



MARKET REPORT

Feb 2024



Looking For An Alternative Root

FEBRUARY 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

This month we have had a few notes of concern from Spanish growers, a choice of forgotten seasonal gems and a brief snapshot of what spring has to offer.

February is renowned for being the month of love and can be an ideal period to shake up the menu. Look out for a decent array of imported soft fruit along with a terrific range of alternative roots and brassicas on offer. It is the perfect time to give your roots a good roasting!



VEGETABLES



Cauliflower volumes are still low with pricing expensive, product is arriving from France along with small pockets of English. Potato prices are continuing to rise, reports are telling us this will continue through until spring and beyond. Yorkshire rhubarb is the showstopper this month, volumes are increasing with the product looking quite magnificent.

The delightfully light purple sprouting broccoli will be available this month, providing we avoid extreme cold weather, and can be a quirky alternative to asparagus. Hispi cabbage is a wonderful but sadly underrated product.

The pointed brassica with a touch of sweetness has a conveniently short cooking time, holds a vibrant colour and pairs remarkably well with spices and stronger flavours.

White turnip is a somewhat forgotten gem. This small root veg with a mild peppery taste can be mashed, roasted or boiled. Replace a few spliced roots with spuds in a dauphinoise and you won't be disappointed.

More suggestions this month are celeriac, salsify and Jerusalem artichokes. The ever-popular sweet potatoes should certainly be a consideration with new season products arriving from the USA this month.



FRUIT

Spanish strawberries started in January with volumes expected to rise gradually throughout the coming weeks. As it is the month of love, expect prices to firm up as the 14th approaches.



Italian blood oranges are in good supply with the product looking terrific. Marmalade oranges have now finished for another season.

South African grapes are due to arrive, although with the much-published troubles around the Red Sea, there is a real possibility volume arriving will be severely affected. Currently, red grapes from the region are on the high side.

At the time of writing, growers were looking at longer alternative routes to ensure supply.



Plums are a great option in February with South African products at their best but the price is also under pressure due to similar circumstances.

This wickedly sweet stone fruit is quite divine with blue cheese in a winter salad. Spanish lemons are in decent supply so don't forget to stock up for Pancake Tuesday on Feb 13th.

SALAD



Tomato prices have stabilised with products now arriving from Morocco. Heritage tomatoes from France are a premium price but the quality is top notch!

Volumes of little gem, cos and iceberg are remaining stable despite reports from Spanish growers highlighting a lack of rainfall and cooler evening temperatures.

Butterhead or flat lettuce is available all year round but it is a great option if you are looking for a more frugal alternative. This underused salad product has a mild sweet flavour, a crunchy heart and leaves that will stand most dressings.

Wild garlic should be available around the 3rd week of month and with this mild climate at the moment, it may come on earlier than expected.



AT THEIR BEST

Purple Sprouting Broccoli
White Turnip
Celeriac
Sweet Potatoes
Yorkshire Rhubarb
Blood Oranges
Salsify

PLANNING AHEAD?

In the coming months look out for wild garlic, UK asparagus, Jersey Royals and Cyprus potato.



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