



## AT THEIR BEST

- Tunnel Grown British Asparagus*
- Wild Garlic*
- Spanish and Dutch Tomatoes*
- Dutch Strawberries*
- Majorcan New Potatoes*
- British Cucumbers*

## COMING UP

- British Tomatoes*
- Outdoor British Asparagus*
- Outdoor Jersey Royals*
- British Strawberries*
- Spanish Peaches, Apricots and Nectarines*
- British Salads*
- Spanish Cherries*

## ASPARAGUS



The official start of the British asparagus is St George's Day, 23rd April, but rather glorious weather seems to have pushed it forward. There's always early asparagus but there's more than usual this year and at a rather better price. Asparagus will be at its best, and best value, during May and June but its still worth checking with your local depot to see what they've got right now. Asparagus growth is dependent on temperature, any colder than 10C and it simply stops growing. Do bear in mind that a cold snap means that there'll be a lot less asparagus around and the price can shoot up. There's also limited supplies of white and purple varieties from those very clever chaps at Wye Valley.

## BROCCOLI WOES

There's currently very little broccoli around and prices are spectacularly high. This is a legacy of that terrible weather in Spain at the beginning of the year. Flooding caused gaps in planting programmes leading to shortages now. Hopefully Spanish broccoli supplies should be back to normal by the end of the month and homegrown broccoli will be along in June.

## NEW POTATOES



The big news this month is of course Jersey Royals. It's still pretty early in the season and it will be next month before they're in full flow. But, rather like asparagus, there already seem to be more around than usual and prices are certainly moving the right way. Alongside the Jerseys there's a few early new potatoes coming in from Cornish growers at similar money. If you're looking for top spud value this month then do consider Majorcan New, A true new potato with a scrapable skin. They're in particularly good nick this season and they're currently about a third of the price of Jerseys!

## TOP FRUIT

British apples are at an end and supplies of other European apples and pears from store are running out. This month we'll start moving on to new season top fruit from the southern hemisphere. The first of the Packhams Triumph pears are here and there's plenty more to follow.

## RHUBARB



Sadly the Yorkshire Forced Rhubarb season is coming to a close and it's time to move on to the outdoor crop.

Outdoor rhubarb is usually at its best at the start of the season and this year's no exception, there's some splendid stuff around. There's two choices, regular or forced. Regular rhubarb is grown in the open air and has a green and red colouring. Forced is still grown outside but with the light excluded, usually by black polythene tunnels. This means the chlorophyll doesn't develop so there's no green colouring, just a glorious vibrant pink.

## SALADS



After a fairly exciting winter the Spanish season is drawing to a close and new season produce from the UK and Holland is starting to come in.

There's a fair few tomatoes around with the last of the Spanish season and some particularly fine new season 'heritage' or exotic varieties from both British and Dutch growers. There's British cucumbers and salad heads both grown under glass.

There's new season peppers and aubergines from Holland with British stuff just round the corner. All in all this a month of change, prices may rise a little at first but quality is much improved and things will soon settle down.

## SOFT FRUIT



Spanish strawberries and raspberries are very good value and have a decent enough flavour but if you're looking for a truly spectacular strawberry then it has to be Dutch. There is some fabulous fruit coming from Holland with tremendous aroma and flavour and it's making the money it deserves. Writing this would have been greengrocer heresy a decade ago but in the past few years Dutch growers have really focused on flavour and are currently growing some quite staggeringly delicious produce. There's a few early British strawberries around but it'll be next month before they really get going.

## IN BRIEF

The Blood orange season is on the final furlong. They really are almost over, time to take them off.

There's terrific new season artichokes from Spain and Italy, both smaller violet and larger globe varieties.

This will be the last full month of Wild Garlic, it's usually all over by early May. There's still plenty of lovely wet garlic which will be with us till August



There's still decent broad beans and peas from Spain. The French season is next then we move on to new season British pods in June.

We'll probably get a bit of new season stone fruit from Morocco and Spain later this month. This very early stuff is often small, unripe and rather dear. Try and hang on a bit for fruit that is better quality and value.

Watch our award winning video market report  
online at [totalproducelocal.co.uk](http://totalproducelocal.co.uk)

**TotalProduce**  
[www.totalproducelocal.co.uk](http://www.totalproducelocal.co.uk)