



MARKET UPDATE

Tomatoes: Florida tomato production continues to make the transition from South Florida to the Palmetto/Ruskin area. As southern areas get closer to wrapping up, round and roma tomatoes have sized down but quality remains good. Palmetto and Ruskin crops have begun in earnest and look to have excellent quality and size. Roma acreage is light, as is usual for this time of the season. Grape tomatoes are shipping from both areas with Palmetto/Ruskin's fruit having the better quality.

Although Mainland Mexico is in its seasonal decline, growers continue to have good supplies of mid-sized round tomatoes and will gradually decline as we head toward June. Big fruit is coming from Baja, where new crops have started. Roma production is also declining out of Western Mainland Mexico, but is starting up in Eastern areas. Baja is also shipping romas with volumes increasing as more growers add to the mix. Overall quality and condition remain nice on both rounds and romas. There have been reports of nipping on Baja's romas but that should work out of the system over the next week or so. Grape tomatoes are coming from multiple growing areas with promotable volumes available. Quality is less than desired from Western Mainland Mexico, but is good from Central and Baja, Mexico.

Bell Peppers: South Florida's bell pepper supply is expected to remain steady for the next two weeks, then harvests will shift to the central part of the state. A few growers have already started in the Plant City area with more expected to come on board next week. Despite some quality concerns on fruit from older fields, there is good-quality product available. Western markets have bell peppers available from two areas: Mainland Mexico and the California desert. Mexico's production continues to lighten up as

they head into the seasonal decline with more choice fruit and smaller sizing. The California desert offers great quality and sizing options with volumes increasing as more growers begin to harvest.

Cucumbers: Cucumbers are also making their way through the transition from South to Central Florida. Quality is a little tired from the older growing areas, but new crops have started in Plant City with more on the way. Georgia should also add to the mix in 2-3 weeks. Mainland and Baja Mexico continue to be the source for Western cucumber supply. Crossings have increased after the holiday-related labor shortage and quality has been nice from both areas.

Summer Squash: Hermosillo, Mexico growers expect to continue with a steady supply of nice-quality squash for at least 2 more weeks. The California desert has started in a light way as well. As South Florida finishes up the Spring season, Central Florida farms are bringing good quality and increasing volumes of squash to market. South Georgia has a few growers scratching crops as well and should be into more volume over the next 7-10 days.

Eggplant: Eastern eggplant volume is still centered in South Florida but will transition to Plant City in another two weeks. Quality is fair this week, as crops near the end of their cycle. Western markets are seeing supply decline out of Mexico and get up and rolling in the California desert. Much of Mexico's fruit is not retail quality, moving that demand to the desert.

Chili Peppers: With South Florida winding down and Plant City not yet into significant volumes, Eastern chili pepper production is light, particularly on specialty varieties. In Mexico, Sonora is into some new sets of product. Quality has been hit or miss on Anaheims and poblanos but good on other varieties. Sinaloa is finishing up some older blocks and waiting for new plantings to begin.

TRANSPORTATION FACTS

* The National Diesel Average is up \$.015 this week, moving from \$2.58 to \$2.60 per gallon.

* The average price for a gallon of diesel fuel is \$.43 higher than the same time last year.

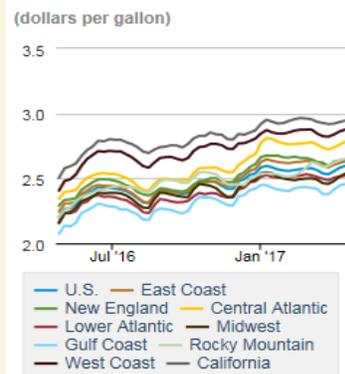
* The diesel fuel price remained stable in New England, but increased in all other reporting areas.

* California remains the high price leader for diesel fuel at \$2.95 while the Gulf Coast region continues to offer the best bargain at \$2.46 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil price fell 5.0% this week, moving from \$53.11 to \$50.44 per barrel.

*Transportation is on the shy side in California and Florida shipping areas this week. However, Mexico crossing points report adequate numbers of trucks available to move product.

On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices



Source: Energy Information Administration

ON THE HORIZON CONTENTS

- An Apple a Day- page 2
- Lipman 5K Run for Backpacks- page 3
- Restaurant Industry News - page 4
- News in the Grocery Trade- page 5

- Produce Barometer-page 3
- April Calendar- page 3
- National Weather Spotlight- page 4
- Pack Your Bags - page 5

AN APPLE A DAY

Adding Calorie Counts on Menus Might Make Americans Eat Better- but Not in the Way You Think

By: Emma Court, www.marketwatch.com, April 20, 2017

Calorie counts on restaurant menus, required in just a few cities until now, will soon be mandatory nationwide. Starting in May, the government will make nearly all businesses that serve food — from sit-down and take-out restaurants to bowling alleys and movie theaters — to say how many calories are in their menu items.

