



**MARKET UPDATE**

**Tomatoes:** The Palmetto/Ruskin tomato deal is rolling along, but is still another 7-14 days from volumes that will satisfy market demand. The size profile on rounds has been small due to hot weather during fruit set so there's a lot of 6x6's and 6x7's available this week. Growers expect to see sizing move up over the next 10-14 days as new plantings come online. Romas are particularly in short supply as farms have light harvest schedules in the first few weeks of production. Grape tomato volumes remain limited this week, but should build gradually going forward. Although reports vary, quality on the early fruit is good, but not perfect. Both quality and volumes are expected to improve as we move further into the season, barring any major weather events.

With CA's San Joaquin valley growers finishing up this week and next, Western markets are moving toward Mexico as the primary source of tomatoes. Baja's Fall round and roma crops have started up which will provide more volume as we move through November. Eastern Mexico farms anticipate moderate roma supplies and sporadic production of rounds for the next 30 days. These two areas will carry tomato supply until early-mid December, when Mainland Mexico is on tap to begin with mature greens. On the grape tomato front, supply remains limited this week. Cooler temperatures and quality issues from recent rains have taken a toll on production numbers in Baja.

**Bell Peppers:** Bell peppers are challenging for both sides of the country this week. GA's fruit quality and yields were affected by the hurricane which has significantly limited supply. Color is one of the main concerns as the plant foliage that protects fruit from the sun isn't as plentiful after the storm. Plant City, FL has light numbers to offer, but it's not enough to cover demand. Bells look to be short in the East until South FL gets into volume in December. Western markets have a hodge-podge of supply. Stockton, Oxnard and LeGrand are each at the tail end of the season

and will wind down soon. Coachella is up and running, but is struggling to get any size above large. Quality is varied by area/grower and there's a lot of choice fruit in the market. With only a few shippers crossing minimal amounts at Nogales so far, the next few weeks may continue with snug availability.

**Cucumbers:** Mexico's cucumber production is transitioning from Baja, where a few growers will continue until December, and the Mainland where production is increasing. As more growers get going in Sinaloa, we should see good supply through November. Other than light coloring at the beginning of the Mainland crop, quality has been very nice. The East is making the transition to FL sourcing where production will be on the light side until late November/early December. GA farms are winding down quickly, but are still shipping some fruit. Quality is rough on what remains in GA, but FL's new crop cukes have been very nice so far.

**Summer Squash:** With multiple areas in FL and GA in production, squash supply is solid in the East. Although Baja's numbers are limited, Western supply is also strong due to volume increases out of Mainland Mexico. Quality has been nice from all areas.

**Eggplant:** With GA and FL both in production, eggplant availability in the East is adequate. Plant City and South FL's fruit has the quality edge on GA, since many GA farms are dealing with the after-effects of the recent hurricane. The West will continue to see good supply out of the CA desert for another 3 weeks, which will bridge the transition to Mainland Mexico. Look for Mexico's eggplant volumes to become strong soon, as more growers are adding to the mix.

**Green Beans:** Bean supply is extremely tight this week. Western production is transitioning to the CA desert, where volumes are still limited. The East is impatiently waiting for the lake area in FL to get up and running in a significant way to help ease the situation.

**TRANSPORTATION FACTS**

\*For the second week in a row, the national average diesel price dropped a few cents, and now stands at \$3.36 per gallon.

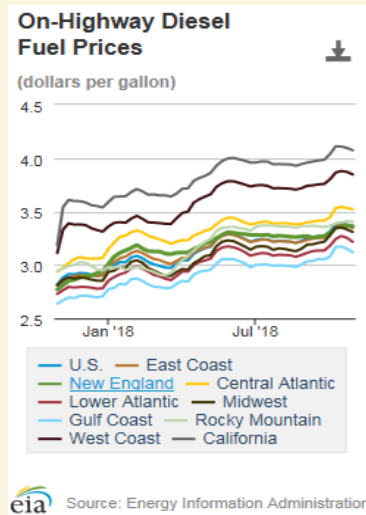
\* The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.54 higher than the same time last year.

\* All areas reported price declines, with the most significant coming from the Lower Atlantic region (down \$.04 per gallon).

