



MARKET UPDATE

Round Tomatoes: Although our VA round crops are on a 3-week hiatus until September 10th or so, the East's round tomato supply is ample with product available from AL to Canada and many points in between. AL's vine-ripe volumes continue to be steady and strong, while NC and TN have mostly steady numbers of vine-ripes and mature greens to offer. MI, Canada and a number of smaller local deals are also bringing fruit to the table. Most all areas have been dealing with either extreme heat, cold fronts, or almost daily rains which have a negative effect on quality and shelf life. There is good-quality product around, but it can be hit or miss by load. In the West, there are vine-ripes available in both Baja and Eastern Mexico. Baja's supply is moderate and size is shifting down as farms work deeper into current plantings. East Mexico's supply has been light but should begin to improve as they start new acreage. The bigger round tomato volumes are coming from CA's mature green harvests. As with most other growers, Lipman's numbers have been steady or just slightly lower this week, having harvest times cut a little short by extreme heat. Current plantings are faring okay, but with 100+ degree temperatures for the past few weeks, we could see a reduction in volume from bloom drop down the road in late September. There's a mix of quality in CA, but our fruit has been very nice from the current harvest areas which are slightly cooler.

Roma Tomatoes: Most of the East's romas are coming from TN and NC where volumes have been solid and mostly steady. As with rounds, quality can be an issue and this fruit won't work for all customers. The West has Baja, Eastern Mexico and CA romas to choose from. Eastern Mexico is currently in good supply and should taper off into more consistent volume in September. Baja expects moderate supply from summertime plantings as they wait for the Fall acreage to come online in early October. CA's roma volumes have been steady and strong with good quality. But, like rounds, we expect to see the repercussions of extreme heat in another 30 days.

Grape Tomatoes: Most of the same areas offering round tomatoes also have grapes, so this variety is plentiful! Our VA farms have planned lighter volumes for this time frame to accommodate for all the sourcing options that are available at this time of year. We're being very selective on what

picks and plants we harvest so that we can provide better quality than most. There's been plenty of weather on the crops, so careful attention to sorting and packing are important to producing a good box of fruit. We expect to see steady but lighter supply from VA for the next few weeks. Grape tomatoes continue to be plentiful in the West as well. Our Central Mexico program has strong production and nice quality. Baja's volume is a bit lighter this week but we expect to break into new blocks in 10-14 days which will give volume a boost.

Bell Peppers: There's still a lot of pepper in the East this week. Recent weather events have taken a toll on quality in some areas so we may see a reduction in retail-grade fruit over the next few weeks. NJ volume has been very light and quality has been challenging due to the storm from a few weeks ago, but our farms will be back in some new fields by the middle of next week which should definitely provide a shot in the arm for both quality and volume. We're seeing some of the nicer fruit come out of IN, TN and NY this week. Despite an extreme heat wave in the Central Valley, Western pepper supply out of CA remains steady and quality continues to be strong this week. Although the heat hasn't shown too many effects on the fruit so far, things could begin to change over the next week or so.

Cucumbers: With NY having a cold front slow production, NJ's skip between crops prolonged due to the same cold snap, and many of the southern programs either finished or seeing volume declines, the Eastern cucumber deal remains snug. MI has product available but volume is below the normal levels for this time of year. There are bits and pieces available in a number of other areas (IN, TN, VA, etc.) but no real volume. We look to see improvements by next week as NY and NJ work back toward "normal" mode. Overall, quality from most areas is average to good. Western volume is on the lighter side this week as Baja works through a small gap between plantings and Mainland production has been slowed by weather. Expect to see more fruit next week.

Summer Squash: Similar to last week, there are a number of areas with squash in the East but not as many with good quality. NJ's post-storm gap has been extended due to cooler weather, but they

should be in new fields this weekend. Quality has been hit or miss from MI but has been more consistently good from TN and KY. As is the norm, zucchini quality is better overall than yellow. Due to warmer weather, the West is starting to see production increases which should continue for a few weeks. The one concern is that if it gets too hot in the growing areas, that could limit pickers working in the fields to half days or less. Also any extended extreme heat could cause a bloom drop and/or stunt the growth of the plants.

