

SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

LIPMANFAMILYFARMS.COM

# ON THE H O R I Z O N

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industry updates

**CROP &  
MARKET**  
INDUSTRY INFO





# MARKET UPDATES

## ROMA TOMATOES

Eastern roma tomato production continues at moderate levels, supported by regional deals in Tennessee, the Carolinas, and other areas. Most growers are currently harvesting from crown and second picks, offering a good mix of sizing options. As cooler weather sets in and production naturally begins to slow, supply will start to shift south. North Florida is expected to come online in early October, with the Palmetto/Ruskin region following by mid- to late October, helping to maintain steady availability through the seasonal transition. In the West, California continues to deliver high-quality fruit, with sizing trending larger this week. Meanwhile, rain has temporarily slowed production in both Central Mexico and Baja, but conditions are expected to improve, and supplies should rebound over the next 5–7 days.

## GRAPE TOMATOES

Lipman's Virginia tomato crops are expected to be on the lighter side for the next two weeks, following the early exit of some plantings due to recent rain. Despite this, supply will remain adequate to meet customer demand, with some improvements anticipated as we move into the final stretch of the season. Across the industry, Eastern supply remains stable, with additional volumes coming from Tennessee, North Carolina, and surrounding regions. Looking ahead, Florida is set to begin harvesting in early October, with stronger seasonal volumes projected by around October 20th, which will help bolster overall supply heading into the fall. In the West, steady volumes are expected over the next several weeks, supported by ongoing production from both Baja and Central Mexico. Quality has remained solid across most regions, and the market outlook remains favorable with consistent availability.

## ROUND TOMATOES

Round tomato volumes remain adequate in the East, with ongoing production from several regions, including numerous homegrown programs. Overall quality has been good, though there have been occasional concerns related to weather impacts, particularly affecting fruit shelf life and appearance. All sizing options are currently available, with a noticeable increase in larger fruit this week as growers move through crown picks. As cooler weather sets in and local/homegrown deals begin to taper off, the supply focus will shift to South Georgia and North Florida over the next 2–3 weeks, followed by the Ruskin/Palmetto region in late October. In the West, California continues to provide steady volumes with excellent fruit quality and sizing skewing larger. Mexico is also contributing consistent volumes, with both Eastern/Central Mexico and Baja expected to maintain stable production into October. The overall market outlook for round tomatoes remains positive, with diverse regional supply and solid quality supporting demand.

## ORGANIC ROMA TOMATOES

As Baja begins to wind down for the season, organic Roma tomato production is now primarily focused in Central Mexico. Quality has been fair from both regions, with Baja's crops showing signs of age as they enter the final stages of harvest. In Central Mexico, recent weather conditions have affected fruit quality to some extent, resulting in variable pack-outs. Despite these challenges, supply remains steady, and overall market conditions are stable. Look for Mainland Mexico to begin harvests in late October/early November.

[CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE](#)





## MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Mini sweet peppers are available in moderate volumes this week, with supply coming from Central Mexico, California, Baja, and Washington state. While overall availability is steady, lighter market demand has led to some inventory buildup, prompting careful monitoring of freshness to maintain quality standards. Among the growing regions, Baja and Washington are producing the best-quality fruit, with consistent sizing and overall appearance.

## WATERMELON

Although fruit is still available in Indiana, New Jersey and other areas, the season is in the short rows and most of these more northern areas will finish up over the next week or two. Lipman's South Carolina crops are on tap to start up in the next 7-10 days which will provide a solid source of supply for seedless watermelons. Production should go until the 1st week of November, at which point harvests will transition down to Florida.

## CHILI PEPPERS

Chili pepper availability is tightening in the East as the summer season winds down. Light volumes continue from Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Tennessee, though many regions are unable to offer the full product mix—particularly lacking in serranos and poblanos. Quality has held up reasonably well overall, though Cubanelles are showing more issues as the plants age and seasonal fatigue sets in. Relief is expected around October 1st when new crops in Georgia begin harvesting, bringing a more consistent and diversified supply to the Eastern market. In the West, chili pepper supply is light to moderate, with production coming from Baja California, Central Mexico, California, and Washington. Tomatillo availability is particularly low, while other varieties are holding steady. Quality is best out of Baja and Washington, while some weather-related concerns are impacting fruit in other areas. Although a few early loads have begun to cross the border, Mainland Mexico is expected to resume stronger production by mid-October, which should help stabilize Western supply moving into the late fall season.

