



MARKET UPDATE

Round Tomatoes: Volume still has a way to go to reach normal seasonal levels, but Lipman's VA crops have brought a nice shot of product and mostly consistent volumes to the East. Fruit quality is good and the sizing profile is on the bigger side. TN farms are harvesting a few with the larger growers expecting "normal" volumes around the 1st of August. Our NC mountain grower is off to a late start but is slowly ramping up with good quality and sizing. There's also fruit coming out of NJ and some vine-ripes in AL. With several different areas just starting, we look to see Eastern volume have a nice boost in the next 10-14 days. Out in the West, CA's overall round tomato volume is down but remains adequate. Some growers in the Firebaugh area are experiencing limited yields due to disease issues. However, Lipman farms aren't experiencing those concerns and expect steady volumes for the next three weeks. Our size profile has been small due to heat, but turned 180 degrees this week, bringing us a significantly larger percentage of bigger fruit. Quality has cleaned up as we've moved deeper into the crops so we're seeing improvements in packouts as well. Vine-ripe programs in Baja will have moderate but lighter volumes as they move into summer acreage while East Mexico should see gradual increases as they get further into new crops.

Roma Tomatoes: There are now 3 areas in the East with light volumes of romas- TN, NJ and NC. TN's roma numbers are stronger than rounds, but haven't hit consistent levels yet. Western NC shipped romas for the first time this week and NJ farms have also begun harvesting in a light way. Each of these areas should see gradual increases over the next few weeks as the East tries to work its way back to some semblance of normal. Quality has been good from all areas so far. As with rounds, Baja will continue the season with moderate supply while East Mexico will have more product for the next few weeks as they move further into new acreage. CA's roma numbers have been steadier than rounds and should continue with consistency for the next 2-3 weeks. There's still some mixed quality around, but Lipman fruit is getting nicer as we've moved into new fields.

Grape Tomatoes: Our VA crops are providing the strongest grape tomato volumes to the East. Production has been steady, but not daily, and quality is nice. There are also grapes in smaller volumes on both sides of NC with no major quality concerns. Central Mexico crops continue to have good supply of grapes although this week's numbers have been down slightly. Baja is providing consistent volumes, helping ensure that supply keeps up with Western demand.

Bell Peppers: Although it's been a slow go, bell pepper production has finally regionalized and spread to a number of new Eastern production areas. Our Eastern NC deal will wrap up sometime next week, leaving NJ and MI as the primary centers of volume. However, there's also peppers to pick in VA, IN, TN, KY, and Western NC. Quality is good in most areas although there are some minor pitting and discoloration concerns here and there. Stay tuned as NY and Canada should be up and running within the next two weeks. The West has fully transitioned to Fresno and Gilroy where supplies are steady, quality is good, and larger sizes are readily available.

Cucumbers: Cucumber production has also spread to a number of areas in the East with the strongest volumes coming from MI and NJ. As pop-up showers and summer heat envelop most of the East, we are seeing some hit and miss quality issues. Shriveled ends, sunken areas, and scarring are the main concerns, and NJ's fruit is generally better than MI's. There are small pockets of product in several other areas (NC, TN, KY, and VA) but most of that stays local. In the West, all Baja growers are going strong and we expect good volume moving forward. There's also good supply out of Central Mexico. Overall quality remains strong and we don't anticipate issues.

Green Beans: With VA going strong and MI, TN, IN and NY also harvesting, there's an adequate amount of beans in the East to meet demand. There have been a few quality issues with product out of IN and MI, but they seemed to have cleaned up this week. Unless weather creates challenges, we look good for the next few weeks. Western markets also have ample green beans as all five growing areas have product.

