

# On The Horizon

[www.lipmanproduce.com/news-and-events/newsletters/](http://www.lipmanproduce.com/news-and-events/newsletters/)

## Market Update

**Tomatoes:** With heavy rains last week and the crops pushed forward due to warm weather, Florida is seeing light yields and limited availability. Ruskin, Homestead and Immokalee are all shipping fruit, but volumes are down significantly on all types of tomatoes. Sizing is on the lower end of the spectrum and quality is challenged, depending on the amount of rain each field has seen. Roma crops have been hit especially hard by the rains, as disease pressure continues to mount and take its toll on yields and plant health. Grapes are also very short since the crops planned to harvest now were picked well ahead of schedule.

In the West, Baja and Eastern Mexico are continuing the seasonal decline, with lighter volumes and many lots showing quality and color challenges. Availability will stay light until Sinaloa gets into volume on romas in 2-3 weeks and rounds after the first of the year. The majority of the West's grape tomatoes are coming out of Mainland Mexico where rain from 10 days ago is showing its effects on the fruit. Quality should improve in another 10-14 days, as harvests work through the damaged fields.

**Bell Peppers:** South Florida is offering steady availability on bell peppers, although much of the fruit is showing bruising and other rain-related quality issues. Look for quality to improve in the next week or so, as the weather dries up. The West also has steady availability on bells, as Sonora continues with good volume and Sinaloa is just getting into fields. Larger sizes are a little tight and color is light, but quality is good.

**Green Beans:** A tremendous amount of rain in the Homestead and Lake areas has severely impacted green bean crops in the East. Some

crops were destroyed, as the fields were under water. Others were damaged and will see low yields and inferior quality on what remains. We expect to see a grim scenario on Eastern beans for the next month or two, until farms can replant and new crops mature. In the West, bean crops are being harvested in Guaymas, Guasave, and Culiacan. However, volume remains light since cooler weather has affected production.

**Cucumbers:** Florida's crops are winding down, just as the Honduran imports begin to come onshore. Volume is light this week, but should improve as more import growers begin to harvest and ship their cucs. Quality has been good so far. The West is looking to Culiacan for cucumbers, where availability is limited due to cool weather and gloomy skies. There's a strong national market in Mexico this week, which is motivating shippers to keep product within their border - further limiting the supply to US markets.

**Summer Squash:** With Florida's crops painfully damaged by rain, there will be both an immediate and long-term effect on availability of yellow and zucchini squash. Quality has been okay on what's shipping this week, but will diminish as growers move further into the damaged crops. In Mexico, both Northern and Southern areas are in production. Rain and cooler weather have slowed harvesting, but supply should pick up in another 2-3 weeks.

**Eggplant:** Florida growers continue to provide steady volumes of eggplant to the East, while Culiacan, Mexico is fitting the bill for Western markets. Quality is average to good in both areas.

**Chili Peppers:** Florida's chili pepper production is transitioning from Plant City to the southern part of the state. While there's only minimal volume of

specialty chilies, jalapenos are available in good volumes. In Mexico, the Central Mainland is bringing more chilies to market and Guaymas is a few weeks behind schedule. However, jalapenos, serranos, and tomatillos are crossing in good volumes and Anaheim's are finally beginning to pick up. Poblanos are the light suit with sizing on the small side. Habaneros are behind schedule and are very short, but should pick up in the coming weeks.

## Transportation Facts

\*The National Diesel Average dropped \$.04 this week and is now down to \$2.38 per gallon.

\*The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$1.16 lower than the same time last year.

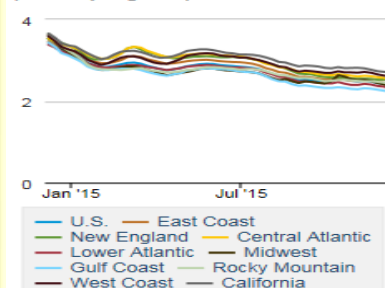
\*Fuel prices decreased in all reporting areas this week with the most notable drop from the Midwest, where a gallon of diesel fell \$.06.

\*California reported the highest-priced diesel fuel of the week at \$2.70. The fuel bargain in the nation is in the Gulf Coast area at \$2.23.

\*The WTI Crude Oil Price dropped 7.0% this week, moving from \$39.94 to \$37.16 per barrel.

