

# Fresh Gazette

Monthly update on all things fruit & veg!

## December 2019



It's the most wonderful time of the year! We are huge lovers of the festive season at Fresh Connect, mostly because through out December you can eat lot's of wonderful food and use the excuse 'it is Christmas!'. At this time of year also there are so many wonderful products to create some fantastic menus, so read on and be inspired.

### Veg & Salad

**Kalettes (flower sprouts)** are a highlight for December. Cross between crunchy kale and nutty sprouts they taste delicious eaten raw or cooked. **Prepared brussels** are now available and a god send for busy kitchens in December (call office for price). **Sprout tops & Sprout stalks** are great for seasonal menus. **January king cabbages** are arriving in larger quantities now and a great, colourful cabbage to try. **Leeks** are at their best right now. **Tenderstem broccoli** is in short supply, English crops usually run until mid December however crops have already finished due to flooding and Spanish crops are also behind production again due to bad weather. **Peeled garlic** has started a new season and prices have increased but this is a temporary measure. **Golden & Candy** beetroots are great quality and other root vegetables we recommend are **Parsley & Chervil** Root! **Jerusalem Artichoke** prices have eased as the season is now under way. **Salsify** is another great root vegetable at it's best right now. Some varieties of **squashes** will now finish. **Baby coloured carrots** are available from South Africa, they look great but a bit pricey. **Mixed colour chantenay carrots** and **piccolo parsnips** are great for Christmas time as prep is minimal. **Purple sprouting broccoli** is around however it is quite pricey so I recommend holding off. As cauliflowers are causing a bit of agg why not try some **romanesque** ? Reasonably priced and also add a bit of colour.

We have been given notice on price increases on **Italian rocket** due to problems with weather in Italy. It is cold & cloudy which is not giving enough light for growth. Rocket from northern Italy has also finished it's season so we rely only on the south. **Heritage mixed tomatoes** from France have finished their season, Spanish available however there mix of tomatoes are far inferior. We have seen the first **pink radicchio** arrive from Italy as well as some **black camone tomatoes** for those of us that love something a bit unusual (and expensive).



### X-mas delivery Schedule

Get in touch for a copy of our Christmas delivery schedule. Don't get caught out with deliveries! **TIP please give more notice when ordering prepared items!**

### From our Forager

In season now from our forager is three cornered garlic (wild leeks) which is always very popular, use as you would wild garlic. Crab apples are lovely little beauties and great for making sweet jellies to accompany roasted meats. Alexanders and Alexander seeds are also in season currently.

### Flood Warnings!

As you would have seen on the news northern England have experienced terrible weather and flooding. At this time of year a very high percentage of produce is being grown up North such as brassicas and potatoes. In the last 2 weeks we have seen that the weather has had a major affect on produce such as cauliflowers & cabbages. Cauliflowers are being grown knee deep in water so keeping there brilliant white colour is near impossible. We have been sourcing French varieties to replace however prices are at a premium. We have also been given warnings that potatoes will also be affected as currently farmers are unable to harvest due to the fields being under water so they are being left to rot. We will expect to see shortages and price increases on potatoes for next year.



### Fruit

**Berries** are always a nightmare in the winter as they are all imported and to get the best quality they cost top dollar. We saw strawberries hike in price in November and whilst they have eased slightly we are still paying a premium for Dutch as the Egyptian varieties are just not good enough. **Figs** have now finished and only available from Israel, size is tiny and price is extortionate. **Lemons & limes** have been a headache as of late but we hope through December we will see prices ease and quality improve. **Large oranges** will be tricky as crops are 40% down so they are hard to come by. **Peaches and nectarines** are not available so please, please stop ordering. **Quince & Pomegranates** are fantastic quality right now and recommended for December. Remember fresh **cranberries** have already started so we expect all your cranberry sauces to be home made! It wouldn't be Christmas without sweet, juicy **clementine's**. We are using the leafy variety as they are tasting the best. **Watermelons** have not been great as it's not a good time of year for them, we are always on the search for the best available but would recommend using other varieties instead.

### Wild Mush Corner

**Yellow & Grey Chanterelle's** are at their peak season

**Ceps**—The king of wild mushroom! At it's best right now and a treat for x-mas

**Pied Du bleu**—Such a lovely looking mushroom and always a more reasonable price.

**Pied du Mouton**

**Girolles** will be available inn medium and large size. Mini have finished

