

FEBRUARY 6, 2026

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CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

ROMA TOMATOES

Roma tomato supplies are expected to tighten over the next few months following last week's frost and freeze event in Florida. While a full industry damage assessment is still underway, crops in the Immokalee region and further north appear to have been hit the hardest, with significant cold injury likely to limit future volume. Lipman's current fields in the Naples area also saw damages but at less severe levels, and should continue to produce for the next several weeks; however, quality and cold weather impacts are expected to trim yields and volumes. The most substantial supply disruption is anticipated from late March through May, when the full effects of the hard freeze in the Ruskin/Palmetto growing district are felt. In the meantime, Mexico is providing moderate roma volume out of Sinaloa and Central Mexico. Quality this week has been fair to good, with some lots showing shoulder damage and scarring tied to last week's rains, but these issues should improve over the next 7-10 days. As Mexican quality and volume strengthen, supplies from that region will play a key role in helping to offset anticipated shortfalls in the East through at least mid-March.

ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Organic grape tomato supplies are holding relatively steady this week, even as prices trend higher in response to strength in the conventional market. Production is currently coming from two growing areas in Baja as well as from Sinaloa, providing a reasonably balanced supply base. Quality has been consistently good across all regions, with solid color, firmness, and shelf life reported, and this level of quality is expected to continue in the immediate term.

ROUND TOMATOES

Florida's round tomato production is navigating the same frost and freeze challenges seen in the roma crop. In the near term, supplies are expected to run lighter over the next several weeks as growers work through weather-related quality issues. The more significant impact to volume is anticipated from mid-March through May, aligning with the projected shortfall on romas. Young plantings in the Ruskin/Palmetto region—typically a major spring production area—were largely lost to the freeze, but replanting is already underway. Whereas this district normally begins contributing volume in April, meaningful shipments are now not expected until May, which will delay the usual seasonal boost from this key growing area. Mexico round tomato supplies are moderate this week, with most volume coming out of West Mexico. Size is skewing larger, with 4x4s and 4x5s making up the bulk of available product. Quality is ranging from fair to good, as some growers are still working through impacts from last week's rain, including occasional cosmetic and firmness issues. Production is forecast to build over the next few weeks as fields move closer to seasonal peak, which should support improved availability and more consistent quality as we move forward.

ORGANIC ROMA TOMATOES

Organic roma tomato availability is light this week, constrained both by light production and by ongoing quality challenges. The prior rains and cool temperatures have contributed to issues such as decay, shrivel, and surface scarring, all of which are significantly impacting packouts and further tightening supply. Growers/shippers are having to be more selective at the field and packing levels to maintain standards, which is limiting marketable volume. These weather-related quality concerns are expected to persist for a few more weeks before conditions improve and more consistent quality and availability return. Plan for continued light supplies and consider flexibility in specs for the near term.

GRAPE TOMATOES

Grape tomato supplies in Florida have been relatively steady in the past week, but lighter volumes are expected as we move further into harvests from fields impacted by last week's cold event. Lipman anticipates reduced yields due to the associated weather stress. Farms that are farther north experienced more significant damage, which will tighten overall availability out of the state for a longer time period.. In the West, grape tomatoes are currently available out of Baja, Central Mexico, and West Mexico, where supplies are moderate. Recent adverse weather has slowed crop progress in these regions, but volume is projected to improve as we move further into February. Quality has been good across Mexican growing areas, providing a solid complement to the tightening Florida supply.

ENGLISH CUCUMBERS

English cucumber supplies are very tight this week, reflecting the combined impact of prior weather and market conditions. When markets were extremely depressed, several growers elected to pull out crops early to limit financial losses, effectively reducing available acreage ahead of schedule. Remaining growers have also seen production slowed by recent cool, overcast weather, further constraining volume. As weather improves, a modest uptick in supply is possible, but meaningful relief is not expected until Canadian production ramps up in roughly 4–6 weeks. At that point, supplies should begin to return to more typical levels, offering improved consistency and availability for most regions.

MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Even with the increased demand for Superbowl, mini sweet pepper supplies continue to be adequate from West Mexico. Quality and color have remained good. No major issues are expected with this item for at least the next few weeks.

YELLOW AND ZUCCHINI SQUASH

Squash supplies are under significant pressure for the short term following the recent frost/freeze event in Florida. Current harvests north of Homestead were severely damaged, and Homestead itself also saw notable injury. The silver lining is that squash is a relatively quick, 30-day crop, allowing growers to replant and bring new volume on fairly quickly compared with many other vegetables. Some newer spring plantings were protected with covers and are expected to produce at least limited volume around the first of March, with a more meaningful recovery possible by the second or third week of March as replanted acreage comes online. In the West, Mexico's yellow squash supplies have also tightened as prior rain and cooler temperatures have reduced yields, while zucchini volumes are somewhat stronger but still only in the light to moderate range. Quality on both yellow squash and zucchini has been running fair to good, varying by location and individual lot. Plan for continued tightness in the near term, with gradual improvement as replanted fields and protected spring blocks come into production.

