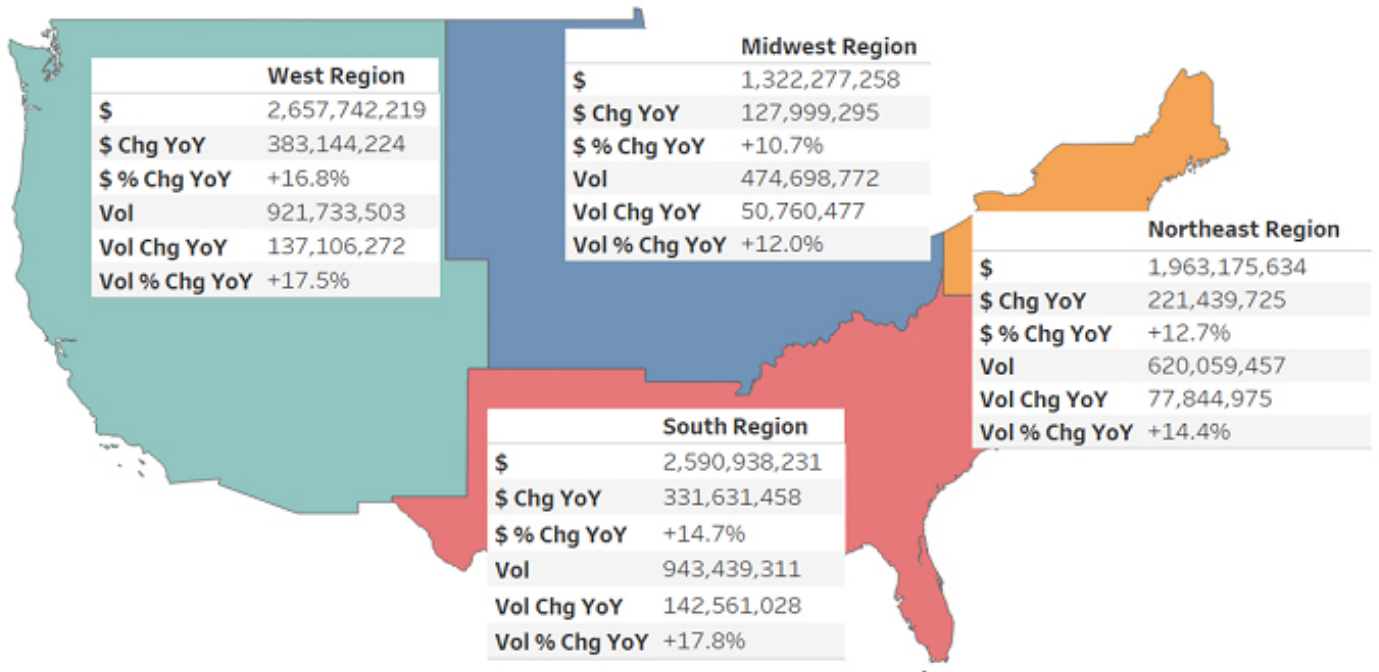


2020 Regional Performance Highlights



- Advertisement -

Organic produce sales to \$8.5 billion in 2020

January 21, 2021

Buoyed by a fourth consecutive quarter of double-digit growth, 2020 organic produce sales finished with a 14.2-percent increase over the previous year, outpacing conventionally grown produce in both sales and volume gains, according to the 2020 Organic Produce Performance Report released exclusively by the Organic Produce Network and Category Partners.

Organic fresh produce sales in 2020 were \$8.54 billion, an increase of over \$1 billion from 2019, and represented 12 percent of all fresh produce sales, according to scanned data from Nielsen. Conventional produce sales rose 10.7 percent for the year.

Overall organic volume in 2020 increased 16 percent from the previous year, while conventional volume rose by 9 percent during the same period. Organic bananas continue to be the biggest volume mover, with movement up 16 percent from 2019.

The 14.2-percent increase in organic sales from 2019 reflected a nine-month-long pandemic that changed consumers' grocery shopping habits. Of the top 10 organic sales and volume categories, 9 of them saw double-digit growth.



Matt Seeley

The top three sales categories for 2020 were packaged salads, berries (strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries), and apples, with each segment registering double-digit gains over the prior year. Among the categories showing the largest year-over-year sales increases were herbs and spices (up 26 percent) and potatoes (up 21 percent), as consumers shifted to preparing more meals at home during the pandemic. Organic grapes saw a decline of 6 percent in both sales and volume.

“In the face of restaurant restrictions and closures and elevated sales across the entire supermarket as consumers turned to at-home eating, organic fresh produce sales surged last year, with consumers looking for healthy, safe, and wholesome meal options for their families,” said Matt Seeley, CEO of the Organic Produce Network.

All four geographic regions of the country experienced double-digit growth in 2020, with the West showing the biggest increases in sales (16.8 percent) and volume (17.5 percent) over the previous year.



Steve Lutz

The South continues to climb in organic produce consumption, with sales of over \$2.5 billion, an increase of 14.7 percent from 2019, and volume up 17.8 percent over the same period.

The fourth quarter of 2020 saw a continuation of the double-digit growth of organic sales that started in early March, with strong increases in the herbs and spices category as well as the lettuce and potato segments. Organic produce sales for the fourth quarter topped \$2 billion, with dollars increasing 15 percent compared to a gain of only 10 percent in conventional. Volume was a similar story, with organics up 14.4 percent compared to a volume increase in conventional of 7.9 percent for the last quarter of 2020.

“The continued strength of organic fruit and vegetable sales through 2020 despite pandemic-related economic challenges underscores the depth of consumer demand for organic products,” said Steve Lutz, senior vice president of insights and innovation at Category Partners. “Across all of 2020, organic sales growth continued to outpace conventional. As we hopefully see the pandemic begin to subside into 2021, the market opportunities for fresh organic fruits and vegetables in the coming year remain outstanding. There are wide swaths of the US where organic fruits and vegetables have limited distribution and narrow assortment in many conventional supermarkets. This indicates that across a multitude of organic produce categories, there remain significant growth opportunities both

by gaining distribution but also in supplying latent consumer demand.”

A complete version of this report will be made available on the Organic Produce Network website at the end of January.

[Print](#)