Eggplant: NJ and SC continue to have steady supplies of eggplant with good quality. Other areas such as VA, KY, TN, IN, and NY also continue with light volumes. With eggplant being a more weather-hardy product, we expect supply to maintain the status quo for at least the next several weeks. As for the West, CA's Central Valley volume has slowed down a bit due to current heat. High temperatures have slowed production and limited harvest crews.

Hard Squash: The primary areas for hard squash in the East are KY, NY and NC. Our KY grower partner has now moved into their larger Fall plantings and should have plenty of all 3 varieties through the rest of the season. They've had a few hit or miss quality issues with maturity and scarring on spaghetti, but no real concerns on butternut or acorn. One grower in NY who has early crops is beginning to wind down on spaghetti, but in just a few weeks several other farms will come online. Western hard squash availability remains steady out of CA. With extended triple digits in this week's forecast, some quality issues might change things up in the next week, especially on the more tender varieties such as acorn.

Green Beans: After a snug market for a few weeks, green bean supplies have gained strength in the East. Product is available in IN, TN, MI, PA, NY and a few other local hot spots with mostly good quality. NY farms, usually strong producers, may see a temporary reduction in supplies as a cool front works its way through the area. (One morning low was in the 40's this week!) Pending any weather disturbances, supply should stay consistent for the next few weeks. Western supply has also improved this week as 3 growing areas that were gapping are back in harvests.

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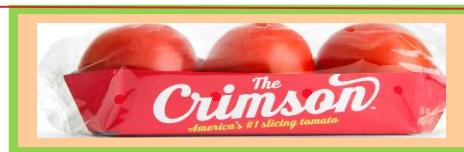
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KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

Industry Viewpoint: Defining Customer Value Amid COVID-19

By: Lesley Daniels, www.theproducenews.com, August 14, 2020

In March, as the world shifted into national emergency mode, food retail revenue climbed to record levels. While demand increased and carefully calibrated supply chains were disrupted, the cost of groceries continued to rise at the fastest pace in decades. These increases were also met with uneasy shoppers who stocked up in fewer stores, with fewer trips, making those increased prices seem even larger as their households' monthly total food spend was now very visible and accessible with only a few mental additions of trip totals.

Even the households that were not feeling the stress of unemployment and food insecurity were rethinking and shifting their values, exhibiting thrifty behaviors, and selectively trading down in some categories. While the data tells us the overall total food spending was down or flat to pre-pandemic levels when given the proportionate decline of restaurant food spending, the sticker shock and large retail rings have left shoppers redefining value in the age of COVID-19. Even now in August as the sharpest hikes have eased somewhat, shoppers are changing their value models and definitions.

So, what is value and how do our shoppers define it? To start, the shopper's value is not the same as your value proposition. It is, however, anything that the customer knows about and is willing to pay for. With that definition, let's explore some of the ways shoppers are expanding their definition of value.

Quality: What once was a 'get the most for my money' mindset shoppers began to seek additional dimensions to the definition of quality. This expansion over the last decade broadened quality to also include taste, food safety and transparency of the supply chain.

Now with health and wellness at the center of our daily conversations, shoppers have yet again expanded their quality definition and are looking for foods that will provide the greatest nutritional value, heal, increase immunity and lower inflammation. They are seeking foods that are functional in their wellness strategy. This is a great time for fresh produce to shine and emerge as the core department for shoppers pursuing healthful eating.

Experience: For years we have been talking about creating meaningful experiences for our customers as opposed to selling them things. The store experience has expanded well past reducing front end wait times and bright and clean stores. Visual displays, cooking classes, meal kits, even walk around beers are now a thing and have continued to expand the shoppers' value and how experience is defined.

