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Market

REPORT

May 2024

FRUIT

This time of year is a lovely time for fruit, in particular **Strawberries**. Our grower in Maidstone, Kent is thriving now with top notch **English Strawberries**. The farm is only 24 miles from our warehouse and the benefit of that is the berries are often picked and in your kitchen the following day. We can't wait for English **Raspberries & Blackberries** to begin shortly, the quality is superb.

Another highlight this month is the long awaited Spanish stone fruit season. We are pleased to see the start of **Peaches, Nectarines, Apricots & Cherries**. The quality is surprisingly very good considering it's so early so this is a sign of good things to come as the month progresses. If we are really lucky we may even see the very start of **English Cherries** by the end of May/early June. **Nadorcotts** are sadly coming to an end, which means we move over to Southern Hemisphere fruit. Naturally this will impact quality and cost due to extended travel time and higher food miles. We'll move on to **Satsumas/Clementines** this month. This is a similar situation for **Lemons & Apples** as the European season draws to an end and we transition to South African, Argentinian & New Zealand. **Melons & Plums** do the opposite and switch from Southern to Northern Hemisphere which is mostly Spanish and we will see improvements with availability due to this.



Forced Yorkshire Rhubarb is finishing but there is still availability of outdoor varieties. We'll also have Dutch available which is fantastic quality. **Blood Oranges** were amazing whilst the season lasted but have now sadly come to an end. On a brighter note Egyptian **Oranges** are still going strong.

MUSHROOMS & FORAGED

We will start to see **Wild Garlic** come to an end this month as the season ends. Check with the office regarding any foraged mushrooms that need pre-ordering.



Check out the following page for information regarding numerous challenges in the vegetable world. As always we continue to source produce from a number of different avenues to minimize the knock on effect and impact to our customers but price and quality will be impacted.



VEGETABLES

Lots to discuss ...it may seem like the situation is never ending but **Potatoes** continue to be an enormous challenge within the industry. In summary, poor weather conditions and heavily saturated fields have resulted in lots of quality issues. The crops haven't been able to grow as much and are being picked earlier due to shortages. The crops that have been picked are basically not up to standard, but growers are in the predicament that new crops are not ready yet. **Maris Piper** and **New Potatoes** seem to be the worst affected at the moment.

Unfortunately, it's not just Potato growers who are facing severe losses, other root vegetables such as **Carrots & Parsnips** are experiencing problems. This is because they are sitting in water for too long and rotting in the fields. **Parsnip** crops are running thin and will near enough run out shortly. We will import from Spain but not until middle of the month so it's inevitable there is going to be a gap in the market. Carrots will be imported from parts of Europe & Egypt so choice is a little broader which will hopefully help with availability. **Sugar Snap, Mange Tout & Fine Beans** that are imported from countries such as Zimbabwe, Kenya, & Tanzania have suffered a prolonged wet season which isn't ideal.

Broccoli is stable at the moment and towards the end of the month we should hopefully start to see English which is great news! **Tenderstem Broccoli** on the other hand is a different story, suppliers are struggling to get any volume and inevitably the price has gone through the roof. Due to bad hailstorms in Spain many hectares of the valley region of crops have been damaged. On top of this heavy rainfall in Kenya has left further shortages as this is where the majority of **Tenderstem** comes from. Winter season **Purple Broccoli** has now finished and there will be a gap until summer season starts. Due to planting issues and slightly colder nights we will see a gap in the market between winter and summer crops of **Cauliflower**. We have already seen this heavily impact the price and we anticipate this being the case for the rest of the month. As we mentioned last month, there isn't an awful lot of **Spring Green** availability at the moment due to a lot of crops being written off when harvesting. We expect it too be middle of the month before fields have fully recovered.

On a positive note a couple of highlights in May are **Jersey Royal Mids & Wares**, availability and price are better now we are further into the season. **English Asparagus** is underway and we have started our Hampshire farm crop. For sustainability purposes we collect on the way back to our warehouse to help with fuel and transport costs. We highly recommend getting **English Asparagus** on your menu's as it's very seasonal.



SALADS

May is a great month as we move the majority of salad items over to English season. We have already seen **Baby Spinach** and **Little Gem** move across, **Baby Mixed Leaf, Rocket, Iceberg & Cos** will gradually follow suit in the coming weeks. **Celery** will move over in early June but Spanish is still looking excellent.

Cucumbers, Tomatoes, Peppers & Aubergines have all moved over to Dutch/Belgian now and are stable. We have had the first batch of **English Heritage Tomatoes** and wow were they good! French is also a great choice, vibrant in colour and fantastic on summer dishes. There is better **Avocado** availability now with the first South African arriving into the country. This could be impacted if shipping delays re-occur.

