

JANUARY 19, 2024

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

The past week was very light for FL roma production thanks to several rainy days in a row and, of course, cool temperatures. Because the fruit is slow to come to maturity, it is gaining size and much of what's been harvested from crown picks is very large. Packouts are down due to rain, but the first pick fruit is still nice. West MX's season is still in a slow- to- get- going mode. Most growers report running 3-4 weeks behind normal start dates and we are seeing this in the little amount of fruit available so far. We do anticipate more romas as we move into February and the shade house growers get started. Although the fruit is crossing very green, the quality has been pretty good so far. There is still a little coming out of Baja and East MX, but both areas are in seasonal decline and the volume is minimal.

## ROUND TOMATOES

The El Nino weather pattern that FL has been experiencing has definitely affected round tomato supply this week. Rain kept harvesters out of fields for several days in a row. That coupled with the slow maturity from cool weather has supply limited. Lipman's production should be as steady as the weather will allow, but there will be less acreage in the industry for the next few weeks as some growers take a break during this time of year. Rain hasn't impacted quality too much at this point but we're watching closely in the packing process. Like romas, sizing is on the larger end of the spectrum. In the West, Culiacan growers have been bringing pallet volumes to Nogales, not truck volumes which is the norm. This week's warmer weather could bring a little more fruit next week, but we may be in for some ups and down in volume as the temperature patterns are very inconsistent. Look for better supplies from MX as we move into February- weather allowing.

## GRAPE TOMATOES

Due to weather conditions, this has been the lightest week of grape tomato production so far this season. Rain and cool weather has impacted yields significantly. As growers harvest around weather, we are seeing lighter color on what's available. 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

We're starting to see a little more volume out of the Culiacan area and should see a boost in volume next week as this week's warmer weather helps to move things along. Greening is the primary issue as growers are pushing to get started and the recent cool weather is holding back color. Central MX also expects slightly stronger production next week and is dealing with greening concerns. For at least the short term, we may see ups and downs in the numbers based on the erratic weather patterns.

## GREEN BELL PEPPERS

FL's bell pepper supply has been somewhere between light and moderate this week. We do look for supply to be shorter next week as rain, cloudy, and cool weather catch up with the crops. Most of what's available is coming from older fields, so there's less big fruit. There are very few jumbos, light volumes on XL, and better numbers on the smaller sizes. There's been a lot of rain, so quality isn't perfect but seems to be holding on at average or better levels. Moving to the West, bell peppers are one of the few items in good supply and we expect more of the same for next week. All sizing options are available and quality is good as long as the fruit is fresh.

[CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE](#)



## GREEN BEANS

FL's green bean volumes continue to be extremely light. Some growers are currently working through a planting skip from prior rains while others are harvesting just a couple times of week with significantly lower yields than normal. We hope to see some improvement once we get a consistently warmer weather pattern. Meanwhile, we expect to see a little more volume from the West this week. A 4-5 day stint of warmer weather has helped bring more product on, but this could be short-lived as cooler temps are expected to return later next week.

## YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH

Squash production is at a low in FL with extremely limited numbers coming from the Immokalee and Homestead areas. Rain and cool weather have taken some older fields out of production sooner than planned and there's just not enough consistent warmth to get the fruit to grow. Quality has been fair on what is available. MX's production is also very light. Culiacan is the area with the most product right now and it's not much as cool weather has held growth back. Obregon is usually the area with the stronger production but some of the crops were damaged by a recent frost. This could impact their overall volume for the season. With the ups and downs in temperatures, we're seeing some bottleneck shape and fruit with smaller diameters.

## CUCUMBERS

The Honduran cucumber program is still in light volumes and there's not a whole lot of product coming in. We've heard that there may be less acreage this year due to the business decisions of growers so we may not see the levels of production we are accustomed to. Overall quality looks good but this product doesn't work well for some receivers' specs. Western supply is also snug this week as the cool weather has slowed things down. There looks to be better supply at the end of next week as some warmer weather is currently in place but that could be short lived. With constant ups and downs in temperature patterns, we may see the same ups and downs in supply- just a week to 10 days later. Quality is very nice, but there's not as much big fruit. Fruit diameter is affected by cool temperatures more than length, so we are seeing some fruit that is a little slimmer than preferred.

