

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

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ON THE H O R I Z O N

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Bringing you your weekly
industry updates

**CROP &
MARKET**
INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

ROMA TOMATOES

Roma tomato supplies are currently available from Alabama, Canada, North Carolina, and Lipman's Tennessee farms, with production remaining moderate and steady and overall quality strong. As cooler fall temperatures set in, volumes are expected to gradually lighten through the remainder of the season. The next production region will be North Florida in early October, followed by Palmetto/Ruskin later in the month. In the West, California supplies, including Lipman's crops, remain consistent with larger-sized fruit, strong quality, and good yields. Mexico is also contributing supply from Baja and Central regions, though quality varies depending on grower and crop stage.

GRAPE TOMATOES

Grape tomato supplies remain active across New Jersey, Michigan, Canada, Tennessee, and Virginia, along with a few smaller programs in other areas. Volumes have been variable recently, though Lipman experienced a strong push this week thanks to favorable weather in Virginia. As the Virginia season winds down, volumes are expected to gradually lighten. But no gap in availability is anticipated with Ruskin/Palmetto crops set to start the first week of October and build volume by mid-month. In the West, Baja and Central Mexico are providing moderate, good-quality supplies that should remain steady until cooler mid-October temperatures arrive. Mainland Mexico is not expected to begin until December.

ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Organic grape tomato supplies out of Mexico have rebounded after being slightly short last week, with crossings now back to more typical levels and overall supply considered adequate. Both Baja and Central Mexico are providing good quality fruit, supporting stable availability for customers.

ROUND TOMATOES

Round tomato supplies are steady across multiple eastern locations. Lipman is currently harvesting in Virginia, with both crown and second picks showing heavier sizing toward larger fruit and strong quality supported by favorable weather. Tennessee production remains steady as well, though volumes are expected to gradually slow with cooler fall temperatures; Virginia harvests should continue until around October 20th, while Tennessee will run until the first frost. North Florida and South Georgia are expected to begin harvests in the next few weeks, followed by Palmetto/Ruskin later in October. In the West, round tomato production is active in California, Baja, and Central Mexico. Lipman's California crops are showing consistent sizing and quality, with other growers reporting similar results, while Mexico's regions are producing moderate volumes of good-quality fruit.

TOMATOES ON THE VINE (TOVs)

Canada's tomato-on-the-vine production remains at light to moderate levels, while Mexico's volumes are steadily increasing as more houses come online for the season. Supplies are currently in transition, but overall quality and sizing have been consistent, with no major concerns reported. Availability is expected to improve in the weeks ahead as Mexico's production continues to ramp up.

ORGANIC ROMA TOMATOES

OBaja's organic roma production has lightened up, with Central Mexico now providing the majority of supply. Overall volumes are light to moderate, and quality is mixed—some fruit is showing softness and shelf-life concerns, while other lots remain strong. Supplies may be less consistent in the near term until Mainland Mexico begins production in December.

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CUCUMBER

Cucumbers are readily available in the East, with Lipman's Eastern North Carolina program in full swing, producing strong volumes, steady harvests, and good quality. Georgia is also running strong, while New York and Michigan are expected to finish in the next 7-10 days, leaving production centered in the southern regions. In the West, supplies are coming from Baja, Central Mexico, and now Sonora. Sonora has been producing light volumes with fair quality over the past few weeks, though improvements are expected once Mainland Mexico's fall season begins in mid-October. At present, Baja's fruit is showing the strongest quality.

GREEN BEANS

Eastern green bean supply is adequate this week. Michigan is winding down, but Virginia is in active production and Georgia has started in a light way, with volumes expected to increase over the next 7-10 days as more growers come online. Western volumes remain limited, with steady supply in Washington for a few more weeks and very light production in California. Additional light volumes are also available from Baja and Central Mexico. Quality has been good across all regions, with no major issues reported. Mainland Mexico is expected to begin around November 15th, weather permitting, provided rain does not disrupt or damage current plantings.

HARD SQUASH

Hard squashes are currently available across key Eastern growing regions, including Michigan, New York, Maine, and Kentucky, meeting seasonal demand. While some reports from northern areas have noted smaller sizing on spaghetti squash, overall quality across varieties has been good. As the fall season progresses, production is expected to increase, particularly in New York and surrounding areas, ensuring continued availability. In the West, supply remains steady, with Washington and California delivering consistent volumes and strong quality. No major issues have been reported from these regions, and the outlook remains favorable as fall demand builds.

MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Our Washington State partner continues to produce consistent volumes of good-quality mini sweet peppers, with the program expected to run at least through mid-October, weather permitting. Additional supplies are available out of Baja and California, where Baja's fruit is showing consistent quality. California's fruit, however, is running slightly shorter than typical retail specifications, limiting some of its market suitability.

