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CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

ROMA TOMATOES

We're now in the point of the year where the East has very limited roma tomato volumes. All growers, including Lipman, have finished up in Palmetto/Ruskin and the only area expected to have fruit between now and July 4th is Quincy/south GA. acreage is limited so the month of June will be a mostly Mexican deal. East MX's volume and quality are beginning to improve as new fields in Jalisco, San Luis Potosi and Michoacán get started. Baja is also seeing improvements in quality and volume as growers get further into new acreage from Vizcaino and San Quentin adding to the early fields from La Paz and Vizcaino. West MX still has fruit from the lighter late acreage out of Hermosillo and Guaymas and there are a few left in Culiacan and Guasave crops. However, quality is lacking from the older crops. Domestic production will begin around July 4th in CA.

ROUND TOMATOES

Although we are still picking some 2nds and 3rds in R/P, Lipman and other growers have pretty much wrapped up for the season in the area. Production is transitioning to SC and Quincy which will be the primary areas of supply until the TN/NC mountain growers get started around July 4th. Lipman began harvesting in SC in a light way this week and should ramp up over the next 7 days. Quincy is still about a week away, but should also be in business shortly. Both SC and Quincy look to have good yields coming up. Quality has been less than optimal on the first planting, but will improve once we move past the initial harvests. As for the West, it's still a MX deal. West Mexico has a few shippers with new acreage from Culiacan and Hermosillo providing bigger sizes, but overall volume is declining as older fields play out in this region. Eastern MX is just getting into new fields from Jalisco and volume should improve over the next few weeks. Baja has light to moderate volumes available with mostly bigger sizes and expects volume to keep improving for the next few weeks. A look ahead - Lipman's CA farms are currently expecting a start date of July 6-10 but we will begin to see other growers get going a little sooner.

GRAPE TOMATOES

Like other tomatoes, grapes are also transitioning in the East. R/P shippers are mostly finished, shifting demand to Lipman's SC crops and Quincy. We harvested a few grapes this week and anticipate volume to pick up as soon as next week. Quality on the early picks required a bit more cleaning up as there were

some splits caused by rain but should improve as we get further into the plantings. Quincy growers don't devote any significant acreage to grapes, but we do expect to see a few around. In the West, the Mainland deal is winding down quickly with most growers harvesting just a few times per week now. They'll stretch things out for another week or two, then Baja will take over as the main area for supply. There is limited supply further south in Central MX (Nayarit / Guanajuato) to help during the transition. Baja's volume is slowly increasing although there are limited growers in the deal this season.

TOV

There's just a trickle of TOV's remaining in Nogales, but domestic programs and CAN are providing an adequate amount of supply. CAN's fresh crops have great quality!

COLORLED BELL PEPPERS

Eastern CAN 's production is ramping up after a brief lull. Houses expect good production for the next several weeks. Quality is very good and most of the fruit is in the jumbo and XL sizing range. Western CAN has plenty of supply but there is a variety of quality around. Down in Western and Central MX, production is spotty as growers finish out their Winter crops with mostly smaller fruit and questionable quality. Central MX's new Summer crops should get going in the next 7-10 days.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS

GA farms are in full production and are providing adequate supply on bell peppers with good quality and sizing options. There are still some bells in FL but most of the fruit is choice grade. Some growers have finished and most others will wrap up over the next week as the migration to points north rolls along. GA should continue as the mainstay of Eastern supply at least until our Eastern NC program gets going in the 3rd week of June. Supply is also adequate in the West this week. Mainland MX growers are still crossing some product at Nogales but it's light in color and some of the fruit is soft. Better quality is available in CA Desert. The transition to the Bakersfield area will take place over the next 7-10 days.

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GREEN BEANS

As we moved into the Memorial Day holiday, GA's green bean yields lightened up and a few growers have now hit a skip so there's a bit less supply available now. VA is just getting started this weekend and should have volume shortly and at least one grower in Eastern NC will begin harvesting next week. Supply looks to be favorable for at least the next few weeks. Western green bean supply will be continue to be limited for the next 7-10 days as Mainland MX and the CA desert are done for the season and we wait on new areas to get going.. We could see some beans out of Guanajuato next week, which would help bridge supply until the Fresno, Watsonville /Salinas and Stockton areas start in another 10-14 days. Also, WA state should see their first beans by the middle of June.

YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH

Eastern squash supply is in transition. Plant City still has a few, but most of that product is staying local. The early squash in GA is finished and later plantings are lighter. However, both Eastern NC and NJ are underway and several smaller local deals have started in a light way as well. In the West, Hermosillo, MX is expecting to go for another week or so . Yellow squash has slowed down, but we are seeing zucchini finish strong. They will continue to taper off on volume and quality as they finish for the season. Moving to CA, we are seeing supplies out of Fresno and Santa Maria. Volume will increase over the next few weeks as more growers get going and others get further into crops. Watsonville/Salinas should get underway by middle of June as well. Our WA state program has started in a light way and should gain steam in the next 7-10 days.

HARD SQUASH

With no significant production, the East continues to look to MX for hard squash. Western supply is coming from replants from the Sonora area, which seem to be lasting for the time being.. CA growing areas won't be a factor until mid-late June, but may have some fruit earlier to help minimize any potential gap. Overall quality is pretty good, but there are some occasional concerns with ground scar on acorn and more significant issues with scarring on spaghetti

CUCUMBERS

GA had almost an oversupply of cucumbers at the beginning of the season. Now that they have moved into the middle of the crop, production has slowed down and there's less available and some spotty issues with quality. Fortunately, Eastern NC is about a week away and NJ is on tap to start around June 15th. We also expect to see small spots of local product between now and then, with more coming online through the month. The West is seeing less fruit as Mainland MX lightens up. These growers are expected to go through the month, and finish off by July 1st. Baja has started, but won't see good volume kick in until mid-June. Although this product doesn't work for all retailers, the Northwest is expected to get rolling by July 1st.

CHILI PEPPERS

As Plant City's chilies wind down, GA's crops are coming online in a more significant way. Between the two areas, the full mix is available and quality is mostly good. In the West, quality and supply are just okay as Mainland MX winds down and we wait for Baja and CA to get fulling rolling . Poblanos, serranos, and Anaheims are the most snug of the chilies during the transition.

ORGANIC MINI SWEET PEPPER

Mainland MX is at the end of current crops and we're seeing some quality issues such as shrivel and softness as the plant energy is depleted. Once Mainland finishes up, it could be a tough go until Baja gets started in July.

ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Older fields in Mainland MX still have product, but they are wrapping up with high color and some shrivel issues. The transition to Baja production is underway as they just got started a week or so ago.

ORGANIC ROMA

Organic roma availability remains pretty steady with mostly XL and L fruit available. There's some nice-quality new crop fruit in Sonora which should go until the end of June. This should overlap with the start of Baja's production in early-mid June.

ORGANIC MINI CUCUMBERS

Baja's organic mini cucumber crops are providing adequate supply. Sizing is on the larger end of the spectrum with more fruit in the 5-7" range than desired, but quality is acceptable.



NEWS IN THE PRODUCE INDUSTRY

Food waste reduction important to U.S. shoppers, Flashfood survey finds

By [Timothy Inklebarger](#)

May 16, 2023

[WINSIGHTGROCERYBUSINESS.COM](https://www.winsightgrocerybusiness.com)

Three-quarters of Americans believe that reducing food waste is a key component to fighting climate change and nearly nine out of 10 (88%) say managing food waste is important to them, according to a survey by food waste-reduction tech company Flashfood.

The data comes from the Toronto-based company's first-annual "Impact Report: The State of Food Waste," a Harris Poll survey of more than 2,000 U.S. citizens conducted in late April.

The survey results also show that more than two-thirds of respondents believe the rising cost of food is making healthy eating more difficult and 77% are concerned about the environmental impact of food waste. The Flashfood report was released at the ReFED 2023 Food Waste Solutions Summit in St. Louis.

The report also notes that food waste was the No. 1 component in U.S. landfills in 2021 and accounts for roughly 30-40% of all food produced in the U.S. That statistic is roughly 60% in Canada. It also accounts for about \$26 billion in lost economic value in the U.S. and Canada combined, according to the report.

"That's why we're setting our sights on massive expansion this year: to be available in more places and at more stores with the goal of saving our consumers money on groceries and rescuing millions more pounds of food from landfills," said Josh Domingues, founder and CEO of Flashfood, in a statement.

