

# CROP REPORT

Wednesday 24th April to Wednesday 1st May

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.

## Potatoes



Potato supply continues to be challenging. In addition to previously reported shortages, for example of Maris Piper, we are now seeing salad potatoes start to become more of an issue.

We are anticipating the availability and quality issues to continue, particularly as we get further into the stored crop.

We will continue to work with technical teams and growers to try to maximise availability and minimise quality issues, but with the market situation as it is, there will continue to be problems for the remainder of this season.

In addition, the wet weather has delayed planting in some areas of the country, which is leading to concern that we will have a slow start to next season, extending the current problems.

On prepped potatoes, we are working with processors to try to manage supply, as they face challenges with availability and quality, which is reducing yields. With machinery being used for longer periods as processors try to maximise yields, we are seeing an increase in mechanical problems, which is exacerbating an already challenging picture.

## Apples



The availability of Granny Smith's apples is beginning to become more challenging as we come to the end of the season. It is likely that Northern Hemisphere fruit will end a month or two ahead of schedule, while Southern Hemisphere apples are also likely to be impacted this year, as El Nino affects availability.

We will be maintaining a watching brief and will continue to provide updates as the season progresses.

We could also see some issues with red or bi-coloured apples from the Southern Hemisphere, which are not expected to colour up as much as they should, which may require concessions on colour as the season progresses.

## Lettuce



The ban on planting in Spain at the end of 2023, followed by warmer temperatures is having an impact on market availability of lettuce.

There are particular issues on the slower-growing varieties of Lollo Rosso and Batavia, due to lack of planting and the fact that fewer farmers grow them, but we are working with suppliers to try to mitigate shortages.

As we are now approaching the end of the Spanish season, availability of the more mainstream varieties of iceberg, little gem and cos is beginning to become a little more difficult. We are also seeing some quality issues, but our technical team is working with suppliers to try to mitigate the impact on customers.

We expect to move to the UK around the third week of May, depending on the variety, although this is very much dependent on the weather in the coming weeks.

## Broccoli and Cauliflower



There are no current issues, but there are some concerns about the forthcoming transition to the UK, where planting has been delayed by the wet weather.

It is too early to predict the full impact, but it could lead to a delay in harvesting of potentially around two weeks. This could lead to some challenges as Spanish product may not be sufficient to cover the delay. However, there is still some time before the scheduled harvest, so we will maintain a watching brief and continue to update customers as the picture becomes clearer.

## Savoy cabbage



The UK season has now completely finished, and we are fully focussed on sourcing imported product. However, with the poor weather forcing an end to the UK season between two and four weeks ahead of expectations, there have been some challenges with the availability of Spanish product.

We have now begun to receive the first imported volumes and we expect full availability to be around a couple of weeks away, weather dependent.

## Tenderstem broccoli



There has been some heavy rain in Kenya, which has affected the quality of Tenderstem broccoli from that area.

We are expecting some problems over the next couple of weeks, during which time we will seek to increase our sourcing from Spain to try to minimise any shortages.

## Tomatoes



We are monitoring tomatoes very closely as we move towards the end of the season. Availability remains generally good, but we have seen some quality issues, particularly on plum and some round tomatoes.

We begin the transition to Holland next week, which will help alleviate some of the quality concerns.

## Avocados



We are continuing to see improvements in availability as new origins begin to arrive in the UK, for example we received our first produce from South Africa this week.

However, there are still some lingering concerns over the delicate global shipping situation. While we do not expect shortages, we could see further issues if there are shipping delays.

## Parsnips



We have been working with our suppliers to maximise the availability of parsnips, as the British seasons comes to a premature end, due to the wet weather and poor harvest conditions. This is being widely reported in the trade and local media.

At the moment, we have managed to avoid major shortages, but as these are industry-wide issues, we are expecting significant challenges until the start of the new Spanish season in the middle of May.

## Spring Greens



There are still some market challenges with Spring Greens as a result of the poor weather conditions, which caused problems with harvesting fields leading to some being written off.

There are some improvements, but it is likely to be another week or two before the fields have fully recovered. In the meantime, we are working with contingency suppliers to try to mitigate shortages.

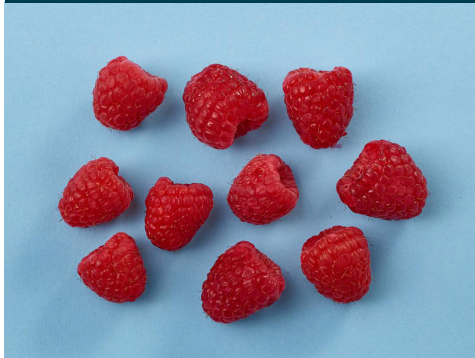
## Melons



As we've previously reported, there are some quality issues with Galia melons. Our growers have added additional checks to remove these at the packhouse stage.

We expect to transition to Spain around the middle of May, where producers are reporting that the crop is looking better.

## Raspberries



We've seen some occasional quality issues with raspberries over the past week. Working with our suppliers, we've taken additional quality steps to minimise any impact on customers, which will hopefully address the situation.

## Peppers



We are experiencing some periodic issues with the quality of Class 2 peppers from Spain. We are working with suppliers to try to mitigate these issues, including using Class 1 to cover.

We expect to move to Dutch supply next week which should help with some of the quality problems that we are seeing.

## MEET OUR SUPPLIERS

Working together to serve our customers produce and products

To learn more about our suppliers, SCAN THE QR CODE.

