

AUGUST 22, 2025

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# ON THE H O R I Z O N

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industry updates

**CROP &  
MARKET**  
INDUSTRY INFO





# MARKET UPDATES

## ROMA TOMATOES

Roma tomatoes are readily available across the Eastern U.S., with the majority of supply coming from the Tennessee and Carolina regions. Tennessee has provided steady volumes, though a brief dip in availability is expected over the coming weekend before rebounding to normal levels. Overall, fruit quality remains strong, with a good range of sizing options to meet varied market needs. In the West, Lipman's California crop continues to deliver consistent supply, and recent quality concerns—specifically gold flecking—have subsided, resulting in a clean, attractive pack. Additionally, moderate to good volumes are flowing in from Baja and Eastern/Central Mexico. Baja's harvest, coming from newer fields, is yielding larger-sized fruit with improved and more consistent quality. Overall, roma tomato markets remain well-supplied with solid quality coast to coast.

## ORGANIC ROMA TOMATOES

Organic roma tomato supplies are moderate this week, with fruit coming from both Baja and Central Mexico. Quality has been somewhat inconsistent across both regions. In Central Mexico, some lots have shown puffiness, while fruit from Baja has exhibited uneven color and occasional blotchiness. However, improvements are expected over the next 7–14 days as newer fields begin harvesting and conditions stabilize.

## TOMATOES ON THE VINE (TOVs)

Tomato on the Vine (TOV) supplies remain very limited in Canada as growers transition to fall plantings. Meanwhile, Mexican supply is showing signs of improvement with a slight uptick in volume. Overall, we expect supplies to increase over the next 2 to 4 weeks as new fields come into production and fall programs ramp up.

## ROUND TOMATOES

Round tomato volumes are light to moderate in the Eastern U.S. this week. Tennessee, one of the key production regions, is delivering steady but below-average volumes due to lingering effects from earlier weather challenges. Harvesting continues on both crowns and second picks, with fruit showing average to good quality. Virginia is in the midst of a seasonal transition, with new crop harvests expected to begin shortly after Labor Day—at which point Tennessee's volumes are also projected to improve. In the West, California growers, including Lipman, are producing steady volumes with notably large fruit and strong overall quality. Meanwhile, Mexico remains a reliable contributor, with Baja delivering consistent volumes and the Eastern/Central regions anticipating increased harvests in the coming weeks. Fruit quality across Mexican growing regions has been solid.

## GRAPE TOMATOES

Grape tomato volumes are improving in the Eastern U.S. Lipman is actively harvesting in Virginia, where fruit quality has been good despite some rainfall this week that may slightly affect packouts. Light to moderate volumes are expected to continue through Labor Day, after which stronger supplies are anticipated. Additional contributions from Tennessee, New Jersey, and Canada are helping to bolster Eastern supply. In the West, Baja and East/Central Mexico remain steady sources of grape tomatoes, with both regions forecasting consistent production for at least the next few weeks. Overall, quality remains solid across all regions, and supply is expected to gradually strengthen heading into early September.

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## COLORED BELL PEPPERS

Colored bell pepper supplies remain tight and are expected to stay snug in the near term. Eastern Canada's crop has faced ongoing challenges from heat and disease, which have impacted yields and are likely to bring an early end to the season. Western Canada continues to provide relatively steady supply, but increasing demand is making availability feel tighter. As is typical in tight markets, a few scattered quality issues have surfaced. Orange bells have been the most limited this week, though yellow bells are expected to become more constrained over the next 7–10 days. Central Mexico has been slow to ramp up, but volume is expected to improve by mid-September. Our farm in Jalisco is currently producing excellent quality fruit. Bushel markets are particularly tight, as field-grown programs have yet to fully come online.

## ENGLISH CUCUMBERS

English cucumber supplies are beginning to show signs of improvement. Availability has increased slightly out of Eastern Canada, and Central Mexico is now contributing some volume to the market. Western Canada has remained the most consistent source, with steady production and good quality fruit.

