



MARKET UPDATE

Round Tomatoes: Ruskin/Palmetto farms have finished crown harvests and will have some seconds going into next week, but will wind down shortly thereafter. Packouts will be light on the remaining fruit as houses sort out any weather-affected product. With South Carolina delayed until next week because of rain and Quincy seeing just a few from early starters, Eastern tomato supply has gotten snug for the short term. We look for supply to improve by the end of next week as the two new growing areas get fully up and running. Western supply is also on the light side. The vine-ripe transition from the Mainland to Baja and new crops in East Mexico is taking its time, creating a snug situation and a variety of quality offerings. The CA desert's mature greens are available to help but this volume is not enough to carry the market. The next area from which we expect strong numbers is the San Joaquin Valley. A few growers will start as soon as next week with the remainder joining in by the 2nd week of June.

Roma Tomatoes: With the final Ruskin/Palmetto roma harvests taking place earlier this week, Eastern roma supply is limited to the minimal acreage in Quincy and SC, which have yet to start in earnest. There won't be any significant volume in the East until July when TN, NC, and NJ get rolling. Western roma production is also in a light spot due to transition. Baja and East Mexico's production isn't strong enough to meet demand but we should start to see some fruit from CA's San Joaquin Valley as soon as next week.

Grape Tomatoes: There are still a few grapes in the R/P area, including some Lipman product, but production is transitioning to Quincy and SC. The remaining R/P fruit has seen some weather, but packhouses are still able to put out a nice box with the right sorting. Quincy has started in a light way this week and SC will begin next week. However, there will be less acreage in production from these areas than we've been accustomed to over the past several months so the overall grape numbers will be lighter. In the West, supply is also snug as Nogales shippers have wound down before new crops in Central Mexico and Baja have come on with increases.

Bell Peppers: Rain and light yields have reduced the amount of pepper coming out of GA this week. With Plant City finishing up over the next week, Eastern supply is expected to tighten up until some of the southeastern local deals in SC, NC, and KY get started in mid-June and get us over the hump. Western supply continues to be challenging this week. The CA desert crops are well past their peaks with less volume and some heat-related quality concerns. Since Mexico is out of the picture for all practical purposes, things will be snug until Bakersfield gets going with volume around June 10th. A heads up: The extreme heat wave some of the CA growing areas is undergoing right now may cause bloom drop which would affect production several weeks down the road.

Cucumbers: Cucumber growers in northern Mainland Mexico and Baja have plenty of product to meet market demand. Quality is still good despite some serious heat in the Mainland. New blocks will come on next week in both areas, providing a steady flow of new crop product at the Nogales and San Diego borders. Eastern numbers have been light this week due to weather in GA but quality has held up pretty well so far. Eastern NC has pushed off its start date a week due to the current weather situation and will begin harvests on June 8th. As we move further into June, production will regionalize and spread to various local areas.

Green Beans: Bean production has been sporadic in GA this week due to weather. Before the rain, quality was very nice but we might see a few issues over the coming week. By the middle of June, we should begin seeing beans from coastal NC and a few in TN. In the West, beans are available in several different spots (Nogales, Brentwood, Fresno and Santa Maria), but there's not a ton of product in any single area. However, the future looks brighter as Santa Maria picks up the pace and Baja gets rolling next week.

Summer Squash: There's not as much squash coming out of GA this week due to gloomy, rainy weather causing lighter production, hit or miss quality and sporadic harvesting opportunities. The East is on the cusp of several local deals getting started. KY will have a few next

week, NC will start June 8th, and TN and NJ will have fruit in 10-14 days. Western squash production is transitioning from Sonora over to Baja and Fresno, CA where we will see the numbers increase over the next few weeks.

Eggplant There are a few eggs left in Plant City where quality is fair from some shippers but nice from others. GA has harvested a handful of eggs but really won't have any volume for another 7-10 days. In the West, the CA desert supply is improving as the warmer weather settles in.

Chili Peppers: Although Sonora has light production, Sinaloa's yields and quality have declined rapidly and they'll soon be out of the picture for the season. This will transition the Western chili pepper deal to Baja where quality has been great so far and volumes are gradually gaining strength. In the East, Plant City has another week or so to go but will soon leave supply to GA and upcoming local deals. A few jalapenos, Cubanelles and serranos have started in GA but more volume and varieties are expected next week.

Colored Bell Peppers: Mexico's volume, quality and color selection have been very limited for the past few weeks as growers transition from Spring to Summer crops. The much-awaited new crops are finally beginning to trickle in with more substantial volume coming within the next two weeks. Canada's red pepper production is expected to pick up next week but yellows and oranges are likely to be on the shy side for 5-7 more days.

