



# On The Horizon

## MARKET UPDATE

**Tomatoes:** Florida farms expect scattered volumes for the next 2-3 weeks, with numbers taking a dip this weekend. Quality has been nice on the fruit that's available though. Eastern supply will remain challenging until South Florida begins to harvest crops that were replanted post hurricane that are expected to come off in mid-December. Although grape tomatoes are extremely short in the East, we should see volume improvements during the first or second week in December.

East Mexico and Baja will continue to work existing acreage on rounds and romas through December, with size dropping off over the next few weeks. Although multiple areas are harvesting grape tomatoes in Mexico, there is not a lot of volume in any one place. Production increases have been slow to come, but should kick in over the next few weeks.

**Bell Peppers:** Peppers continue to be snug this week. Although Georgia is still picking end-of-crop fruit this week, they are expecting to be completely done by the weekend. There's a little product in Florida, but not enough to meet market needs. California's bell crop is winding down, but they continue to have nice quality. Mainland Mexico has started in a small way, but they still don't have much size. Look for production to pick up after the holiday.

**Cucumbers:** Georgia continues to harvest a few cucs but should wrap things up by the weekend. Florida has multiple areas in season and has good fruit available. In the West, Baja is expected to harvest cucs for another 2-3 weeks while Mainland Mexico is increasing in supply. With more Mainland growers expected to come on board over the next few weeks, we anticipate even stronger supply soon. Quality has improved on Mainland's product as they get further into the crop.

**Summer Squash:** With Georgia winding down, Eastern markets are looking to Florida for squash. Several areas are up and running with more than ample volumes available each day. The West also has more than adequate volumes of product available crossing at Nogales. Both Eastern and Western growers are dealing with some quality concerns on yellow squash.

**Green Beans:** Eastern green bean supply is improving as new crops come online in Central and South Florida where quality has been very nice thus far. In the West, the California desert is winding down while Mexico farms are beginning to see volumes increase.

**Eggplant:** Eggplant remains fairly tight in the East, with light volumes coming from both GA and FL. Western markets are transitioning from the California desert to Nogales, where quality and volumes are excellent.

**Chili Peppers:** Chili availability is very tough in the East. Georgia is all but finished and Florida farms haven't gotten started yet. As we look to the West, the main source of product is Mainland Mexico. A strong national market is keeping prices high at crossing points this week. Quality is excellent, but sizing has been challenging.

## TRANSPORTATION FACTS

\*The National Diesel Average remained steady this week at \$2.91 per gallon.

\* The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$.49 higher than the same time last year.

\* There was a mixture of price increases and decreases throughout the reporting regions, with the most significant change coming from the Central Atlantic (up \$.04).

\*As usual, California is the high price leader for diesel fuel at \$3.60 while the Gulf Coast region continues to offer the best bargain at \$2.69 per gallon.

\*The WTI Crude Oil price continues to climb and is now at \$56.09 per barrel.

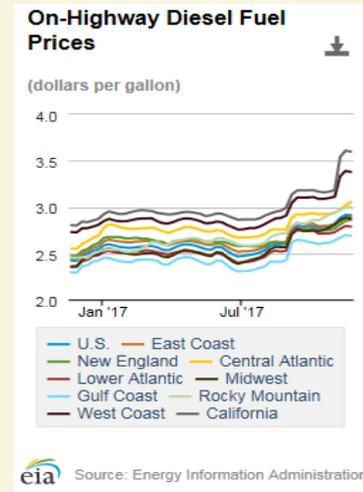
\*Trucks have been short in most areas of the country this week, but availability should improve after the holiday.



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## RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

### 10 Tips for College Town Success

By: Bruce Horovitz, [www.qsrmagazine.com](http://www.qsrmagazine.com), November 2017

Running a restaurant in a college town is unlike running a restaurant anywhere else. Few folks know that better than Matt Crumpton, CEO of D.P. Dough Franchising, which has placed all 27 of its specialty calzone quick-serve locations in college towns like Athens, Ohio; State College, Pennsylvania; and Ithaca, New York.

Perhaps nothing screams “college town” louder than all the “bring backs” (undeliverable food orders) that take place in college towns coast to coast. More often than not, Crumpton says, it’s for the same reason. “Ninety-five percent of the time, it’s someone who passed out from some form of intoxication before the food got there,” he says.

