

JANUARY 24, 2025

LIPMANFAMILYFARMS.COM

# ON THE H O R I Z O N

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Consistent*

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industry updates

**CROP &  
MARKET**  
INDUSTRY INFO





# MARKET UPDATES

## ROMA TOMATOES

Steady supplies of roma tomatoes are available in Florida. While there is still some fruit coming out of the Ruskin/Palmetto area, the majority of production is taking place in south Florida. Lipman just wrapped up in Labelle and has moved fully into the Naples fields. Our quality has been very nice, especially on crown picks. Sizing is mostly in the jumbo and XL range. Expect relatively steady supply for the coming weeks. Mexico's winter production has now kicked in and supply is plentiful. Overall quality is good despite some occasional issue by lot/grower.

## ROUND TOMATOES

Round tomato supply has been strong in south Florida this week. Rain interrupted harvests for a few days and cool weather looks to spread things out a bit, but ample supply is expected to continue. There are still a few fields going in the Ruskin/Palmetto area, but they will wrap up in the next week or so. Quality has been very nice in the southern areas but is a little less sharp in the remaining harvests to the north. Although all sizes are available, the current mix is skewed toward the larger end of the spectrum. In Mexico, round tomato supply is that Culiacan growers have hit their strides. Quality is great and most fruit is in the 4x4 through 5x5 size range.

## TOMATO ON THE VINE (TOV's)

Mexico's TOV supply has strengthened and is at moderate levels this week. No quality concerns have been reported.

## GRAPE TOMATOES

Grape tomato numbers are strong out of Florida again this week. Lipman is harvesting steady volumes in both Labelle and Naples with good quality, while a few other growers have been experiencing heavy harvests. We could see somewhat lighter volumes coming up due to the recent cool weather but supply should continue to be adequate. In Mexico, grape tomato supply is moderate out of the Culiacan area and quality is strong.

## COLORED BELL PEPPERS

West Mexico has light to moderate supplies of colored bell peppers. While growers are usually going full force at this time, cool weather has set things back and slowed supply. We'll likely see supply remain snug for the next two weeks as the plants and fruit recover from the cool snap. While there are still some greening concerns, fruit quality has been good.

## ENGLISH CUCUMBERS

English cucumbers are plentiful this week and there's more fruit coming behind the current harvests. Supply looks to continue at good levels through February although we expect to see stronger demand as retailers plan ads for the middle of the month.

## MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Mini sweet pepper production is in full force in the Sinaloa region. Product is available consistently and no major quality issues are being reported.

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## MINI CUCUMBERS

Mini cucumbers are plentiful in Mexico. Quality varies but is mostly good. Expect supply to remain consistent for at least the next few weeks.

## YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH

Summer squash, especially yellow, is challenging this week. Homestead is the only area in Florida with significant volume and quality can be challenging in this region. Mexico's production is also at light levels as crops are in transition between plantings and cool weather has further slowed the process. As usual, quality on yellow squash is the most challenging, mostly due to bruising and scarring. Growers expect to get into new fields in another 7-10 days, bringing some relief to a snug supply situation.

## CUCUMBERS

Florida's cucumber harvests have concluded for the season, leaving Honduran imports as the primary source for Eastern supply. Honduran growers are currently maintaining moderate supply levels, with quality ranging from average to good, provided the fruit is fresh. This supply situation is expected to remain similar until Florida resumes production with its spring plantings in March. Western supply continues at moderate to good levels mostly coming out of the Sinaloa area. There's also still some fruit coming in from Baja and Central Mexico. Quality has been good from all areas.

## GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Despite a few interruptions in Florida's bell pepper harvests this week due to rain, supply remains adequate to meet demand. A variety of plantings are being harvested, ensuring the availability of all sizing options. Quality is strong from newer plantings, with good quality still being maintained on peppers from older fields. In Mexico, some growers have scaled back production this week in response to low market prices. Despite this adjustment, there is good supply available to meet demand. Quality continues to be strong, and the full range of sizing options is available.

## ORGANIC GRAPE TOMATOES

Organic grape tomatoes continue to be readily available. Baja is still going and could continue into February, but the majority of supply is coming out of the Culiacan area. Quality has been strong from both areas but beware of older inventory, as there has been a backup of product.

## GREEN BEANS

Rain has kept growers out of fields a few days this week, but otherwise, green bean harvests have been steady in the Lake area and south Florida. Yields have lightened up a notch when compared to the last few weeks, but supply is expected to remain adequate for the immediate future. Quality has been good from both Lipman and other growers. Western supply has lightened up to low to moderate levels as cooler weather in the Culiacan area has slowed production. Quality has been a little more challenging than usual with some nesting and broken beans. We expect both supply and quality to rebound in another 10-14 days.

## CHILI PEPPERS

After this week's cooler weather, Plant City's crops are expected to wrap up, leaving just south Florida in the chili pepper game. Lipman and a few other growers in the region have light to moderate volumes on most varieties. Serranos are coming up a little shy though. Mexico's farms are seeing somewhat lighter but adequate supplies on all chilies and quality has been good.

## HARD SQUASH

We have started to see a few Honduran butternut squash ahead of schedule, but that's all that's available in the East at this time. The Honduran season will officially get underway in mid-February with spaghetti and seasonal volumes of butternut. They no longer grow acorn in a significant way, so we'll continue to look to Mexico for those needs. As for Mexico, acorn squash is still snug as it has recently undergone a gap between plantings. New fields are expected to start in the next 4-5 days, which should put this item back on track. Butternut and spaghetti supplies have been adequate. More butternut should be available in the next week and spaghetti should remain steady. No major quality issues have been reported despite some occasional ground spot on acorn.