Organic Veg: Organic green bells continue to be challenging as Nogales shippers are hanging on with minimal volume, size and quality and the CA desert is finished. Bakersfield is 7-10 days away, which will provide welcome relief. Excellent volumes of organic cucumbers are available in Baja. Both yellow squash and zucchini are finishing up in Nogales but there are new crops in Baja. There's more yellow available than zucchini, but we'll see things balance out as CA growers get in the mix over the next 7-10 days. The East has light volumes available on most organic veg items from FL and GA. VA programs are running a few weeks behind, but should start within the next 2-3 weeks.

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RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

How Restaurants Should Communicate Reopening with Customers

By: Lorne Fisher, www.gsrmagazine.com, May 2020

If we think back to March, it's shocking to realize the sheer amount of activity that has been condensed into the past three months. After the restaurant industry scrambled to implement operational changes that would comply with new social distancing rules and keep revenue coming in, we're faced with what seems like the light at the end of the tunnel. Now, as states, counties, and cities begin lifting stay-at-home orders and reopening dining rooms, restaurants are once again ready to quickly shift operations and get back on track.

Meanwhile, as these turbulent times unfold, customers still have many questions and wonder if it's safe to eat out again. It can seem daunting for a brand to communicate during this uncertain time but, simply put, the solution is clear and concise communication. In these unprecedented times, consumers are searching for an authentic brand that will, ultimately, show them your goal is to *earn* their trust and *adapt* alongside them.

Share a concise message on safety protocol.

First thing is first: safety has to be the main message shared, accompanied by a straightforward strategy of what the business plans to do to help keep communities safe. This is especially important when it's reported that 68 percent of Americans say they would feel uncomfortable eating at a restaurant, according to a survey from SAP's Qualtrics. Proactively take concerns into consideration by highlighting your safety protocol, right down to the nitty gritty. Don't assume all sanitation procedures, such as hand washing, are implied just because everyone else is talking about them. Communicate those key safety messages in a tangible way for consumers to reference, either through in-store signage, your website, etc. Additionally, remember not all customers are ready to dine out again. Enticing them with a promotion or discount offer will not change that. Lead your conversation with safety protocol and they'll come to you when they're ready. In the meantime, be sure to demonstrate access to delivery, drive-thru, takeout, and curbside pick-up.

Have a crisis plan in place.

We are all entering the unknown and, with that, preparedness will be your best friend. Restaurants should be prepared to respond to the myriad of situations ranging from customer inquiries to COVID-19 exposure. A great place to start is by training your staff on how to properly respond to customer questions and potentially prevent complaints from escalating. As we've seen in the news, some customers still expect the same fast service they got used to pre-pandemic despite restaurants working under very different circumstances. Meet these concerns with messaging that is evergreen, adapting it for social media comments and online reviews, as well.

Don't lose your brand voice.

When all of this started, brands wanted to make sure they were using the same COVID-19 language public health organizations were sharing to communicate. But now, terms like "social distancing" and "face coverings" are part of our everyday lives; customers get it. Now you have an opportunity to return to your brand voice to connect with customers in an authentic way that was part of the reason they choose to dine with you in the first place. While it's still important to clearly communicate necessary safety protocols, restaurants should feel comfortable to do so their way—even if that means having a little bit of fun. We could all use it.

Stop cluttering that inbox!

The delivery of how customers receive your information is just as important as the words being delivered. While email is an effective way to share updates with customers, it is important to not rely on only this form of communication, but rather, utilize multiple channels of communication to strategically share messages. Many customers will want to be prepared for what to expect *before* they leave home to make their visit as smooth and safe as possible. Create an FAQ page on your website, where customers can find all the information they need about ordering, menu changes, takeout and delivery, social distancing rules, capacity limits, and more. Showcase this FAQ site on your homepage to easily redirect customers in one click. Also, engage in real time on social media to vet those questions. Especially during quarantine, screen time is skyrocketing, providing a perfect channel to communicate with your customers.

Be open to feedback.

Which brings me to my final point: be open to feedback! This is new terrain for customers, as well, and, as they explore reopening alongside your brand, they're bound to have some feedback. Be open to this and provide proper channels of communication, such as online surveys. Likewise, it is just as vital to gather the thoughts of franchisees and employees. They're the ones in the field who know what is working for them and what isn't.



TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*For the third week in a row, the National Diesel Average was reported at \$2.39 per gallon.

