

APRIL 24, 2026

LIPMANFAMILYFARMS.COM

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industry updates

CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

TOMATOES

Supply remains tight across both Florida and Mexico. Rounds and vine-ripes are extremely limited, especially out West where availability is nearly nonexistent right now. Romas continue to carry most of the demand, which is putting additional pressure on that category and keeping supply very snug. Grape and cherry tomatoes are available but inconsistent, with Nogales winding down and limited crossings. Overall, expect tight supply and limited flexibility over the next couple of weeks until new regions start to come online.

BELL PEPPERS

The pepper market is still active with mixed availability. Florida is starting to show a little more production, which is helping slightly, but supply remains inconsistent. Out West, we're seeing variability in both quality and supply as regions transition. Hothouse peppers are also tight due to slower production tied to cooler weather. Availability should gradually improve, but near term it's still a bit uneven.

CUCUMBERS

Cucumbers are tightening up across the board. Florida production is limited, and Western supply is in transition as Nogales winds down. Hothouse cucumbers are also affected by weather, which is slowing production. Expect a firmer market with tighter availability in the short term.

ZUCCHINI & YELLOW SQUASH

Florida supply is relatively steady but starting to tighten slightly. The bigger issue is out West, where we are entering a seasonal gap between Nogales finishing and California getting started. That gap is expected to create increasing pressure on supply over the next couple of weeks.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant remains short in the East, with some ongoing quality challenges. The West has better availability and more consistent quality. Overall, supply is mixed depending on region.

CHILI PEPPERS

Chilies continue to be one of the tightest categories in the market. Availability is limited across Florida and Mexico, with strong demand keeping pressure on supply. This is not expected to ease up immediately.

GREEN BEANS

Green bean supply is moderate but tightening slightly. Quality can vary depending on origin, and the market has been a bit more active compared to last week.

HARD SQUASH

Supply remains limited but generally steady across most varieties. No major changes, but not a lot of extra volume available either.

HOTHOUSE ITEMS

Hothouse items remain tight overall. TOVs and beefsteaks are very limited. Colored bells and cucumbers are also constrained due to cooler weather slowing production in Canada. Demand remains strong against limited supply.

ORGANIC ITEMS

Organic supply is available but remains tight, particularly on tomatoes and peppers. Expect limited availability and less flexibility compared to conventional.

LIPMAN FAMILY FARMS GIVES FOODSERVICE OPERATORS MORE FRESH PRODUCE OPTIONS

[BLUEBOOKSERVICES.COM](https://bluebookservices.com)

APRIL 24, 2026

If you're wondering what's fueling restaurant demand in 2026, go watch the crowd during lunch rush. Or better yet, look at what they're eating. You'll see more color. You'll hear more crunch. Guests are going for clean, healthy and sensible. They don't want to skimp on flavor, comfort or the simple pleasure of dining out, but they do want meals that feel lighter, more balanced and easier to digest.

From fine dining destinations to convenient quick-serve stops, a produce-forward menu is a practical way to bring customers in for 2026. Lipman Family Farms makes it easy to meet the demand without a big menu overhaul. Industry reports show changing health perceptions are fueling an interest in smaller portions and nutrient-dense, real-food choices. Consumers are focusing on protein, dietary fiber and other nutrients. The popularity of GLP-1 medications for weight loss is accelerating a preference for smaller meals and more nutrition.

"Healthy options aren't for sidelines anymore," said Cheryl Hoefs, SVP of Sales and Marketing of Lipman Family Farms. "They're a big part of where guests decide to go and how they order. Lipman produce is an easy answer to that consumer shift ... one with versatility, flavor and familiarity to fit an endless number of dishes."

Offering healthier eating without compromise

Fresh produce helps to deliver a lighter, satisfying experience that many guests are seeking. Even indulgent foods like burgers and pizzas gain fresh appeal with more fruits and veggies. Lipman's product portfolio is loaded with simple solutions for foodservice.

- Grape tomatoes for delicious bowls, salads, sides and toppings.
- Cucumbers to provide satisfying crunch, healthy hydration and a refreshing balance of taste and texture in wraps, sandwiches, salads and more.

