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GUIDEBOOK SERIES



# 23RD ANNUAL MASTERS OF MERCHANDISING

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# A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Every once in a while, the opportunity presents itself to do well while also doing good. Such is the case with our annual Masters of Merchandising supplement. The industry owes a tip of the hat to the collection of industry leaders who elected to invest with us in a marketing vehicle that is both promotional and educational.

Each vendor worked hard to impart their expert wisdom on how to more effectively merchandise the category at hand. By sharing knowledge acquired while working with North America's retailers, these vendors help retailers move more product and help the world by encouraging a more healthful diet.

Increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables is not only a matter of big industry initiatives, but consumption in general can only increase if sales of specific items increase. That means

knowing how to build consumer trial and how to offer the most effective assortment; it means knowing how to market things on a day-to-day basis and how to do some out-of-the-box promotions just to keep consumer interest high.

Retailers, please take the time to

review this offering carefully. When did you last think about how to increase sales of garlic? Or mangos? Or asparagus? Here is a chance to think of merchandising in a different way. When did you last really consider how to best sell bananas — was it when you were



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a produce department manager 10, 20 or 30 years ago? Here is an opportunity to revisit tactics with a different perspective.

The sponsors of this year's Masters of Merchandising section are a special breed. We spoke to many producers who declined to participate, saying they simply had no idea how to merchandise their own items effectively. When we offered to help them research the matter, we encountered all too many vendors who essentially said, "That is the retailer's problem; we just book loads."

Merchandising is everyone's problem, and in the produce industry, "The Times, They Are A-Changin'." Retailers today are in a position to expect more support from producers, and intellectual capital is just about the most valuable support one can provide. So kudos to our Masters of

Merchandising sponsors.

As an added service to our retail readers, we're printing additional copies of this guide, so if you would like extra copies of the Masters of Merchandising 2024 supplement, fill out the form on the next page, and scan/email, fax or

mail it to us. For the cost of shipping and handling, we'll send you up to five supplements (first-come basis). If you require larger quantities for distribution to store-level personnel, call our offices at 561-994-1118. **pb**



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Sources: Suzy Surveys, Apple Shoppers 1000+ responses, August 2023



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## ARTICHOKE MERCHANDISING 101

- Merchandise artichokes on their sides for easier handling
- Keep artichokes on display at 34°F for optimum freshness and shelf life
  - Do not retrim the stems; this causes valuable moisture loss
  - Removing any damaged outer petals before merchandising your artichokes will contribute to the overall appeal of your display (“eye appeal is buy appeal”)
- Cross merchandising artichokes with complimentary items like lemons, olive oil and breadcrumbs will create color breaks, generate interest, and increase basket size



## IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT ARTICHOKE MERCHANDISING

- Build a prominent display that catches shoppers’ attention
- Consumers like variety; use different artichoke sizes and pack styles
- Make sure products look fresh and vibrant. A picture is worth a thousand words – make your display inspiring and memorable
- Once your big, beautiful display is built, be sure to keep the products rotated and stocked (first in, first out)
- Your display should always look plentiful; no one wants to see a half-full display...it translates as old, which in fresh produce means stale and nearing expiration

## MARKETING TO HELP INCREASE CONSUMPTION

- Consumers are more likely to buy artichokes if they know how to use them. Help them by offering usage ideas on selecting, storing, handling, prepping, and cooking with artichokes
  - Ocean Mist has videos, preparation suggestions, cooking tips and hundreds of delicious recipes available at [www.allaboutartichokes.com](http://www.allaboutartichokes.com)
  - Social media is a powerful tool for creating interest and familiarizing consumers with artichokes
    - Using social media platforms as a direct conduit to consumers before they get to the store is a great way to entice them with a promotion, or simply by providing helpful info that helps demystify this unique vegetable
  - Ocean Mist Farms has POS resources including wobblers, price cards, and display bins available to customers to help promote fresh

artichokes at [www.oceanmist.com/trade-resources](http://www.oceanmist.com/trade-resources)

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Frost-Kissed artichokes are truly a specialty item, created naturally after enduring a frost which occurs when the temps drop below 32°F. The artichokes’ skin darkens due to the freezing condition. The brown outer layer is strictly cosmetic – similar to a sunburn – and peels off once cooked. The browning of the exterior petals in no way affects the eatability or quality of the artichoke and, in fact, seals in the distinctive nuttier taste. Retailers can request Frost-Kissed POS materials by going to [OceanMist.com/pos-frost-kissed-artichokes](http://OceanMist.com/pos-frost-kissed-artichokes).



