



MARKET UPDATE

Round Tomatoes: A lack of demand has impacted the harvest volume of Florida's strong Spring tomato crops. Growers are taking various actions to manage potential losses such as walking away from new fields, harvesting only to order, and delaying transitions to the Ruskin/Palmetto area. Despite this scenario, there's still plenty of nice-quality fruit to meet demand. Mexican growers are also seeing a significant dip in demand which may lead to some calling it quits before the scheduled late April/May time frame. With decreased demand and product flow, the new suspension agreement inspections haven't created too much havoc yet.

Roma Tomatoes: Florida's overall harvest numbers are down since there's a very limited market for smaller sizes, but quality has been excellent. Mexico has also slowed its production due to demand and a bit of cooler weather. Growers are keeping smalls and mediums at home. Supplies are adequate now, but should strengthen over the next few weeks.

Grape Tomatoes: Both Florida and Mexico have more than adequate supply of grape tomatoes to cover the demand. Mainland Mexico is still in production and now Baja is up and running to add to the mix. Florida growers are moving out of older picks sooner than usual and into fresh new crops, mostly in the Ruskin/Palmetto area.

Bell Peppers: Although volumes are in a light spot for both Eastern and Western producers, there's an adequate amount of pepper available. South Florida farms are focused on the larger and better quality fruit from new fields, while Mexico's current production areas are slowing down for the season. Plant City should come along next week to help in the East. The West is looking to the California desert for stronger supply but they won't be up and running full force for a few more weeks.

Cucumbers: With little demand for smaller and offgrade cucs, a number of Florida growers plowed up fields after first and/or second picks last week and

are waiting for new plantings to come online. These actions will limit Eastern supply for the next few weeks until Georgia gets up and running in early May. In Mexico, the Sinaloa crop is producing good numbers and should continue for another 8 weeks, weather permitting. Spring crops in Sonora are beginning to ramp up and a few growers have started in Baja. Overall quality has been strong and we don't anticipate any supply concerns for at least the next few weeks.

Green Beans: There's still a lot of green beans in various areas of Florida, but most growers are still picking to order, passing by fields or sending product to the canneries. Ideal weather continues in Mexico which has brought on a slight increase in production and improved quality from our fields. We should begin to see a few beans from the CA desert in the front part of next week.

Summer Squash: As with cucumbers, Florida's squash supply has lightened up as some growers plowed fields under due to low markets. Plant City started with big numbers last week, hit a lull this week, but should have more supply onboard next week. Mexico's harvests are transitioning from south to north where production should be consistent once we work past the Easter holiday.

Eggplant: Mexico's eggplant production is mostly from older fields and plants, so quality issues could be a concern until the California desert crop gets started around April 20th. Meanwhile, South Florida's acreage and production remain light but quality is good.

Hard Squash: Sinaloa is starting to wind down its hard squash season with availability and quality declining. Sonora is in harvest and usually carries on into July. Weather has affected these crops and it looks like they may finish early, leaving June's supply a bit unsure until domestic programs get rolling in the latter part of the month. With Sinaloa crops getting out of the way, quality is improving with less scarring on spaghetti, less ground lay on acorn

and stronger color on butternut. The East has a handful of local deals with light volume in Florida, but doesn't anticipate significant supply until Georgia gets rolling in late May/early June.

Chili Peppers: Mexico's chili pepper supply got backed up as US demand declined. Growers layed out a few days to help get aged product out of the system, but have consistent supply available. There could be a few quality issues over the next week or so as the fruit is staying on the vine longer than is desirable. Florida still has a light supply of the core chili items coming from southern growing zones. Plant City farms expect to have a few jalapenos next week and will see more volume and varieties over the next few weeks.

Colored Bell Peppers: Canadian houses have seen good picks this week with all 3 colors available. Yellow and orange numbers look to be down slightly over the next week, but Canadian quality has been excellent thus far. Mexico's supply continues to be on the light side with orange bells very short. As growers push to fill orders, greening is sometimes an issue at crossing.

