

CROP REPORT

June 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.

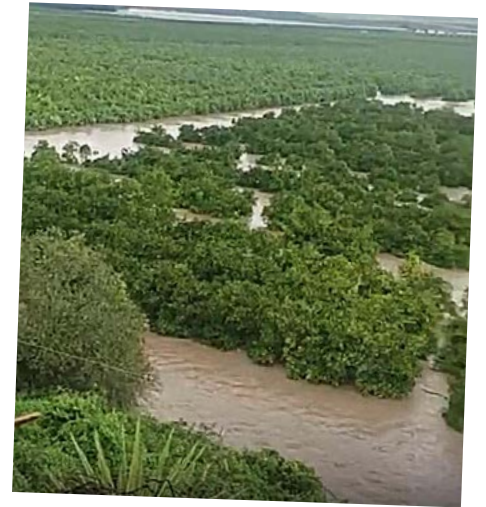


June is when the British growing season really opens up. Outdoor crops are now flowing across most home-grown lines, with soft fruit, salads and the first English cherries adding plenty of menu options. Spring on the Continent was anything but kind, but conditions have settled enough for Iberian and Dutch supply to find its rhythm again.

Two stories dominate this month. First, the South African weather disaster of early May is reshaping the citrus, apple and grape outlook for the rest of the summer. Second, UK potato markets remain under heavy downward pressure from last season's glut. Dairy commodities - particularly butter and cream - are trending lower, while cheese stocks are tight.

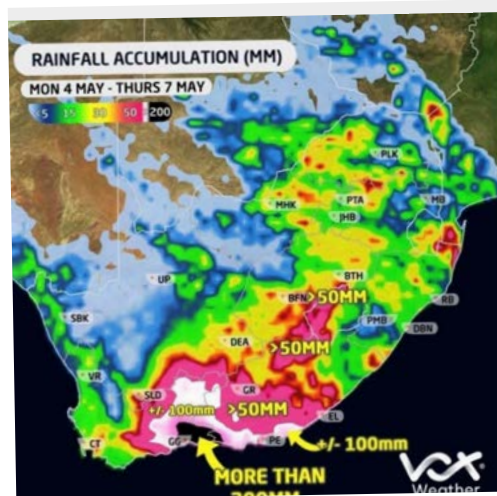
SOUTH AFRICAN FLOODS RESHAPE THE CITRUS AND FRUIT PICTURE

South Africa had been gearing up for a record year, with the industry targeting roughly 215 million cartons of citrus exports.



That ambition has taken a serious knock. Between Monday 4 and Thursday 7 May a slow-moving cut-off low parked itself over the southern half of the country, dropping more than 300mm of rain in the worst-hit areas. Wide swathes of the Cape recorded over 100mm, with localised pockets above 200mm. A national state of disaster followed.

The Eastern Cape's Gamtoos Valley — the country's premier soft-citrus belt around Patensie and Hankey — was the worst affected for fruit. The Kouga Dam jumped from less than a third full to overflowing inside 24 hours and was discharging 2.2 million litres per second over the spillway at its peak. Citrus orchards were inundated for extended periods just as the first mandarins were being picked and packed. The Citrus Growers' Association's initial read is that roughly one-tenth of the local crop has been lost. A number of individual growers have reported very substantial single-farm damage.



Over in the Western Cape the damage profile is different — high winds and heavy rain through apple orchards and vineyards, plus widespread road and infrastructure damage. Some operators are bracing for the loss of half of their late-season volumes; a proper assessment will take weeks. Given South Africa is now the world's biggest citrus exporter, and Europe was just switching across to that fruit for summer, expect supply to be tighter and

pricing firmer on SA oranges, easy peelers, lemons and grapefruit through June and well into July. The soft-citrus category is in the eye of the storm, with knock-on effects on apples and grapes building through the second half of the season.

Vegetables



POTATOES

UK markets remain weighed down by 2025's surplus.

Free-buy values on Maris Piper have moved well below where they sat a year ago — broadly half the open-market level seen last spring — and contract pricing for the new season has tracked the slide. The pressure is feeding back into planting intentions: industry analysis points to a planted area down around 5–10% on the year, which would bring the UK below 100,000 hectares and put production under 5 million tonnes. Doubled fertiliser bills, still-elevated diesel, and the ongoing softening effect of weight-loss medications on chip and crisp consumption are all weighing on growers' enthusiasm. The Northern European picture mirrors ours.

On the new crop, June is squarely Jersey Royal territory. The 2026 campaign got going from an exceptionally wet planting window — much of the indoor cropping had to be planted by hand — but the harvest is now in full flow, with peak shipping reaching the four-figure tonne days that characterise this time of year. Cornwall, Pembrokeshire and Suffolk earlies are all picking nicely; Lincolnshire whites will start to land towards the back end of the month. Jersey's run will tail off through July.

