MARKET UPDATE

Round Tomatoes: Last week's round tomato volume was steady out of Palmetto/Ruskin with good quality and acceptable sizing. There looks to be another week of crowns, then production and size will gradually decrease as farms move toward the end of the month and their seasons. Despite a hail storm during the planting cycle that has caused delays, Quincy, FL/ South GA is on tap to begin at the end of next week. The Mainland Mexico deal is still going but will wrap things up toward the end of the month. One grower has started in Baja and we should see more start up over the next few weeks. As well, the California desert should begin in a light way later this week.

Roma Tomatoes: Florida's roma numbers are steady, but much lighter than rounds. A variety of sizing is available, as various growers are working through crown, 2nd and 3rd picks. Lipman's crops have been on the bigger side, with most fruit falling in the J or XL range. West Mexico expects to have consistent roma volumes through the month of May. Both Baja and East Mexico's Torreon area have started in a light way, which should provide a fairly smooth transition.

Grape Tomatoes: With several growers in different stages of plantings, the Florida grape tomato deal maintains mostly steady volumes this week. Overall quality is good, but more grading is required on the fruit from later picks. Mexico's supplies are light during this time of transition from the Mainland to Baja. Look for improved availability in two weeks.

Bell Peppers: Mainland Mexico is on its last leg, as heat and tired plants are taking a toll on quality. California is up and running, but volume hasn't really come yet so retail quality fruit is on the short side. Moving to the East, volume is also on the light side. South Florida is finished up, leaving Plant CIty to provide the numbers. With lighter acreage and rain affecting quality, Plant City's fruit is struggling to satisy Eastern demand. We look for Georgia to scratch pick over the weekend and come online next week, which should provide improvements in availability.

Cucumbers: Although South Florida farms are finishing up, there's an adequate amount of cucumbers available in the East from Plant City and Georgia. Quality has been pretty good despite the weather issues that have affected some other products. Eastern NC expects to begin harvesting in 2-3 weeks, as do a few other "local" areas. The West is working through a transition from the Mainland to Otay, but there's enough overlap that we shouldn't experience a gap. Quality has been hit or miss but has improved since some of the growers with older fields called it quits.

Summer Squash: Production from Mainland Mexico looks to continue for the next 2-3 weeks, but will finish up at the end of the month. The Santa Maria and Fresno growing districts have gotten underway with limited production but are expecting to increase over the next few weeks. Baja will also join the mix at the end of May. In the East, squash production is centered in Georgia with harvests continuing in the Plant City area. Overall quality is mostly good, but there has been enough precipitation to affect some farms and fields. Look for eastern NC to come online in about 2 weeks.

Eggplant: South Florida's eggplant production has one more week to go, then Plant City should be up and running with product. This week's quality is okay, but we could see some trouble spots as we work through the end of the crop. In the West, Mexico growers will continue to work through the seasonal decline this week, then leave production to the CA desert. CA's fruit has nicer quality, but expect a different looking egg, as the varieties grown are larger and more football-shaped.

Chili Peppers: New fields have started out of Sonora, Sinaloa and Baja. Quality is still good overall, but we are seeing early shrivel and pitting on poblano and serrano as well as lighter color on most varieties. California has now started in a light way with volumes on jalapenos and Anaheims. Light supplies of chilies are available in the East from Plant City. Availability has been sporadic, as supply is in the hands of a few growers and each one is in and out of fields on a daily basis. We should begin to see minimal volumes from GA next week, with full production coming in the first week of June.

Hard Squash: Mexico has good volumes on hard squash, but quality can be an issue from the new crops. Scarring, mechanical damage and ground lay have been reported. Sizing has been inconsistent as well. In the East, there's a little fruit coming out of Florida now with a mixture of quality.

TOV: We are in full production with our Huron greenhouses in Nebraska, Canada and Mexico. Volumes are strong and color and quality have been excellent. It's a great time to promote this item!

HH Beefsteak Tomatoes: Our beef tomato crops have been excellent with good quality, shape and color. Canada is starting up with new crops and will see volume increases within the next 2 weeks. With our O'Neill, Nebraska greenhouses also in good production mode, availability should continue to be strong into the foreseeable future.

Colored Bell Pepper: Our Canadian and Mexican greenhouses are in full production with solid picks and volume. We have seen better color and good thick walls harvested at the start of the spring season. Expect to see good volumes for the next few weeks, particularly from our Canadian crop.

ON THE HORIZON CONTENTS

Look for Transportation Facts on Page 2 this week!

