



MARKET UPDATE

Tomatoes: Overall tomato volumes in Florida are on the light side this week. Farms still operating in the Palmetto/Ruskin area are winding down with 2nd and 3rd picks and will finish for the season over the next 7-10 days. Most of these growers will have a brief break during the holiday, then start back with new crops in South FL after the New Year. Lipman's Immokalee-area harvests have been steady, but will be lighter this week due to cool weather and a rain event. Quality has been very nice on crowns and 2nd's from Southern areas, but there are some issues on fruit from the older Ruskin-area crops. Look for the Sunshine State's grape and round volumes to pick up after the 1st.

Baja and Eastern Mexico are both in the short rows of the season, but will continue light harvests into January. The West's major round tomato production has now transitioned to Mainland Mexico where both mature greens and vine-ripes are becoming more available. Roma production in West Mexico has started and will be increasing weekly with good volume projected by the middle of next month. Grape tomato increases have been slow to come in at Nogales but should eventually come to market in the next few weeks. There have been some reports of quality issues from early shipments.

Bell Peppers: Although Plant City growers are winding down, South FL farms are bringing more peppers to market as they get up and running. Quality is very nice so far, but sizing is big as farms work through crown picks. In the West, green bells are, for the most part, steady as she goes. More and more growers have started but are experiencing cloud cover and cooler nights, stalling any kind of big volume. Quality is hit and miss, with the hits having excellent color and shape and the misses showing stem issues and thinner walls.

Cucumbers: With Mexico's production picking up and demand slowing, there is an abundance of

cucumbers available in the West. Quality has been really good and the fruit is holding strong. Florida's cucumber harvests are winding down but quality is still good. Honduran imports will pick up steam after next week, which should keep the East in steady supply for the short term.

Summer Squash: Florida growers flushed with squash over the weekend, so there's plenty of product available this week. As usual, quality is questionable on yellow, but nice on the zucchini. Mexico's southern growers are rolling now with excellent supply.

Green Beans: Green beans are readily available in both Eastern and Western markets this week. Quality is strong.

Eggplant: Mainland Mexico is into great supplies with promotable volumes available. Florida farms are also experiencing good yields with plenty of volume and good quality.

Chili Peppers: With growers in Mexico waiting to recover from previous storm damage, chili peppers are still in critical mode with orders on all varieties are being prorated daily. Quality is just so-so from prior weather issues. The tight situation isn't expected to change until later in January when re-planted crops come to harvest.

Hard Squash: California's hard squash is still in the market with great quality and all sizes available. Mexico's crops are gaining steam, so there are promotable volumes available.



TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*The national average diesel's steady descent is bringing lower prices than we've seen in a while. It fell another \$.04 this week, moving from \$3.16 to \$3.12 per gallon.

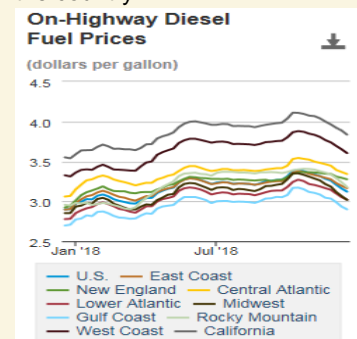
* The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.22 higher than the same time last year.

* All areas reported price declines, with the most significant coming from the Rocky Mountains where the price fell \$.06 per gallon.

*California continues to have the highest diesel prices in the country at \$3.84 per gallon while the Gulf Coast is the low-price leader at \$2.90 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil fell significantly from last week's \$51.15 per barrel to \$46.24, down 9.6%.

*Other than slight shortages in select potato and onion shipping areas and Texas-Mexico crossing points, transportation levels are adequate throughout the country.



Source: Energy Information Administration

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RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

The Future of Food is Digital

By: Stephen Chau, www.restaurantdive.com, December 10, 2018

Eighty percent of restaurants fail. Even though studies show people are eating out more, it's still hard for restaurants to capitalize on increased consumer interest. Despite preparing great food, the daily logistics of operating a restaurant often interfere with understanding hungry customers or unlocking new revenue opportunities.

We've reached a unique point where technology can change the way restaurants serve customers. Just like how the internet created new opportunities for e-commerce and self-expression, restaurants are now able to connect with customers in ways they weren't able to in the past.

While most restaurants still rely on leasing the most expensive real estate in the best locations to attract customers and drive sales, technology can allow restaurants to evolve past the old way of doing business. By utilizing data, provided by companies like Uber Eats, restaurants can personalize their customer's orders and in some instances, move to a delivery-only model without the traditional high-foot trafficked store.