Now we shall shift again to accommodate the shoppers' online experience, sanitation and safety practices, and contactless transactions. Man, I wish I had owned stock in a plexiglass company in January. This is now the new experience and it seems to be here for the foreseeable future.

We need to embrace technology; educate our shoppers on the efforts we are taking to keep them healthy and train our associates to pick beautiful produce. Will I get five bananas or five bunches of bananas this time? I always wish I could provide my picker with details on how to choose my four avocados (two ripe and two with a few days to go).

Retailers are also in a unique position to help with simple meal solutions. I think everyone is a bit tired of cooking or experiencing some level of meal fatigue. Leveraging social media and inspiring new and easy recipes that can make mealtime fun and easy are in high demand. As families return to some form of a school routine this month many parents will be even more time-starved and seeking solutions to get them in and out of the kitchen.

Purpose: Even before coronavirus made its way into our vocabulary, shoppers were using their purchasing power for good. The practice of seeking brands that align with their personal values and beliefs has been well established. Being mindful of the communities we serve, and support goes even further today as social justice continues to be measured across the nation.

The good news is that shoppers are buying more fresh produce than before the pandemic — proof that fresh produce is key to the future of retail and will play a key role in the expanding value dimensions of the shopper.

(Lesley Daniels is the account development director for Produce for Kids)



TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*The average US diesel fuel price held steady this week at \$2.43 per gallon.

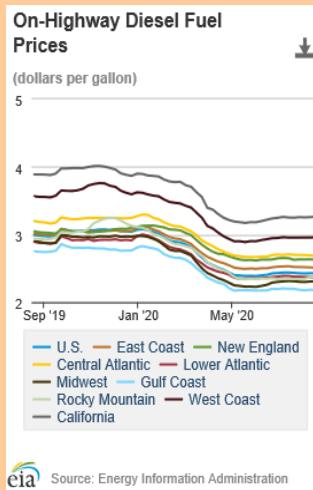
*The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.57 lower than the same time last year.

*California and the Midwest reported minimal price increases (less than \$.01), while all other areas came in with similar price declines of less than \$.01 per gallon.

*As usual, California has the highest price at \$3.26 per gallon, while the Gulf Coast remains the low-price leader at \$2.18 per gallon. (No price change in either location.)

*The WTI Crude Oil price remained relatively steady over the last 7 days, moving from \$42.67 to \$42.93 per barrel.

* Trucks remain short in NC, IN, IL and the Delmarva area this week. CA and NM also report slight shortages but all other areas have adequate transportation available.



NEW PRODUCT ALERT**LIPMAN**
FRESH-CUTClipped & Cleaned
GREEN BEANS**GREEN BEAN SZN
IS COMING...**

- Approximately 20 million American households will serve green bean casseroles for Thanksgiving this year

- 656k tons of beans will be distributed during the Thanksgiving season

- "Green bean casserole" is one of the most Googled Thanksgiving recipes

**MORE THAN JUST A
CASSEROLE SIDE DISH...****Toasted garlic butter green beans**

Pre-cut and cleaned, this side dish couldn't be easier to prepare. Whether it's for a family barbecue or as part of your Thanksgiving spread, this dish has two ingredients that can make everything better: garlic and butter.

**Roasted Green Beans and Grape Tomatoes**

With the earthy flavors from green beans and the sweet, juicy flavors of a roasted grape tomato, this side dish adds a pop of color to your buffet spread. You can toss it in the oven and be good to go!

Tempura Fried Green Beans

Looking for a side dish that gives the savory, salty crunchiness from the green bean casserole, but with a new twist? Try tempura friend green beans as your next side dish!

**Lemon Garlic Green Beans**

Try a tangy twist to lighten the side with a lemon garlic sauce. Great for any holiday or gathering - and the best news is, they're available all year long!