## PEAK SEASON

The traditional peak season for green artichokes is in the Spring (March to May) and around holidays including Valentine’s Day, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Retailers see a sharp increase in volume and sales during these periods.

Headquartered in Castroville, CA – the “Artichoke Center of the World” – Ocean Mist Farms, a fourth-generation family-owned business, is the largest grower/shipper of fresh artichokes in North America. In addition to its Gold Standard green and purple artichokes, Ocean Mist also offers a full line of 30+ fresh vegetable commodities and value-added items, with new innovations currently in development. This year, in 2024, this legacy company is proudly celebrating its 100-year anniversary.



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# ASPARAGUS

JMB PRODUCE • MAURICE A. AUERBACH • PRIME TIME • SOUTHERN SPECIALTIES • SQUARE 1

## STIMULATE ASPARAGUS SALES WITH THESE EFFECTIVE TIPS:

### PROMOTE YEAR-ROUND

Year-round promotion and visibility keeps asparagus on shopping lists. Asparagus from Peru, a principal supplier, allows retailers to complement other seasonal sources and offer a seamless, quality program.

### TAP INTO HEALTH TRENDS

Shoppers are increasingly health conscious! Tout health benefits for a surefire way to gain sales. Asparagus contains a host of health benefits including: low in calories; naturally fat-and cholesterol-free; good source of potassium, vitamin A, & vitamin C; rich in rutin and folacin.

### OFFER CHOICES

Display multiple sizes, options/SKUs and colors to add ring. Fresh asparagus



is readily available in green, white and purple (all available from Peru). Include value-added, bagged or tray-packed fresh asparagus to appeal to convenience customers.

### DON'T MAKE IT A HUNT

Display asparagus visibly and prominently. For many shoppers it's an impulse buy, so ensure they see it easily. Utilize island displays and corner caps to draw particular attention to the product.

### MONITOR QUALITY

Have store personnel check asparagus displays regularly to ensure product is hydrated and looks great. Asparagus should be bright-looking with closed, firm tips. The butt-end should be cleanly cut and sufficiently hydrated. Monitor the condition of water in display trays and change frequently. Fresh asparagus is not ethylene-sensitive but is susceptible to absorbing very strong odors.

### MAKE SUGGESTIONS

Make sure shoppers know the ease and versatility of preparing asparagus. Provide ideas on usage, highlighting easy and quick preparation. Cross-merchandise with other easily used items including meat or seafood, salad, oils, dressings, and deli items.

### Peruvian Asparagus



### Importer's Association

### PERUVIAN ASPARAGUS IMPORTERS ASSOCIATION

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## BANANAS: STILL RIPE WITH POSSIBILITIES AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

Bananas made one of their first appearances in America during the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. Wrapped in foil and priced at a dime each, they were an instant hit with visitors who had never seen the South American import before.

Generations later, Americans' love affair with the iconic yellow fruit is stronger than ever – and it's not hard to see why. Convenient, economical, nutrient-packed, naturally sweet, just the right size for kids' lunches, and offering their own bio-degradable packaging, bananas are practically the perfect food. In fact, bananas are consistently one of the top-selling items sold across all items in grocery stores throughout North America with upwards of 90% household penetration.

With their ubiquity, bananas are the satisfying, all-natural comfort food your customers turn to when times are uncertain. Despite rising inflation and food costs, bananas continue to maintain their all-audience appeal compared to other household staples, with a basket size that remains near pre-pandemic level of 2.5 to 3 lbs. For shoppers looking to stretch their food dollar, bananas remain one of the best values – not just in the produce department but throughout the entire supermarket as well.

Savvy retailers and produce managers can leverage the banana's staying power by leaning into the fruit's premium nutrition story, classic taste, low-unit price and unsurpassed value as an all-daypart recipe ingredient and healthier, economical alternative to breakfast and energy bars, snack foods, post-workout sports drinks and just about everything in-between.