From personalized menus to restaurant-quality delivery packaging, we are excited to see how the restaurants of the future will continue to transform.

A focus on personalization

When searching for songs on Spotify or movies on Netflix, we often rely on their personalized discovery tools to help us decide what to watch or listen to. But static restaurant menus haven't experienced a similar, personalized evolution. Restaurants want to cater customers' tastes but they need their feedback first. In the past this was a hurdle, but every time an eater orders and provides feedback, we can learn something. Do they love mushrooms but hate bok choy? Was the dish too spicy or not spicy enough? Was the portion too large or did it have too much salt in the seasoning?

If restaurants know your preferred tastes, they can put that information against what's in their food to ensure no two customers see the same menu. With precise data, restaurants will create dishes and menus personalized to individual tastes and dietary needs, while still aligning with a restaurant's brand. Detailed past behavior will be

saved and automatically adapted for the next meal recommendation to improve taste, customization and customer happiness.

Applying data-rich insights

Restaurants are eager to learn about their customers, but currently don't have access to these types of thoughtful insights. By tapping into technology to power business intelligence and automate advertising, restaurants can focus on what they do best - make great food. From our experiences working with restaurants, we hear there is a clear gap in identifying the needs of existing or potential customers, and integrating those insights into a restaurant's existing operations. By tapping into rich and actionable insights on customer's dining experiences, restaurants can better serve the evolving tastes of their communities.

We're starting to see examples of this by experimenting with virtual restaurant brands that only exist in the digital world. Restaurants can now review data of what kind of food people are searching for in their area, which can help these restaurants determine how they can meet unmet demand for certain cuisines and dishes. For restaurants, this allows them to use existing ingredients to create new dishes and not invest in costly new real estate to grow their business. Restaurants can continue to leverage data to improve their operations and minimize costs, and increase customer demand.

We recently worked with a French restaurant to present a recommendation that people weren't ordering their French food for delivery, but just their burger on-the-go. The restaurant created a separate virtual restaurant brand on Uber Eats just for specialty burgers, and now delivers those under a different name. Delivery doesn't sacrifice the quality of experience, but provides insights so restaurants can learn more about their customer's needs and address them in real-time.

Immersive takeaway

Restaurants understand that the environment, dish presentation and social interactions all impact

customers experiences of a meal. Today when interacting with a waiter, customers embrace an immersive experience at the restaurant, taking in multiple touch-points of the restaurant's cuisine, atmosphere and attention to branding and decor. But that experience is lost when customers order food to their homes.

In the future, food delivery apps and online menus will rise to the same depths of interacting with a thoughtful waiter about what to eat, what food pairs well and what's really the best dessert on the menu. Restaurants will leverage this interaction with the customer outside of the restaurant by creating thoughtful takeaway dish presentations and packaging, so customers can experience more of the restaurant's brand outside of the brick-and-mortar store.

By learning from hungry customers and building in new feedback loops into existing operations, restaurants have the opportunity to create deeply personal and impactful meals elevating our everyday interactions with food from ordinary, to the extraordinary.



Stephen Chau is a senior director at Uber where he is the head of product for Uber Eats. He has been at Uber for four years and joined as one of the first members of the Uber Everything team. Previously he was at Google for ten years where he helped build Google Now, Android and Google Maps. He started his career in investment banking at Goldman Sachs after graduating from Stanford University.

TECHNOLOGY TO GO

Postmates Launching Delivery Robot www.pizzamarketplace.com, December 17, 2018

Los Angeles residents will soon see a delivery robot roving their sidewalks thanks to Postmates launching Serve, an autonomous delivery robot. After analyzing deliveries and interactions and conducting thousands of deliveries, the company said it developed what it called the first autonomous vehicle made completely by an on-demand delivery company.

"We realized we are in a unique position to create an autonomous delivery vehicle with socially aware navigation that understands how to navigate cities while meeting specific customer needs," Postmates co-founder and CEO Bastian Lehmann, said in the release. "We took a design-first approach with Serve that walks alongside people and fits into our communities. We were able to use data to model how food and goods could move around cities even more efficiently when rovers join our existing fleet of more than 350,000 Postmates. Ultimately, we believe that goods should move through cities at nearly zero cost to consumers."

