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October Named Michigan's Agritourism Month

Governor Whitmer declared October as Michigan's Agritourism Month, a month-long celebration of the economic and social benefits of agritourism of Michigan's farms.

October is the month to celebrate family farmers, processors, wholesalers, and retailers who provide nutritious food supplies and a fun farm experience.

Agritourism is a form of tourism that focuses on the places where agriculture and tourism meet. This could be at a farmers' market, on-farm markets, wineries, roadside produce stands, corn mazes, or weddings. With agriculture and tourism being key economic drivers in Michigan, agritourism offers farmers the opportunity to expand their services by providing value-added products and activities to enhance their business.

Agriculture and farmers are the very start of the processes at Graceland Fruit. Exceptional ingredients start with exceptional fresh fruit provided by our outstanding growers. Our authentic ingredients start with high-quality fresh fruit harvested at peak season and flash-frozen to preserve its nutrition, vibrant color, and natural flavor. We partner with growers dedicated to quality across the premier growing regions to source the highest quality fruit that becomes our exceptional ingredients. Without our exceptional growers, we wouldn't be able to produce exceptional ingredients! Click [here](#) to learn more about our proprietary process and [here](#) to meet some of our growers!



Hopeful for an Average Cranberry Crop

Wisconsin is one of just five U.S. states known to grow and harvest cranberries and is the largest source for **Graceland Fruit** cranberries. However, after an unusually dry summer and some uncooperative weather, the cranberry crop is expected to be average or below.

The **U.S. Cranberry Marketing Committee (CMC)** forecasted in August that Wisconsin growers would produce 4.92 million barrels this year. However, **Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association (WSCGA)** executive director Tom Lochner estimated that this year's cranberry crop is closer to the state's average of 5.5 million barrels.

Our grower partners are close to closing out this year's cranberry harvest. While we are always hopeful for an above-average crop, the initial estimates from the CMC and WSCGA were predicting close to an average crop. Unfortunately, we are seeing below-average numbers coming in off the bogs.

Our team works hard to secure supply to meet the ever-growing demand for our **infused dried cranberries**.

Toast Seeks \$16 Billion Valuation at IPO

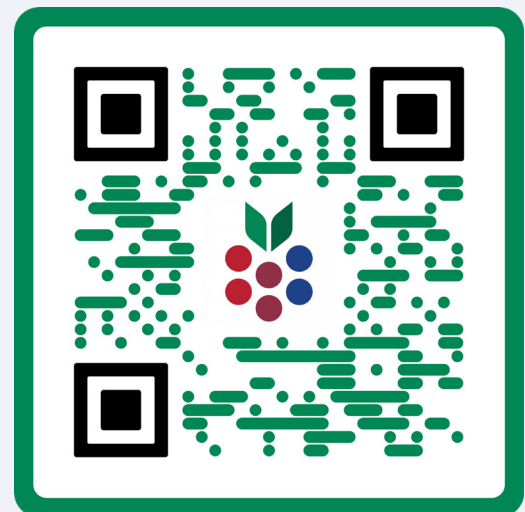
Toast is preparing for an initial public offering that could value the restaurant-tech company at \$16 billion, a dramatic increase from last November. While Toast saw success during the pandemic, the company had an uneven path to the New York Stock Exchange.

Pre-pandemic, Toast sold technology to restaurants that helped them combine their payment systems with inventory management and multi-location controls. In February 2020, investors valued Toast at \$5 billion. Then the pandemic hit, and Toast reduced their workforce by 50% and froze hiring, with CEO Chris Comparato declaring that restaurant sales decreased by 80%.

Toast was quick to counter the unexpected events that COVID brought. Restaurants relied heavily on indoor dining, and they had to offer takeout, delivery, outdoor seating, and contactless options. Toast gave customers a one-month credit of software fees and free access to its technology that enabled takeout and online ordering.

Today, Toast is serving more than 48,000 restaurants, up from 27,000 in 2019. Annual revenue increased by a whopping 118% in the second quarter from a year earlier to \$494 million. Most of Toast's revenue comes from financial technology solutions which include fees paid by customers for payment transactions.

