



FRESHVIEW
Foods Ltd

Crop report - October

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

Potato

Despite the cold, late spring and consequently the slow emergence of the 2024 crop, it has been a great year for potatoes so far. Rainfall amounts have been moderate at the right times."

To date early planted main crops have been yielding average or slightly above average tonnes per acre.

Grower costs do however continue to increase. It has also been a tricky blight year. The potential of the disease to impact on crops has been consistently high.

The original cost of the seed at the start of planting was up due to the heavy rainfalls from the previous season. It's looking like it's not going to be as short as previous years, but costs are higher.

Onion

UK Main Crop – The UK and Holland drilling / planting of main crop drilled was split in half, the first half went in in above average conditions, great start... then the rains came, which pushed us back some weeks and were simply unable to get on the field(s), so the latter half drilling was somewhat challenging and not drilled in even close to ideal conditions, but the onion needed to get in the ground and start germinating. The soil was cold and wet which pushed everything back even further, this included the earlier drilled too.

All the way through the season it was difficult to catch up, onions, like all roots need warm soil, sunlight and dry conditions. What growers did get was almost the opposite for the season, it's not been a great Summer!

Due to the above, the UK is 50%-60% of the way through harvesting, and once again as none of us have enjoyed the rains that we've been 'blessed' with this week. Onions need dry conditions to harvest...

Vegetables

Brussel Sprouts are now available. There are plenty of recipes to cook them off with. Picture below is with crispy bacon.



Cut the bacon up into small pieces. In a skillet, fry until crispy. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel, making sure to leave the remaining grease in the pan. Add the halved Brussels sprouts and stir to coat them.

Cover the pan with a lid, reduce the heat, and cook for about 5 minutes. Return the bacon to the pan. Cook, uncovered, until the sprouts are golden brown and tender. Season with salt & pepper if desired and serve right away.

Cauliflower

Crops are on time and October is looking for a good month in terms of volume and supply. There are a few UK growers not looking to into November so Supply could be a little lower than last year. Spanish supply is set to start for this November period as normal.

Broccoli

UK production continues to decrease and even more so week on week now as the temperatures begin to drop. Spanish product is still a few weeks away. Prices are steadily rising in the meantime, quality remains excellent.

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Mixed Squash

Now available upon request.

They are a real delight of Autumn, and this offers a bounty of colours and shapes. Ornamental to look at and great to eat in hearty autumnal stews, this mix offers a great opportunity to sample several different varieties of squash.



Tenderstem broccoli

The UK availability will start to dip as the temperatures cool, prices remaining steady.

Leeks

Prices are stable and in good supply. Quality is very good.

Carrots

Have dropped to sensible levels and is in doo supply.

Rainbow chantenay carrot

Available and run a similar time to the Piccolo parsnips. They come in a variety of colours with a crisp sweet taste.

Piccolo parsnips

Small, sweet and tender Piccolo (Baby) Parsnips. So convenient no need to peel, top if you like and cook whole. They will run from September to March.



Parsnips

Now reached a level where there is good supply and prices have reached more sensible levels from the high prices that have been not moving for the last two months.

Red and white cabbage

Crops are looking healthy, our Lancashire grower is looking to start cold storing over the next 4 weeks ready for the winter.

Rainbow chard/ red/ green/ black kale (cavalo nero)

Quality and supply remains good.

Fruit

Strawberries

A switch to glass house production early to mid-October as UK outdoor declines in quality/volume will be likely. Pricing will increase as is usual due to the lower overall volumes available and higher cost of production in heated glass. We can also expect the Dutch strawberry to make an appearance, once the UK outdoor strawberry has finished.

Raspberries

Although UK fruit continues, production levels are declining as the UK season nears an end, with Portuguese, Spanish and Moroccan entering supply. Currently last year's issues with excess heat in Morocco have been avoided with production looking broadly on track.

Blueberries

The market will be very tight with both Peruvian and Argentinean volumes down over 50% from last year, itself a tight market. While UK fruit will be available at the start of the month alongside imported South African and Peruvian, pricing is expected to show steep upward pressure given the low availability, and with a reliance on more expensive airfreight until cheaper sea freight arrivals start to enter the mix.

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Blackberries

A switch to imported fruit will occur in October with Dutch/Belgian/Mexican fruit commencing as UK nears an end. Pricing again is expected to be under pressure on lower supply levels versus the UK season.

Apples



The UK Cox apple is now available grown by Jeff Byrd on Tythe Barn Farm. Cox's Orange Pippin apples are a small to medium-sized varietal, averaging 5 to 6 centimetres in diameter, and have a somewhat uniform, oblate to round shape.

The apple's skin is thin, matte, and generally smooth with the occasional patches of sandy-textured russet. The golden yellow base hue is often covered in faint lenticels and orange-red blush striping, and as the fruit ripens, the colours will become more vibrant with maturity. Underneath the surface, the flesh is ivory to white and is firm and fine-grained with a crisp, snappy consistency. The flesh also encases a small central core filled with tiny black-brown seeds. Some apple enthusiasts note that when the fruits are ripe, the seeds can sometimes be heard rattling around in the core when the apple is shaken.

Cox's Orange Pippin apples are known for their aromatic flesh. The apples contain a balanced, sweet-tart flavour and showcase a complex blend of honeyed, spice-filled, and fruity nuances often said to evoke notes of cherries, melons, mangoes, oranges, and pears.