ORGANIC NEWS AND NOTES

Five Questions to Ask About Your Organic Produce Strategy

By: Amy Sowder, www.produceretailer.com, May 9, 2019

Organic produce is a $5.7 billion industry, taking up almost a 10% share of all U.S. retail produce sales, and there's no sign of this trend letting up anytime soon.

That was the statistic that Matt Seeley, co-founder and CEO of the Organic Produce Network, gave before he introduced Matt Lally, associate director of the Nielsen research firm, at the first New England Organic Produce Conference May 1. The event was organized by the New England Produce Council and Organic Produce Network.

"This is huge. Consumers today, particularly millennials, they want to know how this food is grown, where it's grown, and what this is going to do to me and to my family," Seeley said.

If organic sales continue the growth of the last five years, that $5.7 billion could rise to $6.17 billion in the next five years, conservatively, Lally told conference attendees. The data was collected as recently as a month prior to his presentation.

Understanding the way the market is changing will help those in the industry make better decisions about organic buying and marketing, Lally said.

He mentioned the 36% growth in meal kit delivery service sales in the past year, as well as the rising popularity of retail purchases through the click-and-collect system, where a customer buys the items online and then collects the groceries at the brick-and-mortar store.

Although less than 3% of grocery sales happen online, the click-and-collect method has almost tripled in the last two years — comprising 11% of online sales compared to 4% two years ago, Lally said.

Those are areas where organic sales can grow, he said.

It's also important to understand what kinds of organic produce consumers want. Unlike the produce department as a whole, nearly 80% of organic sales is coming from packaged items, like salads, Lally said. Organic kale takes up more than 40% of total kale sales.

These are the top 10 items by share, scored nationally:

- Kale: 41.6%
- Herbs/spices: 30.8%
- Carrots: 26.8%
- Packaged salads: 24.1%
- Kiwi: 20%
- Blackberries: 19.4%
- Raspberries: 17.6%
- Blueberries: 16.2%
- Lettuce: 15%
- Celery: 14.8%

The New England area's rankings match the national trend. The highest organic sales rates are in the west and northeast regions of the U.S., Lally said.

"These are the questions you should be asking yourself now," Lally said:

- Are you achieving your fair share of the sales, and if not, what different strategy are you going to take?
- Are you capitalizing on the holiday demand?
- Are you emphasizing the "right" assortment for your customers?
- Have you assessed and optimized the pricing of organic to conventional?
- Do you have a long-term plan in place to continue to grow your success?

TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*The national diesel average price remains steady at $3.17 per gallon this week.

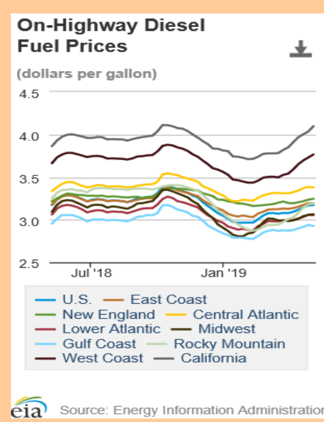
* The average price for a gallon of diesel is exactly the same as this time last year.

* Reporting areas were evenly divided between price increases and decreases. California had the most notable movement with an increase of $.06 per gallon.

*California continues to have the highest diesel prices in the country at $4.10 per gallon while the Gulf Coast is the low-price leader at $2.93 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil price dipped another 3.5% this week, moving from $63.91 to $61.66 per barrel.

*Except for a shortage in Central and South Florida, transportation is available in adequate levels throughout the country.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Janet Snow- Finance Administrator
Lipman/Huron Produce- Exeter, Ontario

How did you become a part of the Huron/Lipman team? I joined Huron Produce in 2012. I had been working in the insurance industry for 27 years and was ready for a change. It was good timing (for both of us) as Huron Produce was growing and needed to expand their team.

What is your favorite aspect of working for Huron/Lipman? I love the fast pace of each day and I am constantly learning but I think my favorite aspect is the people. I have developed great relationships/friendships with my co-workers.

What is your favorite vegetable? Love most but my favorite would have to be the potato (in any form)!

What is your favorite type of food? Seafood

Tell us about your family. My husband Shannon and I are now empty nesters. We live just outside of Exeter with our dog Casey. I have two sons, Jordan and Sean and one daughter Riley (who also works for Lipman/Huron). They are all out on their own now but didn't move too far away!

Where did you grow up? I grew up in Exeter and have lived here all my life except for while I was away at college, in London Ontario.

