



MARKET UPDATE

Round Tomatoes: With Palmetto/Ruskin wrapped up on rounds, production has moved to the Quincy area and South Carolina shore. Only a few growers have started up in Quincy so numbers are light but they should be running at full volume in another 7-10 days. South Carolina deals started last Saturday. First pick sizing is heavy to 5x6's with little small fruit available this week. We'll see fruit sizing down to a more normal spread as we move into later plantings over the next week or so. Quality and packouts are very nice. The Western tomato scenario is similar to last week - mature greens are available from the California desert for another week or so and vine-ripe volume is building in Eastern Mexico and Baja. Looking forward, the first grower in northern California will start June 10th with more to come online in the following weeks.

Roma Tomatoes: The East is down to minimal volumes from a few growers in the Quincy area. There won't be any significant roma volume until the 4th of July, when the regional deals start up in TN, etc. As with rounds, Mexico's roma production is transitioning from Western growing areas to the East and Baja. Northern California will also join in the fun as we head into July.

Grape Tomatoes: There are still a few grapes left in Ruskin, but they'll finish up over the next week. With Quincy not really in the grape deal in a big way, the primary production point in the East is now South Carolina where harvests started on Sunday. Early picks are running a little large on size, but will size down as farms move into further picks. Quality has been nice. Volume is light to moderate, but steady. Western supply continues to transition from Nogales to Baja shippers.

Bell Peppers: Georgia's pepper is plentiful as it has been pushed by the heat. Quality has been pretty good, but we're now starting to see some blossom end rot from select growers and a little bruising from others. They've got another couple weeks to go, as weather permits. Production is

beginning the transition northward and to local areas. Eastern North Carolina is on tap to start next week and crops look promising thus far. Several growers on local deals in KY and VA are reporting that their pepper crops are ahead of schedule. They normally start around July 1st, but some will have fruit as early as June 20th. Western markets are mostly looking to the California desert for bells as Nogales shippers are in the final days of the season. The desert should hold the fort down until the Bakersfield area comes fully online.

Cucumbers: Georgia still has cucumbers to go, but quality has started to decline with the recent heat. Shriveled ends and sunken areas are the most prevalent concerns. Fortunately, local deals have started in KY, NJ and Eastern NC with more to come over the next few weeks. In the West, Mainland Mexico is likely to wrap things up sooner than expected as quality and volumes decline quickly. More shippers have started out of Otag but cool weather has slowed down this week's volume. This area will see volume increases and become a stronger source of supply as weather warms up.

Summer Squash: Heat has affected Georgia's squash yields and acreage as they move into the last days of their season. Quality has been rough on yellow with lots of scuffing/scarring but okay on zucchini. Squash is transitioning to regional/local deal as NC, NJ, VA and KY have all started their seasons. Yellow quality has been hit or miss depending on area and grower, but no complaints on zucchini. In the West, we're seeing Nogales shippers drop off daily as farms leave fruit behind due to quality issues (mosaic, scuffing, etc). By the weekend, they'll be finished up, leaving squash to the Fresno and Santa Maria areas where production has been light so far, especially on yellow.

Eggplant: Eggplant is still snug this week but is showing signs of improvement. There are still a few eggs left in Plant City, but quality is not

retail appropriate. Georgia farms have had some hiccups with quality on their new crops but fruit is looking better this week and volume is picking up. Supply is a bit more challenging in the West, as Nogales is completely finished and the California desert has been slow to come with volumes.

Organic Squash: Nogales is down to one grower who only has zucchini available, so organic squash demand has shifted to newer growing areas in Baja and California that haven't hit their strides yet. California should begin to have volume soon as several growers have now gotten up and running. New crops are also on the way from both Baja and the Northwest in about 2 weeks, bringing more options and volume to the table. A few small local deals have started in the East (KY, SC, NC) with more to follow over the next few weeks.

Organic Cucumbers: Nogales' organic cucumber supply is dropping off quickly and is expected to finish up within two weeks. New crops are getting started in Baja and volumes should begin to ramp up as soon as next week which will help bridge the transition. As with organic squash, various local deals in the East are on the verge of starting or have started in a light way.

