

MAY 24, 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

Ruskin/Palmetto's romas are winding down quickly. Most growers will have light volumes for another 7-10 days, while Lipman will go a few days longer thanks to some extra plantings. This week's harvests have been mostly crown picks which have had good maturity, nice quality and larger sizing. There should be a few to come in south GA and the Quincy area in 7-14 days, but the volume will be significantly less than R/P has had. For the most part, the East will be waiting for the TN/NC area to get started around July 4th. The West continues to work through a transition period. The West MX area is in its seasonal decline with lighter volumes and fair-quality fruit. Baja and East MX are starting to see some volume increases now that a few more growers have started. Baja's quality has been excellent thus far, while East MX has had some ups and downs as some older crops are still in play. On the domestic front, we look for growers in CA's Central Valley to start around June 10th with Lipman following about a week later.

## ROUND TOMATOES

FL's P/R area is winding down as most are finished up with crown picks. We will have a little crown early next week, but, like other growers, will harvest 2nds for another 7-14 days if quality and markets allow. Crown sizing has been on the larger side (jumbos & XL) and quality has been excellent. We do expect sizing and volume to drop as the season finishes out. There may be a small production gap until our SC crops get started around June 1, but we'll have product available through color management. We also expect to see a few rounds coming from Quincy/south GA as early as next week, but the bulk of these crops won't come online until the following week. The Western supply story is similar to romas. West MX is winding down with smaller fruit and lesser quality, while Baja and East MX are beginning to see increases with big fruit and nice quality. Domestically, the CA desert is in production on mature greens with various growers in the Central Valley projecting to start harvesting somewhere between June 3rd-15th. Lipman will begin our CA harvests in the San Joaquin Valley around July 10th, a few weeks later than most.

## GRAPE TOMATOES

R/P grape tomatoes have been producing well this week as plantings have come together for some. Quality has been strong and supply is adequate. With plantings coming together, we

expect to see R/P grapes finish a little early in 2-3 weeks. Meanwhile, Lipman will get started in SC in the next few days as will others in north FL and GA. In the West, Sinaloa is still harvesting but should wrap up very soon. For the Summer season Western supply will transition primarily to Baja with a few greenhouse grapes in Eastern/Central MX. As with last year, Baja's acreage is expected to be less. But, they have started in a light way and should begin to see modest volume increases over the next few weeks. So far, Baja's quality has been strong, especially when compared to the grapes remaining in Sinaloa.

## GREEN BEANS

With some areas of GA receiving as much as 8" of rain 10 or so days ago, green beans availability and quality have changed status pretty quickly. Product has been snug this week but should rebound closer to normal levels in another 7-10 days. GA is expected to continue through June, then harvests will transition to TN and NC in July. The West may be in for a brief gap in bean supply. Mainland MX will finish up in the next couple of days and CA won't get going for another 10-14 days. The Watsonville/Salinas and Stockton//Brentwood areas are projected to start sometime around the 1st to 2nd week of June. Baja and Fresno should also get rolling within the next couple of weeks. In the meantime supply will be extremely limited in the West.

## COLOR BELL PEPPERS

Colored bell pepper supply has been consistent this week, with fruit coming from CAN and Central MX, mostly. The next flush of CAN product is expected over the next 7-14 days, which will give a boost to overall supply. Down south in MX, growers in the west are still hanging on and Central MX houses have been consistent. Supplies of red bells have picked up this week, while yellows and oranges are a bit lighter. Quality has been good from all areas.

## GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Now that all the GA growers are up and running, bell peppers are plentiful in the East with lots of big sizing available. Quality has been impacted by the heavy rains GA had a week or so ago, but should clean up in the coming days. FL's remaining pepper crops are in the process of winding down and should be wrapped up in the next few days. Next up will be our Eastern NC program which is now projected to start on June 18th. In the West, Mainland MX

[CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE](#)



is all but done, leaving pepper production to the CA desert. Supply and quality are strong out of the desert with all sizes available. Things should start moving north into other CA growing areas over the next few weeks.

## YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH

With Plant City now finished for the season and GA's weather, yellow and zucchini squashes have become snug. The rain knocked out some of the older fields and delayed the start of newer ones, so supply has been in the light to moderate range this week. Quality and sizing have been concerns with bigger fruit, scarring and scuffing as the main concerns. Squash crops can turn around pretty quickly, so we hope to see nicer product as soon as this weekend. We will start our Eastern NC acreage over the weekend which should also help bring some quality improvements. In the West, Sonora is pretty much wrapped up Spring crops. We'll now be looking to Baja and CA for squash. The Santa Maria area is coming online and should have fruit available after the holiday weekend.

