



## MARKET UPDATE

**Tomatoes:** With Ruskin finishing up and Immokalee-area farms just getting off the ground, the tomato category is coming up critically short this week in the East. South Florida's production will increase over the next 10-14 days as more growers begin harvests and post-hurricane replantings come to maturity. However, the supply pipeline is completely depleted and won't return to "normal" levels until the first few weeks of January. On a positive note, Immokalee's earliest fruit looks to have nice quality and sizing.

Eastern Mexico, where yields have already been low, recently experienced a cold weather event, which damaged tomato crops and significantly limited production. This has shifted the focus to Baja where growers are into the seasonal decline. Supply is slowly beginning to transition from these areas to Culiacan, where just a trickle of volume will start this week. Look for Culiacan's volume to gradually build until mid-January when supply levels should resume some sense of normalcy.

**Bell Peppers:** Although Florida's bell pepper supply is not abundant, it is improving. Numbers have been steady but may see a temporary reduction as farms work through the holiday week(s) and wait for warmer temperatures to return. Quality is nice and volumes are expected to increase over the next few weeks. In the West, Mexico is now going strong and has more growing areas starting this week and next. Quality is excellent thus far, with good color, strong walls, and nice shape.

**Cucumbers:** Baja will wrap up its cucumber season over the next 7-10 days, but Mainland Mexico farms continue to harvest solid numbers despite the recent cold weather. In the East, Central and South Florida farms have light supply as they near the end of the Winter season and deal with the effects of cold weather. Honduran imports are kicking in with

another major grower on tap to start around the 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Summer Squash:** Cold weather has affected squash production in both Florida and Mexico. Availability has snuggled up this week, especially on good-quality yellow squash. Look for supply to rebound after the holiday as temperatures warm and plant growth catches up.

**Green Beans:** With some Florida fields experiencing frost, green bean harvests are lighter and will be sporadic over the next few weeks. Mexico's overall volume is down as well, but product is available daily. Quality is varied by grower and lot.

**Eggplant:** New Florida acreage has come online, improving the overall supply situation in the East. In the West, more Mexican shippers have started up, adding to the already strong numbers of good-quality fruit available at crossing points.

**Hard Squash:** Hard squash storage crops continue to be shipped in the East, but that is rapidly winding down. The East will have very light volumes available from Florida while they wait for import programs to get going in the new year. Meanwhile, Mexican production is in full swing on butternut and spaghetti, with acorn on the light side. Overall quality is good, but there are reports of light color/scarring on spaghetti and ground lay/orange spotting on acorn.

**Chili Peppers:** Sonora and Sinaloa continue peak-season production of chili peppers. All varieties except poblano and habanero are available in promotable volumes. These peppers are shorter in supply this year due to less acreage planted by growers. Quality is excellent at this time, with good size, color and heat levels. Florida's chili production has shifted from Plant City to South Florida, where a few growers have gotten started with light production.

## TRANSPORTATION FACTS

\*The National Diesel Average dropped another \$.01 this week, moving from \$2.92 to \$2.91 per gallon.

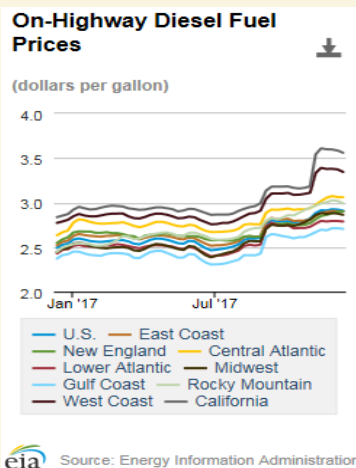
\* The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$.42 higher than the same time last year.

\* Prices declined in all reporting areas except New England where the cost of a gallon of fuel remained stable.

\*As usual, California is the high price leader for diesel fuel at \$3.56 while the Gulf Coast region continues to offer the best bargain at \$2.71 per gallon.

\*The WTI Crude Oil price fell 1.8% this week, moving from \$57.62 to \$56.60 per barrel.

\*Central and South Florida report a surplus of transportation but most other areas that ship tomatoes and vegetables, including Mexico crossing points, do not have enough trucks to meet demand.



