

NOVEMBER 15, 2024

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ON THE H O R I Z O N

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updates

CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

ROMA TOMATOES

With the Quincy/South Georgia area finished and Florida's harvests in salvage mode, Eastern roma supply is very minimal with generally poor quality, as romas tend to take the weather worse than other tomato types. We don't expect change until mid-December when a few storm-affected crops start with light yields. Florida volumes are not anticipated to rise to normal levels until January when new crops get started in the Naples/Immokalee area. Mexico's current volume is in the light to moderate category this week, as they shoulder the majority of US demand. Baja's newer crops have slowed by cool weather and Central Mexico's roma fields are starting the normal seasonal decline. Current quality varies from fair to good, depending on farm and region. There may be a few ups and downs each week, but significant change in output isn't expected until Sinaloa gets going in mid-late December.

ROUND TOMATOES

Round tomato supply is extremely light in the East. The Quincy/South Georgia area has finished up, leaving only minimal supply from Palmetto/Ruskin salvage picks. Supply looks to stay at these levels until some light acreage begins in South Florida around December 15th. These first crops are expected to bring lighter yields and some quality concerns due to Hurricane Helene. With no further weather issues, Florida's supply should normalize by the first of the year, when crops unaffected by the storm come online. Moving to the West, Baja's supplies are light as growers in the northern area are winding down. Central Mexico's production is starting to taper off as well, with mixed reports on quality. A few growers in Mainland Mexico (Culiacan area) may try to come online early, but we don't expect significant volumes until January.

GRAPE TOMATOES

With Ruskin/Palmetto crops in salvage mode and farms further south harvesting at less than half of normal yields due to storm damages, grape tomato supply is light in the East. With no further weather disturbances, more normal volumes should be available in Florida in the latter part of December. Mexico's production has lightened up out of both Baja and Central Mexico due to cool and inclement weather, respectively. No major volume changes are expected until mid-late December when the Culiacan area gets started.

ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Baja's organic grape tomato production has dropped considerably this week as they wait for new fields to come online. Central Mexico has light volumes available but pricing is very elevated and quality is just average. Supply is expected to remain snug until mid-December when Sinaloa finally gets going.

CUCUMBERS

Georgia has a few late fields in process but will wind down the cucumber season over the next 10-14 days. South Florida also has light volumes but no excess of volume as yields are lighter than usual due to residual effects of the hurricane. The percentage of #1 fruit is significantly less than normal, but there is some good quality available. This area should have light volumes until Thanksgiving, then, we'll be looking for the Honduran imports to start in December. Mexico has moderate supply with fruit coming from four different growing areas (Baja, Sonora, Sinaloa and Central Mexico). Quality is not quite as sharp in Sonora due to light color, but is good in the other growing zones.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Eastern bell pepper supply continues to be limited to Georgia's declining crops and a handful of salvage harvests in South Florida. Quality has been marginal in both areas with scarring, color and stem concerns. Georgia will continue harvesting up until Thanksgiving, weather willing. In 2-3 weeks, we should start to see some fruit from fresh crops in the eastern and western parts of South Florida. In the West, Coachella is in production with light to moderate levels of supply and good quality. However, prices are extremely elevated. We're also seeing a few early pick peppers coming into Nogales from Sinaloa. Most of this fruit has been from clean-up harvests and is too small to make retail specs. We should see volumes and sizing pick up by the front part of December.

YELLOW AND ZUCCHINI SQUASH

Although there's squash available in Georgia, Plant City and South Florida, there's not quite as much around as in recent weeks as growers have gotten out of older fields. Zucchini quality has been good but yellow quality has been a little hit-or-miss by grower and harvest area. Look for Georgia to wind down over the next two

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YELLOW AND ZUCCHINI SQUASH (Continued)

weeks. In the West, supplies continue to be lighter out of Sonora due to cooler weather but supply remains adequate. Sinaloa has started in a light way as well and should gradually build volume as we near December. Overall quality has been good.

