

PRODUCE TALK

Volume 28

Issue 41

October 12, 2017

HALLOWEEN

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. (sow-in) The Celts, who lived 2,000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and Northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1. This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the New Year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred. On the night of October 31, they celebrated Samhain, when it was believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth. The people were afraid to go outside at night because of the ghosts, so they lit candles and lights to frighten the ghosts away and wore masks and dressed up, so the ghosts wouldn't know whom they were. The American tradition of "trick-or-treating" was an Irish invention. Groups of villagers would go from house to house begging for food for a community feast: those who gave generously were promised a prosperous year, those who gave little were threatened and cursed. The arrival of the Irish in America spawned a great interest in Halloween. That's how it all started and now Halloween is the second largest Holiday that people spend money on. Halloween is a lot of fun for kids and adults alike. Not only do the kids have parties but adults do too. You need to capture as much of the business as possible! Here is what you can do.



The Department - Start outside with hay bales, corn stalks, scarecrows and jack-o-lantern pumpkins (easy on the clowns, Ha Ha) all set up to WOW the customers and to set the tone for the store visit. Then have a similar display inside, with additional items like painted pumpkins, pie pumpkins, apple cider, caramel and candy apples, gourds, variety squash, and even more jack-o-lantern pumpkins inside. How about having a huge 100 to 150 pound pumpkin with a contest to guess the weight or an apple-bobbing contest to create excitement. Painted pumpkins are growing in popularity some pumpkin suppliers are putting 'HAPPY HALLOWEEN' lightly carved into pumpkin during growing and it end up as a readable scare. The average person doesn't want to take the time or create the mess it takes to carve their own. Painted pumpkins are no muss, no fuss and they last longer. They are not as perishable as those carved into a jack-o-lantern. Displaying pumpkins in bins is a great way to display pumpkins but take time often to top bins off. Using high graphic, 36-inch bins with high graphic Halloween themes on them actually add to the décor of the department. Visit your local Halloween store for great decoration ideas.

To promote squash and other fall seasonal produce more fully, have big beautiful displays with good signage that will catch your customer's interest. Showcase products regularly in ads, and provide information about various fall products with recipes and nutrition information, which will build excitement.

In addition to pumpkin and squash, merchandising kiwi in October when both imported and domestic product is available will generate sales. If you move kiwifruit into a high traffic area like next to bananas, according to market research, using promotional pricing and good signage, sales volumes can increase up to 200 percent but sampling is a must.

Don't forget the candy display for Halloween. Build a center aisle display with full cases decorate it for Halloween (like a witch riding a broom) and you will sell a ton of candy. Individually wrap chocolates and candies make great treats to hand out to children for Halloween.

Baking Bars, should be up and fully stocked because the baking season is ready to really take off, no later than November 1st. It's a great time for the grocery department and the produce department to work together as a team. Instead of the customer getting fruitcake mix in aisle 3 and dates in aisle 8 and almonds in aisle 12, put everything your customers need for their baking needs in one spot, and call it "the Baking Bar". This is an opportunity to grab big dollar rings even though some might be out of department rings. Ask you Merchandiser for the great plan on how to build a baking bar.

Halloween is an exciting holiday, make a plan consisting of fellow employee input and you can capture a lot of extra sales.

Tricks & Treats for Halloween Selling

Did you know?

- Halloween is the 2nd largest holiday for retailers, just after Christmas!
- \$6.9 billion is what is spent on Halloween related items according to the National Retail Federation!
- Halloween is the biggest candy sale holiday!
- Candy sales represent \$2 billion for this time period!
- Customers spend \$50 million on Halloween greeting cards!
- Customers spend \$2.5 billion on decorations and crafts!
- Customers spend \$1.5 billion on costumes!
- 67% of all the above sales come from grocery stores, mass merchandisers and discount department stores!

