



MARKET UPDATE

Tomatoes: South Georgia and North Florida will have spotty tomato production for another 10-14 days, while the bulk of Eastern production transitions to the Ruskin/Palmetto area. New crops are running small but should size up as growers move deeper into harvests. Quality is good on rounds and romas. Grape tomato volumes are picking up and should continue to do so over the coming weeks. In addition, a few players in South Florida are beginning to pack very light volumes of fruit.

With the California mature green deal all but wrapped up, the West is now looking to Baja for round tomatoes. Growers are seeing good volumes, quality and condition on all sizes. Romas are available from both Baja and Eastern Mainland Mexico with good quality and sizing options. As for grape tomatoes, Baja is transitioning from Summer to Fall production and has not hit full stride yet. Expect quality, mixed sizing and volumes to improve over the next few weeks. Central Mexico continues to bring some very nice grapes to Texas on a consistent basis.

Bell Peppers: Peppers, anyone? Georgia has strong supply with the best quality coming from newer fields. Both Central and South Florida have begun harvesting with more growers and volume anticipated over the next 7-10 days. Even the Carolinas are still shipping pepper, as they enjoy unseasonably warm weather for this time of year. It's likely that there will be promotable volumes of bells available in the East for next few weeks. In the West, the California desert is increasing in production with more growers coming on daily. Sizing and quality have been excellent. As well, Sonora has begun harvesting bell peppers a bit earlier than usual. Early picks have

had some quality concerns, but that should work itself out as they get deeper into crops.

Cucumbers: With Baja and Mainland Mexico (Sinaloa and Sonora) harvesting crops, cucumber supply is very solid in the West. Both areas have had very nice quality thus far. Eastern cuc supply is also plentiful with both Georgia and Florida working fields.

Summer Squash: With supply in Georgia, South Carolina and throughout Florida, yellow and zucchini squashes are available in solid supply. Overall quality is good, but there are some spotty concerns in fields/farms that have received significant precipitation. Mainland Mexico is going strong with squashes, so supply is also very good in the West.

Green Beans: Although Georgia is winding down, bean availability has improved slightly this week as North Florida production is up and running. Look for a gradual improvement in availability as South Florida growers begin, some as early as next week. Western availability varies by day, as Northern California areas are winding down and the desert has gotten off to a slow start with beans. New crops out of Mexico are on tap to start on or around November 15th.

Eggplant: Mainland Mexico is up and running with eggs with more growers adding to the mix over the next few weeks. Quality and sizing have been excellent. The East has good supply and quality of eggplant, as both Georgia and Florida are in the midst of their seasons.

Chili Peppers: Baja continues to bring decent volumes of chilies across, but quality concerns are coming into play. Some of this fruit does not have the legs to travel. Mainland Mexico should come to the rescue in mid-November, when volume is expected to pick up.

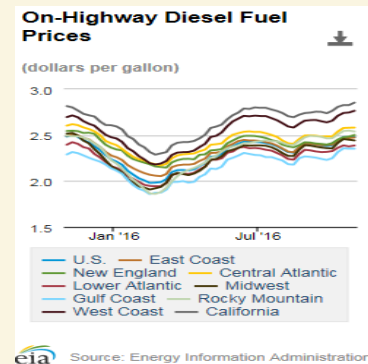
TRANSPORTATION FACTS

- * The National Diesel Average remains stable, coming in at \$2.48 per gallon for the third week in a row.
- * The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is now within 1/10 of one cent of the cost this time last year.
- * Fuel prices rose ever so slightly in most reporting regions this week. Exceptions were the Midwest and Rocky Mountains, where they saw slight decreases, and the Gulf Coast where the price remained exactly the same as last week.

* California has the highest-priced diesel fuel at \$2.86 and the Gulf Coast region offers the best bargain at \$2.35 per gallon.

* The WTI Crude Oil price dropped 10% this week and now stands at \$45.34 per barrel.

* Transportation continues to be available in adequate supply throughout the country with a surplus of trucks in Central and South Florida.



