

Crop Report

Wednesday 19th August to Wednesday 26th August

Get the insight you need to plan more effectively and manage your menus with our latest report from the field, brought to you by our expert produce team.

Weather update



Farmers across Europe continue to face difficult growing conditions, with high temperatures and limited rainfall affecting a wide range of crops. Brassicas have been particularly impacted, with widespread media reports of sunburn and reduced yields in several growing regions.

We are working closely with suppliers to manage the impact and maximise both availability and quality.

The forecast for more seasonally appropriate temperatures and rainfall this week is welcome and should help support seasonal crops and ease some of the current pressure. However, some of the impact on annual crops is likely to be reflected in yields and quality later in the season.

Concerns around pest pressure have eased slightly following the relaxation of certain restrictions on pest control measures, and the expected rainfall should provide further support in managing these challenges in some crops. However, while it is good news for some crops, we are starting to see an increase in some others, for example brassicas, so the picture remains mixed.

We will continue to monitor conditions closely and work with growers and suppliers to minimise disruption and maintain supply wherever possible.

Brassicas



Growing conditions have become increasingly difficult, with the lack of rainfall now limiting volumes across several brassica lines. The coming weeks are expected to be challenging, and multiple concessions remain in place across cauliflower, sweetheart cabbage, savoy cabbage and broccoli to support continuity of supply.

Cabbage is also becoming more problematic as growers near the end of stored stock, adding further pressure to an already tight market.

Spring greens may be fully hearted for some deliveries. This is due to the variety (Verve) of spring green being used during the current period to maximise availability.

A specific concession is now in place for cauliflower. Head weights continue to fall below normal levels, and the lower end specification has been adjusted from 120 mm to 110 mm, meaning heads may appear smaller than customers are used to.

Despite the extremely short market, we have managed limited supply effectively and continue to work closely with customers to maximise availability.

Mushrooms



The ongoing hot weather continues to make compost management difficult, with outdoor stored material proving harder to bring down to the precise temperatures needed for optimal growth.

Although conditions have improved slightly over the past week, the heat is still influencing harvest timing, overall yields and the proportion of larger mushrooms coming through.

The biggest pressure remains on larger sizes, where volumes are tight. Concessions are in place to help maintain continuity of supply while growers work to stabilise crops, although the situation is improving.

Peppers



Pepper quality is deteriorating sharply, with an increasing number of rejections creating market wide challenges, particularly on red peppers. Growers are now picking more backward colour fruit to help support shelf life and maintain continuity.

The market is expected to remain under pressure for the next two to three weeks, and potentially longer. Sizing is also likely to be affected as crops continue to struggle under current conditions.

Cucumber



Cucumber supply remains extremely unstable, with very limited volumes across the wider market. Our contracted programmes continue to hold, but both Dutch and Spanish growers are facing sustained challenges. In the Netherlands, crop rotations are still restricting output, while in Spain the seasonal heat, which is normal for the time of year, continues to suppress yields and slow crop recovery.

These combined pressures are keeping availability tight, and we expect volatility to continue until around November, with peaks and troughs in supply likely throughout this period.

Lettuce



Growing conditions remain challenging across much of the country, with prolonged heat slowing growth and placing crops under sustained stress. However, our growers near Preston have benefited from higher rainfall and cooler temperatures than other regions, allowing them to maintain consistent supply and strong quality despite wider market volatility.

A helpful development is the extension of the pesticide use window until 31 August, giving growers additional time to manage the surge in pest pressure driven by the heat.

Asparagus



Growing conditions in Peru remain unsettled, and El Niño related disruption is expected to intensify through August. The instability is most visible on longer sea freighted arrivals, where extended transit times are increasing the likelihood of condition issues.

To safeguard quality and keep programmes moving, air freight continues to be used selectively to shorten journeys and reduce stress on the crop. Despite these interventions, the market is set to remain tight.

Parsnips



The lack of water is directly affecting product quality, resulting in smaller tubers and reduced yields. This pressure is expected to continue into the year ahead, with lower volumes, more variable overall quality and a higher proportion of Class II produce likely as crops struggle to size under prolonged dry conditions.

Tomatoes



Tomatoes will remain challenging through August, with improvement not expected until we move into early September. All varieties are affected, but the greatest pressure is on beef and plum tomatoes, with G size also becoming increasingly impacted and requiring some substitutions this week.

Quality remains the key issue, with reduced shelf-life following the recent hot weather, particularly among larger sizes, where heat stress has been most pronounced.

Aubergines



Availability is satisfactory for now, but we expect it to tighten shortly as crops begin to feel the full impact of the recent heat. Growing conditions have been challenging, which will mean that availability is likely to remain difficult through the remainder of the season.

Berries



While availability remains stable, the prolonged heat has put berry crops under significant strain. Growers are keeping a close watch on plant health, although the anticipated drop in temperatures should ease stress and support a return to more favourable growing conditions.

Peaches and Nectarines



We expect the seasonal peach and nectarine lines to finish in early September.

Potatoes



The lack of water over recent weeks is set to have a detrimental impact on this year's potato crop, with baker grades facing the greatest pressure. With restrictions in place and ground conditions so hard that water is no longer penetrating effectively, irrigation is offering little benefit. As a result, season long challenges are expected on sizing, particularly across baker 40s and 50s, where yields are likely to remain under strain.