

TUCO North-East Regional Meeting

Tuesday 11th June 2024 at 10:00 am Online via Teams

MINUTES

Attendees:	Peter Anstess [Chair]	Sheffield
	Michael Arthur	Sheffield Hallam
	Kim Ashley	TUCO Category Manager
	Sarah Hodgson	Huddersfield
	Judith Hoyle	TUCO
	Sarah McLoughlin	TUCO Academy
	Lee Sanderson	Sheffield College
Apologies:	Tom Armstrong	Huddersfield
	Julie Brown	Leeds

1. Presentation by Nathan Hodgetts and Tom Bartlett from Fresh Direct

A copy of this presentation is included with the Minutes

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were as above. Peter welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Framework Update

The next quarterly reports will be sent out the same day of the meeting (11th June). Also due out soon is TUCO Intelligence for the next Quarter along with the UKUPC Impact Report. The new Procurement Act has been released and all the Category Team are receiving training to update them. UKUPC are also running free training for the wider membership should anyone be interested in learning more about the new procurement legislation/regulations.

Convenience Retail: has just been re-tendered with the standstill period ending at midnight on Sunday. Some suppliers are no longer part of the agreement with Fulfil and Sugro no longer on there. LWC are also now not on this but are still part of the Alcohol Agreement. New suppliers on this include Evapo Electronic Cigarettes, Harlech and WDS Group. The new agreement goes live on 1st July.

Alcohol: new agreement started on 15th March and comprises of 6 lots as per the previous agreement (draught, packaged, spirits, wines, OSS and independent brewers). Details of which are available on the TUCO website.

Dip-Chem: The new agreement will start on 15th August which will mean a one month gap between the end of the current framework and the start of the new one. Kim advised all members to extend their agreement accordingly.

Digital Menus: Following on from Jonny's update at the last regional meeting; Award made to Ten Kites (Nutritics) for a 2 + 2-year contract which started on 1st April. TUCO Online members have access to a free base module (i.e. web template or allergen page) + implementation paid for by TUCO (regardless of how many sites). There is already an active integration with Procure Wizard which powers TUCO Online which means Ten Kites will consume the API and automatically build new Menu items using the recipe data received. Demos can be arranged if this is of interest.

Greenhouse Gas Calculator System: This DPS system has just re-opened and an award has been made to Edinburgh Innovations.

Food Waste Management: This is a DPS and Leanpath have recently been added.

EPOS: Fidelity Systems have been added onto this (Lot 2 EPOS Software only) and Lee asked for more details

New products available to view and sample FOC on NPD Section of the website.

On Sustainability, the MSC Chain of Custody is now completely free of charge for all our members.

TUCO have now also signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant, promoting that we will work with ex-military personnel to encourage more of them to work within our sector. We have achieved bronze level at this. Our role is to:

- promote armed service covenant
- include in job adverts (welcome ex-military applications)
- update handbook to give time to those serving in TA (additional leave)
- open up attendance at academy courses to ex-armed forces personnel.

Exeter university also have this in place

4. TUCO Academy

The newly formed TUCO Foundation went live on 1st April. All current Academy legislative training is now free of charge to both full and associate members when delivered online as a webinar. Courses include:

Food Safety Levels 2, 3, 4

Allergens Level 2 and 3

HACCP Levels 2 and 3

This will be available face-to-face for full members dependant on numbers but we can accommodate by offering places to nearby institutions. All details on courses, study tours etc are available on the website.

Level 4 will likely remain online initially then face-to-face if there is need but logistically will be difficult considering it is a 5 day course and usually only 1 or 2 people from a single institution would attend. The Food Safety course should be refreshed every 3 years as per EHO guidelines and we have asked if a reminder system would benefit institutions? There was a positive response to this being offered as a service and Sarah indicated she would be looking in to how this could be completed.

Peter suggested that the free of charge legislative training was such a great offer but wondered how the marketing was reaching members of the institution who make the decision on training were being reached. He suggested an email that could be sent by attendees from the region could be passed on to the relevant department, which might help to spread the word.

ACTION: Anj to create a generic email for Regional Chairs to use with bullet points on the free legislative training.

We ran 97 courses by the end of last year and nearly 1,000 people attended these, which was almost double the number of the previous year. We have now delivered over 2,000 Highfield Qualifications. The new curriculum is being added over the coming weeks, and will take us up to July 2025.

We have held a new Management Essentials course recently which covers 6 modules over 12 weeks including dealing with conflict, motivation and delegation and so far has been very well received. This will be repeated twice over the next year. We will also be holding an accredited Nutrition course which will help people understand the Menus of Change.

Development Days include Visual Merchandising in both Scotland on the 26th of September and Wales as a TBC and also Food Photography in Bury on the 18th of July.

We will also be holding some cookery development days, with Dipna Anand at her restaurant on the 5th of September and a potential one with Cyrus Todiwala in January. We will also be working with 'Made In Hackney' to look at Korean and West African food.

As the NVQs are being phased out, we will be working with City and Guilds Assured to replace a bespoke qualification on chefs skills and another on Front of House. It will include leadership accredited by the ILM; this will come with a digital certification which can be added to media eg on LinkedIn. We will also be running webinars around Nudging and Menu Engineering on the 17th and 24th of July, along with a session on Global Food Trends with Charles Banks in January 2025.

The Winter Conference will be held on 14th January 2025 in Manchester where Dr Vincent Walsh will be speaking on Regenerative Farming. The theme is Wellbeing for students and employees. The social dinner will be held in the Manchester Museum and the study tour following the conference will take in the food markets and Manchester's street food offering.

Study Tours include:

- World of Coffee in Copenhagen 26 – 28th June
- NACUFS Louisville Kentucky 15 – 21st July which will include a food tour based on barbeque and Kentucky-style food
- Beer, Wine and Olive Oil – Italy, 2nd – 5th September

5. Chefs' Competitions

Sarah reported that Tom is looking at recruitment of a new Chef at Huddersfield.

6. Board Report

Peter advised members that financially, TUCO is very strong. We have several new members joining us amongst the LEAs and frameworks being used by the LEAs are bringing in a lot of revenue. Amongst the new members joining us are Wakefield City Council, Calderdale and Kirklees.

The theme for the summer conference to be held in Exeter from 29th – 31st July is 'Tipping Point' and we have some excellent speakers presenting to us.

The TUCO Foundation has now been officially established as a training and charitable organisation, which means that we receive tax concessions in order to expand our training offering to members. We have now allocated £700K of funds to the Foundation and have set up a separate Board of Trustees for it which is chaired by Matthew White

7. Member Updates

Sheffield Hallam

Michael reported that they are busy on campus with 3 new buildings opposite the train station, a couple of which will be outsourced. Most of their cafes are very generic so with the new two, this should introduce something a little different. They are still focused on keeping costs low for the students.

Huddersfield

They have a couple of buildings being demolished in the summer and people are still working from home. They have a new Health and Innovation Campus opening. They are reducing the scope of their hospitality service and are offering a very straightforward hospitality service.

Within the new campus they will have a new café which will have to be compliant with the WELL Standard. Their portfolio of outlets has gone from 13 to 7. They no longer have their Vegetarian and Vegan Outlet but they do offer a £2.50 Vegan Small Plate.

Sheffield

The number of outlets at Sheffield has dropped from 20 to 13. Turnover is £4.5 million but they cannot compete with the likes of Tesco Meal Deal. However, their on-campus pubs are still trading really well. Michael commented that Hallam make their own sandwiches but this does increase their labour costs.

It appears that universities in general are cutting costs wherever they can and in particular staff are not allowed to travel.