Citrus



Mandarin/Easy peeler

The Satsuma mandarin season has already started in the Valencian Community, in Spain, with the first Iwasaki, Okitsu and Owari mandarins, which have arrived 15 days earlier than last year. The fruit has a good taste, although sizes are smaller in general as a result of an overly dry spring and summer. Due to the prolonged drought in recent years, which has also resulted in a rather dry spring and summer, sizes are generally smaller than at the beginning of last season, especially for the Okitsu variety, of the Satsuma family, but also for the early clementines that will start to be harvested in mid-September and for the Navelina oranges.

Lemons

The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) announced another revision to its export estimates, forecasting a 4% decline in lemon shipments. This decrease adds to the 19% drop in orange exports announced last week.

The decline in production is mainly attributed to strong winds and flooding in some major producing areas. Additionally, drier weather has caused smaller fruit sizes, and good local juicing prices have also been cited as contributing factors.

The CGA's Lemon Focus Group said that, while some regions have finished packing, feedback from the remaining harvesting areas is making for "a very unusual season".

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Initial projections put lemon volumes at 37.9 million 15kg cartons. This week's adjustment brings the total estimate for 2024 exports of lemons to 33.9 million cartons. Last year, Southern Africa exported 35.6 million cartons.

Below pictures showing poor quality end of season South African lemon which have not be exported.



We will be looking to make an earlier switch over to Spanish than expected but the prices have risen sharply for this 4 week gap.

Oranges

South African Navel orange exports are projected to reach 21 million cartons in 2024, according to the CGA's Orange Focus Group's latest downward adjustment. If realized, this would represent a major drop of 19% in shipments. Extreme weather events mentioned earlier in key producing areas were the main drivers of the decline

Melons

We are on Brazilian fruit now and the quality and availability is good.

Salads

Round Tomatoes

There is still limited supply from Holland and demand has increased which is nudging prices up further.

Cucumber

Holland continues with low yield and the prices have remained high, it's still unsure if this will recover. A few areas of Spain have started but not enough to bring supply levels to drop the prices.

Lollo rosso, Oakleaf and Lollo Biondi

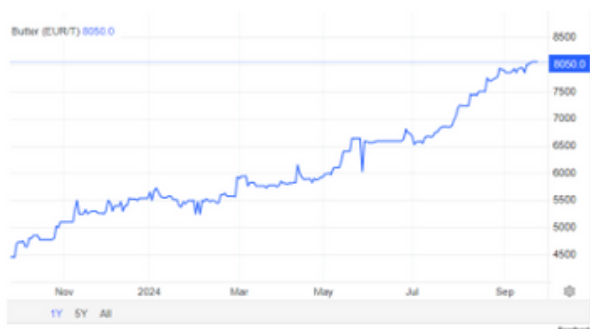
This is still in good supply, quality remains excellent.

Dairy

Milk/Butter/Cream

Milk and Cream prices continue to rise - Butter increased 2,512 EUR/T or 45.36% since the beginning of 2024, according to trading on a contract for difference (CFD) that tracks the benchmark market for this commodity. Historically, Butter reached an all time high of 8050.00 in September of 2024

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Dairy farmers are set to benefit from increased farmgate prices for milk in September, driven by a surge in wholesale demand for butter, cream, and cheese. The rising prices, which have climbed by more than 6p per litre since the beginning of 2024, reflect processors' eagerness to secure milk volumes as autumn approaches. There are further increases in farm gate prices for October.

GB milk deliveries are estimated to have totalled 991 million litres in August 2024 with an average of 32.0 million litres per day. This would mean a decline of 0.5% year on year. Declines in milk supplies have slowed since the early part of the year but are still running behind forecast with July and August together running 1.0%, or 20 million litres, behind forecast.

The latest BCMS figures record the GB milking herd at 1.61 million head, as of the 1 July 2024. This is down 0.3% on the previous year, driven by decreases across all age categories apart from 2-4 years. The average age of a cow in the GB milking herd now stands at 4.55 years, very slightly younger than last year's figure.

The latest data continues to illustrate the long-term trend of declining numbers of older cows in the GB dairy herd, with a 8,000 head year on year decline

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Buyers Choice - Toffee and chocolate apples

We will start supplying again towards the end of October as we will be nearing Bonfire night.

W. Kolb, a veteran Newark candy-maker, produced his first batch of candied apples in 1908. While experimenting in his candy shop with red cinnamon candy for the Christmas trade, he dipped some apples into the mixture and put them in the windows for display. He sold the whole first batch for 5 cents each and later sold thousands yearly. Soon candied apples were being sold along the Jersey Shore, at the circus and in candy shops across the country, according to the Newark News in 1948

The most common "candy" is a hard coating of cooled sugar syrup, tinted red. The sugar syrup is heated to the "hard crack" stage before coating the apple to make a hard coating when the syrup cools.

The French call candy apples *pommes d'amour* (apples of love). They are a common treat found at many festivals. toffee apples are known as caramel apples in the U.S and Canada

The most common varieties of apple used to create these treats are Granny Smith which work best for two reasons. First, the tart flavour is a better contrast to the sweet sugar coating. Second, crisp apples hold up better under the heat and weight of the sugar coating.

They could be healthier than you thought.

An average home-made Toffee apple generally ranges from 215 to 286 calories and contains 0 to 3 grams of fat. Of course, these figures are entirely dependent on what you use to make the coating.