\*California maintains its role as the high-price leader at \$4.07 per gallon while the Gulf Coast continues its reign as the low price leader at \$3.12 per gallon.

\*The WTI Crude Oil price comes in at \$66.18 per barrel this week, which is almost 12% less than the \$74.96 price from two weeks ago.

\*There's a surplus in truck availability at Nogales and in Florida, but the majority of the country reports adequate levels of transportation this week.



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## AN APPLE A DAY

### Earth Doesn't Have Enough Fruits, Veggies to Keep Everyone Healthy: Study

By: The Canadian Press, [www.huffingtonpost.ca](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca), October 25, 2018

The world's agriculture producers are not growing enough fruits and vegetables to feed the global population a healthy diet, according to new Canadian-led research.

The study, published this week in the scientific journal PLOS ONE, indicates that agricultural practices aren't keeping step with prevailing dietary wisdom, greatly overproducing grains, sugars and fats while growing three times less produce than what nutritionists suggest everyone should consume.

The study, led by researchers at the University of Guelph and completed by a team of more than a dozen scientists in Canada and the United Kingdom, also stressed that a focus on growing more fruits and vegetables should go hand in hand with reduced reliance on livestock production in order to limit the agriculture sector's overall impact on the environment.

"We just wanted to ask the question, 'is what we're producing globally matched with what nutritionists recommend,'" said University of Guelph professor Evan Fraser, who co-authored the study led by Krishna KC, a researcher at the school. "The answer is no."

The study contrasted United Nations agriculture production data from 2011 with the nutritional guidelines set out in the Harvard Healthy Eating Plate or HHEP model, an internationally recognized blueprint for consuming a healthy diet.

The study said the HHEP advises that 50 per cent of a person's diet should be comprised of fruits and vegetables, with 25 per cent dedicated to whole grains and the last quarter reserved for a combination of protein, fat and dairy. The study notes that the

Canadian Food Guide, updated last year, calls for 27 per cent less produce, 34 per cent less protein and 60 per cent more dairy than the HHEP model.

In order to feed everyone according to the HHEP's guidelines, the study found global agriculture would have to produce 15 servings of fruits and vegetables per person per day. The 2011 data, however, suggested current practices were yielding just five servings.

The study also documented a smaller shortfall in protein production, with three servings per person per day produced compared to the five recommended by the HHEP.

Fraser said other food groups, however, were being grossly overproduced. The study said agriculture should produce one serving each of oil and dairy, zero servings of sugar, and eight servings of whole grains per person per day to keep the population in compliance with the HHEP.

Instead, it found 2011 agricultural practices were yielding three servings of oil and fat, four of sugar, one of milk and a whopping 12 servings of grains per day.

Fraser said there are numerous, complex reasons for much of the overproduction, noting that people in impoverished countries often focus on growing grains because they offer a cheap, easy source of calories. But he said government subsidies and industry lobbies also played a significant role, citing a long-standing, multibillion-dollar U.S. government subsidy for corn growers as one example.

Fraser said the current crop-to-diet ratios play a direct role in levels of diabetes, obesity and other conditions strongly tied to diet, adding the shortfalls and their ensuing results would only intensify

as the earth's population continues to climb.

Nor is the solution as simple as merely growing more fruits and vegetables.

Fraser said that if the agriculture industry immediately corrected its imbalances and shifted its production priorities to align with the HHEP, a new problem would emerge.

He projected doing so would free up 51 million hectares of arable land globally, but the total amount of land used for agriculture would jump by 407 million hectares thanks in part to increased availability of pasture for livestock. Greenhouse gas emissions would also rise as a result, the study predicted.

Fraser and the team of researchers said a focus on growing more fruits and vegetables should be accompanied by reduced reliance on livestock in order to keep the global food supply sustainable.

Fraser said he "cannot imagine an agro-ecosystem without animals in it," arguing animals play a role in cycling nutrients in the environment and preserving the quality of certain types of land. But he said the best path forward would couple a significant increase in fruit and vegetable production with a shift away from animal protein.

"If we want to move forward to feed the future ... and we want to be healthier and we don't want to increase the amount of land that agriculture uses, we both have to shift to a Harvard Healthy Eating Plate model and we have to shift our protein consumption away from livestock-based to plant-based," he said.