GREEN BEANS

Eastern bean supply remains limited to light supply in Georgia and few in North Florida this week. Some of the growers in Georgia will finish after this week, leaving mostly the reduced yields in North Florida to carry the load until re-planted crops in the Immokalee area and Homestead come online in early to mid-December. In the West, all green bean supply is coming from Central Mexico at this time. As we move closer to Thanksgiving, we expect to see a bit more supply as Sinaloa growers get started. Quality is fair to good with some reports of light color.

HARD SQUASH

The East's hard squash volumes are primarily coming out of the Northeast, which is also where the strongest demand is. These growers should have enough to cover the holiday demand, then wind down as we move into December. Honduras imports are still a few months away, so the East will be looking to Mexico for supply once the New York, Pennsylvania, Maine, and Michigan crops are finished. In the West, supply is transitioning from California to Mexico. Sonora is online with moderate supplies on all varieties except spaghetti, which is lagging behind a little. Quality has been very nice so far. California will also continue to have storage fruit available, likely through the end of the year.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant availability is snug in the East with light volumes coming from Georgia, South Florida and Plant City. Plant City usually has good volumes this time of year, but won't have what they usually do due to storm damages. We should see more volume come online in South Florida in another 3-4 weeks as Winter crops come to maturity. The West's supply is coming from Coachella and is starting to increase in Mainland Mexico's Sinaloa area. Quality has been very nice from both areas. We should begin to see more seasonal volumes out of Mexico in the next 2-3 weeks.

RED, YELLOW, & ORANGE BELL PEPPERS

There are some limited volumes of colored bell peppers coming out of Canada, but that looks to finish up in another 5-7 days. This will leave supply in Mexico's hands. Central Mexico is basically the only area in production right now and volumes have lightened up due to weather and some houses harvesting fruit as green bells to capitalize on the extreme markets. Availability is expected to remain very limited until Mainland Mexico's crops get started in mid-late December, with seasonal volumes after the 1st of the year.

MINI SWEET PEPPERS

The mini sweet pepper situation is critical, with supply drastically reduced. Baja now has only one remaining grower, and Central Mexico is contributing only minimal volumes. This has created a significant shortage, and we anticipate availability will remain extremely limited until Mainland Mexico begins production in 4-6 weeks. Quality continues to be good, although there has been some small sizing on the Central Mexico product.

MINI CUCUMBERS

Mini cucumber production is strong this week with fruit available in multiple locations in Mexico. No significant quality issues have been reported.

ENGLISH CUCUMBERS

Canada product is still available and quality has been good. But, they're near the end of the season, which leaves supply to Mexico for the Winter. Mexico has good volumes available although they aren't as strong as previous years. Quality has been just okay with reports of soft ends, mis-shape and shelf life concerns in some lots.

ORGANIC YELLOW AND ZUCCHINI SQUASH

Cooler weather has slowed organic squash production in Sonora with zucchinis a bit more snug than yellows. Quality is better on zucchini, but average on yellows with some reports of scarring and scuffing. Some new fields will start next week, but we expect availability to remain near current levels until Sinaloa starts in mid-December.

ORGANIC BELL PEPPERS

Mainland Mexico has started organic bells in a light way but doesn't have sizing yet. Coachella does have larger sizes but quality is not as strong as usual and they expect to wrap up in the next two weeks. By then, Mexico should be into bigger fruit and be able to handle the demand.

ORGANIC CUCUMBERS

Organic cucumbers continue to be readily available from multiple areas in Mexico. Quality has been good overall but we've seen some issues with scarring and aged product.

ORGANIC ROMA TOMATOES

Organic roma tomato supply has been mostly steady out of Baja and Central Mexico. A Baja grower has come online with new crops, which have showed quality improvements over the earlier ones that had quite a few issues. Look for the Sinaloa area to get up and running in 4-6 weeks.

ORGANIC MINI CUCUMBERS

Organic mini cucumbers have been available out of Baja consistently with average to good quality. Sinaloa is set to get started in mid-December.

ORGANIC RED, YELLOW & ORANGE BELL PEPPER

Organic colored bell supply is in a very tight spot. Growers in the Jalisco area are winding down with declining volumes and sizing with orange bells being the tightest suit. Although there are some sizing concerns, overall quality is still good. The next major area of production will be Culiacan and they aren't scheduled to start until the 1st of the year, so supply looks to remain at a similar level for the next 4-6 weeks.