Organic Green Bells: Nogales is officially done, so everyone is going to California for organic bells this week. Coachella's short season is winding down quickly, possibly finishing this week. Bakersfield has just started and should see more volume next week. Eastern programs are still 3-4 weeks from pepper production.

Tomato-on-the-Vine: Lipman/Huron's greenhouses in Nebraska and Canada are both harvesting strong volumes of TOV's. Color and quality have been excellent. Mexico also has fruit, but quality concerns in current crops have shifted demand to other areas.

Colored Bell Peppers: Colored bells are snug as cloudy weather in Canada has slowed production and Mexico deals with production/quality issues.

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NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

Avoiding Summertime Shrink

By: Armand Lobato, www.produceretailer.com, June 5, 2019

My favorite author (Anonymous) once said this about focus: "If railroads had understood they were in the transportation business instead of the steel-rail business, we'd all be flying on Union Pacific Airlines." That's just one thought as we head full-steam into summer, the produce department's busiest period.

Specifically, my focus this week is about shrink. Shrink (the difference between what a produce item should sell for, as opposed to what actually gets rung up in the till) is also known as loss or waste. As summer is peak season for produce volume and sales, it is also peak season for shrink.

Some of summer's shrink can be attributed to factors a manager has less control over. Consider this: A produce manager must manage the most volatile categories (such as stone fruit, cherries, berries, and local produce) in the highest-volume time of year, and depend upon temporary or the least-experienced clerks to handle it all — as the more senior clerks rotate in and out of the schedule taking vacation time.

What's a produce manager to do? Focus less on what you can't control and more on what is within your control.

First of all, a produce manager should focus on maximizing sales. Don't be afraid to build the mass displays. Order expecting the best quality and sales, not fearing the worst of either, or you'll be out of business. Carry as many fresh produce items as you can to give the "Yes, we're in the produce business!" impact on your customers. But what about the shrink that this creates?

I have learned two things about our focus from Karen Caplan, CEO of Frieda's Inc. "There's good shrink, and there's bad shrink," she once said.

Good shrink is when a produce manager surrenders a few cases during a week as samples. This is a minimal investment in sparking sales, especially with new or unfamiliar produce items. Good shrink is also regularly carrying a full line of specialty produce. Give it a try. You'll get lots of comments from your customers who share compliments of your store as "the produce stand that has everything!" The shrink from all-out specialty investment? Less than 1% when carrying minimal backstock.

So where does excess "bad" shrink originate? Mostly from incomplete training, writing hasty, inaccurate orders, neglect in storing product out of temperature, or overlooking invoice-billing mistakes. Or from mis-rotation, either in the back room or not faithfully rotating displays every stocking trip.

Some shrink is inevitable. Excess shrink can be avoided, given careful, focused steps.



TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*The national diesel average slid another \$.015 this week, moving from \$3.15 to \$3.13 per gallon.

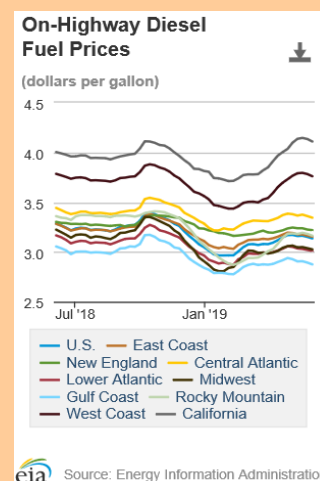
* The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.015 less than the same time last year.

* Prices dropped in all reporting areas with the most significant decline coming from California (down \$.025).

*California continues to have the highest diesel prices in the country at \$4.11 per gallon while the Gulf Coast is the low-price leader at \$2.88 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil price fell significantly again this week (down 9.1%). Pricing moved from \$58.81 to \$53.48 per barrel.

* As production areas transition, transportation availability has tightened up significantly in Florida and to a lesser degree in California and at Mexico crossing points.





