



FRESHVIEW  
Foods Ltd

Crop report - May



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### **The latest updates on the marketplace to help plan menus, what to look forward to and what to avoid.**

From one of our UK salad growers -  
"Some of you may have noticed the UK has been experiencing unprecedented levels of rainfall lately, which has had a significant impact on the UK's agricultural sector. As a result, our harvest team have been delayed in getting out to the fields to begin planting our outdoor crops. We're optimistic for improved weather conditions over the coming weeks, allowing us to resume outdoor operations and start offering an increased selection of British-grown produce."

#### **Potatoes**

The rain mentioned above is delaying next season crops being planted. Speaking with farmers, they need 2-3 weeks of dry weather and a good wind to make conditions suitable for planting next seasons crop due at the end of this summer autumn. This could cause delays for the new season.

#### **Vegetables**

##### **Cauliflower**

The European Union, including the UK, faces challenges due to dwindling potato seed supply.

##### **Broccoli**

Prices remain steady and there is still good volume coming from Spain. Quality remains excellent. As predicted due to the warmer weather the crops are likely to finish earlier this year by the end of May. We will then be moving over to English Broccoli.

##### **Savoy cabbage**

Spain and Portugal have limited volume now partly due to an earlier start with UK finishing earlier. Prices remain a little higher than average due to this, quality remains excellent. We will see the UK season starting around June time.

#### **Carrots/Parsnips**

We are moving onto imported carrots earlier than expected due to the heavy constant rains we have been having. Expect higher prices until the new season English starts in July.

#### **Fruit**

##### **Strawberries**

There is a mix of origins as we enter May with Spain currently in full production. Quality has improved of late, with the weather in Spain more settled, however some dark colouration to the fruit is to be expected from this source as temperatures increase and the export season nears an end. Dutch/Belgian and UK glass house Strawberry will be available, but at substantially higher price levels than Spanish. UK outdoor production will also get underway with volumes increasing throughout the month before displacing imports entirely.

##### **Raspberries**

Quality has been consistent with availability better than in recent weeks. First meaningful UK outdoor volumes should begin end of May and grow in availability as the weather warms.

##### **Blueberries**

Spanish production is now showing good availability alongside Moroccan and will deliver stable volumes into and throughout May. Supply may tighten quickly as these sources stop exporting towards the end of the month with a switch to eastern Europe ahead. Spanish quality is currently good with excellent flavour/texture.

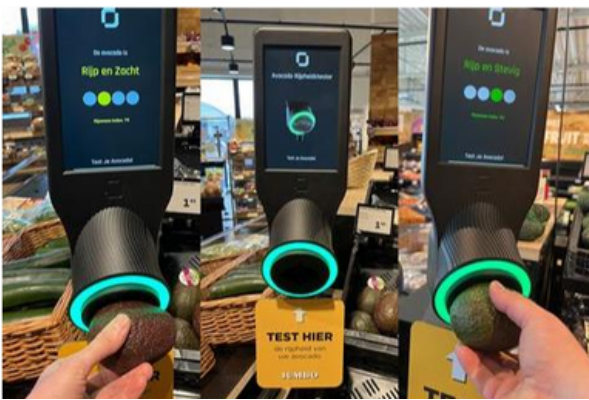
##### **Blackberries**

Spanish supply is already underway with good flavoured fruit continuing throughout May, this while we await the arrival of the first UK Blackberries.

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### Scanners

Supermarkets across Europe have started to employ AI-based freshness scanners that could eventually tell shoppers if a number of different fruits are ripe before they buy them.



Retailers including Jumbo and Migros have apparently recorded higher avocado sales and reduction in waste thanks to arrival of AI-based checkpoints.

### Citrus

Citrus will be moving over to Southern hemisphere, lines like grapefruit, oranges, easy peelers and lemons mentioned below. It has a little further to travel so prices are always a little higher.

The overall 2024 estimate has been pitched just above 180m cartons of citrus, which is an increase of 10 per cent on last year.



From a corridor perspective, the northern regions of South Africa estimate of 91m cartons is up from a baseline of 82m cartons.

The Eastern Cape estimate of 52.5m cartons is up from 47.5m cartons. The Northern and Western Cape regions estimate of 38m cartons is up from 36m cartons and an increase of 6 per cent for the western corridor.

In the short term, this can be increased and expanded to more destinations in greater Asia, the Far East and Southeast Asian countries that do not require pre-clearance or cold treatment measures.

This will be one to watch to see if the additional volume has any price effect on the UK market.

### Melons

This moves the other way around; we will be moving from southern hemisphere Brazil and Costa Rica to Spain. Almeria starts first and then moves over to Murcia. Almeria can have limited volumes so there will be some supply from Brazil for a few weeks.

### Lemons

Primaflori lemons are coming to an end, general quality is still good. We will be moving over to the Spanish Verna variety, which is never as aesthetically pleasing. Southern Hemisphere will look to start mid to end of May.

### Stone fruit

The salad lines are moving away from Spain but We will see new arrivals of cherry, peach, nectarine and Apricots. Availability is limited for the first few weeks, so if you can delay until the end of the month it may be better commercially.



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### **Banana**

- weather conditions are reasonable for banana production.
- Flowering (future production) is a little higher compared to 2023 at this moment.
- Weight of fruit is lower compared to 2023 which means more finger/box which means more probability of cosmetic scaring due to packaging.

### **Salad**

End of April we will see the end of a lot of our Spanish salad lines and we will move over to the Dutch and UK supply.

### **Peppers**

The Spanish peppers are coming to an earlier end than expected due to the warmer weather. Quality is also having an effect and a good portion is only making class 2. This is pushing prices up until the Dutch season starts in May.

