



MARKET UPDATE

Tomatoes: The Eastern part of the country looks to be in good shape on tomatoes for the foreseeable future. With Palmetto/Ruskin still in crown picks and Quincy on deck to start shortly, supply should transition smoothly. Quality and yields remain excellent on rounds, romas and grapes. South Carolina will be the next major production area to begin and numerous local deals are 4-6 weeks out.

With California beginning and multiple areas shipping out of Mexico, the West is also enjoying good supply of tomatoes. Southern Mainland growers are beginning to drop out as the area nears its season end on round and romas. However, Eastern Mexico and Baja are adding growers and volumes over the next few weeks which should keep crossings consistent. Quality has been good on both rounds and romas. As for grape tomatoes, the best quality and supply are now coming out of Baja where color has finally begun to even out. Grapes continue to cross through Texas and Nogales, but volume and quality are declining.

Bell Peppers: With only a handful of Mainland Mexico growers left and the California desert down significantly in volumes this week, bell pepper supply is lighter in the West. With the Bakersfield area still a few weeks away, we could be in for a bumpy transition over the next 2-3 weeks. Eastern markets are seeing lighter volumes as well. South Florida is scrapping fields to round out the season, pushing orders to Central Florida where less acreage is harvesting. Georgia farms will come to the rescue as they get into full volume at the end of the month. Quality is varied with older fruit showing typical concerns of end-of-season fruit.

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Green Beans: There are some beans remaining in Florida, but the majority of production has shifted to Georgia where quality and volumes are good. In the West, Mexico and the California desert are finishing up. Fresno has begun production and will increase in volume over the next 7-10 days. Brentwood will also begin harvesting this weekend.

Cucumbers: Georgia, particularly more Southern areas, are up and running with cucumbers. Over the next few weeks, we'll see more volumes from Georgia as Florida finishes up completely. Baja, Mexico is providing moderate volumes to the West and will pick up the pace as more growers come onboard daily. As for Mainland Mexico, Sonora expects to have good volume through May while Sinaloa is done for all practical purposes.

Summer Squash: With Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina shipping product, squash supply and quality are very good in the East. In Mexico, Hermosillo is looking at another 2 weeks of production and Baja will get started next week. As well, the California Central Coast has begun with light volume. Quality is suspect on yellow squash from older fields in Mexico but is good overall.

Eggplant: Eggplant is finally rolling in Central and South Florida. Although there is a lot of choice fruit around, overall quality is nice. In the West, Sinaloa is struggling with quality issues as they work through the seasonal decline. The California desert is dealing with scarring concerns but that should improve as they get further into the harvest.

Chili Peppers: Chili peppers could be challenging over the next few weeks, as growing areas transition from Mainland Mexico to Baja and California local deals. Quality has become tough out of the Mainland and new areas are still a month out.

TRANSPORTATION FACTS

* The National Diesel Average remains steady this week, coming in at \$2.27 per gallon.

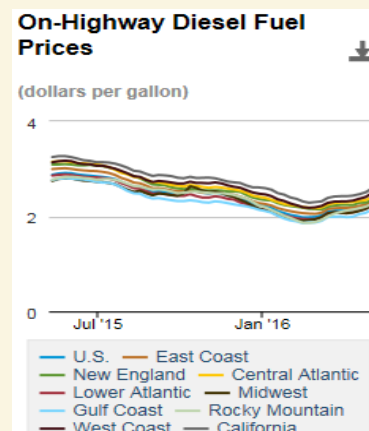
* The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$.61 lower than the same time last year.

* Diesel prices rose ever-so-slightly throughout most of the country with the only decrease coming from the Gulf Coast reporting area (down \$.01).

* California has the highest-priced diesel fuel at \$2.59. The fuel bargain in the nation can be found in the Gulf Coast region where a gallon of fuel costs \$2.13.

* The WTI Crude Oil Price jumped 5.9% this week, moving from \$43.65 to \$46.23 per barrel.

* Central and South Florida continue report slight shortages, but all other areas of the country have adequate levels of transportation this week.



RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

8 Elements of a Customer Service Culture

By: RH Editors, www.restaurant-hospitality.com, May 4, 2016

Customer service expert Jay Baer says that social media and review sites like Yelp have turned customer service into a spectator sport: Outsiders are now witnesses to what once were private complaints or compliments. And that transparency provides both a challenge and an opening for restaurant operators.

