



MARKET UPDATE

Tomatoes: Florida's round tomato volume is about the same as last week's- adequate but somewhat lighter than a month ago. Similar numbers are expected for the next 2-3 weeks as farms transition from final Winter plantings into Spring crops. Lipman farms are reporting very nice quality, but there's some lesser fruit in the market. The size profile is evenly spread out but high demand on 6x6's has made them a bit on the short side. Full Spring volume is expected to hit in about 3 weeks. Grape tomato harvests are also steady as farms transition between seasonal crops. Florida farms are a little shy on romas this week, as the transition is little tighter when there's less acreage. Roma quality varies from farm to farm, depending on the weather conditions crops have experienced.

Like Florida, Mexico's round and roma crops are in a slight lull as growers wait for new plantings to begin later this month. Between vine-ripes and mature greens, most sizes are available but jumbos are on the short side. West Mexico's roma crops are a little slow due to recent cool weather and crop transitions but we anticipate better volumes late this month/early next month. In defiance of almost every other commodity in Mexico, grape tomato quality and quantities will remain strong for at least the next week.

Bell Peppers: Older fields in Florida have played out, leaving mostly new Spring crops for this week's production. Current sizing is about 60% jumbo and 2XL, not leaving much available for the retailer-preferred XL and smaller fruit. New crop quality is excellent with nice color and strong walls. Look for some volume improvement over the next few weeks as more Spring crops come into play. In Mexico, Sonora growers have joined Sinaloa farms in bell pepper production but volume and size are slow to come. Sinaloa's farmers are starting to come out of the bloom drop concerns they've

faced, but are struggling to ship fruit with size. As well, there are some quality challenges with scarring and mis-shape evident from past weather. Look for better yields over the next week with more "normal" production eventually coming in about 3 weeks.

Cucumbers: While cool weather set back cucumber production in Sinaloa last week, warmer weather is bringing crops on. By this weekend, crossings are expected to pick up with adequate volumes for the next few weeks. Baja will also start over the next 7-10 days, further helping with supply. As for the East, Honduras import cucs are winding down quickly! Although they will continue to bring product (mostly offgrades) in for the next 7-10 days, the availability of SS fruit is for all practical purposes, done for the season. Eastern availability will be light for the next few weeks as Florida's Spring crops gradually come to the table. Look for Florida to ramp up in 2-3 weeks, depending on mother nature.

Summer Squash: Spring squash crops are starting up in South Florida and thankfully, quality is much improved on the new crops. Volumes are adequate to meet demand this week. Look for volume to remain pretty steady in South FL for the next 2-3 weeks, at which point Plant City will enter the picture as well. Although the Mexican squash scenario has been a bit tough over the past few weeks, warmer weather and new crops in the north are slowly bringing the numbers back. Quality has been pretty consistent on zucchini but varies on yellow, in part due to varieties and weather.

Eggplant: Demand has perked up on eggplant as we've entered the Lent season. Florida's production has been light but we should see a gradual increase over the next 3 weeks as more growers begin new crop harvests. Mexico farms are crossing adequate and steady numbers. Quality is average from both areas, with some occasional problem lots.

Chili Peppers: With more players getting in the game, we should see better production levels on chili peppers this weekend. But, with the Lent season upon us, all hot peppers, especially poblano anaheim, and tomatillo, will have stronger than usual demand. With the Mexican National Market kicking into high gear from now until Easter, we will see high demand for several weeks. Quality has really improved now that we have the Mazatlan/ Escuinapa region going. Sinaloa/Sonora are getting better numbers, just not enough of them yet. The next 7 days should be good for hot peppers in volume and quality, barring any weather issues. Florida has seen a slight uptick in volume this week as a few growers begin harvesting new crops in South Florida. Volume will remain light until Plant City is up and running in a month so most of the East will be looking to Mexico to fill demand.

Colored Bell Peppers: Colored bell peppers continue to be very short. Mexico growers are reaching for color to satisfy demand resulting in significant greening on almost every arrival. This is a result of weather issues most growers went thru 6-8 weeks ago and the fact that several major growers picked peppers at the green stage to capitalize on elevated green bell markets. Major improvements aren't expected for about 2 more weeks.

