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updates

CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

ROMA TOMATOES

Growers in the Ruskin/Palmetto area (including Lipman) have been running behind schedule but are finally getting started in a light way. Volume is still insignificant but we'll see things pickup over the next 10-14 days. The earliest plantings look to have a light fruit set and mixed sizing due to hot weather during the growing cycle. MX is still in the awkward in-between season with fruit coming from Baja and Eastern MX. Quality is a mixed bag with better fruit coming from new crops in Baja. Sizing is also varied with larger fruit from the better-quality loads. We expect volumes to be light to moderate until Sinaloa starts in late December/early January.

ROUND TOMATOES

Quincy will wrap up in the next week, which will leave the R/P area to cover demand until south FL gets up and running. Volumes are lighter, in general, for R/P this year due to heat during the growing cycle and a few cosmetic issues causing gradeouts. Lipman is scheduled to start rounds in Labelle in 2-3 weeks, which will be when most other growers wrap up in R/P and move further south as well. MX round tomato volumes should remain light to moderate for the next few weeks. Baja and East MX will begin to taper off as we move toward December and the start of Culiacan's crops. Weather will be a significant factor in how the transition goes.

GRAPE TOMATOES

Grape tomatoes remain snug. MX has a limited amount of fruit in Baja and Central MX and it's not really enough to go around. Expect a similar status until Culiacan starts in mid-December. Eastern grape tomatoes have been steady but limited out of the R/P area. We expect more volumes and improved quality as more plantings come to maturity and become part of the harvests. In the meantime, Lipman has also started easing into the Labelle grape tomato crops which look to be nice.

TOV

CAN and domestic crops are winding down or are in transition to the lighter Winter crops. Central MX is trying to pick up the slack but is coming up a little short. Expect supply to level off after Thanksgiving.

COLOR BELL PEPPERS

CAN's crops are winding down for the season. Volume and sizing will continue to get smaller through the rest of November as growers drop off and out until the Spring season begins in March. In the meantime, Central MX houses have steady volumes and good quality from mostly new crops this week. However, we do expect a shortage of yellow bells for the next two weeks as some growers gap on this color. There are light volumes already coming from the Culiacan area but we'll see the bulk of growers get rolling at the end of November/early December.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Eastern pepper production is transitioning out of GA and into FL now. GA looks to wrap up over the next couple of weeks and volume is declining swiftly. FL isn't at full production yet, but there is fruit in both Plant City and south FL. South FL's yields and size have been light on the first set but supply should get stronger within the next week as more growers come online and current producers move into the 2nd sets. Quality has been very nice so far. In the West, peppers continue to be a CA deal. Arroyo Grande is winding down, leaving the Coachella area in the driver's seat for the next few weeks. We expect growers to try to stretch the desert deal out as long as possible since Mainland MX's season is looking to be late and light. We do know that some lost crops and others will be delayed, potentially making early December a challenging supply time.

GREEN BEANS

GA had expected to have stronger supply for the holiday pulls, but last week's snap of cold weather hurt yields significantly. North FL farms were also expecting to have good volumes but the fruit just wasn't there as the plants didn't fully cover from the prior tropical weather. Both the Lake area and south FL are on the verge of starting and there are some light volumes here and there. We should begin to see more normal volumes right at Thanksgiving. The West is also in a light supply situation. Domestic deals in CA have already finished or will be done in the next few days, which leaves supply fully in MX's hands.

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Unfortunately, both Baja and Mainland MX are battling quality issues from the weather of the past few weeks. Some also lost plants, particularly those in the Sinaloa area. Expect sporadic production and quality for the next few weeks with recovery starting in the last week of November/first week of December.

YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH

With GA, Plant City, and south FL all in production, squash supply has been very strong in the East. With depressed markets, growers are walking away from older fields, especially in GA. Quality has been good for most, but there have been some issues on fruit from older fields. Look for that to improve as south FL moves into new plantings and a new area, Homestead, gets started next week. Looking to the West, volumes have also been very strong- primarily out of the Hermosillo area. They've now moved past their peak and a few growers have stepped away from older plantings, so expect volume to be lighter for the next few weeks. Sinaloa normally gets started toward the end of November/first of December. Some farms will be able to start then and others are pushing out until around December 15th, so the early supply will be lighter. Overall, expect squash volumes to be lighter for the next month.

