



Watermelon Update

NATIONAL WATERMELON PROMOTION BOARD



American Culinary Federation Educates Current & Future Chefs About Watermelon

The American Culinary Federation (ACF), founded in 1929, is the largest professional chefs' organization in North America, made up of more than 14,000 members. ACF is the leader in offering educational resources, apprenticeship, and competitions designed to enhance professional growth for all current and future chefs and pastry chefs. In addition, ACF operates the most comprehensive culinary certification program in the world. The Watermelon Board offers a free Watermelon Culinary Curriculum which provides five credits through this program. The curriculum has been submitted for credit more than 850 times since its launch in 2017. The Board also works with ACF to promote the curriculum through digital advertising.

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More ACF Educates About Watermelon

ACF offers regional and national events, print and digital publications and more to help foster the growth of professional chefs and the foodservice industry. The Board sponsored a Garde Manger (Carving) Workshop during the 2021 National Convention on August 1st. This hands-on workshop was open to 20 participants on a first-come-first-serve basis. Interest was overwhelming with more than 70 requests to attend the workshop. In addition to those who were able to participate, many attended the session to learn more. The instructor Patrick O'Brien, the Fruit Carving Ninja, did a great job educating and inspiring the attendees. The level of interest and continued virtual education needs has prompted plans for handouts and video resources addressing these techniques. More to come!



Last Call for Retail Merchandising Contest Entries!

The deadline to submit an entry into the retail merchandising contest is September 10th! The contest is open to all retail chains, independent retailers and commissaries. More than \$10,000 in cash and prizes will be awarded to top entrants, including \$5,000 for the grand prize for winner. The second place winner will receive \$2,500, third place will receive \$1,000 and three honorable mentions will each receive \$500. An additional incentive of a \$15 gift card will be awarded to the first 25 entries.

To enter, retailers can submit their entry and photos, links, screenshots, etc. online (preferred), via email or postal mail.

All entries must be submitted/postmarked by midnight EST on September 10, 2021. Visit: <http://watermelon.org/Retailers/Retail-Contest> to enter or for more information, including official contest rules and entry form. Retailers can also email NWPB at retail@watermelon.org.



July 4th Recap: Production, Retail Ads and Retail Movement

The Fourth of July continues to be the busiest time of the year for the watermelon industry. Utilizing data from the AMS Market News Portal, we can see that from 2016 to 2020 the two weeks leading into the holiday and the week following accounted for roughly 648.6 million pounds shipped on average. In 2021, movement was around 653.1 million pounds representing a lift of 0.7%. Seedless FOB prices have averaged 17.9 cents per pound during the prior five years with 2021 coming in a penny lower at 16.9 cents per pound. This placement represents something of a midpoint between the historically high pricing of \$0.23 seen in 2020 and the series-low of \$0.14 experienced in 2019.

The ad-tracking service Numerator Promotions Intel shows us that ad activity for same-market ads in 2021 was relatively similar to efforts shown over the two prior years when it came to whole watermelon, though the number of ads for mini watermelon were down around 10%. Mini pricing per pound, however, was down roughly 9% compared to those two prior years at \$2.59 per each. Whole prices were up 6% to settle in at \$4.02 per each with most markets across the nation reflecting this subtle uptick.