## ORGANIC ROMA

Organic roma tomato supplies are good out of Sinaloa. This should continue for the next several weeks unless there's a significant weather event. Quality is varied by grower and is overall fair.



## WHAT CONSUMERS WANT FROM PRODUCE SNACKING

[THEPACKER.COM](https://www.thepacker.com)

JANUARY 21, 2025

Snacking habits are changing, experts say, and fresh produce is an integral aspect of a shift from ultra-processed to fresh. Though health and wellness benefits and convenient packing are at the forefront, the growing consumer demand for bold and contrasting flavors and a clear pushback against ultra-processed snacks, positioning produce as a premium choice for health-conscious consumers.

Looking through the data, here are three trends experts see for produce snacking:

### **Snack-sized, easy-to-prepare produce packs**

— As produce shoppers continue to seek simplicity and convenience, it's thought that pre-packaged, snack-sized produce options will thrive. The trend is driven by the increasing demand for quick, 30-minute-or-less meal solutions, which 76% of shoppers found appealing.

### **Global and bold flavors in produce snacks**

— Global flavors are projected to continue capturing consumer interest, as 65% of those surveyed expressed interest in discovering new cultural flavors. From spicy, flavor-packed snack packs to globally inspired ready-to-serve meals, there will be a noticeable shift toward exciting flavor profiles.

### **Produce as functional snacks for health benefits**

— Produce that offers functional benefits, such as immunity-boosting, cognitive or gut health benefits, will see significant growth in 2025. According to the experts, 67% of respondents are highly curious about foods with cognitive benefits, and 69% are interested in snacks that improve gut health.

As the food and health nexus is more widely understood and embraced, consumers — especially Generation Z and millennials — are looking for nutrient-dense foods that help them feel good and fit in with their lifestyles. Produce, with its long-held health halo, benefits from the inherent belief that whole foods equal good foods.

While snacking trends continue to focus heavily on nutrition, it is interesting how “balanced snacks” are emerging as a key theme. With nearly 17.5% year-over-year growth in online produce snacking discussions, this shift shows that consumers are looking for snacks that align with healthier, more balanced dietary choices. People want snacks that not only nourish them, but also fit conveniently into their busy lives. This balance of health-consciousness and practicality is reshaping snacking habits.

Together, these trends highlight a growing demand for health-conscious snacking options with new insights into consumers' desire for more balanced nutrition snacking options.



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## GROWING EVIDENCE SUGGESTS PLANT-BASED DIETS REDUCE CANCER RISK

[MEDSCAPE.COM](https://www.medscape.com)

JANUARY 13, 2024

When it comes to naming the dietary patterns offering the most protection against cancer, plant-based diets emerge as the winner for reducing the risk for several cancers sensitive to lifestyle factors. Though most research into dietary patterns over the past few decades has compared the Mediterranean diet with the Western diet, meta-analyses in the past 5 years have brought more attention to the benefits of plant-based diets. One of the leading hypotheses for the association between plant-based diets and reduced risk for certain cancers is how eating diverse plants affects the microbiome.

Most recently, for example, a study published on January 6 in *Nature Microbiology* compared the microbiomes of vegans, vegetarians, and omnivores across five cohorts totaling 21,561 individuals. Omnivores had more bacteria linked to increased risk for colon cancer, the researchers found, and microbes with favorable cardiometabolic markers were particularly plentiful in vegans' microbiomes. But those healthy microbes in vegans also appeared in greater amounts in the microbiomes of omnivores who ate more plant-based foods. That finding suggests eating a diet emphasizing plants may be more helpful for preventing cancer than cutting out meat.

Another way to think about a plant-based diet is to move the focus of a meal away from meat being the central item. Instead of eating meat as the main course with sides consider other sources of protein and make sure there's plentiful, colorful fruits and vegetables.

It turns out, this strategy for eating, whether you follow more of a vegan version or an ad hoc version cobbling together things that are more plant-oriented, is just healthier in general. Plant-based diets tend to not have ultra-processed foods, and they tend to be better for blood sugar because they have more fiber. They're healthier ways of living that could reduce the risk of many chronic diseases, including diseases that themselves are risk factors for cancer, so ultimately they're also useful for avoiding cancer.



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# UPCOMING EVENTS:

**MARCH 6-8, 2025**

**SEPC'S SOUTHERN EXPOSURE**

ORLANDO WORLD CENTER MARRIOTT  
ORLANDO, FL

[www.seproducecouncil.com/eventsnetworking/southern-exposure/](http://www.seproducecouncil.com/eventsnetworking/southern-exposure/)

**APRIL 10-12, 2025**

**VIVA FRESH EXPO**

MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOUSTON TEXAS  
HOUSTON, TEXAS

<https://vivafreshexpo.com/>

## TOMATO TREATS

COLD WEATHER CALLS FOR SOUP! WARM UP BY ROASTING SOME VIBRANT AND SUCCULENT LIPMAN TOMATOES. FOLLOWING OUR RECIPE, YOU WILL HAVE A CREAMY, COMFORTING, AND FLAVOR RICH TOMATO SOUP.



CLICK THE IMAGE TO  
FOLLOW OUR RECIPE