Member Updates AOB

- All members present commented on the pressures they are currently under to save money. Huddersfield staff (across most departments) are 'grounded' and not able to travel. Therefore, they are not able to justify travel to the TUCO Conference this year. Peter added that though he is coming to conference, he knows of many other universities that also have the 'travel ban' in place, including Nottingham University. Huddersfield added that they do plan on travelling to the Manchester Winter Conference and will attend even if they have to cover the cost of travel themselves.
- Huddersfield commented on University buildings being empty (with so many working from home). The University is currently space planning to reduce costs moving staff around the campus. All other members present also stated that this was an issue at their sites and they are also using space planning to move staff around and save money. They had quite a long conversation about this with concerns raised about buildings being left empty and the cost to maintain them. They also discussed the closure of catering retail sites to focus on volumes through a fewer number as they are no longer getting the footfall. Huddersfield have reduced their outlets from 13 to 7. Sheffield University are looking to reduce theirs from 20 to 13.
- Huddersfield stated that one of their buildings is being re-developed as an eco-building, with sustainable materials being used for building, decoration and furniture. They will also have living walls. The eco-building is due to open in September. The building is to promote health and well-being and the menus for the catering outlets available in the site also have to reflect this. Sarah has some concerns about this as plant-based vegan/vegetarian has not sold well on campus with the majority of students opting for cheaper high carb filling products. They have previously closed a plant-based outlet. The wider group had a discussion about this saying that the trend for cheaper traditional 'student food' was also being seen on campus as the students just wanted to 'fill up'.
- Sheffield Hallam are re-developing 2 sites on a prime footfall area in Sheffield 'Howard Street'. The outlets are to be cafes. <https://www.shu.ac.uk/campus-plan/featured/howard-street-development>
- All members discussed the high cost of labour accounting for 50 to 78% of product costs.
- In Peter's board update he mentioned the increase in membership outside of the University sector citing Local Authorities being a major spend as well as NHS, Academies, Police and other public sector authorities. He gave a kind nod to the procurement department for attracting members through our frameworks and services. Peter also provided an update about the TUCO Foundation and why this has been set up, noting tax benefits to provide more money/opportunity to offer free/subsidised courses to members. £700,000 has been transferred from TUCO to set up Foundation account.
- Sarah gave an update on the Academy and mentioned the provision of FREE legislative courses. This was really well received and lots of questions were asked about giving access to these courses to other departments within the University. Peter asked Sarah how this was being communicated to members.



The University Caterers Organisation

- Sarah stated that an email had gone out and there was information on the TUCO website. Peter said that communication of such positive benefits needed to be improved. Lee from Sheffield College added to that stating that until recently he really had no idea what amazing things TUCO did and that we need to do a better job of communicating all our services out to members. Sarah said she would raise this with Marketing.

8. Any Other Business

There being no further business, Peter duly thanked the members for their attendance and brought the meeting to a close.

9. Dates and Venues for Future Meetings

Autumn (October/November) – date to be confirmed and either in person or online.

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Summer 2024



External factors impacting costs and crops



Weather – El Nino & La Nina

El Nino

Above average sea surface temperatures

Typically dryer in Central America & South East Asia

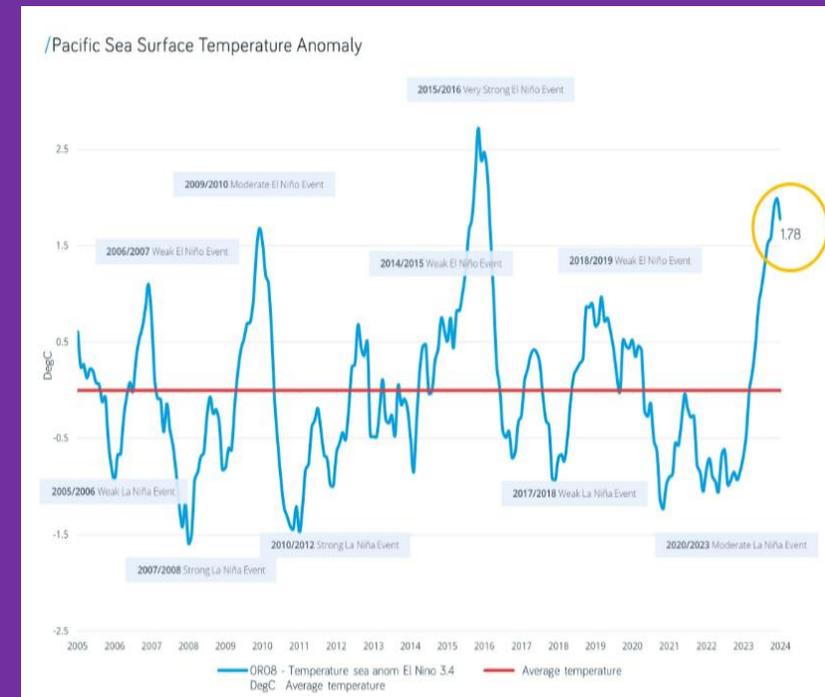
Typically warmer in Central and South America

La Nina

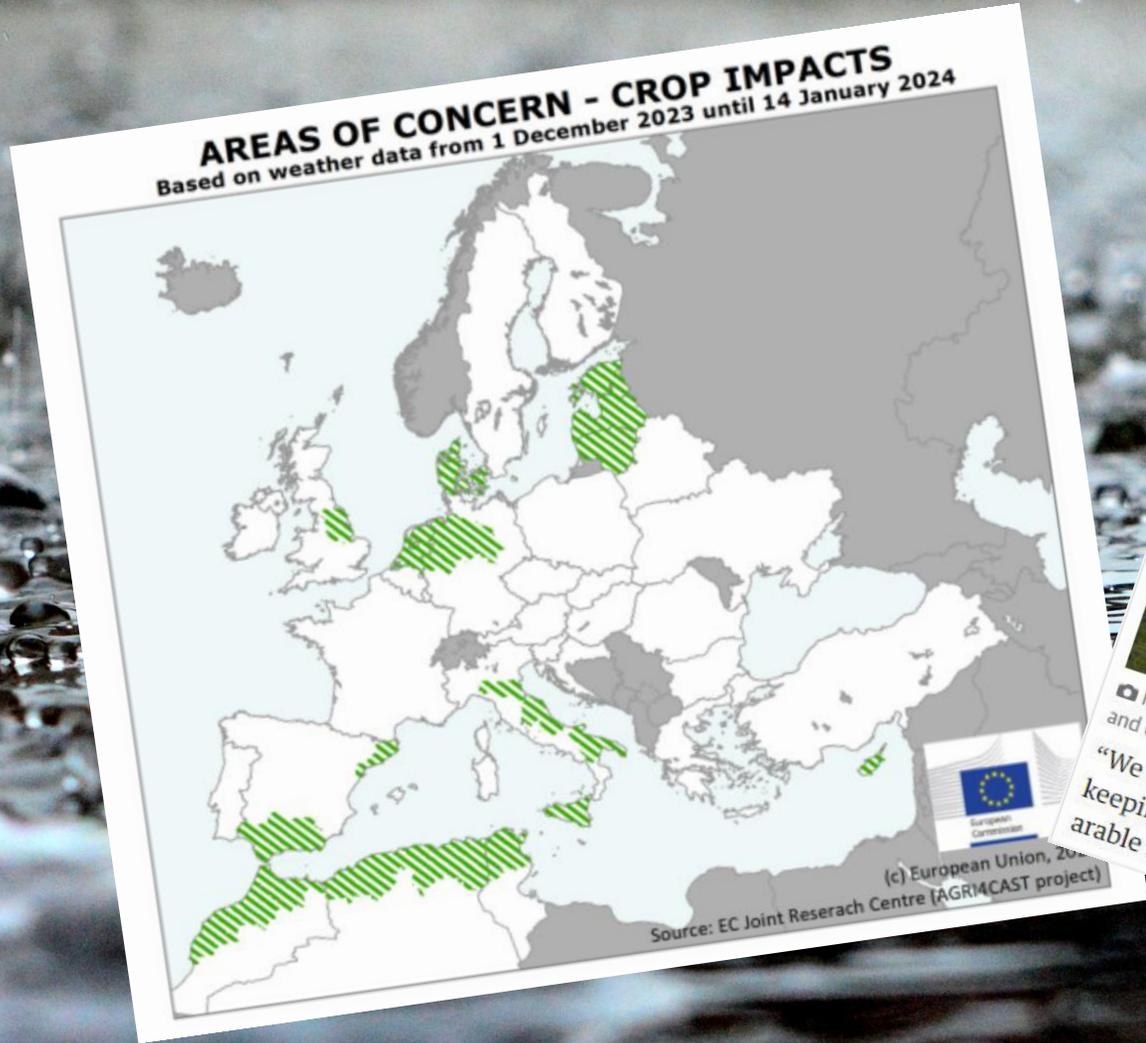
Below average sea surface temperatures

Typically wetter in South America and South East Asia

Typically cooler in Central and South America



Weather UK and Europe



'Our yields are going to be appalling': one of wettest winters in decades hits England's farms

Flooding top of agenda at NFU conference after extreme weather ruins thousands of acres of crops



In the 12 months to January, 76 of England's 139 hydrological areas (regions around rivers, lakes and other water sources) had 'exceptionally high' rainfall. Photograph: Martin Pope/Getty Images

"We have had the wettest October, November and December since we started keeping records 27 years ago," says Andrew Ward, a Lincolnshire-based arable farmer.