Baer, who surveyed thousands of consumers for his recent book, *Hug Your Haters: How to Embrace Complaints and Keep Your Customers*, says restaurants are a popular target for gripes. Food and restaurant brands receive 13.9 % of all complaints, second only to multibrand retailers. "That's partly because there are so many transactions, and so many points for failure," he observes. What's more, nearly three-quarters of people complaining about food brands and restaurants expect to hear back from a business, half of them within a day.

Today, customer service—essentially, how you deal with is the new marketing. To be great at customer service and win the hearts of current and future customers, Baer says restaurants must adopt eight habits.

Habit 1: Answer complaints everywhere

Customer service isn't just about the telephone and email. Today, 38% of all customer complaints are in social media and review sites. Every restaurant must commit to answering diner complaints wherever they appear, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Yelp, TripAdvisor other local review sites.

Baer's research found that addressing one customer's complaint increases that customer's advocacy by up to 25; ignoring a complaint has the opposite effect, lowering advocacy by as much as 47 percent. "You're basically kissing that customer goodbye, then giving them a second chance to talk (negatively) about your restaurant," he says.

Habit 2: Embrace complaints

Each time a restaurant addresses (or fails to answer) a diner comment on Facebook, Yelp and other

channels, hundreds (and potentially thousands) of potential patrons will see that interaction. The financial might of these spectators is massive.

Habit 3: Reply quickly

40 percent of consumers who complain in social media expect a response within one hour, according to Hug Your Haters data. One-third of all complaints in social media are never answered, but among those that are answered, it takes businesses an average of five hours to respond. That's not fast enough to fix an issue while the diner is still on-site or nearby.

Habit 4: Negativity is a no-no

Restaurant owners and managers are rightfully proud of their work. Feeding people is a tough job that requires tremendous passion and commitment. This is why it is so easy for restaurants to take negative feedback personally.

Taking criticism personally can create two dangerous outcomes. First, many restaurant owners choose to not respond at all, decreasing diner advocacy and essentially assuring that patron will never return. Second, restaurant owners and managers sometimes respond with snark and accusations, creating a negative spiral that produces no victors.

If you see something negative and immediately jump on the keyboard, that's dangerous," Baer says. In fact, he adds, restaurants should never get into a tit-for-tat. Never reply more than twice to any customer online, in any circumstance. "Empathy and a simple, polite apology go a long way to satisfying upset diners online."

Habit 5: Understand who complains, and why

Women complain about restaurants 62% more than do men, and women complain about restaurants more than about any other type of business, according to research for *Hug Your Haters*. What are these complaints about? Often, online complaints focus on food quality, as might be expected. But poor employee performance is just as likely to trigger criticism. In fact, restaurants are the top industry for

employee performance complaints online.

Habit 6: Communicate with clarity

Many diners become dissatisfied not because of an obvious error or incident, but because of miscommunication and misunderstanding, Baer says. Whether it's lack of clarity around offers and discounts, not explaining specials or ingredients clearly enough or the front of the house not being on the same page as the back of the house, insufficient information is the catalyst for much customer ire.

Habit 7: Nudge diners for reviews

Reviews matter. 80 percent of Americans say ratings and reviews can be as persuasive as recommendations from friends and family members. Restaurants should encourage patrons to provide honest reviews on every possible platform, most importantly Google, Facebook, Yelp and TripAdvisor. Encourage reviews through exterior and interior signage and messages on menus. A simple reminder from the waitstaff when the bill is presented is the most powerful opportunity to elicit feedback.

Habit 8: Treat feedback as a gift

The vast majority—95%—unhappy customers will never complain in a way the restaurant can find it. They may say something privately to their friends, but they won't "raise their hand." This means that the diners who do take the time to complain are doing restaurants an enormous favor by pointing out how the business can improve.

Too many restaurants blame the patron and say things like, "if they don't like eating here, fine, we don't need them." This completely disregards the fact that complainers provide an incredibly valuable and free feedback-creation service to the restaurant.