The idea is simple enough: Make the information available, advocates say, and consumers will eat smarter and be healthier. There's a problem, though: It might not help. Research suggests that most people don't choose lighter meals after seeing calorie information on menus. Many consumers don't even notice it.

Restaurants, meanwhile, have learned to game the system, highlighting their lowest-calorie options — like salads without dressing — to improve their numbers. And it's hard to be precise about calorie counts, raising questions about how useful the data are in the first place.

But there's reason to believe the requirements could help make Americans healthier eaters. While it might not change a diner's mind as he or she considers a menu board, it might inspire a healthier choice later, or the diner might head to a different restaurant the next time, and that possibility is motivating restaurants to make changes.

While chains have been reluctant to touch popular menu items for fear of turning off their regulars, the new requirements have prompted them to add healthier options. Some experts say it's industry choices, not consumer habits, that will really improve America's weight problem. Others insist consumers will have the final say.

Restaurants "will do what they have to do, but they're not going to compromise the brand," said Bonnie Riggs, restaurant industry analyst for NPD Group. "People can walk into a fast-food restaurant with good intentions, and when they get there good intentions go out the window sometimes."

Restaurants have long been seen as both a key source of and a

solution to America's weight problem. As obesity rates spiked in the early 2000s, activists blamed the industry's notorious "supersizing" of meals and called for a remedy: displaying calories on menus.

New York City was the first to require menu labeling, in 2008, with other cities and states quickly following suit. More than 20 such laws have been passed in total, in places such as King County, Wash., and the states of Oregon, California, New Jersey and Maine, though some held off implementation because of the pending national regulation. After years of wrangling over what kinds of businesses should have to provide menu labeling and how the labeling should work, the FDA's detailed final rule came out in late 2014.

Any business with 20 or more locations selling "restaurant-type food," or food that's typically eaten soon after purchase, comes under its scope. Under the FDA rule, calorie information has to be displayed next to a food item's name or price, and the menu also has to contextualize the numbers with a short statement about suggested caloric intake — generally about 2,000 calories a day, though that varies by person.

But is all this work for naught? Studies show that not all customers even see the calorie labels. The percentage varies between 28% and 68%, depending on the study. And when examining how menu labels affected the number of calories ordered, researchers' take-aways have been unusually clear: Nearly all have found no significant difference. Industry research has come to the same conclusion.

"Part of what we've found is people tend to look at the good choices and then go back to their standard," said Paco Underhill, an expert on retail and consumer behavior and chief executive of consulting firm Envirosell. Customers may tell researchers they look at calorie counts and consider them, but "there's a difference between what they think they do, or what they would like to do, and what they actually do."

One possibility could be the type of restaurant being studied. Labels seem to make no difference at fast-

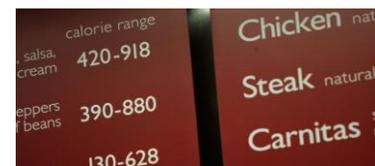
food restaurants, but studies that have looked elsewhere, including Starbucks and full-service chain restaurants, have found more evidence of behavior changing.

Also important: a restaurant's clientele. Customers are more likely to use calorie labels to make a lower-calorie choice if they are women, live in a high-income neighborhood or are between the ages of 18 and 24, according to research reviewing 31 calorie-labeling studies.

Most research has focused on what customers do right after seeing the calorie labels on menus, or at what's called the "point of purchase." But behavior change can also occur in longer-term fashion, which is harder to study. By the time customers set foot in a store, they may already be set on a particular item. But they might use the calorie information the next time they head to the food court, or not go at all, for example.

But the success of calorie labeling ultimately comes down to who customers are and what they want, said David Asch, an M.D. who also holds an MBA and is a professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and Perelman School of Medicine. "There are a bunch of assumptions that are baked into this food labeling: that people will read food labels, that they'll understand them and that they'll be consistent with their goals and values," he said. Wealthy people may end up being the ones who read food labels, he said, while others may use the calorie information in the opposite way, to maximize calories per dollar.

"Calorie labeling and food labeling in general is incredibly well-meaning," he said. "But it requires an extremely stepwise, rational model of decision making for it to actually work. A break in any way along that chain will limit its effectiveness."