Cost of Labour

	NMW Rate	Increase in pence	Percentage increase
National Living Wage (21 and over)	£ 11.44	£ 1.02	9.8%
18-20 Year Old Rate	£ 8.60	£ 1.11	14.8%
16-17 Year Old Rate	£ 6.40	£ 1.12	21.2%
Apprentice Rate	£ 6.40	£ 1.12	21.2%
Accommodation Offset	£ 9.99	£ 0.89	9.8%



Further impacted by the knock-on implications of NLW into existing workforce and compounded by the cost of seasonal agricultural labour

Shipping up-date

Alternative shipping route avoiding Red Sea

— Using Red Sea/Suez Canal	— Around Cape of Good Hope
10,000 nautical miles (18,520km)	13,500 nautical miles (25,002km)
25.5 days*	34 days*

*Based on ultra large container vessel's average speed of 16.48 knots



Source: Veson Nautical



Top Story



Houthi Step Up Attacks Hitting Second Ship and Possibly Downing US Drone

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Freight price up 80% despite return of some Red Sea journeys

Unions and the shipping industry have expanded the categories of vessels that have to pay mariners more to work in the Red Sea following a spate of attacks on ships.

UK manufacturers hit by Red Sea disruption and rising shipping costs

Supply chain difficulties have led to job losses and cuts in purchasing and stocks, S&P Global poll shows



Shipping companies are having to reroute freight due to hostilities in the region. Photograph: Khaled Desouki/AFP/Getty Images

Britain's factories have been hit by disruption caused by Houthi rebel attacks in the Red Sea that led to shipping delays and contributed to rising costs, as the boss of Adidas warned about "exploding" global freight rates.

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Red Sea attacks: 'Our shipping costs have jumped 250%'

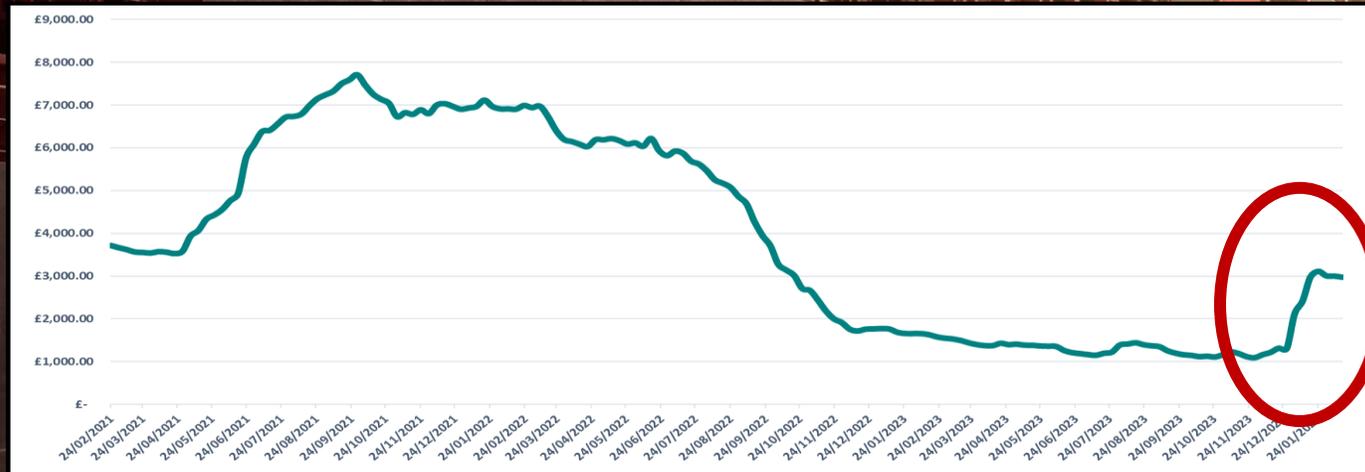
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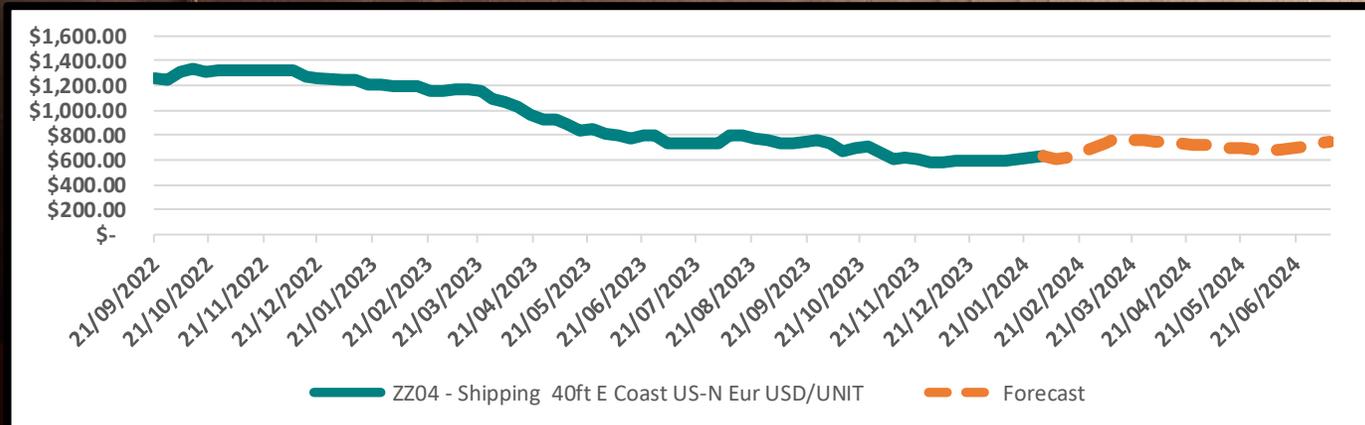
Israel-Gaza war

