



# MARKET REPORT



## Desperately Seeking Spring

### 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

February, famous for being the month of love, is an ideal time to spice up the menu. Dig a bit deeper and you will find an action-packed month including National Pizza Day together with Valentine's Day adding a whisper of love.

The doors to Spring are beginning to creak open with the coming weeks producing a range of homegrown produce with a lighter feel, preparations for up-and-coming Dutch salad and soft fruit season.

The period ahead is key in the seasonal calendar and will form a basis for many menus in the next few months.

### VEGETABLES

Swede is a terrific option this month. The earthy-flavoured root is not only incredibly versatile but will keep the kitchen GP well within check.



Yorkshire forced rhubarb pricing will begin to ease as the volumes increase. The stunning product, with a radiance that cannot be matched, will sit perfectly on any seasonal menu.

UK asparagus started in small quantities last month although prices were eye wateringly high. As harvest yields increase in the coming weeks, prices will level out.



White turnip is a quirky alternative this month offering a milder slightly sweeter flavour. The creamy-like root, which works in so many dishes, is perfect for baking, mashing or roasting.

New season sweet potatoes from USA are a great choice in the coming weeks along with purple sprouting broccoli.

Other products to consider are kale, Spanish artichokes and the winter crop of Cyprus potatoes.



### FRUIT

An essential Valentine's Day fruit simply has to be strawberries. Spanish products started last month and volumes are starting to increase now.

Quality has been outstanding with flavours starting to develop as the season progresses.



The Dole branded fruits are known for their succulence and sweet flavour with lower acidity levels than regular pineapples.

## SALAD

It is also worth mentioning, that in around eight weeks' time the first of the homegrown product will start to appear!!

Spanish raspberries, which offer a sweet flavour balanced with a refreshing acidity, will also be available. Seville (Sours) oranges are sadly finished for another year with blood oranges, from Spain, still in great supply.



Also, look out for the much-celebrated Valencia oranges towards the end of the month. The citrus favourite is renowned for its sweet-tasting notes and high juice content.

For convenience ready-to-eat mangoes and avocados are available. Both offer the comfort of having the product usable on arrival without the hassle of leaving to ripen. Tropical Gold pineapples are a terrific option.



The cosmetic condition of peppers on the market right now are below average with their skin affected by a virus called Thrips.

This is where an insect feeds on the flower and leaves of the plant and as a result, when the fruit matures it leaves behind a small amount of scarring. The actual pepper however is perfectly good to eat.

Despite an early setback winter salads remain stable with products arriving from Spain and Morocco in steady volumes.

Prices remain firm although quality has been first-rate. The end of the month will see very early signs of the transition to Dutch and Belgian products with small pockets of cucumber starting to come through.

In reality, the season will not begin until Easter although early grower reports for the up-and-coming season have been positive.



## PLANNING AHEAD?

Homegrown Asparagus  
Wild Garlic  
New Potatoes

February is a perfect month to make the winter salad the star of the show. Red and white chicory, radicchio and cos have suitably sturdy leaves which will mingle well with roasted roots, dressings and robust cheeses.

## AT THEIR BEST

Yorkshire Rhubarb  
Blood Oranges  
Sweet Potatoes  
Spanish Strawberries  
Local Swede  
White Turnip  
Purple Sprouting Broccoli



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