

Christmas Classics, Festive Twists & More

DECEMBER UPDATE

Each month Dole provides an update on what is happening in the marketplace.

We explain which new lines we expect to see in the following month, the produce causing us concern and which lines are at their very best.

OVERVIEW

The big question for December menu planning is, do you play a straight bat and go for the trusted roots and brassicas or search out a few quirky alternatives?

The month will bring a host of decent choices from the classics you would expect over the festive period to a few suggestions that may get the creative juices flowing.

The devastating weather in Spain continues to raise challenges throughout the industry and may have a longer-term effect on future crops.

In a packed market report, there will also be a peek at the expected treasures we expect in the New Year.

VEGETABLES

Both carrots and parsnips will be arriving in good volumes from our growers.

The festive favourites are in great supply and the quality is quite superb. If you are looking for a change of route, consider Piccolo parsnips or chantenay carrots.

Two products which can be conveniently cooked whole and offer a slightly more festive feeling. Love them or hate them, this is the month to plate up the humble sprout.



You can opt for the traditional, try the fashionable sprout tops or go for the labour-saving prepped product. All of which will be arriving throughout the month.

We would highly recommend you order in advance for unusually high volumes or check with our telesales teams for availability.



Jerusalem artichokes, with its subtle nutty flavour, can offer a delightful twist on the plate.

Potato prices are set to firm up as we move through December and into January.

UK Summer Cauliflower has finished and we move over to UK Winter and imports from Europe. This will mean price firming and product may have a lower yield due to sizing.

If hard frosts are avoided, purple sprouting broccoli, which can add some welcome colour, will be available. Beetroots and Kale continue to arrive in good quality.

Other considerations are UK leeks, cavolo nero kale and tenderstem broccoli. For future menu planning, the stunning Yorkshire forced rhubarb will be starting to appear early in the new year.



FRUIT

Cranberries have a surprising amount of uses and are now available.



Canadian Mac Reds are a welcome arrival on the seasonal calendar. The national apple of Canada develops in late September giving the snow-white flesh a slightly tart flavour, making it suitable for eating or cooking.

Soft fruit options are limited this month although sharon fruit (persimmons), which has a mango-like flesh, are a cracking option.



Strawberry – Will be arriving in the main from Egypt, not the same quality as the previous UK product so maybe best avoided for now. Imported Blueberry, Blackberry and Raspberry are all good options.

Dates are a magnificent option for festive menus, helping create warming indulgent desserts.

The slightly wrinkled Medjool, with a rich toffee-like flavour, will help construct a fudgy texture with a real depth of flavour in so many pudding options.

Italian blood oranges will make an appearance by the end of the month.

Spanish citrus – while the product has been arriving, volumes are down, resulting in firmer than normal prices. We are also seeing product arriving from Morocco which is helping with availability.

Towards the end of the month, or possibly into January, look out for Marmalade oranges (bitters) arriving.

SALAD

The floods in Spain in early November have had a significant impact on the Salad category of products. This has resulted in volumes reducing, however due to our close working relationship with our Spanish Growers and suppliers, products have continued to arrive.

Price have strengthened but we are hopeful that this spike is beginning to level out.

AT THEIR BEST

- Carrots
- Parsnips
- Mac Red Apples
- Medjool Dates
- Cranberries
- Sharon Fruit
- Jerusalem Artichokes



In a busy festive period, our 500gm bags of crispy & exotic salad can be a superb labour-saving option.

The longer-term effect will be very much weather-dependent and we will keep you updated with our mini-market updates.

PLANNING AHEAD?

- Blood Oranges
- Yorkshire Rhubarb
- Marmalade Oranges



Be sure to check out our website & sign up to your local depots mailing list