## ORGANIC VEGETABLES

**YELLOW AND ZUCCHINI-** Despite active production in multiple regions—Baja, California, Washington, and Oregon—organic zucchini supply remains challenging this week. Baja is seeing limited volumes, California's quality has been inconsistent, and the Pacific Northwest is producing only light yields. Interestingly, there is currently a bit more organic yellow squash available than zucchini, with Baja offering the most consistent supply. California has faced ongoing quality issues, with scarring and scuffing impacting pack-outs over the past week. However, we anticipate improvement in the next 5–7 days as supply out of the Santa Maria area begins to pick up, which should help stabilize availability and quality moving forward.

**BELLS-**Organic bell pepper production has finally ramped up in Salinas, with strong sizing and good quality now coming out of the region. Light volumes are available in Baja, Washington, and Oregon, contributing to broader availability across the market. Following recent price elevations, movement has slowed significantly, so we're keeping a close eye to make sure product is fresh and ensure we're maintaining top-tier quality.

**CUCS-**Organic cucumber supplies remain very light out of Baja this week, as growers appear to be in between fields. This tight supply situation is expected to persist for at least the next 10 days before we see any meaningful improvement. Looking ahead, Central Mexico is projected to begin production around September 1st.

## GREEN BEANS

Green bean supply continues at a steady pace in the Eastern U.S., with strong availability out of New York, Michigan, and Virginia. Quality has been consistently good, with no major concerns reported. In the West, light to moderate volumes are being harvested in Baja and the Brentwood, California area, with additional light supply coming from Central Mexico. Quality across all Western growing regions has been solid, contributing to an overall stable market as we head into the final stretch of summer.

## HARD SQUASH

Eastern hard squash supplies are on the verge of increasing as growers in the Northeast approach the start of their seasons. While a few have already begun early harvests, we expect more regions to come online in the coming weeks. Currently, Michigan and Kentucky are leading the way in eastern supply. Overall quality has been good, though there have been a few trouble lots—particularly with spaghetti squash. Out West, supply remains strong and steady, with consistent production coming out of the Stockton and Fresno areas in California, as well as from Washington State. Quality and volume are both solid in the West and expected to remain stable in the near term.

## CUCUMBER

Cucumber production in the Eastern U.S. remains solid, with Michigan, New York, and Canada continuing to lead the way. These primary regions are being supported by select regional and local programs, helping to maintain steady availability. Overall quality has been solid, with only occasional cosmetic defects reported, which have not impacted usability. In the West, volumes out of Baja and Central Mexico remain fairly steady, with increased production expected as we move into September. Quality from Mexican growers continues to be strong, supporting overall market stability as the transition into fall approaches.

## WATERMELON

Watermelon availability remains solid this week as multiple regions—including Indiana, Delaware, Maryland, Michigan, and several southern states—are actively in production. Indiana crops, in particular, are progressing well, showing very nice quality and good volume. All sizing options are currently available, though we may see a shift toward a stronger percentage of 45 and 60 counts over the next week. While some regions will begin winding down over the next month, most growing areas are expected to continue harvesting with steady fruit supply. Looking ahead, Lipman's South Carolina fall crop is set to begin at the end of September, and we anticipate strong volumes and good quality as the season transitions.



## PRODUCE DEPARTMENT DRIVES SALES, SHOWCASES SHOPPER ENGAGEMENT

[THEPRODUCENEWS.COM](http://THEPRODUCENEWS.COM)

August 19, 2025

Fresh foods, and specifically produce, are the key to a successful food retail operation. So, to nobody's surprise, there has been continued growth in the fresh foods space. There is a strident momentum of fresh food products and this provides an optimistic look at the role the departments play in the advancement of food retail establishments in the coming years.

Consumer preferences continue to evolve, and as demand shifts, fresh foods are key for the food industry to meet customer needs. Shoppers' focus on nutrition and health positions fresh foods as a sales driver in food retail moving forward, and it is essential for the food industry to respond and remain focused on cultivating fresh food departments that spur customer engagement and shopping appeal.

