



Floods in South East Spain have had a devastating impact and caused major problems with transport and availability. Now we are also seeing snow and frost in Northern parts of the UK which we expect to also have an affect on produce, we are monitoring the situation closely with our suppliers.

FRUIT

Since the English season has finished we have been using Dutch Strawberries. However supply is now running short from Holland as their season is starting to end. We have started to see early sightings of Egyptian and South African varieties. Despite this, availability is expected to be limited still and prices may continue to climb further. Blackberries seem to have taken a short spike in cost due to minimal amounts of European available. We will now be sourcing from Southern Hemisphere which naturally impacts quality due to further travel time from regions further afield. Blueberries and Raspberries appear to be stable for the time being which is positive news.

Storm Dana caused carnage in Spain last month, with over a years worth of rain hitting the country in an 8 hour period. We mostly saw Satsumas and Clementines heavily affected as a result with severe lack of availability and prices almost double what they were before. We are seeing vast improvements on supply and pleased to report that availability has massively improved, even Leafy Clementines are a lovely option from Italy, Morocco and also Spain.

Pardon the pun but it's not a 'Grape' time of year for Grapes in general at the moment. This is due to Italian finishing a few weeks earlier and Peruvian / South African not quite ready yet. We have seen vessel delays from Brazil which has had a knock of effect with Melons and Limes. Sharp increases across the board on prices, particularly Cantaloupe (Ogen) melon. We have limited time left on Spanish & Italian Plums and we will move across to South African towards the end of December. You may notice a slightly more bitter taste and smaller size fruit as well as potential gap as we transition seasons.

Since the Spanish Stone Fruit season ended we have been longing for Peaches and Nectarines to become more readily available. Some positive news for the month is that South African Peaches and Nectarines are now down to a much more reasonable price bracket and better availability. Spanish Kaki Fruit is a lovely option to consider on seasonal menu's this time of year and something a little different.

We are pleased to announce that Brazilian Figs have hit the ground running and a great festive choice. Cranberries and Chestnuts (vacpak or fresh) are also a Christmas classic and a delight for December. Pomegranates and Quince are also in good supply.

French Pink Lady Apples have started which are absolutely delicious, along with English Apple Season still going strong until next Spring we definitely recommend making the most of Apples on menu's. The farm in Tonbridge Kent is a mere 30 miles from our depot and not only helps support British Farmers but also reduces food miles and carbon footprint.

VEGETABLES

There are currently no major availability issues with Potatoes at the moment. However, we have been informed by our suppliers that we do expect to see some problems with the larger potatoes and baby potatoes in the near future. Supply has started to come from store rather than direct from fields. The wet weather has also delayed lifting conditions, which means immanent price increases due to prolonged storage costs.

In general, English Cauliflower and Spanish Broccoli both seem to be in good supply, however this does heavily rely upon weather, which as we know can be unpredictable. Last year we saw major shortages due to poor weather so fingers crossed it isn't the same story this year. UK Tenderstem has now finished, Spanish and Kenyan varieties are available.

Brussel Sprouts, Tops and Stalks are all in high demand this month with Christmas around the corner and festive menu's booming. Prepared Brussels have started and are ideal for time conscious kitchens as no prep involved. Mixed Chantenay Carrot & Piccolo Parsnips are still going strong and also a chefs dream with minimal prep and adds colour to the plate.

All root vegetables are fantastic at the moment (Carrots, Parsnips, Swede, Turnips, Celeriac) and good value for money. Mixed Rainbow Carrots are a delight they add a lovely vibrant splash of colour or you can purchase Purple, White and Yellow Carrots individually.

Kale, Calvolo Nero (Black Cabbage), Spring Green and Savoy Cabbage are all great this month. If you are looking for something a little bit different maybe consider some firm favourites for December such as January King Cabbage, Rainbow Chard or Kallettes. Sadly, UK Hispi Cabbage has now finished and we will be moving over shortly to Portuguese.

SALADS

The winter months are always tricky and heavily reliant upon decent weather conditions to keep salad items stable. Lolo Rosso, Biondi and Oakleaf are still coming from France. The quality of Large Leaf Spinach has been noticeably poor towards the end of November and very damp due to wet fields. We are hoping to see some improvements further into December. The disruption of Storm Dana has had less of an impact than originally expected on whole head lettuces such as Cos, Gem and Iceberg which is good news. This also applies to Baby Mix Leaf, Spinach and Rocket but as expected during the winter months, anything can happen. Celery has now switched over from UK to Spanish season.

We are still eagerly anticipating the arrival on Monks Beard which is slightly later than previous years. We have seen some lovely Pink Raddichio, Cimmi De Rappa, Trevis and Tardivo. Aubergines, Peppers, Cucumbers and Tomatoes are all stable at the moment but again this is weather and transport issues dependant.

MUSHROOM & FORAGED

White mushrooms in particular (button, cups and flat) are suffering due to unstable and rapidly changing weather conditions. Due to them being highly sensitive we may start to see some quality issues such as discolouration. Still plenty of Trompette available, Pied de Mouton and Chanterelle are also a great option. Girolles have started to slope off and limited availability.

As always with all wild mushrooms please contact the office directly for pre-order and to check availability, we will be happy to help with any questions or further information you may need.