Hard Squash: Hard squash is in its normal March woe.....The next two weeks will be very sporadic for hard squash in yield, quality, and overall size. Sonora farms have been waiting for sunlight to help color up spaghetti, and for size to come on for all varieties. Quality has been pretty good considering weather patterns. We are however seeing higher levels of ground lay on acorn, mechanical damage on butternut, and lack of color on spaghetti, and overall some level of pin mold caused by cooler storage conditions/moisture where the stems get harvested.

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Transportation Facts
on Page 5 this week!





AN APPLE A DAY

Eat Produce, Be Happy

By: Tom Karst, www.thepacker.com, March 5, 2019

Instead of going out to lunch for that quarter-pounder bacon burger, why not just pick the salad bar?

There have been several studies linking fruit and vegetable consumption with better mental health, and this week we add another published in *Science Direct*.

The study, punnily called "Lettuce be happy: A longitudinal UK study on the relationship between fruit and vegetable consumption and well-being" revealed these highlights:

- Increased fruit & vegetable consumption can enhance mental well-being;
- Increasing frequency and increasing quantity of consumption both matter;
- The relationship is robust to different measures of well-being;
- A hump-shaped relationship appeared between age and fruit and vegetable consumption.

Here is one of the more remarkable passages in the research paper:

"Looking at our preferred fixed-effects specification, we find that increasing one's consumption of fruit and vegetables by one portion (on a day where at least one portion is consumed) leads to a 0.133-unit increase in mental well-being ($p < 0.01$). The question remains: how large is this effect in practical terms? One way to gain an understanding of this issue is to compare the estimated change in mental well-being from increases in fruit and vegetable consumption to that of other commonly observed correlates with well-being. A five-portion increase in the number of fruits and vegetables consumed (on a day with positive consumption) would be associated with a 0.67-unit increase in mental well-being. From the coefficients in Table 1, we can see that this would be approximately equivalent in magnitude to the estimated well-being loss from widowhood (-0.68), and approximately one third of the estimated impact from unemployment, which is known to have one of the largest effects on subjective well-being. In terms of a factor that is more controllable at the individual level, our results show that increasing one's daily consumption by one portion (on a day with positive

consumption) provides the same estimated increase in mental well-being as 7.6 additional days of walking continuously for at least 10 min per 4 weeks."

The succinct conclusion of the paper, according to researchers:

"Our findings provide further evidence that persuading people to consume more fruits and vegetables may not only benefit their physical health in the long-run, but also their mental well-being in the short-run."

TK: This is incredible; as I read the research, an extra five portions of fresh produce compared with normal is as nearly positive for one's mental outlook as becoming a widower is negative. I might crave that bacon double burger, but the true salve for the human condition seems to be found in the produce aisle.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Andrea Gordon- Assistant Grower and Greenhouse IPM Specialist- Huron/Lipman- Exeter



How did you become a part of the Huron/Lipman team? I was originally hired for a 2 week temporary job to help with disease management. From there I was asked to stay on for the summers. When I was finished at the university I entered the field of social work, but it only took about a month to figure out it was not the right path for me. I came back to Huron while I figured out what to do with my life. Turns out, my passion was right under my nose the whole time and I have been here ever since.

What is your favorite aspect of working for Huron/Lipman? I love that I have been given the opportunity and freedom to grow and develop professionally and to find my passion. Growing up I never would have guessed that I would end up in agriculture. It was never something that called to me. When I came to work here my passion for growing and the industry as a whole was cultivated.

Tell us about your family. I have 3 kids that are pretty amazing. They are the center of my world. My step-daughter, Annaque, is 18 and is in her first year of college studying nursing. We miss her as she is away from home, but know she will accomplish great things. Kaydon is 10 and he is a ball of energy and curiosity. This kid keeps everyone on their toes. Aryssa is 7 and she is my little princess. She loves all things that sparkle and shine.

Where did you grow up? I grew up in a small town of about 800 people called Hensall, 10 km north of Exeter, where the greenhouse is.

What do you like to do when you aren't working? When not at work, I am big on family time. If I'm not shuttling my kids their various activities, we spend a lot of time going to see movies, parks, museums, etc. We also try to fit in at least one family board game night a week.

