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Tim's Top 10 Merchandising Tips

BY TIM PETERSON

Implement your Christmas merchandising sets! Expect added sales Thursdays through Saturdays, since customers are entertaining for the holidays. Add New Crop Halos, Navels and Grapefruit, Pummelos, In Shell Nuts, Pomegranates and Persimmons. **Promote sales with Party Platters and Poinsettias through the Holidays!** Push sales with Honeycrisp (bulk, totes and 3lb bags), Sweetangos, Grapes, Washington State Apples, Cider, Bartlett Pears, Asparagus, Green Beans, Berries, Melons, Cut Fruit and Vegetables, Sweet Onions, Brussels Sprouts, B-Red Potatoes, Pineapple (including cored), Yams, Squash, Cranberries, Corn, Salads, Tomatoes, Peppers, Potatoes and Onions. **It's football season, so now is a good time to add our Tastebuds Touchdown Party Platters (they're football shaped trays) and expand Peanut and Pistachio displays (regardless of how your team is doing). 😊**

If you haven't built your Holiday gift display yet, either do it now or wait until the week before Christmas. This display is a great place to sell Poinsettias, Nuts, Chocolates, Dried Fruit, Peanut Brittle, Seasonal Party Platters, and other fresh and shelf-stable holiday items. As Christmas gets closer, tighten up on these items and expand your fresh Fruit Baskets.



Christmas Sets:

1. **H. BROOKS & COMPANY'S FRESH FRUIT BASKETS AND GIFT BOXES:** Again this year, we will be offering our fresh fruit basket program. **Let us do the work, while you reap the rewards throughout the holidays!** This allows you the time you need to focus on maximizing sales throughout the rest of your department. Please ask your salesperson for more details.
2. **CHRISTMAS SETS:** Now through New Year's is the peak sales period for Vegetables. **This is also when Hard-Fruit sales start to rise dramatically – so expand here.** It's time to cut back on your local Apple displays (other than Honeycrisp), remain aggressive with Vegetables and expand Party Platters, Clementines, Navel Oranges, Grapefruit, Apples, Pears, Nuts, Chocolates, Peanut Brittle, Candies, your floral department (primarily Poinsettias) and gift-related items.
3. **FRESH PARTY PLATTERS: Promote now through New Year's!** Many retailers will create a "party central" area or add secondary displays to boost sales. They work great up front by your Cut Fruit, or in any highly visible refrigerated area. Ask your salesperson for details.

Add:

4. **CLEMENTINES: New crop California Clementines are here – this is a big ring, so build those displays now.** Make sure you're selling both 5lb boxes and 3lb bags. Merchandise these on their own or tied in with Hard Fruit.
5. **NAVEL ORANGES: New Crop California Navels are here (bulk and bags).** Citrus can be merchandised on its own, or with Hard Fruit.
6. **GRAPEFRUIT: New crop Texas and Florida Grapefruit are in stock (bulk and bags)! Stock both Texas and Florida regardless of which is most popular at your store; you'll satisfy more customers. Display these on their own or tied in with Oranges or Hard Fruit.**

Push Sales With:

7. **APPLES: Be aggressive with Honeycrisp – by far the market leader: I'd suggest Bulk, Totes and Bags.** Otherwise, cut way back on your local Apples. Besides the basics, make sure to try Ambrosia, Envy, Jazz, Kanzi and Kiku. Display these with your other hard fruit items.
8. **GRAPES (include Organic): Quality is outstanding, so sell, sell, sell.** Pretty Lady Grapes are looking great. Displays should remain up front in a lead rack position.
9. **BARTLETT PEARS: Bartletts are looking great; push for sales now.** Tie in Anjou, Bosc, Red and Asian Pears. Display them on their own, with Pears or any Hard Fruit.
10. **BERRIES (include Organic): Stay tight by reducing the size of your displays and all but eliminate back stock.** Tie in Blueberries, Raspberries and Blackberries. Displays should remain up front in the lead rack position.

Buyers' Top 10

1. **MELONS:** Cantaloupe and Honeydew are arriving from both Mexico and Guatemala. We have Personal Mini Watermelons and Carton 5 Seedless—and if you'd like bins, we can pre-order those!
2. **GRAPES:** Our Central California Grapes look and taste great; plus, luscious, larger sizes are arriving daily. Promote Grapes now!
3. **SOFT FRUIT:** California is done for the season. We are starting to see Chilean Cherries arrive in the US now and we should start to see Chilean Peaches arrive early December.
4. **STRAWBERRIES:** Strawberry supplies dropped off in a hurry due to weather issues in Mexico. Central California is just not harvesting enough fruit to cover demand. Expect high markets.
5. **ORGANIC PRODUCE:** Organic Citrus is arriving just in time for the holidays (and cold and flu season)! Be sure to check out our Organic Cranberries and bulk Local Organic Yams.
6. **HOMEGROWN AND TOMATOES:** Roma and Grape Tomato markets are still very high and quality continues to be average at best. Specialty Tomatoes like Sangrias and Juno Bites are amazing! Plus, we have Nature Sweet Cherubs in the 12/18oz size and Constellations in the 12/16.5 size. Give them a try!
7. **CITRUS:** Sunbursts are struggling to color and size up. Mexican Limes are much improved. New Crop California Navels are in stock and sizing is improving. California Halos and California Cuties 10/3# & 4/5# are in stock, sizing will start small until crop produces larger fruit. We have plenty of Florida Grapefruit, Texas Grapefruit and Red Scarlett Red Grapefruit.
8. **BLUEBERRIES, BLACKBERRIES AND RASPBERRIES:** : Blueberries and Blackberries are in good supply with good quality. Switching to pints of Blues this week.
9. **WESTCOAST VEG:** The transition has been difficult this year, but with the Romaine issue it's just gotten worse! All Lettuce and Leaf items have tripled in cost. And supplies on all are EXTREMELY tight. This could be a long-term challenge depending on the Romaine outcome.
10. **ONIONS, POTATOES AND SWEET POTATOES:** The New Sweet Onion lineup includes: Sweetie Sweets from Nevada and Peruvian Sweets. Rain has been devastating for the Local Onion crop; it will be a short but sweet season. Expect the market to be up from last year's bumper crop. POTATOES: We have transitioned into Wisconsin and Nebraska Russets. Due to early snow, the Red River Valley Red Potato crop prices will start to rise. Check out our lineup of Organic Onions and Potatoes.



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