## RETAILER TIPS FOR GROWING BANANA SALES

*How to entice your shoppers to buy more of the fruit they already love*

- **Don't limit bananas to the produce section.** Secondary displays near the cereal aisle, dairy section snack aisles or check-out can promote bananas as an impulse purchase or single-serve snack option.
- **Go beyond the Cavendish.** The yellow Cavendish is still America's favorite banana, but other exotic varieties such as DOLE® Red Bananas, Manzanos, Plantains and Baby Bananas are increasingly popular. Stocking these varieties can boost incremental banana sales.
- **Present Inspiration.** Shoppers know everything about bananas – or do they? Offer unexpected usage ideas, recipe suggestions or complementary items at the point of sale to create an impulse to buy a few more fingers.
- **Sell bananas at every stage.** Bananas are versatile at all stages of ripeness. Consumer tastes vary widely so offering multiple-color stages appeals to broader shopper usage preferences and demographics, and may increase purchase size.
- **Educate shoppers about their bananas.** Most shoppers are eager to know where and how their bananas are grown and surprised to learn how many steps it takes to get those bananas from the farm to their smoothie, cereal bowl or favorite recipe.
- **Offer Organic!** Industry stats prove that organic produce is now a mainstream product. Your customers may be actively looking for organic bananas and will trade up for them, so it's an important option to keep in-stock.
- **First impressions are everything.** Keeping your displays fully stocked with bright, beautiful, unblemished DOLE® Bananas is the key to attracting consumer attention.
- **Leverage the power of the world's most famous brands.** Dole's national nutritional alliance with Disney and partnerships with various health, wellness and hunger-relief groups offers myriad in-store, POP and other exclusive merchandising opportunities.



# BANANAS



## SPECIAL 125TH BANANA-VERSARY RETAILER AND IN-STORE OPPORTUNITIES:

In addition to keeping a steady supply of DOLE® 125th Banana-versary-stickered fruit on hand, retailers can take advantage of this milestone year by working with their Dole rep to plan banana merchandising, promotions, special events and other in-store activities on banana holidays and during high-growth sales periods throughout the year. And with some advance planning, you can book an appearance by Dole's Bobby Banana as a special in-store shopper treat.

- National Banana Day on April 17
- National Eat More Fruits and Vegetables Day on May 23
- Dole Whip Day on July 18
- National Banana Split Day on Aug. 25
- Back to School Days in August and September

## HELP US CELEBRATE OUR 125TH BANANA-VERSARY

Dole has been farming, shipping and selling bananas for 125 years – and we want you to join in on the in-store and online fun.

In 2024, Dole is celebrating its own banana history. It's been 125 years since three Sicilian brothers and their brother-in-law in New Orleans pooled their life savings and began importing bananas from Honduras to give Americans their first taste of the exotic fruit.

Without knowing it, Joseph, Felix and Lucca Vaccaro, and Salvador D'Antoni, laid a foundation for what would eventually become a cornerstone of Dole Food Company and the ubiquitous DOLE® Banana, the world's most popular banana and one of the most-purchased grocery items in history.

We're marking this ripest of milestones with a year-long celebration of contests, partnerships, proclamations, recipes and special appearances by Bobby Banana, our 7-foot mascot committed to inspiring healthier living.

First stop is the Dole 125th Banana-versary landing page ([dole.com/125](http://dole.com/125)) where both retailers banana lovers will find a constantly expanding hub of ways to satisfy their passion for the ubiquitous yellow fruit.



- Multiple waves of commemorative Dole 125th Banana-versary stickers on millions of DOLE® Bananas across the U.S. and Canada in 2024.
- A showcase of "125 Ways to Be Bananas" featuring fun, actionable banana tips, tricks and engagements being shared on Dole's Facebook and Instagram stories pages all year long.
- Dole's largest celebration of April 17's National Banana Day in its history including appearances by Bobby Banana
- Free digital downloads and hands-on DIY activities celebrating all things DOLE® Banana throughout 2024.
- The Dole Banana Hall of Fame honoring the restaurants, people and places who continue to have a lasting appeal on the iconic nature and universal appeal of the fruit.

- Bunches of banana-focused breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert, snack and smoothie recipes created exclusively by Dole over the decades.
- A growing calendar of Dole 125th Banana-versary contests, events, proclamations and partnerships
- Opportunities to join in on the Banana-versary conversation and share Dole and banana memories through #DoleBananaVersary. **To learn more about in-store POP, merchandising tips, recipes, nutrition education and the myriad other ways to leverage the heroic possibilities of DOLE® Bananas, contact your Dole representative.**



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# SUNKIST

# CITRUS



Citrus is a staple in the produce department, and shoppers continue to explore the expanding variety available year-round from navels to mandarins to specialty products. Collaborated merchandising efforts with a trusted supplier, such as Sunkist, will yield even greater citrus sales.



## CATEGORY MANAGEMENT

Place an added emphasis on Category Management. Through our Category Management program, Sunkist is able to stay on top of consumer trends as they relate to our citrus categories, packaging solutions and benchmarking opportunities for our partners.

## DISPLAY IDEAS

There are many promotional opportunities when displaying citrus. Take advantage of Sunkist's wide array of retail marketing programs, including sampling, digital coupons, high-graphic secondary display bins and in-store point of sale materials that highlight flavor profiles, nutritional benefits and recipes to build awareness, drive trial and increase sales.