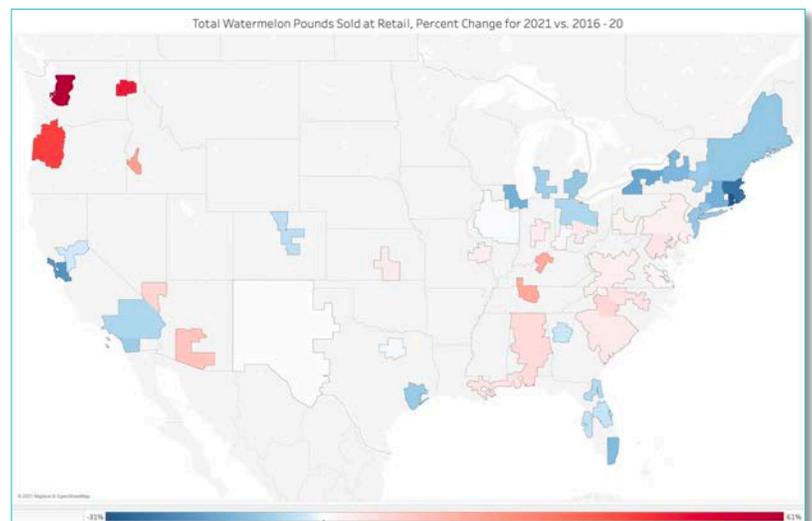
IRI retail scan data provides insight on how sales performed at retail. Breaking down by category, we can see that wholes and minis were down roughly 19 and 7 million pounds from average, respectively, but this shortfall was somewhat offset by fresh cut sales increasing by 12 million pounds to place at a series-high 54 million pounds.

[View the full report here](#) to find regional breakdowns for each of the primary shipping regions during this time of year, as well as market-level comparisons for both ads and sales at retail.

Movement	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2016 - 20	v 20	v Avg
Arizona	41,550,000	56,810,000	45,220,000	45,920,000	43,390,000	64,570,000	46,578,000	49%	39%
California	107,700,000	88,250,000	123,970,000	77,910,000	80,030,000	75,140,000	95,572,000	-6%	-21%
Florida	6,320,000	20,260,000	24,340,000	33,130,000	18,640,000	70,280,000	20,538,000	277%	242%
Georgia	542,710,000	492,840,000	385,740,000	345,560,000	473,940,000	402,380,000	448,158,000	-15%	-10%
Mexico	44,180,000	31,540,000	35,570,000	44,260,000	33,390,000	40,740,000	37,788,000	22%	8%
S. Carolina	38,040,000	54,000,000	48,360,000	48,960,000	58,380,000	57,220,000	49,548,000	-2%	15%
Texas	52,850,000	60,290,000	64,080,000	88,960,000	74,860,000	85,790,000	68,208,000	15%	26%
Total	742,460,000	689,700,000	614,840,000	546,780,000	649,390,000	653,110,000	648,634,000	0.6%	0.7%