## ON THE HORIZON CONTENTS

News in the Grocery Trade- [page 2](#)  
 Lipman Recipe Contest- [page 3](#)  
 Keep Your Eye on the Consumer - [page 4](#)  
 An Apple a Day- [page 5](#)

Produce Barometer-[page 3](#)  
 December Calendar- [page 3](#)  
 National Weather Spotlight- [page 4](#)  
 Pack Your Bags - [page 5](#)

## NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

### Report: Hispanic Shoppers are More Profitable Than Total US Shoppers

By: Alissa Marchat, [www.theshelbyreport.com](http://www.theshelbyreport.com), December 12, 2017

Hispanic shoppers are more profitable than total U.S. shoppers. Although their spending per trip is comparable, Hispanics actually shop more frequently across all grocery trip types. Additionally, Hispanic shoppers with kids spend more than \$150 more each year vs. total U.S. shoppers, according to the 6th Edition of "The Why? Behind The Buy U.S. Hispanic Shopper Study," an annual report released by Acosta, a full-service sales and marketing agency in the consumer packaged goods (CPG) industry, and Univision Communications Inc. (UCI), a media company serving Hispanic America.

In this latest insights report exploring the buying patterns and behaviors of Hispanic shoppers in the U.S., Acosta and UCI found 72 percent of this demographic enjoys grocery shopping, compared to 61 percent of total U.S. shoppers—a difference that has widened by two percentage points compared to the year prior.

"The Why? Behind The Buy U.S. Hispanic Shopper Studies have continued to show that Hispanic shoppers bring family members to the grocery store, and often, their companions are their children," said Marianne Quinlan-Sacksteder, director of insights, Acosta. "In fact, Hispanic children are more likely to influence grocery purchase decisions across many categories compared to children in total U.S. shopper households, creating opportunities for brands and retailers to speak to both parents and their kids."

"Hispanic consumers are key drivers in the CPG and grocery retail categories. When marketing to them, it is essential for brands to understand the role family plays in the grocery shopping experience," said Liz Sanderson, SVP, strategy and insights, UCI. "Bringing a family member along, particularly children, is more than likely to influence Hispanic consumers' purchasing decision, helping to introduce new products, which translates to an exploration of new items."

The Why? Behind The Buy highlights the variety of reasons these consumers are some of the most valuable grocery shoppers in the aisles.

#### Shopping with families in tow

Total U.S. grocery shoppers are more likely to shop alone, contrasted with Hispanic shoppers who often bring spouses, children, extended family or even friends with them to shop at the supermarket.

\*Seventy-nine percent of Hispanic shoppers shop with someone else, including a spouse (47 percent) or children (35 percent).

\*Hispanic shoppers with kids spend significantly more on monthly groceries (+\$100) than Hispanic shoppers without kids.

\*Hispanic children are more likely to influence grocery purchase decisions in many categories, including cereal (30 percent), salty snacks (28 percent) and chocolate candy (24 percent), compared to kids in U.S. shopper households (18 percent, 15 percent and 18 percent, respectively).

#### Grocery shopping more often

Across grocery trip types, Hispanic shoppers make more monthly trips than total U.S. shoppers, including significantly more stock-up, fill-in and last-minute trip types.

\*In a typical month, Hispanic shoppers reported making an average of 3.1 stock-up trips at the grocery store, while total U.S. shoppers indicated averaging 2.7 stock-up trips.

\*Although most shoppers indicate that they are making about the same amount of routine grocery trips as last year, 16 percent of Hispanic shoppers and 20 percent of Hispanic shoppers with kids indicate they are making more routine grocery trips as compared to last year (versus only 12 percent of total U.S. shoppers making more routine trips).

\*Significantly more Hispanic shoppers than total U.S. shoppers agreed they enjoy the experience of shopping for ingredients to prepare the meals they have planned (61 percent versus 52 percent).

#### Exploring new products

Hispanic shoppers indicated that planning meals, grocery shopping and preparing meals are all enjoyable. They also are willing to change up their routines and try new foods and dishes.

\*Sixty-five percent of Hispanic shoppers enjoy preparing new dishes (versus 62 percent of total U.S. shoppers), and 61 percent enjoy the experience of planning meals for themselves or their households (versus 54 percent of total U.S. shoppers).

\*Fifty-five percent of Hispanic shoppers agreed they often try new flavors and products (versus 51 percent of total U.S. shoppers).

\*Forty-seven percent of Hispanic shoppers agreed, "I buy grocery brands that are authentic to my ethnic heritage" (versus 25 percent of total U.S. shoppers).

#### Engaging with digital grocery tools

Just as Hispanic shoppers show an interest in exploring new foods to eat, they also are using digital and online tools to facilitate their shopping experiences before, during and after their trips to the grocery store.

\*Forty-five percent of Hispanic shoppers agreed, "I am comfortable using digital/online tools to assist with grocery shopping."

\*Thirty-nine percent read their retailer's digital flyer/circular.

\*While only 54 percent of Hispanic shoppers reported having access to online grocery shopping solutions—compared to 61 percent of total U.S. shoppers—65 percent of those who did have access indicated they have ordered grocery items online in the past year.