A recent Sunkist-commissioned study revealed when consumers were asked what advertisements incentivized direct citrus purchases, recipe inspiration, and utilization tips were at the top of their lists. Sunkist's merchandising program features interactive point-of-sale materials with scannable QR codes, providing real-time recipe inspiration to shoppers.

## BEST MERCHANDISING TIPS

- Use high-graphic secondary display bins together to create a citrus destination in the produce department.
- Cross-merchandise citrus with other complementary items including seafood and liquor products.
- Educate shoppers on citrus flavor profiles, nutritional benefits and recipes to drive sales with channel rails, clip cards, posters and more.
- Promote specialty citrus items, such as Cara Cara



navel oranges, blood oranges and Minneola tangelos, to increase purchase intent through various activities, not limited to sampling, display contests and coupons.

- Engage with shoppers online through social media, digital outreach and loyalty programs to boost consumer interest.



**SUNKIST**

Learn more at [sunkist.com](http://sunkist.com)



Sunkist Growers is the longest-standing agricultural cooperative in the United States. With over 1,000 family farmers in California and Arizona, Sunkist Growers produces premium oranges, lemons, grapefruit and more. For more information, visit [www.sunkist.com](http://www.sunkist.com).

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# MAURICE A AUERBACH, INC

## GARLIC



Make garlic a profit-center all year long with these key merchandising tips to boost garlic sales:

### DISPLAY BIG

• Make sure shoppers can easily find garlic. Build visible displays with a mix of whole bulbs, 5-bulb packaged garlic and jar garlic, as well as one or two SKUs of organic.

### MOVE IT

Secondary displays increase sales! Put garlic next to meat and poultry to promote as a rub and even next to baguettes in the bakery.

### COMMUNCIATE & EDUCATE

Signage and POP material near garlic should always have a three-fold message:

(1) Highlight specialty items such as elephant garlic to attract attention and spark consumer interest.

(2) Promote health benefits of garlic: fat-free, saturated fat-free, sodium-free, cholesterol-free.

(3) Provide recipes and usage ideas. Garlic sales directly relate to consumer use of recipes requiring garlic, so always have a recipe next to the garlic display.

### MAKE IT EASY

Convenience items include various processed and semi-processed forms, such as whole peeled garlic, chopped garlic, minced garlic and a multitude



of jarred products. Offer a full range of garlic and complementary products. Every garlic sale means the sale of additional items from produce and other areas of the store.

Pay frequent attention to the display to keep it clean and dry since skins of garlic tend to shed with handling. Store garlic in a cool, well-ventilated place and keep dry. Garlic should not be misted.

### HANDLE WELL

Rotation is crucial! Fresh garlic sitting out for long periods will tend to dry out.

### PROVIDE VARIETY

A variety of quality garlic is available year-round with supplies coming from



## SUGGEST THESE GARLIC USES!

Put garlic next to ripe tomatoes, basil and cilantro to promote salsa.

Create a make-your-own-pasta-sauce center with garlic, tomatoes and other ingredients.

Promote garlic as a healthy alternative to butter and seasonings — an easy, healthy way to give food great flavor.

Point out how garlic is great in salads, marinades, and rubs, and cross-merchandise accordingly.

Showcase unique varieties — highlighting red or elephant garlic draws the attention of shoppers.

Encourage adding flare to old favorites by including garlic in mashed potatoes or scrambled eggs.

Suggest garlic for decorative purposes. Braided garlic or loose garlic can be used to adorn holiday wreaths and other holiday decorations.

California, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Spain and China. Stores can maximize garlic sales by promoting a diversity of items including red garlic, elephant garlic, peeled, packaged, braided and certified organic in addition to the standard bulk.