Serve will be on the job next year in L.A., where the company is working with local governments on a framework that will allow on-demand commerce with public-right-of-way allowance. The full roll-out of Serve will take place over the next 12-months in key U.S. cities, according to the release.

Lehmann said the company was able to create a language that it says will allow "rovers and humans to understand each other's intentions."

Some of Serve's features include:

- Socially aware navigation.
- Velodyne Lidar sensor and Nvidia Xavier processor.
- 50-pound carrying capacity.
- 30-miles-per-charge.
- Touchscreen and camera-based interaction.
- Movement and directional signaling via dynamic "eye" lighting and top light ring.



PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



DECEMBER CALENDAR

December All Month
National Stress-Free Holiday Month

December 24th

Christmas Eve

December 25th

Christmas Day

Kiss the Cook Day

December 26th

Kwanzaa Begins

National Thank You Note Day

Immokalee, FL Weather

Fri Dec 21	Sat Dec 22	Sun Dec 23	Mon Dec 24	Tue Dec 25
68° F	68° F	71° F	75° F	77° F
50° F	42° F	51° F	56° F	66° F
W/SV 24 MPH NNW 8 MPH NE 3 MPH NNE 9 MPH NNE 9 MPH				
Precip 40%				

MERCHANDISING MINUTE

The 12 Days of Holi-Daze

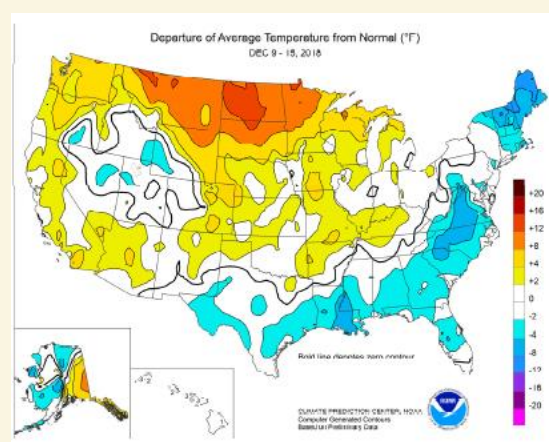
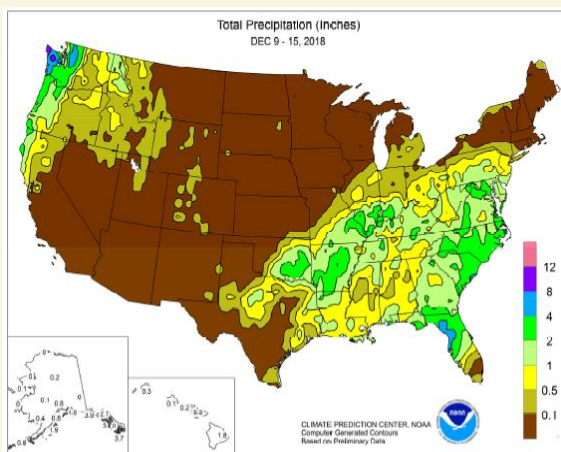
By: Armand Lobato, www.thepacker.com , December 18, 2018

Holi-daze. As the year's end fast approaches, and two holiday waves are about to crash into the produce aisle, I'm reminded of doling out a few tidbits of advice to new produce managers flush with stress. Call it the "12 Days of Holiday Sanity."

- 1. Don't panic.** Holidays aren't always the joyous times they're cracked up to be. You'll see customers rushed, sometimes irate, looking for last-minute produce purchases to go with the last-minute meal shopping. Do your level best to be understanding and accommodating.
- 2. Do be cheerful.** Or at least as much as possible. Make it a point to coach your produce crew to acknowledge your customers. Of course, "yule" be busy stocking extra product and concentrating on tasks and productivity. Just remember who makes it all possible, smile and greet your customers.
- 3. Stay ahead of the rush.** Try to be fully stocked each morning, and even more important, for each evening rush. Do everything you can think of to be prepared, such as rotating and building produce displays before anticipated customer traffic. This is the time that it's all right to perhaps stock a layer or two higher and build spillover displays on all your "power" holiday-related items so the holding power matches your anticipated sales volume.
- 4. Prep ahead saves time.** If your crisping, trimming, load receiving, etc., is done prior to stocking, it will streamline productivity and keep the shelves stocked.
- 5. Overnight shifts?** Scheduling one or two clerks is an excellent, uninterrupted way to get a jump on prepping, load receiving and cleaning.
- 6. Schedule accordingly.** If you can get schedules written a couple of weeks in advance, that leaves you more time to manage your department.
- 7. Keep an eye on the sky.** Storms often mean delayed deliveries. So stay a day ahead on orders and keep an eye on the weather.
- 8. Know your "extra" items will take a hit.** You know this list by now, so plan ahead: Fresh herbs, nuts, fruit baskets, dressings, green beans, relish items, dips and fruit & veggie trays are just a few.
- 9. Keep up with breaks and lunches.** Take breaks during holidays? Especially during the holidays.
- 10. Exit strategy.** Know when to wind down the holiday cheer, back off on orders, pull up the spillovers, prepare for post-holiday inventory, decor removal and cleanup.
- 11. Prepare holiday notes for next year.** Focus on what worked, what didn't, and file it all away for next year. You won't remember all the details, so document everything.
- 12. Take time to enjoy some eggnog with your team.** Hey, it's the holidays for you and your crew as well!