### On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices

(dollars per gallon)



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## Restaurant Industry News

### PREPARING FOR TAKEOUT SUCCESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

[www.restaurant-hospitality.com](http://www.restaurant-hospitality.com), December 4, 2015

The holiday season is a bittersweet time for restaurateurs. It brings a welcome spike in revenues, but the lean days of January and February – when credit card bills and New Year's resolutions conspire to keep diners home – are just around the corner. Maximizing revenue during the holidays can help carry you through those lean months, and offering prepared take-home meals is one very practical way to do it. Not only can it generate additional revenue, it provides an opportunity to build guest loyalty and extend your brand beyond your current base.

A successful campaign must include good food and adequate promotion, but most of all it requires careful planning. To start, you'll need to make room for added inventory. Look through your walk-ins and dry goods areas before the holidays, and use or relocate product to free up space. Remember to allow room for your takeout packaging, which can be bulky.

Managing your kitchen usage is a trickier proposition. Your takeout meals can't take away equipment you need for service, so you'll need to think carefully about when and how each piece is used. If you're closed mornings or evenings, that's time you can devote to your take-away menu. Full-day operations will need to prepare both menus simultaneously, which is a challenge. It helps if you design your take-home meals to utilize your existing prep as much as possible. If your kitchen is already near its production capacity, renting outside kitchen space may be your best option.

Staffing can be your single biggest hurdle. Unless you already carry large numbers of cooks, you'll need extra bodies in your crew. First, calculate how many extra person/hours you'll

need to meet production goals. Your current part-timers may be able to step up and take some of those shifts. Calling on former employees is also a high-value option because they already know your system and require less training.

You'll probably still need a few outside hires to fill remaining holes in your schedule. Your current staffers know other cooks, so offer them a recruiting bonus. Some establishments experience seasonal slowdowns over the holidays – office-tower lunch venues, industrial-park diners and on-campus eateries come to mind – and they're a source of potential recruits. Staff in these restaurants often struggle to make ends meet over the holidays and would welcome the opportunity to pick up some shifts.

Ideally you'll leave your regular menu primarily in the hands of your current crew, and have your new hires focus on the takeout items. That minimizes any disruption of your regular service and reduces the potential for friction between permanent and transient staff. Make sure you have at least one or two staff on duty at all times who know their way around your kitchen and storage area. Your short-term hires will need some help finding things for the first week or two.

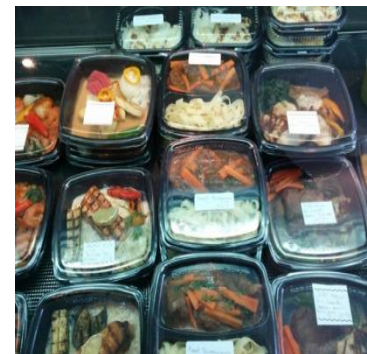
Juggling your schedule to incorporate extra shifts and new hires can be an unwelcome time sink, especially if you make up your schedules by hand or in a spreadsheet. Arranging shifts to minimize costly overtime is only the start. Time-off requests, sick days and break-schedule compliance also need to be managed. This makes the holiday season an optimal time to automate your scheduling.

A modern, Web-based software product such as TrackSmart can substantially lower your stress

level. Entering your employee data, or importing it from your current spreadsheet, is quick and painless. Once it's set up, it takes just a few mouse clicks to create and post a finished schedule. The program monitors your schedule for compliance, overtime, day-off requests and other potential headaches.

Proactively removing potential sources of stress from your day is one of automation's key benefits. With TrackSmart, you'll eliminate most of the opportunity for excuses and misunderstandings. Your staff can log in from any Web browser or mobile device to check the schedule, take a sick day or request a change of shifts. This reduces the demands on management because you won't need to answer calls or keep track of paper notes. Instead, your cooks and prep staff will do much of the work themselves. You'll retain full control because only you and your designated supervisors can approve shift changes.

At the end of the season, review the promotion while it's fresh in your mind so you can refine the process for next year. Arrange exit interviews with as many of your temporary staff as possible, and invite the good ones back. Some may even become regular staff.





## LIPMAN CELEBRATES From the Kitchen of Jessica Kerstein

*There's no better way to celebrate the upcoming holidays than with a good meal between family and friends. This season, we'd like to invite you into the kitchens of some of Lipman's own as they share their favorite holiday traditions and foods.*

**Jessica Kerstein-** Marketing and Business Development

**Lipman Location-** Immokalee, FL

**Holiday Traditions-** My family celebrates Hanakkuh in several traditional ways. Some of those include making latkes, playing dreidel, and lighting the Menorah as a family.

