

While the Hispanic population continues to grow in the U.S. and is estimated to reach around 28 percent of the total country's population by 2060, [United Fresh](#)'s Brandstorm held a session to speak on how to reach this community as a consumer demographic.

The dialogue focused on this growing consumer population and helping fresh produce marketers understand the opportunities available within this customer base.

The panel session was hosted and moderated by Abasto Media's Director, Gus Calabro, and included retailers Miguel Garcia from Kroger, Jorge Gonzalez from Leavers Supermarkets and Ramon Portilla of Walmart.

All three panelists agreed that the way Hispanic customers shop depends on which generation they are, however, to keep all generations happy is about providing them with what they need.

Portilla began by sharing a presentation, showing it is estimated that by 2023 the purchasing power of Hispanics will be 1.9 trillion dollars.

"That is larger than the GDP from Brazil or Canada and if it were a country, it would be the ninth-largest economy based on numbers."

"We are noticing that when the Hispanic customer has something to say, we better listen."

As trends change for each generation, the most important of what is known about Hispanic customers is that they love food and they love family, Garcia said.

"We need to make them feel good about the place they are shopping and although everyone wants something different, it's crucial to know about the community [the Hispanic shoppers] live in and where they are coming from."

Gonzalez added that for Leavers, bilingual or just Spanish print fliers, Spanish TV and radio as well as Facebook is what is working to engage first-generation Hispanic customers. While for second-generation they think in line with home delivery and e-commerce for engagement.

"We have to make it feel like home and with produce, we have to remember that fresh and quality product is what they look for as well as ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables."

When asked their opinion on whether e-commerce will diminish after the country is vaccinated, the opinion was the opposite.

Garcia said: "I think it is going to continue to grow because consumers like the convenience of it and convenience is a big deal when doing your grocery shopping".

Portilla agreed and advised against thinking of in-store and e-commerce separately, saying that instead, these things are connecting.

Gonzalez was asked if others should be using bilingual language or just Spanish on point of sale to communicate better and be more inclusive, his response: "absolutely".

"We talk about feeling at home and Hispanics are going to come to your stores and they are going to feel welcome if you treat them the right way. The bilingual element is crucial."