### **Onion**

The Spanish season is just finishing, Dutch and English are in good supply but a little smaller in size. The Chilean season has arrived but prices are much, much higher than the UK and Dutch. Prices will continue to rise until the new season starts from Spain.

Spanish new season does start in end of April with limited volume but typically the skin is not set and the shelf life is very limited. So if it has to be extra large onion, Chilean is the way to go at big money or the UK is a good alternative for a month or two.

### **Tomatoes**

Like the peppers Spanish fruit is reducing in volume as its reaching the end of the season. There are small volumes of Dutch tomatoes starting which will increase over the next few weeks.

### **Asparagus**

The UK season will be in full supply, and we should see prices reaching more sensible levels.

### **Iceberg Lettuce, Little Gem, and Cos Lettuce**

Spain will be coming to an end and we will hopefully be switching over to the UK Season mid May. Quality remains good.

### **Lollo rosso, oakleaf and lollo Biondi**

Will be starting beginning of May with our local supplier at woodlands Farm.

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### Eggs

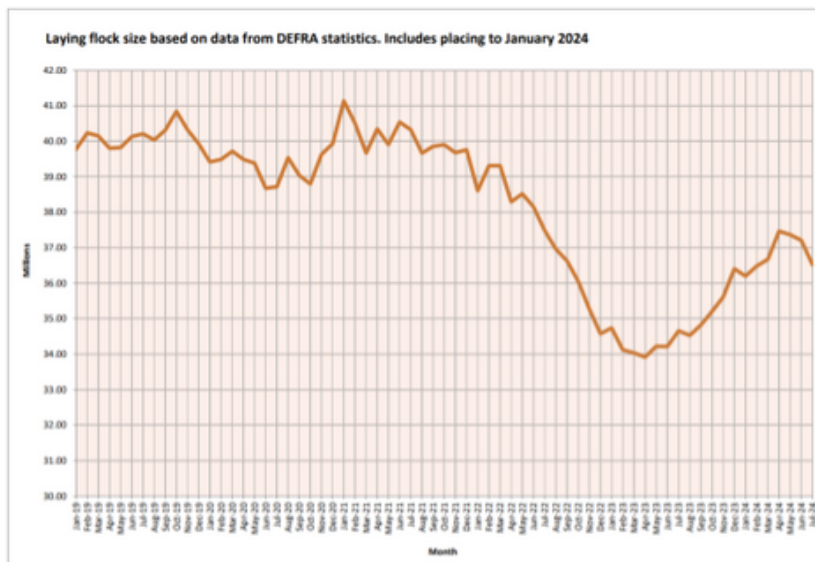
I wanted to give a little update on eggs and why the high prices have remained.

Below you can see that only once in 12 months has approval been given for planning to house only 32,000 birds in England, Wales and Scotland. The second graph shows the national flock in millions. The national flock was sitting between 40-41 million and it is currently sitting at just over 36 million. We are approximately 5 million birds down which is keeping costs up. I have been speaking with one egg supplier and they have been 6 months trying to get planning to expand their flock and are still working on it. There is that much legal red tape and approvals that needs to be checked off before planning is granted. The evidence shows below. The UK still allows European egg into the country without the same accreditations that UK producers face, so one to watch if you are offered a cheaper egg.

## REGIONAL PLANNING DATA FREE RANGE AND ORGANIC APPROVALS

\* Number of Birds (approval only)

ENGLAND		SCOTLAND		WALES		N IRELAND	
Month	Birds	Month	Birds	Month	Birds	Month	Birds
Feb 2023	-	Feb 2023	-	Feb 2023	-	Feb 2023	48,000
Mar 2023	-	Mar 2023	-	Mar 2023	-	Mar 2023	-
Apr 2023	-	Apr 2023	-	Apr 2023	-	Apr 2023	-
May 2023	-	May 2023	-	May 2023	-	May 2023	-
Jun 2022	32,000	Jun 2022	-	Jun 2022	-	Jun 2022	-
Jul 2023	-	Jul 2023	-	Jul 2023	-	Jul 2023	-
Aug 2023	-	Aug 2023	-	Aug 2023	-	Aug 2023	8,000
Sep 2023	-	Sep 2023	-	Sep 2023	-	Sep 2023	-
Oct 2023	-	Oct 2023	-	Oct 2023	-	Oct 2023	-
Nov 2023	-	Nov 2023	-	Nov 2023	-	Nov 2023	48,000
Dec 2023	-	Dec 2023	-	Dec 2023	-	Dec 2023	-
Jan 2024	-	Jan 2024	-	Jan 2024	-	Jan 2024	32,000
Feb 2024	-	Feb 2024	-	Feb 2024	-	Feb 2024	-





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**Buyers Choice - The UK Strawberry – Pics below from our local Staffordshire growers**



### Facts

1. They contain serious amounts of Vitamin C - Although we might think of them as a 'sweet treat', did you know that just five strawberries have more Vitamin C than an entire orange?
2. There are more than 30 varieties grown in the UK and just like apples they all have their own taste, shape and even colour to differentiate themselves. In blind tastings it's Jubilee strawberries that are considered the sweetest and the tastiest – the queen of the crop.
3. They're ex-seed-ingly good - The average berry has 200 seeds and they are all on the outside of the fruit. It's the only fruit that wears the seeds on the outside. Technically, because of these outer seeds, they're not really a 'berry' and should have their own class altogether.
4. They have health benefits - Strawberries' bright colour comes from the large amounts of anthocyanidin (like the blood orange) which recent studies have shown have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties - they're thought to protect against cancer and heart disease.
5. Not all strawberries have to be red. Most the strawberries in the UK are red, but you can also get them in yellow (alpine) and even white. The white ones are called pineberries and taste more like pineapple than strawberry

### Pineberry



### Yellow Alpine



### White Peach Strawberry

