

A Recipe for Success

10 KEY STEPS TO INCREASE TOMATO CATEGORY SALES

The Florida Tomato Committee is committed to understanding your consumer's wants, needs, buying behaviors and purchase triggers in order to help you increase your tomato category sales. That's why we teamed up with the Perishables Group to conduct consumer research, both in-store and online in several regions of the country, as well as analyze national and regional sales data. Further, we commissioned the Perishables Group to conduct an in-depth promotional best practices study of ten retailers in the Northeast and South regions. All of this value-added information provides us and you with a recipe for growth and success.

MAXIMIZE SHELF SPACE WITH BEST-SELLING ASSORTMENTS

Consumers regularly shop for tomatoes. In fact, 72% of consumers surveyed purchase tomatoes weekly or more often. Nearly half purchase three or four tomatoes at a time.

The majority of consumers stated that tomato purchases are pre-planned and included on their shopping list. This fact underscores the importance of the tomato category to the produce department. National sales data also reveals that the tomato category ranks high on the list, averaging 7% of total produce department sales on a national basis.

TOMATOES ARE A DESTINATION CATEGORY

Field-grown tomatoes provide the foundation

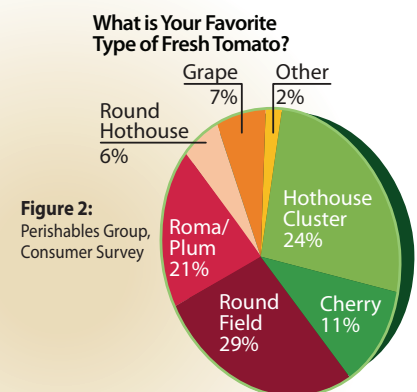
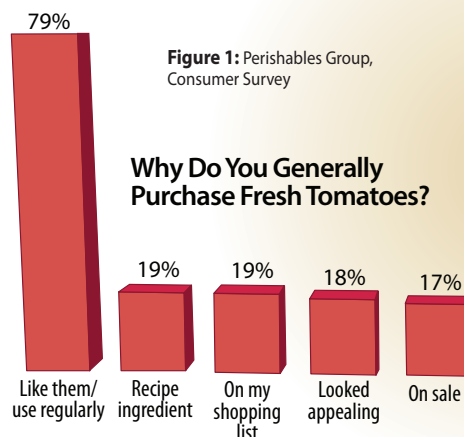
With pre-planned purchases and usage regularly in meals, we recommend "Destination" as the main role for the tomato category. Destination means the category has high or moderate sales, high frequency of purchase and can differentiate the retailer from competitors in the minds of consumers.

The top reason consumers purchase fresh tomatoes is they like fresh tomatoes and use them regularly.

(See Figure 1)

Field-grown tomatoes provide the foundation as the category driver with nearly 30% of consumers naming round field-grown tomatoes their favorite type of tomato.

(See Figure 2)



1 Showcase the tomato display and use secondary displays – location, location, location

Place tomato display in a high-traffic area of the department, preferably in the front or center. Cross-promote tomatoes with other key products including packaged salads, avocados, onions and dressings. Place secondary displays next to complimentary items.



2 Increase shelf space of round field-grown tomatoes

We recommend increasing shelf space for round field tomatoes—offer them in bulk and packaged in 4-6 count packages. According to the *Packer Fresh Trends Report*, consumers prefer field grown beefsteak and slicer tomatoes (43%) over hothouse tomatoes (7%).

Consumers' preference for fresh, field-grown flavor

About half of consumers surveyed reported their primary reason for purchasing field-grown tomatoes is the flavor. More than half of tomato consumers surveyed are aware that some tomatoes are field-grown and others are hothouse-grown. Of those who are aware that there is a difference between the two, 70% stated they prefer the flavor of field tomatoes. (See Figure 3)

PURCHASE TRIGGERS FOR POS SIGNAGE AND IN-STORE ADVERTISING

3 Highlight the nutritional and health benefits

More than half of consumers surveyed said knowing the nutritional benefits of tomatoes makes them want to purchase more tomatoes. Use POS signage to educate your customers on tomatoes' health benefits using these key copy points (per USDA):

Fresh Florida tomatoes are high in vitamin C and a good source of vitamin A. Fresh tomatoes are fat-free, low in calories and sodium and contain the antioxidant lycopene. Research shows that low fat diets rich in fruits and vegetables, that contain vitamin A and C, may reduce the risk of some cancers.

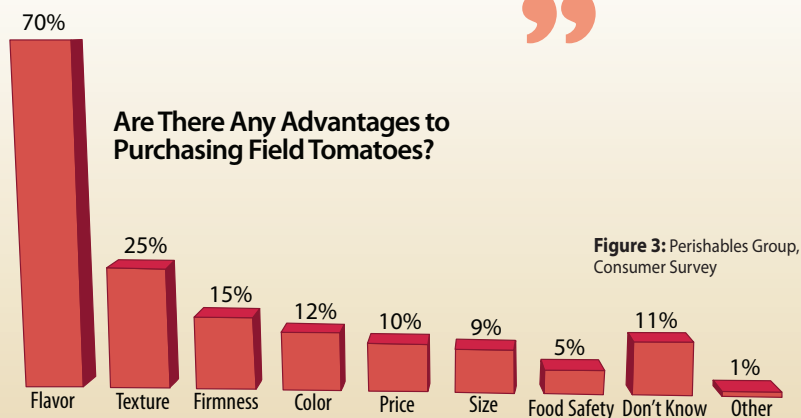
4 Highlight USA Grown Tomatoes on the display signage