The Why? Behind The Buy U.S. Hispanic Shopper Study, 6th Edition, was produced in partnership with UCI via Acosta's proprietary Shopper F1rst survey.





## LIPMAN RECIPE CONTEST

**Thanks to Leetha Reynolds of the Lipman Arkansas team for sharing her delicious recipe for Smoked Chicken Salad Stuffed Tomatoes. She is now eligible to win the December Grand Prize!**

### Leetha's Smoked Chicken Salad Stuffed Tomatoes

1 lb smoked boneless chicken breast – shaved from deli or smoked and shredded  
 ½ to 1 block of cream cheese softened (start with ½, may have to add more for consistency)  
 ½ cup Hellman's mayo (may have to add more at the end of mixing for consistency)  
 ¼ cup green onion, reserve 2 tbsp  
 1 pack of ranch seasoning (Hidden Valley)  
 ¼ to ½ teaspoon garlic powder  
 ¼ to ½ tsp Cavender's Greek Seasoning (or other favorite spice)  
 ¼ to ½ tsp black pepper  
 4 whole Lipman tomatoes



- Wash and cut top part off tomatoes and hollow out with spoon; sprinkle inside with salt and turn upside down to drain on a clean paper towel.
- In a large bowl, mix ½ block of softened cream cheese and ½ cup mayo
- Add onions, and seasonings, mixing until well incorporated.
- Shred chicken into bite size pieces and mix into cream cheese mixture.
- Add additional mayo and cream cheese to reach desired consistency.
- Fill drained, hollowed tomatoes with chicken salad. Sprinkle with left over green onions.
- Note- can add diced celery, boiled eggs, or dill pickles as preferred.

**Here's how to enter:** If you have a vegetable-oriented favorite dish that your family and friends expect to see on your holiday table, please send the recipe to [joanna.hazel@lipmanproduce.com](mailto:joanna.hazel@lipmanproduce.com). A grand prize winner will be selected each month with the winner receiving a Lipman "bag of swag" and a gift card!! Here are the rules:

1. This contest is open to all customers, partners and employees of Lipman.
2. One recipe will be published each week, with the monthly winner being chosen from the weekly winners.
3. To be considered for each week's selection, please submit your recipes by Tuesday EOB.
4. Recipes should include or feature at least one Lipman item. With so many tomatoes and vegetables to choose from, that should be easy!
5. Winning recipes will be chosen based on several criteria including: originality, use of Lipman products, flavor profile, and presentation.
6. Submit a picture of the finished product with your recipe for bonus points!

### PRODUCE BAROMETER

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Good	Lower
Cucumber	Good	Steady to Higher
Eggplant	Good	Steady
Green Beans	Good	Higher
Jalapenos	Good	Lower
Onions	Excellent	Steady
Squash	Varied	Higher
Tomatoes	Good	Higher



### DECEMBER CALENDAR

#### All Month

Write a Business Plan Month

#### Third Week

Gluten-Free Baking Week

#### December 16<sup>th</sup>

Chocolate-Covered Anything Day

#### December 21<sup>st</sup>

Shortest Day of the Year

National Hamburger Day

#### Immokalee, FL Weather

Fri Dec 15	Sat Dec 16	Sun Dec 17	Mon Dec 18	Tue Dec 19	Wed Dec 20
76°F	76°F	81°F	83°F	83°F	79°F
53°F	59°F	64°F	65°F	63°F	67°F
SE 3 MPH	NNE 6 MPH	E 8 MPH	NE 6 MPH	ESE 3 MPH	NNE 9 MPH



## KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

### Millennials Shop Multiple Stores for Groceries

By: Mark Hamstra, [www.supermarketnews.com](http://www.supermarketnews.com), December 11, 2017

Millennials are more likely than other age groups to shop three or more retail outlets for groceries each week, according to a new report from Acosta.

However, although price is a driving factor for most shoppers who report shopping multiple locations, Millennials are the least likely of any age group to report price as a reason for spreading their grocery shopping around.

According to Acosta's "Trip Drivers" Hot Topic Report, 76% of consumers who shop at least once per week said they visit two or more stores to buy groceries. Millennials are the most likely to shop at the most locations, with 44% saying they shop at three or more stores, compared with 29% of all shoppers.

Price is the biggest motivator for all shoppers visiting multiple outlets, with 60% agreeing that some products are priced lower at certain retailers. Forty-one percent said quality variability across different categories is a motivating factor in store-hopping, 33% said product availability is a factor and 23% cited convenience.

