

CROP REPORT

November 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 November crop report.

WEATHER OUTLOOK



Very little change in the UK & Holland: expect a changeable mix of bright spells, cloud, and passing rain.

Late October rain in Spain damaged some crops, especially leafy salads. Morocco cools slightly, with plenty of sunshine broken by occasional cloud.

For new Spanish and Moroccan winter crops, these settled, bright conditions are near ideal - helping young plants establish and boosting volumes for salad and tomato categories.

WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH

November redraws the supply map as Dutch and UK glasshouses hand winter salads, tomatoes, and peppers to Spain and Morocco.

On the arrivals board: Egyptian strawberries, Spanish raspberries, Mexican blackberries, cranberries, Dutch redcurrants, forced rhubarb, Spanish avocados and broccoli, sprout tops, and prepared sprouts.

Bowing out: European peaches and nectarines (ahead of South African arrivals), plus UK broccoli, fancy lettuce, and spring onions.

Looking ahead: Italian blood oranges, Seville oranges, and Chilean cherries arrive in December.

EL NIÑO — THE LATEST FROM PERU

Last month we set out why this winter's El Niño matters for the UK.

It could be the most powerful since records began in 1950.

The numbers have moved since. Proarándanos, the Peruvian blueberry growers' association, has now trimmed its 2026/27 export forecast to around 366,000 tonnes, slightly below last season despite almost 15% more planted area. More telling is the shape of the season: shipments between weeks 39 and 46 are expected to run close to a third below the same period last year, and the usual mid-season peak has effectively flattened out.

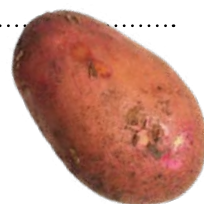


The good news is that Mexico is stepping in on raspberries and blackberries, with shipments building nicely into the winter. Asparagus, mangoes and ginger from the same Peruvian coastal belt remain the lines to watch, and we will keep you posted as the picture develops.

POTATOES

A small crop, and the market knows it.

The full scale of the British harvest is now clear, and it is not a comfortable read. Industry voices have described it as one of the smallest crops in decades, and the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit estimates heat and drought could have taken in the region of 440,000 tonnes off Great Britain's output compared with a normal year. GB Potatoes points to smaller tubers and ongoing quality pressure as the main headaches for growers. Potato prices are 30% higher than at this time last year.



Bakers and chippers feel it first

Small tubers are a nuisance for everyone, but they hurt most at the large end of the grade. Baking counts are scarce, and chipping varieties are delivering shorter lengths and more offcuts per tonne. Washed whites are in more reasonable shape on volume, though the mix is running smaller than packers would like. Wholesale values have increased, as you would expect from a crop of this size.

Storage is the season's real test

Much of this crop went into store warm and under stress, and that makes it more vulnerable over the coming months. Store managers are watching closely for breakdown and sprouting, and we expect some grading losses to emerge as the winter goes on rather than all at once. Across north-west Europe the picture is no better, so continental supply offers little relief.

For Christmas, roast potatoes will be fine, and large bakers will continue to be limited in volume.

Vegetables



BRUSSELS SPROUTS AND SPROUT TOPS

The cooler nights have done the sprout crop a lot of good, sweetening the buttons and firming them up nicely.

Sizing is building through the month. Sprout tops are available again on 48 hours' notice, and prepared sprouts - a real time-saver for busy kitchens - return towards the end of November as the Christmas party season gets going. Some growers did lose yield over the summer, so festive volumes are best booked early.

BROCCOLI

Supply is steady and holding at current levels for now, but British cutting is on its way down and is unlikely to recover much for the rest of the home season.



The inland growing area of Albacete in Spain is ready to take over, with the first heads already being cut. Expect a full switch to Spanish product during the month.

TENDERSTEM BROCCOLI



The British crop is slowing as temperatures drop, and Spanish and Portuguese supply is already filling in alongside it.