Shipping up-date

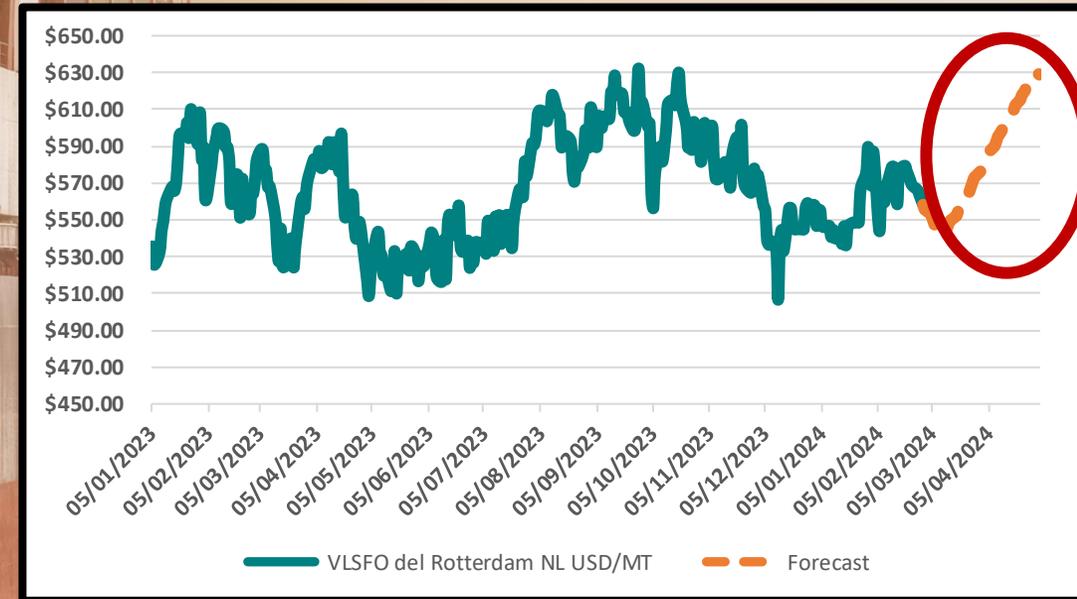
Global Container Index



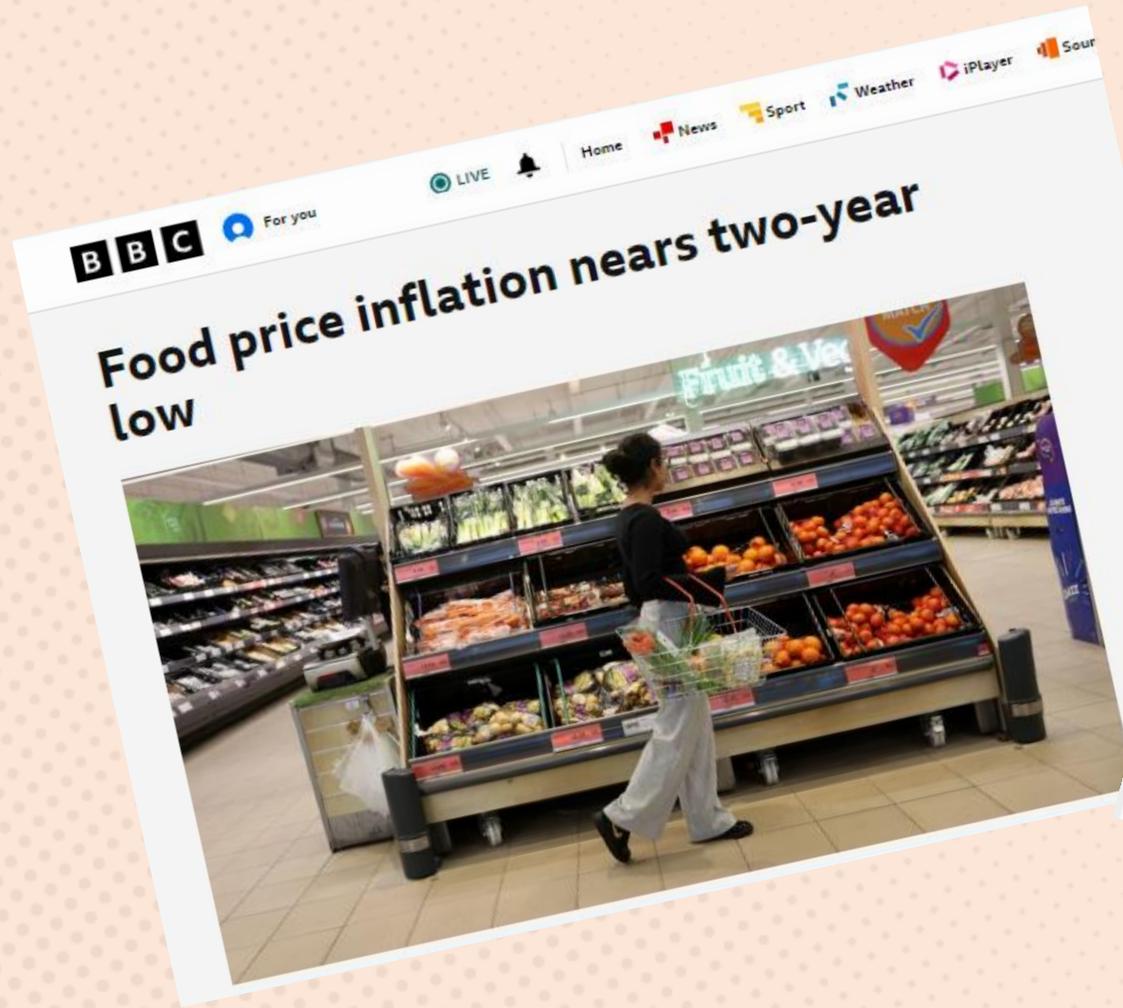
America > UK



Bunker adjustment factor



Media coverage



What have we been doing ?

Growing regions



New suppliers



Service levels



Improved logistics



Best of British



Sustainability



Range expansion



NPD



An aerial photograph of a vast agricultural landscape at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. The landscape is divided into numerous rectangular plots of land, some of which are dark brown, suggesting they are recently plowed or planted. In the distance, there are mountains and a small town or village. The word "fresh" is overlaid in the center of the image in a white, cursive font.

fresh

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a Sysco company

SPRING IN TO SUMMER

New fresh products for your menus



Range and NPD



SPRING IN TO SUMMER

We will be launching 40 new lines this summer



Best of British

freshdirect™
a Sysco company

BEST OF BRITISH



Summer 2023

SUPPORTING BRITISH GROWERS

Here are some of our partnership growers and farmers we work alongside throughout the British Isles.

1. AH Worth
2. AB Produce
3. Abbey View Produce
4. Berry Gardens / Driscoll's
5. Bryans Salads
6. Clock House Farm
7. Dawndew Salad
8. De Groot
9. E Park & Sons
10. Goldcircle Mushrooms
11. Gomez
12. Hughes Mushrooms
13. Hammond Produce
14. M Leggate and Sons
15. Len Wright Salads
16. Naylor Produce
17. Peloton Produce
18. Lower Reule Farm
19. Red Star Growers
20. Stonegate Farmers
21. Sun Salads
22. Westlands
23. Freshgro
24. PC Thorold's
25. Lincolnshire Field Products
26. R&RW Bartlett
27. J Pao
28. Riviera Produce
29. The Green House Growers
30. Stewarts



ISLE OF WIGHT TOMATOES

Location
Isle of Wight

Produce (April - October)
Tomatoes, aubergines, Padron peppers

Where it began
Formerly 'The Tomato Stall', founded in 2007, Isle of Wight Tomatoes grows tomatoes renowned for their excellent flavour and innovation, grown on the island with the most hours of sunshine in the UK.

Innovation
'Zero waste, maximum taste.' Fruit is fully developed on the vine, providing maximum ripeness, higher sugar content and fuller flavour.

The company works alongside seed companies globally to create and trial over 200 new varieties to seek the best varieties for the future.

Sustainability
Isle of Wight Tomatoes encourages native bumblebees to pollinate 40 varieties of tomato across 27 hectares of glasshouses, using a closed-loop biodegradable system. This means all crop waste is recycled to enrich the organic soil.

Rainwater is stored and used in the growing process, with excess heat and CO₂ from local power generators used to heat glasshouses and reduce emissions.