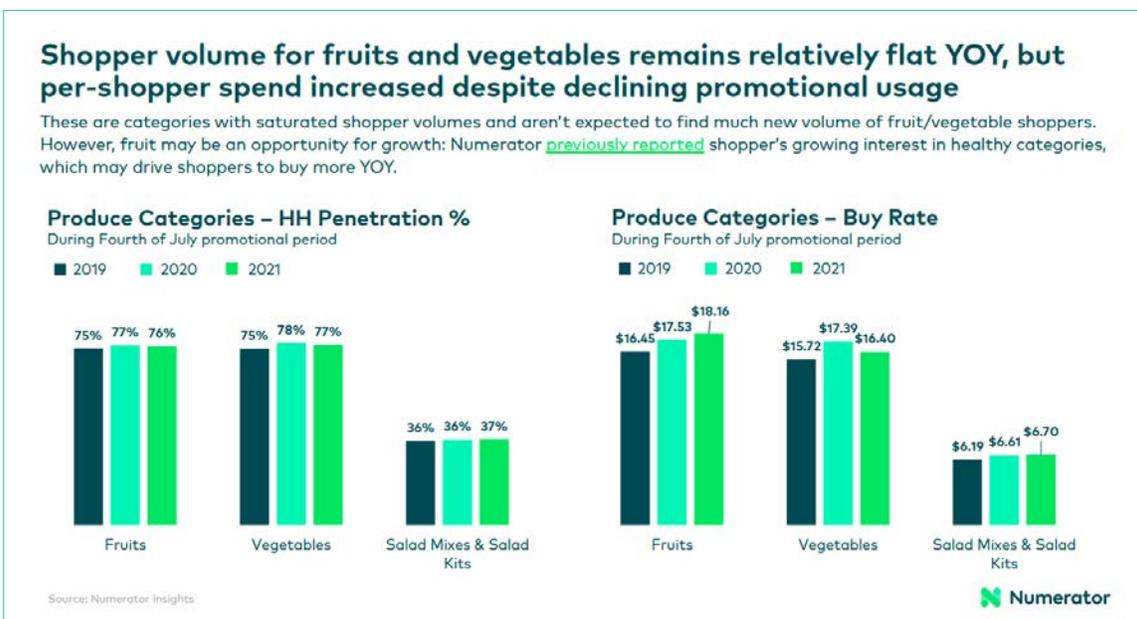
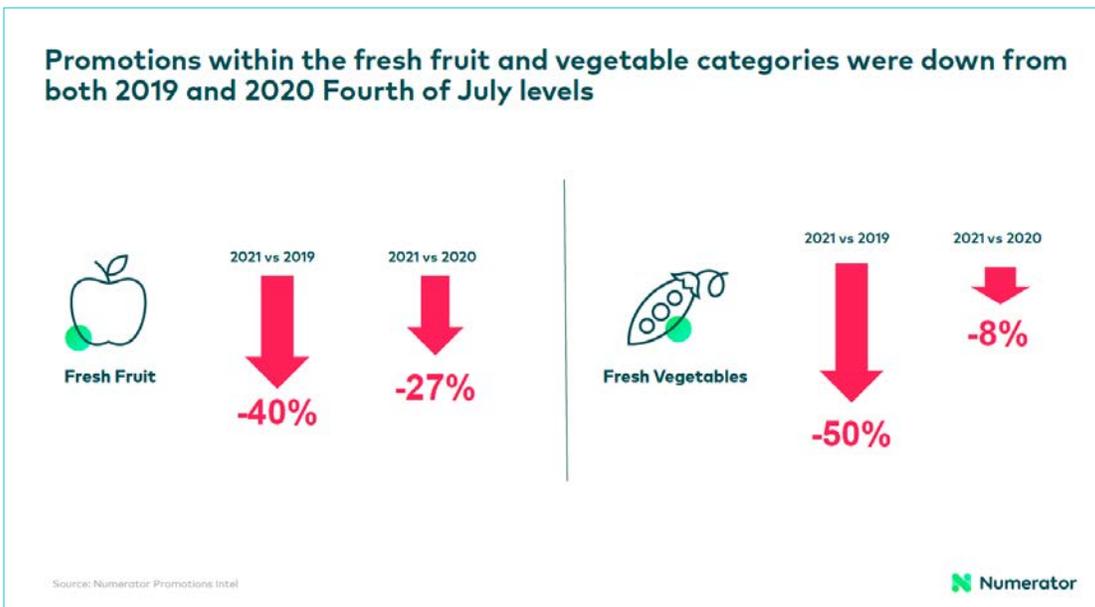
FOB	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2016 - 20	v 20	v Avg
Arizona	\$ 0.188	\$ 0.259	\$ 0.203	\$ 0.140	\$ 0.247	\$ 0.185	\$ 0.210	-25%	-12%
California	\$ 0.186	\$ 0.255	\$ 0.197	\$ 0.141	\$ 0.243	\$ 0.183	\$ 0.204	-25%	-10%
Florida	\$ 0.153	\$ 0.163	\$ 0.184	\$ 0.128	\$ 0.229	\$ 0.177	\$ 0.168	-23%	5%
Georgia	\$ 0.153	\$ 0.160	\$ 0.167	\$ 0.131	\$ 0.229	\$ 0.165	\$ 0.170	-28%	-3%
Mexico	\$ 0.171	\$ 0.174	\$ 0.193	\$ 0.199	\$ 0.230	\$ 0.153	\$ 0.193	-33%	-20%
S. Carolina	\$ 0.159	\$ 0.163	\$ 0.167	\$ 0.126	\$ 0.229	\$ 0.166	\$ 0.171	-27%	-3%
Texas	\$ 0.187	\$ 0.196	\$ 0.222	\$ 0.153	\$ 0.240	\$ 0.169	\$ 0.198	-30%	-15%
Total	\$ 0.161	\$ 0.181	\$ 0.178	\$ 0.139	\$ 0.232	\$ 0.169	\$ 0.179	-27.1%	-5.4%