Persian Cucumbers: Northern Mexico's crops are ramping up just as Sinaloa's harvests are coming to an end. There's also some fruit in Baja, which will continue through the Summer. Quality is declining on older crops/felds but new crops will be strong.

Organic Cucumbers: After what seemed like a long wait, organic cucumber crops have finally hit their strides. Good volume and quality are available consistently.

Organic Green Bells: Organic green bell production has gotten even lighter this week with very little sizing and #1 fruit available. There should be a little more around next week but no significant volume until California gets going later in April.

Organic Squash: Good volume is available on both colors this week

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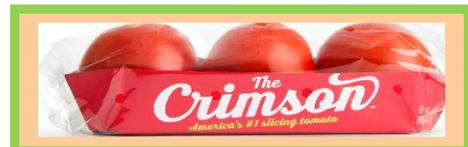
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NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

Grocery Shopping in the Time of COVID-19

By: Steve Markenson, www.fmi.org, April 2, 2020

As consumers experience the unprecedented realities presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and confront the frustrating truths of supply and demand, once ingrained grocery shopping habits have shifted to some new behaviors. As one would expect, shoppers are highly concerned about the impacts of COVID-19 and those apprehensions are driving some changes in the way they shop for groceries. Many are turning to online grocery shopping.

To assess the impact of COVID-19 on the perceptions and behaviors of grocery shoppers, FMI conducted an initial wave of online surveys from March 21 to 26 and will be conducting ongoing biweekly consumer surveys over the coming weeks. From this first wave of research, we learned some baseline things about the shopper's initial reactions as this crisis unfolded. Here are some of those findings, with much more come.

Shoppers rush online to shop for groceries.

Americans have had to make changes in where, how and who shops for groceries as a result of COVID-19. Most shoppers (77%) have specifically made a change in where they shop, with online shopping seeing significant growth. Many shoppers have increased or are shopping online for the first time, as almost one-half of Americans have shopped online for grocery-type items in the past month. This is more than twice the proportion of monthly online shoppers from our *U.S. Grocery Shoppers Trends* research one year ago. Many of these shoppers (17%) are new to online grocery shopping and recall no shopping for grocery-type items before this month, while others (4%) recall shopping previously for grocery-type items and have returned this month for the first time in a while.

Many online shoppers are ordering new products online for the very first time. Paper products are an expected need, but many are also ordering fresh produce, fresh meats and milk online for the very first time. Compared to online shoppers in our *2019 U.S. Grocery Shopper Trends* research, average weekly online spending per shopper in the past seven days has approximately doubled.

Shoppers may be using online shopping as a means of practicing social distancing by avoiding visits into the store, but they are still experiencing many of the same issues as those who shop in-store such as out-of-stocks for paper products, household cleaning supplies, personal hygiene items, preferred food items and other items, along with limits on quantities. In addition, the unprecedented demand for groceries has resulted in fulfillment issues with many experiencing delivery delays, no acceptable times for pick-up or a lack of acceptable times for home delivery.

As shoppers adjust to a new reality, FMI will be continuing to track consumer attitudes and perceptions over the coming weeks and months through our *U. S. Grocery Shoppers Trends COVID-19* tracking surveys. A brief report containing additional information will be available on the FMI website.



TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*For the 13th week in a row, the National Diesel Average price fell, moving from \$2.59 to \$2.55 over the past seven days.

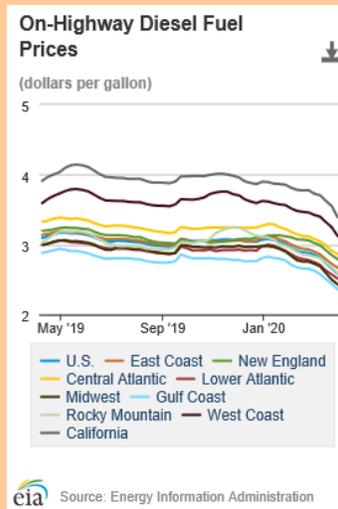
*The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.55 lower than the same time last year.