CHILE PEPPERS

Florida's chili pepper production was already at its lightest point of the season and last week's cold weather only compounded the situation. Many of the older blocks that had been carrying current volume did not tolerate the frost/freeze well and were effectively finished off, leaving only a few scattered pockets of surviving supply. As a result, we do not expect any substantial volume out of Florida until spring plantings begin harvesting in roughly six weeks. Cubanelles will be a particular pain point in the near term, as Florida is currently the only active production region for this variety, and losses there will translate directly into tighter to no availability. In the West, supplies are more favorable but not without challenges. Jalapeños, poblanos, serranos, and Anaheims are in moderate supply, providing reasonable coverage for most chili needs. Tomatillos, however, are in very short supply. Previous rain events have led to quality issues and increased insect pressure, which is especially difficult to manage in this crop. Quality on husked product has been only fair, while peeled tomatillos have shown better overall condition. This tight and quality-challenged scenario is expected to persist for at least another 10–14 days. In addition, growers are reporting that jalapeño volumes are likely to trend lower over the next few weeks as insect damage further reduces usable yields.

LIPMAN'S WINTER ROUND TOMATOES KICK OFF 2026

[THEPRODUCENEWS.COM](https://theproducenews.com)

February 5, 2026



To support consumers who want fresh, simple foods to begin healthier routines, Lipman Family Farms offers reliable staples that are good from the ground up, like in-season round tomatoes.

As retailers move through their first quarter, Lipman sees round tomatoes continuing to play a central role in winter assortments to support displays, value-driven promotions and consumers returning to everyday meals created with fresh produce.

The new year is a great time to lean into dependable items that perform week after week and make healthier eating easy for shoppers. With per-capita annual consumption of more than 19 pounds, tomatoes are routinely one of the first fresh produce items that customers seek out.

"Starting the year fresh begins with familiar favorites that take the pressure off starting a healthier routine," said Elyse Lipman, CEO of Lipman Family Farms. "Round tomatoes are a popular weekly essential for meals, snacks, sauces, salads and more. Our focus is on delivering consistency as the season unfolds."

Lipman's round tomato season is going strong in Florida, with production shifting from Labelle to its Naples-area farms. These crops will carry the program through the rest of the winter season. Quality has been strong, and crops are expected to respond positively to warmer January temperature forecasts.

Lipman coordinates production across growing regions for an uninterrupted supply, so retailers and foodservice operators can plan promotions with a reliable round tomato program. Lipman's focus on quality and consistency ensures vibrant, appetizing fruit with bright, juicy flavor.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

TRENDSPOTTING: BREAKING THE ROUTINE — FOR RETAILERS AND CONSUMERS

THEPRODUCENEWS.COM

February 6, 2026



Breaking routine is hard — for retailers as well as consumers. According to new research, most grocery shoppers say they're open to innovation. The reality appears to be a bit different as the report suggest that routine still rules the cart. It also touches upon what new really means to consumers, when they decide to try something different and what actually helps them break their autopilot habits.

Innovation is always a buzzword and most shoppers aren't expecting existing brands to blow them away with something completely out of the box. According to the report, 88 percent of shoppers say that a new flavor is innovative while 56 percent say seasonal versions check their innovation box.

Consumers' propensity to impulse shop (four out of five shoppers said that they decide to buy new items while shopping) provides retailers with an opportunity to get new products into the shopping cart. Where a product is displayed plays a big role in doing so. The report said 68 percent of in-store shoppers expect to find innovation on endcaps (compared to just 22 percent in the checkout areas). For those who shop online, 51 percent rely on ads for new products, with just under half looking at the savings page and 37 percent hoping to see innovation in their suggested products.

It should come as no surprise that discounts are the key factor to convince shoppers to switch from regular to new. Only 60 percent will switch to something new if the new item is just 5 percent lower than the regular price. That number climbs to 80 percent who are willing to try the new item if it's 20 percent lower than the regular price.

For produce in particular getting consumers to try new items is a bit more difficult. The report stated that 22 percent of consumers notice new items. That number drops to 15 percent of consumers that are likely to try new items.

Why don't consumers try new items? The top three reasons are: too high a price, risk of not liking it and a preference to stick with what they know. For retailers, we all know sticking with "what works" doesn't always work. Eventually new products are going to stick and it is in a retailer's best interest to be ahead of the curve.

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TOMATO SNAPSHOT

TOMATOES CAN BRIGHTEN A PLATE AND SUPPORT A HEALTHY HEART. 🍅 THEY'RE A NATURAL SOURCE OF LYCOPENE, AN ANTIOXIDANT THAT HELPS TO LOWER LDL ("BAD" CHOLESTEROL), REDUCE BLOOD PRESSURE AND IMPROVE BLOOD VESSEL HEALTH.