## TOMATOES ON THE VINE (TOVs)

Tomato on the Vine (TOV) supplies remain very limited in Canada as growers head toward the end of the season. However, we are seeing more Mexican supply as growers get started with new crops. Supplies out of Mexico should continue to increase over the next few weeks as new plantings come into production and fall programs ramp up.

## GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Bell peppers are in strong supply across the country this week, with good availability in both the East and West. In the East, production is widespread, coming from Michigan, New Jersey, the Carolinas, and parts of Canada, alongside contributions from smaller regional and local growers. All sizes are currently available, though there is an abundance of larger-sized fruit as several growers are in newer plantings. Overall quality has been reported as good, with only a few isolated issues. Looking ahead, Georgia will start pepper production within the next two weeks, while Florida's season should begin in late October. On the West Coast, moderate volumes are coming out of California's Fresno region and Washington state, where fruit quality has been excellent and should remain strong barring any adverse weather. Central Mexico also has a limited amount of peppers, but significant volumes from the fall Mainland Mexico crops are not expected until November.

## CUCUMBER

Cucumber volumes have improved in the East, driven by the production from Eastern North Carolina and the recent start of Georgia's season. Our North Carolina farm is now into second plantings, which are delivering good quality and solid yields. . Meanwhile, northern growing areas such as New York and Michigan are winding down their seasons. As those regions taper off, Georgia and North Carolina are set to carry the bulk of Eastern supply until Florida begins harvesting in mid-October. Out West, moderate to good volumes are available, primarily from Baja , where quality remains strong. Central Mexico continues to produce lighter volumes, and some early fruit is now crossing from Sonora, though quality from that region is still developing.

## PICKLING CUCUMBERS

Pickling cucumber supply has tightened in the Eastern U.S. as the fall transition progresses. Remaining volumes are limited to a few late-season fields in Michigan, New Jersey, and Kentucky, but these are winding down quickly. In the coming week, attention will shift to Georgia and North Florida, where new harvests are expected to begin and help stabilize supply. Out West, availability is very limited, with only a few small pockets of fruit aside from the ongoing local program in Washington. Washington is expected to maintain production until mid-October, weather permitting, when the Mexican season begins.



## THREE RETAIL TRENDS RESHAPING PRODUCE AHEAD

[FRESHPLAZA.COM](https://freshplaza.com)

September 19, 2025

Evolving forces are shaping what success will look like for the perimeter. In an environment defined by rapid change, inflationary pressures and increasingly discerning shoppers, suppliers and retailers alike are under pressure to pivot fast and perform.

Here are three retail trends suppliers should consider:

- Operational efficiency is now a selling point: Retailers increasingly favor suppliers who provide operational excellence in addition to great products. As expectations rise, product availability, logistics reliability and supply chain visibility are major differentiators. A proven track record matters, but data makes the difference. Suppliers should work towards improving performance and building trust by speaking the language of retail execution. This includes connecting and integrating field-level, logistics and financial data into performance dashboards that reveal efficiencies and highlight the full value of a supplier's partnership.
- Shoppers want to know the why: Shoppers are wary of buzzwords. Claims like "organic" or "sustainable" may still draw attention, but they no longer guarantee trust or justify higher prices on their own. Consumers want proof, clarity and real meaning behind the label. This shift is forcing retailers and suppliers to rethink how they talk about their products. To understand which messages resonate and which ones fall flat, suppliers should conduct research, including consumer testing, focus groups, surveys and custom studies.
- Retailers are raising the bar on supplier relationships: With consumer attitudes changing and operational expectations rising, buyers are placing a premium on suppliers who bring insight, reliability and shared strategy to the table. This shift is changing the rules of engagement, and retailers are making sharper distinctions between vendors and true partners.

The takeaway of this is clear that success in today's produce industry demands operational excellence, clear messaging and partnerships that bring value beyond the sale.