Welcome to the wacky world of running a quick-service or fast-casual restaurant in a college town—something more operators are exploring as an opportunity to serve a captivated audience. For all the “undelivered” meals that never get accepted by anyone, there are gobs of other college students who are dutifully ordering, eating, and paying for their food 24/7.

Students spend more than \$17 billion annually on campus-related dining, which perhaps explains the recent explosion of limited-service restaurants targeting college towns, according to Datassential. “College students know what they want, how they want it, and when they want it,” says Corey Winograd, CEO of better-burger concept BurgerFi, which just opened its first collegiate location at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Increasingly, national chain restaurants are refocusing on college locations even as smaller independent operators are also cracking the books—and opening their doors—at all kinds of campus locations, Datassential reports. The food they offer varies widely, from fruit bowls to vegetarian fare to upscale Mediterranean.

For restaurant owners, managers, vendors, and entrepreneurs thinking about opening in a college town, experts like Crumpton and Winograd say there are 10 key tips to remember.

1. Get used to crazy seasonality. Both D.P. Dough and BurgerFi see big dips in guest traffic at college-

town locations during summer and winter breaks. “That’s the No. 1 downside of a college town,” Crumpton says. “Our goal is to break even or sometimes even lose money in the summer.”

2. Immerse yourself in college culture. You’re best off if you learn everything about the local college’s DNA, from which sports team is most popular to what celebrations are unique to the university, Crumpton says.

3. Link to the school’s meal plan. BurgerFi’s Temple University location is inside the student center food court and is directly linked with the student meal plan run by Aramark. That’s been a huge traffic driver, Winograd says.

4. Get techy. College students want online-ordering capabilities, and they want to have a strong voice in that technology, Winograd says. “College students want to have a technological voice,” he says. “They want to be able to post reviews and talk to the brand.”

Not only are digital platforms crucial to success, but social media responsiveness is, as well. Crumpton says D.P. Dough relies heavily on Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat to get out its message.

5. Offer an interesting menu. When college students are starting this new chapter in their lives, they are particularly open to changing their habits and trying new restaurants and menu items, Crumpton says. His chain attracts students by selling dozens of varieties of fresh-baked calzones—which themselves are a special twist to the typical pizza.

6. Offer delivery very late. With its delivery service lasting until 3 a.m. most days, D.P. Dough is almost always available whenever students want it. It will also deliver Ben & Jerry’s ice cream pints along with its calzones—a move that has become very popular with students.

7. Know the traffic plan. Many college towns have just one or two main streets, which can result in traffic tie-ups. That’s why

it’s key to understand the traffic grid and stay ahead of it for delivery, Crumpton says.

8. Know the local college calendar. You need to be “granular” in your understanding of the details of the college schedule, Crumpton says. “If you’re staffed for a \$4,000 day, but it’s President’s Day and all the students have gone home for the weekend, you could be in a mess,” he says.

9. Expect odd tipping habits. Some D.P. Dough delivery drivers are offered unusual tips instead of cash—sometimes of the, shall we say, illegal variety. “We’re very clear that’s not acceptable during work time,” Crumpton says.

10. Understand that flirting sometimes happens. Because it’s a college town—and employees are mostly college workers—there’s bound to be inter-staff relationships, Crumpton says. The key is to draw clear on-the-job limits to those inclinations, he adds. “Young love is cool, just as long as it’s not between managers and non-managers.”

The benefit of all this investment in college towns? The experts say it’s not just dollars and cents. ROI can in fact extend far beyond those college towns and prove to be long-term.

“You have educated consumers from different parts of the country who, upon graduation, will go back to different parts of the country and spread the BurgerFi gospel,” Winograd says. “That’s extremely appealing to us.”





# LIPMAN RECIPE CONTEST

**Thanks to Carrie Barnes of Lipman/TPE in Livermore, CA for sharing her delicious recipe for Texas Caviar. She is now eligible to win the November Grand Prize!**

### Texas Caviar

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup vinegar
- 1 tbsp black pepper

Mix these ingredients in a saucepan and bring them to a boil, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and cool.

- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 lb mini sweet peppers, chopped
- 1 medium purple onion, diced
- 1 jalapeno pepper, chopped
- Cilantro to taste, chopped
- 1 pack frozen shoe peg corn (rinse and drain)
- 1 can pinto beans (rinse and drain)
- 1 can black beans (rinse and drain)



Pour cooled liquid mixture over vegetables, stir gently, and refrigerate. Carrie recommends refrigerating overnight to get the best flavor.

