

Crop Report

Wednesday 21st May to Wednesday 28th 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.

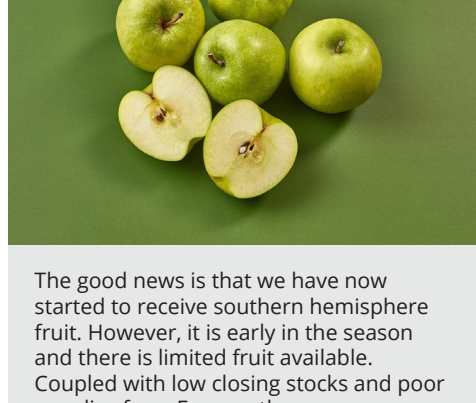
New Trade Deal Announced



The UK and the EU have agreed new trade rules that will have a positive impact on the trade of food and drink between the two trading partners.

At the time of writing the full details or timings of the deal had not been released, but it appears to be good news and should reduce red tape and make it easier for fresh produce to move between the UK and EU.

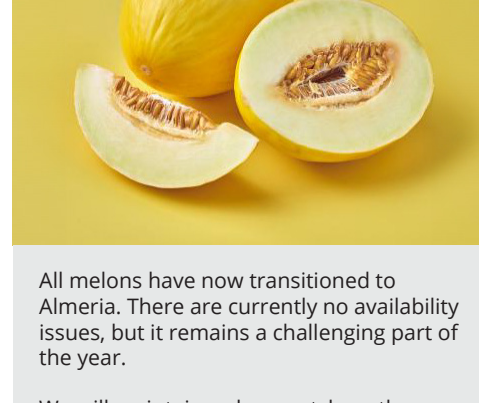
Apples (Granny Smith's)



The good news is that we have now started to receive southern hemisphere fruit. However, it is early in the season and there is limited fruit available. Coupled with low closing stocks and poor supplies from Europe, there are some challenges on Granny Smith's and we have some concessions on size in place to aid availability.

This is likely to last for around six weeks, so for customers who are particularly concerned about size, Golden Delicious are plentiful and could be a good alternative.

Melons



All melons have now transitioned to Almeria. There are currently no availability issues, but it remains a challenging part of the year.

We will maintain a close watch on the crop over the coming weeks, as we move to Murcia in mid-June, where planting was delayed by heavy rains.

Berries



The great news is that we are now 100% British for our strawberries and blackberries.

We are expecting British raspberries to start this week when we'll have a mix of UK and Spanish origins, with the full transition due within the next fortnight. Blueberries will follow at the very end of June.

We are currently happy with quality and availability of the new British season.

Lemons



We are pleased to report that this week will see the start of the transition to South African lemons, after a three-week delay caused by heavy rains ahead of the season, which was then exacerbated by some vessel delays.

This week will see a blend of end-of-season Spanish product and early season South African, before fully moving to southern hemisphere fruit next week, after which the availability issues should come to an end.

Sweet Potato



There are no current availability issues, although the American harvest is around 40% down on a standard year.

There are around three weeks left of Portuguese produce before we transition to Argentina, which should bridge the gap before the start of the Egyptian season.

Due to the overall market challenges, we are expecting a difficult June and July.

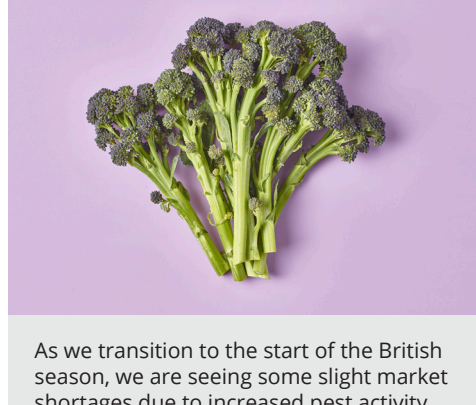
Cauliflower



Supporting our British supply with some Spanish produce over the winter worked very well. However, as we move into the UK summer season, we no longer need that back-up supply and we have now moved to all British produce.

While availability is not a major concern, there may be some slight issues with the colour of the head, which has been caused by the recent warm and sunny weather.

Purple Sprouting Broccoli



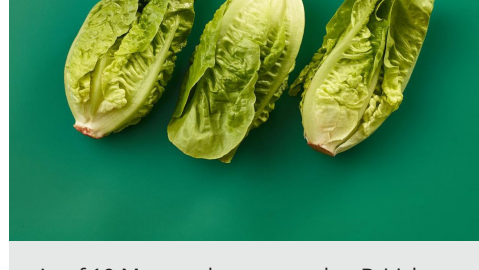
As we transition to the start of the British season, we are seeing some slight market shortages due to increased pest activity in the valley growing region in Spain. We expect the UK harvest to start next week which should ease the situation.