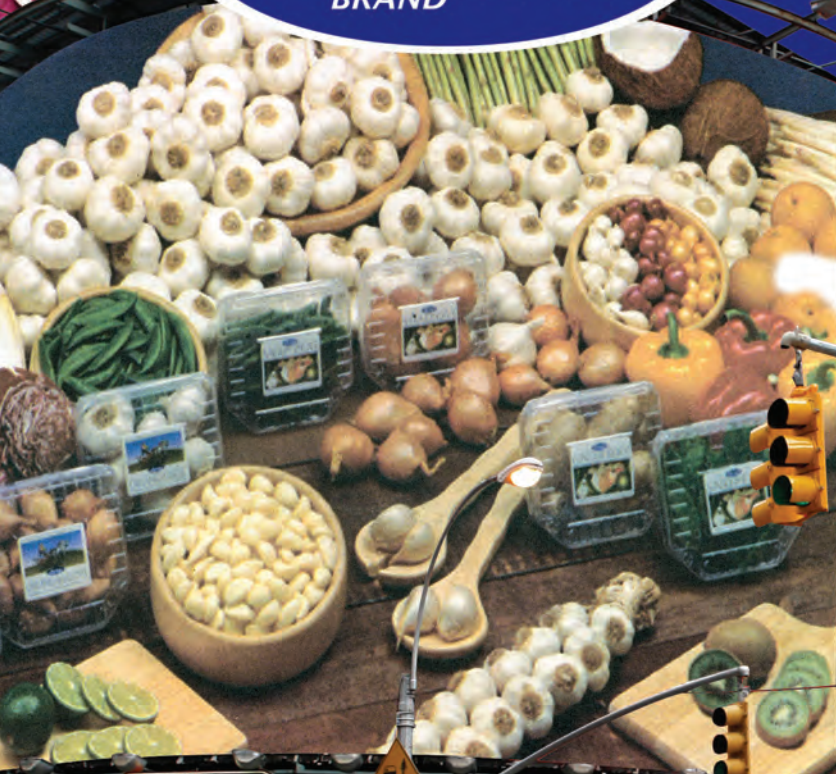
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## INCREASE SALES WITH IN-STORE DISPLAYS

### KIWIFRUIT IS ON TREND!

- Zespri™ continues to be the #1 selling kiwi brand!
- Kiwi is one of the fastest growing fruit in the fruit bowl, outpacing total fruit sales by +7 points
- Zespri SunGold™ Kiwifruit is driving this growth, accounting for 49% of total kiwi category growth this past year



### DRIVE INCREMENTAL DEPARTMENT SALES WITH IMPACTFUL DISPLAYS

Zespri's shipper display features new creative to tie into its *Taste the Obsession* consumer campaign. The extensive digital campaign includes social, email, online video, display advertising, lbotta, sampling and event activations all designed to drive consumers to your stores.

- 1) Build large, eye-catching displays.** Retailer X featured Zespri™ SunGold™ Kiwifruit for a month which included a 4-week TPR and 3 display bins at front of store. This averaged a +200% \$ sales lift over the month.
- 2) Permanent home in retail leads to increased sales.** Retailer X planogrammed Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit into the set for the first time and saw a volume increase of +46% versus YA, ACV distribution improving by +18 points, +6 units moved per week, and minimized out of stocks!
- 3) Maximize department sales with Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit & Berries.** Based on a 3rd party merchandising study, moving Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit from the exotic section to adjacent to berries may result in +64% total fresh fruit sales uplift, driven by higher basket spend. Placement of Zespri next to berries also has no negative impact on berries.

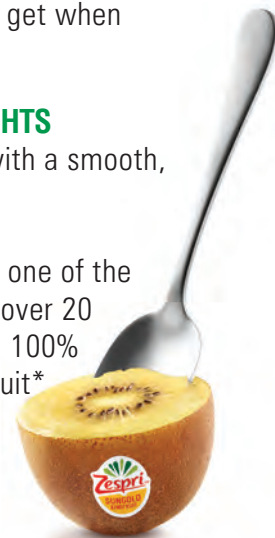
**Bonus!** Kiwi is a basket builder in the fruit department. When kiwi is in the basket with other fruit items, the basket size increases +\$37 on average.

### CUSTOM-DESIGNED PACKAGING IS STACKABLE AND EASIER TO MERCHANDISE ON DISPLAY SHIPPER

Unique 1-pound packaging is made from a minimum of 50% recycled materials and is recyclable†. The graphic sleeve features Zespri's bold visual identity that captures the burst of flavor consumers get when they bite into Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit.

### ZESPRI SUNGOLD KIWIFRUIT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Texture:** Golden-yellow juicy inside with a smooth, brown edible skin
- **Taste:** Refreshingly sweet flavor
- **Nutrition:** Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit is one of the most nutrient-dense fruits containing over 20 vitamins and minerals per serving and 100% of your daily vitamin C needs in one fruit\*
- **Usage:** Just simply CUT, SCOOP and ENJOY!



**Grow your department sales with Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit**

**LET'S WORK TOGETHER!**  
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**USDA Organic available too!**

Sources:  
Kantar, Everyday Shelf Market Research 2022  
IRI Retailer X RMA – Season to Date (WE 1/23/21)  
Circana Total US MULO – L52 Weeks ending 10/8/23  
Numerator - Last 52 Weeks Ending 10/8/2023  
† subject to recycling facilities in your area  
\* 290% of the daily value per serving (2 kiwifruit)



**ZESPRI™ KIWIFRUIT**  
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KIWI BRAND**

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CONTACT YOUR ZESPRI REP TO SECURE YOUR PROGRAM NOW.**



# CIRULI BROTHERS

# MANGOS



## MANGOS

Every few years, weather patterns characterized by warmer waters in the Pacific Ocean occur. Known as El Niño, this phenomenon can affect weather across the globe, and in Q4 2023 and Q1 2024, contributed to record high pricing and unusually short mango supplies from Central and South American producers.

