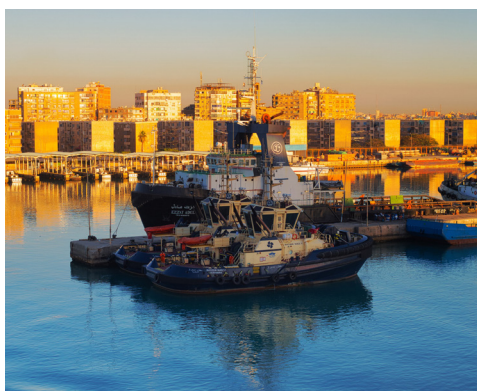


Crop Report

Wednesday 19th November to Wednesday 26th November

Get the insight you need to plan more effectively and manage your menus with our latest report from the field, brought to you by our expert produce team.

Shipping



As we approach winter, and the weather becomes less favourable to shipping, the possibility of delays is increasing. It is particularly difficult in the run-up to Christmas, when there is the additional problem of very high port traffic, with the potential for congestion.

This can cause quality issues as produce remains on vessels for longer, along with availability problems. Currently the biggest concerns are for limes and sweet potatoes, but we are managing these well at the moment, with no availability problems.

Berries



The market remains very challenging, which is often the case in November ahead of the transition to winter crops.

Strawberries are becoming more difficult as Dutch volumes begin to decline following the short glasshouse season. We are working with suppliers to maintain availability, which includes the introduction of a small amount of air-freighted Egyptian supply to support early season Moroccan produce.

Raspberries remain challenging as, although crops are now all coming from Morocco, produce is transitioning between regions within the country.

Potatoes



We have launched a number of new premium potato products in time for Christmas. Chef's Choice Chipping and Roasting Potatoes and Premium Chips are selected from high quality and high specification raw material and are generating great feedback from customers ahead of the festive season.

With around 95% of the crop now harvested and in-store, availability is looking positive for the season. However, we are maintaining a close watching brief on quality as the hot conditions throughout the spring and summer has increased the level of dry matter, which can lead to bruising and other problems.

We are working with our suppliers to minimise the impact on customers, and will continue to provide updates as necessary over the season.

Cabbage



Cabbage will remain challenging for the season, as maintaining weight is an ongoing challenge and concessions will stay in place to support availability of both red and white cabbage. There are also some ongoing quality issues with oedema impacting the crop.

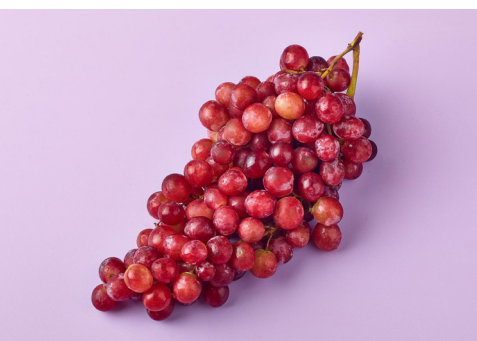
Sweetheart cabbage is currently a mix of British and Spanish produce. This variety will complete the transition to Spain by the end of the month.

Easy Peelers



We expect supply to finish moving to Spain by the end of the month. In the meantime, we are continuing to use South African varieties, which allows us to maximise the use of the better eating quality produce.

Grapes



We are currently moving from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere and availability is very tight. In order to maintain supply, we have introduced concessions on both red grapes, due to the inconsistent size of the new season produce, and green grapes, where there is a concession for colour, although this does not impact eating quality.

Sweet potatoes



There have been some shipping delays affecting sweet potatoes. While availability remains satisfactory, it is causing some minor quality issues.

However, we are liaising with suppliers and have put extra quality control processes in place to ensure that problems are graded out, which is working well.

Eggs



Housing Orders are in place across England, Wales and Northern Ireland as cases of Avian Influenza (AI) continue to rise.

An Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) is in place across the UK, which means that enhanced biosecurity measures are now in force. We source eggs from multiple locations, reducing the risk of localised outbreaks and we will continue to work with suppliers to minimise the potential impact.

Under UK legislation, when hens are temporarily kept inside because of a Government Housing Order, eggs can continue to be marketed as free range until the Chief Veterinary Officer says it is safe for hens to go outside again.