



CROP REPORT

January 2026



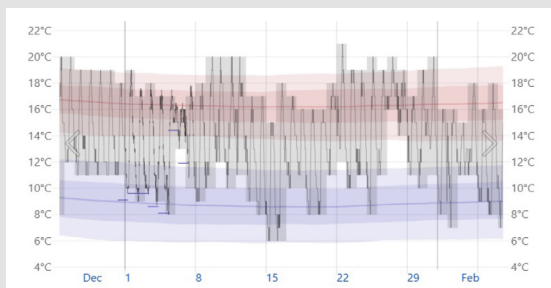


Meet Simon – Our Procurement Expert

Simon leads procurement, overseeing fresh, dairy, and dry goods. With 20 years' experience, he excels in trading, importing, and supplier relations. His industry knowledge is second to none, here's his January crop report...

COLD WEATHER IMPACTS CROPS

This year, the agricultural season in Almería started under colder winter conditions earlier than usual.



Snow has covered the mountains behind Almería's greenhouses since November, earlier than the usual December or January snowfall. The colder conditions have improved pest control, particularly for peppers affected by Thrips parvispinus and whitefly, but have slightly reduced overall harvest volumes. This has helped growers maintain stronger quality levels.

In Murcia, cooler weather has also impacted open-field crops, with marginally lower volumes seen in broccoli and some lettuce varieties. Temperatures across Spain are continuing to fall, reaching 5–6°C, and typically drop further at night in January. This is expected to slow growth, reduce availability and potentially push prices higher, with similar but more severe effects likely in the UK, particularly for brassicas.

POTATOES

The UK usage of fresh potato is falling while fry imports is rising, namely chips.

There is a change of habits with the younger generation. Fresh potatoes face increasing competition for both physical and digital retail space as shoppers look for meal solutions, and that space allocated to fresh potatoes is shrinking. There is innovation and health messaging, noting opportunities for products designed for air fryers. Some fruit and vegetable sectors highlight nutritional attributes and added that a medium baked potato contains twice as much potassium as a medium-sized banana.

The European Harvest alongside the UK was very good this year.

In Belgium the industry is struggling with large stocks of fries and low sales, while at the same time, there is a vast area of high yields available that were not needed this year. *"This makes the situation complex for all involved. Growers, traders, and processors. So the problem is no longer just with the industry, but with the entire sector."*



Vegetables

AUBERGINES

The cooler Spanish nights have already started to reduce the volume available and prices have risen. The quality available remains excellent.



ONIONS

Spanish onions have been increasing in cost over December due to Spanish transport costs rising. This should hopefully reduce in January.

UK onions remain steadily priced and of good quality.

Vegetables



CAULIFLOWER

Is in good supply currently with Spain, France and the UK being available.

It's one to watch at this time of the year, a lot of rain or hard frosts and long stints of cold temperatures can affect this quite quickly.

BROCCOLI

Murcia which is a big growing area for Broccoli has had temperatures as low as 3° degrees which has really slowed production.

Prices have doubled as a result. As a plus point the cooler weather does benefit the quality of the crop.



TENDERSTEM BROCCOLI

Tenderstem broccoli remains readily available, Spanish rains reduced some supply in December.

We have the use of Kenyan air freight to maintain good supply which is a little more expensive, but quality remains excellent.

BRUSSEL SPROUTS AND TOPS

We will continue to stock this line, quality remains good.



RED CABBAGE/ WHITE CABBAGE

Is all in cold store for the winter and spring. The stores are set to just above freezing to maintain quality.

LEEKs

No change here, great quality, consistent supply and no movement on price.



CARROTS & PARSNIPS

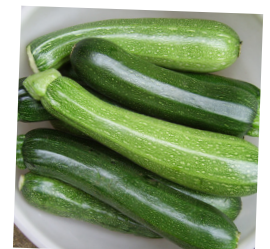
UK crops are in good supply, quality and prices remain stable.

Parsnips turn sweeter after a frost because their natural starches convert into sugars.



COURGETTE

Prices have crept as the crop yield has dropped a little. Quality remains excellent and no supply issues.



KALE

Cavalo Nero, red and green kale all consistent great quality and availability. Prices also remain stable.