"Additional Halloween Tips"

- Don't just stick with the traditional colors of orange and black...purple is a hot color for Halloween decorating.
- Have an employee do face paintings for the kids.
- Come up with some fun and creative ideas...costumes, contests, etc.
- Hand out safety tips and plastic bags for "trick or treat."

Great opportunity for sampling of new varieties of apples, apple cider and caramel apples.

Recipe (Source: Allrecipes.com)

HALLOWEEN EYE OF NEWT

Ingredients:

- 12 eggs
- 1 tablespoon sweet pickle relish
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 pinch celery salt
- 1 tablespoon prepared yellow mustard
- 2 drops green food coloring, or as needed
- 1 (6 ounce) can sliced black olives, drained

Directions:

1. Place all of the eggs into a large pot so they can rest on the bottom in a single layer. Fill with just enough cold water to cover the eggs. Bring to a boil, then cover, remove from the heat and let stand for about 15 minutes. Rinse under cold water or add some ice to the water and let the eggs cool completely. Peel and slice in half lengthwise.
2. Remove the yolks from the eggs and place them in a bowl. Mix in the relish, mayonnaise, celery salt, mustard, and food coloring. Spoon this filling into the egg whites and place them on a serving tray. Round the top of the filling using the spoon. Place an olive slice on each yolk to create the center of the eye. Dab a tiny bit of mayonnaise in the center of the olive as a finishing touch.



Western Vegetables

AVOCADOS: The market continues to drop on both conventional and organic fruit. Promotable pricing as we move closer to November.

BROCCOLI: The market is extremely tight as availability is very light out west. The continued issues with heat has increased quality issues. Since crown material has been scarcer than bunch, we have fully shifted into Michigan product. These have shown great quality with abundant volume.

CAULIFLOWER: Somewhat tight market. The extreme warm weather is causing quality issues in the field.

CELERY: The celery market remains somewhat depressed. Yields have increased as fields have shifted from South to more North, where the temperatures are more moderate. As we move towards Thanksgiving, volumes will increase to correspond with demand.

GREEN ONIONS: Market has increased as quality has allowed some volume to pick up.

LETTUCE: The mixed leaf market remains steady. Red leaf, Romaine and Romaine heart numbers have begun to decrease as quality issues in the field have caused yields to drop.

Value-Added

Declining supplies of raw product from the west coast growing areas continues to affect the supply of various conventional and organic value-added items. Mann's is prorating most items that contain broccoli and sugar snap peas. Organic Girl is prorating most orders for Romaine heart leaves, Mache Blend, Butter and Butter Plus Salads.

Southern Vegetables

BEANS: Good supplies from Michael's; will go to about October 15th, weather permitting.

CABBAGE: Good supplies; will go to November 10th.

CORN: Supplies and prices have dropped off due to lack of demand.

CUCUMBERS, EGGPLANTS, YELLOW & ZUCHINNI SQUASH: Market has increased drastically over the last 4-5 days due to cool nights.

GREENS: Good supplies on collard, mustard and kale.

ONIONS: Western onion quality is very good. Markets are steady and firm. Peruvian sweet onions will be available next week.

PEPPERS: Good supplies out of California.

POTATOES: Markets are mostly steady. Supplies continue to improve as does quality.

Organics

BEETS: Beets still remain a challenge due to curly top virus that impacts the plant leaves and bulb. Supplies will be limited for a few more weeks until growers move to lower elevation new fields that should be clean.

BROCCOLI: Due to weather issues (heat) in growing regions in the west, we are seeing suppliers limit available supply driving market cost up. There will be discoloration to the tops as heat will cause a darker head on the broccoli.

BUNCH CARROTS: Supply is available, though due to high temps, we are seeing discoloration to the tops of the product.

CABBAGE: Regional supply has really come on from Ohio and other surrounding areas. Great time for promotion!

CAULIFLOWER: Supplies are starting to improve and the quality is good. Market has gradually decreased; high temperatures out west should not affect supply.

CELERY: Supply is getting better as we have moved up in to California product starting out. Pricing has come down and it's getting promotable.