C 146259
British Mixed Baby Plum Tomatoes



C 146258
British Yellow Cherry Tomatoes



C 146260
British Beef Tomatoes



C 146257
British Red Cherry Tomatoes

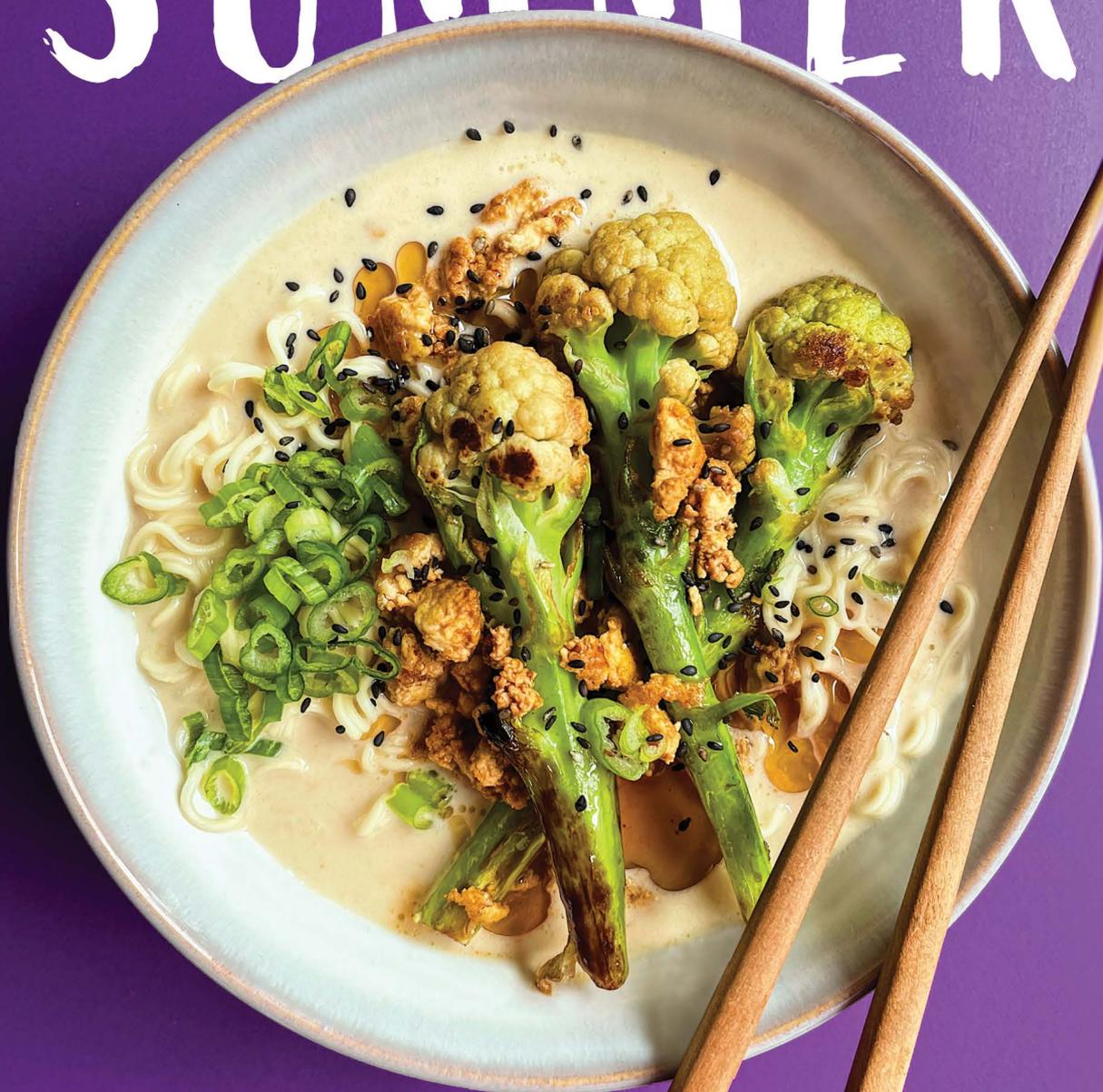
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**Thank you
for your
time any
questions**



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SPRING IN TO SUMMER



New fresh products for your menus

Spring 2024



New fresh products

Our expert food team would like to recommend a special selection of new and exciting products, perfect for your spring and summer menus. We have launched even more great British products in direct response to customer requests, enabling you to continue to showcase the freshest produce on your menus while supporting British farmers.

From our innovative new CauliShoots®, with no prep and no waste, to our vibrant tomatoes grown on the Isle of Wight and vegan foraged mushroom meat, there are products to refresh every menu. Our new products not only look and taste great, but many support local suppliers and farmers, giving you and your customers something to enjoy and talk about. We're all about sourcing responsibly and celebrating the flavours of the season.

To find out more, get in touch
info@freshdirect.co.uk
0344 873 0868

Now available in large size



107912 | Large Lemon | 1 x 5 lemons

All-year-round | Sourced from Spain and South Africa | Westfalia

Our hand-selected lemons are an essential component of the latest cocktail trends. With their impressive size and vibrant flavour, they are available year-round.

fresh.
fruit



Now available in large size

**107829
Large Easy Peelers
10kg**

January - October | Sourced from Morocco, Egypt and South Africa | de Groot

Enjoy the juicy and tangy sweetness of our large easy peelers, available from January to October and carefully chosen for their large size.

**1078451
Piel de Sapo Melon
1x8**

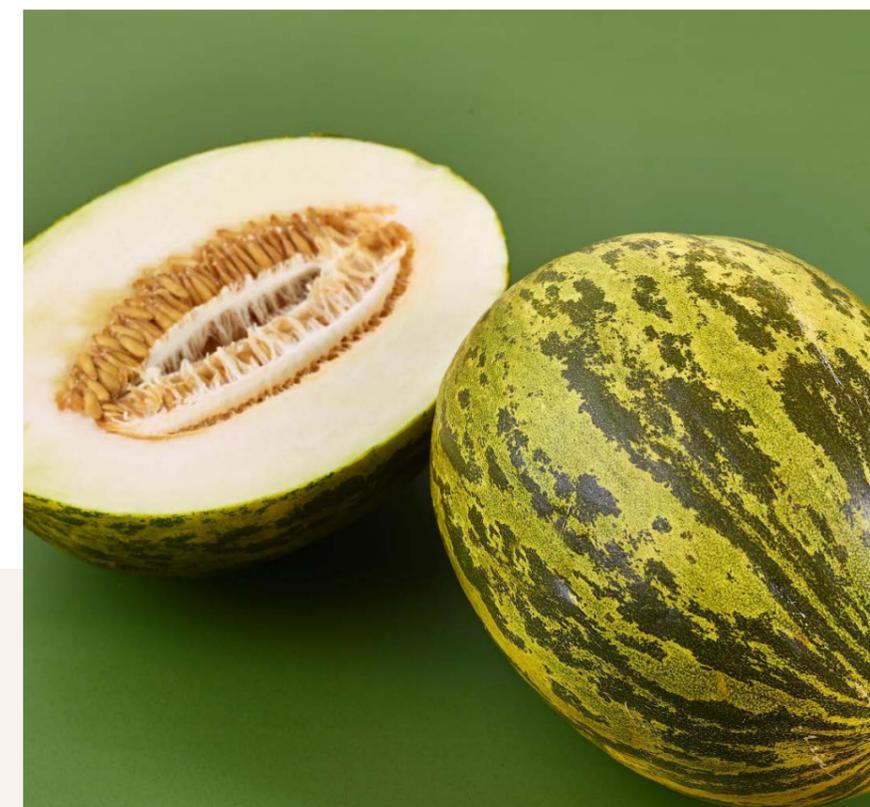
All-year-round | Sourced from Spain and Brazil | VIDAfresh

With a thick, green outer rind and pale green to white flesh, it offers a mild, honeydew-like flavour. Popular in Spain, you can now enjoy this refreshing fruit year-round.



Our chef's comments

One of the best-flavoured melons around, piel de sapo (frog skin) melon, sometimes known as Christmas or Santa Claus melon, is fantastic simply served with prosciutto di Parma (particularly if compressed to intensify texture and taste), in fruit salads, or frozen and blended for a melon granita.





Available from May

107970
Blueberry Snack Pot 
20 x 80g

Sourced from UK, Spain, Poland and South Africa | Driscoll's

Each plump and juicy blueberry is bursting with just the right balance of sweetness and tartness, making it the perfect healthy snack.

beautiful berries



107971
Strawberry Snack Pot 
20 x 80g

Sourced from UK | Driscoll's

Packed with sweet, juicy flavours in every bite. Each strawberry is hand-picked at peak ripeness, ensuring a fresh and delightful snacking experience.

Available from May



succulent salads

Baby Cucumbers
4kg

All-year-round | QPI

A smaller version of the classic cucumber, featuring a tender skin. Ideal for health-conscious snacking, these cucumbers also make a good addition to salads or children's menus.



