

OLIVER KAY



CROP REPORT

Autumn 2024

As the football season kicks off and kids head back to school, we begin to bid farewell to summer and welcome the beautiful autumn months. Autumn brings a bounty of wonderful UK root vegetables, like cauliflower and broccoli, and a guest appearance from the Halloween pumpkin.

To navigate your menus for the coming months, Lee Callon, our expert buyer with over 20 years of experience in fresh produce, will provide insights into what to choose or avoid in the world of fresh produce.

Our dedicated team continues to source the highest quality products from our long-term supply partners. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our team, who are always ready to help.

Orders can be placed over the phone during working hours, or online via our website or app - 24 hours a day - 7 days a week to suit your needs!

As always, we thank you for your continued support in choosing us as your fresh produce supplier.



Contact our team 01204 385463
or order online at www.oliverkayproduce.co.uk or via the Oliver Kay app

GROWING CONDITIONS

The last few months has left us all wondering whether we were actually going to get a summer but we officially had the hottest day of 2024 on 12th August with the mercury topping 34.8 in Cambridge. As summer finally made an appearance, albeit late, it gave us a bit of optimism. Following what was a very wet winter, and a non-existent spring, this gave the UK some challenges by creating a lot of gaps in the growing calendar. But yet again our growers have done a great job in supporting us when the supermarket shelves have been empty and some major foodservice providers have been short. We managed to maintain supply due to great support from our growers and supply partners.

CHALLENGES & LOOKING AHEAD

Challenges

- The 2023/24 **potato** harvest left the UK at least 1m tonnes short of crop and led to imported crops being used for the first time in a generation. Now many growers have been eagerly awaiting the 2024/25 harvest. Initial reports are showing that the new UK crop is smaller in size with a limited number of larger tubers available. Planting started on schedule at the end of March, but prolonged wet weather conditions in April and May created a delay in completion and resulted in less than ideal seed-bed conditions. May experienced relatively low temperatures and some areas faced light frosts, causing damage to some of the early crops in Suffolk & Norfolk. June then brought some much needed growing conditions. The summer months have brought some longer periods of sunshine with relatively mild temperatures which has supported the growth of the main crop.
- The transition from Mediterranean **avocado** supply to southern hemisphere sources for summer was challenging, but we are now seeing a return to more stable supply.
- **Longer term outlook** - UK growers are increasingly moving away from traditional, higher-risk, and more labour-intensive crops. The ongoing challenges in the labour market have prompted them to shift towards crops better suited for mechanised harvesting and lower risk, such as sugar beets and cereals.



Finished

- Imports from Europe on **carrot**, **parsnip** and **potato** have now ended as we are into new season UK crop and lean into autumn.
- English **courgette** from Cambridge will continue until the end of September.

Looking Ahead

- The autumn guest appearance of **pumpkins** from Yorkshire & Cambridgeshire.
- Mixed edible **squashes** are also available now.
- New UK season **potato** will be lifted throughout October.
- UK **carrot** and **parsnips**.
- English Heirloom **tomato** still good but will end late in October.
- UK **strawberries** have been fantastic this summer but will move to Dutch glass house this autumn before Mediterranean fruit starts in November.
- English **leaf** from Shropshire, Cheshire and Evesham still going strong.
- English **Tenderstem®** from Worcestershire going well.
- UK **broccoli** from Lincolnshire and Fife will take use through until late October.
- Yorkshire outdoor **rhubarb** will come to end as soon as the weather turns.

FIND OUT MORE.....

about the passionate growers and producers who bring you the freshest, UK-grown produce on *our interactive map*

WHAT'S IN SEASON


At Oliver Kay, we work with trusted growers sourcing the very best seasonal produce from our range of local and international suppliers. The below guide will advise on product availability over the autumn months, but due to the nature of fresh produce there are many external factors that impact supply. Please check availability with our team or by using the online ordering before listing a product on your menu.