Revenue	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2016 - 20	v 20	v Avg
Arizona	\$ 7,815,450	\$ 14,739,955	\$ 9,167,808	\$ 6,434,180	\$ 10,717,217	\$ 11,955,945	\$ 9,774,922	12%	22%
California	\$ 20,081,667	\$ 22,509,325	\$ 24,380,225	\$ 10,954,040	\$ 19,467,650	\$ 13,720,473	\$ 19,478,581	-30%	-30%
Florida	\$ 970,067	\$ 3,304,250	\$ 4,477,200	\$ 4,251,717	\$ 4,261,133	\$ 12,448,800	\$ 3,452,873	192%	261%
Georgia	\$ 82,872,117	\$ 79,081,767	\$ 64,538,700	\$ 45,349,867	\$ 108,671,333	\$ 66,253,033	\$ 76,102,757	-39%	-13%
Mexico	\$ 7,546,058	\$ 5,479,666	\$ 6,877,450	\$ 8,787,200	\$ 7,688,750	\$ 6,246,800	\$ 7,275,825	-19%	-14%
S. Carolina	\$ 6,042,000	\$ 8,827,800	\$ 8,068,467	\$ 6,192,200	\$ 13,347,567	\$ 9,500,883	\$ 8,495,607	-29%	12%
Texas	\$ 9,897,550	\$ 11,835,825	\$ 14,236,600	\$ 13,640,533	\$ 17,983,167	\$ 14,507,650	\$ 13,518,735	-19%	7%
Total	\$ 119,285,358	\$ 125,114,963	\$ 109,441,383	\$ 75,777,003	\$ 150,806,083	\$ 110,625,051	\$ 116,084,958	-26.6%	-4.7%



Numerator 4th of July Report Fruit Trends Similar to Watermelon

Promotional ads at retail for fruit were down in 2020 and 2021 compared to 2019 for the 4th of July holiday but volume remained stable. Learn more about watermelon trends in the Watermelon July 4th Recap story featured on page 3.



Luca Collaboration Social Results

Our collaboration with the Disney+ release of Luca recently received some very impressive social results! The average engagement rate (e.g. likes, comments, shares) for their other content as compared to the engagement performance of our co-branded social content are highlighted below:

Top Platform Performance:

- Youtube: +1264% top weekly average engagement boost
- Facebook: +135% top weekly average engagement boost
- Instagram: +67% top weekly average engagement boost
- Creative Insight - The most popular LUCA-related post (pictured, right)



NWPB and Longo's Go Digital in Canada for Promotions

In conjunction with Longo's, one of Canada's premier food retailers, an extended June through September social media campaign was developed. Longo's targeted their large social media base to showcase and elevate consumer awareness for in-season U.S. watermelon. This included watermelon's nutritional benefits and extended usage opportunities, as well as a unique watermelon shrimp recipe developed expressly for this campaign, all which appeared on Facebook, Instagram and Longos.com.

How has this year's social media engagement campaign impacted U.S. watermelon movement at Longo's so far this season? With September's social media segment yet to run, U.S. watermelon movement has already exceeded Longo's 2020 entire year. With its impervious rind and easy-to-handle binned marketing capacity, food retailers like Longo's and the patrons they serve have once again flocked in greater number to this trusted fruit.



