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New opportunities: new markets

WELCOME TO THE POST-BREXIT EDITION OF OUR SEASONAL MARKET GUIDE FOR SMART FOOD BUYERS AND CATERERS. HERE YOU'LL FIND HANDY INFORMATION THAT HELPS YOU TO BUY BETTER AND EMBRACE EVERY OPPORTUNITY.

On 31st January, Britain left the European Union and we entered a transition period. Experts state that there will not be many discernible changes in the short term as we start negotiating trade deals with the EU and other countries. In fact, any price impacts this year are likely to be caused by the world's unpredictable weather

patterns that can profoundly impact growing conditions, and of course, the strength of the pound against the Euro and the US Dollar.

We need to wait until later this year to understand how Brexit will impact our industry but it's important that you prepare for whatever the future brings.

Talk to us about your suppliers and key product requirements and we will work with you to secure the best prices and a smooth supply - very often without changing suppliers.

When we work together, we can make 2020 a fantastic year for us all.

My Purchasing Partner will source the **high quality goods and services** that *you* need to exceed your customer's procurement expectations - and to maintain profitable margins. **Call us on 0800 121 6440**

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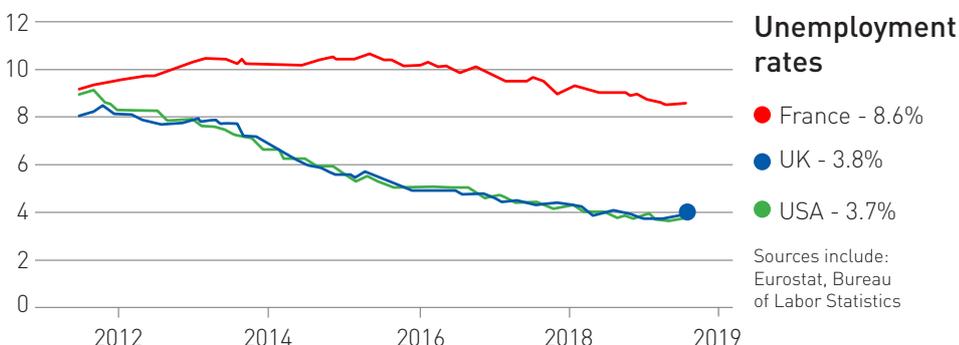
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THE BIG PICTURE

UK Economy - a silver lining post-Brexit?

The currency markets offer an ongoing commentary on what is happening politically and economically. They are currently reacting favourably to the situation in Britain and the current prediction is that the GBP will continue strengthening against the Euro and will maintain its current high against the US Dollar, at least over the first half of the year - great news for imports.

The Bank of England is predicting that the UK's economy will grow during 2020 as the dampening effects from Brexit-related uncertainties begin to dissipate and this growth will continue into 2021 and 2022.



Even Brexit-sceptic, Mark Carney, aka the boss of the Bank of England, now says there could be a silver lining in Prime Minister Boris Johnson's plans to boost growth post-leaving the EU.

Alongside this, the unemployment rate continues to fall (see graph above), mirroring what is happening in the USA and bucking the trend in many European countries, including France.

Sponsoring fruit trees for a local secondary school

Early this month, Sam Tippins from the MPP team helped to plant 60 fruit trees at The Hazeley Academy, a secondary school and sixth form in Milton Keynes. Sam thoroughly enjoyed his day at the school planting the trees supplied by Premier Fruits, as the photos testify.

Principal of Hazeley, Tony Nelson, explains more.

"Our vision at Hazeley is to create a vibrant community of exceptional people, full of character, confidence and creativity. Our recent project, which saw our students involved in the planting of 60 fruit trees, is a perfect example of our values coming to fruition – please excuse the pun!

Our young people have helped to plant apple, pear, peach, plum and cherry trees that will not only play a small part in helping our environment, but will also provide fruit that current and future students will use in catering lessons. Students will also be able to enjoy the fruit in dishes freshly prepared and on the menu in our onsite Cucina restaurant.



Our fruit tree project is a win for the environment, a win for healthy eating, a win for saving money and it was carried out in a fun way that connects back to the curriculum."



Tony went on to thank all the involved partners including Cucina and Impact Food Group, My Purchasing Partner (MPP) and Premier Fruits, "whose role in this venture has been critical to its success. Their support is deeply appreciated."



IN THE MARKETS

Great British Seasonal Produce

TOP 5 CHOICES

Bramley Apples



Celeriac



Leeks



Purple Sprouting Broccoli



Peppers



SAY GOODBYE TO...

Celery



Turnips



Did you know?

Celeriac is a root vegetable that is closely related to celery, parsnips and parsley. It's loaded with fibre, vitamins B6, C and K, and it's a good source of antioxidants and minerals, such as phosphorus, potassium and manganese.

Celeriac is extremely versatile and is an alternative to potatoes and other root vegetables. celeriac has a crunchy texture, making it a perfect addition to salads and coleslaws, or try it mashed, baked, roasted or boiled if you prefer a sweeter flavour.