*All regions of the country reported price declines ranging from \$.03-\$.05 per gallon. The Rocky Mountain area had the most significant drop at \$.05 per gallon.

*California still tops the charts at \$3.37 per gallon while the Gulf Coast remains the low-price leader at \$2.33 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil price is showing some life this week with a 12.1% increase, moving from \$20.31 to \$22.76.

*There's still a shortage of transportation for fresh produce in Central & South Florida but all other areas report adequate numbers of trucks available.





CHEF'S CORNER

Contributed By: Wil Wilbur
Lipman's Manager of Culinary Development

Cooking at Home!

With the majority of the world staying home more these days, that means you are more likely to be cooking meals in your own kitchen more often. Don't make cooking at home arduous; make it enjoyable by getting creative and including other family members (or roommates)!

First things first, start by cooking what you love to eat. By figuring out how to make the food you love to eat, you'll end up cooking for yourself more! Then, start experimenting with different ingredients and cuts of meat. Don't be afraid of that cut of meat or that species of fish you've never prepared, there are many resources from cookbooks, websites to friends to help you make something delicious and fun.

Use fresh ingredients! Nothing tastes better than fresh produce, meat, poultry and seafood. Talk to your butcher, ask what is new or what they recommend. Ask the grocery store employees what produce is in season if you don't know (or look it up). These conversations and choices will make for a more flavorful meal, no matter what you're cooking!

Include your family. People always gather in the kitchen which is another reason to make meal time family time. Get the kids to knead dough, toss a salad or add ingredients to a bowl. Include your friends or spouse in on a secret recipe or ingredient you add that makes your food unique. Don't forget to make sure everyone helps cleaning up too! (For me, doing the dishes is a very relaxing / de-stressing time of the day.)

The most important rule to keep in mind when cooking at home, is keep it fun and interesting! Try new ideas, recipes and cuisines. By expanding your knowledge of global foods and how they are cooked, you will be able to understand which components you like (and dislike) and can incorporate them into other meals you make!



PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



APRIL CALENDAR

- All Month**
- Fresh Florida Tomato Month
- Stress Awareness Month
- April 12th**
- Easter
- National Grilled Cheese Day
- April 13th**
- National Make Lunch Count Day
- April 14th**
- National Gardening Day

Estero, FL Weather

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Apr 11	Apr 12	Apr 13	Apr 14	Apr 15
85° F	90° F	89° F	89° F	89° F
72° F	76° F	74° F	74° F	72° F
ENE 10 MPH	SE 17 MPH	S 16 MPH	SE 7 MPH	SSE 14 MPH
Precip 20%			Precip 10%	Precip 20%

AN APPLE A DAY

5 Mindfulness Tricks to Help You Avoid Overeating When You're Stuck at Home

By: Anthea Levi, www.livestrong.com, April 2, 2020

Remember when our biggest worry was whether we could resist the doughnuts in the office pantry? Kind of seems like a lifetime ago, doesn't it? But if you're one of the millions of Americans now ordered to stay home to help stop the spread of the novel coronavirus, you may find yourself facing a different challenge: 24/7 access to your fridge and pantry.

Before you beat yourself up for finishing that family-size bag of popcorn, though, you should know that it's normal for your eating patterns to be out of whack during this chaotic time. "There are so many different aspects to the collective 'food struggle,'" says Sydney Greene, RDN, a New York City-based dietitian and founder of the private practice Greene Health. "Close proximity to the pantry coupled with disrupted routines is the perfect recipe for mindless eating." These are also intensely stressful times. "High levels of stress and anxiety are known to increase cravings for sugar or highly processed foods," notes Greene. "Eating these foods can help calm negative feelings in the short term, but they present negative physical and mental consequences in the long term." What's more, if you're someone who typically relies on fast-casual or takeout food for sustenance, the need to suddenly cook all of your own meals may present some serious challenges.

The bottom line: If your eating habits have taken a turn for the worse over the last few weeks, don't freak out. Your days don't have to look like full-on food marathons for the foreseeable future. In fact, the key to mastering healthy habits at home lies in one simple strategy: mindful eating.