Old-crop stocks are running thin and the variability has crept up — we are steering customers across to new crop wherever sizing and fry colour matter. Markies and Agria remain the best-behaved chipping options to extend the storage season. Encouragingly, retail volumes on fresh potatoes are picking up as shoppers respond to lower shelf prices.

ASPARAGUS

We are into the closing stretch of the English season — typically wrapped up around midsummer's day. Quality has held up well, but volumes will fall away through June and prices will firm as supply tightens. From July we move back to Peruvian air-freight cover.



AUBERGINES

Dutch and Belgian glasshouse production is consistent, with medium calibres dominant and quality very good.

A trickle of UK glass is around too. Pricing has stabilised at workable levels after the Spanish springtime volatility.

BROCCOLI

UK supply is hitting full stride.

Lincolnshire and Lancashire crops are both cutting well and Scottish crops join from mid-month. The shortage and price spikes of the spring are behind us - heads are good, pricing is back on track.



CAULIFLOWER

British heads are clean and well-shaped this month. The early warmth has set the

crops up nicely and we are expecting steady, competitive supply right through June.

TENDERSTEM BROCCOLI

British production has come on stream in proper volume, taking over from the Kenyan and Spanish cover we leant on through the brassica gap. Pricing has eased markedly.



Vegetables

SPRING CABBAGE

Our Lancashire grower's crop continues to look excellent. This is a long-running line that will see us through to the end of the year.



HISPI

Outdoor UK Hispi is well established with summer pricing in place.

Rainfall is the variable to keep an eye on - eastern growers were already supplementing with irrigation through the spring, and a dry June could bring some tension back into the market.

RED AND WHITE CABBAGE

Cold-stored UK is doing the heavy lifting and quality is holding well.

New-season crops are pencilled in from mid-July, with an outside chance of a slightly earlier start if the warm weather continues. Small (1kg) red heads are likely to stay scarce — the European crop is skewing oversize.



SAVOY

UK new-season is up and running. The Portuguese flooding that wiped out the majority of their winter crop is still echoing through the wider European market, but UK supply will keep us covered.



LEEKS

British is done and we're now leaning on French and Spanish cover, with prices reflecting that as expected. UK new-season is due to start late June into early July.

CARROTS

Imported French, Spanish and Israeli fruit is bridging the gap.

The Suffolk new-season pick is targeting mid-June and that will start to unwind the price pressure. The shortfall in last year's UK crop has kept us reliant on imports for longer than usual.



PARSNIPS

Spanish parsnip is plugging the gap until UK new-season comes through in early July. June pricing will stay firm.

COURGETTE

Spanish supply remains plentiful and pricing competitive. UK outdoor crops are picking up speed with the warmer conditions and will add volume to the mix as the month progresses.



Vegetables



ONIONS

UK old-crop is finished. We're using a mix of Spanish and Dutch, with the new Spanish spring-

planted crop gaining shelf life and skin set each week.

KALE

Plentiful and good. No issues to flag.



BEANS AND PEAS

Italian peas are on with British peas, broad beans and runner beans coming in through June. A good two-

month window of pod-in-pod options for summer menus.

GLOBE ARTICHOKE

Spanish artichokes continue with very good quality.



Fruit

LEMONS

This month brings the changeover from late Spanish to Southern Hemisphere lemon.



In a typical year that's a routine switch; in 2026 it lands in a thin, jittery market. Three things are converging.

First, the Spanish Verna campaign is finishing about three months of carrying European demand on a crop forecast roughly a quarter to a third smaller than last year's record. Sizing has run heavier than usual, meaning fewer small calibres for chefs and a firm price floor at origin. With Spain having supplied nine in ten European

lemons this season, the gap left behind is meaningful.

Second, South Africa and Argentina now have to fill that gap. Argentinian fruit is arriving cleanly and in steady volume, but Argentina alone can't replace SA. The Eastern Cape floods have hit citrus packing operations and orchard access exactly when the harvest curve should be ramping up. Turkey, which would normally help underpin the market, is still working through the after-effects of the spring 2025 frosts and isn't a meaningful factor.

Third, freight. Iran-related disruption around the Strait of Hormuz continues to push fuel surcharges higher and lengthen routing decisions for shipping lines. South African boxes don't transit Hormuz, but the wider

container and bunker-fuel market does, and that feeds into landed cost.

Practical guidance for the next eight weeks:

- SA opening prices, which are above 2025 levels, have been rising in May and look set to stay firm through July.
- Larger Spanish fruit dominates what's left of the season.
- Argentinian fruit is the steady performer right now on volume and quality.
- Vessel timings are less predictable than usual. So we are having to build extra lead time into orders.
- Eating quality of arriving fruit is fine across origins; this is a supply story, not a quality one.