FRESH**FRESH CUT*****the best
of nature™*****PRODUCE BAROMETER**

ITEM	QUALITY	PRICING
Bell Pepper	Varied	E-Lower; W-Lower
Cucumber	Mostly Good	E-Steady; W-Higher
Eggplant	Mostly Good	E-Lower; W-Steady
Green Beans	Varied	E-Lower; W-Steady
Jalapenos	Good	E-Steady; W-Steady
Squash-Hard	Varied	E-Higher; W-Steady
Squash-Soft	Varied	E-Steady; W-Lower
Tomatoes	Fair to Good	E-Lower; W-Lower

**AUGUST CALENDAR****All Month**

National Sandwich Month

August 25th

National Whiskey Sour Day

August 27th

National Burger Day

August 29th

More Herbs, Less Salt Day

August 31st

National South Carolina Day

Eat Outside Day

Manteca, CA Weather

Sat Aug 22	Sun Aug 23	Mon Aug 24	Tue Aug 25	Wed Aug 26
98°F 71°F WNW 8 MPH	98°F 71°F NW 10 MPH	98°F 71°F WNW 13 MPH	96°F 68°F NW 11 MPH	96°F 64°F WNW 10 MPH

NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

Three Customer-Facing Tech Fails to Avoid

By: Dan Berthiaume, www.chainstoreage.com, August 14, 2020

Especially as COVID-19 disrupts consumer shopping patterns, retailers must ensure they do not alienate customers with dissatisfying technology experiences.

Non-virtual loyalty offerings

We are two-thirds of the way through 2020. Statista data shows that more than 70% of the U.S. population owns a smartphone. Yet many retailers still require customers to download and print out coupons from a website or email, or carry a physical loyalty card, or hold on to printed receipts for future discounts.

There is no excuse for not having a fully digitalized CRM/loyalty program that provides customers everything they need to track and collect rewards, discounts and points from their smartphone. Stores should be equipped with barcode readers, clienteling systems, and any other hardware and software needed to verify and deliver virtual loyalty offers. Retailers should still provide the option of non-virtual loyalty fulfillment for the other 30% of their customer base who do not use smartphones.

Multiple apps

Consumers suffer from “app fatigue,” with experts saying the average smartphone owner has as many as 60-90 apps on their device. Estimates on how many apps the typical person actually uses on a daily basis range from nine to as few as three.

Requiring consumers to download multiple apps, such as one for shopping and one for managing loyalty programs, does not make sense given this situation. Busy customers have to make a fair amount of effort just to find a single app, let alone toggle back and forth between two different apps to engage with one retailer. In addition, loading an app with a lot of different features and functions can provide competitive differentiation in the very crowded and competitive retail app space.

Not disclosing third-party delivery policies

As e-commerce sales have surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, so has demand for fast delivery of online purchases. In an effort to quickly stand up or reinforce their supply chains to handle spikes in delivery demand, many retailers have been turning to third-party delivery platforms.

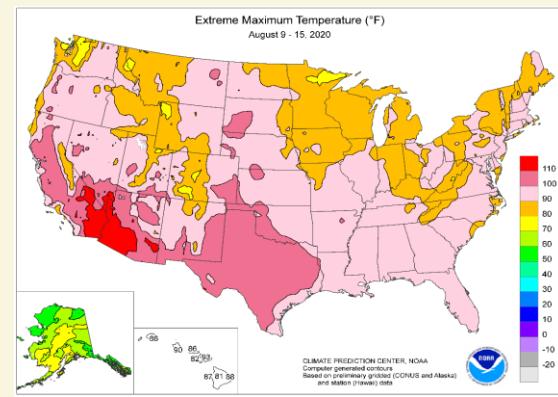
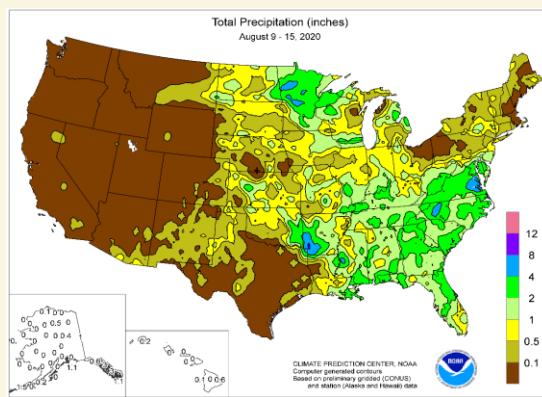
In and of itself, this arrangement makes a lot of sense. Third-party delivery platforms eliminate the need to purchase vehicles or develop complex last-mile delivery infrastructure. Some also provide installation and setup services for home entertainment, electronics and furnishings. For a retailer without capability to deliver online orders to consumers, or who needs extra support, third-party platforms are an ideal solution.