## HARD SQUASH

With little to no acreage in FL, the East continues to wait for the Honduran program to start next month. Until then, the East is looking West for supply. Overall, supply remains lighter and at similar levels to last week with acorn being the shortest in supply. We're keeping our eyes open for ground spot on acorn and the usual scarring on spaghetti and butternut but the issues aren't widespread.

## CHILI PEPPERS

South FL's chili supply continues in its lighter Winter mode. Poblanos are still in short supply, but there are somewhat "normal" volumes of jalapenos, Hungarian wax and Cubanelles. The larger cavity items (Cubanelles, etc.) haven't had the warmth they like, so some of the fruit is a little shorter than usual but quality is pretty good. In the West, we're happy to report ample supply of most all chili items with the exception of tomatillos. Quality is good overall despite an occasional concern with Anaheims and poblanos.

## CALABACITA

Calabacita supply is also more snug, as it is generally grown in the same areas as yellow and zucchini squashes. Demand is lighter for this item, so it doesn't seem quite as short though.

## EGGPLANT

FL's eggplant production is down to minimal levels and a lot of the fruit that's coming off is choice. We don't expect the situation to change until Spring crops come online in March. Mainland MX's supply is also lighter this week due to cooler temperatures. We should see more next week thanks to this week's warmer weather. But, like other items, the ups and downs of temperatures could continue for several more weeks and impact consistent supply numbers. Quality is average or better.

## ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

More growers are coming online with organic grapes, but volumes are slow to ramp up. Color and quality have been good with only occasional issues with splits reported.

## ORGANIC ROMA

Strong demand for the very limited supply is keeping organic romas in a tight situation. Much of the fruit is coming in light in color and quality issues are, at times, showing up as the fruit colors up. Supply improvements are on the way as long as cooler weather doesn't hold things back.

## ORGANIC MINI CUCUMBERS

Organic mini cuc numbers are in extremely light supply as cold weather has stalled transitions between blocks. Supply should begin improving by February 1, with normal supply by the middle of the month....weather pending.

## ORGANIC MINI SWEET PEPPERS

As with conventional product, organic mini sweets are quite snug this week with very limited availability. We are seeing some issues with greening and some growers only have 2 colors available right now.



## ELYSE LIPMAN: WHY 'FAMILY' IS ON OUR NAME

[VISIONMAGAZINEUS.COM](https://www.visionmagazineus.com)

BY ELLEN URIBE

With a buoyancy and seemingly endless reserve of energy, Elyse Lipman takes great pride in the journey she's cut out for herself as chief executive of Lipman Family Farms.

"I grew up really proud of this company and my grandfather Bill Lipman, but I didn't necessarily have it in my sights," says Lipman, who has been at the helm of Lipman since January 2023 when she succeeded Kent Shoemaker following his retirement.

Lipman Family Farms was founded as a field-grown tomato operation in Southwest Florida. Today, it has operations in four countries and partners with a global network of farmers to market quality produce year-round.

Lipman joined the company in 2020 as chief strategy officer after being recruited by Shoemaker. "We all are where we are because someone saw us. Kent is a big reason why I am here today. Not only did he help me see the real opportunity at Lipman, but he gave me a runway," she says.

In that challenging role, Lipman developed and enhanced the company's strategy, emphasizing the company's core values and goals while striving for ongoing expansion.

"The board went through an exhaustive search to succeed Kent Shoemaker following his 13-year career as CEO," says Lipman. "I'm honored to be in the position to work with such a strong team of industry titans. My top four lieutenants have a combined 110 years of industry experience, and we have over 300 employees with over 20 years of tenure with Lipman," she explains. "Many of these people I've known my entire life, and I look forward to continuing building on that."

Lipman Family Farms, which is North America's largest supplier of tomatoes and fresh vegetables, has a vast global network of strategically located farms, packhouses and shipping facilities.

Lipman started as a farming company, but now we are vertically integrated crossing all

of North America. There is a high level of professionalism," notes Lipman. "There is so much history, a lot of pride and real human connections."

