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Sweet potatoes poised for strong growth ahead

By

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The sweet potato market is witnessing significant growth, fueled by various factors such as heightened consumer awareness of their health advantages, their culinary versatility and their recognition as a sustainable and budget-friendly food choice.

According to Data Bridge Market Research, the global sweet potato market, valued at \$34.98 billion in 2023, is projected to reach approximately \$56.17 billion by 2031.

“Sweet potatoes are a popular item for some consumers due to their increased shelf life over other produce items, but most importantly, their immune contributing qualities and overall versatility in the kitchen,” said Robin Narron, sales support and marketing director for the Nashville, NC-based Nash Produce. “Many families have become more health conscious, and spending a lot more time cooking at home than in years past. Having a product that can be cooked in so many different ways make cooking much easier, and more pleasurable.”

Another contributing factor is the rising trend of incorporating sweet potato-based ingredients into processed foods and beverages. Sweet potato flour, puree and extracts are becoming increasingly popular in bakery items, snacks and drinks due to their nutritional benefits and distinctive flavor.

Retailers have been doing a strong job in promoting sweet potato sales in recent years by simply keeping ample stock of fresh product front and center in the produce section.

“Retailers have done a good job with helping to highlight sweet potatoes in the stores,” said Autumn Campbell, sales manager for the Wynne, AR-based Matthews Ridgeview Farms. “If they continue to build displays, offer additional nutritional information to consumers, offer recipes and promote when it’s not necessarily peak season, things will continue to be strong.”

Retailers have plenty of opportunities to market and promote sweet potatoes throughout the season.

“Having a high volume of sweet potatoes positioned on attractive displays will help draw the consumer’s eye and their direction can be very beneficial for sales at a retail level,” Narron said. “This can be helpful year-round, but more so at major holidays such as Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Also, sourcing fresh product on a consistent weekly basis allows for less waste and more sales by always keeping freshly packaged product in inventory. At our facilities, we package product and have it shipped within 24-hours for maximum freshness.”

For retailers to continue to do a good job of selling sweet potatoes, Charlotte Vick, partner/sales and marketing manager for Wilson, NC-based Vick Family Farms, noted stores need to make sure they are receiving the best quality to put in front of their customers.

“We make sure that packers are sending excellent quality, which in itself will help to increase sales,” she said. “The more shelf space and ideal locations are always important and doing promotions—not just during holiday periods but other times during the year—helps.”

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About Keith Loria |

A graduate of the University of Miami, Keith Loria is a D.C.-based award-winning journalist who has been writing for major publications for close to 20 years on topics as diverse as real estate, food and sports. He started his career with the Associated Press and has held high editorial positions at magazines aimed at healthcare, sports and technology. When not busy writing, he can be found enjoying time with his wife, Patricia, and two daughters, Jordan and Cassidy.

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