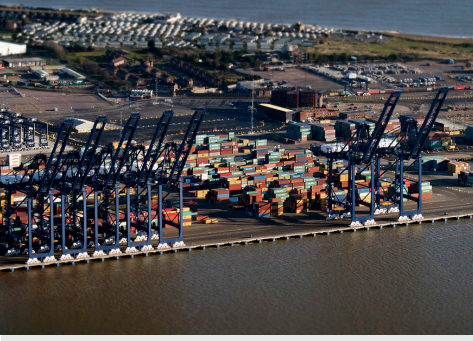


# Crop Report

Wednesday 1st April to Wednesday 8th April

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



Whilst not expected to cause any issues in the short term, we continue to monitor the potential longer-term implications of the conflict in the Middle East on global supply chains.

Separately, global shipping remains a significant risk factor for fresh produce. Port and vessel delay issues are improving, but we are still seeing challenges affecting specific produce categories. We continue to work with our supply partners to minimise customer impact.

## Berries



We continue to see strawberry availability improving as more Spanish product becomes available, and do not foresee any issues this week.

As reported last week, raspberry and blueberry availability is being affected by weather conditions in Morocco, and market availability remains extremely tight. We are also seeing minor quality challenges on raspberries, but we are working closely with our suppliers to mitigate impact on customers.

## Lettuce



Growers across Spain have experienced further aphid pressure over the past week, with as much as 15% of the lettuce crop being impacted. Multiple measures have been put in place by suppliers including removing aphids by hand, and critical control points within fields and packhouses. It continues to be an extremely fluid situation, and we are working closely with suppliers to minimise the impact on customers. Concessions remain in place, and we continue to advise taking extra care when washing products before use.

Some lettuce suppliers are reporting that crop being harvested over the next week or two was planted under drier conditions, and as a result are seeing less impact from aphids. This is good news however due to government regulation growers have less pesticides available and aphid issues in lettuce crops, typical at this time of year, are becoming harder for growers to manage.

## Broccoli



We have avoided major issues with broccoli through the winter, but as growing conditions continue to deteriorate, the market is becoming increasingly challenging.

Growers had hoped that crops affected by poor weather and late planting earlier in the season would recover with improved conditions; however, the weather has remained difficult, and this recovery has not materialised.

We are working closely with all suppliers to manage supply, and we expect these challenges to persist for the next three to four weeks.

## Tomatoes



This has been an exceptionally difficult season for tomato growers, with poor weather affecting all major production regions across Europe, North Africa, and the Canary Islands.

Varieties such as Baby Plum and Cherry have been particularly impacted, placing pressure on availability across the market.

The good news is that over the coming days will see our much-loved Isle of Wight Tomatoes range return. Heralded for their intense flavour, the range is perfect for adding vibrancy and provenance to spring and summer menus.

## Tenderstem® Broccoli



Tenderstem® supply continues to be affected with Spain, Portugal and Egypt impacted by adverse weather conditions, resulting in reduced availability across the wider market.

We are working closely with our suppliers and, despite continued tightness in the broader market, we do not anticipate major issues with our own supply.

## Fine Beans



Product availability remains stable. However, logistics continue to pose significant challenges due to prolonged sea freight delays from Senegal. Whilst there are no issues with quality at source, the additional time at sea is leading to defects on arrival. Our teams continue to manage the situations to avoid impact on customers.

## Mangetout & Sugar Snap



Crop of sugar snap has been completely wiped out by high temperatures in Egypt. Mangetout has also been affected, with supply likely to end in around two weeks. The issue has been exacerbated by severe flooding in Kenya, delaying their season by around two weeks.

We are managing stock and availability currently but there may be a requirement to substitute Sugar Snap for Mangetout in the coming fortnight.

## Cavolo Nero



Availability is severely tight this week due to Italian growers being impacted by shortages as a result of poor weather earlier in the season. Typically, crop can also be sourced from Spain, but weather conditions have reduced quality and availability in this region also.

We anticipate the situation will improve next week.

## Brassicas



Concessions remain in place for red and white cabbage on weight following poor growing conditions earlier in the season. Cabbages are also being affected by oedema, for which a separate concession has been agreed.

## Asparagus



High temperatures in Mexico have created challenging growing conditions for asparagus. Whilst overall availability is not currently affected, the heat is placing plants under significant stress, slowing growth and reducing stem size. This is particularly impacting large and extra large grades.

## Limes



Shipping delays are still posing a challenge, however not to the levels experienced in February. Quality issues are lingering due to delays in transit, but this is expected to ease imminently as fresher vessels arrive.