KEY: UK SEASONAL BEST


VEGETABLES


Broccoli (UK) - We've seen a few issues caused by the heat but overall very good quality.

 **Carrot (UK)** - UK is good quality and size, there have been no issues with stored crop and contingency supply from Spain is not expected this year. UK crop is expected mid-June, no issues expected.

Cauliflower (UK) - Although late, cauliflower is a good size and quality.

 **Lettuce (UK)** - Cos, gem, and iceberg from Shropshire now at their very best.

 **Lettuce - Baby Leaf (UK)** - Produce from Leamington Spa is excellent, with washed from Shropshire. There is some quality challenges now as we move into autumn and the growing cycle lengthens. But so far good availability.


 **Lettuce - Fancy Leaf (UK)** - Both Evesham and Lancashire going real well, we are using whole head Oakleaf and Salanova for our red variety.

Onion - (Egypt & Europe) - Yellow & red onions - The supply of red onions from Egypt continued through mid-August, when the European harvest begins for the new season. Brown/yellow cooking onion has just started which is welcomed.


Parsnip (UK) - After the early end to the UK season, we moved to imports, which posed challenges primarily related to availability due to strong demand for the Spanish crop. The new UK crop has now begun, There were some smaller-sized roots seen but we expect these to get bigger the further we go into the autumn season.

Potatoes (UK / Egypt & France) - Lifting has started for some mid-season and salad varieties, and while overall quality is looking promising, there are concerns about yields being lower than expected. There remains some uncertainty about this season's crop performance, but we should have a clearer understanding within the next four weeks.

Mainland Europe, particularly Northern Belgium and Southern Holland, experienced wet weather during their planting period and there are reports that they were unable to plant 20-25% of their crops this year. Consequently, they may turn to the UK to help fill any gaps in supply.

 **Red and White Cabbage (UK)** - The new UK season is now underway, albeit about four weeks behind schedule. It has been worth the wait as the quality is excellent.

Savoy Cabbage (UK) - Small amount of Primo was supplied to bridge the gap but the UK savoy is now perfect.

 **Spring Cabbage & Kale (UK)** - Although late, UK variety is now underway from Lancashire and thriving.

Swede (UK) - Overwintered crop has ended, new season early crop from east of Scotland is now underway. The main crop will be seen further into autumn.

DID YOU KNOW?.....

For seasonal recipe ideas from our development chefs, along with customer dish ideas and provide inspiration on how to use the latest seasonal produce, [click here.](#)



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BERRIES


Blackberries (UK) - Both supply and quality has been good. Varieties include Loch Ness and Sweet Royalla.

Blueberries (Poland) - Liberty, Duke and Blue crop, with excellent flavour.

Grapes - red (Spain) - A small amount of black maybe seen until Apirena - Itumtwelve is in supply.

Grapes - green (Spain & Greece) - Currently Sugrone from Spain, and we will be moving to Greek - Thomson in autumn.

Raspberries (UK) - Majority ok, UK supply is from Scotland, with Evesham supplying mainly Majestic varieties.

 **Strawberries (UK)** - UK season is underway and the quality is excellent. Varieties include Morano, Favori and Malling Centenary.



EXOTICS

Asparagus Large (Peru) - While there were delays in arrivals last month due to civil unrest, things have calmed down, quality is very good, and supply has greatly improved.

Baby Corn (India & Thailand) - Supply from India and Thailand in equal quantities, and quality is good.

Baby Vegetables (UK & South Africa) - There are some UK-grown rainbow and orange carrots available. We may also have courgettes and leeks, depending on the growing conditions. South African produce will be available throughout the summer as a backup, but preference will be given to home-grown options.

Beans (Various) - Currently a mix of Rwandan and Moroccan, with Egyptian just finishing. September will be challenging as Egypt and Moroccan end, but we have Rwanda and Kenya as backup options.

Butternut (Various) - South African will continue to September, where we will start to see European varieties.