Over three-fourths of consumers surveyed would very likely purchase USA grown tomatoes over imports, and their responses averaged a significant cost increase of 25 cents more per pound. Signage is available (posters, price cards) that underscores USA Grown Fresh. (See Figure 4)

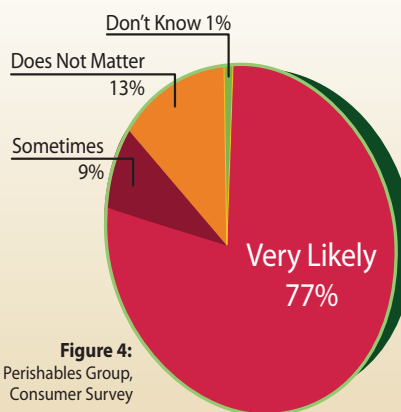
5 Arm your consumers with the information they want and need for the best tomato experience

When asked about information included on tomato displays, 38% of consumers said they would like to see recipes included; 26% would like storage and handling tips, and 25% would like usage ideas. (See Figure 5)

“Consumers regularly shop for tomatoes. In fact, 72% of consumers surveyed purchase tomatoes weekly or more often. Nearly half purchase three or four tomatoes at a time.”



Price and Appearance Being Equal, Would You Select USA Grown Tomatoes Over Imported Tomatoes?



**PROPER HANDLING GOES A LONG WAY
PROVIDE CONSUMER TIP – DO NOT REFRIGERATE.**

Since 60% of consumers currently store their tomatoes in the refrigerator, a tip on the display for “Do Not Refrigerate” will go a long way in maintaining product quality and repeat purchases.

**USE THESE PROVEN BEST PRACTICES
FOR TOMATO PROMOTIONS**

6 Optimum Discount Level is 31% - 40%
This discount level resulted in larger dollar impacts on the tomato category (7% increase) and field-grown round tomatoes (21% increase). While effective, the discount ranges of 41% to 50% should be used sparingly, as regular deep discount promotions can result in lower category dollars.

Frequency of Tomato Promotions

7 Run one to three field round tomato promotions per month during season (including print ads and ISPRs or in-store price reductions). The total tomato category does best when at least one tomato item (from any subcategory) is on promotion each week. April, May and November are the peak months for field-grown tomato promotions so increase frequency during these months to maximize results.

Promote field-grown tomatoes by themselves

8 In promotions that included field-grown tomatoes only, the average dollar lift was 17% with a volume increase of 52%. In addition, packaged field-grown tomatoes perform well on promotions; make sure to promote packaged field-grown tomatoes as well as bulk.

9 Promote field-grown tomatoes separate from hothouse tomatoes

Keeping field-grown and hothouse tomato promotions separate benefitted each item and the category.

10 Promote field-grown tomatoes on the back page of print ads

The back page of the print ad is the most effective location for field-grown tomatoes resulting in a 16% sales lift. (See Figure 6)

**PROVIDE CONSUMER TIP:
FOR BEST FLAVOR,
DO NOT REFRIGERATE.**

Impact by Promotion Location

Average Dollar Impact

Promotions That Include Field Round Tomatoes

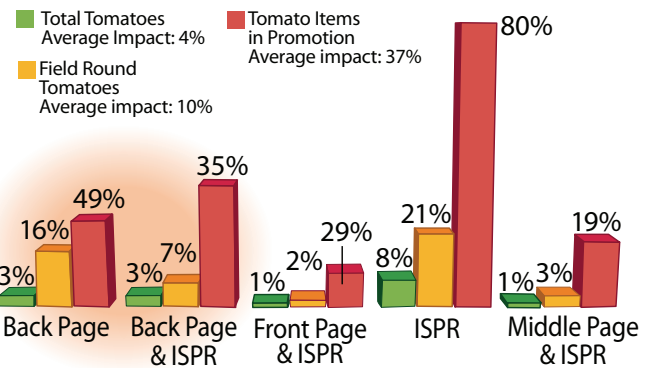


Figure 6: Perishables Group, Retail Promotional Analysis

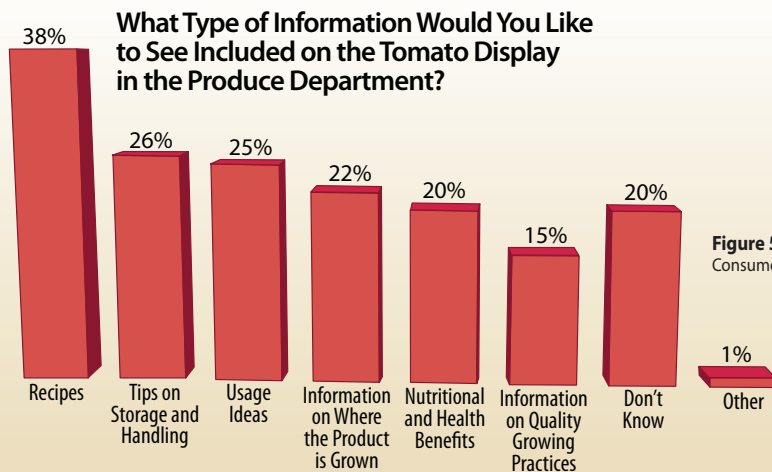


Figure 5: Perishables Group, Consumer Survey

