

# OLIVER KAY



## CROP REPORT

Autumn 2023

It may feel as though we are still waiting for summer, but it is already time to see what Autumn brings on the fruit and veg front!

From last year's droughts to this year's rain – soggy fields are causing UK farmers headaches and impacting crops – in particular potatoes and onions.

UK Kale is in season and looking great so there's some good news! Check out the full fresh produce update from our buyer – Lee, to find out what's looking good for your menus and what may be ones to steer away from.

Find out what to be choosing or losing from your menus over the next few months, as our buyer Lee gives you the lowdown on what's happening in the world of fresh produce.

Should you have any questions please contact our team who will be happy to help. Orders can be placed via your company ordering system or online via our website [www.oliverkayproduce.co.uk](http://www.oliverkayproduce.co.uk), or 'Oliver Kay' app – 24 hours a day – 7 days a week, to suit your needs!

Read on for more information about key produce lines to assist with your menu planning.



Contact our team 01204 385463  
or order online at [www.oliverkayproduce.co.uk](http://www.oliverkayproduce.co.uk) or via the Oliver Kay app

## LOOKING FORWARD

We are expecting our first UK Kent large red apple mid-September, starting with – Windsor followed by UK Cox, Gala and Braeburn.

Pumpkins are growing very nicely, they are still their typical green colour but the cooler nights will soon turn them bright orange ready for Halloween.

## UK GROWING CONDITIONS

Growing conditions in the UK have been challenging - compared to last year when we suffered the highest on record heat and droughts, to one of the wettest summers in a decade. Conditions have been better the past week or so, causing lots of activity in the fields with farmers getting things planted.

Potatoes – facing delays in harvesting and some quality problems with the skin due to the amount of water. However, the size of potatoes is actually much better than last year so we are able to swap back to the correct size grading over the coming weeks rather than using 2 potatoes for 1 on bakers etc.

Onions are suffering harvesting issues. The wet weather means getting them out of the ground and dried out in the fields is an issue, as unlike products such as carrots - onions are not a product that is washed so the soggy ground conditions prevent them being lifted as they'd be too muddy.

Although we have had these problems some crops have done quite well, for example carrots and parsnips. Although some delays in harvesting overall size and quality of crops looks good.

## OVERSEAS GROWING CONDITIONS

The annual move to the Mediterranean for Salad crops such as leaf and peppers etc will start October as normal, Tomato will change supply November as usual but Issues with exceptionally high temperatures around the Med & Morocco have created problems with planting of salad crops - some seedlings and young plants being cultivated for winter have had to be replaced. Our contract are fine but this will result in a limited crossover period so expect to see high market prices over this period.

Contingency supply has been put in place to avoid Morocco export restrictions. Supply of tomatoes will be a combination of Morocco, Canaries, Egypt and Turkey to avoid disruptions seen in the past few years.

Spain is still experiencing low rainfall which is making irrigation more expensive.

## SEASONAL MENU INSPIRATION:

### Kale, Apple, Celery, Walnut & Sultana Salad

Here's a simple & quick autumn recipe idea.

Find this recipe and many more on our website [oliverkayproduce.co.uk](http://oliverkayproduce.co.uk)



### Ingredients:

- 100g picked Kale no stalk, chiffonade
- 2 Braeburn apples peeled and fine diced
- 2 celery sticks fine diced
- 50g toasted walnuts chopped
- 75g sultanas
- 25g mayo (or vegan mayo for vegan option)

### Method:

Combine all the ingredients and lightly coat in the mayo, serve as a side salad. This would also work well as a garnish for a smoked fish dish.

For enquiries or more information about any of the products mentioned in the Crop Report, or to place an order, please contact our team who will be happy to help:

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## LOCAL PRODUCE IN SEASON

**White and red cabbage** - quality good, size is improving.

**Kales** - very good.

**Cauliflower** - Autumn crop of English cauli looking very good to take us to winter when we swap to French.

**Broccoli** - doesn't like the rains but Scottish supply has gone well and will take us through to November when Spanish supply will commence.

**Leaf** - whole head. Has been challenging due to water damage from the rain, some fancy leaf head sizes are towards the lower end specification.

## OVERSEAS SEASON CHANGE

**Apples** - southern hemisphere apple season is finishing so we will move to European fruit from Sept/Oct for medium and small sizes.

**Citrus** - Smaller orange has been a challenge due to large sizes this year from South Africa following increased rains. Alternative varieties such as Orri are being used for smaller fruit, which is a mandarin type orange, slightly looser skin but eats fantastic along with the usual Valencia types varieties. We will also see Leanri varieties in our medium fruit, again another looser skin variety and also eats great, moving into Valencia types later.

**Melon** - challenging out of Spain due to hail earlier in the year followed by scorching hot August, moving to Brazilian supply in autumn. Quality and availability is reported to be good.

**Kiwi** - we have experienced a gap in supply from Southern Hemisphere, but new season Italian crops should be with us shortly.

**Berries** - Strawberry - has been ok, will start supply migration shortly as UK nights draw in, we move to Dutch glasshouse then to Egypt and Morocco before going to Spain for the new year. Raspberries will move from UK to Morocco and Spain as we move into winter, some plants have been replaced due to heat damage. Blackberry supply moves to Mexico, Guatemala, and blueberry to Southern Africa and Peru.

## EXOTICS

Supply challenges continue for products out of Africa (beans, Sugar snaps, Mangetout) and baby corn from Asia. A combination of sustained high air fresh cost domestic cost of living in the producing countries along with a trend across the hospitality to reduce food mile is resulting in less growers and less imports from Africa, making sourcing more challenging,

Butternut yields are down in Europe due to high temperatures and low rainfall.



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