



**PREMIERFRUITS**  
FOODS SERVICE PROVIDER  
EST 1999



# HEADLINES

***SPRING IS COMING... APPARENTLY...***

I hope that we will see some dry weather in March and maybe a spring feeling towards the end of the month. With the storms and the flood's UK growers need our support and patients more this time of year than ever before.

It is important we inform you of potential issues regarding certain products due to the Coronavirus situation in China. You will start to see effects to certain product lines in March due lack of exports throughout February.

Shipping time is around twenty-eight days so items like Ginger, Garlic, Nashi pears, Pomelo that will be sea freighted to Europe normally will not be appearing at the docks in anyway the same frequency as normal. Pickers have not been picking, packers have not been able to pack, Transport has not been running to docks, and a very high percentage of vessels never left ports.

Around eighty percent of garlic purchased globally comes from China. We have of course other origins we procure from but with market demand being high price will rise a lot due to demand.

Other items that will be impacted are Shiimeji mushrooms, Eryngii mushrooms, Lotus root, although not relied upon from China other origins of supply have already started putting prices up due to demand. A large amount of frozen items are also produced and packed in China for Europe.

China also has a huge influence on the import side of fresh produce globally which will lead to suppliers looking for alternative markets potentially causing over supply situation.

*As fresh as it gets!*







## FOOD SERVICE

New season jersey royal potatoes, Chats , Mid's and Ware all available and fantastic quality.

We will also have plenty of wonderful Norfolk wild Garlic and it always proves very popular this time of year.

UK purple sprouting broccoli will be good value in March. First arrivals of French White Asparagus will be available.

Chervil root, Parsley root from France will be excellent quality. First arrivals of fresh Spanish peas and broad beans from Spain.

Amazing French Gariguetta strawberries throughout the month.

Wild Strawberries from Spain.

UK Cornish spring greens will be in full swing.

Very nice Spanish Calcot onions available.

Red tipped little gem lettuce from our growers in Spain.

Courgette flowers from Holland will also proved very popular throughout March.

Spanish round courgettes will be very good quality and value throughout March. What about some beautiful Romanesco.

Lovage, Melissa, Salicornia, Thai Basil and Tarragon all remain difficult in terms of availability due to ongoing weather issues.

Jerusalem artichokes are very good quality. General Mushroom market remains steady with no issues. Some beautiful Pink oyster mushroom available.

## SPECIALITY FINE FOODS

March is very much a transition month separating two seasons and pending on a late winter or early spring we can taste significant differences.

Two cheeses are there to accommodate this. Alchester Sloe is a soft cow milk cheese, created and matured by our specialist team in our own Affinage section, gently washed with Sloe Gin , adding a touch of sweetness and lifting aromas

Brin d'Amour is a Corsican semi soft sheep's milk, covered with wild herbs from the island. A very aromatic cheese with a great texture, which can be savoured on his own or with a salad, even on a pizza...

If thinking of cooking with cheese, baked Goat cheese Crottin is ideal at that time of the year, with a touch of acidity typical of goat milk cheese.

Alternatively, nothing beats our forty-two months mature Parmesan, rich, with incredible depth of flavours, perfect to finish a risotto.

Finally yet importantly, one of our chef's favourite is our white Balsamic vinegar, described by one of customer as liquid gold.





# FRUITS

Melons Galia and Cantaloupe switch over to Honduras fruit with no issues expected.

UK Bramley Apples still short and due to finish very soon. Still very expensive on the market.

Braeburn Royal gala Red chief Apples Croatia, France, and some Italian about but all pressures are lower than what should be for this time of year. Although towards the end of the season.

European Granny smiths some growers have finished so this will lead to higher prices and general shortage in market.

Golden delicious Apples no issues expected.

UK Russet Apples on the market still but a little expensive as not lots of volume.

Pink lady Apples very short this year and some suppliers not working them at all due to higher prices being asked for by growers.

Apricots New Zealand is available but are very expensive due to airfreight.

Peaches and Nectarines will be Chilean and expensive as normal for time of year.

Cherries very good quality from Tasmania arriving although expensive due to airfreight.

Bananas lower supply this time of year due to central American weather systems.

Star ruby Grapefruit Cyprus coming to an end and quality indifferent. Good Spanish fruit coming through. Turkish susceptible too due to quality issues and poor colour.

Marsh grapefruit all quality in different depending on origin. Cyprus mainly and small fragments from Turkey now arriving.

White grapes no punnet coming through from south Africa due to collapse in the medium sizing grape due to floods etc. punnet grapes from India started mid to late February but as usual not good size and not good brightness in the colour either.

Very good loose white grape coming from south Africa size xl through to xxl and jumbo all too big for punnets.

Red / Black varieties of grapes from south Africa not as susceptible to the floods as the white grape. Going into crimson grape now from south Africa. Good supply and good quality and good price.

Kiwifruit from Greece and Italy, Quality not as good as last season as fruit pressures are lower than normal from both origins.

Lemons from Spain no issues and good quality supply in cardboard trays still.

Yellow melons Watermelons slowly moving from Brazil into central America fruit Costa Rica. Very high prices on waters as per normal. Yellow melons normally go shorter towards end of March.

Easy peeler varieties good supply of nadorcotts as usual from Morocco.

Oranges from Morocco, Egypt and some small supply from Spain. All fruit is showing different signs of quality and has various special qualities. Spain for eating and medium brix levels. Morocco for high brix levels and juice content. Egyptian for general meeting a customer need of price and quality. Egyptian supply is less than this time last year and the farmers holding out for higher prices at start of their Valencia season.

Blood oranges good blood supply now from Sicily all the way to end of March.