However, consumers need to be fully informed when a third-party platform is fulfilling their online purchase. They also need to know ahead of time how a delivery from a third-party platform may affect situations such as returns or service complaints. Consumers living in the “Information Age” expect no less.

This selection has been edited for content and space. Please visit www.chainstoreage.com to review the entire article.

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Last Week's Precipitation Totals and Extreme Maximum Temperatures



RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

Poll Reveals 3 Things Customers Expect During COVID-19

By: Ido levanon, www.fastcasual.com, August 18, 2020

The reopening of restaurants across the U.S. has been a trying process as coronavirus cases have surged in the South and West regions. However, restaurant owners have continued to push through, offering outdoor dining as well as take-out and delivery to keep their businesses as close to on track as they can.

To better understand consumers' mindset and sentiment toward foodservice during the pandemic, we conducted a survey of more than 1,000 U.S. adults. Although we found that consumers were still wary of indoor dining, we also uncovered opportunities for restaurants to consider for ultimate success.

1. Restaurants must take ownership of deliveries

The past five months have been a serious adjustment for the restaurant industry. In this difficult landscape, consumers have become more cautious than ever, leading them to shy away from even their go-to restaurants. According to the survey, nearly 70% of respondents said food delivered without the use of protective gear has deterred or would deter them from ordering from the same restaurant again. Additionally, nearly 40% of respondents said they'd fault the restaurant if they placed an order through a delivery app and had a poor experience. Restaurants are in a unique position to take control of the delivery experience, whether that means hiring their own drivers or using technology to provide insight into the delivery status to make consumers feel more comfortable.

2. Contactless carry out is a must

As consumers have shifted into their new normal, they are very particular about what they feel are the quickest, safest, and most convenient food ordering options. However, it is up to restaurant orders to ensure that consumers' expectations are met.

For example, nearly 70% of respondents said that they had ordered food for delivery during the pandemic, indicating delivery as a go-to means for dining during the pandemic. However, of those who said they were using the delivery aggregators such as Seamless, UberEats, GrubHub, etc. more than they did before, over 70% said they would be more inclined to order for carryout over delivery if given the option for a contactless experience. By providing the option for contactless carry-out, restaurants are able to provide a safe and convenient way to interact with customers while also reducing the need to use delivery services that eat into restaurant profits.

3. Consumers had high expectations for delivery, and they have only gotten higher

Consumers have always had high expectations when it comes to ordering out, and the onset of COVID-19 has only exacerbated them. Over 80% of respondents said that they were using delivery marketplace the same or more than they did before the pandemic made its way to the U.S. They also shared that their poorest deliveries resulted from their orders being incorrect or incomplete, not being delivered hot, fresh and not being delivered on time.

Restaurants are in a unique position to not just meet but exceed customer expectations. And investing in technology to optimize the kitchen and delivery services can help. As restaurants take the time to figure out their next moves and reevaluate what has worked, it will become clear that streamlining processes with the customer experience in mind will be key to their success in the long run.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS?

October 13-15, 2020
 PMA Fresh Summit
 Online Event
 To learn more, visit:
www.pma.com/events/freshsummit

November 13-14, 2020
 West Coast Produce Expo
 JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa
 Palm Desert, CA
www.westcoastproduceexpo.com

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