As these cycles repeat, Ciruli Brothers is taking the lead on developing and researching mango varieties that are more appropriate for our changing climate. We have pledged years of research and investment in developing a mango program based on a natural growing process that works in harmony with the environment. We do this so our customers can have more consistent supplies at competitive prices.

Our growing practices support nature's way. We do not sacrifice quality but allow for a normal bloom cycle and harvest only when fruit is ready. This results in better quality and great tasting fruit for the consumer. With year-round supplies, we offer retail partners a myriad of resources including display-ready packaging, P.O.S. signage, retail display blueprints, creative messaging, and more. From growing to merchandising, the Ciruli Brothers team can provide expert insight to help you plan for mango category growth.

## LEVERAGE TASTES & TRENDS

According to data offered by the National Mango Board for Q3, 2023: Mangos ranked #10 YOY in terms of whole fruit sales. Mangos also grew 8.2% in volume, contributing 2.7% of total produce volume sales. For one major retailer in the dataset, mangos ranked 8th in the fruit category, growing 20.4% in volume sold compared to prior year and represented 3.9% of total produce volume sales in Q3.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WHOLE FOODS MARKET

Mango consumption has nearly doubled since 2005, averaging 3.63 lbs. per capita (National Mango Board, 2020). This equates to a few mangos per year. With the right quality and value offering for consumers, there is ample room for growth

## PROMOTION

To drive sales, we recommend promoting mangos early and often, especially during months when supplies are abundant. There are opportunities to promote between Easter, Cinco de Mayo, and Independence Day. Mangos are available all year.

## DISPLAYS

Build large displays in high-traffic areas to drive sales. Rotate fruit to keep firmer mangos on bottom and riper fruit on top. Having ripe fruit helps educate consumers how to select and know what to expect when mangos are ripe and ready to enjoy.

## HANDLING

To help offset shrink and safeguard quality for your customers, hold mangos at the proper temperature: 65 – 70°F ripens, adds flavor, color, and aroma.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PUBLIC SUPER MARKETS

Conversely, a range of 52 – 55°F holds ripeness. Never store below 50°F. Do not mist or refrigerate.

## CROSS-MERCHANDISING

Creative opportunities abound depending on the time of year and type of promotion. We also recommend displaying multiple varieties to highlight their unique flavor profiles. The best window for multiple variety promotions is April - June.



**THE CIRULI BROTHERS™ MANGO BRANDS:**

**CHAMPAGNE® MANGO**  
CIRULI BROTHERS™

*Mr. Mango®*

*Super Mango®*

*Señor Mango®*

**CIRULI BROTHERS™**

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MANGO

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...and nurtured  
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We didn't create our favorite fruit. The right seed, soil, and climate did. But we make sure to pick, ship, and share them with the care that this silky smooth, deeply sweet superstar fruit deserves. Explore your golden opportunity to share Champagne® Mangos now: [ChampagneMango.com/Sweeter](https://ChampagneMango.com/Sweeter)

Look for our other  
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mango brands

*Super Mango®*

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*Señor Mango®*

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## RECOMMENDED DISPLAY IDEAS

Usage of color at the retail shelf helps enhance the visibility of mushrooms amidst the array of fresh produce options. Utilize signage or packaging to introduce vibrancy to the display. Considering the importance of mushrooms as a fresh produce category, make sure they are prominently positioned within the department.

## KEY VARIETIES

- Whites
- Portabella
- Baby Bella/Crimini
- Shiitake
- Oyster

## SECONDARY VARIETIES

- Royal Trumpet
- Maitake
- Beech

## MUSHROOM MONDAY

Encourage shoppers to get creative with mushrooms by providing helpful ideas and information. Utilize the Mushroom Council's "Mushroom Monday" campaign promotions and point-of-sale materials to entice shoppers to incorporate more mushrooms into their weekly rotation. Mushrooms are not only full of flavor and extremely nutritious, they are also an eco-friendly food – making Mushroom Monday a guilt free, culinary tradition to be embraced in their home kitchens.

