



MARKET UPDATE

Round Tomatoes: Eastern round tomato supply is on the lighter side this week. TN/NC mountain farms actually fared pretty well through last week's weather, as the heaviest precipitation was just west of them. Post-storm fruit quality has varied, but, overall, is average from most and there's a good range of sizes available. However, production volumes are on the lighter side as cool nights have moved into the area, slowing fruit development and maturity. Lipman's VA farms just started back into Fall harvests in a light way this week. So far the fruit looks good and the sizing profile is nicely distributed. We anticipate stronger harvests next week and should continue with crown picks through the first week of October. Western vine-ripe tomato volumes are steady or slightly better this week. East Mexico farms are seeing moderate volumes as growers work past previous weather and begin to get into a more structured harvest schedule. Baja's numbers will continue at the current light, but steady pace until mid-October when Fall acreage gets started. Oceanside, CA will be in their stride this month, as September is typically strong. On the mature green front, Northern CA farms have been providing volumes consistent with last week. Lipman has transitioned production to the fields south of Manteca, where we'll stay for the remainder of the season. Although we're heavier to larger fruit, all sizes are available and quality is nice. Our yields are favorable in this area, but not all other growers are enjoying the same, depending on their particular location.

Roma Tomatoes: The TN/NC mountain growers are seeing limited volumes on romas this week as recent weather and cooler nighttime temperatures have slowed things down. Although availability is on the snug side, there are no sizing issues

and quality is about average. Northern CA roma production continues at light levels with most growers still only running a few days per week. At Lipman, our harvests have been steady, but yields are below last year's levels. Most of the CA fruit is in the jumbo to large sizing range, with very few smalls and mediums around. Baja, MX and Oceanside, CA are in moderate/good supply and both should continue at similar levels through the month of September. We will see Baja's numbers pick up in mid-October when the Fall acreage comes into play. East Mexico's roma production has lightened up after the recent rains, as growers cull a greater percentage of the harvest to meet grade.

Grape Tomatoes: Local deals in the TN/NC mountain tomato zone are back with light volumes of grape tomatoes. Quality is hit or miss from this area, depending on the amount of rain each crop received. Lipman's VA farms have maintained steady numbers and should continue in that mode through the rest of the season. Quality and packouts had been affected by weather but are improved since we moved away from older plantings and are focusing our resources on the early picks from newer blocks. Looking to the West, one large grower has come into a flush, while another is in between sets, leaving Baja's grape tomato situation similar to last week's. Production is on the lighter side overall, but demand has matched up. There is now some product coming in at Nogales as well and they are getting a bit more consistent with crossings.

Bell Peppers: Eastern bell pepper supply is lighter this week. MI has had rain and less fruit to ship while a few local programs in the areas hard hit with rains have wound things down earlier than anticipated. However, there are still pockets of supply in NJ,

OH, KY and NY to help meet demand. Quality is mostly good but there are some occasional issues from the product coming out of older fields. We're looking for an influx of new crop product over the next 7-10 days as SC and GA get started with Fall harvests. This should help compensate for the lighter volumes to come from northern areas that are seeing cooler temperatures and are headed toward the season's end. CA's Gilroy and Arroyo Grande areas are a little lighter on bell peppers this week as they transition into Fall production blocks. XL sizing is the tightest, but all sizes/grades are available.

Cucumbers: NJ, MI and NY have been carrying Eastern cucumber volume for the past few months but that's about to change. NJ expects to go for another 2-3 weeks, while MI and NY volumes will start to drop as the temperatures do. Production is making its way south- specifically to Eastern NC and GA. Our Clinton, NC program has started in a light way, working through the lighter first picks. We'll see better numbers by next week and, barring any significant weather events, should have cucumbers into the 1st or 2nd week of October. We're also seeing a few early starters out of GA already. As more growers add to the mix over the next 7-10 days, look for production to work its way up. There aren't any major quality issues to report, but we do expect to see nicer fruit from the new areas. Western cucumber supply is on the short side this week. Some Central Mexico crops were hurt by a recent storm while Baja's farms are in between Summer and Fall plantings. Supply should improve in 7-10 days when at least some get into new blocks. Despite the short supply situation, quality continues to be very nice.

