

JANUARY 12, 2023

LIPMANFAMILYFARMS.COM

ON THE H O R I Z O N

*Reliable &
Consistent*

Bringing you your
weekly industry
updates

CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

ROMA TOMATOES

FL's roma supply continues to be at very light levels and not enough to meet demand. Lipman's harvests remain in Naples, where we are working around and with the cool, rainy weather. There's now more crown picks and less 2nd's and 3rd's, resulting in better availability of larger romas this week. Quality has been excellent on the crown fruit but the later picks are showing rain check and have lighter packouts. We anticipate similar production levels until weather conditions take a turn for the better. West MX's season is off to a slow start so far. More growers are getting started, but no one has any real volume yet. Warmer weather is projected next week which will hopefully give a boost to production in another week or so. Both Baja and East MX are seeing volume decline as they are just about finished for the season.

ROUND TOMATOES

FL's round tomato volumes are mostly steady this week, although color is coming more slowly due to cool and rainy conditions. Lipman is harvesting mostly crown picks in Naples with nice quality and bigger fruit. There aren't a lot of 2nd's and 3rd's right now due to the weather so smaller fruit is limited. Homestead has also started their Winter crops, but we are hearing of scarring concerns which are typical of the area. In the West, more Culiacan-area growers are getting started but projected volume increases have been slowed by cooler weather, leaving supplies somewhat limited. There are also some growers that are 3-4 weeks late due to the prior weather in October. No major quality issues have been reported and sizing is heavier to big fruit.

GRAPE TOMATOES

FL grape tomato volumes remain light overall. Yields and packouts have come down due to the weather's effects on the fruit. There is good-quality fruit available from the earlier picks. In the West, there are a few more grapes coming into Nogales, but the recent cold weather seems to be slowing any momentum down. However, there will be less volume out of West MX overall this season as some growers opted not to grow this item.

TOV

It is that time of year where we see our shortest supplies from MX. Look for smaller-sized fruit and lighter color as we deal with

low light levels and cooler winter temps. Availability will be snug through the month and ease back up as we move into February and March.

COLORED BELL PEPPERS

West MX's production is still on the lighter side with all the players having just a little bit of fruit. Green cast is becoming an issue. Warmer weather could definitely help to spur things along. Central MX has had better weather but production is still on the light side, especially on reds. Quality is mixed- some with nice, clean product and others with consistent trouble, so we are evaluating inbound closely.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS

FL's pepper supply is light as cold and rainy weather continue to plague the Sunshine State. Another factor impacting supply is that several of the smaller growers step out for a few months between Fall and Spring plantings so there's a little less acreage in production. However, quality has been good and a variety of sizing options are available. After a tight spot early in the week, the West seems to have more consistent supply from the Culiacan area. Quality is good and all sizes/grades are available.

[CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE](#)



GREEN BEANS

FL's green bean volume continues at lighter than planned levels thanks to overall lower yields caused by rain and cool weather. Production schedules are skippy and spotty in the three main areas with beans: Immokalee, the Lake and Homestead. Prolonged exposure to rain and cold have reduced acreage for some, while others are mostly dealing with reduced yields. Quality seems to be good despite the weather issues. MX's production has been extremely light as farms are still trying to rebound from the weather-affected start of the season. There's been a little more product this week, but far from normal seasonal levels. However, quality has been excellent.

YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH

Consistent cool weather and rainy patterns have really taken a toll on FL's already limited Winter production of yellow and zucchini squashes. Both Homestead and Immokalee crops have been hurt and look to continue on with limited numbers and hit or miss quality. The news isn't looking good in the West either. Some of new crops that were about to come online were hit by frost and are damaged. Others not hurt by frost are experiencing minimal to light production at this time. With all the Eastern needs headed toward MX, demand far exceeds supply. Quality is average on the fruit that is available. We look for a brighter supply future for the West in about 3 weeks.

CUCUMBERS

Until March, the primary source of Eastern supply is the Honduran import deal. They've been going in a light way for a few weeks now and we should see full volumes at the end of January. There haven't been any major quality issues so far, but this product doesn't work well for some receivers so its use is limited. As anticipated, Western supply has tightened up this week. Cooler weather has caused some skips in the fields and will cause some gaps over the next 7-10 days as we navigate through fields and production schedules. Weather willing, supply should improve to some degree in a couple of weeks. Quality is not an issue as most fruit has nice color with limited cosmetic concerns.

HARD SQUASH

With little to no acreage in FL, the East continues to wait for the Honduran program to start late this month/ early next month. Until then, the East is looking West for supply where things have been pretty consistent. However, we're hearing at least one major grower has suffered some freeze damage with the effects yet to be determined. Overall, supply has lightened up this week with acorn being the shortest in supply. Quality is good but we are still watching acorn for ground scar.

CHILI PEPPERS

South FL's chili pepper production is light and scattered as most growers are selective about what grow in the Winter months. Volumes of jalapenos and Cubanelles are the most steady, but there are also a few other varieties around as well. However, poblanos are few and far between. In the West, we're surprisingly seeing consistent availability on jalapenos, serranos and Anaheims. Poblanos have also gotten started to a greater degree. Tomatillos are the snuggest chili, possibly due to strong national markets in MX. Quality has been excellent on jalapenos and good overall on the other items.

