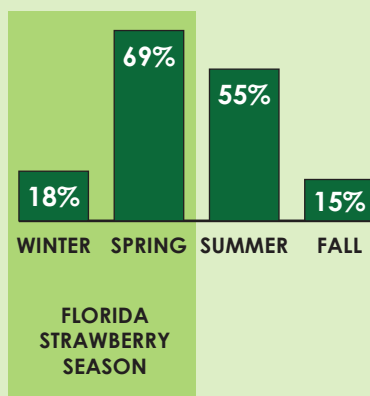


WHAT CONSUMERS THINK ABOUT FLORIDA STRAWBERRIES

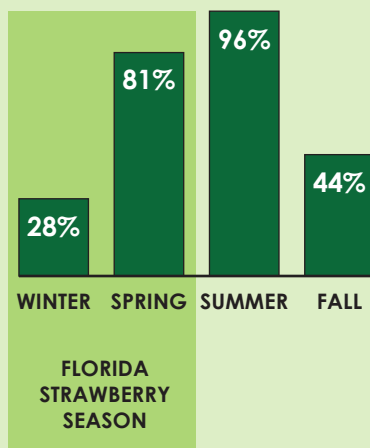
Florida is the country's second-leading strawberry producer and highest producer during the winter. The state's strawberry industry contributes \$300 million to Florida's economy annually but faces growing challenges from strawberries imported from Mexico. Consumers value Florida strawberries for the crop's freshness, taste, price and quality, but seem unaware of when the strawberries are available, according to research from the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education.

40% OF CONSUMERS SAID THEY KNOW WHEN FLORIDA STRAWBERRIES ARE IN SEASON.

WE ASKED THOSE PEOPLE WHAT MONTHS THEY THOUGHT FLORIDA STRAWBERRIES WERE IN SEASON:



WHEN CONSUMERS BUY STRAWBERRIES



SURVEY: RESIDENTS UNAWARE OF WINTER STRAWBERRY SEASON

Consumers most frequently buy strawberries in the summer — after Florida's strawberry season has ended.

Ninety-six percent of U.S. residents living east of the Mississippi River said they typically purchase strawberries in June, July or August. Although 81 percent of shoppers said they typically purchase strawberries in the spring, or very end of the Florida strawberry season, only 28 percent bought strawberries in the winter.

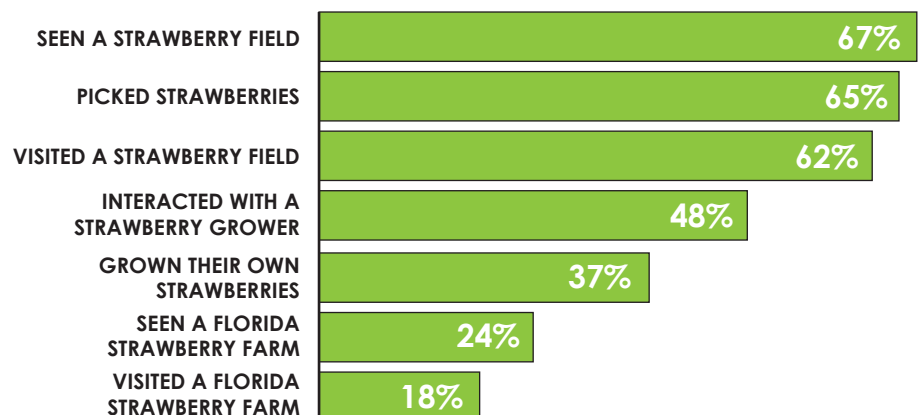
Sixty percent of consumers did not know when Florida strawberries were in season. Of the 40 percent who said they did, more than half mistakenly believed Florida strawberries were

available during summer months. Only 18 percent believed Florida strawberries to be in season during the winter.

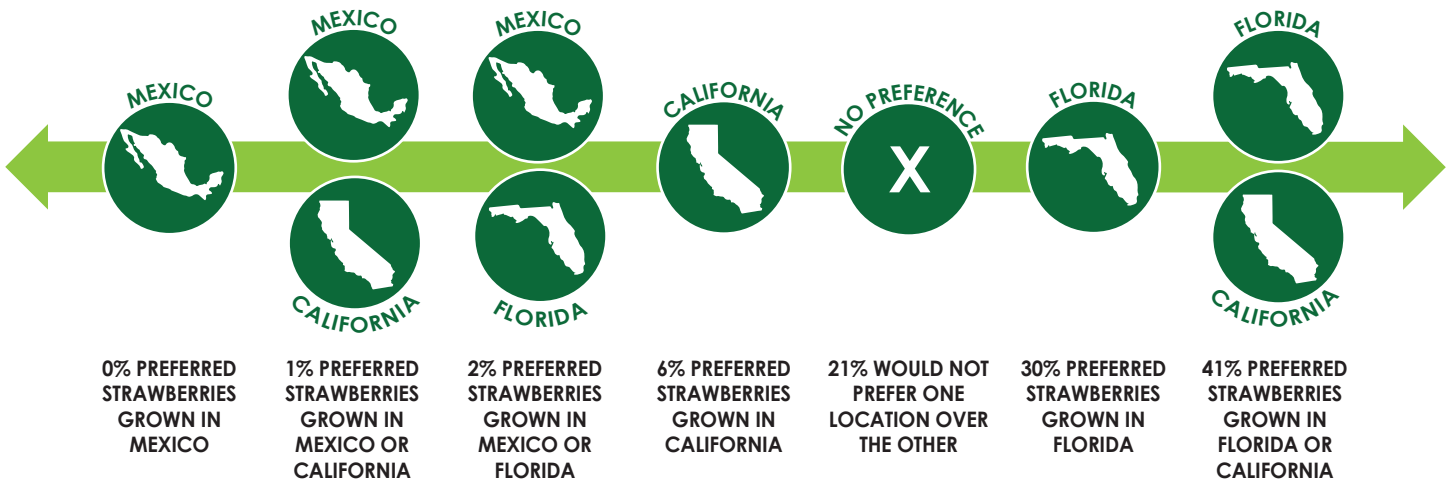
About two-thirds of consumers reported having seen a strawberry field in person or picked strawberries by hand. Sixty-two percent had visited a strawberry field and nearly half said they had interacted with a strawberry grower at a farm or farmers markets.

However, consumers' experiences with strawberries does not always happen in Florida. Less than a quarter of eastern U.S. residents said they had seen a Florida strawberry farm and even fewer reported visiting one.

CONSUMERS' EXPERIENCES WITH STRAWBERRIES



PREFERRED GROWING LOCATION



FLORIDA PRIME SPOT FOR STRAWBERRIES

Despite not knowing when Florida strawberries are in season, national consumers recognize the state for producing high-quality and delicious strawberries.

When given the choice of purchasing strawberries from a variety of locations, 30 percent of consumers

who live east of the Mississippi River said they would prefer strawberries grown in Florida. About 40 percent said they would buy strawberries grown in either Florida or California.

Consumers valued Florida and California strawberries for their perceived

freshness, taste, price, quality and food safety regulations.

Beyond freshness, taste and price, the few who preferred strawberries imported from Mexico said they believed the crop to be grown organically and with better farm worker regulations.

ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

The PIE Center partnered with the Florida Strawberry Growers Association to explore consumers' strawberry-buying habits and perceptions. PIE Center researchers surveyed 1,500 U.S. residents at least 18 years old who lived east of the Mississippi River.

TOP 5 REASONS TO PURCHASE FROM EACH GROWING LOCATION

