

CROP UPDATE

4th DECEMBER 2017

COLD AND WET WEATHER IN SPAIN...

Mainland Spain's temperatures have dropped since the end of November and now set to rain the first week of December further risking shortages in supply.

Mainland Spain's temperatures are averaging around 14 to 16 degrees during the day and between 4 to 6 degrees during the night. Whilst in the Canaries, the temperature has dropped to around 18/20 to degrees during the day and around 8/12 degrees during the night.

Volumes have started to decrease rapidly, and there may be insufficient volumes to meet strong demand in the run up to Christmas.



WHAT'S AFFECTED...

AUBERGINES

Currently in reasonably short supply and will likely get worse over the coming weeks. The quality is generally good and clean, but we do not anticipate many changes due to the current weather in Spain.

BROCCOLI

The availability is not improving and remains in very short supply with the added Christmas demand making the situation more challenging. However there is a positive that the quality overall is good with the characteristic dark green colour.

CAPSICUMS

The current weather conditions in Spain have slowed down the growing process, which will impact the availability of green and yellow peppers over the coming weeks. Medium size pepper volumes are currently healthy. There is slightly more availability of medium size peppers but the quality is still good across the three main colours although particularly the yellow may have a thinner wall which with any slight damage could break and develop into very isolated mould.

TOMATOES (STANDARD ROUND, VINE, BEEF AND PLUM)

The overall quality, colour and condition of the fruit in terms of firmness is good. However, with the recent cooler weather, there will be a decrease in the volume over the coming weeks. This change in weather in Spain has slowed the growing process resulting in fruit taking longer to reach full size and colour. These shortages will occur to all winter sources throughout Mainland Spain, Canary Islands and Morocco.

CHERRY TOMATOES, BABY PLUM, SUN STREAM, PICCOLO & COCKTAIL TOMATOES

The volume particularly on the cherry tomatoes, sun stream and piccolo are limited. The baby plum remains low but still enough to meet orders. As the weather conditions remain the same in Spain, we don't expect volumes to recover in the short term.. Quality for all these varieties is improving, particularly cocktail and sun stream where there have been isolated issues with shorter shelf life. Please be aware that some fruit may arrive in slightly lighter colouration as the growers are having to pick a lot earlier than normal to meet demand.

COURGETTES

The crops have not been consistent in size and quality over the past few weeks. However, this may likely change over the next couple of weeks due to the lower temperatures, this may result in the improvement of quality.



CUCUMBERS

Due to the cooler weather in Mainland Spain, the next week in relation to previous weeks will see a slight drop in volume. However this should not affect the availability throughout the Christmas period as our growers have already started harvesting the crop in the Canaries and Mainland Spain. Although the Canary production has started slow and below expected volume, there is an improvement every week. This month will see a good range of sizes available and good quality in general.

ICEBERG LETTUCE, COS LETTUCE AND LITTLE GEM

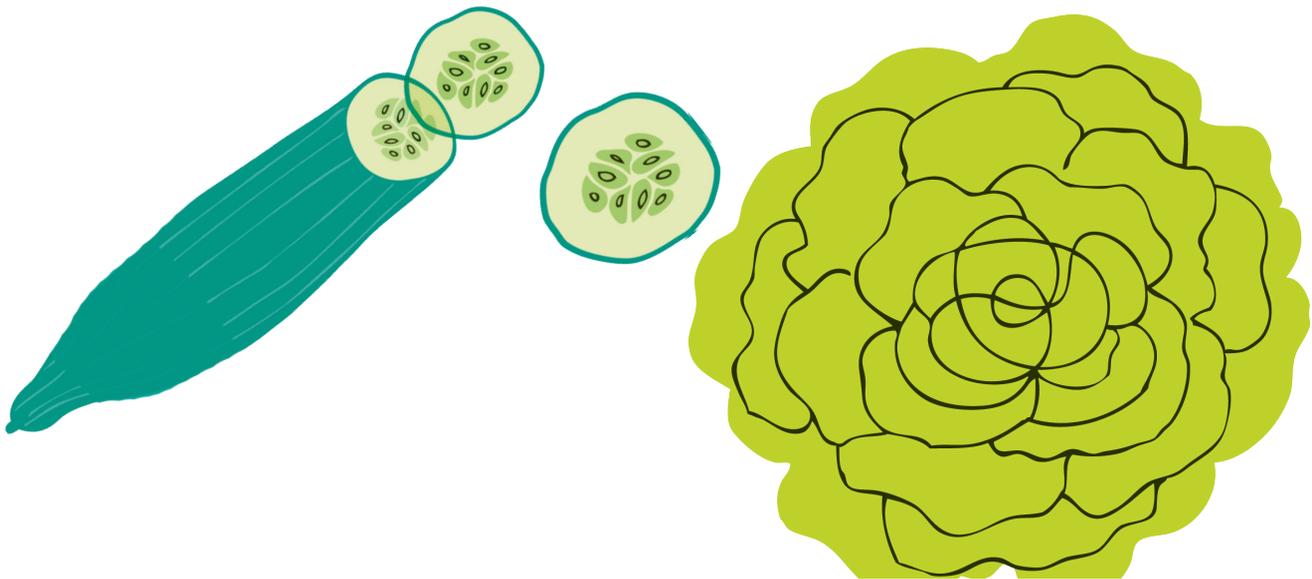
There are some quality issues and short shelf life on iceberg lettuce coming from Spain due to being picked during the highest temperatures. The volume on cos is ok, whereas little gem is shorter in supply. We predict that there will be a decrease in volumes across these lines, although quality should improve due to the cooler temperatures.

LOLLO ROSSO, RED OAK LEAF AND FRISSE

The quality and quantity of these leafy lines have been unpredictable the last month or so due to the changeable weather conditions in Spain. However this month we're seeing enough volume coming through and some good quality available with higher head weights than normal. However, there are some cases of the outer leaves being slightly dry due to the warm conditions previously.

CELERY

On a good note, there is a slow increase in supply for celery, however not fast enough to meet the increasing demands over December and the run up to Christmas due to cold weather. However the quality is very good.



WHAT NEXT?

We expect the general supply of produce from Spain to remain a challenge for at least the next 2-3 weeks. Our team is working around the clock, and will continue to do so while this situation continues. We'll also continue to update you on the weather and supply on specific crops regularly until we are back to normal.