"Treat customer service like the new marketing," Baer says, "because that's what it is." It's not easy to embrace negativity and customer complaints. It's not simple to hug your haters, but that's what restaurant owners must do to dominate the important new opportunity of online customer service.



The HR Team



The Housing Safety Team



The Payroll Team

SPOTLIGHT ON LIPMAN Farm Center- Human Resources

Location? Our human resources team is based out of the Lipman Farm Center in Immokalee, Florida.

What does your location do? The team consists of about 24 people who oversee and manage: employee relations, payroll, training, staffing, H2A guest worker management, benefits, compliance, labor management, housing, and social responsibility programs.

History of the location? At one time, HR only consisted of one person. Employee files were only created back in 1992. The office has been in various locations throughout Immokalee.

Anything special about your team? We have an extraordinary group of HR professionals that are dedicated to delivering best people practices..

General geographic area that your location services?

We serve 34 location throughout the US & Mexico.

Community or charity events your team participates in each year? The Lipman 5-K Run, The Lipman Backpack Drive, and Lipman scholarships.

Anything else we should know? HR is diversified from numerous perspectives. The team consists of 30+ year veterans, homegrown in the industry, up to those with advanced degrees and professional certifications. Many on the team having worked in the farms as harvesters and now hold key HR positions. Virtually every HR team member is bilingual or trilingual and does an outstanding job representing the diversity of Lipman Family Farms.

PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Good	Steady
Cucumber	Good	Steady
Eggplant	Good	Steady
Green Beans	Good	Steady
Lettuce-Iceberg	Fair	Steady
Jalapenos	Fair-Good	Steady
Onions	Good	Steady
Tomatoes	Excellent	Steady



MAY CALENDAR

All Month

National Hamburger Month

Third Week

National Transportation Week

May 16

National Barbecue Day

May 18

National Employee Health & Fitness Day

Ruskin, FL Weather

Fri May 13	Sat May 14	Sun May 15	Mon May 16	Tue May 17	Wed May 18
86° F	86° F	88° F	88° F	90° F	90° F
72° F	72° F	73° F	75° F	77° F	73° F
W 9 MPH	W 12 MPH	WNV 6 MPH	W 6 MPH	SE 7 MPH	SE 7 MPH
Precip 20%	Averages	Averages	Averages	Precip 20%	Precip 40%
87° F/65° F	87° F/65° F	87° F/65° F	87° F/66° F	88° F/66° F	88° F/66° F

NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

How Women Shop in 2016

www.progressivegrocer.com, May 6, 2016

American women are shopping across multiple channels, are price sensitive, and know how to take advantage of the myriad promotional offers available to them, according to shopper research from Blackhawk Engagement Solutions. "With women usually doing the lion's share of day-to-day shopping, female shoppers aren't only a key demographic for retailers, they're often the primary demographic," said Rodney Mason, GVP of marketing at Blackhawk Engagement Solutions, an international incentives and engagement company. "Our research shows that retailers have opportunities to engage with the sought-after female shopper through omnichannel optimization and valuable promotions that offer best-in-market prices and use prepaid cards."

Blackhawk Engagement Solutions' "How Women Shop: Shopping Habits of American Women," summarizes the findings from two distinct studies: the first was a U.S. study conducted in April 2015 that surveyed more than 1,300 American women and focused on shopping behaviors; the second was a U.S. study conducted in October 2015 that surveyed more than 1,300 additional American women and focused on app and gift card preferences.

Together, these surveys identified the ways American women research purchases, the devices they use, and the influences along their paths to purchase. Key findings include:

-Women are plugged in, particularly to smartphones: Female shoppers own and use daily: smartphones (71 percent), laptops (66 percent), desktop computers (46 percent) and tablets (44 percent).

-TV and social media are most popular sources for shopping info: When it comes to learning about products, specials and shopping news, women rely most heavily on TV (45 percent) and social media (42 percent), followed by friends and family (38 percent), retail websites (37 percent), newspapers and magazines (36 percent) and Amazon (29 percent).

-Women remain price sensitive: Female shoppers' purse strings aren't getting any looser. Ninety-seven percent have more or the same sensitivity to price as last year. Additionally, price has the greatest influence on women's purchase decisions above all other factors, including quality, brand, store and availability.