FRESH CUT FOCUS


Diced Cucumbers

Contributed By: Johnathan Maldonado, Manager of Innovation/Product Development- Lipman Dallas, TX


Lipman's fresh cut product line provides you with the best of nature, cut fresh and packed for convenience.... year round. Our product-specific processing and patented packaging drives optimal shelf life – meaning you'll receive only the best product, every time. And this produce not only tastes good... it helps customers save valuable time in the kitchen, and the convenient packaging also reduces the risk of foodborne illness, by decreasing the opportunity for cross-contamination.

Because our fresh cut products are so versatile in both foodservice and retail applications, we'd like to share some of our ideas on how they can be incorporated into your operation. This week, we're featuring our diced cucumbers!


For more information, please reach out to your usual Lipman contact or one of our fresh cut specialists: Johnathan Maldonado at 214.907.0695, Chris Daulerio- East at 215.870.8956 or Brian Arbini- West at 209.402.5184.



Seared Corn Tortillas with Carnitas and Fresh Cucumber Pico de Gallo



Refreshing Strawberry and Cucumber Tabbouleh Salad with Fresh Mint and Feta



Cucumber Pico de Gallo with Fresh Herbs and Chili

Diced Cucumbers

Ingredients:


- Diced Cucumber

Menu Applications:

- Cucumber Pico de Gallo on Tacos or Burritos
- Diced Cucumbers with Grains for a Refreshing Mediterranean Salad
- Cucumbers, Diced Tomatoes, Onions and Fresh Herb Salad

Kit Versatility:

- Foodservice items
- Salad bars
- Behind the glass deli
- National accounts
- Kits sold for repack at store level



PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Mostly Good	Steady
Cucumber	Fair to Good	Steady
Eggplant	Poor to Good	Steady
Green Beans	Varied	Rising
Jalapenos	Good	Steady
Onions	Good	Higher
Squash	Varied	Higher
Tomatoes	Varied	Higher



JUNE CALENDAR

June All Month

National Country Cooking Month

National Pollinator Month

June 10th-16th

Men's Health Week

June 8th

Companies That Care Day






June 10th

Ball Point Pen Day

June 13th

National Cucumber Day

Clinton, NC Weather

Fri Jun 7	Sat Jun 8	Sun Jun 9	Mon Jun 10	Tue Jun 11
				
88°F	83°F	84°F	85°F	84°F
71°F	71°F	72°F	72°F	63°F
W 5 MPH	ENE 6 MPH	ESE 6 MPH	SE 7 MPH	SE 6 MPH
Precip 70%	Precip 70%	Precip 70%	Precip 70%	Precip 50%

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

3 Ways Restaurants Can Hit it Out of the Park this Summer

By: David Galante, www.foodnewsfeed.com, June 3, 2019

Up to bat

The chill of winter is melting away, making way for the promises of summer, including sunshine, warmth and, for restaurants, oftentimes, an increase in business. Just as we put away the winter coats and break out the baseball or soccer gear to meet the coming season, restaurants can, and should, refresh their business strategies. A restaurants' summer roadmap for implementing emerging technologies can help support their servers, build patron loyalty, and create an overall exceptional customer experience. Here, we'll discuss three key strategies for success in these areas.

Supporting the Servers

A restaurant's first step toward creating a great customer experience is ensuring its servers, the backbone of the restaurant, are happy and operating smoothly. According to TDn2K's People Report, over 75 percent of restaurants are regularly understaffed. When servers don't have the support that they need, they begin to feel the pressures of the job, and when they're feeling burdened and overwhelmed by the number of customers and the lack of support, the customer experience is negatively impacted.

A short-staffed restaurant impacts every aspect of the customer experience, leading to long waits on everything from placing orders to receiving food to paying the bill. A restaurant's maintenance of adequate staffing is also top-of-mind for customers, with 82 percent of customers saying that having enough staff is important to them, according to a recent Oracle study which asked 15,000 consumers around the world what is most important to them when dining out. The implementation of labor management technology is one way to ensure restaurants have the optimal staff levels at all times—providing great service while not negatively impacting profits. This technology allows servers to better focus on their jobs and gives customers exceptional services and experiences.