WATERMELONS

Watermelon availability in Florida is extremely limited this week, largely due to the lingering effects of recent hurricanes, which have caused a slight gap between fields. However, new fields are expected to come online next week in the Immokalee area, which should help improve supply. In Mexico, light volumes are still available, but quality has been declining as the season winds down.



SPECIALTY, FRESH FORMAT, AND VALUE GROCERS ARE OUTPACING TRADITIONAL CHAINS

[SUPERMARKETNEWS.COM](https://supermarketnews.com)

NOVEMBER 8, 2024

Weekly visits to the grocery store are up, and those shoppers are headed to specialty, fresh format, and value grocery chains, according to a new white paper from Placer.ai.

Shoppers are willing to travel further to access niche products, prompting larger, traditional grocers to expand their own niche banners, Placer.ai noted in the report "Specialty and Value Chains Transform Grocery in 2024."

The data analytics firm said that foot traffic at grocery stores got a boost in early July, when it jumped 4.6% year over year. Following the rush of shoppers stocking up for Independence Day barbecue and picnic items, foot traffic dipped and then picked back up in September, when foot traffic growth ranged from 2% to 2.9%.

Much of that growth came from specialty, fresh format, and value chain stores, according to the white paper. "The two segments offer markedly different shopping experiences: Specialty chains tend to emphasize harder-to-find ingredients and fresh produce — sometimes even at higher price points than traditional grocery stores — while value grocery stores focus on affordability. But both categories are experiencing outsize visit growth in 2024, highlighting consumers' dual interest in both quality and value," the report noted.

While traditional grocery stores' foot traffic increased 3.1% in July and 0.9% in August, value and specialty chains experienced much higher growth ranging

from 4.7% to 7.7%, respectively, over the same period. That trend continued into September, when visits to traditional grocery stores fell 0.5%, but value stores saw 5% growth and specialty chains saw 5.2% growth.

Placer.ai noted that shoppers are willing to travel further to visit non-traditional grocery stores, adding that 18.5% of visits to specialty and fresh format stores were less than a mile away, compared to 23.9% for traditional stores and 23.2% for value stores. Nearly a third (31.3%) of visits to fresh and specialty stores came from one to three miles away from the store.

Value grocers are also attracting customers rapidly due to the rising cost of living, Placer.ai said. "Like visitors to specialty grocery chains, value grocery shoppers demonstrate segment-specific behaviors that reflect their preferences and habits. And perhaps most strikingly, foot traffic data reveals that these shoppers tend to stay longer in-store than visitors to traditional and specialty grocery chains," the report noted. Those longer visits are likely due to discerning customers looking closely for deals.



NRA RELEASES 2025 WHAT'S HOT CULINARY FORECAST

PRODUCEBLUEBOOK.COM

NOVEMBER 13, 2024

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13, 2024 /PRNewswire/ — The National Restaurant Association's 2025 What's Hot Culinary Forecast is here, revealing top trends set to shape the nation's menus with a fresh focus on flavor, wellness, and sustainability.

This year, consumers can expect restaurant menus to buzz with wellness-enhancing mushrooms, honey-infused creations with a spicy twist, and the vibrant tastes of Southeast Asia. Today's diners are not only craving bold flavors but are also prioritizing environmental consciousness, value, and well-being in every bite.

The report, based on the insights of thought leaders in the culinary world, highlights the top trends that will shape the culinary landscape in the coming year. Among the hottest trends identified, sustainability and local sourcing emerged as the top overall trend on the list, with industry experts noting that customers increasingly seek out restaurants that offer locally sourced, environmentally friendly options.

"This year's forecast highlights a powerful shift toward enhancing both individual wellness and the health of our planet," said Dr. Chad Moutray, Vice President of Research and Knowledge for the National Restaurant Association. "As customers seek sustainable choices and exciting new flavor experiences, restaurants are responding with options that emphasize locally sourced ingredients and innovative menu offerings. The popularity of Southeast Asian flavors also speaks to a more adventurous consumer palate, with many diners interested in global cuisine that brings added depth to their dining experiences."