To view the full article, please see: <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/adding-calorie-counts-on-menus-might-make-americans-eat-better-but-not-in-the-way-you-d-think-2017-04-13>

LIPMAN 5K RUN FOR BACKPACKS



Come join us this weekend! We're excited to share in the fun and raise money for a great cause. All proceeds go to help supply backpacks full of school supplies for Immokalee school children at our annual Backpack Giveaway!



APRIL 22, 2017 ● GARY BATES STADIUM
 IMMOKALEE FOOTBALL STADIUM
 701 IMMOKALEE DR., IMMOKALEE, FL 34142
 ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE LIPMAN BACKPACK GIVEAWAY



PRE REGISTRATION:
 STUDENTS \$15
 ADULTS \$25

DAY OF REGISTRATION:
 ALL RUNNERS \$30

JR FUN RUN FOR KIDS 10 & UNDER IS FREE

PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



APRIL CALENDAR

Last Week (24th-28th)
 Every Kid Healthy Week
April 23rd
 National Picnic Day
April 25th
 National Zucchini Bread Day
April 26th
 National Administrative Professionals Day

Palmetto, FL Weather

Fri Apr 21	Sat Apr 22	Sun Apr 23	Mon Apr 24	Tue Apr 25	Wed Apr 26
84° F	84° F	82° F	79° F	81° F	84° F
66° F	72° F	72° F	66° F	70° F	68° F
E 13 MPH	ESE 9 MPH	SE 8 MPH	WNW 12 MPH	NNW 10 MPH	NE 8 MPH
		Precip 10%	Precip 30%		

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

Teen Food Spending Hits New High

By: Ron Ruggless, www.nrn.com, April 10, 2017

A lot of money, time and expertise go into uncovering customer desires, including a poll from AlixPartners, which found that in many ways money still rules. Today's diners want it all, but they want it all as cheap as they can possibly get it.

Echoing previous studies that found a consumer shift toward eating at home to save cash, the AlixPartners poll indicated that diners today are well aware of the price gap between restaurant meals and those prepared from groceries or even ready-to-eat items from convenience stores. In fact, when it comes to the folks who opt for those ready-to-eat items for a meal, the survey found more than half (56 percent) said they do it because it's cheaper. The convenience of these meals, though important, was far behind in its level of importance, with just 22 percent of those polled saying this was the main reason they opted for ready-to-eat over restaurant meals.

AlixPartners Managing Director Kurt Schnaubelt said restaurateurs should be picking up some clear signals about their paths forward with today's dining public. As shown in the results reported here Thursday, it's clear that customers want home delivery options, but they also show a good amount of reticence to accept delivery from third-party services outside of restaurant ownership.

"All the companies today putting investments into the third-party and other delivery programs might want to step back a bit and look at their operations holistically, with an eye on packaging and available technologies as well as delivery," Schnaubelt said in a release about the study. "The challenge is to thoroughly understand how well your food 'travels,' and to maintain as much control as possible over the entire process."

The study also found this year that even more diners supported restaurant operators who pay higher wages than in years' past. For instance, 58 percent of those surveyed agreed with the U.S. movement of increasing worker wages, up from 50 percent from last year's survey. As altruistic as that sounds, 16 percent said they wouldn't pay more, up from 13 percent last year.

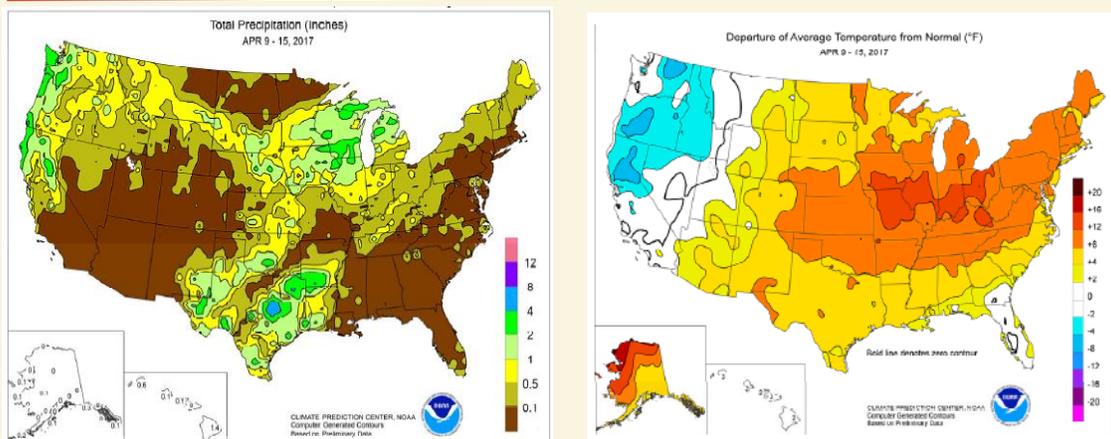
Overall, the study leaves restaurateurs stuck between a rock and a hard place, with the overall industry appearing to be slowing growth-wise — same-store sales for all major foodservice segments were down last year except for QSR — while prices on the menu remained flat even as operators were struggling to pay employees more.