Fruit

STRAWBERRIES

British strawberries are at their best.

The early-spring warmth pulled the season forward and pulled volume up with it — retailer intake has more than doubled since the start of April, and across the trade growers are reporting a yield uplift around the 30% mark. Quality is exceptional. We are essentially on UK for the rest of the summer.



RASPBERRIES

UK fruit is now flowing in proper volume, supplemented by tail-end Iberian supply early in the month.

Fruit set has been strong off the back of the spring conditions and quality is impressive.

BLUEBERRIES

Spanish has tailed off. UK joins this month, with Portuguese and Eastern European fruit running alongside to keep volumes consistent through June.



BLACKBERRIES

British eating-variety fruit is building through the month.

Belgian and Dutch open-punnet fruit continues as a contingency. The Mexican season has wound up.

CHERRIES

Spanish cherries are in good supply, with bench prices at Mercabarna trending around mid-single-figure euros per kilo and premium fruit fetching considerably more.

The UK season starts from mid-June — early signs point to a strong crop with good sizing after the warm spring. Opening prices will be punchy but should come back through the month.



STONE FRUIT

Spanish peach, nectarine, apricot and platerina (the flat nectarine that retailers can't get enough of) are all in full flow.

Catalonia is forecasting nectarine volumes roughly in line with last year and a modest lift in peaches. The mix of cool, damp spring weather and a high cold-hour count produced excellent flowering, so flavour and sizing should be very good. Pricing should ease steadily as availability builds.



MELONS

We're staying on Brazilian fruit for the first half of June for consistency, then transitioning to Spanish Murcia from the third week.

Murcia is where melons traditionally hit their stride — better sugars, better consistency, worth waiting for. Almeria continues but at low volumes and high pricing, so it's not where we'll be focused.

Fruit



WATERMELON

Spanish Murcia and Alicante watermelons are in good supply with strong eating quality.



GRAPEFRUIT

SA fruit dominates the supply mix and the flood disruption adds uncertainty. Pricing will be firmer than typical.



ORANGES

Southern Hemisphere season is now fully in play.

South African navels have been the workhorse, but flood damage in the Eastern Cape has knocked back volumes early in the campaign and we're expecting tighter availability and firmer pricing through June and July. Argentinian and Egyptian fruit will help cover where needed. Quality of arriving fruit is good.



APPLES

Now solidly on Southern Hemisphere cover.

Western Cape orchard damage from the recent storms could remove a meaningful slice of late-season SA volumes, which will support firmer pricing into the latter half of summer. Chilean and New Zealand fruit will pick up some of the slack. UK and French new-season comes back into the mix from August.

EASY PEELERS

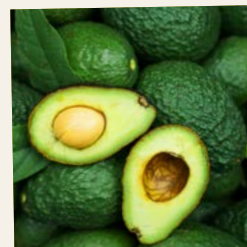
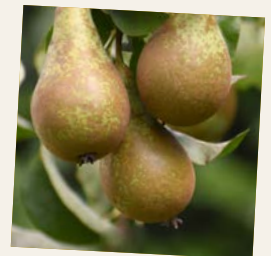
Southern Hemisphere only — Peru and South Africa.



The Eastern Cape floods landed exactly at the start of the SA soft-citrus pick, making mandarins the most exposed citrus category for the summer. Peruvian supply will shoulder more of the load. Skin colour can run paler than the Moroccan we've left behind, but eating quality is excellent.

PEARS

Argentinian and South African pears are running well, with no material impact yet from the Cape weather. Quality is good.



AVOCADOS

Peruvian supply is in good shape and ramping up. Bias remains towards larger fruit, so smaller sizing is the pinch point on price. Dry matter is climbing nicely and ripening behaviour is well-behaved.

LIMES

Brazilian limes are steady on supply and reasonable on quality. Nothing significant to flag.



Fruit

MANGO

Dominican Republic continues with good fruit. The Kent variety gives way over the next few weeks to Keitt from Brazil and Egypt.



GRAPES

South African production is winding down and the Western Cape weather adds uncertainty around the tail end of the season.

The first early-season Spanish, Italian and Egyptian fruit is expected late June into July. A short, tighter, pricier transition window is likely.



PINEAPPLES

Costa Rican supply is consistent on both volume and eating quality. No flags.

RHUBARB

British outdoor rhubarb continues in good shape through June.

Forced is finished for the year.



Salads



ICEBERG, LITTLE GEM AND COS

Wholly on British supply now. The warm spring set the crops up beautifully and pricing is competitive. Quality is across-the-board good.