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



AN APPLE A DAY

7 Tips to Keep You Healthy and Lean This Holiday Season

By: Karyn Forsyth Duggan, www.onemedical.com, November 19, 2018

The holiday season is here! If you're like most people, you have less time to work out and more sweet treats and buffet tables tempting you at every turn, but you don't have to view this time as a test of your willpower. To stay fit and healthy throughout the holiday season, it's important to be prepared. Here are seven, nutritionist-approved tricks of the trade to help you stay the course and stay healthy.

1. Eat healthy, balanced meals

Well-balanced meals will help you feel full, which is essential if you want to resist unhealthy party food. You might think that it's better to save up your calories for a party by eating less during the day, but that's actually a recipe for failure. You can't go to a party hungry and expect divine intervention to help keep you in control. Give yourself a chance to stay on track by eating well-balanced meals *and* a healthy snack before going to a party. A healthy, balanced meal should consist of a lean protein, a small portion of healthy fat, and fiber-rich carbohydrates. To learn more about how to create a well-balanced meal, take a look at our example of a healthy plate.

2. Stay hydrated

You might feel hungry when you're merely dehydrated. To figure out how much water you should drink in a day, take your body weight and divide it in half — that's how many fluid ounces you should consume. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, aim to consume approximately 75 fluid ounces of water throughout the day.

3. Eat regularly — and often

If you skip a meal, sampling the cookies that your colleague brought is almost guaranteed. Eat a healthy breakfast within an hour or two of waking and plan to eat something about every four hours thereafter. If your breakfast is at 8:00 a.m., then lunch should be around noon. Better yet — have a small, healthy snack to tide you over between breakfast and lunch. This will minimize your risk of over-eating or of making poor choices when lunchtime comes around. Do the same thing between lunch and dinner.

4. Avoid late-night eating

It's also important to avoid eating approximately two hours before bed. Your metabolism slows when you're asleep. When you allow enough time for digestion before bed, you reduce your chance of digestive upset, and studies suggest that you'll minimize your risk for weight gain, too.

5. Exercise early

Exercise is energizing, so it makes sense to do it earlier rather than later in the day. Getting your exercise in early is especially important during the holidays when parties and activities will make it difficult to hit the gym after work.

6. Try mindful eating

This tip comes late in the list because it can be difficult to practice mindful eating if you haven't already mastered the other tactics. Mindful eating helps you become more aware of how much you're eating, how tasty the food is, and whether you're actually hungry. Take the time to learn how to eat mindfully and use this skill to your advantage. Take a look at 5 Tips to Curb Cravings for more on this topic.

7. Relax and enjoy!

Emotional eating tends to increase over the holidays, so you might try incorporating relaxation techniques into your day to help manage stress. Even something as simple as taking three deep, mindful breaths can help reset your mood. It's also more difficult to eat well if you feel deprived by your current eating plan. Use these tactics to make healthy lifestyle changes instead of trying to stick to any particular type of 'diet.' Trust that these tips will help you stay on track and allow you to focus on the most important part of the holidays — relaxing and enjoying the festivities with your family and friends.

FRESH
TOMATOES

the best of nature™

MARK YOUR CALENDAR PACK YOUR BAGS!

March 7-9, 2019
Southeast Produce Council's Southern Exposure
Walt Disney World Swan & Dolphin Resort
Orlando, FL
www.seproducecouncil.com
Come join #TeamLipman at Booth #1125!

April 10, 2019
New England Organic Conference
Gillette Stadium
Foxboro, MA
www.newenglandproducecouncil.com

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