Our chef's comments

Great for home-made 'dill pickles', they also work well split in half and char-grilled as a hot garnish or side dish or used in fish dishes.

3106701
Sweetbite Peppers
20 x 200g

All-year-round | Available with notice | MDIE

Colourful baby peppers with a sweet taste and crisp texture, making them a perfect addition to your kitchen, whether enjoyed raw or cooked.



Our chef's comments

Vibrant baby peppers, can be treated as Padrón peppers or stuffed with cheese then grilled and marinated for starters and sides or as a salad component.



Available from May

300018 | British Green Chilli | 3kg 
300019 | British Red Chilli | 3kg

May - October | Barfoots

These vibrant peppers offer a fresh and spicy flavour that adds depth to any dish.

1079181 | Baby Watercress 
4 x 250g

All-year-round | Westlands

Experience the classic peppery and spicy taste of British indoor-grown watercress. This watercress is unwashed for a longer shelf life, so you can enjoy its benefits for longer.



Our chef's comments

Great flavour and a 100% yield. Baby watercress doesn't have the 'leggy' stalks that often end up in the bin with regular watercress. Excellent for garnishing steaks and grills as well as in burgers.

1079161 | Micro Rocket Wasabi 
8 x 20g

All-year-round | Westlands

Tender and peppery, this microgreen will elevate your dishes with its distinctive wasabi kick.



Our chef's comments

Brilliantly intense and punchy mustard/wasabi/horseradish flavour. Great for finishing sushi, to add punch to salads or as a garnish for steak, beef, mackerel and other oily fish.

1079171 | Sunflower Shoots 
8 x 100g

All-year-round | Westlands

Packed with a crunch and refreshing crispness, these micro shoots boast a nutty flavour, adding texture and taste to any salad.



Our chef's comments

Excellent ingredient to add height, texture and taste to salads and garnishes.

10795151 | The Shoot Mix | **8 x 100g** 

All-year-round | Westlands

The Shoot Mix is a blend of sunflower shoots, golden pea shoots, broccoli shoots and micro-red amaranth. This combination offers a spectrum of flavours, from aromatic, bold and peppery to citrusy, earthy, floral and sweet.



Our chef's comments

A nice alternative to traditional leaf mixes, bringing more texture and variety to the plate and adding height to dishes. Can be used to top off salad bowls or as a garnish for a host of recipes.

1079131 | Petite Leaf Mix | **4 x 250g** 

All-year-round | Westlands

Our new British-sourced mixed salad is available year-round and has a longer shelf life for your convenience. This colourful mix includes four or more tender salad leaves: chicory, kale, komatsuna, land cress, red amaranth, red mustard and red vine sorrel.



Our chef's comments

A really delicate, refined salad mix packed with flavour, for use on more premium and refined dishes as a side salad or garnish.

**Elevate
your dish**



*Luscious
leaves*



1079191
Asian-Inspired Micro Leaf Mix 
16 x 20g

All-year-round | Westlands

Our Asian-Inspired Micro Leaf Mix, sourced from British farms, consists of three or more of the following micro leaves: mizuna, red pak choi, Thai basil and coriander. Create vibrant and fresh dishes inspired by Asia, all year round.



Our chef's comments

Great little micro leaf mix which saves chefs having to buy multiple packs of micro greens. Punchy Asian flavours great for finishing bao buns, Asian-inspired salads and fish dishes.

To find out more, get in touch
info@freshdirect.co.uk
0344 873 0868



Produce from The Isle of Wight

3000121
British Isle of Wight Piccolo Tomato 
250g

April - October | IOW

The ultimate cherry tomato, bursting with flavour and aroma, is organically grown. Perfect for salads and cooking with, it adds sweetness to any dish. Isle of Wight Tomatoes lead the way in growing the finest Piccolo tomatoes, renowned for their superior flavour.

Available from April



Available from April

3100831
British Isle of Wight Padrón Pepper 
250g

April - October | IOW

Small green peppers, also known as Herbón peppers, sustainably grown on the Isle of Wight. Typically mild in flavour, these peppers offer a slight kick for those who prefer a bit of spice.



Our chef's comments

Classic tapas pepper great for sharers and sides, deep-fried or char-grilled and sprinkled with smoked sea salt.



Available from April

1079421
British Isle of Wight Striped Aubergine 
1 x 15

April - October | IOW

Renowned for their vibrant, striped pink skin, these aubergines are also known as graffiti aubergines, offering a uniquely sweeter flesh.



Our chef's comments

Premium-quality aubergine with a creamier, sweeter flesh than regular. Can be used just like a standard aubergine.

107941
British Isle of Wight Premium Beef Tomato 
3kg

April - October | IOW

This mixed box features a combination of Fuji, Marsilia and Beorange beef tomatoes, each renowned for their premium flavour and quality. Carefully grown on the Isle of Wight, these tomatoes offer a rich and meaty texture.



Available from April

Moreish Mushrooms



1079251
Foraged Shredded 
Mushroom Meat
4 x 500g

All-year-round | Northern Ireland
Umi Foods

Our vegan meat alternative is made from locally sourced mushrooms grown in Northern Ireland. Offering versatility all year round, it is perfect for elevating dishes like bao buns and wraps.



Our chef's comments

Meeting the need for 'cleaner' vegan menu options this pulled mushroom meat is neutral in flavour, allowing chefs to add their own twist, e.g. adding sesame oil, 5-spice, soy and garlic to create a vegan Chinese crispy duck, or combining with barbecue sauce for a plant-based version of pulled pork.

1079261
Foraged Mushroom Meat 
4 x 500g

All-year-round | Northern Ireland
Umi Foods

Crafted from locally sourced mushrooms grown in Northern Ireland, with year-round availability, this natural vegan product offers versatile use as a meat alternative.



Our chef's comments

These chunky nuggets of shredded mushroom are ideal for vegan menu options such as ragus and casseroles, or can be broken down to replicate pulled beef in texture for barbecoas, shawarma or stir-fries.

107927
Large Portobello
Mushroom 110-140mm 
1.5kg

All-year-round | Northern Ireland
Gold Circle

A reflection of the latest mushroom trend, grown in Northern Ireland. This natural product serves as a versatile ingredient for creating vegan dishes, adding depth and savoury richness to your dish.



1074871 | Maitake Mushroom | 2 x 500g 

All-year-round | Livesey Brothers

Grown in clusters, the name of these mushrooms comes from Japanese and means 'dancing mushroom'. They offer a meaty texture and flavour and are available year-round, making them versatile for any menu. Maitake mushrooms are often referred to as hen-of-the-wood, or by their scientific name, *Grifola frondosa*.



Our chef's comments

The new 'darling' of the mushroom world and favoured by many Michelin-starred chefs. This umami rich mushroom barbecues brilliantly and can be brushed with any number of marinades' from teriyaki to barbecue. Great as a steak or burger alternative, a vegetable side, or broken up and sautéed to be added to other dishes as a component. If you haven't tried it before, you must give it a go!



3102281 | CauliShoots® | 15 x 250g 

All-year-round | Small volume | Barfoots

CauliShoots® are a new variety of cauliflower with sweet, nutty curds on succulent stems. They are a blank canvas for your cooking and are edible from tip to toe, so there's no prep and no waste, saving time for the chef.



Our chef's comments

The cauliflower equivalent to tenderstem. Really versatile veg that can be steamed, char-grilled, roasted or tempura'd. Multiple applications as a side dish, starter, sharer or vegan platter. Takes flavours and marinades really well.



bloomin' brassicas



**1079241
Tenderstem® Broccoli Tips** 
4 x 500g

All-year-round | Available from the UK and import | Barfoots

Selected for their tenderness, and with year-round availability, these fresh broccoli tips are trimmed and ready to use, providing a hassle-free cooking experience.



Our chef's comments

Great for when you want a more refined tenderstem with less stalk and more flowering head, perfect for steaming or char-grilling.

