



OLIVER KAY

CROP REPORT

SPRING 2021

GOOD THINGS ARE ON THEIR WAY!

Spring is on its way and so is the prospect of doors re-opening for the many that have had to shut for so long. The excitement this brings is echoed in the produce coming into season, with many UK growers getting ready to share their offerings that the new season brings.

The following pages provide a guide, provided from our buyer, Lee, as to what is good and what to avoid on menus, along with a breakdown of where all your favourite fruit, veg and salads are coming in from and any impacts the weather or current situation may have on supply.

We wish all those with outdoor spaces looking to re-open, all the very best and remind you that our team are here to help should you need us.

For more information or to order any of the items mentioned in our Crop Report, please contact your account manager or call the office on 01204 385463. If you're not signed up already, sign up to our mailing list to receive your regular copy of the Crop Report and other seasonal updates and offers - register at: www.oliverkayproduce.co.uk

GROWING CONDITIONS

Most of our salad is still coming in from Spain. Growing conditions there have improved following difficult conditions through January with poor light and low temperatures reaching -2°C at night and only around 8°C during the day, this, along with snow followed by some flooding has made for a challenging start to the year.

The past week has seen a big improvement with highs of 28°C during the day and around 10°C at night. Produce was effected and crops such as peppers went into shock due to the change in conditions. Yellow peppers in particular, are struggling with shelf life now.

In the UK, delays of ground preparation due to water logged ground followed by sub zero temperatures will cause delays to planting.

CHALLENGES

All air freight lines: The lack of passenger flights has severely reduced the amount of fresh produce which requires airfreighting, this impacts products such as asparagus, baby corn baby veg and some berries.

Ginger is in incredibly short supply as stocks coming in from china are near non-existent. Brazilian supply, which is rarely seen, is plugging the gap.

Spring greens have been hit by the UK cold snap.

LOOKING FORWARD

South African peach and nectarine are yet to be seen but when they do come through, at first, they are often expensive and eating quality is often woody.

British asparagus starts early May.



IN SEASON

- UK Purple sprouting broccoli -limited volumes due to frost & snow.
- Brazilian melon, eats well.
- Egyptian oranges are very good at present.
- Moroccan tomato – better colour and flavour than Spanish.
- Kale – winter varieties from Lancashire are still very good, they tend to be lighter in colour.
- Sprouts and whole chestnuts have now come to an end.

VEGETABLES

Potato – There is sufficient supply for UK consumption in stores, although there is a high level of out grades being seen as more CA (controlled atmosphere) stores are opened. Planting for this year's crop has start in Cornwall and will commence around the rest of the UK throughout March.

Carrot – Quality and availability is good from strawed fields.

Parsnip – UK availability and quality is good. No problems to report other than some bronzing being seen when prepared.

Swede – UK quality remains high with no availability issues expected.

Cauliflower – UK supplies continue with a mix of Spanish & French as a contingency

Broccoli – Spanish quality is good but production low due to poor growing conditions

Red and White Cabbage - UK is good quality and size from store.

Savoy Cabbage – UK - good head size and quality is looking very good. Spanish will be required in April as UK ends.

Green Cabbage –Lincolnshire green cabbage crop good quality throughout winter.

Spring Cabbage & Kale –Spring cabbage is unavailable but kale will be available.

Yellow & Red Onions - Dutch quality very good. Spanish supply is becoming more difficult due to reducing volumes in store and will need Chilean earlier this year for around 2-3 months until new Spanish starts.





SALADS

Aubergine – Spanish quality improved, production low due to cooler weather in Spain.

Capsicums – Spanish very challenging. Yellow has not coped well with changing temps.

Tomatoes – Moroccan crop is much better than Spanish.

Courgette – Spanish quality has improved as we move into their spring crop.

Cucumbers – Spanish quality has been mixed, but new spring crop is much better.

Celery – Spanish quality is good.

Iceberg, Cos and Gems – Spanish crop is good quality and size, cooler weather has slowed production.

Fancy Leaf – all Spanish, head size good. Red now very deep in colour, but slow production due to cold weather.

Baby Leaf – Italian & Spanish quality good but production much reduced due to cold.

FRUIT

Golden Delicious – A good supply of mainly French - quality still very good.

Red Apple – A mix of Serbia and Poland, French Gala also available.