A hard, prolonged frost would bring the UK season to an abrupt end, so we are keeping both origins open to avoid any gaps.

CAULIFLOWER

British cutting has picked up and is in better shape than it was a few weeks ago, with Dutch and Belgian supply stable alongside it.

That is a welcome change after a difficult autumn. French cauliflower from Brittany is usually the next step and should join the mix from December. We will also be seeing some Spanish cauliflower, which started in October; the quality has been excellent.



LEEKS

Little to report, which is good news.

Dutch and Belgian volumes are steady and the British crop is gathering pace, while the imported Spanish season has now finished for the year. We expect values to hold where they are.

CELERY

British growers continue to supply consistent volumes and we see nothing to change in the coming weeks.

Quality is excellent: crisp, well-coloured sticks with good length.



CABBAGE

Volumes are stable and values are holding at similar levels.

Quality is good overall, although some varieties carry more marking than others after the extreme heat of the summer. Red and white cabbage will start moving into cold store for the winter, kept just above freezing to hold quality right through to spring.

Vegetables



SWEETHEART CABBAGE

British supply is not abundant, with just enough coming through to cover demand.

That balance is keeping values firm, and we expect them to stay around current levels.

JERUSALEM ARTICHOKES

British Jerusalem artichokes are coming into their own now.

Like parsnips, they benefit from a touch of frost, which deepens that nutty, slightly sweet flavour. They are a great alternative to the usual roots for soups, purées and roasting.



ONIONS

The story from last month carries on.

Bulb sizes are smaller and store quality needs careful management after the hot, dry growing season. Smaller grades will make up much of the supply, and some flexibility on size will help keep things moving.

COURGETTES

Dutch and British production is giving better availability, and new-season Spanish crops are ramping up quickly behind it.

With more fruit on the market, values are easing back to more competitive levels. Quality is very good across all origins.



AUBERGINES

Volumes from Holland and Belgium are building steadily, and Spain's new crops have started.

Spanish volume is modest for now but will climb week on week. Quality is excellent from every source, and values continue to soften, already close to half of what they were a few weeks ago.



CARROTS, PARSNIPS AND THE WINTER ROOTS

British carrots and parsnips are in reasonable supply, although the dry summer means roots are running shorter and smaller than usual.

Parsnips are at their best after the first proper frost, when the starch turns to sugar, so flavour should keep improving through the month. Swede and beetroot are steady.

Salads



CUCUMBERS

British and Dutch production is falling away fast as most crops reach the end of their life.

New Spanish crops are already cropping well and building quickly, but they are not yet in full flow. We expect them to be fully on stream within a fortnight.

As buyers across Europe start to move over to Spanish supply, values have begun to climb. Quality from Holland and the UK is steady but variable in places. The first Spanish fruit has gone down well, with the dark green skin you would expect at this point in the season.

PEPPERS – ALL COLOURS

Dutch, Belgian and British volumes are stable.

Larger sizes remain hard to find, while smaller sizes are more plentiful and noticeably cheaper—typical as the glasshouse season draws to a close. Red and yellow remain the costlier colours, while green is slightly more affordable.

Early Spanish crops are producing, but only in very small quantities. Many growers planted a couple of weeks later than normal to dodge virus pressure and avoid establishing young plants in extreme heat, meaning real volume is still a few weeks away.

Supply constraints are being further compounded by an aggressive outbreak of Thrips parvispinus (tobacco thrips) across key Spanish greenhouse regions. The pest damages plant cells, causing crop deformities that severely reduce yields and marketability—deepening the European pepper shortage and driving up prices.



SWEET POINTED AND RAMIRO PEPPERS

Another month with nothing new to report.

Dutch and Belgian supply remains steady and British growers are still contributing good volumes. Quality is good from all sources and values should hold at similar levels in the coming weeks.



SWEET BITE PEPPERS

Holland and the UK are both supplying well on volume and quality.

Demand is healthy and we expect values to stay in line with current levels.