Department narratives within the fresh food sector unveil a more complex story about fresh foods as a growth driver in food retail. Just below meat, produce also leads sales and showcases deep shopper engagement. The growth in sales in both departments highlights shoppers not just spending more, but buying more, and each sit at 11 percent of total store sales.

Fresh food is at the heart of many of our most important operational strategies, driving workforce investments, technological advancement, and customer engagement. In 2025, foodservice is our top workforce expansion focus within fresh foods, with nearly a third of retailers planning to increase labor in this area. We're also seeing fresh food play a leading role in ecommerce success — averaging 39 percent of online sales revenue — and in our tech investments, with growing use of inventory and demand planning solutions tailored to the fresh perimeter. As consumers continue to prioritize health and nutrition, fresh foods remain essential to delivering the quality, convenience, and experience shoppers expect.



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## VALUE, CONVENIENCE: WHAT CONSUMERS WANT IN PREPARED FOODS, CASE-READY

[THEPRODUCENEWS.COM](http://THEPRODUCENEWS.COM)

August 18, 2025

What happens when your produce sales are steadily slipping through the cracks? Who usually notices it besides you? When this happens, it doesn't take long before your boss comes knocking on your office door for an explanation. That's when it becomes an uncomfortable situation — trying to justify several reasons as to the causes for the lost sales.

Grocery store produce departments are up against the challenges of strong competition to keep their customers. Oftentimes, those customers get discouraged and part ways because they can't be satisfied. So, when sales take a dive there are several factors that have initiated the change. That should be a signal to address the issues immediately.

What triggers descending sales? It's simple — customers. There are a number of things that alienate customers, forcing them to switch to other stores. Such reasons may be unavailable ad items, out of stock displays, high prices, inadequate assortment, understaffed stores and especially department conditions that are in shambles. That's when they decide to opt out. Some customers are looking for product information to make their buying decisions and are often hesitant about certain produce items mainly because employees have inadequate knowledge. This is another way to lose sales. Reaching out to customers in a friendly, personalized way can stop them from passing up a purchase.

Here are four reasons and solutions to address and prevent lost sales:

**Reach out to customers:** First off, recognize the customers who shop the produce department. Talk to them. Ask if they need help with items they want. Build a relationship that will get that purchase from them.

**Attend to out of stocks:** Insufficient product supplies are lost sales. Better managing of ordering and inventory can prevent out of stocks. That calls for all to be involved — growers, shippers, buyers, warehouses and stores.

**Fix understaffing:** Produce departments that become shopped down and are in shambles turn off customers and are instantly bound for lost sales. Management is fully responsible to create a work schedule that will prevent customer frustration.

**Employ technology:** Failure in analyzing and monitoring product categories is another way to lose sales. In order to avoid falling into that abyss use data tools that will track and manage item movement, inventory, customer activity and other operating means to protect sales from becoming a loss.

The best way to prevent lost sales is to pay attention to customers while they shop and implement friendly service by helping them make purchases. Focus on all the ways to make sales rather than missing those opportunities.



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# UPCOMING EVENTS:

SEPT 10 - 13

**SEPC SOUTHERN INNOVATIONS**

CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER

CHARLOTTE, NC

<https://seproduceouncil.com/events-networking/southern-innovations/>

OCT 16 - 18

**IFPA GLOBAL PRODUCE AND FLORAL  
SHOW**



ANAHEIM CONVENTION CENTER

ANAHEIM, CA

<https://www.freshproduce.com/events/the-global-produce-and-floral-show/>

## TOMATO SNAPSHOT

BRING THE SUMMER  
HEAT WITH FRESH SALSA!

  TRY THIS EASY  
RECIPE WITH LIPMAN-  
GROWN PRODUCE FOR  
YOUR NEXT BBQ OR  
SNACK SPREAD.

