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# **Produce department sales top \$71 billion, see continued growth**

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Fresh produce continues its steady growth at retail, with increased sales for both fruits and vegetables in Q4 of 2020, according to United Fresh's FreshFacts on Retail Q4 2020/Year in Review 2020 report, sponsored by Mucci Farms.

Among the findings, the issue reports that fresh perimeter categories continue their role as the growth engines of the store. The report features seasonal category deep dives on cucumbers, mangos and mushrooms, with a year-to-year comparison of the last three years' Q2 results to aid in planning for a successful Q2 2021.

"Q4 was largely a continuation of pandemic trends we have seen throughout the year, including consistent growth for produce at retail," said Miriam Wolk, United Fresh's vice president of member services. "The resilience of fresh produce throughout 2020 was a testament to the commitment of growers, manufacturers, distributors and retailers to ensuring America's healthy eating needs continued to be met."

Q4 highlights include:

- Both fruits and vegetables continued to grow, as sales surged across categories driven by consumers making more trips and spending more during those trips.
- Value-added produce sales continued to gain momentum after rebounding from declines in the past. While vegetables are growing at a higher pace than fruit, the latter has returned to growth after consecutive quarters of sales decline.

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- Total fruit generated revenues of \$7.3 billion in the latest quarter, representing 7.7 percent growth versus a year ago.
  - Vegetable dollar sales grew 14.1 percent in the latest quarter, reaching \$8.8 billion, backed by strong volume growth of 9.2 percent.

Highlights of the Year in Review 2020 section of the report include:

- The produce department generated \$71.6 billion in 2020, accounting for 33 percent of total fresh sales, second only to the meat department.
- Despite the pandemic, produce still managed to drive store trips, proving that consumers are not willing to subsist on frozen, canned and center store items alone.
- Total fruit sales in the U.S. crossed \$33.7 billion in 2020, 7.6 percent higher than a year ago, with apples, grapes and bananas ranking as the top three categories in sales.
- Vegetable dollar sales topped a new high of \$35.8 billion, and was higher by 14.4 percent vs a year ago, driven by a strong volume growth of 11.7 percent, with pre-packed salads, tomatoes and potatoes as the top three categories in sales.

As an added value, the United Fresh Retail-Foodservice Board and Nielsen Fresh will host a webinar to highlight statistics included in the Q4 2020 report. Featuring analysis from Mike Galaburda, client director for Nielsen, the webinar will take place on Thursday, Feb. 25 at 2 pm EST, providing an opportunity for participants to ask questions and participate in an interactive audience discussion with Ajit Saxena from Mucci Farms. Registration for the webinar is available [here](#). The webinar will be moderated by Jeff Cady, director of produce and floral at Tops Friendly Markets.

The FreshFacts on Retail report measures retail price and sales trends for the top 10 fruit and vegetable commodities, as well as value-added, organic and other produce categories. The report is produced in partnership with Nielsen Fresh, with direction from the United Fresh Retail-Foodservice Board.

FreshFacts on Retail can be [downloaded](#) free of charge for all United Fresh members (\$50 for non-members) on the United Fresh website.

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