According to leaders at AlixPartners, it's important that operators realize that there are still some areas of opportunity. For instance, while it's true that casual dining grew only 0.8 percent last year, 34 percent also said they wanted more choices in fast casual options. In the fine dining sector, people with the cash to regularly eat at fine dining restaurants are planning to eat out even more this year. There are even some signs now that confirm those finding, including the current success of so-called "specialty" fast casual concepts. Likewise, the poll found that the majority of American consumers (35 percent) chose the gourmet burger segment of the restaurant industry as their favorite option for future growth.

"Clearly, there is still room for indulgences by diners at almost every segment level," Werner said. "The challenge for operators is to zealously find and exploit the opportunities that do exist."

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Weekly Precipitation and Temperature Deviation



NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

Fresh Departments Continue to Dominate Grocers' Differentiation Strategies

By: Bridget Goldschmidt, www.progressivegrocer.com, April 13, 2017

Is fresh overrated? Well, no. Although nonperishable products have definitely gained traction as part of a distinctive in-store experience, to differentiate themselves meaningfully, grocers must still primarily think fresh.

In rating the most successful departments, 67.1 percent of respondents to this year's Annual Report survey chose meat as the top draw, while deli/grocerant/prepared foods occupied the second spot, with 60.8 percent attesting to its popularity. Other big lures were third-place produce, down from last year's top spot; beer/wine/liquor (if applicable), up from fifth place last year; and private label, which soared from No. 12 to round out the top five, in line with store brands' greater importance to the in-store experience. In fact, meat scored as the most influential department in driving stores' overall brand, image or point of differentiation by a wide margin, followed by deli/grocerant/prepared foods, produce, organic, private label and center store.

When asked what big issues were keeping them up at night, 42.8 percent of respondents identified competitive threats, which leapt from 14th place last year to third as a major concern. This response indicates a much rockier competitive landscape for grocers, caused by supermarkets' extremely tight margins and the need to keep up with rapidly changing trends.

Greater competitiveness could explain the uptick in limited-assortment stores, with their promise of quality products at value prices, from 3,325 stores to 3,396, with sales up a whopping 39 percent to account for 3.5 percent of the total supermarket sector, up from 2.6 percent last year.

Be that as it may, the benefits of differentiation are clear: Looking at EBITDA over the last five years, research firm Deloitte LLP found that if a retailer provides differentiated products and experience, then growth is almost 13 percent in that particular segment compared with the average growth of 2 percent, according to *Progressive Grocer* Senior Editor Randy Hofbauer's coverage of the National Retail Federation's Retail's Big Show in January.

When it comes to ways to enhance the in-store experience, 69.5 percent of respondents zeroed in on private label, landing it in first place, up from No. 3 last year. Other popular merchandising and brand enhancement strategies include locally sourced products, holding steady at No. 2; signature products, which climbed from sixth place last year to third this year; grocerant/prepared foods, last year's top program, which slid to the fourth rung; and rounding out the top five, cross-merchandising, which dropped a slot from last year.

In the area of customer interaction, community involvement, seasonal special events and sampling demos all retained their spots in the top three, while healthy-eating store tours rose from seventh place last year to fourth this year, tying with in-store restaurants, which advanced from the fifth slot last year. Descending a rung from last year, this year's No. 5 was wellness events/counseling.

As for in-store services, on-site butchers, community programming and seafood specialists continue to hold the lead, at Nos. 1, 2 and 3, respectively, while promoting a store's florist as a point of differentiation (new to this year's survey) captured fourth place, and event planners/concierge services/catering dipped from No. 4 to No. 5. Also new to the survey were offering vegetable "butchers," a service that's received a lot of attention for its inclusion in recently-opened stores, at No. 6, and providing self-checkout/check-less capabilities, in 11th place.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS!

May 20-23, 2017

National Restaurant Association Show
McCormick Place
Chicago, IL
www.restaurant.org

July 28-30, 2017

PMA Foodservice Conference & Expo
Monterey Conference Center
Monterey, CA
www.pma.com/events

Come see the Lipman team at Booth 514!

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