## Keep Your Eye on the Consumer

**Progressive Grocer's 2018 Produce Report:  
Category Remains Major Draw for Shoppers**  
By: D. Gail Fleenor, [www.progressivegrocer.com](http://www.progressivegrocer.com) , October 18, 2018

Produce department managers have a lot on their minds these days. The product that arrives at stores must be fresh, but transportation costs can't be too high.

As one retailer participant in *Progressive Grocer's* annual Retail Produce & Floral Review put it, he hopes for "procurement of the right item at the right price." Also, product must be maintained in a fresh manner by employees who care about freshness to limit spoilage and shrink.

All of these things contribute to the bottom line. In *Progressive Grocer's* survey of retail produce and floral executives, profit is the second-highest-rated issue facing produce departments today, after product quality. At the same time, the grocery research shows that produce managers are confronting competition from other supermarkets and online retailers.

### By the Numbers

Produce sales were almost flat in comparison with last year, with an increase of only 1.1 percent, but the importance of produce as a consistent draw for supermarket shoppers remains as important as ever. Total produce dollar sales were \$59.8 billion for the 52 weeks ending Aug. 12, according to IRI, a Chicago-based market research firm.

A confident 72 percent of participants in *Progressive Grocer's* supermarket research projected that their same-store department sales would increase for the entire year of 2018. In last year's survey, only 63 percent of respondents expected same-store sales to increase for 2017. The emphasis in media concerning healthy eating may have influenced this response.

High-quality fruits and vegetables continue to be the top draw of all departments for supermarket shoppers, with 80 percent citing their availability as the reason that they select a primary store, according to the latest research from Arlington, Va.-based Food Marketing Institute (FMI) in its "U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends 2018" report. Shoppers expect more from brick-and-mortar stores in terms of freshness, selection and price/value, according to the annual supermarket research report.

### PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



### NOVEMBER CALENDAR

**November All Month**  
National Gratitude Month  
**November 1<sup>st</sup>**  
National Calzone Day  
National Men Make Dinner Day  
**November 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
National Sandwich Day  
**November 6<sup>th</sup>**  
I Love Nachos Day  
**November 7<sup>th</sup>**  
National Stress Awareness Day

### **Ruskin, FL Weather**

Fri Nov 2	Sat Nov 3	Sun Nov 4	Mon Nov 5	Tue Nov 6
85° F	77° F	84° F	85° F	86° F
65° F	61° F	69° F	69° F	75° F
S 14 MPH	NNE 11 MPH	NE 8 MPH	ESE 7 MPH	SE 9 MPH
Precip 50%	Precip 40%	Precip 40%	Precip 30%	Precip 20%

## RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

### The Survey Says: Gen Zs, Millennials Like Working for Industry

[www.restaurant.org](http://www.restaurant.org), October 30, 2018

Millennial and Gen Z members say the foodservice industry offers good employment opportunities and effective training in various skills, according to new research by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation.

The Foundation partnered with the Center for Generational Kinetics, to release a report detailing how both generations view the industry and how to interest them in future job and career opportunities.

The research looked at responses from more than 1,600 respondents and found the following:

- More than 70 percent said they think the industry is a good place to get a first job. About half of them believe the industry offers opportunities to earn a living wage and provide for their families.
- Millennials started working in the industry at age 18 while Gen Zs started at 16-and-a-half.
- Nearly half of respondents who said they'd left the industry indicated they'd return. The number was even higher for people with culinary degrees – 65 percent – who said they would also return for a job opportunity.
- Another 65 percent said working in foodservice or hospitality requires a wide variety of skills. Almost half of them said they thought a job in the industry is a good one to have and would encourage their own children to seek employment there.

