

FLORIDA PEACHES

**SWEET MARKETING TIPS FOR
FLORIDA'S SWEET FRUIT**

**CRAVING MORE
INFORMATION?**

Learn about consumers' perceptions of Florida peaches and how you can better market your crop.

UF|IFAS
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



**Center for
Public Issues Education**

**FLORIDA
SPECIALTY CROP
FOUNDATION**

THE PIE CENTER IDENTIFIES OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FLORIDA PEACH INDUSTRY

There are some pretty sweet opportunities that exist for growers in Florida's peach industry. Florida peach growers have the opportunity to succeed in the retail market through targeted marketing and increased knowledge of consumer perceptions of the peach industry.

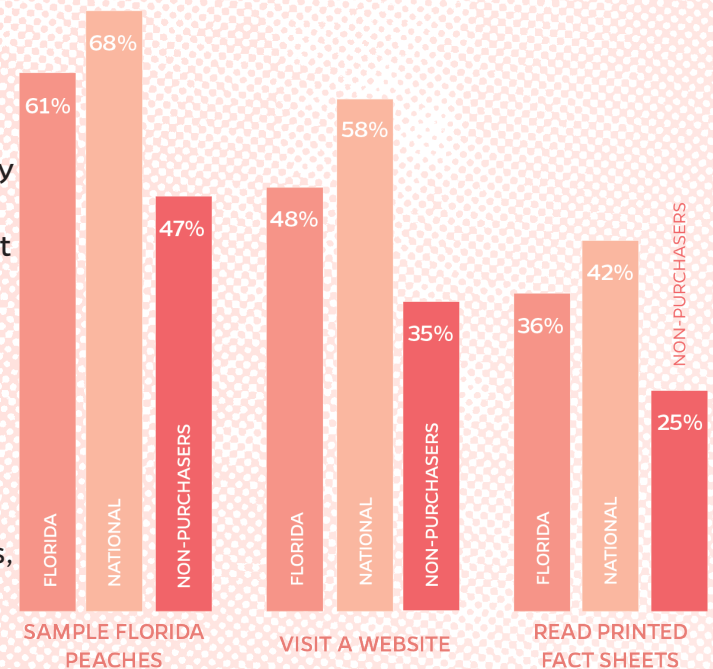
The UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center) surveyed consumers in 2016 and sought to identify the opinions of national and Florida consumers. This survey informed a strategic marketing plan for the Florida peach industry and allowed insight to how peaches could be marketed through different opportunities.

Research revealed that consumers were most likely to eat peaches as a snack and to purchase peaches in a supermarket. Supermarkets were also identified as the most affordable purchasing option, and the most convenient.

When survey participants were asked their opinions of various statements, most national and Florida consumers agreed that peaches are delicious. The statement with the least agreement was that peaches are available year-round.

Respondents were also asked questions related to their awareness of Florida's peach season. Few national consumers, Florida consumers and non-purchasers were aware of the season. Even fewer respondents could correctly identify the months when Florida peaches are in season.

CONSUMER-PREFERRED OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FLORIDA PEACHES



The industry has the opportunity to educate consumers and retailers about Florida's peach industry. When asked what opportunities would be preferred to learn about Florida peaches, sample Florida peaches, visit a website, and read printed fact sheets were the most popular among Florida and national consumers and non-purchasers. Sampling Florida peaches was the most preferred learning opportunity for all three audiences, with 68 percent of the national respondents selecting this option.

Other opportunities for the Florida peach industry include motivating retailers to differentiate Florida peaches and target consumers that are willing to pay a premium price.

The tips suggested by the PIE Center offer guidance about how these opportunities can be capitalized on.

To learn more information about the PIE Center's research on peach marketability, visit piecenter.com/issues/food/local-food and navigate to "Driving Demand: Increasing awareness and marketability of Florida peaches."



CAPITALIZE ON OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT WITH CONSUMERS AND FOSTER THE SUCCESS OF FLORIDA'S PEACH INDUSTRY.



Boost retailer knowledge.

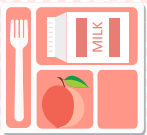
Growers should encourage retail buyers to share information on correct handling practices with all members of the retail team that handle Florida peaches.

Growers can also submit articles written by Florida peach industry experts to inform retailers about the Florida peach season and Florida peaches' unique characteristics, such as the examples shown on this page.



Reach consumers through consumer-preferred education tactics.

Growers can work with partners, such as Fresh from Florida, to offer sampling opportunities. Growers can connect with consumers at community events, such as farmers' markets, with displays or fact sheets that inform consumers about Florida peaches.



Sell peaches directly to school lunch programs.

When growers have an abundance of peaches that are too small for retail markets, growers can sell their peaches to school lunch programs, such as the Fresh from Florida Farm-to-School program. These programs connect growers with local school districts and ensure growers can sell more of their peaches each year.



Utilize social media to inform consumers.

Growers can promote the Florida peach industry on their own social media accounts and educate consumers about Florida peach season and attributes of Florida peaches. Use of social media allows growers to reach a diverse audience of potential peach buyers.



Open a U-pick to educate consumers and drive demand.

Less regulations and more legal protections are making it easier for growers to open U-picks. U-picks provide guests with a personal experience, which may lead to higher demand for the specific crop and reinforce consumer knowledge of the Florida peach season.



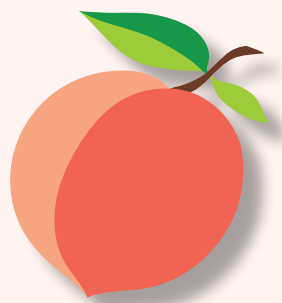
Engage with University of Florida's Institute of Food and Consumer Sciences (IFAS).

Growers can partner with UF/IFAS researchers to work toward developing peach cultivars. Researchers and growers may even find peach production practices that are less expensive than current practices.

DRIVING DEMAND OF FLORIDA PEACHES

These outreach materials were created to inform retailers and consumers about Florida's peach season, peach characteristics, and peach health benefits. Download these materials at "Driving Demand: Increasing awareness and marketability of Florida peaches" (piecenter.com/issues/food/local-food).





ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

In partnership with the Florida Specialty Crop Foundation, this project aims to increase the awareness and marketability of Florida peaches. The PIE Center surveyed three groups of people, a national group who purchased peaches, a Florida resident group who purchased peaches, and a national group who did not purchase peaches. This consumer survey informed a peach marketing plan. This research is funded through a specialty crop block grant administered by the USDA and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The full results, marketing plan, and outreach materials can be found at:

PIECENTER.COM/ISSUES/FOOD/LOCAL-FOOD