Tenderstem® Broccoli



Tenderstem broccoli is facing the same issues as purple sprouting broccoli due to end-of-season pest problems in Spain, although we are expecting better market availability as the British season has already started and stocks are available from other European countries.

Lettuce



As of 19 May, we have moved to British supply for our core lettuce lines, removing our reliance on Spanish product.

Prepped Potatoes



We have seen some quality issues on prepped potatoes. We are investigating these with the supplier and have been taking steps to remove the affected stock.

Sweetheart Cabbage



Our supply is currently a mix of Spanish and British produce as we approach the end of the Spanish season and the start of the UK one. The transition is progressing well, and we are receiving our first British sweetheart from Lincolnshire.

Parsnips



We are approaching the end of the British parsnip season and will transition to Spain around 26 May. We are pleased to report that the seasons are currently lining up well. However, we are maintaining a close watch on the Spanish crop, as there may be some problems caused by the heavy rains during the growing period.

Peaches and Nectarines



These fantastic seasonal lines will be available from the beginning of June, with the season running through to the end of August. These will be a mix of Spanish and Italian produce.

Savoy cabbage



Concessions remain in place for Savoy cabbage as we utilise stored produce. The quality is such that additional leaves need to be stripped away making the product smaller.

Broccoli



There are some ad hoc quality challenges as we approach the end of the Spanish season. These are the result of the heavy rains that we saw earlier in the season but are not likely to have a major impact on availability before we begin the move from Spain to the UK towards the end of May.

Carrots



We are expecting the new season for British carrots to start at the beginning of June.

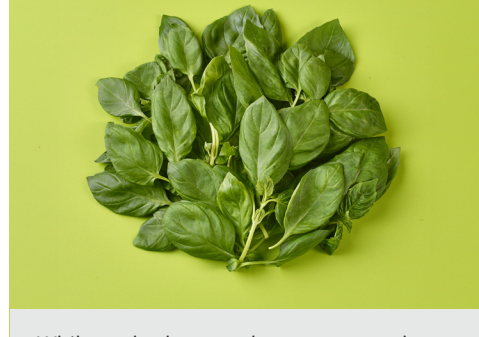
Until we reach the new season, we are advising customers to keep carrots stored at as low a temperature as possible, which will help to maintain shelf-life and minimise any end-of-season quality issues.

Grapes



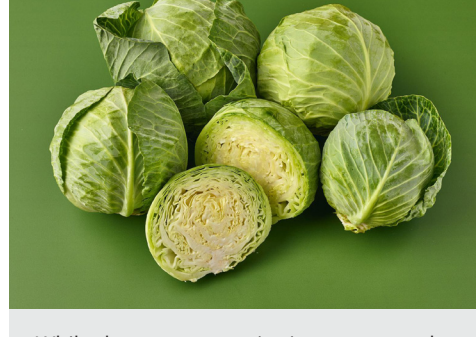
As is normal for the time of year, there will be a short pause in the availability of Sable and Cotton Candy grapes as the Chilean season ends around mid-to-late May. This will last until we see the first arrivals of Egyptian and Spanish fruit around mid-July.

British Basil



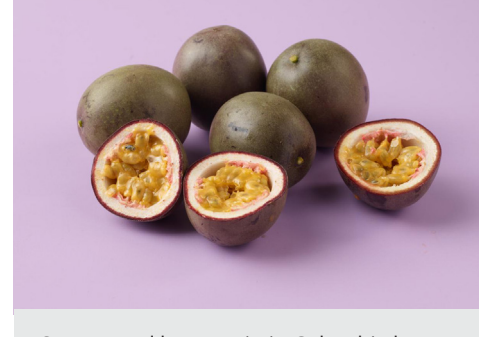
While we had sourced some very early outdoor-grown British basil, unfortunately this proved to be too immature, leading to excessive bruising on the leaves. We will therefore need to wait until early June for the glass grown season to start.

Cabbage



While there are no major issues currently, we are maintaining a close watching brief on red cabbage, which is not lasting as well as hoped in store with more wastage.

Passion Fruit



Storms and heavy rain in Colombia have led to the destruction of a significant part of the crop. While we are not expecting any shortages, we will need to rely on produce that is air-freighted from Kenya for the next month or so.

Eggs



The Chief Veterinary Officer has decided that the risk of Avian Influenza has reduced to the extent that it is safe for birds in England to go outside again. As a result, the mandatory housing order for poultry and captive birds across England will start to be removed on 15 May. By 22 May all free-range flocks will be provided with full access to the range area once again.

While the risk level is now reduced, an Avian Influenza Protection Zone remains in place across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, ensuring enhanced biosecurity. These precautionary biosecurity measures are aimed at protecting the health and welfare of the birds.