Top 10 Overall Trends for 2025:

***Sustainability and Local Sourcing** – Eco-friendly practices are on the menu as diners increasingly prefer locally sourced ingredients and waste-reducing efforts that support the planet and local farms.

***Cold Brew** – Cold brew beverages are cooler than ever, satisfying those seeking energizing, smooth, and refreshing drinks without the bitterness.

***Korean Cuisine** – With its spicy, tangy, and umami-rich flavors, Korean cuisine is sizzling in popularity, satisfying diners' thirst for adventurous and bold meals.

***Hot Honey** – Sweet with a kick! This honey variation is heating up dishes, adding a spicy buzz to everything from fried chicken to ice cream.

***Vietnamese Cuisine** – Light, herbaceous and packed with fresh flavors, Vietnamese food is ideal for health-conscious diners who love a balanced, flavorful meal.

***Hyper-Local Beer & Wine** – These drinks put the "cheers" in local flavors, connecting customers to regional brews and supporting nearby craft producers.

***Fermented/Pickled Foods** – From kimchi to pickled veggies, these zesty, tangy flavors are in a pickle to please diners who love a unique flavor punch.

***Wellness Drinks** – Functional beverages packed with ingredients like vitamins and probiotics are taking center stage, offering a sip of wellness in every glass.

***Creative Spritzes** – Refreshing, light and often low-alcohol, spritzes are sparking up the beverage scene, delivering a bubbly experience without the buzz.

***Value Deals** – With inflation still on consumers' minds, value-focused deals are keeping dining out accessible for budget-conscious patrons.

"Macro trends reflect the bigger-picture priorities of today's consumers, extending beyond just what's on the plate to convenience, creativity, and efficiency," Moutray added. "As the restaurant industry tackles challenges like labor shortages and changing consumer values, operators are innovating with streamlined menus, pre-prepped ingredients, and inventive flavors that balance efficiency with excitement. This year's forecast celebrates both novelty and nostalgia, offering modern twists on familiar favorites and globally inspired flavors that make dining out a memorable experience."

The National Restaurant Association surveyed nearly 300 culinary and industry professionals in the United States in October 2024.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

DECEMBER 10-12, 2024

NEW YORK PRODUCE SHOW & CONFERENCE

SHERATON NEW YORK TIMES SQUARE HOTEL
NEW YORK, NY

www.nyproduceshow.com

JANUARY 13-14, 2024

GLOBAL ORGANIC PRODUCE EXPO

JW MARRIOTT MIAMI TURNBERRY RESORT
& SPA

ADVENTURA, FL

[www.events.farmjournal.com /gopex2025](http://www.events.farmjournal.com/gopex2025)



Take a look at some of the great things Team Lipman did during our Day of Good!



PHOENIX, AZ

TEAM PHOENIX, LED BY SUSIE CEREZO AND MIRANDA ELAM, COMPLETED THREE SERVICE PROJECTS. ONE WAS HELPING WITH FUNDRAISING AND VOLUNTEERING AT THE SUSANA CEREZO BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION'S FIRST GOLF TOURNAMENT. ANOTHER WAS TO MAKE BIRTHDAY BAGS FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE THROUGH THE ARIZONA HELPING HANDS ORGANIZATION. THEY ALSO DONATED TURKEYS TO EL PAVAZO, A LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENT FOR UNDERSERVED FAMILIES IN PHOENIX.



HENDERSONVILLE, NC

OUR HENDERSONVILLE TEAM, LED BY KATIE LAMB, SERVED THE HENDERSON COUNTY RESOURCE HUB. THE GROUP VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME TO SORT DONATIONS AND DISTRIBUTE ITEMS TO FAMILIES AFFECTED BY HURRICANE HELENE.



PORTLAND, OR

OUR PORTLAND LOCATION PROVIDED NEEDED SUPPLIES TO THE STUDENTS AND STAFF AT THE COMMUNITY TRANSITIONAL SCHOOL. AMONG OTHER ITEMS, EACH CHILD RECEIVED A BACKPACK, SET OF PENS, WATERCOLOR SET AND PAINTING PAD. FAYE YOUNT AND CARMEN ZAVALA CHAMPIONED THESE EFFORTS.