CHILI PEPPERS

Chili pepper supplies are light in the East as Michigan and smaller local deals wind down, though Georgia is expected to bring some relief in 7-10 days. Current quality has been mixed, with smaller sizing on poblanos and some concerns on serranos as most fruit is coming from older fields. In the West, supplies are moderate overall, though poblanos, serranos, and Anaheims remain a bit short. Baja and California crops should run through October, with Washington potentially extending depending on weather, while Central Mexico continues its mostly year-round programs. Mainland Mexico is expected to begin trickling in by mid-October, marking the fall transition. Tomatillo quality has been challenged by heavy rains, but improvements are anticipated within the next two weeks, weather permitting.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant supply is currently adequate in the East, with Eastern North Carolina and Georgia in the midst of fall crops and smaller programs extending their seasons where possible. Quality is variable but strongest from newer plantings. In the West, supplies remain centered in California with additional volume from Washington, and overall quality has been good. Central Mexico is contributing very light volume, while Mainland Mexico is expected to get started by mid-November.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Bell peppers are plentiful in the East, with Michigan and New Jersey providing the bulk of volume and Georgia just getting started in a light way. Georgia's production is expected to pick up over the next week, while smaller regional programs from New York to the Carolinas continue to add supply. With so much fruit available, all sizing options are accessible, though quality is mixed, with some issues around coloring and decay tied to local weather conditions. In the West, volumes are lighter as California's Salinas region moves through a slower production phase. Central Mexico and Baja are contributing small amounts, but no significant volume is expected out of Mexico until the Mainland season begins in late November.

MINI CUCUMBERS

Western Canada's mini cucumber season is winding down, with lighter and more sporadic harvests expected to finish over the next 2-3 weeks. Light volumes are currently available from both Baja and Central Mexico to help with supply. Mexico's fall programs are anticipated to begin by mid-October, which should help stabilize overall supply.



IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER: HOW 'UGLY' PRODUCE IS RESHAPING THE FOOD WASTE CONVERSATION

[PRODUCEMARKETGUIDE.COM](https://www.producemarketguide.com)

SEPTEMBER 24, 2025

At the grocery store, consumers are quick to discard fresh produce that isn't as visually pleasing. The slightly bruised peach, the pitted cucumber or the knobby carrot are often passed over for more cosmetic choices. This bias is real, according to a Columbia Business School study. The study finds that people who believe outward appearances reflect inner character are more likely to reject unattractive fruits and vegetables. Roughly 40% of produce in the U.S. goes uneaten, and a significant share of that waste comes not from spoilage but from rejection based on appearance alone.

Key takeaways from the study include:

- Consumers' personal beliefs drive the rejection of ugly produce: Consumers who believe that a person's appearance reflects their character are more likely to view unattractive produce as lower-quality.
- Not everyone applies this logic: Consumers who do not hold this belief do not penalize ugly produce and, in some cases, even prefer it.
- An intervention can help: A simple message of "Different Outside. Same Inside" that highlights that unattractive produce is as tasty, nutritious and enjoyable as typical produce disrupts this behavior and increases consumers' willingness to purchase unattractive produce.
- The intervention was effective in both in-person field tests and Facebook ad campaigns and in two distinct cultures, the U.S. and Singapore, highlighting its broad applicability.
- Importantly, the intervention doesn't reduce acceptance among those who already accept unattractive produce, making it broadly deployable.

Consumers who believe that outward appearance signals inner value are more likely to judge unattractive produce as lower in taste, nutrition or texture — and demand steeper discounts or avoid buying it entirely. We know that those fruits and vegetables that are oddly shaped or have a blemish are still edible, nutritious and tasty. Yet, because of their appearance, consumers perceive them not to be. Another hurdle has been shifting mindsets from "this is discounted because something's wrong with it" to "this is discounted because traditional standards are flawed."

Fighting food waste is one of those rare issues with overwhelming support, whether for environmental reasons, affordability or fairness to farmers. More and more customers discover it's not just aligned with their values, it's something they can do to make an impact every week simply by shopping for groceries.



[READ MORE HERE](#)

THE PRODUCE PACKAGING CONUNDRUM: SUSTAINABILITY VS. CONVENIENCE

PRODUCEBUSINESS.COM

September 22, 2025

Innovations in fresh produce packaging are pushing the industry towards sustainability, driven by consumer demand and environmental concerns. With packaging accounting for 40% of plastic waste, there is an emphasis on the need for materials that enhance visibility and shelf life while reducing environmental impact. There has been an industry wide focus on solutions that extend freshness without compromising safety. The drive for automation in packaging processes further supports efficiency, showing a balance between sustainability and practicality in modern produce packaging.

Effective fruit and vegetable packaging is a vital component in the supply chain. From harvesting to reaching supermarket shelves, packaging is needed not just to protect produce from damage, but also to limit moisture loss, extend shelf life, and enhance product visibility and marketing information. However, consumer and retailer pressure for more sustainable produce packaging is driving change and innovation. While ensuring extended shelf life and product visibility are key concerns, many packaging manufacturers have been just as active in their efforts to cut back on plastic.

Sustainability isn't the only trend influencing the direction of the produce packaging industry, and it's easy to imagine clashes taking place with another major trend — convenience. People want packaging that's easy to carry, store and use, while also expecting businesses to make responsible material decisions. At the same time, not all packaging works for every type of produce, with different fruits and vegetables requiring different solutions to stay fresh. Shippers need solutions that work with their equipment, maintain product quality, and help them stay efficient. The reality is even the most sustainable option has to function in day-to-day operations.



[READ MORE HERE](#)

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

GIVING BACK NEVER
GOES OUT OF SEASON.
🤝❤️ HERE'S ONE WAY
WE'RE SUPPORTING OUR
COMMUNITIES THIS
MONTH.



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