To find out more, get in touch
info@freshdirect.co.uk
0344 873 0868

perfect potatoes



107774
Chefs Choice Chipping and Roasting Potato 
20kg

All-year-round | Linwoods

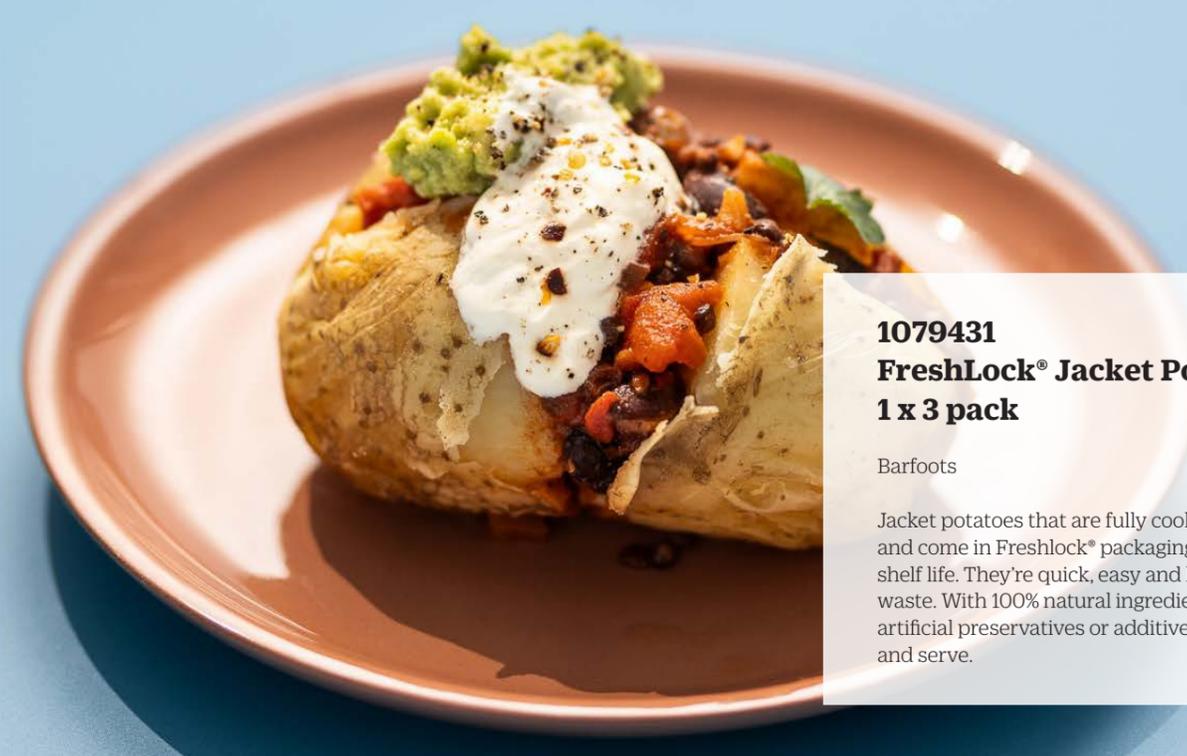
Our premium British potatoes are chosen by chefs and are specially selected for chipping and roasting. They are hand-selected, tested, and stored to ensure only the finest potatoes make the cut.

Why are they so good? It's all about careful variety management throughout the year to ensure the right balance of starch and sugars, offering an unbeatable taste in every bite. Each pack also comes with expert cooking and storage tips from the chefs themselves. Plus, our commitment to sustainability means they come in fully recyclable packaging.



Our chef's comments

A fabulous, consistent product that will guarantee you the perfect chip or roastie every time. Also works brilliantly for mash, rostis, sauté and purée.



1079431
FreshLock® Jacket Potato 
1 x 3 pack

Barfoots

Jacket potatoes that are fully cooked, prepared and come in Freshlock® packaging for an extended shelf life. They're quick, easy and help reduce waste. With 100% natural ingredients and no artificial preservatives or additives, simply heat up and serve.

Prepped solutions

107838 | Shredded Red Cabbage 3mm | 2.5kg

All-year-round | Live just-in-time line | TCK

Our ready-to-eat red cabbage is a versatile ingredient, offering a hassle-free way to incorporate a burst of colour and flavour to slaws and salads.

107834 | Shredded Kale 3mm | 2.5kg

All-year-round | Live just-in-time line | TCK

Carefully prepared to 3mm, washed and ready to eat. Enjoy this versatile ingredient in stir-fries or salads.

107839 | Shredded White Cabbage 3mm | 2.5kg

All-year-round | Live just-in-time line | TCK

Our ready-to-eat white cabbage is a versatile ingredient, offering a simple way to incorporate a crisp, mild flavour to your menus.

107789 | Diced Root Vegetable Mix, 5mm (Leeks, Carrots & Onions) | 5kg

All-year-round | Live just-in-time line | TCK

Save time in the kitchen while elevating your dishes with a blend of leeks, carrots and onions, perfectly diced to 5mm.



107837 | Shredded Savoy Cabbage 3mm | 2.5kg

All-year-round | Live just-in-time line | TCK

Washed and prepared for immediate consumption. This versatile ingredient is perfect for an array of recipes, offering a straightforward way to add a crisp texture and mild flavour to your dishes.



107796 | Diced Shallot 5mm | 1kg

All-year-round | Live just-in-time line | TCK

Our fresh shallots are expertly cut into small 5mm dice, offering convenience and saving you time in the kitchen.

107841 | Sliced Spring Onion 3-5mm | 2.5kg

All-year-round | TCK

Enjoy the effortless preparation of fully sliced spring onions; simply wash and they're ready to use.

Supporting British growers

Many of our new fresh products have been sourced from British farmers

1. Barfoots
2. TCK
3. Driscoll's
4. Gold Circle
5. Isle of Wight Tomatoes
6. Linwoods
7. Livesey Brothers
8. Umi Foods
9. Westlands



Isle of Wight Tomatoes

Location
Isle of Wight

Produce (April – October)
Tomatoes, aubergines, Padrón peppers

Where it began
Formerly 'The Tomato Stall', founded in 2007, Isle of Wight Tomatoes grows tomatoes renowned for their excellent flavour and innovation, on the island with the most hours of sunshine in the UK.

Innovation
'Zero waste, maximum taste.' Fruit is fully developed on the vine, providing maximum ripeness, higher sugar content and fuller flavour.

The company works alongside seed companies globally to create and trial over 200 new varieties and seek out the best varieties for the future.

Sustainability spotlight
Isle of Wight Tomatoes encourages native bumblebees to pollinate 40 varieties of tomato across 27 hectares of glasshouses, using a closed-loop biodegradable system. This means all crop waste is recycled to enrich the organic soil.

Rainwater is stored and used in the growing process, with excess heat and CO2 from local power generators used to heat glasshouses and reduce emissions.



Barfoots

Location
Bognor Regis

Produce
Caulishoots®, green beans, Tenderstem® broccoli, sweetcorn, chillies

Their story
Barfoots has operated as a family-owned business since it began in 1976. As growers, they believe in improving their impact on the world while producing delicious, nutritious vegetables and putting sustainability at the core of their business.

Sustainability spotlight
Barfoots' founder, Peter Barfoot, has a CBE for Services to Sustainable Farming, highlighting their expertise in sustainable agriculture and a desire to 'do better'.

They are self-sufficient, investing in sustainable waste management with anaerobic digestion at the heart of this commitment. They actually produce much more energy than they need for their factories and fields!

Recent technology that extends the shelf life of their FreshLock® sweetcorn which in turn reduces waste is one of multiple successful initiatives they operate. Not only this, but they also contribute to a number of schemes to relieve food poverty and reduce food waste.



Driscoll's



Location

Kent and Staffordshire

Produce

Strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, cherries, plums

Behind the berries

Driscoll's began in the early 1900's and grew into the global brand it is today, providing the freshest, best quality berries on the market, from multiple locations all over Britain.

Since 2020, Driscoll's have partnered with Fresh Direct, with all packaging co-branded to further strengthen the partnership

Sustainability spotlight

Driscoll's are on a journey to reduce the use of single-use plastic, via new punnets made of recyclable paper packaging.