Building Patron Loyalty

Providing customers with consistent and dependable service is, in and of itself, a worthy goal. However, a restaurant should also be focused on retaining loyal, paying customers. According to an Oracle Hospitality study, customers tend to show their loyalty in two ways—through their activity and through their behavior. For instance, 47 percent of customers report that they will visit a brand that they are loyal to more frequently than others (activity), while 52 percent state that they will recommend these brands to a friend (behavior).

As we've already discussed, convenience and service play a big part in the customer's experience. According to the Oracle Hospitality loyalty study, more than 80 percent of customers welcome technologies that would enhance these experiences—whether through recommendations and promotional information, the ability to order and pay for their order on a mobile app, or being able to track the progress of their orders.

Going the Extra Mile

Most importantly, customers feel special when a business goes above and beyond to ensure they are satisfied and taken care of. Whether this treatment is a service or the product, customers will not quickly forget their enjoyable experiences. Esteban Kolsky, founder and principal of ThinkJar, a customer strategy consulting organization helping companies and users successfully become better, reports that 55 percent of customers will pay more for a guaranteed good experience. Quick and efficient service and order accuracy are the two areas in which this improvement is the most appreciated.

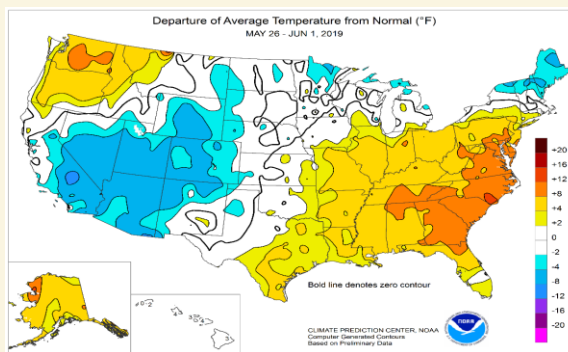
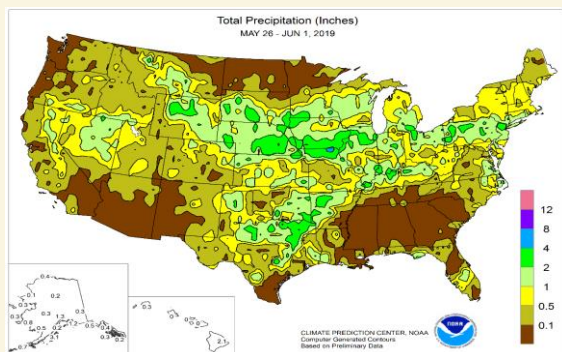
According to the Oracle study mentioned earlier, 84 percent of consumers ranked fast, efficient service as their number one priority when visiting a restaurant, while 83 percent of consumers mentioned "order accuracy" as being important to them. At the end of the day, customers are going to remember how they felt during their dining experience—whether they felt special and appreciated as a customer or were simply treated as a dollar sign. "People are always willing to pay more to feel important, to feel remembered and to feel like they belong," says Patric Yumul, president of Mina Group, a multi-chain restaurant group. "Knowing what a customer's preferences are—what they like to eat, what they like drink and what they tend to order—goes a long way."

As restaurants create a game plan to tackle these daily challenges ranging from server happiness to strong customer loyalty, knowing which technologies to implement will determine whether these restaurants hit it out of the park or strike out.

This article has been edited for content and space. To read the entire article, please visit www.foodnewsfeed.com

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Last Week's Precipitation Totals and Average Temperature Deviations



KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

Understanding the Modern Vegetarian Customer

By: Nicole Duncan, www.qsrmagazine.com, May 2019

Long before keto and paleo, flexitarian and pescatarian, grain-less and gluten-free, there was the original alternative diet: vegetarian. While such dining behaviors are becoming more common, vegetarians remain a niche and somewhat static slice of population. That being said, understanding—and serving—these herbivorous consumers can pave the way to mass appeal and even menu innovation.