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News in the Grocery Trade

Retail View: Produce Sale are On the Rise- Part 1

By: Tim Linden, www.producenews.com, October 28, 2016

Produce sales at retail are on the rise, which has led to better placement and additional sales avenues within the store. That was one of the takeaways from an analysis of the Food Marketing Institute's Power of Produce 2016 report, which was the subject of a seminar session at the Produce Marketing Association's Fresh Summit in Orlando, FL, in mid-October.

Anne-Marie Roerink, principal of 210 Analytics, said the path to produce within the traditional supermarket is changing as fresh produce claims its spot as the top driver of store sales. She said IRi scan data show that fresh produce is a \$61 billion business at traditional retailers. Adding farmers' market, independents and the other retail categories not covered by the scan data, Roerink said total sales are probably in the vicinity of \$90 billion. She added that those sales numbers represent a 5-6 percent annual growth in fresh produce.

What makes that growth figure even more impressive is that the number of store trips for the average grocery shopper is down 7 percent. For sales to increase with fewer trips means the basket volume has to increase substantially.

The format of the session had Roerink going through the Power of Produce report followed by a panel of experts commenting on various topics within the report. The panel consisted of Rick Stein, FMI vice president of fresh foods; Sally Lyons Wyatt, executive vice president of IRi; and Kristin Yerecic, marketing manager of Yerecic Label. For the most part, Wyatt took a researcher's perspective while former retailer Stein

gave the retail perspective, and Yerecic, who is a millennial, explained how that demographic views the particular topic at issue.

The first subject involved the popularity — or lack thereof — of organics and GMO food. Wyatt said the jury is still out on whether the American populace will accept GMO foods. In fact, there are many GMO foods that are being purchased. She opined that what people really want is transparency. Given that, maybe they will purchase those products.

Yerecic agreed, stating that millennials are driven in many different aspects of their life by the right to know. It is the digital generation that has lots of information at its fingertips. They want to know if the food has been created via GMO, but simply stating what an item is "free from" is not enough. Millennials want to know what is in the product, as well.

Speaking about organics, Stein said the category has moved completely mainstream. Every supermarket has to carry organic items. Interestingly, he said it has progressed to the point where supermarkets can actually drop the conventional choice and just offer an organic choice for many items, even staple items such as baby carrots.

Roerink discussed the digital revolution and how it is affecting the marketing efforts of retailers. She noted that even millennials still read the weekly circulars that have long been a staple of supermarket advertising. She noted that there is still a lot of produce purchased as an impulse buy, which retailers can influence through promotions both the old-

fashioned way and through digital marketing.

Both Wyatt and Yerecic agreed that millennials are spending an inordinate amount of time online, especially through their mobile devices. Wyatt said they learn about many products through online promotions or through their online communities. She indicated that it is very important for retailers to promote within this space.

While which venue a shopper frequents is determined by many different factors, Stein noted that many specific produce-buying decisions are not made until the eyeballs see the product. He reasoned that this still gives retailers ample opportunities to sell that product in-store.

Stein noted that many retailers are taking advantage of this opportunity with many more creative displays than one might have seen a generation ago. He said Super Bowl promotions are a prime example. The display used to be limited to chips and beer, but now a whole host of items — including avocados — can get top billing in that display.

One very interesting discussion during the session revolved around the many choices consumers now have in which to emerge with food. Venues that carry food are omnipresent, from convenience stores to a general merchandise discounters — and everything in between. Supermarkets are still the top choice but more than one-third of consumers also shop elsewhere for food items, though Roerink noted that produce skews much higher as a "supermarket-only" item.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.....



SPOTLIGHT ON LIPMAN Team Lipman Shouts Out

Amy Holcomb Sales Dallas, TX

As a member of the Lipman sales team, Amy's responsibilities include growing current business and finding new opportunities that best suit the customer's needs. Her favorite part of daily tasks is building relationships with her customers.

When asked why she enjoyed being a part of the Lipman family, Amy's response was, "There are so many extraordinary things. To name a few, I enjoy the strong family and team-oriented environment, innovative ideas, and the love for produce. Lipman is playing a major role in pioneering the future path of produce and I want to be part of that future!"