In its updated IPO, Toast plans to sell shares at \$30 to \$33, raising more than \$700 million, which would value the company at \$16.5 billion based on its outstanding share account.



Could Upcycling Solve America's Food Waste Problem?

Americans waste a considerable amount of food, roughly 40%, and most of it ends up in landfills, with a small percentage getting donated, composted, or turned into animal feed. Luckily, there is a potential solution to solve America's food waste problem.

Upcycled food is food that uses ingredients that otherwise might not have gone to human consumption and have a positive environmental impact. Food that is surplus or rejected is given a purpose instead of being tossed aside. An example of upcycled food might be sausages made from meat scraps or jams and jellies made from overripe fruit. Unfortunately, one in six Americans are food insecure and need healthy, fresh, and accessible produce, and upcycling might bridge that gap. After all, fruits and vegetables are some of the topmost wasted items.

Also fighting to decrease food waste, the Zero Waste Act creates federal grants that support recycling and waste reduction efforts. The grants can go towards recycling infrastructure, partnerships with local businesses to reduce waste, and actions to reduce incinerators that emit toxic pollution. The Zero Waste Act will create jobs, grow domestic manufacturing, reduce greenhouse emissions, clean waterways, protect communities from health hazards, save energy, and grow the economy.

Graceland Fruit has gotten in on the upcycling movement as well. We've recently identified waste streams and channel options to prevent unsellable products from ending up in a landfill. Our waste reduction team is actively focused on limiting waste and upcycling our byproducts.

Sustainability is one of our top priorities at Graceland Fruit. We are dedicated to practices that protect the environment and leave it better for the next generation. Areas of focus include organic agriculture and processing, water stewardship, energy consumption, and waste reduction. Learn more about our commitment to environmental sustainability [here](#).

Supply Chain Issues and Labor Shortages Impact School Lunches

Supply chain disruptions and food shortages have upended the school year and have made it especially difficult for school districts to feed students. Some schools are not only having trouble distributing hot meals to students but are also struggling to provide lunch trays, silverware, and condiments.

Along with the pandemic, a new economic force has threatened to worsen the current supply chain and food situation: labor shortages. The recent lack of labor and demand for employees has also affected food distribution and production industries. There are not enough workers on production lines, warehouses, and delivery vehicles. As a result, staff has filled cafeteria positions, and some schools have stopped serving hot lunches altogether.

The shortages have prompted Tom Vilsack, Agriculture Secretary, to announce initiatives to help schools respond to these events, including \$1.5 billion in funding and a waiver that prevents schools from being penalized if they can't meet federal regulatory requirements.

Governor Whitmer Announces Apple Month

Governor Gretchen Whitmer acknowledged the importance of the Michigan Apple industry and has declared October to be Michigan Apple Month.

Michigan is famous for its diverse agriculture and growing many specialty crops, including apples. This year's apple crop is roughly 18.25 million bushels or 766.5 million pounds.

We love apples here at Graceland Fruit. Our **infused dried apples** are made from Rome and York apples known for their sweet-tart taste and distinct texture. Not only do our infused dried apples have exceptional taste and texture, but they're plentiful in antioxidants, phytonutrients, and flavonoids which help strengthen immunity.

Add our apples to a variety of **applications**. Contact our experts today for customized solutions!



What's New at Graceland Fruit

Our employees have raised over \$4,000 for the local Munson Healthcare Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital mammography program in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness month.

3D mammograms are an emerging technology that improves methods to scan patients for breast cancer, increasing early detection for breast cancer and decreasing "false alarms." Graceland Fruit purchased pink branded shirts and polos for employees who could donate an amount of their choosing for their shirts, and employees were encouraged to wear them to support breast cancer patients and survivors.

Together, we have raised over \$4,000, all of which will go towards the mammography program at our local hospital. We are thrilled with the results and generous donations!



First Shift Main Street Production wears their pink shirts in support of this great cause!



We deliver *delight*

Graceland Fruit, Inc. is a leading producer and global distributor of premium quality dried fruit ingredients for the food industry. Our exceptional product and service performance make it easy for innovative food manufacturers and providers to create delicious, on-trend products to surprise and delight their consumers.

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