Summer Squash: Squashes continue to be available from both smaller local deals and larger regional providers in the East. Again, the bigger numbers are coming out of MI and NJ but there's enough squash in local areas to reduce dependence on these larger production areas. Quality is varied and mostly depends on the amount and frequency of rain any given area has received. MI's fruit has seen quite a few afternoon showers and that is resulting in shorter shelf life. NJ's fruit is better, although they've had some occasional issues by field. Some of the better quality reports over the past week have come from TN, NY and KY. Baja, Santa Maria and the CA Central Valley have been in strong volume but will begin to lighten up a bit as they play out their fields and get ready to start their next blocks which should break around the 1st week of August.

Eggplant There's more eggplant in the East this week as NJ and a few more local deals have gotten started. Our Eastern NC farm continues to harvest its reduced acreage only once per week but yields have been at or above average and quality is nice. Now we have light availability in VA and SC and expect to see product from NY, IN, and MI within a few weeks. Western eggplant numbers are still on the small side as Fresno and Baja are both in a lighter production mode.

Hard Squash: Hard squash supply is improving in the West as Linden and Lodi come into product. The Fresno/Selma areas are steady and butternut squash from Mexico is still coming in through Nogales at discounted levels. Spaghetti squash has the strongest demand and is still snug. Hard squash is still a waiting game for the East as there's no significant volume around. Even programs that normally have pretty good numbers this time of year are either seeing a slow start (like KY) or are dealing with crop loss (as in Eastern NC). NJ harvested its first butternut this week, but it looks to be another 3 weeks before they see other varieties mature. By that time, MI, NY and PA should be underway and our KY partner should move into larger plantings. So, we wait.

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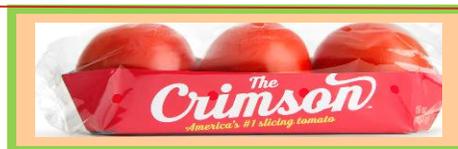
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RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS

10 Restaurant Trends Fueled by the Pandemic

By: Melissa Calvert, www.fastcasual.com, July 13, 2020

The restaurant industry is expected to lose \$240 billion by the end of 2020, according to the National Restaurant Association, and until things can go back to being the way they were pre-pandemic, we have to accept the new norms that pertain to dining out — among other things.

Dining out has always been one of those experiences that can range from being utterly random to extremely special. To put it better in perspective, think about the lunch meal you used to grab with your work buddy from a nearby café and on the flipside the dinner buffet you had last time you went out for a team meeting with your boss. It seems like two extremes, right?

As we steer deeper into the period where technology is taking over everything, and we have to learn to live with this pandemic until further notice. One cannot help but notice how much of our choices have been manipulated based on the convenience of technology. Now, we would instead order in for a casual meal and complete a pre-booking online for a dinner reservation if it is something special because many restaurants are not allowing more than 25% of public capacity.

According to a recent survey report on integrating technology in the restaurant business, 95% of restaurant owners said they have seen a significant boom in their business ever since they have embedded technology in their processes. With such high figures, it is clear that technology has shaped many restaurant trends for the years coming ever since the new decade has started with the year 2020. Therefore even during this pandemic, the restaurant industry is thriving by leveraging technology as it continues to envelop every mode of our lifestyle.

Below are 10 trends that will continue to play out during the second half of the year.

1. Good vibes as a getaway from lockdown

Many restaurants have yet to open up for a full 100% capacity, but until then, there is still a demand for eating out, but it's not just about sustenance. It is more about the experience that builds up as per the place where you choose to go. One of the top emerging trends has been people wanting fast and casual good vibes over other aspects. If the place has a nice but casual ambiance to hang out with friends, complements your Instagram aesthetics, and has an overall good vibe, it will be a huge success. According to recent statistical publications in this regard, this restaurant segment is expected to grow to a whopping \$863 billion in total sales as more and more restaurants adopt this fast and casual style. *Source: Finances Online*

2. Food for the mind and soul

It is a menu trend based on understanding your consumers that started in the pursuit of satisfying more than just a hungry stomach. As the lockdown and pandemic have been very depressing, people are leaning toward having a good experience when they step out to eat. Soul food and mind food, as the terms suggest, is a type of dining experience that caters to providing a unique feeling of fulfilling your soul and makes you more mindful of what you are eating. People now want to go beyond just the fundamental functional aspects of food and want to be catered for how the food actually makes them feel. From traditional comfort food luxuries that satisfy cravings to a complete mood board on a plate that suits customers' states of mind, restaurants must provide both.