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Yellow/Zucchini Squash: Eastern squash is slowly making its way back to more consistent levels. While several local programs have succumbed to rain, cooler weather, disease, etc., there are new areas in production (GA and Eastern NC) to help pick up the slack. Our Clinton, NC farm has started Fall harvests in a light way. The yields on our first plantings have been light due to prior weather, but we should see things pick up in a week or so. A few growers have started in GA and there are more to come. There are also reports of some early squash coming out of Plant City, FL. As things wind down in more northern areas, we'll see GA and FL become the volume centers through the Fall. Quality is varied, with the nicest fruit coming from newer production areas. Looking West, zucchini is available in fairly good volumes with nice quality in Fresno and Santa Maria this week. Santa Maria is the only spot with yellow squash, so they are less available than zucchini and quality is just okay. With Eastern WA local deals finished up, these will be the primary areas of supply until Mainland Mexico gets started in another 10-14 days.

Eggplant: Eggplant supply is lighter, but adequate in the East this week. Both NJ and MI's production have slowed as cooler nighttime temperatures have phased in. NJ will be back into better volumes by next week, but MI's volume will continue to decline as the season nears its end. There are several local programs with light numbers to ship, but the bulk of volume will begin to transition to Eastern NC, which will start back in 10 days, and GA where we are already seeing a few. Eggplant continues to be limited out West. Fresno has slightly better volume this week, but production is still light. Eastern WA is still in good production and they have plenty of good-quality fruit to cover the local demand through the rest of the month. By the end of September, the Coachella/ CA desert area should come in with Fall crops to help bridge the gap until Mexico gets started.

Chili Peppers: With a few local deals finishing up, Eastern chili pepper volume is a bit lighter this week. MI and NJ still have product with a wider selection of SKUs than some areas, but we will see this production start to wind down soon. Although all varieties aren't available yet, a few GA farms have started Fall chili programs in a light way. We expect to see more volume and all varieties over the next 7-10 days, as more growers get started and some of the slower-to-mature varieties are ready to harvest. Baja still has all chili varieties to offer with mostly good quality, although poblanos and serranos are in limited supply. Santa Maria has plenty of the big movers (jalapenos and poblanos) but are also limited on serrano availability. Early season tomatillos should be available in Nogales as early as next week.

Colored Bell Peppers: Eastern Canada's picks are a bit lighter due to gloomy weather but should level out as the weather does. Growers had hoped that the sizing profile would move up this week and that more XL's would come off, but that did not materialize. Looking ahead, there will possibly be a gap on yellows in a few weeks, but reds and oranges should hold steady. Down in Mexico, we're seeing more production than expected, as a few growers that normally start later are off and running already. With most harvests coming from relatively new crops jumbo and XL sizing is readily available. Although we could see ups and downs due to weather, we expect to see mostly steady production out of Central Mexico from now through the Winter months.

Green Beans: Green beans are very limited throughout the country. There have been some available in MI, NY, TN and DE, but quality has been hit or miss due to weather in almost all areas. Production will begin the transition to the south over the next few weeks as VA and GA get started with Fall crops. Supplies from the CA bean districts are very limited with the last potential of volume coming out of Fresno later this month. Production will be hit and miss for the next 3-5 weeks as CA and WA state move in and out of plantings with gaps expected. "Normal" volume isn't expected until mid-late November when Mainland Mexico gets rolling.

Conventional TOV: Canada still has good volumes of TOVs, but supply will begin to decline as shorter days/lower sunlight levels take hold over the next several weeks. Meanwhile, Western supply has been strong with fruit available in Nogales, McAllen, and CA. With a good number of active growers, we expect a similar supply situation for at least 6-8 weeks.



TRANSPORTATION FACTS

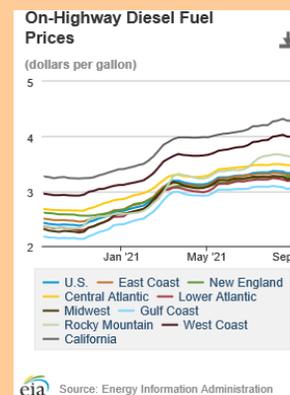
*Diesel fuel prices are on an upward trajectory. The national average price for a gallon of diesel is up \$.03 this week and now stands at \$3.37.