Chillies (Spain & Portugal) - Spanish supply with Portuguese taking us into autumn. Quality is very good.

Figs (Various) - Spanish supply currently, with Turkey arriving early September to take us through autumn.

Garlic & Ginger (Brazil, Spain & China) - Availability of Brazilian ginger is good. The new crop of garlic is Spanish, with Chinese varieties available as a backup. Both of good quality.

Limes (Brazil) - Mainly Brazilian. Mexican supply is not expected but always there as backup, with no quality issues to report.

Mango (Brazil & Peru) - Brazilian Tommy Atkins are good with option of Spanish. Peruvian supply will take us through to the end of the year, with quality good.

Shallots (France) - French banana quality from store is fine. We have a hybrid (cross between banana and round) available to bridge any gaps until new season starts, no problems expected.

Sugar Snaps & Mangetout (Zimbabwe & Kenya) - Mainly Zimbabwe, with some Kenyan supply. Quality is good.

Sweet Potatoes (Various) - The primary supply is Honduras, with some US produce available as a contingency due to potential shipping delays. Egyptian supply is expected to arrive in September, and the quality is very good.

Lee's Top Picks

- Strawberries
- Spring cabbage & kale
- Lettuce
- Carrots

FIND OUT

what produce is in season locally and overseas all year round to help choose produce when it is available and at its best [here](#).

SEASONAL MENU INSPIRATION:

Pumpkin Tarte Tatin, Compressed Apple, Savoury Granola Salad

Here's a seasonal recipe idea.

Find this recipe and many more on our
website oliverkayproduce.co.uk

Roasted Pumpkin

Ingredients:

- 1 Pumpkin
- 2 Red onions
- 40ml Olive oil
- 40g Butter - melted
- 1 Tsp Cumin seeds
- 1 Tsp Fennel seeds
- 30ml Sherry vinegar

Method:

-Peel and slice the Pumpkin into even size pieces and then do the same with the red onions.
-Combine all the ingredients, place evenly onto a roasting tray and cook for 10-12 minutes on 180c.

Compressed Apple

Ingredients:

- 2 Apples
- 50g Caster sugar
- 10g Light soy sauce
- 20g White wine vinegar

Method:

-Peel & slice the apples.
-Combine all the other ingredients and tumble with the apple slices then vacuum pack to compress the apples.

Savoury Granola

Ingredients:

- 200g Oats
- 30g Sesame seeds
- 10g Cumin seeds
- 10g Fennel seeds
- 100g Crushed walnuts
- 100g Pumpkin seeds
- 20ml Soy sauce
- 30g Harissa
- 1 Lemon - zest & juice
- 60ml Olive oil
- 40g Honey
- 100g Butter - melted

Method:

-Place all ingredients into a bowl and mix together.
-Spread evenly onto a baking tray and cook for 10-15 minutes at 180c or until golden and then allow to cool.

Tarte Tatin

Ingredients:

- Roasted pumpkin
- 20g Caster sugar
- 50g Butter
- 1 Sheet of puff pastry - cut to a disc just larger than the frying pan
- Savoury granola
- Micro red chard & celery

Method:

-Heat the oven to 180c.
-Add the sugar to a 20cm frying pan and make a caramel.
-Arrange slices of the pumpkin and red onion in the pan and then top with pieces of butter and the disc of puff pastry, folding the excess down the sides.
-Place in the oven and cook for 15-20 minutes, then turn the oven down to 160c and cook for a further 10-15 minutes.
-Turn out on a plate and top with the savoury granola, compressed apple & micro herbs.



BRITISH SEASONALITY CHART

Our commitment is not just to deliver the finest fruits and vegetables, but also to guide chefs through the journey of flavours and textures that result in extraordinary dishes.

[Click here](#) to view our British Seasonality Wheel



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:



Call the office on 01204 38546
or order online at oliverkayproduce.co.uk
or via the Oliver Kay app