MIXED LEAF AND BABY LEAF

Consistent UK and Italian supply across rocket, spinach, chard and the speciality leaves. Quality is very good.



LOLLO ROSSO, OAKLEAF AND LOLLO BIONDI

Our Cheshire grower at Woodlands has moved outdoor production into full flow. UK cover right through to early autumn.



SPINACH

British spinach is in its early-season prime, with Italian on standby for any peak-demand top-up.

Salads

TOMATOES

Dutch and Belgian glasshouse crops are producing strongly, with consistent quality and the mid-light pick favoured for shelf life.



A brief mid-month volume dip is possible as the plants rebalance, with smaller-calibre fruit (47/57mm) the most likely pinch point. UK heritage from Westlands in Evesham is showing exceptionally well and worth featuring.

PEPPERS

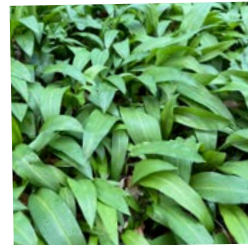
Spanish has wound up.

Dutch and Belgian crops are picking across all colours, with the usual strong Dutch consistency. Pricing has come back substantially from the spring peaks.



CUCUMBERS

Dutch volumes are building and pricing should soften through June after a firm spring. Quality is reliable.



WILD GARLIC

Season has now closed — the plants have flowered and gone over.

Eggs

UK SUPPLY REMAINS TIGHTER THAN PRE-2024 NORMS

Avian influenza is still a factor, although detection rates have come down through the first half of 2026 and production is recovering steadily.

The squeeze is most visible on larger size grades. Demand has stayed firm through the spring. Ordering early into busy trading weekends is sensible.



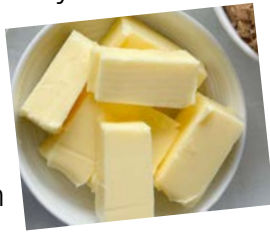
Dairy News



DAIRY PRICE PRESSURE CONTINUES THROUGH JUNE

The dairy commodity picture has softened materially since the spring rally.

Butter has given back all the ground it gained earlier in the year and is now trading at multi-year lows — the price direction has been firmly down for several weeks. Bulk cream has followed suit, with material falls within April and the monthly average coming in well below recent comparisons. Mild Cheddar has slipped modestly, although the move is less pronounced than in the fats market.



The May Global Dairy Trade events have reinforced

that picture: butter and Cheddar both lower again, with whole and skimmed milk powders trending up. The drivers are familiar — strong spring milk volumes here and on the Continent, softer European demand, and the Iran conflict knocking export sentiment and pulling value out of fats.

For caterers and buyers, the practical read is that butter and cream pricing should continue to ease through June if these conditions hold. Cheese has come off its highs but is more sticky, with mild Cheddar stocks reportedly tight after a strong 2025 trading year — so we'd expect any decline there to be modest. A renewed Iran flare-up or a hot dry spell affecting summer milk yields are the obvious watch points.

BBQ SEASON HAS ARRIVED!

Celebrate the BBQ season with mouth-watering products and sizzling inspiration!

NEW

CLICK HERE TO VIEW OUR 2026 BROCHURE!





BUYERS CHOICE - UK STRAWBERRIES



DID YOU KNOW!!!

Eight strawberries deliver more than a full day's vitamin C requirement







THERE'S NO PRODUCE LINE THAT CAPTURES THE START OF BRITISH SUMMER QUITE LIKE A STRAWBERRY.

The 2026 crop is exceptional — early warmth pulled flowering forward, growers are pointing to volumes 30% above last year, and the major retailers have more than doubled their intake since early April. Flavour and colour are spot-on.

The UK industry has reinvented itself over the past two decades. Tunnel-grown production from Kent, Herefordshire, Cheshire and parts of Scotland has stretched the season from a brief six-week burst into a six-month run from late April to October. Britain is now broadly self-sufficient on the nation's favourite summer fruit for the whole of that window.

DID YOU KNOW...

-  Annual British strawberry production now exceeds 130,000 tonnes - more than twice the figure from twenty years ago.
-  The Wimbledon Championships famously power through around 38 tonnes of strawberries each year — all British.
-  Botanically a strawberry isn't actually a berry; it's a member of the rose family, and the only fruit that wears its seeds on the outside.
-  A typical strawberry carries roughly 200 seeds.

CULINARY USES

- Sliced fresh with cream — pavlova, trifle, Eton Mess, and anything you'd serve at a midsummer table.
- Brilliant in savoury salads with goats' cheese, balsamic and cracked black pepper.
- Roasted briefly with sugar and balsamic to intensify the flavour for desserts.
- Make outstanding jams, coulis and compotes.
- Pair beautifully with rhubarb, basil, mint and cracked pepper for menu twists.





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