## DISPLAY AND PROMOTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Keep shelves stocked with fresh, high-quality products. A clean, organized and visually appealing display of fresh mushrooms will entice shoppers to purchase. Mushrooms left on shelves for too long will deter purchases.

Promotions should be a primary focus as they drive sales, attract customers, and help retailers differentiate themselves in the market. By strategically leveraging promotions, you can maxi-

### QUICK TIPS

To develop a signature fresh mushroom category, contact your Giorgio Fresh sales representative for additional information.

mize the potential of mushrooms and create value for consumers and suppliers!

## CROSS MERCHANDISING OPPORTUNITIES

As the warmer weather approaches, retailers should cross-merchandise mushrooms with other grilled items to help inspire recipe ideas in shoppers' minds. Ideal pairing items include steaks, burgers and grilling vegetables.

## CARE AND HANDLING

Using Giorgio's CARE Program will maintain the best mushroom quality:

- Cool the product to 34 degrees to provide maximum shelf life.
- Avoid spray misters and over-stacking (three high maximum).
- Rotate the product to keep the display case fresh.
- Entice your customers by keeping the product attractive.



Find these and other recipes at [GiorgioFresh.com](http://GiorgioFresh.com)



Pepper Burrito "Bowls" (Stuffed Peppers)



Shiitake Mushroom Smoked Tofu Stir Fry



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# NEW PRODUCTS

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## THE LIVING DIFFERENCE

For over three decades, North Shore® has stood at the forefront of nurturing partnerships with retailers, spearheading category growth, and pioneering innovations in the produce aisle. Grown in the USA, at the core of their offerings lie North Shore Living® Herbs + Greens, a pioneering collection of living plants in the produce wet rack, creatively first to market with roots intact. These are encased in packaged clamshells, meticulously designed to cradle the roots for



optimum merchandising. This innovative approach ensures the herbs remain vibrant up to three times longer than their fresh-cut counterparts. Moreover, North Shore® potted living herbs distinguish themselves through lush foliage and a compact display design, excelling in superior leaf count and minimal space requirement, thereby redefining standards in the category.

## CERTIFIED ORGANIC CLAMSHELL HERBS

Introducing the freshest flavors to the produce section, North Shore® merchandising solutions excel with clarity and impact, infusing life into sixteen varieties of compactly packaged living herbs. They are strategically placed in refrigeration within the wet rack—except for Basil, which flourishes at a cozy 50° - 55°, positioned ideally for cross-promotion next to tomatoes.



## POTTED HERBS

The brand's versatile single or double waterfall racks, engineered for both convenience and maximizing sales per square foot, also greet shoppers at the entrance with a farmer's market ambiance. The innovative self-watering 9-pack trays are designed to extend freshness, ensuring effortless watering for every plant. These culinary bouquets are perfect for enhancing kitchen counters, providing consumers with a quick

and easy way to access and enjoy this freshness.

## POINT-OF-SALE SIGNAGE AND PLANNING

North Shore® maintains a promotional events calendar to ensure that retailers have the option to inspire consumers with beautiful end-dish imagery and straightforward recipes. This strategy empowers consumers to elevate their culinary adventures with the freshest herbs. Such merchandising approaches have been proven to stimulate impulse purchases, leading to an increase in transaction size per trip when North Shore® products are included in the basket. The brand connects with consumers seeking a farm-to-table staple to enjoy daily.

As they continue to navigate the paths of innovation and collaboration in the produce world, North Shore® remains committed to delivering not just products, but experiences that resonate with values such as freshness, sustainability, and community. This reflects the brand's dedication to offering more than just goods; it embodies their commitment to enriching consumer lives and fostering a sense of connection.



## A FRESH REASON TO GATHER

North Shore® is thrilled to introduce a new product that truly embodies everything the brand stands for, Counter Culture™. These one-of-a-kind herbs, designed to be stored right on the kitchen countertop, bring beauty, freshness, and flavor into every home. This instant kitchen herb garden elevates the everyday, inspiring everyone to cook and live a little differently. Perfectly designed to be giftable. These are offered exclusively by special order from April through September.



**NORTH SHORE GREENHOUSES, INC**

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760-397-0400  
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# A Fresh Reason to Gather

basil • mint • thyme

THE ORIGINAL TRIO



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GIFTABLE · REFILLABLE · RECYCLABLE



INTRODUCING

Counter Culture™

KITCHEN HERB GARDEN



# CAL-ORGANIC FARMS

# ORGANIC VEGETABLES



The organic wet rack is the powerhouse destination for fresh organic produce sales.

Data from Circana showed more than 50% of dollar and volume sales 2023 spent by U.S. retail shoppers on organic vegetables was selected from the wet rack. By comparison, sales of conventionally grown vegetables from the wet rack comprised 40% of dollar sales and 37% total conventional vegetable sales.

