

Crop Report

Wednesday 10th December to Wednesday 17th December

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.

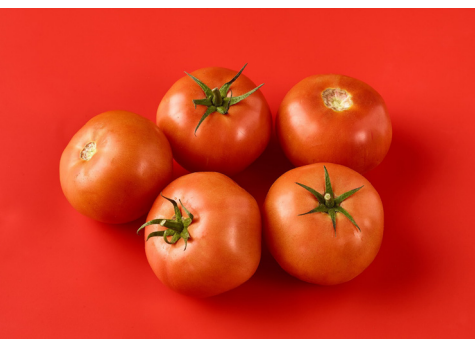
Shipping



Although not currently affecting our supply, shipping delays are increasing as we approach the busy Christmas period. Port congestion is already causing some disruption, and vessels may skip UK ports to maintain European schedules, requiring alternative transport by road or vessel.

We're monitoring the situation closely and will work with suppliers to mitigate any impact.

Tomatoes



Large GG-size beef tomatoes remain limited due to late planting in Spain and Morocco. To maintain supply, we're sourcing from additional origins and have introduced size concessions for slightly smaller tomatoes where necessary.

Availability is gradually improving as the season progresses, but challenges are expected for the next couple of weeks before stabilising for the remainder of the season.

Berries



After a challenging few weeks, raspberry availability has improved as the transition between Moroccan growing regions concludes. Blackberry supply remains stable.

Blueberries are currently in good supply, though minor challenges may arise over the next couple of weeks due to shipping delays. We're working closely with suppliers to minimise any impact on customers.

Strawberries remain the most challenging, as the transition from Holland to Morocco continues. To support availability, we've supplemented supply with Egyptian fruit, helping maintain stock during this period.

Easy Peelers



The South African season has ended, and Spanish fruit—typically used to bridge the gap—has been of lower quality this year. Early Moroccan Easy Peelers are now arriving, though sizes remain small. A size concession is in place to maintain supply.

By the end of the month, we expect to be fully into the Moroccan season, resolving any remaining issues.

Cucumbers



Warm October weather accelerated crop development, creating a short gap before the next harvest. While shortages are not expected, availability will remain tight in the near term.

Peppers



The Almería region of Spain, a key winter growing area, is currently facing thrips pest challenges—unusual for this early in the season. Thanks to a strong geographical spread of suppliers across Spain and other countries, we've reduced risk significantly.

While colder weather should bring some improvement, intermittent issues are likely over the coming weeks, with the potential to worsen later in the season. Thrips affect appearance only and do not impact eating quality.

Flat Mushrooms



Availability is satisfactory, but recent compost and disease issues have affected quality. We've worked with suppliers to address these challenges and expect quality improvements this week.

Eggs



Avian Influenza (AI) outbreaks continue across the UK. To protect poultry, mandatory Housing Orders and enhanced biosecurity measures are in place under the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ).

We source eggs from multiple regions in the UK to reduce disruption and are working closely with suppliers to maintain availability. Under UK legislation, eggs can still be marketed as free range while hens are temporarily housed indoors until it's safe for them to return outdoors.

Cabbage



Cabbage supply will remain challenging this season as maintaining weight continues to be difficult. Size concessions for both red and white cabbage will remain in place.

Some quality issues caused by oedema persist, but we're working closely with growers to ensure the best possible product reaches customers.