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## HOW TO SPEAK CONSUMERS' SUSTAINABILITY LOVE LANGUAGE

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

SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

While sustainability resonates across all produce shopper demographics, The Packer's Sustainability Insights 2025 finds that sustainable packaging might be the most powerful tool grower-packer-shippers and retailers have in engaging sustainability-minded consumers.

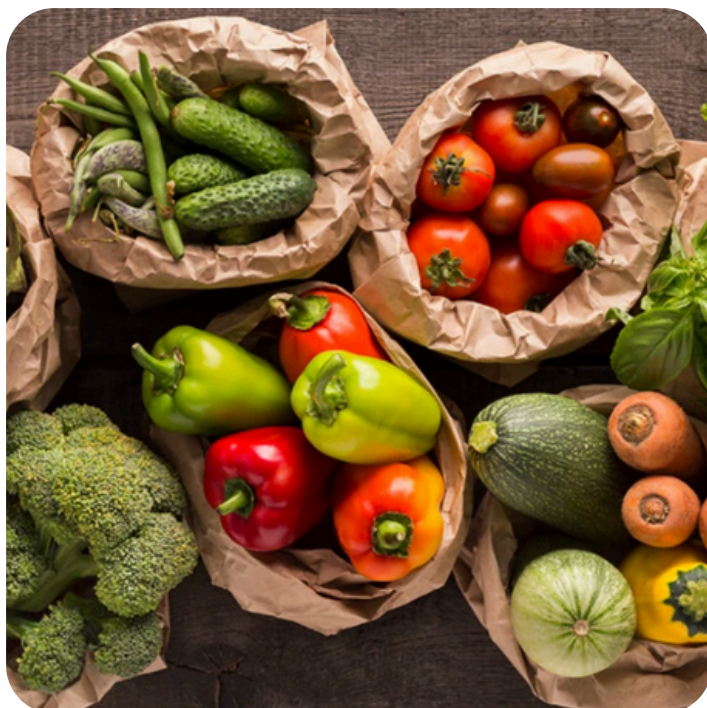
The most surprising takeaway from the survey was that consumers across all income levels place essentially the same level of importance on packaging materials used as criteria for produce selection. On average, 46.5% of consumers always or usually factor packaging materials in their decision-making. Growers surveyed underestimate consumer willingness to pay for sustainable packaging. While 35% of consumers say they will pay upward of 11% more for sustainable packaging, growers think only 13% of consumers will pay that much more.

Eco-friendly packaging was also the No. 1 product feature that helps consumers identify a product as sustainable, with 60% of consumers surveyed indicating so. When consumers were asked what they are personally doing to pursue a sustainable lifestyle, choosing products in eco-friendly packaging was No. 1, with 44% indicating that's one way they live a sustainable lifestyle.

When it comes to the type of sustainable packaging preferred, the survey found that consumers have the greatest preference for bio-based packaging materials over recyclable, compostable or recycled packaging materials. And they're willing to pay more for it. The percentage of consumers indicating they are willing to pay upward of 15% more for bio-based packaging is up significantly from 10% in 2024 to 18% in 2025. While this is more prominent among age groups under 45 years old, even those aged 45 or older are showing more willingness to pay for bio-based packaging.

What sustainability terms resonate most with today's shoppers? Eco-friendly, organic, regenerative farming, local and transparency of the product journey, are the leading product features consumers associate with sustainability. Surveyed consumers said they view sustainability as many things, including: environment, freshness, health/nutrition, economic viability, organic, local, renewable, availability, waste reduction and energy use. However, food waste was the top reported concern associated with a sustainable food supply, followed by a desire to improve human health, and climate change.

With younger generations more concerned about climate change and supporting brands that address it, suppliers and retailers would do well to communicate their efforts. Consumers tell us that choosing eco-friendly packaging is the top action they personally take to pursue a sustainable lifestyle.



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# UPCOMING EVENTS:

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/](https://www.freshproduce.com/events/the-global-produce-and-floral-show/)**

## TOMATO SNAPSHOT

SUSTAINABLE FARMING ISN'T  
A SEASON – IT'S EVERY  
SEASON. HERE'S HOW WE  
PREP OUR FIELDS FOR  
HEALTHY SOIL AND  
HARVESTS AHEAD.



GOOD FROM THE GROUND UP