CHILLI PEPPERS — PADRÓN, HABANERO AND JALAPEÑO

No change here.

Volumes from Spain and Morocco remain limited as the last summer crops run down, with the new-season plantings only just beginning to contribute. Red chillies are the tightest and most expensive; green is holding firm but at a lower level. Padrón has increased in value as production falls away. Holland has only small amounts across the range. Quality is good overall.



ICEBERG, LITTLE GEM AND COS LETTUCE

The position is largely unchanged and remains difficult, with all three lines in short supply.

Quality remains variable, requiring weekly concessions as new plantings in Murcia yield only small quantities. Prices stay high until Spanish volumes build across all lines, so we are sourcing directly from Spanish growers.

Salads



LOLLO ROSSO, OAK LEAF AND LOLLO BIONDO

The British fancy lettuce season is ending, and supply is switching to France and Spain.

As always with this changeover, values tend to rise, but quality from the new origins is very good.



SPRING ONIONS

British production is finishing for the year.

We are switching to Mexican and Egyptian supply to carry us through the winter.

TOMATOES

Every line in this category is still tight.

The real turning point comes when Spanish and Moroccan winter production is properly established. Some Spanish lines have started but in short supply, some are approx two weeks behind schedule.

Standard Loose Round - Nothing has changed: yields remain very low and supply stays challenging until the winter origins are fully up and running. Values are high, but slightly below the peak of recent weeks. Quality is good for the time of year, though some fruit may arrive a little under-ripe as growers pick early to keep up with demand.

Vine Tomatoes - Dutch and Belgian availability is down on recent weeks, so values are likely to stay close to current levels. The fruit that is arriving is excellent.

Beef Tomatoes - Availability from Holland and Belgium is limited, and values have increased again. The larger 82–102mm grade, the most popular size, remains scarcer and dearer than the 72–82mm. Quality is good.

Plum Tomatoes - Belgian and Dutch output remains limited, keeping values high, and we expect them to stay at least where they are. Quality is good overall, though more under-ripe fruit is coming through as growers pick early to meet demand.

Intense Plum - Availability remains very limited, and values are still exceptionally firm. Quality is good, although crops near the end of their life are producing more medium and small fruit.

Cherry on the Vine and Cocktail

- Dutch and Belgian volumes are low across every variety, and values are holding

firm, especially on the premium lines. The upside is flavour: Brix levels are excellent, especially in the premium varieties.

Heritage and Inca Mix - Volumes are down on previous weeks and values are rising. To keep the mix complete, some varieties are being supplied on the vine. Quality and presentation are still good overall.

Cherry and Baby Plum - Supply from Spain and Morocco is limited as the summer crops come to an end, and Dutch yields have dropped too, keeping values very high. Quality is holding up well. We expect relief in around a fortnight, when new crops come on stream in Níjar, in the Almería province on Spain's south-east coast.



Fruit



BRITISH APPLES AND PEARS

The home crop is eating beautifully and the full line-up is now available to order:

Gala, Braeburn, Cox and Russet, with Bramley for the kitchen. Conference and Comice pears are still going strong. As we mentioned last month, there is a little more cosmetic marking than usual this year, but none of it affects flavour or keeping quality.

STONE FRUIT — THE WINTER GAP

The European stone fruit season is over.



The last Spanish peaches and nectarines have cleared, and there is now a short gap before the Southern Hemisphere season begins. South African airfreight peaches and nectarines are the first to fill it, usually from late November into early December, with apricots and plums following soon after. Early fruit comes in at a premium, but values tend to ease as the season gets into its stride.

Chilean cherries follow around the turn of the year. As we flagged in October, they are exposed to rain at harvest during an El Niño year, so we will keep you posted on quality.



CITRUS

Spain now has the citrus season firmly in hand.

Early clementines and satsumas are improving week by week as colour and sugar build, and the paler-skinned Spanish fruit will soon be eating much better than the first pickings. Spanish lemons are in, and skin finish will improve as the season goes on.