CUCUMBERS

Between GA's end-of-season fruit and FL's newer Winter crops, cucumber availability is adequate in the East. We do expect GA to be out of the mix in the next 7-14 days, but south FL should find its rhythm during the same time frame. Quality has been good but there's a less than desired amount of #1 product. FL's winter cucumber season will continue until mid-December, which is when the Honduran import program is on tap to begin. Western supply is a little lighter this week as cooler weather and seasonal decline in some areas have slowed things down. Supply is light out of Sinaloa so far as the massive rains from Norma have affected the early crops. We expect to see lighter numbers for the next 10-14 days, with increases by last week of November, when more consistent supplies start to cross daily. Thanks to the rain, quality is not quite as sharp as it usually is out of MX, but is still average or better.

HARD SQUASH

Hard squash supply is somewhat steady in the East with the bulk of fresh product coming out of NY. There are also some light storage volumes here and there, but that should clean up over the holiday. We've seen a variety of quality issues on older storage product but the newer fruit looks much better. In the West, Stockton and Fresno continue to provide adequate volumes and nice quality on all varieties. They plan to go through the end of the year although most switch over to MX supply for freight reasons. Sonora is now up and running with steady volumes and good quality. We expect volume to continue to build for a few more weeks as additional growers get started.

CHILI PEPPERS

Chilies are still available in GA, but their supply will be winding down as FL gets kicked into gear. South FL has already started with some select items (jalapenos, Cubanelles, and Hungarian wax) and Plant City is on tap to start next week with

Jalapenos. In the West, CA and Baja will both wind down for the season over the next couple of weeks. So far, there's been a few chilies out of Mainland MX crossing at Nogales, mostly jalapenos, tomatillos and serranos. Crops in the Sinaloa area were definitely hurt by the recent hurricane. Although there are a variety of areas with chilies, the overall outlook is lighter supply and potential quality challenges through the month of November.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant supply is adequate in the East. GA is still working, Plant City has light volumes to start, and south FL has started scratch picking. Over the next 2-3 weeks, look for FL's volume to pick up as GA's declines for the season. As for the West, CA's Central Valley/Fresno is trickling along with eggplant as it heads toward the end of the season. Quality continues to be fair and typical for CA fruit. The Coachella Valley is also in with their smaller Fall crop. Both areas will continue through November, weather permitting. Mainland MX/Culiacan is up and running. Volume will be increasing as we see more growers come online with fruit. Quality is surprisingly good considering the weather the plants/fruit have been through.

ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Organic grape tomato supply is limited and will remain so for the next few weeks as we wait for the Culiacan area to start. Quality is just okay as growers push to meet orders.

ORGANIC ROMA

Both Baja and Central MX will have organic romas for a few more weeks then Baja will finish up. Quality is good from both areas although Baja has the edge. The Culiacan area is on tap to start in December. Central MX will help bridge the two areas, hopefully gap-free.

ORGANIC MINI CUCUMBERS

Organic mini cucumber production is steady out of both Baja and Central MX. Quality has improved a bit but we're still watching freshness closely.

ORGANIC MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Organic mini sweet supply out of Baja has been adequate and should continue for at least a few more weeks. We look for Mainland MX to start in mid-December but they could run a little behind due to the tropical weather that hit the growing area (s).

CALABACITA

Hermosillo continues to provide the West with enough calabacita to meet demand. As with other soft squashes, we could see things lighten up for the next several weeks as we work through the transition from Sonora to Sinaloa.



LIPMAN FAMILY FARMS CRUSHES DONATION GOAL IN CELEBRATION OF 75TH ANNIVERSARY

[THEPRODUCENEWS.COM](https://theproducenews.com)

Tuesday, November 7, 2023

As the year-long celebration of its 75th anniversary comes to a close, Lipman Family Farms challenged its employees to an initiative of donating 75,000 meals for the milestone. In just five weeks, the company far exceeded its goal, donating an impressive 260,455 meals, more than tripling the initial objective.

"Our company's success over its 75-year tenure has always been due to people: our employees, our customers, and the communities we work with. We're continuously inspired to be 'Good from the Ground Up' by providing healthy and safe produce that is accessible to all," said Elyse Lipman, CEO of Lipman Family Farms.