3. Boom for online ordering during COVID-19

Nobody wants to step out of their comfort zone and dress up when they are just in the mood for a quiet night of Netflix. As technology makes it easier to order your food right at your fingertips, who will not want to order in? Many people embrace ordering food online through apps designed precisely to do that. It is safe to say that this is going to be a massive trend wave all around the year, also due to the pandemic. People have been suggested to stay home as much as they can. And as many restaurants still haven't opened up for the general public and others allowed to open with a 25% dine-in capacity range, ordering online and eating-in seems like a great option to not miss out on your favorite eateries.

4. Sustainable and organic eating to stay healthy in the pandemic

Consumers are making real changes in the industry as the demands for food to be more sustainable, organic, healthier and ethical have come into play. Also, there is a massive role of the pandemic here as people want to stay fit and healthy to surpass this period without falling sick. According to a recent survey poll, 61% of consumers would pick a healthier option on the menu as compared to their choice two years ago. Community involvement and awareness of being socially responsible have drastically changed

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TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*The average US diesel fuel price dipped slightly this week, moving from \$2.44 to \$2.43 per gallon.

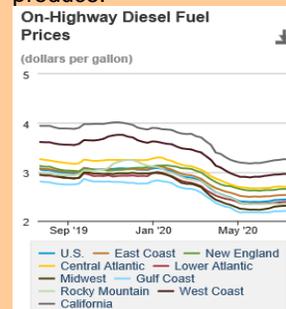
*The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.61 lower than the same time last year.

*Only one area (the West Coast) had a very slight price increase. All other reporting zones came in steady or with slight price declines of \$.01 or less.

*As usual, California has the highest price at \$3.25 per gallon, while the Gulf Coast remains the low-price leader at \$2.20 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil held relatively steady this week, only moving from \$40.75 to \$41.07 per barrel.

* IN, IL and CA's San Joaquin Valley have slight to moderate truck shortages on their first USDA report of the season. The Carolinas are also a little short, but all other areas report enough trucks to move produce.



Source: Energy Information Administration

News Bites
From Chef Wil



Message from the Chef:

Most people don't know what to do with green beans, but they are so versatile. Think of any dish with a green vegetable in it, or any vegetable in it, and you can add or replace it with green beans. As many other vegetables get soft during the cooking process, you can easily keep green beans "crisp" for a texture difference in the meal.

I believe green beans are one of the most underutilized fresh produce items on the shelf. Everyone overlooks them, or thinks they're only good for casseroles. Green beans can be sautéed, grilled or even oven roasted. They don't only have to be steamed!



Inspired by the Chinese originated dish Broccoli Beef

BEEF & GREEN BEAN STIR FRY

Recipe Highlights

- 12oz Lipman's pre-cut and cleaned green beans, cut into 1" pieces
- ½ lb thinly sliced beef tenderloin
- 2 Tbs brown sugar
- 1 Tbs corn starch
- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 1/8 tsp ground ginger
- 3 Tbs soy sauce
- 1 Tbs sesame oil
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Sesame seeds for garnish

@GREEN_BEAN_BUYERS

- Our fresh-cut green beans are offered in bulk and 12oz and 24oz retail bag options
- Their shelf life is pack date **+18 days** for bulk and pack date **+12 days** for retail



FRESH

FRESH CUT



the best of nature™

PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



JULY CALENDAR

- All Month
- National Pickle Month
- July 27th**
- National New Jersey Day
- July 29th**
- National Lasagna Day
- July 30th**
- National Chili Dog Day
- July 31st**
- System Administrator Appreciation Day

