

# The Price of Seasonal Buying at Trader Joe's

## A crankygram to the people who run Trader Joe's.

I'm kind of annoyed at my local Trader Joe's. A few weeks back, I walked into the store to find it stocked like some communist era grocery store – most of the shelves were bare. Their excuse that time was that the corporate warehouse was moving, and due to some sort of snafu, the last shipment for my store didn't arrive, but, rest assured, the shelves would be stocked in a day or so. This sort of thing has got to be a one-off, but I've noticed that it happens all the time on a smaller scale at Trader Joe's, moreso than any other grocery store I frequent.

I find some great new product that I really like, and then, without warning, it's gone. It's happened often enough to make me annoyed. This time, it was a Brazilian roast beef hash in one of those foil packages you can keep in your pantry forever. Another time, it was a mixture of organic frozen vegetables that I really liked. There one day, and then gone forever. I don't think it's the fault of an inept stockboy at my local store. I think it's an issue with the whole corporation.

Their website claims that they stock their store based on seasonal variables. I can understand it if, say, peaches are in season now, but they're not in January. There's the assumption that peaches will be back on the shelves again, in time. And maybe this is just their way of introducing variety and spontaneity into the lives of their shoppers – no more complacency! Don't get used to anything! I guess I'm at the age where, if I find something I like, I want to keep buying

it. And I don't want to have to buy 50 units and stockpile it. And all that will do is make the person coming after me encountering the same empty shelves or missing products that I am finding.

Or maybe it's an evil plot to get me to come back more frequently, in the hopes that my beloved missing items will be back the next time ... or the next time. Whatever the cause, it's almost enough to make me not want to shop there anymore. I guess if they expect to be people's main grocery store, and not just some impulse buying adjunct to a more traditional grocery store, they have to get more reliable supply lines for the products they sell.