



freshconnect.

Market REPORT

February 2025

FRUIT

This month is an opportunity to really spruce up menu's with Valentines day mid month and spring just around the corner. **Blood Oranges** have been a lovely addition to the start of the year and are a stunning deep red colour, bursting with flavour. The season was short but sweet for **Seville Oranges** as they are almost finished for the year. **Yorkshire Rhubarb** is bang in season at the moment, perfect for your winter crumbles. It's also great to support UK grown produce and British Farmers, however we do have back up support with supply from the Netherlands.

Nadorcotts are in full swing and availability is strong. Taste is lovely and sweet with a bright orange flesh and outer skin. **Egyptian Oranges** of all sizes are great value and packed full of flavour. **English Apple Season** has been fantastic from our grower in Tonbridge, Kent but as we approach the end of season there could be some challenges as a result of poor weather impacting European yields and the season is likely to draw to an end a lot earlier than expected. **Lemons** are steady and good availability this time of year and We are expecting a delay with the new season of **Melons** and supply of **Pineapples** due to multiple issues. Heavy rainfall during planting has caused problems with all varieties of Melons. Shipping delays from Southern Hemisphere to the UK have caused delays with importation of both product lines. Once in the UK strong winds from Storm Eowyn have made unloading vessels very tricky and caused further delays. Brazilian season is stretching as long as it can but ultimately we expect some form of availability issues with **Galia, Cantaloupe and Watermelon** in particular. Brazilian **Honeydew** is notorious for having a slightly longer season than the rest.



Plums and **Grapes** are much better availability than last month and they are much more reasonably priced. **Mangoes** are a lovely choice at the moment coming from Peru. Storm Garoe has caused carnage with heavy rainfall and flooding which has meant availability issues on **Strawberries, Raspberries, Blackberries & Blueberries**. On top of this, the hike in production costs in Morocco have meant there is less supply of berries. An increased demand around Valentines also triggers a dip in availability of Strawberries. Combined with low temperatures in Spain we are certainly expecting a challenging upcoming period with Berries.

VEGETABLES

Egyptian Sweet Potatoes are coming in plentiful and very robust, great for winter warmers. On the root vegetable front, Carrots, Parsnips, Swede, Turnips and Celeriac are all still going strong and very reliable. Jerusalem Artichokes are another great staple choice.

Portuguese Hispi Cabbage is up and running now, with small sightings of Portuguese Savoy but also small quantities of English around when it's not frozen.

Black Cabbage and Kale are also at risk of quality being impacted from frost.

Despite having January in the name, usually we will see January King Cabbage for a little longer, however due to frost and cold weather they have drawn to an end earlier than expected.



English Cauliflower is also in the same boat with cold weather snaps really affecting crops and noticeably much smaller heads than normal but with such a lack of availability quality issues are tricky to avoid. There is back up of French & Spanish Cauliflowers but they are on the pricey side and in high demand.

As the weather starts to warm up we are optimistic the situation will ease. Spanish Broccoli seems to be stable at the moment, however, we are monitoring this situation closely as small hikes are a potential risk.

We have been informed by our suppliers that plantings of Potatoes are likely to be lower this year due to a lack of seeds. This will undoubtedly have an impact on availability. In particular it is Salad Potatoes, Red and Larger size potatoes which we could see a shortfall on.

Towards the tail end of February if we are really lucky, we may see the start of Jersey Royal Mids & Wares. Usually they are excellent in Spring time but we are keeping our fingers crossed for early sightings, bare in mind they start off very steep but prices ease as the season progresses and availability is better.

Peruvian Asparagus is drawing to an end as we use Mexican to bridge the gap before our lovely English season starts towards the end of March/Early April. We had a fantastic year in 2024 working with our grower in Rogate, Hampshire and can't wait to have supply again for the 2025 season. Monks Beard and Cimmi de Rappa are also good to consider and lovely options for the month of February

SALADS

There have been some cold snaps in and around Europe which has affected some key salad items such as Cos, Gem and Iceberg. This will also impact Baby Leaf (baby mix leaf, baby spinach and rocket). We have seen Peppers slightly inflated due to poor weather in Spain and Morocco, some slight marking and damage on the outer skin of the pepper itself may be noticeable as a result of this. All Tomatoes have settled now and are in much better supply. Avocado will remain steady this month but expect a definite increase going into March/April as with previous years the change in season inevitably causes shortfalls.

We still have some lovely choices on the Italian salads front: Pink Raddichio, Treviso, Tardivo and Castlefranco are great if you fancy something a little out of the ordinary.

MUSHROOM & FORAGED

Please contact the office for further information regarding Wild Mushroom availability and we will inform you of what our forager recommends is in season, what to avoid and what requires a pre-order. We are also optimistic that we may see very early sightings of Wild Garlic, it's always such a great addition and highly recommended as adds so much flavour to recipes.