Who are they?

At the most basic level, vegetarians are people who forgo meats. Within that catchall are different shades: A vegetarian may consume animal-derived products like eggs and cheese, while a vegan refrains from any food originating from animals—including honey. At their healthiest, vegetarians and vegans eat diets rich in vegetables, fruits, beans and other legumes, and whole grains. As with any diet, some members eschew the nutritious, whole foods in favor of processed items. Vegan evangelist and author Kris Carr coined the term "muffin vegan" to describe the pallid, malnourished eaters subsisting entirely on packaged veggie burgers and other processed foods.

Counterintuitive crowd

It's tempting to assume vegetarians, and especially vegans, skew female, white, and urban-dwelling, given public figures like Carr, Ellen DeGeneres, and Miley Cyrus, but the numbers paint a very different picture. According to Datassential, a greater portion of men (2 percent) are vegan compared to 1 percent of women. Three percent of both genders as well as white, black, and Hispanic consumers are vegetarians, while a sizable 7 percent of Asians are vegetarian. Interestingly the more restrictive vegan diet appeals most to minorities: 3 percent of Hispanic and Asian-Americans are vegan; 2 percent of African-Americans are; and only 1 percent of white consumers are.

In terms of age, millennials are more likely to be either vegetarian (5 percent) or vegan (4 percent) than any other generation. [A fun side note: Of the 3,500 people polled in Datassential's study, 0 percent of boomers were vegan.] As for geography, the South—land of barbecue, fried chicken, and other meaty delights—boasts a larger vegan population than the West, although that relationship flips for vegetarianism. Unsurprisingly, urban areas are home to more vegetarians than the suburbs or rural areas. Cities tie with the suburbs for their population of vegans, both at 3 percent.

Holding steady

In the U.S., more consumers are clamoring for veg-only options—an estimated 54 percent, per the Hartman Group. Intuitively, this would suggest that vegetarians and vegans are growing in their ranks, but it's simply not the case. According to a recent Gallup poll, 5 percent of Americans identified themselves as vegetarian, while 3 percent reported they were vegan in 2018. The former percentage has remained constant since 2012, and the latter has only increased by 1 percentage point. Similarly, Culinary Visions found that 87 percent of consumers would like to eat more vegetables—but 82 percent of polled participants reported that they loved meat. In short, the number of consumers refraining from animal products may not be skyrocketing, but the demand for veggies is.

Winning them—and their meat-eating friends

Be intentional with vegan/vegetarian options. This should go without saying, but fries, skimpy side salads, and bread baskets do not a meal make—same goes for a bun filled with lettuce and tomato. By adding a few signature veggie entrées, restaurants can not only eliminate the veto vote, but also attract greater market share overall. Go global. From India and Ethiopia to Singapore and Peru, the world is your playground for culinary inspiration. Most cultures have signature vegetarian dishes or recipes that can be easily adapted to eliminate prohibited ingredients. Similarly, ingredients and spices often reserved for animal-based foods have infinite potential in plant-forward applications.

Research, research, research. Remember when quinoa, a complete-protein seed that acts like a grain, was nonexistent in the U.S.? Yeah, neither do we. The last decade has carried so many foods from relative obscurity to menu headliner. Restaurants that wish to not just ride the veggie wave, but rather get ahead of it, would do well to familiarize themselves with up-and-coming ingredients like pili, coconut amino acids, jackfruit, and Irish moss.

FRESH TOMATOES the best of nature™

MARK YOUR CALENDAR PACK YOUR BAGS!

June 10-12, 2019
United Fresh Convention & Expo
McCormick Place Convention Center
Chicago, IL
www.unitedfreshshow.org
Come see #TeamLipman at booth #2017!

July 23, 2019
NEPC's Annual Golf Tournament
Indian Pond Country Club
Kingston, MA
www.newenglandproducecouncil.com

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