CALABACITA

Calabacita supply is also more snug, but there is enough product to meet the lighter demand for this item.

EGGPLANT

Some of south FL's older fields are now out of production earlier than usual due to the weather and lack of yields. With cool weather slowing growth and maturity of this warm-weather loving item, Eastern supply is at minimal levels. Mainland MX's supply is slim but steady this week. We expect the situation to remain similar for the next 10-14 days as we continue to monitor the effects of cooler weather and its effects on yields. Quality is nice and strong.

ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

More growers are coming online with organic grapes, but volumes are still short as the pipeline is so empty from long-term shortages. Color and quality have been very nice so far. We should see gradual improvements to supply as we move toward the 1st of February.

ORGANIC ROMA

With another grower coming online, there are a few more organic romas around this week. Quality and color are still not the best, but have improved over recent weeks.

ORGANIC MINI CUCUMBERS

Organic mini cuc numbers have quickly taken a dive this week. Between cool weather and transitions, availability is at pallet levels this week. We're hearing it may be 3-4 weeks before the situation improves.

ORGANIC MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Supplies have gotten really snug on organic mini sweets as the cool weather has really affected this crop. We probably won't see much improvement until February. Quality has been good but as is the norm when things are tight, we expect to see greening issues for the next few weeks.



TECHNOMIC DECLARES 2024 THE YEAR OF THE TOMATO

[NRN.COM](https://www.nrn.com)

BRET THORN

NOV 17, 2023

THE CONSUMER AND MENU RESEARCH FIRM ALSO PREDICTS GROWTH IN BREAKFAST AND MORE CULINARY CREATIVITY

Restaurateurs should be able to anticipate a bit less insanity in the coming year compared to the “roller coaster” that has been the 2020s up to this point, according to Technomic.

The consumer and menu research firm said the lows of the pandemic followed by the rapid recovery will level out to low single-digit growth for many restaurants in 2024, with limited-service operators benefitting from continuing trade down and full service restaurants focusing on managing prices while providing “experiences that are different and engaging.”

More broadly, an aging consumer base and slower population growth will make it more difficult to achieve organic growth in the coming years.

Here are some more specific trends that Technomic expects in the coming year.

The Great Consumer Occasion Shift

As inflation pressures continue and fears of a recession loom, Technomic expects to shift from pricey delivery to takeout. It also anticipates growth in going out for breakfast rather than lunch, satisfying a desire to eat in restaurants, but at a lower price. Ditto weekend brunch instead of dinner.

Menus get granular

Saying where an ingredient comes from, or specifying the variety of fruit or vegetable that’s being used, commodifies it and makes it more valuable and interesting to customers.

“Cocktails won’t contain just any apple flavor, but rather that of a Granny Smith. Generic red wine vinegar will move aside for Barolo wine vinegar,” Technomic predicts. Specific meat cuts also will be called out, such as filet mignon carpaccio or tenderloin steak tartare.

Ingredients’ origins also will be called out. “This in-depth menu detail will further push quality, premiumization and transparency in the consumer mindset,” Technomic said.

[KEEP READING HERE](#)



TRENDSPOTTING: NEW YEAR, SAME PRODUCE INDUSTRY STRESSES

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

By Craig Levitt
January 10, 2024

The new year has brought increased input and transportation expenses to produce suppliers and buyers. Obviously, this puts pressure on winter produce markets that rely on supply from growers in places like Chile and Peru for high-value commodities such as blueberries, grapes, citrus and mangos.

Blueberries, in particular, could be troublesome, according to ProduceIQ. "Chile is done, and Peru has yet to ramp up. The gap in supply is keeping blueberry prices perilously high, and containers are taking their time to arrive due to delays in the Panama Canal," said Mark Campbell, founder and CEO of ProduceIQ. He said volume from South America is less than half of the volume in week No. 1 of 2023, adding that suppliers are reporting crossing should increase toward the end of January.

Regarding strawberry prices, "they inch higher as rain and cold quell new year enthusiasm," said Campbell. Reports are demand exceeds supply in the East and West due to labor and weather-related challenges, though he expects that strawberry prices should fall by the end of January.

With harvesting delays due to morning ice on plants, lettuce markets are basking in below-average pricing. Campbell believes butternut squash and other soup-driven commodities have an opportunity time to shine.

[**READ MORE HERE**](#)



Trendspotting

WITH CRAIG LEVITT

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 22-24, 2024

GOPEX Show

BOOTH #207

Hollywood, Florida

March 7-9, 2024

Southern Exposure Show

BOOTH #222

Tampa, Florida

CHEERS TO A REFRESHING TWIST ON
TRADITION! 🍅🍹

RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH OUR TOMATO
MOJITOS—BURSTING WITH GRAPE TOMATOES,
FRESH MINT, LIME AND LEMON JUICE, AND A
SPLASH OF TEQUILA. A VIBRANT SIP TO
CELEBRATE THE COUNTDOWN TO A FLAVORFUL
YEAR AHEAD! 🎉🌟