Jasmine Lopez Associate Breeder Estero, FL

As Associate Breeder for the Research and Development Department, Jasmine's primary function is to evaluate all hybrids created in our program for physical and chemical traits (yields, color, firmness and sugar/acids and others). She also assists the head breeder in selections and in creating new hybrid combinations with disease resistance packages and fruit quality traits to be used as parents in our tomato breeding program.

What Jasmine likes most about Lipman is that they listen and include employees in decision making; they appreciate, challenge and mentor their employees. They do whatever is in their hands to develop employees as they believe in growing within the company.

PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- All Month
Vegan Awareness Month
- November 6th**
National Nachos Day
Daylight Savings Time Ends
- November 8th**
Election Day
- November 11th**
Veteran's Day

Ruskin, FL Weather

Fri Nov 4	Sat Nov 5	Sun Nov 6	Mon Nov 7	Tue Nov 8	Wed Nov 9
82° F	82° F	81° F	81° F	81° F	81° F
64° F	63° F	63° F	63° F	61° F	68° F
NW 8 MPH	NE 14 MPH	NE 10 MPH	ENE 11 MPH	ENE 9 MPH	NNE 7 MPH

An Apple a Day

USDA Provides More Funds for Fruit and Vegetable Incentives

By: Tom Karst, www.thepacker.com, October 27, 2016

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is again priming the pump for fruit and vegetable demand among low-income consumers. The government is making available nearly \$17 million in grants to help organizations create incentives to increase the purchases of fruits and vegetables by participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Previous grants have been used by many farmers' markets to create incentives for low income SNAP recipients to purchase more fruits and vegetables, said Kevin Concannon, USDA Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services. "I think it has been a great success and it is certainly well received in the agricultural world across the country, and certainly we see the enthusiasm for it," he said in late October.

The USDA said the funds will be given to nonprofits and governmental organizations through the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grant Program, as authorized by the 2014 farm bill and administered by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The farm bill authorized as much as \$200 million in grants for the program.

Concannon said there about 7,000 farmers markets or direct marketing farmers that can process electronic SNAP benefits, up from fewer than 1,000 markets and direct marketing growers with that capability eight years ago. "We have seen a parallel growth in the numbers of markets around the country that have either what are referred to as Double Up Bucks, Healthy Bucks, or Harvest Bucks," he said. Those programs reward SNAP beneficiaries when they use their SNAP cards to buy healthy food. While the USDA does not have a firm number of farmers' markets that offer SNAP incentives to purchase fruits and vegetables, Concannon said the number is likely in the hundreds.

Other projects funded by FINI grants have stimulated access to fruits and vegetables in low-income communities with low access to food stores. Others have targeted senior citizens in assisted living communities or public housing. Applications are due by Dec. 12 and information is available online. Descriptions of previously funded grants also are available on the USDA website.

The FINI grants can also be used to encourage fruit and vegetable incentives at retail supermarkets, and that approach has been tried in Detroit and also in Flint, Mich. "There is great interest in that in different parts of the country and that could be part of this next round of grants," Concannon said.

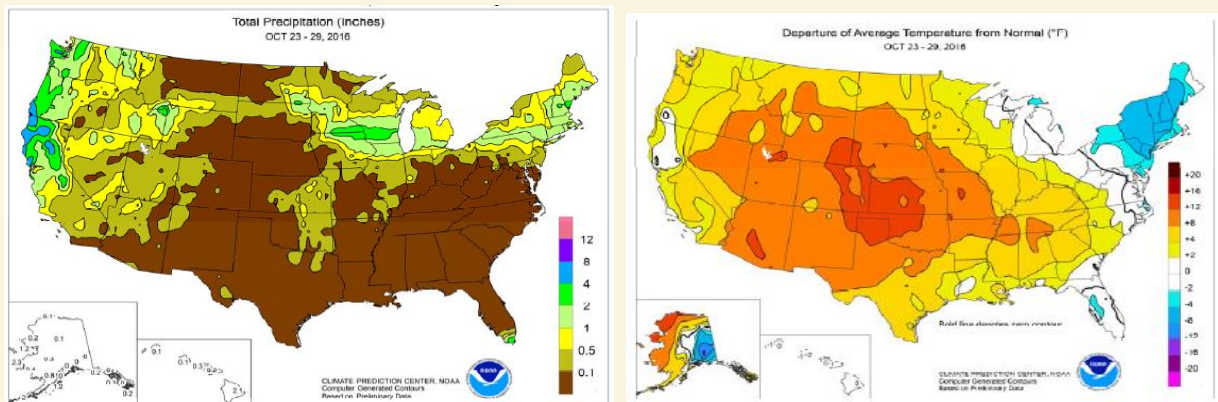
Looking ahead, Concannon said that he would like to see an expansion in the employment and training program that is part of SNAP. "We want to serve people that need the program, but we would love to be able to help people develop their own circumstances such that they don't need the program," he said. "We are on a mission encouraging states across the country to do more in the employment and training arena for those heads of household that can benefit from more training," he said. Another USDA program -- the Healthy Incentives Pilot -- was operated for one year in Massachusetts. That pilot program proved that incentives to move consumers to eat more fruits and vegetables. "The research is encouraging and promising of what we saw, but I think we can certainly do more (research)," he said.