Individuals with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations and or alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, LEP, etc.) should contact: Juliemar Rosado at jrosado@watermelon.org within three days of event. The National Watermelon Promotion Board is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Watermelon Discovery Week Partnership with StarChefs

StarChefs serves as a community, resource and platform for restaurant professionals and offers a backstage pass for food-savvy consumers. In 2021, StarChefs curated a group of influential restaurants in eight markets across the U.S., showcasing watermelon on their menu from July 14-28. This custom on-premise promotion created long-lasting relationships with chef partners and developed original recipes and photos for future marketing use. Watermelon Discovery Week included social and web amplification through StarChefs and assets for each restaurant to encourage their customers to post on social media to win a gift card to the restaurant. The watermelon menu items were great examples showcasing the versatility of watermelon:

- **Tigertail + Mary (Miami):** Grilled Watermelon with Thai Chile, Lime, Crispy Garlic, Pickled Watermelon Rind, Sesame Oil, Basil, Cilantro, and Sea Salt
- **Backstreet Cafe (Houston):** Watermelon & Dragonfruit with Blackberries, Texas Honey, Watercress, Mint, Lemon, and Olive Oil
- **Rich Table (San Francisco):** Bucatini with Pork Belly, Watermelon, and Green Coriander
- **Woods Hill Pier 4 (Boston):** Fried Clams with Watermelon, Greek Yogurt, Honey, Habanero Sriracha, Lime, Shaved Sweet Peppers, and Mint (pictured, bottom right)
- **Mercantile Dining & Provisions (Denver):** Grilled Watermelon with Prosciutto, Nam Pla, Grated Cashew and Herbs
- **Haymayer (Seattle):** Watermelon Salad with Arugula, Feta, Greek Yogurt, Shallots, Lemon, Coriander, Chives, and Sea Salt (pictured, right middle)
- **Redheaded Stranger (Nashville):** Charred Watermelon Salad, Ancho Chile, Lime, Whipped Feta, Celery, Black Sesame Seeds, Pickled Watermelon Rind, Sea Salt
- **Albi (Washington D.C.):** Watermelon Fattoush, Fried Pita, Harissa, Smoked Feta, Whipped Labneh, Persian Cucumber, Mint, Lime



There were nearly 1,500 watermelon dishes sold as a part of the promotion with six of the eight restaurants planning to keep the menu item on their menu throughout the summer. One chef said, "It was a LOT of fun to come up with a creative watermelon dish for our menu. Guests loved it and we will be keeping it on the menu through the summer!" The StarChefs social reach totaled more than 100,000 impressions not including each restaurant's own social engagement. This promotion is a great example of the foodservice program placing more watermelon on menus *and* reaching consumers in the process. These menu items will be used with foodservice media to inspire chefs in the future.

Retail Kit Now Available in French Canadian & Spanish

The revamped Retail Kit is now available in three languages! over to the Retailers' section of watermelon.org for [English](#), [French Canadian](#) and [Spanish](#) versions!



Curious Plot Visit

In August Senior Director of Communications Stephanie Barlow visited with food and agriculture marketing agency and longtime partner Curious Plot (formerly FLM Harvest). The purpose of the visit was to meet with all team members who work on the watermelon account and discuss big ideas for future watermelon activities, events and ads to further audiences' reach, awareness and boost consumer demand.



Family Features: Sweet Ideas for Back to School

In anticipation of the back to school season, NWPB partnered with Family Features to launch a nationwide campaign to put watermelon at the forefront of breakfast planning. The feature, which includes delicious watermelon oat flour waffles - always a web favorite - and the watermelon "donuts," has already garnered 1,156 placements - 50 of which are print publications. Of those, 68% are front page placements!