Ideal vacation spot? Anywhere warm and sunny that involves me on the beach, with umbrella drink in one hand and a book in the other!

Favorite movie of all time? Why? There are so many great movies out there. I think my favorite is Princess Bride. I love the whole love conquering all theme. It is a movie I watched as a kid, and now watch with my kids.

Favorite book of all time? Why? This one is easy. Fugitive Pieces by Anne Michaels. It is a great book about the impact of traumatic moments across generations. I read for the first time when I was 16 and it opened up a whole literary world for me.

Do you have any hidden talents? Something that normally surprises people is that I am pretty handy with needle crafts, like cross stitch, and embroidery. I also know my way around a sewing machine making anything from curtains and throw pillows to clothing.

PRODUCE BAROMETER

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



MARCH CALENDAR

March All Month

American Red Cross Month

March 10th- 16th

National Agriculture Week

March 10th

National Ranch Dressing Day

Daylight Saving Time Returns

March 11th

Fill Your Stapler Day

March 14th

National Agriculture Day

Immokalee, FL Weather

Fri Mar 8	Sat Mar 9	Sun Mar 10	Mon Mar 11	Tue Mar 12
80° F	85° F	88° F	87° F	88° F
59° F	75° F	65° F	65° F	65° F
NE 9 MPH	E 7 MPH	S 7 MPH	ENE 2 MPH	E 7 MPH
Precip 10%				

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE CONSUMER

Study: Consumer Engagement is All in How You Say It

By: Dan Berthiaume, www.chainstoreage.com, March 4, 2019

Retail marketers seeking to effectively engage customers should polish up their smooth talk, according to a new study. In its new study “The write stuff,” marketing technology provider Persado examined more than 8.3 million marketing messages across four industries (retail & e-commerce, financial services, technology and travel & hospitality), reaching a combined 2.4 billion customers through six marketing channels (web pages, social media, display ads, SMS, email and push notifications). Results show that subtle shifts in marketing language can have a dramatic impact on brand engagement and revenue performance, with differences between the best and worst performing messages totaling as much as 400%.

In retail and e-commerce campaigns, for example, some words used to describe products, services, discounts and offers increase engagement more so than others. Analysis indicates that consumers are more likely to engage with messages that vaguely convey product pricing (“get it for less”), compared to messages that call out specific prices (“get it for \$25”). Additionally, using the word “complimentary” instead of “free” can increase engagement by as much as 21%.

When encouraging consumers to act quickly, the study reveals that messages about limited quantities (“while supplies last”) are more effective than those about limited time (“before it expires”). However, phrases like “ends today” can generate as much as 49% more engagement than “online exclusive.”

When sharing promotions with consumers, Persado data suggests quantitative offers (“discount”) perform better than words about qualitative offers (“deal”). Furthermore, using percentages (“45% discount”) drives on average 23% more engagement than specific dollar amounts (“over \$100 savings”).

In addition, the report explores how much each of the six dimensions of a marketing message, including emotion, description, formatting, positioning, and call-to-action, contribute to overall campaign performance, as well as how those trends change across channels. Key findings include:

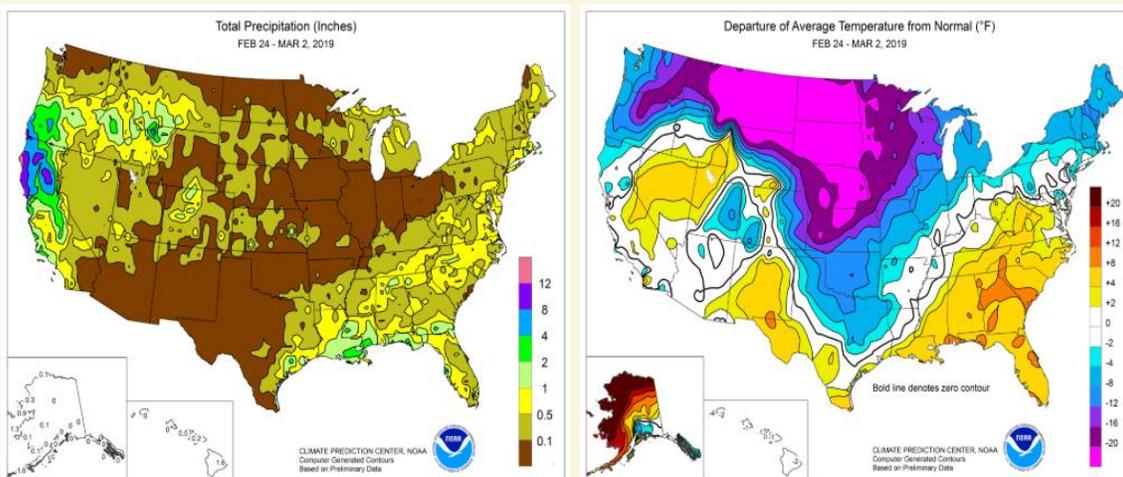
- Language prompting a call-to-action is the most influential factor contributing to campaign performance on email bodies (40%), display (32%), and Web pages and banners (48%). However, it is the least influential factor contributing to performance on email subject lines (8%), with other elements like emotional language (57%) inspiring consumers to engage instead.