-Amazon and Google are tops for price comparisons on smartphones: Amazon (38 percent) and Google (31 percent) are female shoppers' top choices for comparing prices on their smartphones. Additionally, Amazon dominates as women's top shopping app (71 percent) followed by grocery store apps (28 percent) and Groupon (26 percent).

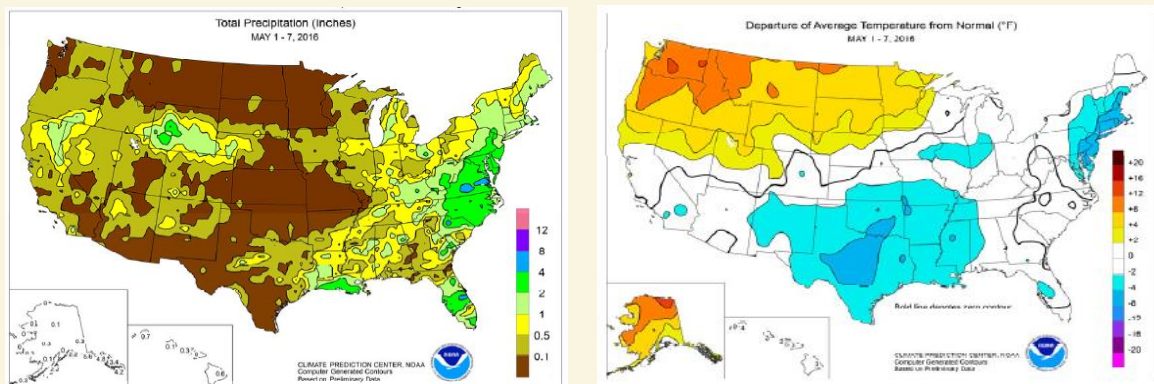
-When it comes to promotions, women love rebates, prefer plastic for rewards: Sixty-nine percent of women consider in-store rebates attractive offers. Women also prefer plastic prepaid cards over eCodes when it comes to receiving post-purchase rewards. However, 80 percent of women would accept a \$25 promotion on a \$100 purchase when only a digital reward is offered.

-Same-day delivery or pickup is attractive, especially with a rebate: Forty-five percent of women bought online and picked up in-store in the last six months; 88 percent would consider buying online and picking up in store to save \$10 on a \$50 purchase; and 80 percent would consider doing so to receive an item three days earlier.

-Women embrace loyalty programs: Eighty percent of women belong to store loyalty programs and 64 percent are happy with those programs. Women largely prefer to receive loyalty notifications by email (82 percent), although 37 percent of women receive loyalty offers via apps and 36 receive them via text message.

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

Millennial Consumers Driving Down Cash Usage for Small Buys

www.progressivegrocer.com, March 23, 2016

Approximately six in 10 credit cardholders typically use cash for purchases less than \$5, according to a new CreditCards.com report. Twenty-seven percent prefer debit cards and 11 percent normally use a credit card for small purchases.

At the same time, the use of cash is down seven percentage points from 2014, while debit cards are up five percentage points and credit cards are unchanged.

While 41 percent of people under age 50 prefer to use cash for small transactions and 40 percent prefer debit, consumers age 50 and up clearly prefer cash at 74 percent. Millennials are the most likely to use debit (46 percent) and credit cards (18 percent).

"I'm confident that debit and credit cards will gain even more market share in the years to come," stated Matt Schulz, senior industry analyst for CreditCards.com. "Credit cards offer better protection against identity theft and fraudulent charges, so I think they're the best choice."

Other key findings from the report include:

- Seventy percent of rural credit cardholders prefer to use cash for small purchases compared to 59 percent of urban cardholders and 54 percent of those who live in the suburbs.
- The vast majority of cardholders in the Northeast and Midwest prefer cash, while just 46 percent of those in the West say the same.
- The likelihood of using cash decreases as the annual household income increases.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS

July 29-31, 2016

PMA Foodservice Conference & Expo
Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa
Monterey, CA

www.pma.com/events/foodservice

Come visit Lipman at Booth #122!

October 9-11, 2016

Fast Casual Executive Summit 2016
Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa
Dana Point, CA

www.fastcasualsummit.com

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Questions or comments about the newsletter?

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