*This year's pricing is \$.94 higher than the same time period in 2020.

*All regions reported price increases of at least \$.01 per gallon with the most significant coming from the Gulf Coast and Midwest zones (up \$.04).

*California reports the most expensive fuel price at \$4.32 while the Gulf Coast has the lowest price at \$3.10.

*Trucks continue to be snug in many of the active shipping areas, particularly in the East. However, truck availability is adequate at Mexico crossing points and in northern CA.



TASTY BITES FROM CHEF WIL

Summer may be winding down, but the taste of Lipman's fresh vegetables never goes out of season. Here is another selection from Chef Wil's Summer collection and some thoughts from the News Bites crew!



As you plan for the season ahead, the NewsBites team strives to help inspire creativity among the upcoming produce trends.

As you look to introduce new items within your menus and product SKUs, we aim to act as a source of inspiration and tribal knowledge in produce trends.

Produce trends are accelerating more than ever - so let's grow together!



MEDITERRANEAN SUMMER SQUASH FRITTERS

Ingredients

- 1 large Lipman® zucchini squash
- 1 large Lipman® yellow squash
- 1 1/3 cup flour
- 1 cup shredded gruyere cheese
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup beer of choice
- 1 tbs garlic powder
- 1 tbs S&P
- 3 tsp finely cut chives
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1/2 cup mayo
- Lemon

Instructions

Shred squashes on a box grater and place on paper towels for 20-30 minutes to remove excess moisture.

Preheat oil in a deep pan to 375°F. Mix shredded squashes with shredded cheese, garlic powder, salt, pepper, and flour to coat.

In a separate bowl, whisk 2 eggs then add beer of choice. Combine beer and egg mixture with squash mixture. Scoop zucchini mixture into balls and gently drop into hot oil. Fry until golden brown on all sides. Season again with S&P immediately after they come out and serve hot.

For a dip: combine mayo, chives, oregano, and the juice of a lemon.

Makes 5-6 fritters



FRESH FRESH CUT  *the best of nature™*

PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Good	E-Steady; W-Steady
Cucumber	Good	E-Steady; W-Steady
Eggplant	Good	E-Steady; W-Steady
Green Beans	Varied	E-Higher; W-Higher
Jalapenos	Good	E-Steady; W-Steady
Squash-Hard	Good	E-Steady; W-Steady
Squash-Soft	Mostly Good	E-Lower; W-Lower
Tomatoes	Varied	E-Steady; W-Steady

Did you know?

*Buttercup is classified as a winter squash because of the lengthy period between planting and harvesting (90-100 days).
 *Because of the similarity of the names, buttercup and butternut squash are often confused. However, they are different squash varieties.
 *The seeds from the cucurbita maxima species (to which buttercup belongs) are used to treat parasites in animals.



Clinton, NC Weather

Fri Sep 10	Sat Sep 11	Sun Sep 12	Mon Sep 13	Tue Sep 14	Wed Sep 15
81° F	86° F	89° F	93° F	92° F	91° F
58° F	59° F	62° F	65° F	67° F	71° F
NNW 8 MPH	E 5 MPH	S 2 MPH	SSW 3 MPH	SSW 4 MPH	SSE 5 MPH



RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

Study Looks at Best Places for Restaurant Rebound

By: Tom Karst, www.thepacker.com, September 7, 2021

What U.S. metropolitan regions are the most likely to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic? Researchers at LendingTree think they have the answer.

The researchers analyzed key metrics (including consumer spending at restaurants, job postings in the hospitality industry, and time consumers spent away from home at retail and restaurants) across the 50 largest metro areas to find the places where the restaurant industry is most likely to recover this year, according to a news release.