CUCUMBERS: Supply is extremely limited! Western supply has not been available and most product in the southeast has been affected by the various weather issues.

GREEN PEPPERS: Steady supplies regionally with good quality.

KALES: Great supplies of kale currently; plenty of regional product from all over the Midwest available. We are sourcing from North Carolina, Ohio and other regions. Product is in great supply and pricing is very promotable.

LETTUCES: The inbound quality we are seeing out west is showing russet and leaf mildew. We are sourcing as much from Canada as possible due to better quality. Iceberg lettuce will be a struggle as supply is not meeting good arrival.

RADISHES: Supplies are improving with better quality tops. Very little damage now to the tops and they look much cleaner than they have been.

YELLOW SQUASH & ZUCCHINI: Supply has been very good out of Ohio on the zucchini with yellow being much more limited.

Asparagus

Supplies on the upswing out of both Peru and Mexico. Market is falling back into more seasonal pricing with stable conditions than we have seen the past few months. Great time to promote over the next few weeks. Organic asparagus steady supply for next month; market strong but decreasing slightly.

Fruit

APPLES & PEARS: New Crop Washington apples are almost in full swing. New varieties will be added each week. Looks to be a good crop this year with the volume being in 80 size and smaller. Pink Lady and Braeburn apples will be in a gap for a couple of weeks. Adding new varieties weekly, check your catalog. Michigan Honeycrisp are now available and the fruit is beautiful. New Crop Washington pear crop is looking great. Danjou, Bartlett, Bosc and Starkrimson are now available. Peak volume will be in 80/90ct this year.

BLACKBERRIES: Market bottoming out as increase of heavy volume coming out of Mexican regions. Special buys and spot promotions will be normal for next two to three weeks. Organic blackberries remain limited but volume will begin to increase over coming weeks.

BLUEBERRIES: Blueberries moving out of domestic blues into imported crop out of Argentina/Peru with good supplies. Volume will increase quickly and good ad opportunity in later October and into November. Organic blueberries are switching to 4.4's; price is very high and will remain. You won't see good promotions on organic blueberries until we move into November.

CANTALOUPE & HONEYDEWS: Domestic cantaloupe and honeydew pricing is edging up and quality is very good.

CITRUS: New crop Florida and Texas grapefruit will begin loading next week. Florida has started picking tangerines. Navel oranges and juice oranges will begin shipping next week.

CLEMENTINES: Good steady volume continuing out of Southern America; quality outstanding with great flavor.

FIGS: Brown Turkey and Black Mission figs remain in steady supply but moving into latter haul. Quality improving as heat has eased off and back into more normal growing conditions.

GRAPES: Good volume on Reds; transferring into Scarlet Royals, Crimson and other late season red varieties. Holidays Red seedless in-house and beautiful grape with excellent flavor. Green seedless moving into newer late varieties such as the Autumn King and Kelly's, sizing is outstanding with good clean grapes. Organics are still in good volume into October.

PINEAPPLES: Good supplies.

POMEGRANATES: Will be switching into the Wonderful variety by week of October 23rd. Pom Wonderful's pomegranates slated for loading that same week and will be available the first week of November. Organic pomegranates are steady.

RASPBERRIES: Like strawberries, we are starting to see supply affected by the higher temperature.

STRAWBERRIES: With the increased temperatures in growing regions, we are starting to see loading and available supply slow down. Inbound quality will be an issue as with higher temperatures will bring increased bruising and sun-scold.

Tropical Fruit

BABY FRENCH BEANS: Market increasing; some russeting appearing in beans due to weather issues from excessive rain.

KIWI: Good supplies.

LIMES: Prices have firmed up and increased on some sizes with better demand this week. Size 200 and large remained limited. Overall quality is very nice.

MANGOES: Conventional mangos are in good supply. Organic mangos are in a gap until the end of October until the Ecuador deal starts up.