**Here's how to enter:** If you have a vegetable-oriented favorite dish that your family and friends expect to see on your holiday table, please send the recipe to [joanna.hazel@lipmanproduce.com](mailto:joanna.hazel@lipmanproduce.com). A grand prize winner will be selected each month with the winner receiving a Lipman "bag of swag" and a gift card!! Here are the rules:

1. This contest is open to all customers, partners and employees of Lipman.
2. One recipe will be published each week, with the monthly winner being chosen from the weekly winners.
3. To be considered for each week's selection, please submit your recipes by Tuesday EOB.
4. Recipes should include or feature at least one Lipman item. With so many tomatoes and vegetables to choose from, that should be easy!
5. Winning recipes will be chosen based on several criteria including: originality, use of Lipman products, flavor profile, and presentation.
6. Submit a picture of the finished product with your recipe for bonus points!

## PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



## NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- All Month**  
National Gratitude Month
- November 25<sup>th</sup>**  
Eat With a Friend Day  
Small Business Saturday
- November 29<sup>th</sup>**  
National Throw Out Your Leftovers Day
- November 30<sup>th</sup>**  
Computer Security Day

### Immokalee, FL Weather

Thu Nov 23	Fri Nov 24	Sat Nov 25	Sun Nov 26	Mon Nov 27
81° F	78° F	77° F	76° F	71° F
64° F	59° F	56° F	51° F	60° F
S 10 MPH	N 7 MPH	NNW 9 MPH	W 13 MPH	N 13 MPH
Precip 60%	Precip 40%			

## KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

### Don't Overlook Power of Gen X Shoppers

By: Becky Schilling, [www.supermarketnews.com](http://www.supermarketnews.com), November 16, 2017

Millennials might be the shiny object, but don't overlook Generation X, said Brad Edmondson, author and consultant on demographics. Speaking at the recent PLMA conference, Edmondson said, "Gen X is your most important customer right now. Millennials are the second, but Gen X is the juiciest generation right now."

Why? Even though Millennials are the largest generation, Gen X has many economic and demographic factors that make them highly valuable to retailers.

Consumer spending is chief among those factors. Gen X spends more than other generations on food, both at home and away from home. They spend 40% for food at home, compared with 19% for Millennials, which is third behind Baby Boomers; however, Millennials are growing in this spending area.

One reason for that is Gen X has the largest households of any generations, meaning they have more mouths to feed and need to purchase more food. Gen X is often taking care of older family members as well as Millennial children who have moved back into the household.

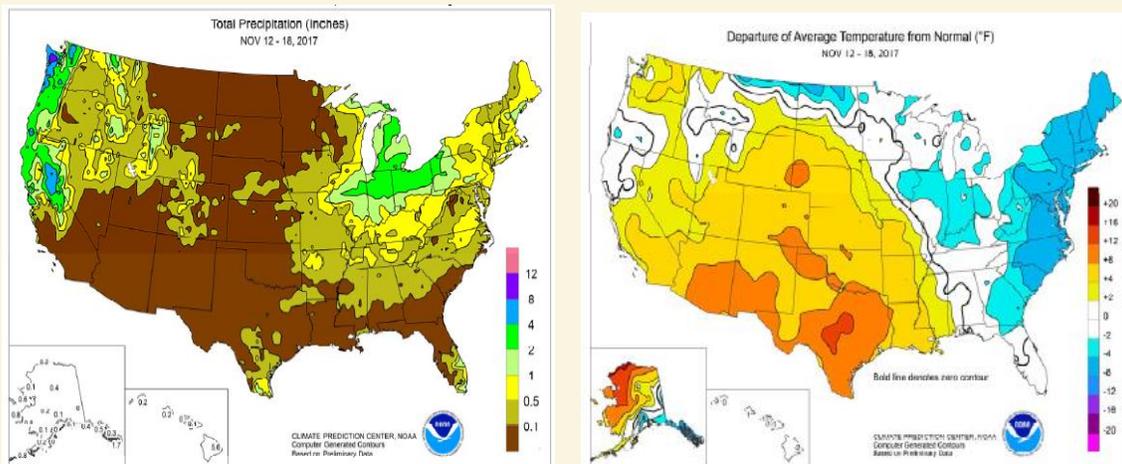
A second factor for why Gen X is such a powerhouse for retailers is the empowerment of women. Gen X women grew up in the '60s and '70s when civil rights and women's rights started to come to the forefront — birth control was legalized for all women in a Supreme Court ruling in 1965. One way this impacted women was that more women went to college, which means that Gen X households are more likely than previous generations to have dual-income households. In fact, Gen X is the first generation where women's income equaled that of the man in the household, according to Edmondson. Because there is this dual-income household, men in Gen X contribute to so-called women's tasks of grocery shopping, Edmondson said.