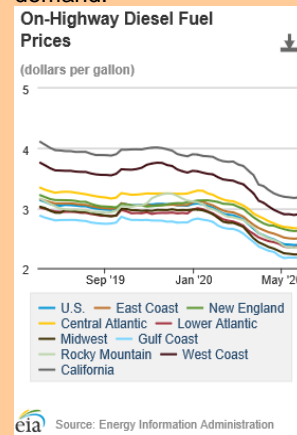
*The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.76 lower than the same time last year.

*All areas of the country reported price movement (up or down) of less than \$.02 per gallon.

*As usual, California has the highest price at \$3.18 per gallon while the Gulf Coast remains the low-price leader at \$2.18 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil continued its upward trajectory this week, moving from \$32.50 to \$33.71 per barrel (up 3.7%).

*There are slight shortages in transportation in Central/South Florida, Southern California and at Nogales. All other areas have adequate numbers of trucks to meet the current demand.





NEWS BITES

From Chef Wil



LOOKING AHEAD

*Snipped & Cleaned
Green Beans coming soon
from Lipman!*

Stay in "the know" on all new Lipman products and trends - exciting announcements to come!

If you or a team member would like to stay subscribed or be added to our bi-monthly NewsBites newsletter, please email InnovationTeam@lipmanfamilyfarms.com with the email addresses you'd like to add.

FRESH

FRESH CUT



*the best
of nature™*

PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



JUNE CALENDAR

All Month

National Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Month

First Week

Volunteer Week

June 4th

Birthday of the Shopping Cart

June 5th

World Environment Day

National Ketchup Day

Lake Park, GA Weather

Fri May 29	Sat May 30	Sun May 31	Mon Jun 1	Tue Jun 2	Wed Jun 3
84°F	88°F	89°F	87°F	87°F	90°F
70°F	66°F	67°F	64°F	62°F	66°F
N 3 MPH	N 4 MPH	W 3 MPH	ENE 8 MPH	E 6 MPH	ESE 3 MPH
Precip 90%	Precip 40%				

NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

Online Grocery Growth Continues Amid COVID-19

By: Ashley Nickle, www.producemarketguide.com, May 28, 2020

Performance Metrics	Aug 2019	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020
 Sales (Past 30 days)	\$1.2 B	\$4.0 B	\$5.3 B	\$6.6 B
 Spend (Average per order)	\$72	\$82	\$85	\$90
 Orders (# Past 30 days)	16.1 M	46.9 M	62.5 M	73.5 M
 Customers (# Active during past 30 days)	13.1 M	39.5 M	40.0 M	43.0 M
 Frequency (Monthly average/customer)	1.0	1.2	1.6	1.7

* Excludes online orders shipped to home via common or contract parcel carriers.

Online grocery continues to grow rapidly amid social distancing due to COVID-19. (Brick Meets Click and Mercatus)

New research has found that total online grocery orders, household penetration of online grocery, and average purchase frequency among online grocery users all increased in May.

"COVID-19 has accelerated online grocery adoption at a rate the industry hadn't expected to see for years," Sylvain Perrier, president and CEO of Mercatus, a firm that helps grocery retailers develop their digital presence, said in a news release. "The online surge may level off slightly as various states strive to return to 'normal.' However, what has changed in shoppers' eyes is the realization of the immediate benefits of online grocery shopping."

In May, online grocery sales reached \$6.6 billion, according to a survey fielded by Mercatus and retail consulting firm Brick Meets Click. Sales were 24% higher in May than April.

The total number of orders grew from 62.5 million in April to 73.5 million in May, according to the release. Household penetration hit 33%, up from 31% in April.

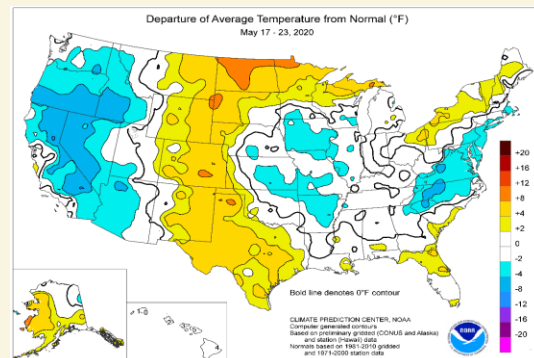
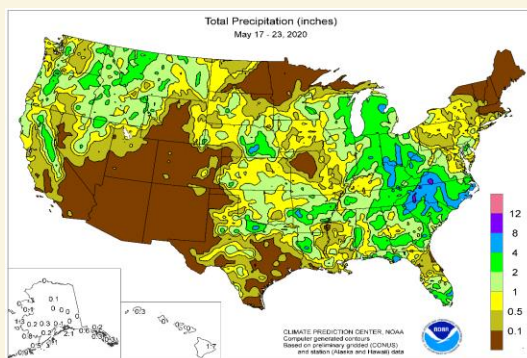
Average purchase frequency increased 10% from April to May, with active households placing an average of 1.7 orders for delivery or pickup. Average order value also grew, reaching \$90 in May, an uptick of nearly 6%.