**Recipe Notes-** This old Israeli recipe is one of my family's favorites and my mom makes it every year. Of course, it is better when made with Lipman's tomatoes and cucumbers!

### TABOULI SALAD (Pareve)

- 1 cup cracked wheat (also known as bulgur)
- 1 cup minced fresh parsley
- 1 cup minced fresh mint
- 1 cup minced green onion
- 4 tomatoes, cut into ½ inch cubes
- 1 cup cubed cucumber

### Dressing:

- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Put wheat in a bowl and add enough boiling water to cover. Wait at least one hour, then add other salad ingredients. Combine dressing ingredients and toss with salad. Chill before serving. Serves 6-8.

### Variations:

If desired, add green or black olives, celery, cheese, or corn to taste.

## PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Good	Steady
Cucumber	Fair-Good	Higher
Eggplant	Good	Steady
Green Beans	Varied	Higher
Lettuce-Iceberg	Fair	Lower
Jalapenos	Good	Steady
Onions	Good	Steady
Potatoes	Good	Steady
Squash	Fair-Good	Higher
Tomatoes	Fair-Good	Higher



## December Calendar

### All Month

Food Service Safety Month

**December 12<sup>th</sup>**

National Cocoa Day

**December 15<sup>th</sup>**

National Cupcake Day

**December 16<sup>th</sup>**

Chocolate-Covered Anything Day

## Immokalee, FL Weather

Fri Dec 11	Sat Dec 12	Sun Dec 13	Mon Dec 14	Tue Dec 15	Wed Dec 16
84° F	86° F	84° F	81° F	79° F	82° F
64° F	66° F	68° F	64° F	66° F	70° F
ENE 6 MPH	E 12 MPH	ESE 15 MPH	SW 9 MPH	ESE 4 MPH	SE 9 MPH
Averages 78° F/54° F	Averages 78° F/53° F	Averages 78° F/53° F	Precip 20% Averages 78° F/53° F	Precip 20% Averages 78° F/53° F	Precip 30% Averages 78° F/53° F





## News in the Grocery Trade VEGGIE-STARVED NATION

[www.progressivegrocer.com](http://www.progressivegrocer.com), December 9, 2015

Despite high-profile chefs and food writers putting produce in the limelight, fruit and vegetable consumption levels were down 6 percent during the past five years, according to the National Fruit & Vegetable Alliance.

Rather being part of the problem, grocerants can be part of the solution. The Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBHF) has an action plan for increasing produce consumption, and supermarkets play a big part.

“Supermarkets and other retailers offer an unprecedented opportunity to increase consumers’ access to convenient fruit and vegetables, and to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to increase their purchases and consumption,” notes the PBHF’s action plan.

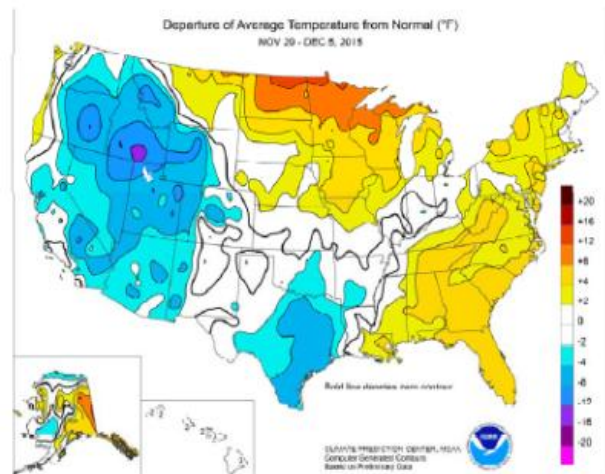
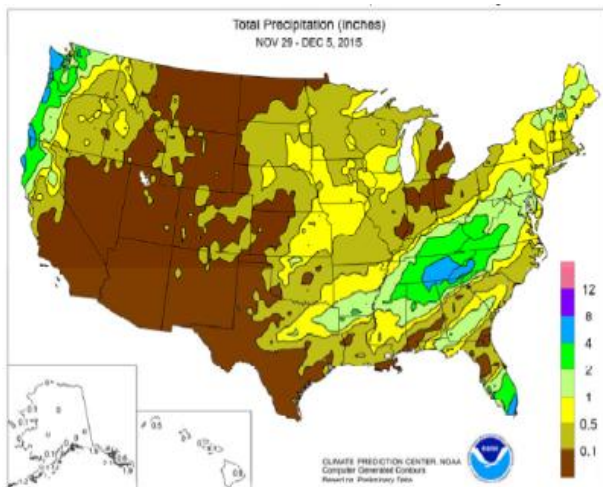
To increase produce visibility, take a page from fast casual restaurant settings, where veggie-centric concepts and dishes are proliferating. Tony Rosenfeld, co-founder of b.good, a Boston area fast casual chain where kale and butternut squash get equal billing with burgers, notes: “One of the first things customers see when they enter a b.good is a row of head shots of the farmers and artisans who raise/make the beef, local produce, ice cream and milk for that specific store.”