- Descriptive language about products, services, discounts and offers has the greatest effect on SMS campaign performance (35%). This language also significantly consistently contributes to campaign performance on email subject lines (24%), display (20%), email bodies (17%) and Facebook (17%), suggesting that marketers can quickly increase campaign performance by pinpointing the descriptive language most likely to resonate with their audiences.

- Formatting contributes to nearly half (44%) of the performance of ads on Facebook, and emotion contributes to another 40%. Stylistic elements like emojis, symbols and imagery, combined with emotional language, together can help catch the consumer eye in an increasingly crowded newsfeed.

NATIONAL WEATHER SPOTLIGHT

Last Week's Precipitation Totals and Average Temperature Deviations





TRANSPORTATION FACTS

*The national diesel average continues to rise, moving from \$3.05 to \$3.08 per gallon over the past 7 days.

* The average price for a gallon of diesel is \$.08 higher than the same time last year.

* All areas of the country reported price increases, with the most significant coming from the Midwest where diesel is \$.045 per gallon higher this week.

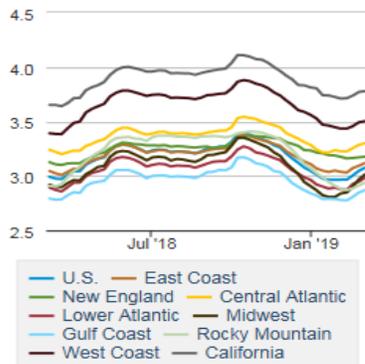
*California continues to have the highest diesel prices in the country at \$3.78 per gallon while the Gulf Coast is the low-price leader at \$2.87 per gallon.

*The WTI Crude Oil price fell 1.3% this week, moving from \$56.94 to \$56.22 per barrel.

*Trucks are available in adequate or surplus levels at all shipping points in the country this week.

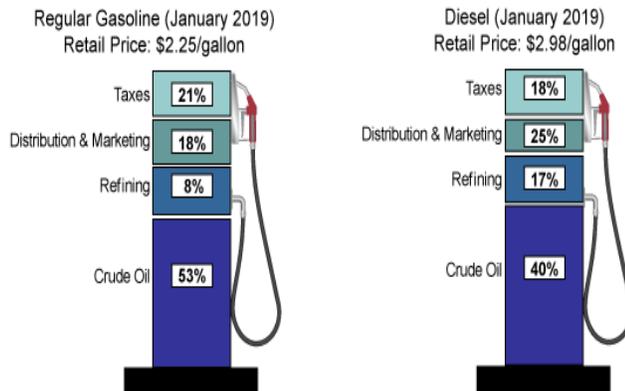
On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices

(dollars per gallon)



Source: Energy Information Administration

What we pay for in a gallon of:



FRESH TOMATOES
the best of nature™

MARK YOUR CALENDAR PACK YOUR BAGS!

March 7-9, 2019
Southeast Produce Council's Southern Exposure
Walt Disney World Swan & Dolphin Resort
Orlando, FL
www.seproducecouncil.com
Come see us this weekend at Booth #1125!

April 30-May 1, 2019
FMI's Day in Washington
The Liaison Capitol Hotel
Washington, D.C.
www.fmi.org

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