Manteca, CA Weather

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Jul 25	Jul 26	Jul 27	Jul 28	Jul 29
95° F	96° F	95° F	94° F	93° F
63° F	63° F	63° F	61° F	61° F
N 8 MPH	N 10 MPH	NNW 11 MPH	NW 10 MPH	NNW 13 MPH

NEWS IN THE GROCERY TRADE

The Future of Retail

By: Bruce Peterson, www.producemarketguide.com, July 17, 2020

No one would argue that events over the past 6 months are going to have a profound and lasting effect on the future of retailing in general and produce specifically. And while a discussion of that future has several caveats to it, here are a few things that I think will become evident.

Produce departments will become smaller. This was already happening prior to the pandemic, but the rise in online shopping, coupled with fewer trips to the store, will cause a significant reduction in space devoted to fresh fruits and vegetables.

I am already seeing display fixtures being shortened or removed and merchandise space being given over to shelf-stable items or non-produce merchandise. Retailers simply can not absorb the shrink that it is occurring from the slowdown in turns.

This will significantly impact the volume of highly perishable items such as stone fruit and soft veg as retailers will not be "mass merchandising" these items in an attempt to reduce spoilage.

Produce department stock-keeping units will decrease significantly. This is a function of the move to online shopping.

Historically, 80% or more of produce sales came from impulse shopping. A consumer would browse through the produce department and discover new or seasonal merchandise that looked good. But the online shopper makes purchase decisions by reviewing an assortment. And there is no way they will take the time to browse 600+ items.

Another factor in this is that the consumer now has in-store personnel doing their shopping for them so they can pick it up or have it delivered. Retailers have been struggling for years with training produce department staff, let alone the thousands of people being used to shop for the consumer. So, assortments will be streamlined to items that can be handled correctly and simply.

Packaging will continue to proliferate. Food safety/traceability and sanitation were driving more packaging before the pandemic. People are more concerned than ever about how their food is handled. There are fewer knowledgeable people doing the shopping for customers; random-weight produce, which needs to be weighed on a scale, is more difficult for in-store shoppers to select for the online shopper.

Brands will become irrelevant. Private label was proliferating in major retailers already. And produce buyers are far less experienced with traditional shipper labels, so they are less inclined to maintain continuity of label on display.

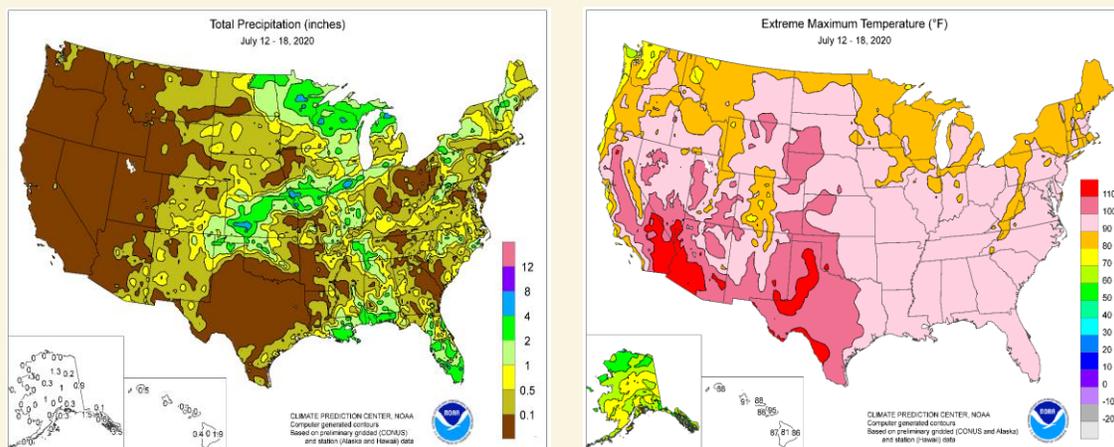
Foodservice was a major driver of many produce brands. But with foodservice being decimated by the pandemic, and a slow recovery on the horizon, the retail channel is begin looked at to pick up the slack. Good luck with getting today's produce buyer to pay a premium!

