

Produce Market Report Aug-14

Potatoes

The new potato crop is now being harvested in earnest, even though it is early in the season indications are that this year's crop is clean, with good tubers sizes, and excellent yields. Set skin bakers are to be lifted in the next few weeks. Volumes of new crop should increase steadily, albeit the cereal harvest also appears to be early this year and this will take precedent due to its vulnerability to wet conditions.

Please remember that the new season potatoes will have very thin skins and their shelf life is short, kept them cool and in the dark if possible.

Vegetables

Improved volumes of the new season UK carrots are now available, with the start of UK parsnips and leeks due in the next few weeks. Cauliflowers, along with cabbages have improved in size and quality, and after a slow start UK ice-packed broccoli is now readily available and better quality than recent weeks. UK broad beans and peas and runner beans are in the markets along with UK courgettes, spinach and watercress.

Salad

Dutch supply has started to settle after a period of inconsistent supply to the UK, particularly of capsicums and cucumbers. Good growing conditions now prevailing are ensuring that there are plenty of good quality UK salad lines available including the many varieties of lettuce, along with tomatoes, cucumbers, celery, and salad onions.

Fruit

The European stone fruit season is now underway with apricots, peaches, nectarines from Spain France, Italy availability and quality is good. Egyptian, Spanish and Italian grapes are supplementing the last of the southern hemisphere imports from Chile & South Africa. UK Strawberries have been difficult recently due the warmer conditions causing cell breakdown, blueberries, raspberries; blackberries and gooseberries are plentiful and good quality. UK, Turkish, Belgian, Spanish and USA cherries are available and excellent quality this year. Several varieties of plums and the majority of melons are now coming from Spain, with no supply or quality issues. Lemons are still relatively expensive due to lower exports from Argentina due to higher temperatures spoiling crops, and South Africa's tripling of lemon exports to China.