So, What's Mindful Eating?

You've probably heard of mindfulness, the practice that involves tuning out distractions and focusing completely on the present moment. "The practice of mindful eating uses the foundation of mindfulness before, during and after eating," explains Greene. "While mindful eating is about utilizing all of the senses and not participating in distracting behaviors, a key part of it is showing up to experiences with food without any judgment." With less judgment comes less food guilt, which may be why mindful eating training has been linked to impressive health benefits, from decreased levels of inflammatory markers in the body to binge eating disorder recovery, per a small study published in *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*.

Below, we explain exactly how to use mindfulness to avoid overeating while you're working from home. And remember: We're all in this together.

1. Designate Meal Times

For most of us, the workday is punctuated by lunch. Whether you're an early bird at the salad bar or don't get around to eating until 3 p.m., your midday meal typically takes place once — and then it's done. The problem with working from home is that there's basically nothing stopping you from eating from sunrise to sunset. You might have breakfast at 9 a.m., opt for a snack at 11 a.m., eat lunch at 1 p.m., snack again from 3 to 4 p.m. and then roll right into happy hour, followed by dinner and dessert. Here's the thing, though: It's a lot tougher to tune into our natural hunger and fullness cues when we snack for hours on end. "When we sit down to eat without distraction, it's easier to slow down and begin to recognize levels of fullness throughout a meal," Greene says. "Becoming attuned to hunger and fullness takes practice and patience, but having meals and snacks at designated times throughout the day (and enjoying them with time and without distraction) will help to regulate metabolism, mood and energy levels."

Isabel Smith, RDN, a New York City-based dietitian and founder of the private practice Isabel Smith Nutrition, says finding ways to stick to a routine is critical in preventing overeating while we quarantine. "Make a schedule for yourself! Draw it out, make alarms, set timers," Smith suggests. "You can do this for meals, but also for exercise, walks or anything else you need help getting done."

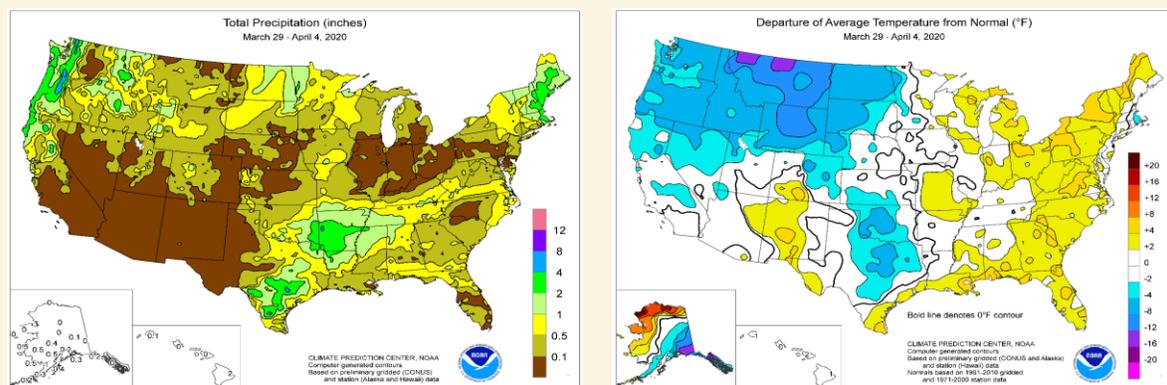
2. Focus on Your Food

Plain and simple, the fewer distractions we experience during meals, the better. According to a February 2013 review published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, people who eat while distracted tend to eat more not only in the moment but also later on in the day. Those findings aren't all that surprising. After all, eating while distracted makes us

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NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Last Week's Precipitation Totals and Average Temperature Deviations



AN APPLE A DAY...Continued

5 Mindfulness Tricks to Help You Avoid Overeating When You're Stuck at Home

By: Anthea Levi, www.livestrong.com, April 2, 2020

less aware of how much we're actually consuming, so we may treat ourselves to dessert, forgetting about the half sleeve of cookies we ate after lunch. "I recommend putting your fork down between bites, noticing how the flavor of the food evolves as you chew and continuously checking in to see if you are still enjoying it."