The research also showed shopper satisfaction climbing closer to pre-COVID levels, according to the release. In March, only 47% said they were extremely or very likely to shop the same provider again within the next 30 days. That number grew to 50% in April and to 56% in May. However, Brick Meets Click's previous research indicated that pre-COVID rates for repeat purchase intent were much higher, closer to 80%.

"COVID-19 has made it clearer than ever that moving forward, trust between the retail brand and its shoppers is core to a healthy and long-term relationship," Perrier said in the release. "Shoppers at every income level and demographic will continue to expect an efficient, effective and safe online order and fulfillment experience and will reward grocers who provide this with continued loyalty."

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Last Week's Precipitation Totals and Average Temperature Deviations



KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

U.S. Consumers Feel Safer About In-Store Shopping

By: Thad Rueter, www.progressivegrocer.com, May 26, 2020

As more parts of the national economy reopen during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, consumers have gained more confidence about going back into retail stores, at least according to data released Tuesday by Deloitte.

The latest "Deloitte Global State of the Consumer Tracker" found that 42% of U.S. consumers feel safe enough, from a health-risk angle, to return to physical retail stores. That's a significant improvement from about 34% of U.S. consumers who said the same thing in late April. Deloitte based its latest findings on a survey of 1,000 U.S. consumers conducted between May 12 and May 16.

While food retailers have seen demand and sales skyrocket — along with labor costs — other merchants not deemed essential are struggling. They continue to wonder what it will take to get shoppers through the doors as other businesses start to open and try to get revenues flowing again. That more consumers are apparently feeling safe about in-store shopping can serve as a genuine, if relatively small, cause for optimism for many merchants, especially small businesses.

Big Retail Challenges

But massive challenges remain, as the new Deloitte data suggest.

For example, shoppers who are becoming less worried about their health during these extraordinary times still have major concerns about whether they can afford to make retail purchases beyond groceries and other vital items. Deloitte said that 43% of U.S. survey respondents are still putting off major purchases, in large part because 27% of U.S. consumers still worry about being able to make upcoming payments.

That anxiety appears within various consumer segments, including Millennials, who before the pandemic were at least on a rough path toward their peak earning years and the various retail rewards that come with that. Deloitte said that 38% of U.S. consumers between the ages of 18 and 35 report having "immediate financial concerns." As well, 37% of all U.S. consumers fear losing their jobs, according to the survey report.

Even so, there is perhaps another bright spot in the new report, at least for some retailers. Deloitte found that 82% of U.S. consumers soon plan to buy retail products online and pick up those items at stores, a good sign for ongoing online and mobile commerce efforts, and associated curbside pickup programs. Only 40% of consumers plan to use those programs because of fears about health risks, down from 48% in the previous Deloitte survey. That suggests more consumers are being won over by retail e-commerce efforts created or boosted during the pandemic.

"We are observing some early positive signals across the world which should help give confidence to business leaders as they transition from responding to this crisis to rebooting their recovery," said Seema Pajula, vice chairman, U.S. industries and insight leader for Deloitte. "While the next few months will be full of challenges, consumers are demonstrating that they are eager to return to some semblance of normal life — even if cautiously. This sentiment can provide a solid foundation for business recovery."

<div>  TOMATOES  <i>the best of nature™</i> </div>	<div> <h3>MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS?</h3> <p>June 15-19, 2020 United Fresh LIVE! Online Tradeshow and Conference Registration is free. www.unitedfreshlive.org</p> <p>July 23-24, 2020 PMA Foodservice Conference & Expo- Monterey, CA Rescheduled as an online event PMA Foodservice Delivered- July 20-24, 2020 www.pma.com/events/foodservice-delivered</p> </div> <div> <p>CREATED BY LIPMAN FOR OUR VALUED CUSTOMERS</p> <p>Learn more about us @ www.lipmanfamilyfarms.com www.suntasticfresh.com</p> <p>Follow us on social media</p> <div>     </div> <p>Questions or comments about the newsletter? Contact: joanna.hazel@lipmanfamilyfarms.com</p> </div>
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