## CUCUMBERS

There are good numbers of cucumbers available out of GA, but there is a disproportionate amount of select and offgrades this week, leaving supers a bit on the shy side. We could see some fields go out of production due to the abundance of offgrades in the market. Quality is average, as the recent weather has had at least some impact, but things should clean up soon. Our Eastern NC program will get started with new crops early next week with volumes coming on shortly thereafter. The West has consistent and adequate availability this week. Mainland MX is still where the volume is coming from, but there have been some quality issues for those who are in areas that have had extreme heat. Baja is up and running with excellent quality, but is still light in terms of volume. Baja should have strong volumes by the 2nd week of June.

## HARD SQUASH

Eastern hard squash is sort of a hodge-podge of supply. There are some acorns in FL and now GA, with butternuts and spaghetti being brought in from Honduras and MX. We do expect to see the full line from GA over the next few weeks, but their supply is generally light. Our KY partner, which is one of the bigger programs in the East, will get started in early to mid-July. Mainland MX still has another 10-14 days to go with acorn. Spaghetti will wind down 7-10 days after that, with butternuts available until mid-late June. Supply is starting the transition to CA with the desert already up and running in a light way. There's not a whole lot of volume in this area, but Bakersfield/Selma will have stronger numbers once they start in mid-June.

## CHILI PEPPERS

Plant City's chili production is finishing up, while GA is just getting started. During this transition, poblanos and serranos have been pretty snug. MX's chili pepper volumes have improved on most items, although poblanos, habaneros and serranos are lagging behind. There are chilies available in Sonora, Central MX, Baja, and even a few that have started in the CA desert. The new fruit from Baja (tomatillos and poblanos) has been really nice so far.

## EGGPLANT

Plant City's eggplant is now on the way out, while GA crops are slowly coming in. We should see volume in GA in the next 2 weeks, Also coming soon...Eastern NC expects to harvest its first eggs on/around June 20th. Looking to the West, Mainland MX is finished. This leaves only the CA programs in production right now. Size and supply seem to be adequate but the majority of what's available is the cannonball-shaped varieties which are challenged to make retail specs. It could be a few weeks until we see ample supplies of the more retail-friendly teardrop-shaped fruit as new growing areas in CA come online.

## CALABACITA

Calabacita supply is very limited right now as squash transitions from Mainland MX to CA production. We should see improved availability in the next 7-10 days.

## MINI SWEET PEPPERS

West MX growers have had the last year-end flush this week so availability has been adequate. In 7-10 days, we'll see these crops completely wind down. There's a little high-tech product in Central MX, but supply looks to remain very short until Baja starts in July. Quality is varied with greening and short shelf life cited as concerns. CAN does have some limited volumes available, but they are at a significant premium.

## ORGANIC ROMA

Organic romas are a Sonora deal for the next few weeks. Quality has been varied- good from some and not so good from others. One grower will start in mid-June in Baja with others following suit in July.

## ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Sonora's organic grape tomato crops are still winding down, but Baja has started in a light way. Quality is strong from Baja's new crops but there are some hit or miss issues in Sonora (high color, shrivel, etc.). Look for Sonora to wind down and Baja to come on with more volume over the next few weeks.

## ORGANIC MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Organic mini sweet peppers are still available in light supply out of Mainland MX. Quality and condition have continued to be solid, but there are some color mix issues here and there. We're looking at 4-6 weeks before Baja gets up and running, so there's likely to be a gap once Mainland finishes.

## ORGANIC MINI CUCUMBERS

Organic mini cucumbers have been a tough item this week due to quality challenges. Product had been better in Baja than from Mainland MX, but both areas are now having concerns with traveling due to shrivel and firmness issues. We expect to see improvements from Baja's crops as farms get further into the season.

## ORGANIC COLOR PEPPERS

Central MX's newer crops have been providing very strong quality, great shelf life, and attractive sizing options. These crops are expected to run for the next 8 weeks. There are also still some older crops remaining in West MX, but quality is poor and sizing options are limited.. CAN has just gotten started with a few reds and will add orange and yellow fruit over the weekend.



## SURVEY: GROWERS VALUE SUSTAINABILITY BUT LACK DOCUMENTATION ON PRACTICES

[THEPACKER.COM](https://www.thepacker.com)

BY [TOM KARST](#) MAY 14, 2024

The Packer's Sustainability Insights 2024 survey reveals that growers value sustainability but often lack documentation for sustainable farming practices.

