

AUGUST 9, 2024

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updates

CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO





MARKET UPDATES

ROMA TOMATOES

Rainy weather continues to be a factor in Eastern roma production, impacting harvests and causing a few extra gradeouts. Eastern TN has been affected less than western NC where it's been too wet to get into fields for most of the past week. Despite the concerns, this region is still the one with the most volume and best quality. We could see a little more fruit for the next several days, as there will be a 4-5 day stretch of drier weather before returning to the rainy patterns. Moving to the West, several CA growers, including Lipman, have sat out for several days as the heat has lessened yields and quality and altered the normal timing of harvests. We are back in production now, harvesting mostly jumbo and XL sizing at steady rate. Heat has caused some sunburn and heat-related issues that we're able to grade out, but the end pack results are still quite nice. We expect to see lighter numbers in general for the next few weeks as we continue to deal with the residual effects of prior hot weather. MX's roma volumes remains on the light side. Baja's numbers are lighter now that southern growers have finished for the season. East/Central MX is still in a light mode but some new acreage is just getting started and we should see volume pick up to some extent.

ROUND TOMATOES

With Lipman's VA round crops out of production until early September, the TN/NC area has the most volume to offer. However, a 2-week stint of rainy weather has impacted production and quality to some extent, reducing yields and availability for the last week or so. A weeklong stretch of better weather should bring on a little more fruit and quality improvements over the next 7-10 days. Local deals in MI, NJ, etc. are also dealing with lesser volumes due to weather. As for the West, CA's availability has been pretty snug this week. Most growers have not been able to harvest consistently due to split sets, bloom drop, crop transitions and heat-related concerns. Lipman has been able to harvest more than some and has had pretty nice quality after close grading efforts. Our sizing continues to be in the jumbo and XL range which is a notch bigger than most. There should be a little more fruit in the next 7-10 days as growers/plantings in the Gilroy area that have been less affected by heat get started. MX's continue on the lighter side with product coming out of Baja and eastern/central MX.

GRAPE TOMATOES

Grape tomato availability is mostly steady in the East as growers work around rains. Small local deals in TN, NC, NJ, etc. have some fruit but not enough to make impact on the market. Lipman's VA crops are in mostly steady production despite rains. We've had a few days where we've had to grade weather issues a little harder, but overall quality is solid as grapes seem to take weather a little better than the larger tomatoes. We anticipate steady numbers through August, weather willing. Western supply is lighter this week and may continue to be for another 7-10 days as some growers in central MX experience an almost gap caused by weather. Quality continues to be good in both Baja and central MX.

GREEN BEANS

Green bean availability has been a little sporadic in the East as most growers are in a light volume mode and have had the occasional weather concern or skip. NY, MI, VA, KY, TN and CAN are the primary areas with beans and should continue at similar levels. In the West, we are seeing minimal production from CA as most growers are experiencing gaps due to previous high temperatures. We expect supply to remain light for at least the next few weeks. After a gap, our local partner in WA is back with beans at levels adequate enough to supply the local area.

COLOR BELL PEPPERS

Colored bell pepper availability is still on the shy side as CAN continues in lighter than normal production for this time of year. We're hearing that western CAN and Holland are expecting to slow down over the next few weeks, which won't help the situation. However, central MX programs are up and running and should see volumes pick up in the next week, especially on reds.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Although there are some areas with lighter numbers and lesser quality due to rain & prior heat, bell pepper availability is adequate in the East. NJ has been in a lighter spot for a few weeks, but should pick up the pace in about 14 days. With the

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remnants of a hurricane working its way north, we will keep our eyes closely on quality in the coming weeks. In the West, pepper production has improved in CA now but there are more offgrades in the mix. Due to the prior extreme heat, this may continue for the remainder of the season. Our WA state partner is in the 2nd week of the season and has adequate supply to cover needs in the local area. There were a few quality concerns on the earliest fruit, but that has cleaned up nicely.

YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH

As is the norm this time of year, squash availability is spread throughout many areas and programs in the East. Rain has impacted quality on yellows for some, but overall there's enough nice fruit to meet demand on both colors. In the West, several areas in CA and Baja are in good production with nice quality. Yellows are less available than zucchini, as most Western growers have lighter acreage of yellow squash. Our local WA state program has finished for the season but there are now squashes available in the western part of the state.

CUCUMBERS

With several local deals in production and bigger volumes in MI, NY, NJ, and CAN, cucumber availability is holding steady in the East. Quality has been good overall, with some of the nicest fruit coming out of NY. Moving to the West, good-quality cucumbers are readily available with most of them coming out of Baja and central MX.

HARD SQUASH

Hard squash availability continues to be shy in the East. KY is still a few weeks away from their stronger Fall volumes and we're just starting to see a few growers in the northeast get up and running. By the end of August/early September, we should see stronger seasonal volumes from all production areas. In the West, hard squash is available in both Selma and Stockton as well as in WA state. Quality has been very nice despite a few sizing issues in WA.

EGGPLANT

There are a number of local pockets of eggplant supply in the East, which seem to be adequate to meet demand. Quality has been good in most areas as eggplant seems to take rain better than most other vegetables. The West has fruit available in WA and CA, as well as some light volumes in central MX. WA and MX's quality has been strong, but the CA fruit has its challenges.

