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The Auction Market for Kentucky's Front Porch Staples: Mums and Pumpkins

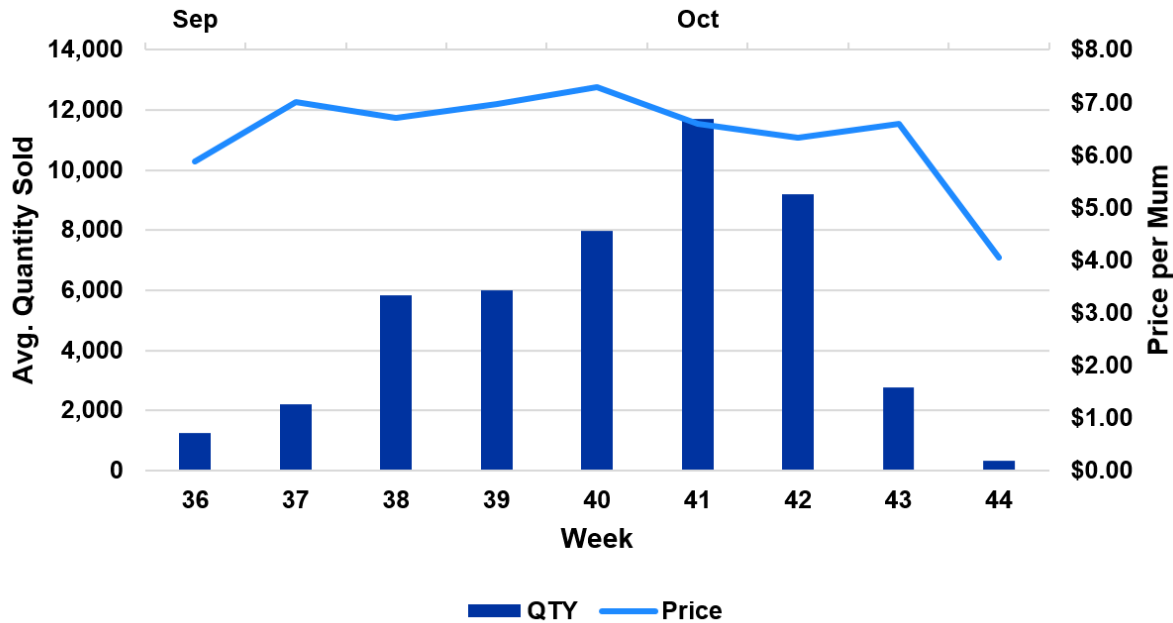
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The current picture of fall in Kentucky can be painted with harvest underway and horses racing at Keeneland racetrack, while pumpkins and mums fill the front porches of homes across the Commonwealth. Mums and pumpkins are staples of the Autumn season in our state. Whether they are used as a decoration or the critical piece of a pumpkin carving contest – mums and pumpkins are bought and sold through many market channels this time of year. A specific market channel they make their way through is the produce auctions in our state.

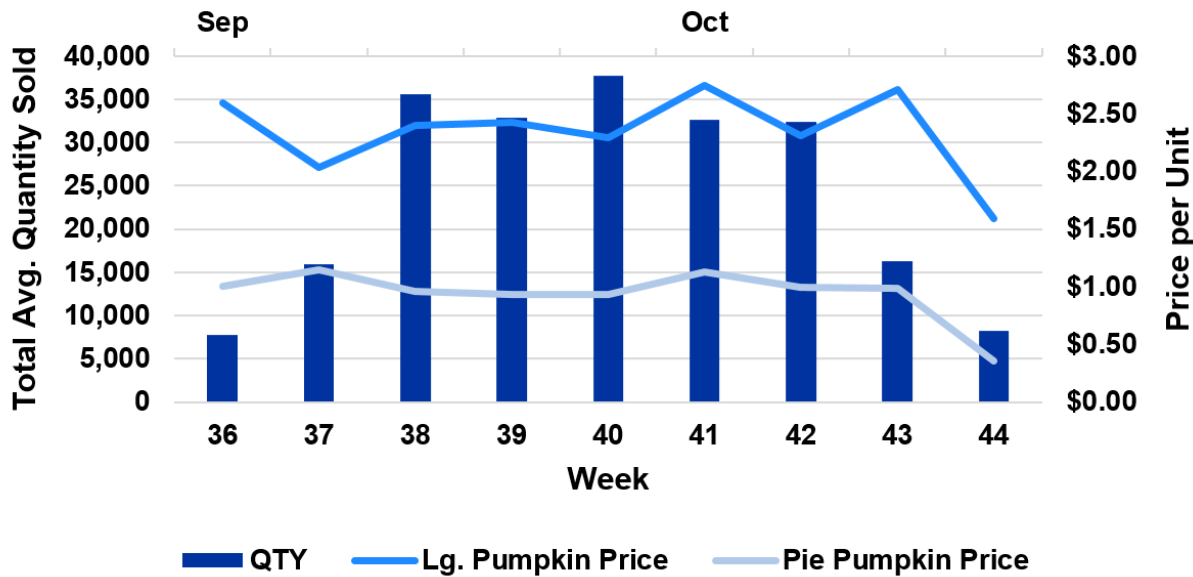
Figure 1 shows the average quantity and price for 10 to 12-inch mums sold through the Fairview Produce Auction from 2020-2022 during the months of September and October. We observe steadily increasing sales from the beginning of September to the beginning of October with peak sales in the first week of October [Week 41]. Prices stay steady between six to seven dollars per unit sold during the beginning and middle part of the season. A price drop is observed at the end of the season – which is not uncommon as floral items are seasonal. The Fairview Produce Auction also sells mums in other sizes such as 12-inch hanging baskets and large planters, but the 10 to 12-inch mums bring in the largest volume of sales with over 72,000 sold to date this year. The current volume going through the Fairview Produce Auction has already surpassed 2021's yearly sales for 10 to 12-inch mums. The other unit sizes [smaller mums, hanging baskets, and planters] are staying steady with the previous year's quantities sold. These are all good signs that the produce auction is a stable outlet for mum production.

Figure 1: 3-Year Avg. QTY & Price for 10 to 12-inch Mums Sold through Fairview Produce Auction



Likewise, pumpkins [both large and pie-size] are faring well this season. Over 143,000 medium to large pumpkins and 78,000 pie pumpkins have been bought and sold through the Fairview Produce Auction this year. Figure 2 displays the total average quantity of pumpkins [both large and pie-size] that have come through the auction from 2020-2022 during the months of September and October. An almost bell shape can be observed for the average quantity sold –indicating rising quantities from the beginning of September, a high point in the middle [Week 40], followed by a decline as the season comes to an end. Prices for the two pumpkin types are shown separately. We observe peak prices for pumpkins around the beginning of October [Week 41], with a decline in price as we move closer to the end of October. The average price per unit is \$2.34 and \$0.94 for large and pie-size pumpkins respectively. Prices and quantities are holding strong for 2022 which can be attributed to Kentucky’s strong agritourism sector and household decorators.

Figure 2: 3-Year Avg. QTY & Price for Pie & Large Pumpkins through the Fairview Produce Auction



If you are interested in checking out the price reports used for these graphs or price reports for the other 20+ crops that go through the produce auctions, the [Center for Crop Diversification KY Produce Auction Price Reports](#) publishes reports for each auction’s sale date and covers five produce auctions in our region. Price reporting can be used to price your product, see where the market for your product currently is [from a wholesale pricing standpoint], or understand seasonal quantity trends. FYI: a new version of the “*Three-Year Average Prices & Quantities at Kentucky Produce Auctions*” will be available soon and will cover 2020-2022.

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