

## Covid-19: Impact on Retail Promotion of Produce, 2019-20 Season

**Table 1. Fruit Promotions, Conventional and Organic**

Period	Item	Units	Conventional	Organic	Total
Sep-Nov	Ads	#	656,128	120,748	776,876
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 1.626</i>	<i>\$ 2.382</i>	<i>\$ 1.744</i>
Dec-Feb	Ads	#	639,112	45,522	684,634
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 1.961</i>	<i>\$ 1.720</i>	<i>\$ 1.945</i>
Mar-May	Ads	#	494,078	53,226	547,304
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 2.010</i>	<i>\$ 2.675</i>	<i>\$ 2.075</i>
Jun-Aug	Ads	#	728,892	173,378	902,270
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 1.941</i>	<i>\$ 2.926</i>	<i>\$ 2.130</i>

**Comment:**

1. Table 1 includes all major fresh fruits except apples. The number of conventional ads changed little between Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of the 2019-20 season before the impact of Covid-19 was felt.
2. The number of conventional ads fell by over 20 percent between quarter 2 and quarter 3, but reached new heights in quarter 4.
3. The number of organic ads fell by two-thirds between the first and second quarter, and remained low in the third quarter before tripling from that level in quarter 4.
4. The average price for conventional fruit jumped in the quarter 2, and remained high for the rest of the year.
5. The average price for organic fruit fell by 28 percent in quarter 2, but jumped by 55.5 percent in quarter 3, at the height of the Covid-19 scare, and rose a further 14.6 percent in quarter 4.
6. In summary, the Covid-19 crisis appears to have strengthened demand for fresh fruit.

**Table 2. Apple Promotions, Bulk and 3-lb Bags, Conventional**

Period	Item	Units	Bulk	3-lb Bags	Total
Sep-Nov	Ads	#	314,396	102,934	417,330
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 1.559</i>	<i>\$ 1.114</i>	<i>\$ 1.450</i>
Dec-Feb	Ads	#	240,073	75,720	315,793
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 1.500</i>	<i>\$ 1.131</i>	<i>\$ 1.412</i>
Mar-May	Ads	#	126,936	40,426	167,362
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 1.474</i>	<i>\$ 1.133</i>	<i>\$ 1.392</i>
Jun-Aug	Ads	#	73,977	29,755	103,732
	<i>Price</i>	<i>\$/lb</i>	<i>\$ 1.543</i>	<i>\$ 1.321</i>	<i>\$ 1.479</i>

**Comment:**

1. The number of apple ads, both bulk and 3-lb bags, fell dramatically as the 2019-20 season progressed.
2. The proportion of ads for 3-lb bags in total ads hovered around 25 percent for the first three quarters, but rose to 28.7 percent in quarter 4 after the Covid-19 crisis had stabilized.
3. The average advertised prices for bulk ads remained relatively stable through all four quarters. However, the average advertised prices for 3-lb bags rose by 16.6 percent between quarter 3 and quarter 4.
4. The data for 2019-20 support the claim that retailers are shifting more of their advertised specials from bulk sales to 3-lb bags. However, the shift remains relatively modest. The test will be whether or not the shift continues in the 2020-21 season.

**Table 3. Potato and Vegetable Promotions, Conventional and Organic**

Period	Item	Units	Conventional	Organic	Total
Sep-Nov	Ads	#	258,373	51,624	309,997
	Price	\$/lb	\$ 1.789	\$ 1.917	\$ 1.810
Dec-Feb	Ads	#	227,504	51,261	278,765
	Price	\$/lb	\$ 1.694	\$ 1.961	\$ 1.743
Mar-May	Ads	#	154,335	22,639	176,974
	Price	\$/lb	\$ 1.409	\$ 1.670	\$ 1.443
Jun-Aug	Ads	#	191,200	36,802	228,002
	Price	\$/lb	\$ 1.517	\$ 1.683	\$ 1.544

**Comment:**

1. There has been more seasonal volatility in the potato and vegetable market than in the fruit segment.
2. In quarter 3, at the height of the Covid-19 crisis, conventional ads fell by one third from quarter 2, while organic ads fell by over 50 percent. Some of this may have been due to lack of availability of organic product.
3. The number of ads, both conventional and organic, in quarter 4, bounced back, but was still well below the numbers in quarters 1 and 2.
4. Average advertised prices for both conventional and organic products fell from previous levels in quarter 3, at the height of the Covid-19 crisis, and recovered little in quarter 4.