

# DECEMBER HOLIDAY MERCHANDISING

**HANUKKAH 2024 BEGINS:** WEDNESDAY, DEC 25, 2024 AT SUNDOWN

**CHRISTMAS DAY 2024:** WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25 **NEW YEAR'S DAY 2025:** WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1

The December holidays are filled with ethnic, religious and cultural traditions that influence your customers' food choices. Understand the preferences of your shoppers? Know your customers and the cultural make-up of the neighborhoods near your store. This will aid you in creating merchandising and sales opportunities by catering to their individual needs through fresh produce variety, displays and special offerings, as well as inspiring meal or party ideas.

Use this checklist of suggestions and tips to help you plan so you can please your customers and set sales records in your produce department this Holiday season.

## TRADITIONAL "MUST-HAVES" CHECKLIST

### VEGETABLES

- Asparagus
- Artichokes
- Beans - Green & French
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Sweet Baby Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts & Stalk Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage - Green, Red, & Savoy
- Carrots - Baby/Whole
- Cauliflower
- Celery & Celery Hearts
- Collard Greens
- Escarole & Endive
- Fennel/Anise
- Fresh Herbs
  - Poultry Mix
  - Sage
  - Rosemary
  - Thyme
  - Chives
  - Parsley
- Mushrooms - White
- Sweet Peppers & Cucumbers
- Tomatoes - Snacking varieties

### FRUIT

- Apples Snacking - large sizes & club varieties
- Apples Baking- McIntosh, Cortland, & Rome
- Avocados
- Berries
- Cranberries
- Melons
- Grapefruit
- Mandarins - Clementines & Satsumas
- Oranges - Navel
- Pummelos
- Pears - All Varieties
- Persimmons - Fuyu & Hachiya
- Pineapples
- Pomegranates - Whole & Arils

### BAKING

- Nuts - In-Shell & Shelled
- Chestnuts
- Pistachios
- Raisins & Dried Cranberries
- Dates
- Glacé/Candied Fruit

### DECORATIVE

- Fresh Cut Flowers
  - Poinsettias
  - Fresh Wreaths
  - Norfolk Island Pines
- \*\*All items pre-ordered*

### HARD GOODS

- Garlic
- Parsnips
- Rutabagas
- Onions - Pearl, Cipollini, & Shallot
- Onions - Sweet & Yellow
- Potatoes - Russet, White, Red, & Gold
- Sweet Potatoes (Yams)

### VALUE ADDED

- Cole Slaws & Salad Mixes
- Stuffing Mix
- Cubed Butternut Squash
- Cut Vegetable Florets
- Snipped Green Beans
- Fruit And Vegetable Trays
- Cored Pineapples
- Cut Fruit
- Chopped Collard and Kale
- Sparkling Juice

## THE 12 TIPS & REMINDERS TO HELP YOU THIS DECEMBER

### 1. NUT & DRIED FRUIT DISPLAYS

Nut & Dried Fruit Displays should include:

- In-shell and Shelled Nuts
- Medjool Dates
- String Figs
- Raisins
- Chestnuts
- Nut trays
- Dates
- Dried Figs
- Pistachios Packs

Ask your rep about the brands and programs we offer on organic and conventional.

Take a good look at your inventory on **Glacé/Candied Fruit** and holiday shipper displays around **December 12th-15th** to make sure that you have it all out on the sales floor. Consider reducing the retail so you don't carry it over past the holiday. Turn your cash over and start out fresh next year.



### 2. PARTY TRAYS & GIFT BASKETS

These are a **MUST** during the holidays for those hosting parties or going to gatherings! **Veg and fruit trays sell very well** during December. Plan out your orders with your Four Seasons rep.



Many independent retailers find success in packing their own custom fruit and gift baskets in store. Gone are the days of **Red Delicious Apples, Globe Grapes, and Florida Navel Oranges**. Include modern varieties like premium California **Navel Oranges** and **Washington Fuji, Granny Smith, and Honeycrisp Apples**. Premade **Fruit Baskets** may be available by pre-order from Four Seasons as well. Merchandise gift boxes of **Oranges and Mandarins** too.



### 3. EASY-PEEL MANDARINS

Easy-peel **Mandarins**, for snacking and giving, continue to become more popular around the holidays. Offer **Clementine** and **Satsuma Mandarins** in 2 or 3lb bags. Keep a few gift boxes around. Loose or tote bag displays of **Stem & Leaf Mandarins** can really make a statement!



### 4. CONVENIENCE PRODUCTS SAVE HOSTS' TIME

These convenience items will sell well all month, especially right before Christmas and New Year's Day:

- Cored Pineapples
- Pomegranate Arils
- Fresh Cut Fruits & Vegetables
- Cubed Butternut
- Cut Vegetable Bags
- Guacamole & Fresh Salsa
- Microwave Green Beans
- Vegetable Spiral Noodles



### 5. DECEMBER HOLIDAYS ARE HISTORICALLY MORE FRUIT FOCUSED

December is more fruit focused than Thanksgiving, which is more about vegetables. Expand fruit variety:

- Coconuts
- Persimmons
- Mangos
- Melons
- Berries
- Clementines
- Pummelos
- Kiwifruit
- Pomegranates
- Papayas
- Varietal Pears
- Pineapples
- Satsuma Mandarins
- All other fresh Citrus

December is a great time to promote Organic Specialty Citrus from Buck Brand!