To get more mindful at mealtimes, make small choices that will encourage you to focus on your food. "Turn off the TV and other electronics while eating," Smith recommends. "Sit with your food before you start to eat and take a few deep breaths before you dive in." You can engage multiple senses by arranging your food in an aesthetically pleasing way (instead of eating it straight from the container) and smelling its aromas before eating. "I also recommend putting your fork down between bites, noticing how the flavor of the food evolves as you chew and continuously checking in to see if you are still enjoying it," Greene says. The more you slow down and focus on the meal in front of you, the less likely you are to overeat. Finally, consider keeping a food journal that prioritizes mindfulness instead of macros. "Instead of tracking calories and fat grams, track how hungry you were before you ate and how full you were after eating, both on a scale of 1 to 10," Greene suggests. "You can also note your mood before, during and after eating as well as the taste, smell and texture that you noticed throughout the dining experience."

3. Nix the News

Real talk: We are living in unprecedented times. Fear, uncertainty and anxiety are running rampant, and most news headlines just add fuel to the fire. What does that have to do with the pint of ice cream you polished off last night? Actually, a lot. "Some studies suggest that individuals may eat 40 percent more calories when stressed," Greene says. "This could be related to the volume of food consumed or the type of food. We know that when stressed, people consume a greater proportion of calories from high-sugar, high-fat or processed, carbohydrate-containing foods, as these have been shown in the short term to dampen negative emotions." These foods also trigger reward systems in the brain that can stimulate the release of feel-good neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine. But while you may feel satisfied by these types of foods in the moment, you may not feel so great if you eat three servings of them daily for the next few months. To keep your stress levels at bay and your intake in check, make an effort to avoid consuming news an hour before as well as during meals and snacks. An overload of COVID-19 info is likely to leave you feeling pretty anxious about the state of the world right now, which may serve as a cue for emotional eating. Thanks, but no thanks.

4. Snack Responsibly

"When it comes to snacks, I recommend including a source of protein as well as a source of fiber to maximize short- and long-term satisfaction," Greene says. "Examples include fruit and nut butter, veggies and hummus or yogurt with pumpkin seeds." If your snack is coming from a box or bag, be mindful of portion size and place it on a plate or in a bowl. "Remember, the serving size on a nutrition facts label is a suggestion," Greene says. "As you become attuned to feelings of hunger and fullness, you can choose to have more or less of a serving." For unpackaged foods like fruits and vegetables, a serving is about the size of your fist, Greene adds. If you find yourself simply snacking to snack, try to replace the habit with another activity. "Start writing daily gratitude lists, begin journaling, pick up a hobby you used to do or make space to move," Smith suggests. "I'm finding yoga incredibly helpful right now."

5. Be Kind to Yourself

Since no one truly knows yet how long we will be stuck at home, vow now to be nice to yourself for the duration of your quarantine. That means ditching the "screw it" mentality — you know, when you fall off your healthy eating game and figure you might as well eat all the things before you get yourself back on track. News flash: "No one ever felt better by doing this!" Smith says. "Don't do it now." Instead, view this forced pause as "a key time to get yourself more focused on your healthy behaviors," she suggests. Because when have you ever had the time to cook dinner every night and squeeze a 20-minute yoga flow in between meetings?

Above all, don't beat yourself up if you do occasionally find yourself emotionally eating during this time. Remember that mindful eating is about experiencing food without judgment. If you find yourself overeating one day, note how it made you feel and craft a plan for the next day. Perhaps you call a friend instead of grabbing another snack or draw a bath instead of serving yourself a second helping of dessert.

FRESH
TOMATOES
🍅
the best of nature™

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS?

June 15-19, 2020
United Fresh Live!
Convention and show rescheduled as online event
www.unitedfreshshow.org

September 17-19, 2020
SEPC's Southern Innovations
Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort
Savannah, GA
www.southerninnovations.seproduceceouncil.com

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