Pears Italian made good money this year due to shortage of crops. South African pears are now starting in assorted green and red varieties.

Conference pears from Belgium very good quality.

Plums going through the varieties as normal from south Africa. Ruby crisp, Fortuna's, although purple majesty now ending. Moving onto varieties sapphire and Laetitia, which are undoubtedly the best of the bunch.

UK Rhubarb remains very good quality.





# VEGETABLES

UK Red cabbage, white cabbage good quality and great value.

UK Leeks are fantastic quality and good value.

UK Carrots good volumes still arriving daily from our growers.

UK Parsnips no issues expected.

UK Swede no issues expected and are very good value.

Onions no issues with good volumes arriving from Holland and UK on smaller milder onions. Spanish larger Grano variety remain very good quality although we now move to cold store.

Cauliflowers will continue from France and quality has been very as usual.

Broccoli remains difficult still due to lack of availability from Spain.



UK Celeriac no issues and very good quality.

Very good Butternut squash from Portugal available.

Sweet potatoes will be from USA and good quality.

UK Candy, Golden, Purple Beetroot all very good in terms of both quality and availability.

Potatoes, Bakers remain a little higher than expected. Ware, Red, Chippers, Baby no issues any different to this season so far.

Some very nice Spanish pointed cabbage available.

Spanish Broad beans and Fresh peas will be available throughout the month.

**Continue**





# EXOTICS

Asparagus no issues with plenty of product arriving from Mexico and very good value.

Limes arriving from both Mexico and Brazil in very good quality and excellent value.

Strawberries will be easier in March as the fruit from Spain is improving all the time in colour and taste.

Raspberries likewise temperatures have increased by around even degrees in the past two weeks improving growing conditions.

Pomegranates no issues with good supply from Peru.

Garlic loose, peeled as explained in main headlines price is already very high and is set to remain the same in March.

Ginger is not going just to be about high prices, availability will be a concern in March.

Blueberries excellent fruit arriving from Chile throughout the month.

Pineapples After being very expensive and hard to source during most of January and February there is a lot more fruit now arriving and more on the water so will ease the situation a lot.

Mangoes South American sea and airfreight fruit is readily available with no concerns you will also start to see fruit from Africa and Europe as well in March.

Avocados large volumes are being shipped from both Colombia and Peru so no issues expected with availability.

Chillies Red/Green chillies and Padron Peppers widely available from Spain, Morocco and Holland so no issues here.

Figs Prices will be steady as plenty of product is available from Brazil, Argentina, Peru and South Africa.

Blackberries Mexico are still sending good quality at reasonable prices and Spanish ready to start with very little product being seen now but volumes will improve throughout the month.

Fine beans as the weather has improved in Kenya so has availability.

Mangetout and Sugar snap plenty of Egyptian and Kenyan product available so no issues expected.

Product also available from Guatemala but still very early season.

**Continue**



# SALADS

Cucumbers set to remain expensive even though we will start to see a lot of Dutch product arriving this will not have any real impact until the end of the month.

Aubergines will also be available from Holland this month so providing an alternative to Spanish crop and increasing volumes available.

Capsicums you will start to see first arrivals of Dutch although mainly green until end of month. Capsicums will also continue to arrive from Spain and Morocco.

Tomatoes will mainly be from Morocco and Spain until end of month when you will see various varieties from Holland.

Radicchio very good quality from Italy arriving daily.

Lettuce Iceberg, Cos, Gem all arriving from Spain with no major issues as the weather continues to get better in Spain.

Fennel all very good from quality and plenty of availability from Italy.

Celery no issues expect as very good Spanish arriving still.



*As fresh as it gets!*

Continue





# Rungis

Spring in France means the beginning of asparagus. We have already had green from Spain (and a small amount from France), and the white from France started in February but becomes much more plentiful in March. We see many more calibres and this is the same for the green.

Spring means youth too, like lambs etc., and this is reflected in the vegetables in particular that we see. Young bunched garlic, looking a little like bunched onions, is available for a short time along with early, bunched, young shallots. Who does not love the smell (and using) wild garlic leaves and then the delicate white flowers that come a little later? Wet garlic, or fresh garlic, will be coming from Egypt. Early bunched Grelot onions should begin in France but only the white ones to begin with. Bunched and plated Tropea red onions should be available from Italy.

Broad beans will arrive from Italy and peas will continue to be plentiful from Spain. Early French peas, often tiny but really sweet, should arrive during March. Courgettes come into their own with France joining Spain in producing long and round ones. There should be good long yellow courgettes from France and the long, striped Nicoise.

Early potatoes arrive with the tiny Linzer Delicatesse coming first from Morocco (and later from France), and the most famous region in France, Noiremountier, sends Sirtema.

Tomatoes become more abundant with Noire de Crimée and the large, yellow Pineapple varieties joining the round 'on the vine' from Provence. Provence seems not to have much left in the way of seasons as we were offering beautiful looking Marmande in February!

We continue to enjoy the Moscatel grape from Chile, one of the best grapes of the year, and the last of the clementines from Spain. New fruit starting includes the Nisperos (or Loquats) from Spain, Charentais orange fleshed melons from Morocco and the Gariguettes strawberries from France. We should see the start of the Tulamine raspberry too, quite possibly from France. Yellow (Honeydew) and green (Piel de Sapo/Frog Skin) skinned melons start in Spain.

Stone fruit comes from Chile although Spain may send the first early cherries that are carefully grown under cover to ensure the early crop.

Wild mushroom is a little tricky but we should see Morel from China (finishing) and then Turkey. There should be some chanterelle from North America and the last of the pied de mouton from Portugal. Mousseron and later St George, may appear.





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