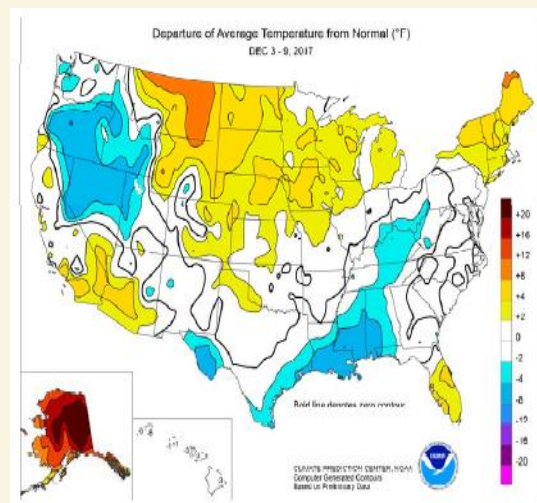
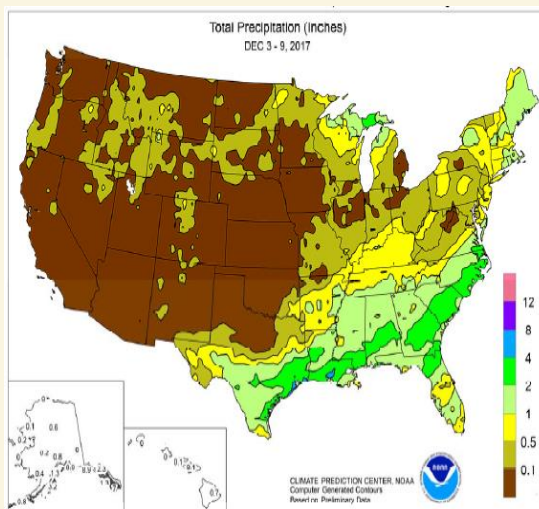
Among Millennials, only 45% cited price as a key factor driving them to shop multiple stores. This age group is more likely to cite physical proximity and the availability of specific brands.

Millennials are also more likely to shop multiple retailers to ensure freshness, the report found. While 37% of shoppers said they make multiple trips to ensure their food is fresh, 65% of Millennials said they make multiple trips or have multiple deliveries to receive the freshest possible food. That compares with 47% of Gen-Xers, 25% of Baby Boomers and 22% of Silents (age 70-plus).

"Shoppers appreciate having options, which is why we are seeing a rise in hopping from store to store for weekly grocery trips," said Colin Stewart, senior VP at Jacksonville, Fla.-based Acosta. "People are motivated by not only good deals and fresh products, but also by brand loyalty, which can impact their decisions to either keep returning to a particular store, or hopping to another."

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

### Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



## RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

### Mintel: Speed, Innovation & More Pressing Competition to Shape Foodservice Category in 2018

[www.csnews.com](http://www.csnews.com) , December 11, 2017

Four key trends are set to impact the U.S. foodservice market in 2018, according to market intelligence agency Mintel.

The year will see the blurring of retail, foodservice and social media, as well as health and indulgence.

Shared kitchens and small spaces will give chefs the ability to let their creativity flourish, while automated order and delivery processes will meet the need for convenience as consumers grow more comfortable with and reliant on restaurant technology, Mintel said. Food and drink offerings that are functional as well as flavorful will rise to the top, and the routine use of social media will impact the creation of next-level menus and food presentation.

Mintel's foodservice trends for 2018 are:

**Co-op Cuisine** — Chefs will concept test in shared spaces due to the high cost of entry for new restaurants.

**The Need for Speed** — Time-strapped diners value convenience and affordability more than ever. Foodservice operators will respond by leveraging technology advances in the name of food — fast.

**Foodceuticals** — The intersection of food and function will become more important as menu items focus on the well-being of consumers from the inside out.

**Feed the Feed** — The blurred line between social media aspiration and reality is challenges operators to create a menu that lives up to both expectations.

"While the dining out landscape is in a state of continual evolution, what is clear is that Americans want innovative and convenient dining out options that are nutritious, but also enjoyable to eat and photograph," said Amanda Topper, associate director, foodservice research for Mintel. "In the year ahead, expect to see operators across segments shift to meet diners' various needs as speed, innovation, and category competition become more pressing in 2018 than ever before."

FRESH

TOMATOES



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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR  
PACK YOUR BAGS!**

**January 16-18, 2018**  
United Fresh Start Foundation  
Annual Conference & Gala Dinner  
Rancho Bernardo Inn  
San Diego, CA  
[www.unitedfreshstart.org](http://www.unitedfreshstart.org)

**February 25-27, 2018**  
NRA's New England Food Show  
Boston Convention & Exhibition Center  
Boston, MA  
[www.nefs.restaurant.org](http://www.nefs.restaurant.org)

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