While there will be many other evolutions of the produce department, I mention these because of their impact on the total produce supply chain. And while the pandemic was not the cause of these changes, it accelerated the rate at which they will take place. All of retailing is being affected, and the produce.

Note: This article reflects the opinion of its author and may or may not reflect the views of Lipman Family Farms.

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Last Week's Precipitation Totals and Extreme Maximum Temperatures



RESTAURANT INDUSTRY NEWS...CONTINUED

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people's priorities, even when it comes to food. The knowledge mostly comes from social media playing a huge role in shaping people's opinions. *Source: Finances Online*

5. Foodtech: robot waiters, tablet devices for contactless dining

A considerably unique as well as incredibly cool experience would be to have a robot take your order. As fantastical it may sound, it is very possible. As the world adjusts to the new norm, contactless dining is coming in to play. Today, we can walk in a restaurant and easily expect orders to be automated through a touchable computer screen menu or just a single floor manager handing us the tablet to confirm our orders. As per the figures given in a survey result for a dining experience with technology, 73% of the respondents said that technology added more to their dining experience. As much as it feels like this is a feat yet to perfect, it is very much achievable, demanded, and appreciated by consumers that like to dine out.

6. More vegan and vegetarian options

As the world continues to grow into one giant global society, we have become more inclusive of people's choices, especially when it comes to food during this pandemic. Many restaurants now offer a whole side menu for vegans and vegetarians, and some have even gone as far as creating a fine dining experience with just vegan food. As more people embrace veganism or convert to a vegetarian, restaurants have adjusted to the food dynamics and now provide even similar dishes as vegan-alternative. In addition to this, restaurants have also integrated other cultural food dynamics like kosher and halal food in support of such practices.

7. Transparency in hygiene, quality and environment

As people have become more aware of what they should eat, their choices have been dictated by the mere fact of this knowledge. Restaurants that are more transparent with the hygiene of their ingredients, food preparation, cooking, staff, and just the general environment will see this trend work in their favor. People are more likely to indulge when they know what goes into making their food. Also, given how people have become picky about their eating hygiene due to the pandemic, the majority would resort to restaurants that put hygiene as a priority and are transparent with the preparation of the food.

8. LTOs and fun meals

Starbucks is thriving off of this simple strategy where they come up with one drink or snack and make it available for a limited time that creates hype. No wonder those drinks don't taste as good but still go viral because they are made to the market. As we consumers continue to snap our food and value the fact that we were amongst the first ones to taste something that is for a limited time, such trends will continue to soar and make us feel exclusive.

9. Boutique and luxury experiences to relieve stress

Social media has played a considerable part in shaping how restaurants design their food and dining experiences. Now, when customers empty their pockets, they want to show friends online. The trend of boutique and luxurious experience caters to that. From luxury food ingredients like caviar, truffle, edible gold, and the most expensive alcohol to velvet-tufted chairs, chandeliers and a rotating mirror bar, the business is not for the food alone anymore. It is for the experience and for the exclusivity of devouring the best in the world ingredients that many can only think to have.

10. Instagrammable and social media-friendly dishes are still a thing

From the black ice-cream and buns, charcoal made waves a week years ago just as we have seen macha-flavored everything. The list of Instagrammable trends continues. What's next?

Bottom Line

Sharing food and eating experiences have defined us as a human race. It forms the bases of culture, religion, relationships, and many more things that we hold most dear, so even though we are fighting a pandemic, people still crave the restaurant experience.

FRESH TOMATOES the best of nature™

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & PACK YOUR BAGS?

September 17-19, 2020
SEPC Southern Innovations
Savannah Convention Center
Savannah, GA
www.seproducecouncil.com

October 6, 2020
NEPC Golf Tournament
Indian Pond Country Club
Kingston, MA
www.newenglandproducecouncil.com

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