The company is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2023, and under Lipman's direction, is embracing technology in a big way.

"We celebrate the successes of our last 75 years as a company while also looking towards the next 75 years ahead of us," explains Lipman.

Aside from being the organization's CEO, Lipman is a fourth-generation Lipman Family Farms family member. She has turned heads with the many achievements she has managed in a relatively short amount of time. In her previous roles in strategy for the company, she championed improved product offerings, making a firm commitment to operate sustainably, and led the acquisition of Lipman's first owned greenhouse in Mexico, a 75-acre structure growing tomato and vegetable varieties.

Lipman possesses a strong sense of self, and she is highly astute when it comes to problem-solving. A great communicator, she makes it a point to get to know the employees and in many instances, their families.

[Read more here](#)





## 3 GROCERY TRENDS TO WATCH FOR IN 2024

[RETAILSPACESOLUTIONS.COM](https://retailspace.com)

December 13, 2023

When winding through the aisles of their local grocery store, shoppers have so many decisions to make before placing something in their cart.

What's on the list? How much do I have to spend? Am I searching for sustenance or snack-ary? How hungry and impulsive am I feeling? What foods did I see on social media? What's in stock? What's on sale? Am I brand loyal or willing to try something new?

As grocers welcome the 2024 shopper, it's important to remember they aren't completely new, but an evolved version of the shopper they once were in 2023. And by understanding and embracing what's important to these new(ish) shoppers, grocers can stay a step ahead of competitors. Here are three grocery store trends that grocers can really sink their teeth into in 2024.

### Private Label Sales will Continue to Prevail

Forced to find ways to save amidst inflation, the grocery industry witnessed a 2.3x growth rate on private label sales compared to national-brand competitors with some categories exceeding 5x the sales growth. And as shoppers continue to support private label, private label can support shoppers by developing new, low-cost products.

Private label products help shoppers save on their grocery bill. But they also keep them in your store. Many national-brand products struggled with supply chain issues leaving them out-of-stock. Private label helped save the day (and the basket) by offering an alternative solution, which can lead to increased shopper loyalty and a more positive in-store experience. Once shoppers got a taste of private label, they often found it was sufficient enough to purchase again. Research found 76% of shoppers who switched from a national brand to a private label brand purchased private label again on the following purchase.

### Premium Snacking Trend Will Rise

Social media sells big even when the products are little. Thanks to TikTok trends like "Girl Dinner" and "A little treat", snacking has shifted beyond traditional chips and pre-packaged cookies to support a more luxurious, Instagram-worthy snacking culture. Charcuterie boards are nothing new (and they're not going anywhere), but

consumers often have a craving for elevated experiences from home. This food trend may include purchases like pre-packaged snacking cheese, specialty dips and frozen foods that blur the lines between at-home cooking and a tapas/small plate dining experience (often in pajamas).

### Younger Audiences will Shop Sustainably

Sustainability is more important to some shoppers than others. But as many grocers seek to reach younger audiences with higher lifetime values, the answer may just be more sustainable options. Research shows 50% of Gen Z and Millennials place a premium on sustainability compared to only 23% of Gen X-ers and 16% of Baby Boomers. This may include plant-based alternatives, more local choices, and improvement in more sustainable merchandising solutions that can reduce shrink and energy usage.

How a product is displayed can impact how it sells.

And whether your store is investing in elevated displays for private label favorites, snacking cheeses or sustainable meat substitutes, pusher trays from the experts at Retail Space Solutions can help. Learn more by browsing our catalog or request a free online quote for your packaged cheese, veggies, pre-packaged meats or bagged salads.

**READ MORE HERE**



# UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 22-24, 2024

**GOPEX Show**

**BOOTH #207**

**Hollywood, Florida**

March 7-9, 2024

**Southern Exposure Show**

**BOOTH #222**

**Tampa, Florida**

OUR CRIMSON TOMATOES ARE  
NATURE'S IMMUNITY  
BOOSTERS 🍅💪

WITH THEIR POWERFUL  
VITAMIN C, THESE VIBRANT  
GEMS ARE YOUR SECRET  
WEAPON AGAINST COLD AND  
FLU SEASON!

