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**Aldi's strong produce sales come with stronger thoughts on apple displays**

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It's no secret that Americans have been feeling the sting of high grocery costs for months. Aldi said record numbers of shoppers are heading to its stores rather than become accustomed to eyebrow-raising receipts at the end of every grocery trip.

"We're pleased to share that in the past year we have welcomed more than 1 million new households into our stores and experienced double-digit sales growth, proving the Aldi experience is one that resonates," the company said in a statement.

The company said it creates a different kind of grocery experience by focusing only on providing high-quality groceries like fresh fruits and vegetables instead of what it described as wasting time and money on all the "extra noise," like apples stacked in a pyramid for aesthetics.

"Our simple, efficient displays are just the beginning. Many times, people equate low price with low quality, but that is simply not the case at Aldi," said Scott Patton, vice president of national buying. "We make thousands of strategic, intentional decisions that help us keep prices low on high-quality groceries because we're committed to giving our shoppers the very best, at a price they can afford — every day, in every aisle."

The company said its apples aren't lower quality just because our aren't stacked. It gets fresh fruits and vegetables delivered daily, sources locally whenever possible, has a large organic selection and emphasizes seasonal produce so shoppers get the best value and peak freshness.

The company's fresh fruit and vegetable sales are up 70 percent in the last five years. In that time, it has expanded its assortment by 20 percent, with a heavy focus on organic. Ninety-eight percent of the most popular produce can be found in the average 130 items it offers at any given time.

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