What do you like to do when you aren't working? Spending time with my family, entertaining friends, watching movies and cooking.

Ideal vacation spot? Fiji is on the wish list

Favorite movie of all time? Why? The Blind Side with Sandra Bullock. I love any type of movie based on a true story.

I**f you could have one superpower, what would it be?** Find a cure for ALS and other terminal diseases.

Do you play any musical instruments or have any other hidden talents? Took piano lessons as a child. Love to sing but not good at it (so I've been told)!

PRODUCE BAROMETER

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

MAY CALENDAR

May All Month
National Salad Month
National Salsa Month

May 12th-18th
National Transportation Week

May 13th- 17th
National Etiquette Week

May 16th
National Barbecue Day

Ruskin, FL Weather

Sun May 12	Mon May 13	Tue May 14	Wed May 15	Thu May 16
89°F	87°F	87°F	86°F	86°F
76°F	75°F	72°F	72°F	72°F
SSE 15 MPH	SW 16 MPH	W 10 MPH	NE 6 MPH	E 7 MPH
	Precip 50%	Precip 30%	Precip 20%	Precip 20%

NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

Study: Most Moms Do Grocery Shopping In-Store but Online Gaining Steam

By: Marianne Wilson, www.chainstoreage.com , May 2, 2019

Despite the changing grocery landscape and the growing availability of shopper-friendly technology, moms are still shopping brick-and-mortar retail.

That's according to a new survey Valassis, whose finding revealed that 52% of moms do most or all of their shopping in-store, compared to 27% of dads. For household items, 50% of moms demonstrate this same behavior, versus 24% of dads.

According to Valassis' 2K19 Coupon Intelligence Report, 79% of moms said that going to stores with the lowest prices is critical, while almost 60% want to save the most money through the use of coupons and discounts. One-in-three moms cites the highest priority when it comes to grocery shopping is saving time, while over one-in-four says the same about ease and convenience.

But when it comes to HBC items, only 36% of moms opt for brick-and-mortar, compared to 24% of dads. Since over half of moms indicate they need better solutions to save more time (53%) and money (58%), retailers and brands should consider this an opportunity to make improvements, according to Valassis.

"Our data shows brick-and-mortar is still a first stop for moms, although e-commerce is bringing an entirely new level of accessibility and convenience – through innovations like our Add to Cart offering – to modern online shoppers," said Julie Companey, director – grocery, Valassis. "Moms are balancing the need for speed, convenience and savings. Retailers and brands that can deliver on these three components, while also providing unique, personalized experiences, will help win moms over."

In other survey results:

• Over one in three moms are increasingly shopping via brick-and-mortar with the added convenience delivery and pick-up options bring.

• 40% have increased their shopping at stores other than their main retailer of choice because they advertise better deals.

• 51% of moms always or very often search online for coupons they can use during their shopping trips.

• As the digital and physical environments continue to blend, approximately one-in-five moms orders groceries online for delivery or in-store pickup.

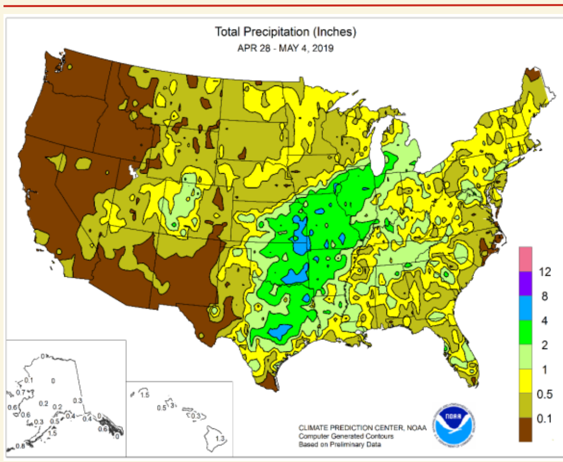
• Over one-in-four moms now use a smartphone app to scan barcodes as they shop.

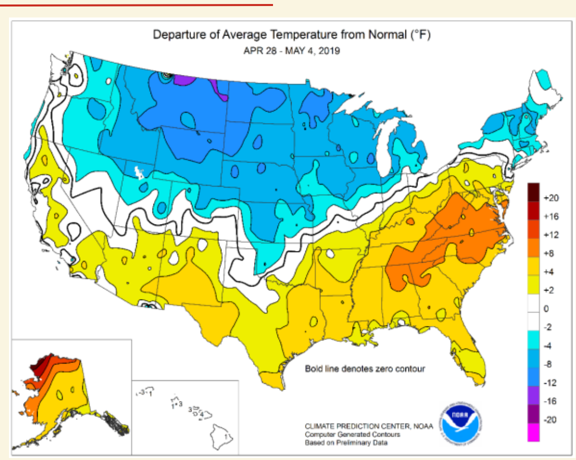
• 36% of moms have increased their shopping at stores that offer prepared foods/meals versus last year.