Retail sales from the organic wet rack were resilient last year with a 1.8% increase in dollar sales and 1% decrease in volume. This result outperformed total organic vegetable sales and total fresh produce dollar sales. The retail average price per pound for items on the organic wet rack increased 3.3% in 2023 from the prior year, twice the rate for total fresh produce pricing. Organic vegetable shoppers are very valuable to retailers.

The organic produce buyer is more likely:

- To consume fresh produce every day
- Take multiple trips per week and spend more on a per person basis, with focus on healthy eating
- To be younger, either Gen Z or Millennial
- To shop at specialty/organic stores and online
- Have kids, particularly younger kids, ages 0-6 or 7-12

In 2023, the average grocery shopper basket was **\$45.90**, while the average organic produce basket size is **\$112.42**. The average number of items in the average organic produce shopper's basket was more than double the number of items in average shopper's basket.

Mid-October through May is peak season at retail for the organic wet wall. Backyard gardens and local farmers' markets complement supply through the summer season. High volume periods are as follows:

- January begins to an annual uptick in volume as consumers begin to think health and fitness.
- Super Bowl, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, and Earth Day bring seasonal sales spikes in volume as households accommodate friends and family.



- National Organic Harvest month in September is a time for retailers to connect with shoppers and help them discover the many benefits of fresh organic produce.
- Thanksgiving sees the biggest spike in organic volume. Retailers should be well stocked across organic varieties to capture this opportunity.

## ASSORTMENT

Assortment should focus on these areas:

- Volume Drivers - Cabbage, cauliflower, beets, broccoli, green onions, kale, lettuce, potato and onions
- Growth Drivers – Baby Bok Choy, cilantro, dill, parsley, and leafy greens
- Regional Drivers – Adjust your variety mix for regional preferences
- Seasonal Drivers – Rotate seasonal favorites to encourage discovery and trial

## PROMOTION

Broadcast to shoppers about the availability of organic vegetables with regular promotions featuring organic vegetable items to and draw them into your store. Combine varieties to create themed recipe ideas.

Create an annual AD planner to support theme-based promotions throughout the year while ensuring supply and minimizing out-of-stocks.

## MERCHANDISING

Sixty-eight percent of shoppers prefer retailers to display organic items in their own section.

- Merchandise the wet wall in a visually compelling way using color and texture to create contrast and clean lines
- A variety of different vegetables and colors help create a sharp-looking wet rack
- Keep displays well-stocked and rotate product to keep the freshest items arranged front and center
- Produce team members should learn as much as they can about the commodities displayed so they can educate consumers on usage and benefits
- Create visible product ID tags to highlight organic produce
- Supply organic marked purple bags to ensure proper scanning at checkout

## HANDLING & CARE

- All fresh produce items require special attention and care to provide shoppers with the best looking and highest quality fruits and vegetables.
- This is especially true for organic vegetables that command price premium over their conventionally grown counterparts.
- Exercise vigilance to ensure organic vegetable items are handled carefully, stored at the proper temperature, and merchandised to maximize the exposure of the items to shoppers.

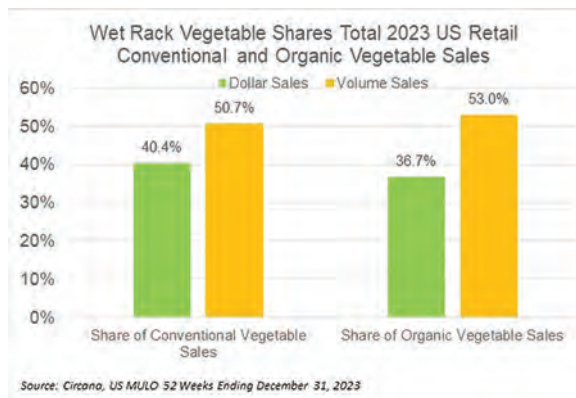
## RETAILER EXECUTION

Retailers should develop a strategic promotion plan to capture high-volume weeks and year-round opportunities. Evaluate your shopper demographics to ensure the right product mix across stores. Implement signage that highlights organically grown produce.

Contact your Cal Organic Farms sales representative or distributor for serving suggestions, recipes, and merchandising ideas to draw more shoppers to your organic vegetable set.

## Sources:

- Circana, US MULO 52 Weeks ending December 31, 2023
- Numerator
- The Power of Produce 2021
- IRI Advantage Annual Trends 2021 to 2017



## GRIMMWAY FARMS / CAL-ORGANICS FARMS

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