CUCUMBERS, TOMATOES AND PEPPERS

Storms in Spain have affected the quality and colour of peppers and cucumbers. Tomatoes are also affected and as supplies of the early-plantings come to an end we are watching out for supply issues caused by the colder weather and damp conditions. The rain is also impacting the quality of savoy cabbages grown in the UK - a good alternative are the fine beans coming from Senegal.

FRUIT

A range of fruit options are available right now including seville oranges - perfect for puddings, sauces and marmalade! Good quality redcurrants from Holland and Galia, Cantaloupe and honeydew melons from Brazil are plentiful and a great price at the moment. Dutch indoor-grown rhubarb is also currently popular - another favourite dessert, as are cranberries from South America.

APPLE AND ORANGE JUICE

Damaged apple crops in Poland have reduced supply by 50% and pushed up the price of apple juice here in the UK. In contrast, the price of orange juice has fallen slightly as production levels rise in the EU and USA. However, it is unlikely to fall further as transport, packaging and processing costs remain high.

In a nutshell...

The weather and economic uncertainty continue to impact the cost of many food and non-food products. Here are a few key areas to watch out for:

Dairy

Cream and milk prices have risen slightly as is traditional during the winter: we expect them to fall in spring as it gets warmer.



Meat

Pork prices remain high as we continue to see huge demand from China. Beef, lamb and chicken prices continue to rise.



Fish

Cod prices should to stabilise over the following months as Russia and Norway agree to increased quotas. We still advise trying alternatives see our feature on fish later in this report.



Vegetables

Onions and potatoes are benefiting from good growing conditions and prices are falling both month-on-month and year-on-year.



Packaging

Packaging prices continue to remain high.



Wages

Wages increased by 2.1% year-on-year (September-November) compared to an average 3.4% growth across the whole economy.



HEADS UP ON 2020

Meagre - an alternative to wild sea bass

Meagre, also known as stone bass, is farmed in the Mediterranean. Sales grew by 60% last year as restaurants and gastropubs discovered this versatile and cost-effective alternative to wild sea bass that can be grilled,

pan fried or served raw as a ceviche. Other popular alternatives to our favourite cod and salmon included farmed sea bass, halibut and turbot, and frozen lobster.

Skewer the menu

Skewers are popular in New York and it's a growing trend here too. They combine the trend for small plates and the ongoing appeal of street food - plus they take us back to our cave-living past when most food was cooking on sticks. In short, they are versatile, fun and colourful and when you add a dip

or two, they become a bonding food for friends. Add a range of sustainable fish for a colourful celebration of the sea; use fruit for a flavoursome, healthy dessert; go vegan with a range of beautifully presented veggies... send us photographs of your creations!

Shout about sustainability

For both health and environmental reasons, people want to know where their food is coming from. They're concerned about food miles and animal welfare (and it's clear that they are eating a lot less red meat because of this too). Shout about where you source your food, be clear about ethical production messages and the carbon footprint of your ingredients - we can help you with this. Remember, that as well as tasting a lot fresher, local produce is more sustainable and supports independent businesses in your area, as well as giving you

the option to explore lesser-known options. Diners are looking for this information and are making food choices based upon it.



Fermented food is more than a fad

The popularity of fermented foods is increasing across multiple sectors. Kimchi, a fermented vegetable side dish from Korea, is a favourite and recently, bars have started to offer both alcoholic and non-alcoholic kombucha options. Kombucha is a fermented, lightly effervescent, sweetened black or green tea drink. We're also seeing lesser-known ingredients appear on menus, such as Burmese fermented tea leaves in salads and Kefir ice cream.

Fermented foods are not for everyone, but if they are ingredients that could work for your customers, add a few drinks or desserts to the menu to gauge interest.

Offer them as an optional extra to salads (kimchi or fermented beans would be good for this) and explain their history and health benefits on boards or within the menu so that customers can learn about their health benefits.

Promotional Weeks Spring 2020

23RD -29TH FEBRUARY
CORNISH PASTY WEEK

24TH FEBRUARY -8TH MARCH
FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

1ST - 8TH MARCH
DEMENTIA UK 'TIME FOR A CUPPA'

2ND - 8TH MARCH
BRITISH PIE WEEK

16TH - 22ND MARCH
NUTRITION & HYDRATION WEEK

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My Purchasing Partner works hard to source the products that you demand. We closely analyse the markets and negotiate with suppliers to alleviate volatile pricing impacts on our customers. Be assured that whilst we cannot control the future, we can be smart and transparent about what is happening.

We pledge to keep you abreast of developments and give you the information and tools necessary to support your strategic business planning. Look out for our next market report as we head towards Autumn and visit our new website for the very latest information. In the meantime, if you have any questions, feel free to contact us on :

info@mypurchasingpartner.co.uk
or **0800 121 6440**

Thank you for your continued support.