



MARKET NEWS

December 2009

Overview



Who would live anywhere else? October gave us the warmest month since records began and now November has broken another record as the wettest on record, with an average of 217.4mm of rain across the UK. Cumbria recorded an amazing 621.4mm. Thankfully most of the crops that could have been damaged, have already been lifted.

The wholesale markets have been extremely quiet and demand in general has been poor, the feeling in the market place is Christmas will also be quiet as firms tighten their belts for the new year lull.

Spain, where the majority of salad lines are now coming from has been too hot reaching 27° in the day and down to only 18° to 20° during the night, causing a few issues.

In Season:

Brussels Sprouts (whole and prepared), Chestnuts (cooked and loose)
Cranberries, Pomegranates, White and Red Cabbage

Vegetables

Potatoes Any small pockets of crop still in the ground will probably be left due to heavy rain and plentiful supply. Some high dry matter material in store is showing problems and becoming a growing concern due to bruising and internal growth damage. Larger baking potatoes are in plentiful supply, but there is a split between cheap material which is not suitable to store and better quality material for 2010. A higher proportion of rejections are now going straight to animal feed. Supply of Mids potatoes and smaller sizes are tightening up and expected to remain so going forward. Salad potato are predominantly Charlotte and eat well, moving to French Agata within the next 4 weeks.

Carrot & Parsnip Both still at their best, carrot is in plentiful supply, but waterlogged fields are making lifting a problem. A heavy ground frost will force growers into strawed material.

Cauliflower Quality is looking good for December. All crops have plenty of foliage so we shouldn't suffer with frost damage. The current supply looks good, however expected annual frost will reduce the harvesting days. Product will be supplied from both Lincolnshire and Cornwall. No supply issues forecast.

Broccoli The main Spanish crop is now underway and excellent quality, there is a dip in production forecast mid December.

Cabbage Savoy is good quality, but as temperatures drops the overall size will fall - but will still achieving 500g plus. Red and White cabbage is still arriving direct from the fields and is of excellent quality and size.



Our dedicated Customer Service team are available to answer your queries, they can be contacted on: **01274 470200**



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Salads

Aubergine These are of good quality and availability. We don't expect any changes for the coming month.

Capsicums Dutch is all but finished and Spanish is good quality with no problems.

Tomatoes Its fair to say it was a bit too warm for Tomatoes in Spain during November and this has produced a flush of product which is high coloured and a little softer than usual. We moved production to the Canaries to cover this period and are now back into mainland Spain

Courgette The quality is good and also with good steady supply. There are no issues.

Cucumbers There is good volume available as both Almeria and Granada are in full production. The quality is very good.

Leaf Iceberg weights are very good at present due to earlier rains and then a hot November. We have seen intermittent pest problems due to these weather conditions, including internal caterpillar damage and small snails, this is due to the Integrated Crop Management systems not allowing additional spraying when the crop is accelerated. **Cos** sizes are much improved with fewer problems than Iceberg.

Spanish **Fancy leaf** is now up and running, quality is good and the head sizes are improving day by day.

Celery The overall quality is good with isolated breakdown where cut.

Fruit

Apples

Golden Delicious French is still freely available and the quality is good.

Red French Red Chief is going well with no issues

Granny Smith French supply and the quality is great.

Stone Fruit

Peach & Nectarine We are now starting Southern hemisphere sea freight following expensive early season airfreight .

Plum Italian plum is still good as we move towards winter.

Melon All from Brazil, good availability and excellent eating quality, especially the Cantaloupe.



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Fruit

Citrus

Orange Prices remain very high but expected to start falling into line as the Spanish season becomes established.

Lemon Spanish lemons are now with us and quality is much improved

Limes Cold problems in Brazil and Mexico have improved but prices have responded cautiously and still above the same period last year.

Easy Peelers (Satsuma's and Clementine's) the supply of Spanish fruit is now improving and eating well.

Banana Wholesale market prices are still stable with supply meeting demand. There are no problems expected.

Soft Fruit

•Berries

Strawberry Quality is starting to dip as we wait to move into the main Egyptian crop, stock should be kept tight. **Raspberries** are mainly Portuguese with top up from Tanzania, quality is good. **Blackberries** from Mexico are plentiful, no quality problems to report. **Blueberry** mainly Uruguay due to poor Argentinean fruit moving to Chile in the new year. **Redcurrant** is CA stored Dutch. Canadian **Cranberries** are now available and are fantastic.

Grapes

•White In tight supply until later next week when Peruvian and Namibian vessels dock around 10th/12th December.

•Red USA/Brazil Scarlotta/Crimson now moving into Peruvian – Flame, prices have been extremely high and the late vessel will keep availability low until the new year.

•Exotics

•Sugar Snaps, Mange Tout and Bean are much improved. The availability of Sugar Snaps is more difficult but nothing to worry about. **Avocado's** are Spanish and the quality is good. Thailand is currently in the rainy season which will effect availability of **Baby Corn, Lemon Grass** and **Asparagus Tips**. Greek **Butternut Squash** Greek is almost finished, moving to Italian over the next few weeks, no quality issues. RSA **Baby Vegetables** are good with no problems to report.

•Sweet Potatoes are becoming less plentiful with price rising daily. **Figs** are now underway from Brazil, quality is good. **Garlic** is very short, and has gone up 15 fold in China (according to Radio 5!). Ginger is also short but to a lesser extent.

