventions Super Select, Select, Small Super, Small, Large, and Plain.

### Optimum Temperature

10-12.5°C (50-55°F) Storage of cucumber is generally less than 14 days as visual and sensory quality deteriorate rapidly. Shriveling, yellowing, and decay are likely to increase following storage beyond two weeks, especially after removal to typical retail conditions. Short term storage or transit temperatures below this range (such as 7.2°C (45°F)) are commonly used but will result in chilling injury after 2-3 days. Cucumbers are chilling sensitive at temperatures below 10°C (50°F) if held for more than a day to 3 days depending on temperature and cultivar. Consequences of chilling injury are water-soaked areas, pitting and accelerated decay. Chilling injury is cumulative and may be initiated in the field prior to harvest. Cucumber varieties vary considerably in their susceptibility to chilling injury.



Suslow, T. and Cantwell, M. 1997. Cucumber: Recommendations for Maintaining Postharvest Quality.  
[http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/Commodity\\_Resources/Fact\\_Sheets/Datastores/Vegetables\\_English/?uid=&ds=799](http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/Commodity_Resources/Fact_Sheets/Datastores/Vegetables_English/?uid=&ds=799)

## PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



## JANUARY CALENDAR

### All Month

National Soup Month

January 14<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup>

Healthy Weight Week

January 13<sup>th</sup>

National Gluten-Free Day

January 16<sup>th</sup>

International Hot & Spicy Food Day

January 18<sup>th</sup>

Get to Know Your Customers Day

### Immokalee, FL Weather

Fri Jan 12	Sat Jan 13	Sun Jan 14	Mon Jan 15	Tue Jan 16
79° F	71° F	65° F	67° F	70° F
56° F	45° F	41° F	47° F	42° F
SSE 14 MPH Precip 50%	NW 7 MPH	N 11 MPH	NNE 9 MPH	N 10 MPH



## RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

### How Restaurants Can Use Popularity of Online Dating, Netflix to Increase Sales [www.fastcasual.com](http://www.fastcasual.com), December 26, 2017

Both consumer priorities and the choices they make have changed drastically over the past decade. With ecommerce, social media and ubiquitous mobile devices driving much of this change, restaurants and retailers are experiencing dramatic shifts in customer engagement. Recognizing and adapting to these new behavioral patterns is crucial to success. In this era of change, there's one thing that has not changed: food! In fact, people today are not eating less. They are just eating differently. In fact, changes have happened before, and restaurants adapted to them. Just as, fast food and drive-through restaurants were a response to the post-World War II car culture, takeout and online ordering are a reply to the onslaught of social media and mobile devices. It's important to stop and see just how restaurants can capitalize on cultural changes and learn to interact with their customers in new ways. An examination of two key areas, online dating and movie night, explain how this can be done.

#### Targeting the online dating community

Dating, for starters, has been completely revolutionized by online services such as Tinder, Match.com and OKCupid. And while online dating may have replaced the bar scene as the preferred venue for meeting new partners, bars and restaurants still play a big role in dating. Let's look at Tinder as an example of how this might work. With 32 million members and 10 million daily active users, Tinder orchestrates 1.3 million dates every week and, all told, has made nine billion total matches.

These matches are still meeting in restaurants, bars and coffee shops. But instead of going on a big, romantic first date — say dinner and a movie — online daters prefer a more casual, inexpensive meeting. Their orders are a lot smaller, and drinks are preferred — maybe a cup of coffee or a beer as opposed to an entire meal. The spending really depends on the quality of the date.

#### So how can restaurants take advantage of the online dating paradigm?

First, they need to identify guest behavior and peer potential. One way to do this is to search for patterns within their loyalty program that will help identify the online dater. Is a member coming in several nights a week, but only visits the bar where he orders two drinks then leaves? Does someone visit the fast-casual restaurant in the middle of the afternoon for a single coffee, which they prefer to drink in the restaurant as opposed to taking it to go? Once he or she has been identified as an online dater, how can they be incentivized to spend more?

A restaurant can target these specific customers with first-date promotions that offer food with alcohol purchases or a free sandwich after 10 coffees have been purchased. The trick is to get these frequent visitors to order a starter item, an entree or dessert along with their drinks. From there, the goal is to get them back in for a full meal once they start getting serious with a significant other. Another approach is to create an opt-in dating program. To get into the program, a member identifies themselves as a dater and gets customized benefits, such as a free coffee or draft beer for every five purchased. The goal is always to increase visits and spend.

#### Moving away from dinner and a movie

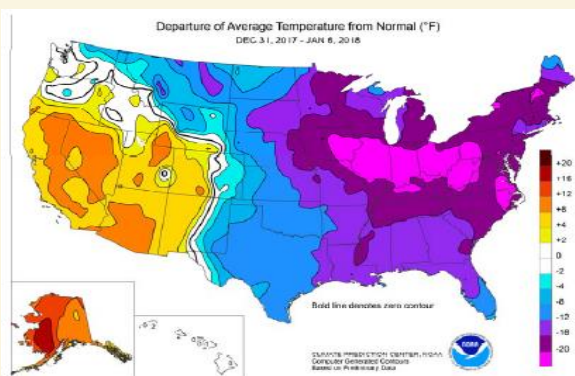
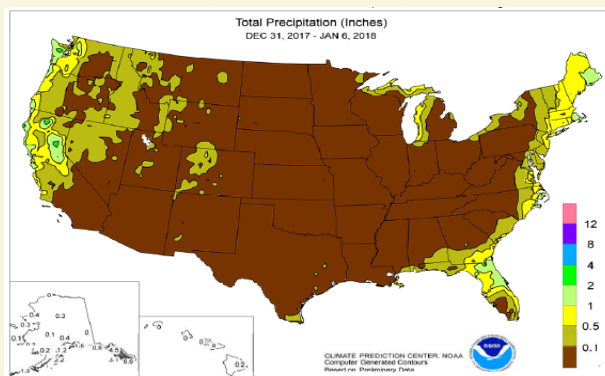
Movie theaters have also been impacted by the way we consume media. Today there are many alternatives to going out to see a movie. Services like Netflix, HBO and Stars, have made it much easier for people to stay home and watch movies. With 100 million subscribers and more than 50 billion hours streamed annually, Netflix reports that the average subscriber spends close to four weeks every year watching its content. Subscribers prefer to stay home, watch a movie and chill out. In many cases, they are ordering takeout food to eat while they watch.