Two December arrivals are worth putting in the diary now. Italian blood oranges need the first cold nights to develop their red colour, so the deeper-fleshed fruit comes later in the season. Seville oranges for marmalade follow from late December.



POMEGRANATES

Spanish volumes are still building, with the popular Mollar de Elche variety in full swing.

Quality is excellent, and the favourite sizes are in strong demand.

PERSIMMON AND SHARON FRUIT



Spanish Rojo Brillante is now in full flow, and the flavour deepens noticeably as the month goes on.

It is a brilliant winter fruit for desserts and cheeseboards and is often overlooked.



BERRIES

There are plenty of changes across the berry range this month as the UK season closes and imported fruit takes over.

Strawberries: The British season is over apart from a little heated glasshouse fruit. Dutch and Belgian supply continues into December but at a premium. Egyptian fruit starts in small volumes and builds through the month, with South African airfreight also available.

Raspberries: With the UK finished, supply moves to Spain and Morocco. Volumes are rising through November and quality is very good.

Blackberries: The Dutch and Belgian season is ending. Mexico and Guatemala take over, with volumes increasing and quality improving as the season develops.

Blueberries: Peruvian, Argentinian and South African airfreight fruit is available, with sea freight volumes expected later in the month. Given the El Niño cuts in Peru, values are likely to stay firm until sea freight arrives.

Redcurrants: Dutch supply is available, and we will build stock steadily ahead of Christmas.

Fruit



CRANBERRIES

Fresh cranberries are back and will be stocked in steadily increasing amounts as Christmas gets closer.

A little notice is helpful in the early weeks. This month's Buyer's Choice takes a closer look at one of the most surprising fruits we sell.

FORCED RHUBARB

Forced rhubarb is available to order now, starting with Dutch supply before moving to British.

It is a premium product, so please check the price before you order.



GRAPES

Late Italian varieties continue in good volume.

Excellent sugar levels, with Southern Hemisphere fruit stepping in as December goes on.



MELONS

The switch to Brazilian supply is now complete.

Galia, cantaloupe and watermelon are all available, and quality has settled well since the change of origin.



CHESTNUTS AND QUINCE

Fresh chestnuts from Spain and Italy are still available and

well suited to stuffings and festive sides.

Quince, last month's Buyer's Choice, runs until the end of November, so now is your last chance this year.



Exotics



AVOCADOS

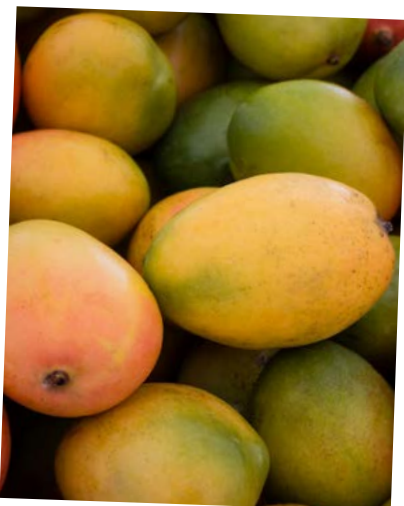
The Mediterranean season is gathering pace.

Israeli and Moroccan fruit is building, and Spanish Hass joins from the second half of the month. Mexico and Colombia continue to supply alongside them. Smaller sizes are still the tightest; larger fruit is easier to secure.

MANGOES

Brazilian Palmer and Keitt remain the mainstay, with consistent quality.

The Peruvian season begins around the turn of the year, and it is the one most exposed to El Niño.



PINEAPPLES, PAPAYA AND PASSION FRUIT

Costa Rican pineapples remain dependable on volume and quality.

Brazilian papaya and Colombian passion fruit are steady, with no concerns.



GINGER

Peruvian supply remains vulnerable to weather through the winter.

Chinese ginger is the back-up option; it behaves a little differently in the kitchen, so test it first if you are thinking of changing over.