The web survey of growers, completed between April 10-19, indicated that 78% of those polled consider sustainability is either a top or secondary priority to their operation.

Seventy-eight percent of growers cite cost as their biggest impediment when adopting new sustainability practices, and 60% do not have documentation processes for sustainable farming practices, according to the survey. Four in 10 growers said they use farm management software (24%) and/or third-party auditors (19%) to track practices.

Soil testing and crop rotation continue to stand out as the top implemented sustainable farming practices, according to the survey. Looking to the issue of climate goals, 54% of growers think a smaller carbon imprint can slow climate change. Fifty percent said more efficient equipment could achieve that end, according to the survey.

For soil goals, the survey found that two-thirds of growers say minimizing erosion, building nutrients and more precise input application all are "very important." Seventy-five percent rated reducing pollution from water runoff as highly important to them.

Water availability for the long term is a concern for some growers. Sixty-eight percent of growers surveyed think water access will have a negative impact on their farm in the next three years, compared to 59% holding that view in the 2023 survey.

Sustainable packaging is a pain point for some growers, the survey found, with just one-third of growers saying they have adequate, affordable sustainable packaging options.

In fact, most don't think sustainable packaging results in a higher price for their farm's produce. Growers not only think they need more sustainable packaging options, but also need more affordable options available, the survey found.

[Keep reading here](#)





## HOW RETAILERS ARE PUTTING A SPOTLIGHT ON SUSTAINABILITY

[THE PACKER.COM](https://www.thepacker.com)

[BY AMANDA BALTAZAR MAY 14, 2024](#)

Jimbo's has a system for ensuring as little of its produce as possible is sent to the landfill. First, any fruits and vegetables beyond the point of selling are sent to the stores' delis or juice bars to be repurposed. Bananas always go here, meaning the juice bars never buy them. Secondly, it boxes up produce for employees to take home and use, and finally, it donates anything else to 15 partners "which helps us reduce food waste," said Stephanie Morris, who at that time worked for the four-store San Diego chain, serving as the sustainability coordinator.

Anything beyond use for any of those causes is available for customers to pick up to add to their compost piles or feed to their animals.

In the U.S., 92 billion pounds of food is wasted annually, according to Feeding America, which accounts for more than a third of the country's food supply. Food waste accounts for 8% of global carbon emissions, and it aggravates water shortages and contributes to food insecurity and high food costs.

Retailers, like Jimbo's, are stepping up to the plate. They're taking steps to cut food waste and be more sustainable and responsible companies overall.

Portland, Ore.-based New Seasons Market, which has more than 20 stores, says it pairs up with local gleaning partners and educates customers on proper storage techniques to extend the life of produce at home.

It's also added a new dry misting process in one store, which decreases water use and keeps fruit and vegetables fresh for longer, ultimately reducing food waste.

"We have set ambitious goals to drive our progress in sustainability, aiming for a 70% landfill diversion rate, reducing our waste to 3.93% of sales and decreasing food waste by 50% by 2030," says Chris Harris, produce category director for New Seasons Market. "We are currently also exploring [artificial intelligence] to measure and reduce waste more effectively."

Scarborough, Maine-based Hannaford says it focuses on first preventing food waste through strategic product ordering and management at the store level. The company trains staff on how to responsibly handle food to avoid damage and exposure to temperature variations. It also donates food, including to farmers for animal feed and food-to-energy conversion efforts. Large grocery chains are making a difference, too, including the judicious use of technology.

[Continue reading](#)



# UPCOMING EVENTS:

**JULY 10-11, 2024**

**ORGANIC PRODUCE SUMMIT**

**Monterey, California**

**OCTOBER 17-19, 2024**

**THE GLOBAL PRODUCE & FLORAL SHOW**

**ATLANTA, GA**

NOT SURE WHAT TO COOK UP THIS  
MEMORIAL DAY? OUR SPICY STUFFED  
BELL PEPPERS BRING A TOUCH OF HEAT  
TO THIS CLASSIC DISH 🌶️🌶️

SERVE HOT AND ENJOY THE SPICY  
GOODNESS WITH YOUR LOVED ONES AS  
YOU EMBRACE THE START OF SUMMER  
AND THE SPIRIT OF TOGETHERNESS THAT  
MEMORIAL DAY BRINGS!