Fruit



UK APPLES

A few of the early varieties will be dropping off now, we will still have Russets, Cox and Bramley available as they move into cold store.

BLOOD ORANGE

Italian and Spanish fruit will now be available.



The Sanguinelli blood orange will start this month known for their vibrant crimson flesh and skin. They are excellent for marmalades, vinaigrettes and cocktails like Sangria. Blood oranges can be added to salads for colour and flavour, jams, jellies, preserves. They can be used as glazes for meats, seafood and vegetables. They can be used in baking recipes, like cookies, cakes and muffins for their colour and flavour.



SEVILLE ORANGES

These oranges will be available now, a bitter orange for sauces/ sorbets.

These mix well with aged spirits and elevate desserts especially chocolate or almond based dishes. Great for infusing syrups and bitters to add depth and character to drinks.

STONE FRUIT

South African stone fruit will come to an end this month, peach nectarine and apricots.

Plums will continue until the Spanish starts in April. Chilean will start next, but the fruit is for cooking only, the fruit does not ripen the same as the Spanish, Italian or South African.



EASY PEELERS

January will see the start of the Moroccan Nadorcotts which will run alongside and then replace the

Spanish clementines which have been shorter in supply this year.

Fruit

LEMONS

The quality has improved since the start of the season, but remains limited and considerably more expensive than the previous season.



FORCED RHUBARB

Yorkshire and Dutch is available. Prices are very expensive. Please call to check first.

STRAWBERRIES

Origins will be a mixture of Egypt, Morocco and Spain which will increase volume throughout January, availability should be ok.



BLACKBERRIES

We will be buying from Mexico all through January, the availability is expected to be good.

BLUEBERRIES

We will be starting with Peruvian and then Chilean will start and increase in volume throughout the month.

Possibility some early Morocco fruit available but likely to be expensive. Availability should be ok with several options available.



RASPBERRIES

Will continue to be from Spain and Morocco. Availability should be ok.

RED CURRANTS

Available from Holland, prices are expected to be high due to less availability.



Salads

CUCUMBERS



There has been an overlapping between pulling out the early plantings and production from the beginning of September.

New crops have taken a lot longer than expected, resulting in very limited availability. Prices have been high all December, looking to hopefully come down again in January.

TOMATOES

The quality coming through remains very good, however the volume produced has started to ease back due to the cooler weather. Prices have been steadily rising as a result.



LOLLO ROSSO/ OAKLEAF/LOLLO BIONDI

Good supply and great quality coming from Spain and France. Quality will improve as the temperatures drop, volume will drop a little. Prices remain steady.



LITTLE GEM AND COS LETTUCE

The cooler weather in Spain will help the lettuces

quality but at the same time the heads are not growing as fast. The crops are being held back a little longer until they reach the correct size. Prices have started to rise as a result.



PEPPERS

Peppers continue to be limited in availability, quality also remains mixed in the early stages of the season. The Thrips virus is causing many hectares of loss and affecting the appearance on the surface of the pepper.



BUYERS CHOICE - SPROUTS ON THE STALK

DID YOU KNOW!!!

One stalk can hold up to 60 sprouts!



Sprouts kept on the stalk retain moisture, flavour and sweetness for longer.

Staying attached to the stalk protects them from yellowing and drying out.

They are rich in Vitamins and minerals – Vitamin C, Vitamin K, folate, potassium which supports the immune system, blood clotting, bone health and digestion. Sprouts can degrade once picked from the stalk, so sprouts on the stalk have a higher concentration of vitamins and minerals.

The Science bit...

Respiration continues even after harvest. Vegetables, including Brussels sprouts, continue to respire, using up sugars and releasing carbon dioxide and water. This process contributes to wilting, softening, and loss of flavour and nutrients. Being attached to the stalk allows for a continued, albeit diminishing, supply of water and nutrients, slowing down the respiration rate.



COOKING IDEAS



Roasts on the stalk – Brush with oil, garlic and thyme, roast whole for a great table centre piece.

Festive Sprout Caesar – shred raw sprouts for a crunch winter salad with Parmesan and croutons.

BRUSSELS ARE ONE OF THE OLDEST CULTIVATED VEGETABLES IN EUROPE, DATING BACK TO THE 1200s!



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