#### Some other demographic highlights from Edmondson's talk:

- Convenience is important but there's one important thing retailers need to keep in mind. A Pew Research Center survey asked working parents what they missed the most and the answer was fun with family. So that leads to more food delivered to home and frozen foods.
- The percentage of households that are married is on the decline and cohabiting couples are on the rise. They don't have the same setup as married couple meaning they are likely to pool incomes and less likely to eat together.
- Gen X was the hardest hit by the Great Recession. "They spent a decade putting their household goals on hold," Edmondson said.

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

### Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



## NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

### 7 Ways to Boost Customer Service During the Holidays

By: Nancy Friedman, [www.progressivegrocer.com](http://www.progressivegrocer.com), November 20, 2017

Few times are more important for grocery store owners and managers than the holidays. They can not only make your financial year a huge success, but they're also a prime opportunity to gain customers who have the potential to become return shoppers. If your employees fail at customer service and aren't helpful, knowledgeable or pleasant, you not only lose customers and lose future sales, but you also risk the chance of getting slammed on social media.

So what can grocery store owners and managers do to encourage excellent customer service during the holiday season and beyond? Here are seven tips that will help up your game and provide customer service that will generate holiday sales and repeat customers in the new year:

1. **Start some sort of training now**, before the holiday shoppers arrive. If you have some customer service training in place, review it with your employees and those seasonal workers you're hiring for the holidays. If you don't have a customer service plan in place, hire an experienced expert to spend a day training your staff. And if you have no time to train, remind your employees that saying "thank you for shopping with us" or "we appreciate your business" or "Have a wonderful holiday" goes a long way, costs nothing, and leaves a positive, lasting impression.
2. **Meet with your staff at the end of each day.** Discuss what went wrong and what went right. Make sure any customer service concerns are addressed immediately and solutions are implemented so customers walk away satisfied.
3. **Provide your employees with a mental "suit of armor."** Make sure they're aware that all customers won't be so nice, and some will be downright difficult. Your employees will be on the front lines of occasional customer abuse. Warn them in advance, and make sure that when those incidents happen, your employees will still treat the customer with politeness and respect. We all know that the customer isn't always right, but they remain the customer.
4. **Your employees need to care.** While knowledge of a product is important, it's just as vital that your associates show that they care and want to help the customer with a purchase. A friend of mine went to a restaurant, only to find the hostess busy texting. She was more concerned with her phone than properly greeting the diner. Not good! Greet each customer as if they were bringing \$1 million in business to your store.
5. **They should never take their frustrations out on the customers.** And if the customer is in a foul mood, too, that's all the more reason for employees to turn on the charm. Employees should remain upbeat and happy, and not let a rough day, coupled with a customer's bad mood, affect the service that they provide.
6. **They should leave a great last impression.** Associates' response to customers saying "Thank you" shouldn't be "No problem." They should use the gold standard of "You're welcome." "No problem" is a big problem when it comes to positive customer service.
7. **Smile!** Don't let your employees greet shoppers without one. A smile creates a positive, friendly first impression.

As the holidays rapidly approach, remember that if you don't provide excellent customer service and leave a pleasant experience with your customers, you'll lose an opportunity to gain and retain valued customers forever.

<p><b>FRESH</b>   <b>TOMATOES</b></p>	<p> <i>the best of nature™</i></p>
<p><b>MARK YOUR CALENDAR PACK YOUR BAGS!</b></p> <p><b>January 16-18, 2018</b> United Fresh Start Foundation Annual Conference Rancho Bernardo Inn San Diego, CA <a href="http://www.unitedfreshstart.org">www.unitedfreshstart.org</a></p> <p><b>April 11-12, 2018</b> PMA Fresh Connections Philadelphia Airport Marriott Philadelphia, PA <a href="http://www.pma.com/events">www.pma.com/events</a></p>	<p>CREATED BY LIPMAN FOR OUR VALUABLE CUSTOMERS</p> <p></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>