Sweet Ideas for Easy Back-to-School Breakfasts

Watermelon Donuts

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1/2 cup watermelon juice
- 1/2 cup watermelon pulp
- 1/2 cup watermelon rind
- 1/2 cup watermelon seeds
- 1/2 cup watermelon rind
- 1/2 cup watermelon seeds

Watermelon Oat Flour Waffles

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup watermelon juice
- 1/2 cup watermelon pulp
- 1/2 cup watermelon rind
- 1/2 cup watermelon seeds
- 1/2 cup watermelon rind
- 1/2 cup watermelon seeds

Kid-Friendly Cuts

It's so easy to get kids excited about watermelon. Just cut it into fun shapes and serve it up with a smile. Here are some ideas for watermelon cuts that are both fun and healthy.

Shrimp

Shrimp is a great protein source for kids. It's also low in fat and calories. Try serving it with watermelon for a refreshing and healthy snack.

Cheese

Cheese is a great source of calcium and protein. Try serving it with watermelon for a healthy and delicious snack.

Sticks

Sticks are a great way to get kids to eat their vegetables. Try serving watermelon sticks with a dip for a healthy and fun snack.

Smoothies

Smoothies are a great way to get kids to drink their water. Try serving watermelon smoothies for a refreshing and healthy drink.



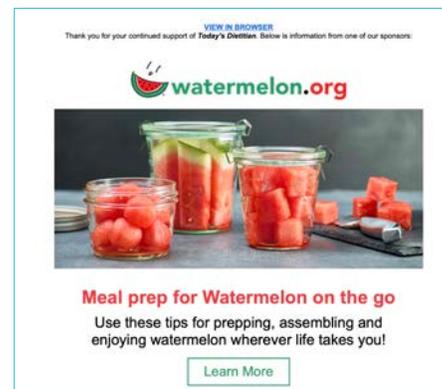
Wellcomm Photoshoot

Each year the NWPB invests in fresh photography of watermelon recipes and creative product shots to be used on the website, social media, print ads, paid article features and promotional materials. This year we partnered with Wellcomm for a one-day photoshoot featuring watermelon rind pickles. Rind pickles are consistently the top-searched key words on watermelon.org and the new recipes and images will be featured on the newly launched Rind Hub (watermelon.org/rind). The dill-flavored rind pickles are showcased in different ways and usages in modern recipes including avocado toast, burger and hot dog, charcuterie board, deviled eggs, potato salad (pictured bottom left) and pulled pork sandwiches (pictured middle row right).



Today's Dietitian E-blast

In mid-August, NWPB partnered with Today's Dietitian to send a watermelon and health-focused e-blast to their network of nearly 65,000 nutrition practitioners. This was the perfect opportunity to position watermelon as convenient and great on-the-go with some simple meal prep tips and tricks - of course including watermelon! The blast which received a 26% click through rate, also highlights ways to Use the Whole Watermelon and our RD toolkit and pop quiz, which has received 642 responses so far which includes opt-in for our monthly *What About Watermelon?* e-newsletter.



Watermelon on the Menu

The South Side restaurant in Cleveland is currently offering Watermelon Gazpacho made with fresh local sweet yellow watermelon and sweet red watermelon, blended with tomato, onion, chilies, pomegranate balsamic vinegar, fresh herbs and spices, served with poached shrimp, light grapeseed oil, and local pea shoots. The Chef of *The South Side*, Natasha Pogrebinsky, was recently featured in Cleveland Magazine for her Watermelon Gazpacho (pictured, right).



NWPB Connections

Flavor Experience - Monterey, CA - September 6 - 8

Women's Fresh Perspectives Conference - Santa Ana Pueblo, NM - September 12 - 14

MILE - Sun Valley, ID - September 19 - 21

NWPB Board Meeting - Orlando, FL - September 24

Nutrition News Update Media Event - Phoenix, AZ - September 26 - 28

Very Important Beverage Executives Conference - Carlsbad, CA - September 27 - 29

FPA Meeting - Nogales, AZ - September 29

New England Produce Council Produce & Foodservice Expo - Boston, MA - September 29 - 30