In addition, most b.good stores have large chalkboards listing what’s local in the store that day, because the concept is built around “telling real food stories.”

Grocerant-Ready Ideas:

- Grocerant signs showcasing local suppliers and growers
- Bundling cooked dishes with fresh, speed-scratch veggie sides and recipes
- Featuring a “vegetable butcher” next to your prepared food

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation





## An Apple a Day US TEENS DON'T EXERCISE ENOUGH AT SCHOOL

Reuters, [www.foxnews.com](http://www.foxnews.com), December 8, 2015

Even though teens get more exercise at school than anywhere else, it still isn't enough to meet minimum daily activity levels recommended for good physical and mental health, a U.S. study suggests. Children and teens should get at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity every day, the World Health Organization recommends. But in the U.S., only an estimated 8 percent of youth meet this standard, researchers report in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Schools, where teens spend far more waking hours than anywhere else, appear to be a big part of the problem. On school days, adolescents got an average of just 23 minutes of physical activity at school, and this accounted for more than half of the 42-minute daily total, the study found.

Taking weekends into account, teens were even less active over the course of the entire week, averaging only about 39 minutes of activity daily with the majority of exercise still happening at school. "We knew that schools were a major source of physical activity for kids, but we were surprised that kids spent only 4.8 percent of their time at school physically active," said lead study author Jordan Carlson of Children's Mercy Hospital and the University of Missouri in Kansas City.

"Kids have a natural instinct to move around, and schools can support this by providing more opportunities for students to be active, such as by incorporating physical activity in the classroom," Carlson added by email.

Plenty of previous research has found many teenagers tend to be too sedentary and documented a declining focus on physical education in U.S. schools. The current study set out to shed new light on where adolescents get whatever limited exercise does occur. For the current study, researchers asked more than 900 students aged 12 to 16 years living in the metropolitan areas around Washington, D.C. and Seattle to wear activity trackers that mapped when and where they exercised over the course of one week, including both school days and weekends. Carlson and colleagues analyzed data from a subset of 550 teens who wore the trackers for at least one school day and one weekend day. Most spent a full week wearing the trackers. On average, the teens spent 42 percent of waking time at school during the week, followed by home, which accounted for 28 percent of their time. They also spent about 13 percent of their time near home and an additional 4 percent of time close to school.

Teens passed the majority of their physically active time on school days either near home or close to school, the study found. This probably included travel to and from school as well as recreational activities in the neighborhood, the researchers conclude. It's possible that some of exercise that happened at school didn't occur during the regular school day, but instead happened as part of after-school sports or other programs, the researchers note. The study also lacked specifics about the locations outside of home and school where students got some of their exercise, the authors concede.

Even so, the findings suggest that interventions designed to increase exercise opportunities at school may help students become more physically active, said Penny Gordon-Larsen, a public health researcher at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. "Physical activity provides multiple health benefits, including physical, cognitive and psychosocial health benefits," Gordon-Larsen, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email. "Low physical activity puts teens at current and future risk for obesity and cardiometabolic diseases."

It may also be bad for their grades, noted Maureen Dobbins, a nursing researcher at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, who wasn't involved in the study. "The evidence demonstrates a clear link between physical activity and student achievement," Dobbins said by email. "So while math, science, language etc. are important, time spent engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity is an important strategy in helping teens achieve academic success."

### Mark Your Calendar & Pack Your Bags

January 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
40<sup>th</sup> Annual Hotel, Motel & Restaurant Supply Show  
of the Southeast



Myrtle Beach Convention Center  
Myrtle Beach, SC  
[www.hmrsss.com](http://www.hmrsss.com)

April 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Western Association of Food Chains Convention  
Hilton Hawaiian Village  
Honolulu, HI  
[www.wafc.com](http://www.wafc.com)

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