Lipman attributes the culture across the company to the success of this initiative, saying, "Our community champions and dedicated office managers play a pivotal role in bringing our community initiatives to life. Their hard work and passion for philanthropy exemplify our commitment to our community partnerships." Lipman Family Farms has been dedicated to supporting its community since the company was founded. Charitable efforts are driven by its three pillars of children, education and hunger relief. Company founder Max Lipman was unable to read

or write. His dream for a future where his legacy might create greater opportunity for generations to come was the founding inertia for the philanthropic avenues the company has in place today.

The 260,455 meals are more than three times the initial goal of 75,000 meals set by Lipman Family Farms and equate to feeding 52,000 families across 21 states and three countries. All organized and donated through 27 community partnerships such as Manna Food Bank in Asheville, NC; Inspired Vision Food Bank in Dallas; the Community Cooperative Soup Kitchen in Ft. Myers, FL; the Immokalee Friendship House homeless shelter in Immokalee, FL; and the Food Bank of the Eastern Shore in VA.

Each Lipman Family Farms location played an integral part in the event, whether it donated produce, prepared meals or donated time, it all directly benefited families in need right now. Lipman plans to continue the momentum with its annual Day of Good where 20 separate community volunteer projects have been planned throughout the company's many locations. "Our employees continue to demonstrate that remarkable things happen when we unite for a common cause," said Lipman.



WHAT PRODUCE RETAIL NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THE 'JUST-IN-TIME' SHOPPING TREND

THEPACKER.COM

Jennifer Strailey

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Inflation, the sky-high cost of goods and the ever-changing retail landscape in America has triggered a seismic shift in the way consumers shop for produce — presenting both new opportunities and new challenges. To learn how inflation is influencing purchase decisions and how retailers can leverage those insights to drive store visits, bigger basket rings and repeat purchase, The Packer recently sat down with Jonna Parker, Circana principal and fresh foods team lead.

"Shopping in a post-inflation world in America means more frequent and smaller trips," Parker said. "On average, we make 10.5 more trips per year to the store than we did in 2019 for anything food and beverage — for groceries." Trip frequency is up, and shop size is down for two reasons, Parker says. One is the ubiquity and availability of fresh in a wide variety of store formats.

"Think about how different c-stores look now than they looked three years ago. Think about how much more Trader Joe's, Costco, Walmart — all stores [have expanded in fresh]," Parker said. Add to this the availability of fresh produce at every Starbucks, airport, hotel, online, etc. "All of that adds up to more frequent trips and therefore for retail, a more split ticket or dollar." More frequent trips equate to smaller trips. "Consumers are now just buying what they need," Parker said. "We're calling it 'just-in-time shopping,' which means you don't overspend on things you don't eat."

Fresh produce is particularly well positioned for this trend as shelf life has been a traditional barrier to purchase. If consumers only buy what they're going to eat immediately, it's no longer a factor in the purchase decision. "What we've seen in our data is that there's less stock-up trips where people are walking every aisle and getting what they need for the week — especially among younger consumers," Parker said. Instead, Circana data points to shoppers making purchases for a specific meal or to replenish

"Produce is the most frequently purchased department of any fresh foods department now and it's enjoying increased sales," Parker said. "Bakery can't claim that. Deli can't claim that. Produce is really benefiting from this new reality of increased consumer engagement — more trips and depth or share of baskets. The total spend is bigger in produce than in the total store. This new phenomenon is actually favoring produce naturally and that is a huge opportunity for the department."

Parker points to an August report from Circana that revealed the top 20 fresh foods with the most engagement in summer, as consumers make smaller trips and buy more often. Eight of the top 10 and 15 of the top 20 were produce items. Salad/fresh lettuce, bananas, tomatoes and berries all made the top 10.

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

What does the change in produce purchasing behavior mean for retailers?

"The merchandising concepts behind this new produce reality are infinitely different than the way we've marketed anything before," Parker said.

"They're doing that in the health and beauty aisle and the laundry detergent aisle," she said. "Those promotions have helped retailers stave off channel shifting because you're incenting someone to buy more while they're in the store — at your store — which is \$1 more gained that you would have lost to somebody else if you didn't incent them to make a purchase."

[READ MORE HERE](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS:

November 9, 2023

Lipman Family Farms' Day of Good

Lipman's companywide day of giving back to the communities we work and live.

December 5-7, 2023

New York Produce Show

BOOTH #418

New York, NY

HAVE YOU VISITED ONE OF OUR
FRESH-CUT FACILITIES? GET A PEEK
INTO HOW OUR DICED TOMATOES
ARE MADE:



@lipmanfamilyfarms

