



New Year, New You

Is "Diet Season" still a thing?

For the past decade or so, the first few calendar weeks in January after New Year's Day have become known in the retail and produce business as "Diet Season." After holiday celebrating with food, sweets, and drink, perhaps too much in November and December, many chose a weight-loss goal, special diet, or exercise regimen as part of a New Year's Resolution. In recent decades, this has translated to a boost in consumption of fruits and vegetables in early to mid-January at stores known for fresh produce and organics, driven even further by at-home juicing and smoothie making trend. All of this led to sharply increased demand in produce departments, followed by a drop-off as many people gave up on their strict diets, weight-loss goals, and resolutions by the time January ended.

The past three Januaries have shown a plateauing, if not slight decline, of this demand spike for resolution diets. Why? Perhaps this: The consumer mindset, influenced by social media and culture, seems to be shifting away from resolution diets based on societal expectations, guilt from overindulgence, and comparison. Those diets and goals are often unrealistic or unsustainable. Instead, there is a noticeable shift towards wellness, self-grace, positive behaviors, mindful eating, clean eating, functional foods, and sustainable changes to start the New Year.

January is still a chance for a fresh start, though retailers may consider replacing Diet in their merchandising and marketing efforts with terms like **"New Year, New You."**

Promotion focus can center on **wellness** (foods that impact your mood), **function** (foods that help you with something), and **better for you or free-from** (foods like organic, clean ingredient). The good news is that fresh fruits and vegetables and other produce department items are still the star of January.



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Here are some things to prepare for and things to promote in early-to-mid January's *New Year, New You* theme:

Expect more demand for:

- Salads and Salad Kits
- Berries and Apples
- Mandarins and Oranges
- Avocados and Bananas
- Lettuces and Romaine Hearts
- Broccoli and Cauliflower
- Tomatoes and Cucumbers
- Kales and Greens
- Carrots and Celery
- Organics in general



New Year, New You sentiments will impact shopper demand at your produce department and grab-and-go drink sets.

Be ready with Functional Beverages and Fresh Beverages:

- Fresh Orange Juice and Citrus Juices
- Protein Shakes
- Wellness Shots and Immunity Shots
- Produce-based Smoothies
- Cold-Pressed Juices
- Kombuchas



How about those kitchen gadgets that your shoppers got for Christmas or Hanukkah? Yes, there will still be plenty of brand-new Air Fryers, Juicers, and Blenders getting new use. And yes, fresh produce should be purchased to use in each one of those.

TIPS: Use suggestive signage by displays with call-outs like "great for juicing" or "perfect for the air fryer".