MARIDOL PAPAYAS/ GOLD PAPAYAS: Stable with back to normal supplies coming in from South America or the Caribbean.

SUGAR SNAP PEAS/SNO PEAS: Strong markets out Guatemala on both snows and sugar snaps.

Merchandising Tips

If you would ask any car salesman, he'll tell you his chances of making a sale improve dramatically once he gets a potential customer to take a test drive. The same principle exists in the produce department. If you get your customers to take a taste test, your chances of selling a product skyrocket. Anytime is the perfect time for sampling but in the fall your choices for sampling seems endless; all varieties of apples from Washington State and Michigan, especially the Honeycrisp variety, citrus from Florida, pomegranates, caramel apples, and cider. No item is off limits.

Taking a few moments to make every customer feel special is very important to the lifeblood of your store. There is no better way than to make them feel special than by offering them a sample.

With Halloween right around the corner and Thanksgiving just a little over a month away, we really need to be thinking and planning for fall selling and the holidays.

- **FALL SQUASH** - You could tie in mini-pumpkins and gourds; you can use bushel baskets, hay bales and corn stalks to decorate with. Selling fall squash by the bin is a good idea also. You should be loaded with all the different kinds of pumpkins right now too!
- **APPLE CIDER** - Make sure you demo cider and tie in donuts and cinnamon sticks.
- **YAMS** - You should already have yams but now is the time you need to bring in the variety yams, like red garnet and white yams too. You can tie them in with marshmallows or cranberries.
- **CRANBERRIES** - You should have them now also. Tie them in with celery, yams and oranges or in the cooking section!

We have Halloween, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas to really capture extra floral sales. Remember, you need to be in the floral business everyday if you are going to build a consistent floral sales base, so don't just carry product for the holidays; have a consistent, fresh and stocked floral shop with all the items every day.

CROSSET NEW ITEM & DELETION SHEET

W/B: 10/22/17

ITEM #	NEW ITEMS	SIZE
33828	Jazz Apple	40#
38575	Comice Pear	40#
28810	Snapdragon Apple	27#
1220	Honey Crisp Kiss Melons	9 ct
1230	Summer Kiss Melons	9 ct
31075	Pinova Apple OG	40#
33451	Gold Del Apple OG	40#
89070	Potato Buttercream	12/2#
89049	Potato Finger French	16/1.5#
89079	Potato Finger Russian	16/1.5#
79685	Og Bok Choy	35#
79690	Og Bok Choy	15#
79781	Og Nappa Cabbage	30#
66010	OG Cranberries	18/8oz
78520	OG Blueberries	12/4.4oz
	DELETIONS	
42903	Alo Enrich Pom	12/16.9oz
66031	Dried cranberries	12/6oz
66033	Dried blueberries	12/3oz
68064	Dried cherries	12/5oz
610195	Autumn Mix	30#
63028	Fruit Cake Mix	12/16oz
63034	Cherry Green	12/8oz
63037	Citron	12/4oz
775001	Josie's Chop Asian Salad	6/12 oz
775002	Josie's Chop Sweet Kale	6/10 oz
1210	Sugar Kiss Melons	11ct
93010	Idaho Potato	5/10#
93018	Idaho Potato 10# Bin	100/10#
93020	Idaho Potato 5#	10/5#
39027	Orange Cara Cara	33#
39038	Og Valencia	88ct
39535	Og Valencia	10/4#

39530	Og Valencia	10/4#
40012	Og Juice Orange	38 #
46183	Og Red Grapefruit	40ct
46190	Og Red Grapefruit	40ct
13505	Og Bagged Red Beets	24/1#
97810	Og Celery Root	25#
78530	OG Blueberries	12/6oz
71273	OG Peaches	18#
71420	OG White Flesh peaches	18#
73515	Cv Red Pluots	18#
73560	Cv Mottled Pluots	8#
73568	Cv Mottled Pluots	18#
73575	Cv Red Pluots	8#