• The same percentage say they are doing more shopping at stores that focus on organic, natural and fresh products compared to last year.

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Last Week's Precipitation Totals and Average Temperature Deviations





KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

Survey: In-Store Shoppers Opt for Mobile Devices over Associates

By: Dan Berthiaume, www.chainstoreage.com , April 30, 2019

The Food and Drug Administration published its final rule for menu labeling on December 1, 2014, and the compliance date was established as May 7, 2018. After a year grace period, operators should expect to see enforcement mechanisms emerge to achieve compliance later this year, likely through local health departments. The rule requires that certain restaurants and similar retail food establishments provide consumers with calorie and other nutrition information for standard menu items. The goal is to provide consumers with nutrition information in a clear and consistent manner to enable them to make informed choices for themselves and their families when eating foods away from home.

The menu labeling rule requires covered establishments, generally food service operations with 20 or more units, to:
-Disclose calories for standard menu items listed on menus and menu boards;
-Disclose calories for foods on display and self-service foods that are standard menu items;
-Include on menus and menu boards a succinct statement concerning suggested caloric intake and a statement that additional nutrition information is available upon request; and
-Have the required additional written nutrition information available upon consumer request on the premises of the covered establishment.

Many of the industry leaders in the quick service restaurant category have already complied with the FDA menu labeling rule. Other quick-service restaurant chains that are just below the threshold of 20 units but foresee expansion, or those who are required to comply with the rule but have not done so, may view the requirements of the FDA rule to be a daunting task, and are unsure of the impacts on sales as calorie counts become a part of the menu as noticeable as the price.

Once the data is posted on menus, how will consumers react? While there can be sticker shock for some customers who hoped their triple cheeseburger combo meal was a healthy option, many other customers already have a sense of calories and some just assume a worst-case scenario. There can be relief to see a reasonable calorie count for a menu item, opening the door to reduced consumer guilt.

Operators should not assume that posting calorie counts automatically has a negative impact on sales but should be watchful for customer reactions. Customers who want to indulge themselves with their favorite menu items no matter what will continue to order and ignore the calorie counts. Customers who take a more balanced approach to nutrition may adjust their behaviors based on the information provided but still want to enjoy their dining experience. For operators that support higher price points by offering value in larger portions, posting calories may impact consumer behaviors. A double cheeseburger order can become a single, but it is also true that a customer may elect to order their favorite pasta entrée and eat half now and take the other half for later.

Operators may find that posting calorie counts leads to a need to develop menu items targeted to more health-conscious customers—customers who can be the veto voice in the group conversation of "where shall we go out to eat tonight?." Today's consumers are more inclined to want transparency in menu choices, so when operators cannot answer questions about ingredients, allergens, or nutrition content or offers limited acceptable menu choices, it lowers consumer confidence in that operation.

A closer look into FDA Menu Labeling compliance may reveal benefits for operators that might not obvious at first glance. For example, the recipe review required to nutritionally analyze menu items can reveal inconsistencies in recipes across its units, such as weights and measures of ingredients or consistency of the products used. The more accurate the recipe the better, and nutrition data can be an excellent marker for recipe accuracy. A small error in a recipe's ingredients or yield may not show up in product quality or in recipe costing exercises, but a dietitian can glance at nutrition data for a recipe and quickly identify when the data appears unreasonable. Accurate recipes lead to accurate production costs, accurate price setting, and accurate purchasing models—all leading to improved margins for the operator.

Consumers want the foods they love to be good for them, so nutrition data can assist chefs as they try to make this true for their menus

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

PACK YOUR BAGS!

July 26-27, 2019
PMA Foodservice Conference & Expo
Monterey Conference Center
Monterey, CA
www.pma.com/events
Come join #TeamLipman at booth #1317!

September 12-14, 2019
SEPC's Southern Innovations
Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center
Nashville, TN
https://seproducecouncil.com

CREATED BY LIPMAN FOR OUR VALUED CUSTOMERS

Learn more about us @
www.lipmanfamilyfarms.com
www.suntasticfresh.com

Follow us on social media

Questions or comments about the newsletter?
Contact: joanna.hazel@lipmanfamilyfarms.com