Dairy News

The fat side of the dairy market has turned lower

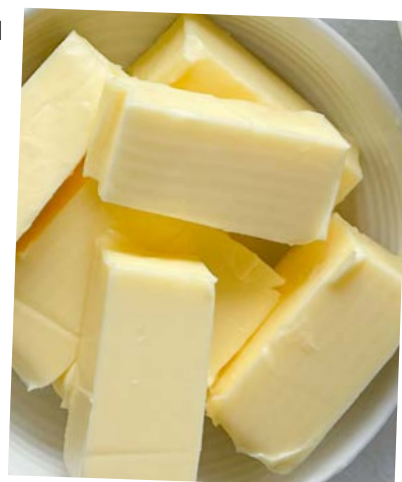
AHDB's October wholesale figures show bulk cream and butter both falling month on month, and both now sit well below where they were this time last year. The milk supply worries that pushed values up over the summer have eased, and as grass growth picked up this autumn, butterfat levels in milk have strengthened too.

Bulk cream weakened as demand softened. With little appetite for butter-making and softer continental values limiting export outlets, there is more cream looking for a home. Butter followed it down: stocks are very high in the UK and abroad, buyers are already covered for the quarter, and cheaper Irish and US product is adding pressure.

Skimmed milk powder is the exception, increasing again on the back of strong global demand for protein, tight

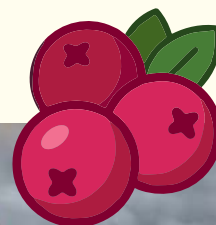
supplies and good feed demand. It is now well ahead of last year's level. Mild Cheddar eased slightly, pulled down by weaker butter values and competition from Irish and US supply, although it remains a little above last year.

For kitchens, the direction on cream and butter is helpful heading into the festive season. These movements usually take a little while to reach wholesale pricing, so they are worth keeping an eye on.





BUYER'S CHOICE - CRANBERRIES



The berry that bounces.

Cranberries are so closely tied to Christmas that we rarely stop to think about them. But this small, sharp, glossy berry has one of the most unusual stories in the fruit world. The North American harvest started in mid-September and is wrapping up in the first week of November, with Massachusetts growers expecting a crop slightly larger than last year's. Our fresh stock builds from now right through to Christmas.

They do not grow in water. The flooded bogs in all the photographs are only flooded twice a year: once at harvest and again in winter, when a sheet of ice protects the low, trailing vines from frost. For the rest of the year, they grow in sandy, acidic beds, much like heather.

At harvest, growers flood the bog and use machines to loosen the berries from the vines. Each berry contains small pockets of air, so it floats to the surface, turning whole fields deep crimson before the fruit is gathered from the water.

Four ways to use it

Fresh relish, no cooking — blitz raw cranberries with orange zest, a little sugar and a few chopped walnuts. It is bright, crunchy and a great match for cold turkey or ham.

Roasted with the roots — scatter a handful over parsnips or squash for the last ten minutes of roasting. They burst, slightly caramelise and add sharpness to the plate.

Quick-pickled for the cheeseboard — warm through in spiced vinegar and sugar until they just start to split, then chill. They are excellent with Stilton or a mature Cheddar.

Straight into the freezer — fresh cranberries freeze brilliantly with no preparation, so it is worth buying ahead of the December rush.

DID YOU KNOW...

🔴 They are graded by bounce. In 19th-century New Jersey, a one-legged grower named John 'Peg Leg' Webb couldn't carry his barrels down from the loft, so he tipped them down the stairs instead. The firm, sound berries bounced to the bottom, while the soft ones stayed on the steps. The 'bounce board' separators still used today work on the same idea.

🔴 The name comes from a bird. Early European settlers thought the pale pink flower, with its curved petals and long beak-like centre, looked like the head of a crane. They called it the 'craneberry', and the name gradually shortened.

🔴 The pop is the air escaping. The pockets of air that make cranberries float are also why they split with a satisfying pop when you cook them.



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