Crop Report

August

a.b. fruits
the family food service

Welcome August

August is one of the highlights of the British growing season, with an abundance of fresh, seasonal produce reaching its peak. Summer fruits, salads, vegetables and field crops continue to provide excellent variety, giving chefs plenty of opportunities to showcase the best of British-grown ingredients across their menus.

The recent spell of warm and dry weather has accelerated the development of some crops, bringing certain lines forward earlier than usual.





While this has supported good availability in many areas, the prolonged heat and limited rainfall have also created challenges for growers, increasing irrigation demands and affecting some crops in terms of size, consistency and shelf life.

Despite these challenges, growers continue to work hard to maintain quality and continuity of supply. August remains a fantastic month to celebrate the flavour, freshness and variety of British seasonal produce.

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Market Supply

Market conditions remain mixed as we move through August. While many summer lines continue to perform well, the prolonged warm and dry weather is creating significant challenges across several key crops.

Broccoli, cauliflower and tenderstem broccoli are currently under considerable pressure, with reduced availability and tighter supply as crops struggle with the ongoing heat. Salad lines, spinach, lettuces, herbs and cresses have also been significantly affected, with reduced availability, shorter shelf life and increased variation in quality being reported.





The challenging growing conditions are also having an impact on pricing, with tighter availability and increased production pressures causing some lines to firm. Growers are continuing to manage crops carefully, but the effects of the weather are expected to continue in the short term.

Despite these challenges, supply remains available across the wider range, and we will continue to work closely with our local farmers and suppliers to maintain continuity wherever possible.

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Vegetables

Broccoli - The broccoli market remains extremely tight, with the recent weather conditions creating challenges for growers. Heat stress has led to quality issues such as pheasant eye and hollow stems, reducing available volumes. We are monitoring the crop closely and working hard to maintain supply during this difficult period.

Cauliflowers - Cauliflower availability remains extremely tight, with warm and dry conditions pushing crops forward and creating gaps between harvests. Very dry field conditions are also affecting the crop, with our local growers reporting smaller sizes and some discolouration during our recent farm visit. We continue to work closely with growers and suppliers, but availability is likely to remain under pressure over the coming weeks.



Carrots - The main British carrot crop has now started, with increased UK availability replacing imported supply. Quality is looking good, with seasonal volumes expected to build further through August. As supply strengthens, pricing is expected to gradually return to more typical levels.

Tenderstem Broccoli - UK continues to be affected by the after effects of July's extreme heat. Crops are gradually recovering, although the pace varies between growing regions. Availability remains limited, and while we are working closely with growers to manage supply, the market is expected to remain tight through August.

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Courgette - Local courgettes are in season, providing great quality at lower price.

Sweetcorn - August is a fantastic time for sweetcorn, with peak-season crops offering exceptional flavour, quality and value. Perfect for making the most of fresh summer menus.

Beans - French and runner beans are currently in season, offering fresh, budget-friendly options.

Aubergines - Abundant and high in quality, aubergines are available at stable, affordable prices.





Salad

Peppers - Dutch, Belgian and British pepper crops are now settling into a more balanced position following higher volumes earlier in the season. Prices have firmed slightly but remain stable across all colours, with quality continuing to perform well.

Tomatoes - British tomatoes are now in abundance, with a wide range of varieties available and excellent quality across the range. Prices remain at reasonable seasonal levels, offering great value alongside outstanding flavour and freshness. A fantastic opportunity to showcase British grown tomatoes on summer menus.

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Lettuce, Salad & Herbs

Spinach - Recent hot and dry weather has put spinach crops under pressure, leading to slower growth, lower yields and some yellowing of the leaves. Availability remains tight, with quality and shelf life also affected.

Lettuce, Salad & Leaves - UK-grown salad leaves remain available; however, the recent hot weather has affected crop development, resulting in some natural variation in quality, appearance, and shelf life. Some quality and availability challenges may continue over the coming weeks while temperatures remain high. For the best quality, we recommend using products promptly after delivery and storing them correctly under chilled conditions.





Baby Leaf Salad - The recent hot weather has affected baby leaf crops, accelerating crop maturity and reducing quality and shelf life. Availability may remain challenging over the coming weeks while temperatures stay high. For the best quality, we recommend using products promptly after delivery and storing them correctly under chilled conditions.

Herbs & Cresses - Supply remains stable; however, continued hot weather is affecting delicate soft herbs and micro cresses. Higher temperatures may impact freshness, shelf life, and appearance. For the best quality, use promptly after delivery and store correctly under chilled conditions.

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Fruits

Strawberries - British strawberries remain in good supply, with excellent flavour and quality. Warm weather has supported strong volumes, making August a great time to showcase British strawberries while the season continues.

Blueberries - British blueberry season is progressing well, with increasing volumes, excellent quality and good availability throughout August.

Melons - Watermelons, cantaloupes, and honeydews are in strong supply, with imports from Spain and Italy ensuring great quality and affordable pricing.





Cherries - British cherries are continuing through their peak season, with strong availability, excellent quality and improved value as volumes build and prices become more competitive.

Blackberries - British blackberries are now coming into season, with UK volumes building steadily and availability expected to improve as the main crop progresses through August.

Figs - both black and green figs are thriving thanks to ideal growing conditions - expect excellent quality and availability.

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We remain positive about the outlook and will continue to monitor developments and provide updates in due course. Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this report, please do not hesitate to contact our team.



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