CHILI PEPPERS

MI is now up and running with light to moderate volumes but Eastern chili pepper supply is spread out among several states. Not many growers have the full product line, which creates some sourcing challenges. As for the West, production is pretty steady in Baja and central MX, but has slowed down in CA thanks to the temperature situation. Moderate to good volumes are available on all but habaneros and quality is good overall. Our WA state program has now started all varieties except for red fresnos and habaneros, which won't come online until September 1st.

MINI SWEET PEPPERS

With limited acreage on the new Baja crops, mini sweet pepper supply remains quite snug. Quality has been very good, but we have seen some lots with sizing that won't make retail specs. There have been a few around in CAN but availability has been limited to pallet quantities. Good news- WA state is on tap to start in 7-10 days, which will provide a boost to supply for the northwest.

ORGANIC ROMA

Organic roma supply is limited to mostly field-grown product in Baja and quality issues (shrivel, soft, high color, etc.) are still an issue. We've learned that some Baja growers skipped plantings that would have come off in August and September and won't return to production until October. We do expect to see one grower in central MX start a new crop next week and there will be a few others to come online over the following few weeks.

ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Organic grape tomato supply is holding steady with last week. Most of the fruit is coming out of Baja, where quality has been strong. There are also some organic grapes in central MX.

ORGANIC MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Organic mini sweet supply continues at a steady pace out of Baja. Of the two larger growers in Baja, one has been in between sets this week. But, fortunately, the other has been able to pick up the slack and provide enough supply to meet demand. There are no significant quality issues to report.

ORGANIC MINI CUCUMBERS

Organic mini cucumbers are available in Baja and central MX. Quality has been consistent and good overall.



WATERMELON

Watermelons are available in several areas including VA, KY, SC, NJ, MO, and IN. Quality is marginal in many areas, especially those that have seen rain and intense heat.



LIPMAN FARMS ACQUIRES FAMILY-RUN TOMATO FARM

[HORTIDAILY.COM](https://www.hortidaily.com)

Lipman Family Farms has added Jones & Church Farms of Unicoi, Tennessee to the Lipman farming network. This acquisition underscores the company's commitment to family farming, sustainable practices, and the expansion of fresh produce availability throughout the United States.

Jones & Church Farms aligns with Lipman's dedication to supporting family-run businesses and increasing production capacity. Established in 1975, Jones & Church Farms is now entering its third generation, continuing its legacy of growing romas and round tomatoes during the July-October growing season. By investing in this critical tomato season and location, Lipman is further committing to supplying stable, year-round produce to its customers.

Family farming is central to Lipman Family Farms' mission. Integrating Jones & Church Farms allows Lipman to honor the rich history and expertise of their local growing partnership. With family central to its culture, Lipman continues to acquire and support family-owned operations.

Jones & Church has been a close partner of Lipman since 1996 when they started buying and marketing their tomatoes after the opening of Custom Pak, the latter's repack operations. This partnership became

instrumental in the company's seasonal supply in the East.

"The Jones & Church team has always provided top-quality product and been honorable and sincere partners, offering tomatoes between July-October," said Elyse Lipman, CEO at Lipman Family Farms. "Now, our companies and families are joining forces."

Lipman is committed to investing in domestic farming and providing local produce year-round for fresh, reliable vegetable offerings. In addition to Tennessee, it continues to expand open-field acreage in Florida over the last year.

"This partnership is a wonderful continuation of my father's legacy," said Renea Jones, whose parents, Carl and Sue Jones, started Jones & Church alongside Buckley and Charlene Church. "Our families have shared values and a deep respect for the land and community, making this union a perfect fit. We are excited about the future and the opportunities it brings for our farm and the local community."

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PROMISES, PROMISES. JUST DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU'RE GONNA DO

[PRODUCEMARKETGUIDE.COM](https://www.producemarketguide.com)

BY ARMAND LOBATO, AUG 08, 2024

It was January 1995, and my first venture into another part of the produce industry.

After 22 years in retail, I joined a Denver-based produce brokerage, Ringer & Son. I made the move for lots of reasons, though I wasn't sure what to expect working in an area not at all like retail.

Beforehand, I recall getting some good advice from my old boss, Mike Aiton, a longtime produce director whom I'd known since I was a courtesy clerk in the mid-1970s. He told me, "Just do what you say you're going to do, and you'll do fine."

Such a simple message — with a lot of emphasis placed on the do's.

Of course, I planned to do whatever I'd say I do. I'd been doing that for some time — or at least I tried. When I got off the phone with Mike, I thought, doesn't everyone in business do this?

Apparently not.

Think of all the unkept promises that people make every day, whether intentional or not:

- "I'll get those price quotes over to you right away."
- "Hey, I'm going to send you a sample of a new variety that I think you're gonna love."
- "I'm in town next month, let's get together for lunch."
- "Thanks for the samples. We loved those pluots. Give me a week to get item numbers set up in our system."

A week passes, then a month, with little or no follow up. Same thing with all the other assurances. It's like what we used to murmur to one another at the Ringer sales desk: "Yeah, yeah, the check's in the mail."

[READ MORE HERE](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS:

SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2024
SOUTHERN INNOVATIONS
NASHVILLE, TN

OCTOBER 17-19, 2024
THE GLOBAL PRODUCE & FLORAL SHOW
ATLANTA, GA

AND JUST LIKE THAT, WE
ARE BACK TO SCHOOL! 📚

START THE YEAR OFF
RIGHT WITH OUR LIPMAN
CAPRESE SKEWERS