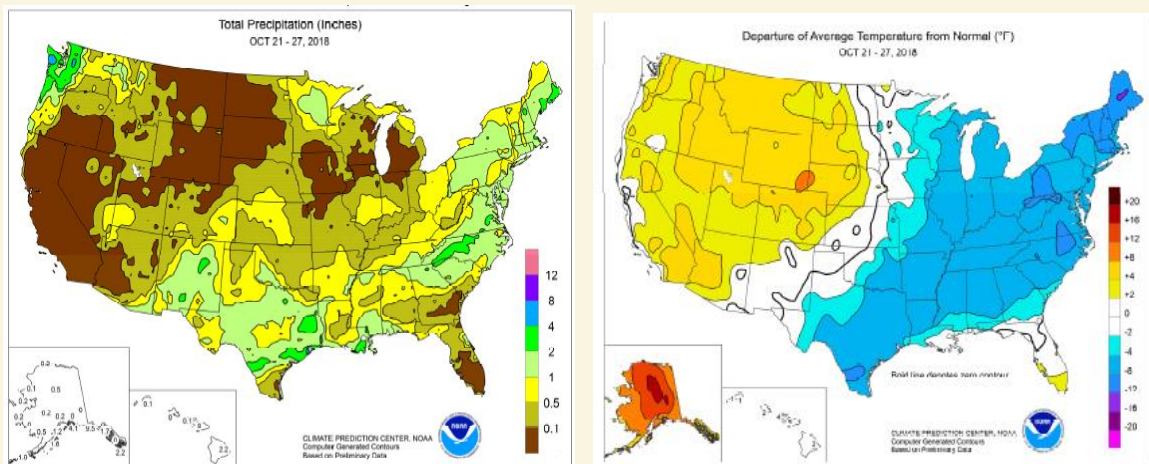
“Millennials and Gen Zs feel so strongly about their own positive experiences in the restaurant industry, they'd recommend working for it to their own children,” said Rob Gifford, the foundation's executive vice president. “This offers us a powerful opportunity to not just foster long-term relationships, but also influence this next generation of leaders.”

The industry currently employs 15.1 million people and expects to add 1.6 million new jobs over the next 10 years.

Millennials, born between 1982 and 2004, are also known as Generation Y. The group's oldest members are approximately 36 years old. Gen Zs were born between 1995 and 2010, and their oldest members are about 23.

## NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

### Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



## NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

### Grocers: Are You Responding to Online Reviews? Here's Why You Should Be

By: Randy Haufbauer, [www.progressivegrocer.com](http://www.progressivegrocer.com), October 25, 2018

Grocers: If your shoppers are reviewing you online – positively or negatively – it's your duty and in your best interest to respond, new research from location-based marketing solution provider Uberall Inc. reveals.

The San Francisco-based company's new "Customer Review Report" reveals that 65 percent of shoppers believe that brands should respond to online reviews, whether the review puts the brand in a positive or negative light. About one in five (18 percent) believe that brands should respond only when the review is negative, while far fewer – 6 percent – believe that they should respond only to positive reviews.

Responding plays a key role in whether someone will shop your store: Nearly nine in 10 shoppers (86 percent) said they would be more likely to shop a store if it responds to online reviews.

"It's critical for brands to have a proactive voice in these conversations," said Josha Benner, Uberall co-founder. "Ready-to-buy shoppers aren't just looking for positive online reviews; they're actually evaluating the quality of an in-store experience based on online responsiveness."

But it's not enough for a retailer to provide a canned response: Nearly four in five shoppers (78 percent) expect responses to be personalized. How much personalization is enough, though? Nearly half (49 percent) expect responses to be "somewhat personalized," while nearly three in 10 (29 percent) expect responses to be "very personalized."

"People simply aren't going to be satisfied with a generic response from a store," Benner noted. "Some individualization is required to show that the brand cares about the customer. These results perfectly demonstrate why platforms like Google and Yelp spend so much energy on enforcing that businesses post personal responses versus generic, meaningless ones."

The fact is, more and more shoppers are expecting to interact one-on-one with brands, and that includes where they buy the products that they consume daily. Considering that one in five shoppers (19 percent) check reviews "all the time" – and that the number is likely to grow as consumers become increasingly connected and demand better transparency – grocers can't afford *not* to respond to reviews online, regardless of whether those reviews are favorable .

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR  
PACK YOUR BAGS!

**December 10-13, 2018**

The New York Produce Show & Conference  
New York Hilton & Javitts Center  
New York, NY  
[www.nyproduceshow.com](http://www.nyproduceshow.com)

**January 29-31, 2019**

Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention  
Hershey Lodge & Convention Center  
Hershey, PA  
[www.mafvc.org](http://www.mafvc.org)

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