Granny Smith – Mainly French with some German, quality is good.

Small Snacking – Short supply from Europe, quality is good.

Large Red – UK – Quality from Mark Eastwood is very good, variety is Braeburn.

Peach & Nectarine – South African late but woody to start and doesn't have the same flavour as Spanish and Italian we see in summer.

Plum – South African Fortune eats very well

Honeydew, Galia, Cantaloupe & Water Melon – All fruit is from Brazil for the winter. Quality and availability is good. Central American fruit to follow.

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Orange – Egyptian fruit eats well. This season will finish earlier than usual due to poor growing conditions.

Lemon – Spanish Primaflori is in short supply, but Egyptian Adalia has good colour and juice content.

Easy Peelers – Clem Nour from Morocco is very good along with Spanish Queen Satsumas.

Banana - Costa Rica for main supply, quality good. Ivory Coast as a backup.

Strawberries – Egyptian season is being extended due to problems in Spain with cold and snow in El Ejido which is a big growing region. Varieties are mainly Fortuna, with Victory, Rociera & Rabida.

Raspberries – also a big reliance on El Ejido in Spain, fruit also arriving from Portugal, varieties are Gema & Glen Lyon.

Blackberries – Guatemalan & Mexican supply coming to an end, Spanish to follow once conditions improve. Varieties are Kiowa & Tupi.

Blueberries – mainly from Peru with varieties Duke, Legacy and Biloxi. Morocco is due to start late March.

Red Currants – Holland variety Rovada. No issues with quality or availability expected.

Red Grapes – supply from South Africa – quality is good, main variety is Crimson with Evans Delight.

Green Grapes – same as red, quality good. Variety is Thompson.



RECIPE: Kale, Apple, Celery, Walnut & Sultana Salad

Delicious seasonal salad recipe using beautiful British Braeburn! Combine the below ingredients and lightly coat in the mayo, serve as a side salad.

100g picked Kale no stalk, chiffonade
2 Braeburn apples peeled and fine diced
2 celery sticks fine diced
50g toasted walnuts chopped
75g sultanas
25g mayo (or vegan mayo for vegan option)

EXOTICS

Sugar Snaps & Mange Tout – mainly Guatemala being supplied.

Beans – Kenya supply is good, weather conditions good. Rwanda is increasing in volume

Avocado – less supply (due to demand) of firm varieties of smooth skin such as the Peruvian Feurte. The ongoing demand for 'Hass' ready to eat seems to be growing, currently supplied from Mexico. Interestingly Kenyan is seeing a lot of investment in avocado production.

Butternut – new season Brazilian now underway, with South Africa alongside and Guatemala as backups.

Large Asparagus – Mexican supply and quality good. UK will probably be late due to recent cold spell.

Asparagus Tips & Baby Corn – growing conditions and quality good. Airfreight is incredibly difficult and should be avoided.

Baby Vegetables – South African production is being supplied, quality is good but again airfreight is the main challenge.

Chillies – Spanish for the winter. Quality is good but cool conditions have slowed production.

Sweet Potatoes – Honduras and USA main supply, quality is very good. Guatemala is a back-up, Guatemala quality has improved year after year.

Figs – Brazil supply, quality is very good.

Mango – Peruvian Kent quality is excellent.

Limes – Brazilian supply is very good and Guatemalan also in the background. Concerns over supply when bars and restaurants re-open as shipping takes around 5 weeks so pre-order recommended.

Garlic & Ginger – Availability of Chinese difficult. Ginger incredibly short as new crop does not store well and tends to be held back until fully cured/dried out, quality of Brazilian good.

Shallots – mainly French Banana shallot in demand – quality is very good, Round is generally less available nowadays and only available to pre-order currently.



Rhubarb, Asparagus & Peashoot Salad
recipe available on our website



RECIPE: King Oyster Mushroom, Soy Gel, Nori Dusted Kale, Sesame Breadcrumbs

This dish takes advantage of mushrooms pairing very well with Asian flavours. The meaty texture of the king oyster mushrooms gives the dish a lot of body.

This dish is very high in umami and acidic flavours and would be well suited as a starter on a fine dining or vegan menu.

Recipe available on our website with loads of other recipe ideas for mushrooms and more! Visit: www.oliverkayproduce.co.uk