Key findings:

- The restaurant industry was one of the hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that the number of people working in leisure and hospitality — including food services — fell by nearly 50% from February to April 2020. June 2021 data shows a full recovery hasn't yet been made. There were 14.7 million leisure and hospitality workers in June, down from 16.9 million in February 2020 just before the crisis.
- The restaurant industry is most likely to recover in 2021 in Oklahoma City. The metro leads the list thanks to a strong employment recovery and a sizable pool of restaurant workers. Southern metros tend to rank the best. Five of the top 10 metros in the LendingTree study — Oklahoma City; Tampa, Fla.; Tulsa, Okla.; El Paso, Texas; and Jacksonville, Fla. — are in the South.
- The restaurant industry is least likely to recover in 2021 in Washington, D.C., according to the report. The nation's capital is near the bottom in nearly all the metrics examined. Specifically, consumer spending at restaurants and hotels and time spent away from home at retail and restaurants are both second-to-last in D.C. among the 50 metros.
- The most expensive metros tend to have the worst scores. Cost of living in the U.S. is highest in San Francisco and San Jose, Calif., which come in at No. 49 and No. 47, respectively, for restaurant industry recovery potential. New York, which has the third-highest cost of living, comes in at No. 40.

LendingTree chief credit analyst Matt Schulz said in the release that areas like San Francisco and New York — where competition and expenses run high — make it even tougher for restaurants to thrive.

“High rent is part of it, no question, but the sheer amount of restaurant options that are available in those areas plays a big role, too,” Schulz said in the release.

“That’s true even in the best of times. Factor in a pandemic, and it all just gets exponentially more difficult.”



KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER**UF Study Shows Kids Drive Impulse Buys at Grocery Store**By: Brad Buck- University of Florida IFAS, www.news-press.com, September 8, 2021

Prior research has shown that people who are important in our lives influence our impulse-buying at grocery stores. But the new UF/IFAS study ranks the importance of those groups of people — and parents and children came out on top. They carry more weight than spouses, significant others or close friends. The study also shows the role of demographics on impulse buying.

For consumers, Gao said, the main message is: "If a person is surrounded by others while shopping and receives purchasing suggestions, they are more likely to act on those suggestions and increase their expenditure."

But there's a different takeaway for those managing grocery stores. "Products marketed for married couples and households with children could significantly benefit from appealing to children, since shoppers in these households are more likely to respond to their children's shopping suggestions," Gao said.

Using an internet survey of 791 people nationwide, Gao and his research colleagues found some interesting tidbits regarding demographics. Here are a few examples from the study:

- Males are more likely to buy on impulse if they get suggestions from parents.
- Compared to women, men are more likely to buy on an impulse if they get suggestions from parents and colleagues.
- On the other hand, men are less likely to make an impulse purchase if the suggestions come from their children and significant others.

"Knowing that female shoppers are more likely to be influenced by their children and close friends, while male shoppers are more likely to be affected by their parents and colleagues provides valuable insights on utilizing marketing campaigns for products intended for each gender," Gao said.

He sees several takeaways from his study, depending on the target audience. For consumers, the data tell us why we buy items based on a sudden need or urge.

"This can help us process different purchasing suggestions more objectively because they come from different types of shopping companions," he said. "This will enable consumers to evaluate different purchasing decisions better, therefore only making reasonable purchases based on needs."

For grocery stores and marketers, the data can give them tips on consumers' purchasing decision processes. "That in turn will enable them to advertise their products more effectively by engaging the types of people who are more likely to induce impulsive purchases. They can also focus on strategies that encourage family shopping or shopping with close friends," Gao said.

Co-authors on the study are Bachir Kassas, a UF/IFAS assistant professor of food and resource economics, and Xuqi Chen, an assistant professor of agricultural and resource economics at the University of Tennessee.

The mission of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) is to develop knowledge relevant to agricultural, human and natural resources and to make that knowledge available to sustain and enhance the quality of human life. Visit ifas.ufl.edu for more.

INDUSTRY EVENT CALENDAR**September 15-16, 2021**

Organic Produce Summit
Hyatt Regency Monterey
Monterey, CA

www.organicproducesummit.com

Lipman will be at Booth #448...we'd love to see you!

September 20-22, 2021

United Fresh Annual Washington Conference
Grand Hyatt Washington
Washington, D.C.

www.unitedfresh.org/events

Learn more about us @

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**Questions or suggestions for the newsletter?**

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