Concannon said SNAP recipients aren't all that much different than average Americans in how they eat. The USDA's Healthy Eating Index measures how well consumers adhere to U.S. dietary guidelines. With a perfect diet represented by a 100, scores from the index show the average American has a score of 56, compared with a score of 52 for low-income consumers and a 50 score for SNAP recipients.

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NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

Restaurants Are Key to Training America's Workforce

By: Dawn Sweeney, www.huffingtonpost.com, October 27, 2016

As the first semester of the new school year is well underway for millions of students across the United States, we want to recognize the growing number of young people in this country who are pursuing an alternative path - one that gets them real world experience in the job market.

In the restaurant industry, we are firm believers that you shouldn't need a costly four-year degree to succeed in America - and we welcome and value anyone who is willing to work hard and learn on the job, regardless of their background. That's especially important today as the youth unemployment rate stubbornly stands above 11 percent - and upwards of 20 percent among African American young people.

Data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center shows that college enrollment has declined for the fourth straight year, with overall enrollment down by six percent since 2012. These young people who opt out of higher education need jobs that will equip them with the skills they need to succeed for the rest of their lives. That's where restaurants come in. Restaurants are the classroom for any career.

Restaurant team members who enter the workforce with little or no experience learn vital professional skills on the job. A report by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation shows first jobs in the restaurant sector help people develop crucial skills and attributes necessary to be successful in the workforce - regardless of industry. The survey of current and former employees shows that 94 percent agree that the restaurant industry is a good place to get a first job and learn fundamental working skills such as dependability, teamwork, and flexibility.

While these professional skills will serve people well in any career, many employees choose to stay in our industry. Our research shows that 75 percent of restaurant employees believe they have the opportunity for career advancement in the industry, with 80 percent of restaurant owners and managers having started in entry-level positions.

Of course, restaurants also provide needed flexibility for students, too. More than one-quarter of all restaurant employees in the United States are students. And students who are waiting tables to help pay tuition have a lot more to gain from restaurant jobs than good tips. They learn and develop crucial skills and attributes necessary to be successful in the workforce.

As we work to build a 21st-century workforce and combat rising income inequality, we should encourage these types of career opportunities and the on-the-job training they provide to the more than 14.4 million Americans employed in the restaurant industry.

The restaurant industry is one of the largest private-sector employers in the country this year, but its value is much more than economic. Americans who worked in restaurants as one of their first jobs are valuable assets to the communities they join, having learned the dependability, flexibility and initiative required of them from their very first shift. The restaurant industry sets people up for success for the rest of their lives.

We believe in the potential of every restaurant employee to continue on the upward path that began here, in a restaurant. When restaurant employees go on to own their own business or excel in another industry, they will carry with them all the tools for success they could possibly need.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS!

March 28-30, 2017

Restaurant Franchising & Innovation Summit
The Highland Dallas
Dallas, TX
www.franchisinginnovation.com

April 26-28, 2017

Retail and Consumer Goods Analytics Summit
The Drake Hotel
Chicago, IL
www.risnews.edgl.com

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