### 6. HERBS & STUFFING INGREDIENTS

Herb & Stuffing ingredients sell well but not as much as a Thanksgiving, as more different meats are cooked for the holiday feast:

- Parsley
- Thyme
- Poultry Blend
- Rosemary
- Sage
- Celery & Celery Hearts

### 7. POPULAR SIDE DISHES

These items are popular holiday side dishes:

- Green Beans
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Brussels Sprouts (both loose and on the stalk to create excitement in your veg displays)
- Asparagus
- Fresh Cranberries
- Green Cabbage
- Cole Slaw Mixes
- Yukon or Red Potatoes
- Pearl and Boiler Onions





## 8. TRADITIONAL HANUKKAH INGREDIENTS

- Honey
- Sweet Potatoes (Yams)
- Soup Mix (root vegetables)
- Walnuts
- Raisins
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Apples
- Oranges
- Tangerines
- Potatoes for Latkes
- Falafel
- Donuts
- Chocolate Candy (Gelt)



Hanukkah 2024 is December 25 (begins at sundown) - January 2.

## 9. CATER TO THE DO-IT-YOURSELF VEGGIE TRAY MAKERS

Make sure you offer all of these items for customers who want to make their own veggie trays:

- Celery & Carrot Sticks
- Baby Carrots
- Broccoli Crowns
- Cauliflower Florets
- Peppers
- Radishes
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- White Mushrooms
- Grape & Cherry Tomatoes
- Scallions
- Cucumbers
- Green & Yellow Squash
- Avocados
- Asparagus
- Fresh Dips
- Dressings
- Guacamoles



## 10. ETHNIC SPECIALTIES

### MEDITERRANEAN:

- Artichokes
- Broccoli Rabe
- Savoy Cabbage
- Escarole
- Endive
- Fennel/Anise
- Long Hot Peppers
- Red Peppers
- Green & White Asparagus

### LATINO CUISINE:

- Cilantro
- Tomatillo
- Batata
- Yuca
- Eddoes
- Yautia
- Plantains
- Calabaza
- Avocados
- Chayote
- Meridol Papaya
- Butternut Squash
- Acorn Squash
- Varietal Eggplant



### EASTERN EUROPEAN:

- Fresh Dill
- Parsley Root
- Horseradish
- Red Cabbage
- Celery Root
- Beets
- Leeks

### SOUTHERN COOKING:

- Collards - bunched and shredded
- Kale
- Black-Eyed Peas,
- Sweet Potatoes



## 11. ORDER & DISPLAY PLANNING TIPS

- Key Christmas produce displays should be in place by December 16th to maximize sales and profits and to keep your labor force as efficient as possible.
- Bring in your tonnage and items on your December 16th - 20th deliveries.
- Stay ahead on your "hard goods" like potatoes, onions and dips. Your shrink risk is minimal, but if you are out of product and waiting for deliveries you are going to miss sales and disappoint customers.
- Keep bananas with good yellow color on display – these are great in fruit salads! Stay ahead with color.
- Beginning on the Wednesday prior to Christmas, every day will be busy and you'll want to capture as many sales as you can.

### December 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

## 12. SMART LABOR PLANNING

- Develop an off-hour or evening fill schedule for your "hard goods", like nuts, dried fruit, potatoes, and onions, and "longer code date value-added" items, like salad dressings & dips, salsa, guacamole, hummus, and croutons, juices and jarred fruits, fruit mixes, and snacks.
- Daytime labor should be focused on fruit, vegetable, salad displays and engaging your customers.
- Large orders are expected for delivery on 12/21 and 12/23. Plan ahead so you won't be waiting on delivery trucks those days with items that could have been brought in earlier.





## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT: CLEMENTINE & SATSUMA MANDARINS

December is the perfect time to start opening up on your mandarin displays. These sweet, easy-to-peel orange gems are a consumer favorite, and when merchandised properly, often end up in shopping carts. Mandarins are the fastest growing commodity within the citrus category and are a staple in many lunch boxes! The peak season varieties during December are **Clementine Mandarins** from California, Spain, and Morocco, along with the high-flavor, zipper skin **Satsuma Mandarins** from California.

### TIPS ON MAXIMIZING SALES:

- **Go BIG on displays!** Use the high image graphic boxes to build an impressive, eye catching display.
- **Offer both loose and bagged/boxed fruit.** Loose fruit, particularly Stem & Leaf Satsuma Mandarins, are great for the grab & go customers who just want a sweet snack when on the run. Stem & Leaf Satsumas also lend themselves to sales by the lb, both loose and in-store toted. Bagged Clementines are outselling gift boxes these days, but December is a good month to carry both.
- **Place displays in high traffic areas** and **promote with large signage.**
- **Offer samples and varietal information.** With as many varieties of mandarins available today, it's great for consumers to check out and taste the different flavor profiles that mandarins have.
- **Maximize the citrus category** by placing some grapefruit or navel oranges by your displays as well.

## PREPARE FOR SOME SWEET SALES AND BUILD YOUR MANDARIN DISPLAYS TODAY!





# Poinsettia Care

- 1 Poinsettias should be unpacked immediately upon arrival.** If this is not possible the boxes must be opened or the tops cut off to allow the ethylene gas to escape. If this not done, the ethylene gases that poinsettias release will suffocate the plants causing them to droop and become limp. This process is not reversible.
- 2 Poinsettias must be stored and displayed out of coolers and refrigerated areas.** This will cause irreversible chill damage.
- 3 Displays should be located out of drafty areas.**
- 4 The top half of the soil should be allowed to dry** before watering poinsettias.
- 5 Older, damaged poinsettias should be removed from the display,** as they will detract from the rest of the display.
- 6 Poinsettias cannot sit in water.** They need 'dry feet'. This will drown the plant, causing the leaves to drop and become yellow. Once this process starts, it will continue to work its way up to the top of the plant.