- Peppers and squash for adding color and volume to plates without heaviness.
- Fresh-cut sliced or diced tomatoes, onions and peppers add fresh flavor in sandwiches, burgers or breakfasts. The fresh-cut line provides ready-to-eat product for produce that is accessible and convenient.

"As operators plan out the rest of 2026, more produce is a win-win," said Hoefs. "Guests will feel good about what they order, and operators get affordable, flexible ingredients that enhance everything on the menu."

Lipman Family Farms is ready to help operators build more produce into the menu, with items that easily fit into popular cuisines, menu items and formats.



[READ MORE HERE](#)

RETHINKING FAST-CASUAL GROWTH IN THE AGE OF INSTANT GRATIFICATION

[NRN.COM](https://www.nrn.com)

APRIL 23, 2026



Historically, fast-casual growth was built on prime real estate, standardized footprints, and menu-driven traffic. That model is being redefined. Today's consumers are prioritizing speed, convenience, and seamless digital experiences, with expectations shaped by an on-demand mindset.

Consumers now expect immediate access to high-quality options and frictionless experiences — and many traditional expansion strategies weren't designed to deliver that. As a result, growth today requires a fundamental shift. Leaders must align their real estate, operations, and menus with how customers behave, building systems that deliver speed without sacrificing quality, while still driving loyalty and profitability. Growth today isn't about adding more locations; it's about building a model that consistently delivers what customers want, when and how they want it.

Consumer Behavior is the Blueprint in Driving Growth

To scale with intention, growth strategies must be anchored in how, when and where customers actually choose to engage. The shift is clear: Brands need to meet consumers where they are, not where they hope they'll go. Today's consumers aren't planning around destinations; they're making decisions in real time, driven by convenience, value and accessibility. That changes the role of real estate. It's no longer just about high-traffic locations, it's about whether a brand can seamlessly fit into a customer's daily routine. This shift has also elevated the importance of digital integration. Order-ahead, delivery, and frictionless pickup are no longer differentiators; they're baseline expectations. Brands that fail to align with these behaviors risk losing relevance, regardless of product quality.

Speed is No Longer an Advantage; It's the Baseline

In the age of instant gratification, speed is a requirement. Consumers now expect frictionless experiences from order to pick up, and in an oversaturated market, they won't wait. With endless options at their fingertips, even minor inefficiencies could cost a brand a customer. Operations must be treated as a core part of the customer experience, with every step in the process optimized for efficiency, without compromising quality. This means designing kitchens and workflows that support high-volume throughput, ensuring that even complex products can be prepared quickly and consistently.

Innovating Menu Offerings without Losing Efficiency

Menu strategy is a key aspect of the fast-casual landscape that is undergoing rapid transformation. As consumer preferences evolve and competition intensifies, brands are shifting away from overly extensive menus and toward offerings that prioritize relevance, clarity, and speed. While today's diners want menus that are easy to navigate and quick to execute, this doesn't mean all restaurants should slash their menus in half. Variety and customization are still key drivers of decisions, particularly in fast-casual. The most successful menus are not the largest, but the most intentional.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

APRIL 27 - 29

IFPA RETAIL CONFERENCE

**SHERATON GRAND AT WILDHORSE PASS
PHOENIX, AZ**

COME VISIT US AT TABLE 9!

**[https://www.freshproduce.com/events/
the-retail-conference/](https://www.freshproduce.com/events/the-retail-conference/)**

MAY 27 - MAY 29

WEST COAST PRODUCE EXPO

**JW MARRIOTT DESERT SPRINGS RESORT
PALM DESERT, CA**

COME VISIT US AT BOOTH 405!

**[https://events.farmjournal.com/west-
coast-produce-expo-2026](https://events.farmjournal.com/west-coast-produce-expo-2026)**



TOMATO SNAPSHOT

**DIG OUT THE SPIRALIZER
AND ZOODLE UP!
SPIRALIZED ZUCCHINI
PROVIDES A CRISP,
REFRESHING TWIST ON
PASTA NIGHT, ADDING
HIGH-NUTRITION AND LOW-
CALORIE APPEAL TO ROUND
OUT OUR INDULGENT
CARBONARA.**