These Netflix viewers are part of an ongoing restaurant evolution that has evolved from sit down dining to take out and drive through to home delivery and now online ordering. Restaurants should be targeting the Netflix audience with specific offers and promotions. Just as with capturing the online dating crowd, the restaurant loyalty program is a great place to start.

Ideally, the restaurant online ordering program is integrated with the loyalty program. This enables the restaurant to segment loyalty members based on recurring takeout orders, then target them with promotions designed for movie nights. In many cases, these customers are ordering for their entire family. If the family profile has been defined, then the promotion might include two-for-one kids' meals or a free dessert with an extra-large pizza. Capturing the movie night crowd can be a weekly restaurant bonus. They may not come in and sit down, but they still want a good meal that someone else has prepared for them.

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

### Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



## NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

### Why 2018 Will Be Very Good for Food Retailers

By: Gina Acosta, [www.retailleader.com](http://www.retailleader.com), January 5, 2017

The year 2018 may turn out to offer a key opportunity for food retailers, as Americans say they plan to cook more meals at home this year. According to a new survey conducted on behalf of online grocer Peapod by ORC International, 73% of adults currently make dinner at home at least four nights a week and nearly one third (31%) are planning to cook dinner at home more often in the New Year.

Millennials are pushing that trend even further as 50% have intentions of making dinner at home more frequently in 2018. Teens, part of the generation dubbed Post-Millennials or Generation Z, look to be following in those foodie footsteps as four in five (79%) say they want their parents to cook more in 2018.

#### What's Driving the Trend?

Fueling the momentum to cook more at home are the desire to save money (72%) and eat healthier (52%). These were also the top factors in 2017, proving Americans see the financial value in shopping for groceries and planning ahead for meals as well as selecting ingredients tailored to their nutritional preferences. An interesting shift for 2018 is that more Americans report cooking at home helps them spend quality time together as a family (43%); that's up 11 percentage points from last year. This is especially true for parents as 60% report cooking to spend quality time together. When parents are searching for dinner ideas, finding a meal the whole family will like/agree upon ranks second in importance (85%), surpassed only by "tastes good" (94%).

#### Getting Kids Involved

Perhaps most surprisingly, kids are big supporters of more home-cooked meals. Four in five teenagers surveyed (79%) want their parents to cook more at home in 2018, and over half of teens want to help their parents with the cooking process more often. Teens report having fun while cooking (59%) and they also see meal time as a way to spend time together as a family (55%). Along with family bonding, getting kids involved with cooking teaches them important skills and grows an appreciation for healthy food and nutrition; one in three teens (32%) who want to help their parents with cooking more express a desire to help their family eat healthier meals.

#### Meal Planning Made Easier

When asked what would make it easier to cook at home, Americans report the most valued shortcuts as ready to serve or cook mixes (41%), an example of which would be meal kits, followed closely by pre-chopped produce (38%). Pre-measured ingredients (34%) and grocery delivery (25%) are also perceived as adding value. Parents are significantly more inclined than non-parents to value ready to serve or cook mixes (49% vs. 38%, respectively), pre-measured ingredients (43% vs. 30%), and grocery delivery (30% vs. 23%). With respect to grocery delivery, Millennials are over twice as likely as Boomers to perceive this shortcut as valuable to them.

ORC International conducted an online survey among 1,024 adults comprising 512 men and 512 women 18 years of age and older on Nov. 27-29, 2017. The results reported for parents are based on parents or guardians of children under the age of 18 living in their home. An online survey of 508 teens ages 13-17 was conducted Nov. 28- Dec. 3, 2017.

<p><b>MARK YOUR CALENDAR PACK YOUR BAGS!</b></p> <p><b>February 6-9, 2018</b> Eastern Grower Connect: Strategies. Relationships. Results. Legacy Lodge at Lanier Island Buford, GA <a href="http://www.easterngrowerconnect.com">www.easterngrowerconnect.com</a></p> <p><b>March 1-3, 2018</b> Southeast Produce Council's Southern Exposure Tampa Convention Center Tampa, FL <a href="http://www.southernexposure.seproducecouncil.com">www.southernexposure.seproducecouncil.com</a> Come see Lipman at Booth 535!</p>	<p><b>CREATED BY LIPMAN FOR OUR VALUABLE CUSTOMERS</b></p> <p>Visit our website... <a href="http://www.lipmanfamilyfarms.com">www.lipmanfamilyfarms.com</a></p> <p>Follow us</p> <p>Questions or comments about the newsletter? Contact: <a href="mailto:joanna.hazel@lipmanproduce.com">joanna.hazel@lipmanproduce.com</a></p>