Dana Gunders, executive director of U.S.-based food waste nonprofit ReFED, said in the report that retailers play an important role "because they sit at the center of the food system and have so much opportunity to influence the supply chain upstream and downstream."

"By implementing waste reduction solutions in their operations, retailers can not only benefit their bottom lines, but they can show their customers and partners what's possible," he said.

The report noted that Flashfood, which offers food nearing its sell-by date at a discount, diverted more 28 million pounds of food from landfills to nearly 3 million shoppers in 2022.

The company, which was founded in 2016, grabbed the industry's attention in February when it appointed former president of the Giant Company, Nicholas Bertram, to serve as president and CEO.

About a month later, Bertram hired two industry executives, former Meijer executive Sepideh Burkett and former Impossible Foods executive Jordan Schenck to serve as head of partner development and chief brand officer, respectively.

[Continue to read the rest here](#)



NEWS IN THE GROCERY WORLD

APRIL BRINGS ANOTHER BREATHER IN GROCERY PRICE INFLATION

By **Russell Redman**

May 10, 2023

WWW.WINSIGHTGROCERYBUSINESS.COM

Grocery prices again fell on a month-to-month basis in April amid downticks in food inflation and the overall Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The April CPI for All Urban Consumers edged up 4.9% (unadjusted) over the previous 12 months, down from a 5.0% uptick in March, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported Wednesday. That represented the 10th consecutive month of year-over-year declines in the CPI and the lowest annual gain since April 2021, according to BLS.

During the past year, the CPI saw 12-month growth of 6.0% for February, 6.4% for January and then in 2022 of 6.5% for December, 7.1% for November, 7.7% for October, 8.2% for September, 8.3% for August, 8.5% for July, 9.1% for June, 8.6% for May and 8.3% for April.

Sequentially, the April CPI rose 0.4% (seasonally adjusted), up from 0.1% in March. Monthly growth in the CPI over the past 12 months has been up and down but remained below 1% since last summer, coming in at 0.4% in February, 0.5% in January and in 2022 at 0.1% in December, 0.2% in November, 0.5% in October, 0.4% in September, 0.2% in August, flat in July, 1.3% in June, 1% in May and 0.3% in April.

Though not as big of a decrease as in March, April continued a downtrend in food prices. The food-at-home index dipped 0.2% month over month for April following a 0.3% decrease in March—the first decline since September 2020, BLS reported.

Monthly increases in the food-at-home index have stayed below 1% since a 0.8% uptick in August, followed by gains of 0.7% in September, 0.5% in October, 0.6% in November and 0.5% in December of last year and 0.4% in January and 0.3% in February of 2023. That compared with increases of 1.3% in July, 1% in June, 1.4% in May and 0.9% in April of 2022.

Year over year, the food-at-home CPI was up 7.1% in April, continuing sizable drops this year from 8.4% in March, 10.2% in February and 11.3% in January. Those numbers extended a downtrend trend from 11.8% in December, 12% in November, 12.4% in October, 13% in September and 13.5% in August. The end-of-summer months had marked the end of rising 12-month growth since the start of 2022, as the food-at-home index climbed 13.1% for July, 12.2% for June, 11.9% for May, 10.8% for April, 10% for March, 8.6% for February and 7.4% for January.

“It’s consistent with what we were expecting,” Kroger Chairman and CEO Rodney McMullen told Good Morning America host George Stephanopoulos in a video segment on Wednesday morning (see above). “If you look over the last year or so, we’ve been telling people we expect that, as you get further during the year, the inflation will continue to decline year on year. It doesn’t mean that it will go down a lot, but the rate of increases will slow down.”

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

July 12-13, 2023

Organic Produce Show

Monterey, California

organicproducesummit.com

PRODUCE BAROMETER:

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Good	Lower
Cucumber	Good	Higher
Eggplant	Varied	Higher
Green Beans	Good	Lower
Chili's	Varied	Varied
Squash-Hard	Good	Steady
Squash-Soft	Good	Higher
Tomatoes	Good	Higher

GROUND BREAKING



Lipman Family Farms has pulled back the curtain on an upcoming groundbreaking, announcing that the company will be hosting a ceremony for the new Lipman Family Campus for Children and Families in Immokalee, Florida, in collaboration with Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA).