The new paper packs use around 90 per cent less plastic, compared to previous plastic packaging.

This represents a plastic saving for Fresh Direct's customers totalling 47.5 tonnes per year.



Westfalia

Produce

Avocados, limes, lemons

Their story

Westfalia Fruit is a leading multinational supplier of fresh fruit and related products to international markets. Through their vertically-integrated supply chain they grow, source and ripen, pack, process and market quality avocados and other produce – across the year and across the globe.

It has strong supply partnerships that help it source avocados from Africa and South America. With the largest avocado-growing footprint in the world, they are recognised as the #avoexperts.

Sustainability spotlight

Accreditations ranging from GlobalGAP, IFS and Sedex to BRC and HACCP assure customers of their commitment to producing safe, high-quality food while ensuring the sustainable and responsible management of their bio-resources and the communities and environment in which they operate.



Westlands

Location

Evesham

Produce

Speciality tomatoes, leaves, edible flowers, micro leaf, tender leaf, samphire & other sea vegetables

Their story

With over 150 product lines to boast about and 80 years of expertise behind them, Westlands Nurseries bring market-leading innovation and world-class produce into foodservice kitchens nationwide.

All Westland products are UK grown and they are proud to be the only commercial grower of samphire in the UK.

Sustainability spotlight

Westlands pride themselves in investing time into the planet, and the community. This is backed by Red Tractor, LEAF and BRC accreditations. The nurseries benefit from renewable energy, combining heat and power to generate electricity around the Evesham site and to heat the greenhouses, saving unnecessary burning of gases. Rainwater is collected from the roofs of the glasshouses and stored in an open reservoir. This is then treated to be used in the irrigation of crops. Water management systems are a high priority for Westlands. All water that has been recycled gets nutrients added for optimal crop growth.



TCK



Location

London

Produce

Prepared fruit and vegetables

Their story

With over 35 years' experience in the fruit and vegetable industry, TCK delivers freshly prepared produce, seven days a week, 24 hours a day and has built a reputation for fresh food, innovation and a personal approach. Accredited to BRC AA standard, they are committed to producing top-quality produce, whilst remaining competitive in price and flexible in nature.

Quality

TCK's dedication to providing healthy, fresh cut produce is of utmost importance. They have an experienced technical team and quality assurance staff to ensure their procedures follow the rigorous standards required for food production. From procurement to storage to distribution, their team work hard to maintain a high standard of quality and hygiene



To find out more, get in touch
info@freshdirect.co.uk
0344 873 0868

Serving suggestions

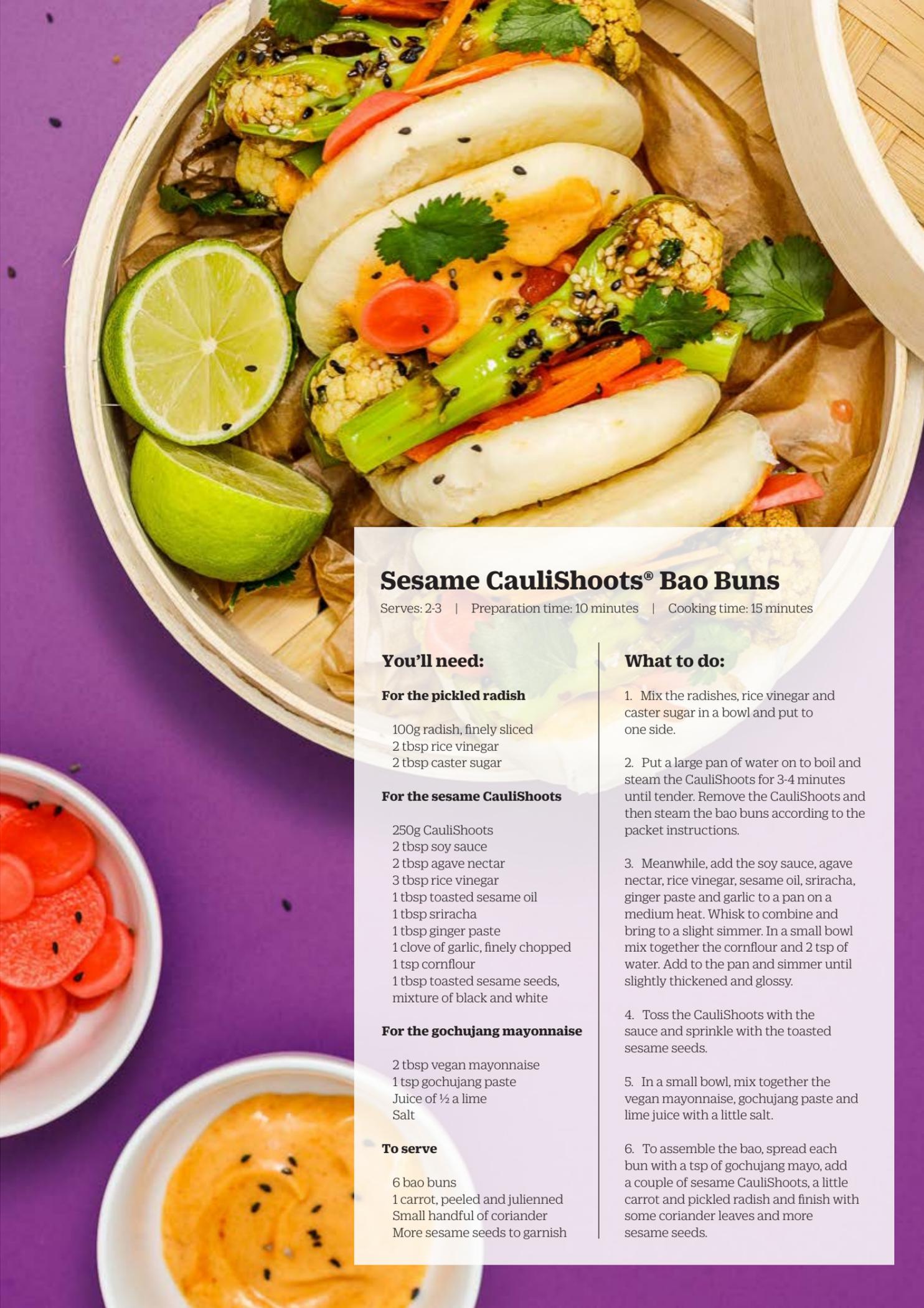
Everyone loves Tenderstem® broccoli, either as a side dish or in its own right, but some prefer the tips more than the stem! So we have launched a tighter trim version with less stem for more refined plates.



With the rise in popularity of clean-eating plant-based dishes, we're proud to launch our foraged mushroom 'meat' available in nuggets or pulled versions. Produced utilising the waste stalks from our flat mushroom growing process and without using any artificial ingredients, this is a great base for many dishes such as stews, stir-fries, as a replacement for pulled meats in tacos, burritos, and bao buns, as we have done in this dish where we have used it alongside our own Fresh Kitchen bulgogi sauce and paired with kimchi and tempura fried shiso leaf.



We have added a touch of luxury to the humble potato. Here we've created a rich, indulgent creamy mash using our own Chef's Choice potatoes with double cream, butter, and truffle oil from the Wild Harvest range, topped off with shavings of fresh, black winter truffle.



Sesame CauliShoots® Bao Buns

Serves: 2-3 | Preparation time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

You'll need:

For the pickled radish

100g radish, finely sliced
2 tbsp rice vinegar
2 tbsp caster sugar

For the sesame CauliShoots

250g CauliShoots
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp agave nectar
3 tbsp rice vinegar
1 tbsp toasted sesame oil
1 tbsp sriracha
1 tbsp ginger paste
1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
1 tsp cornflour
1 tbsp toasted sesame seeds, mixture of black and white

For the gochujang mayonnaise

2 tbsp vegan mayonnaise
1 tsp gochujang paste
Juice of ½ a lime
Salt

To serve

6 bao buns
1 carrot, peeled and julienned
Small handful of coriander
More sesame seeds to garnish

What to do:

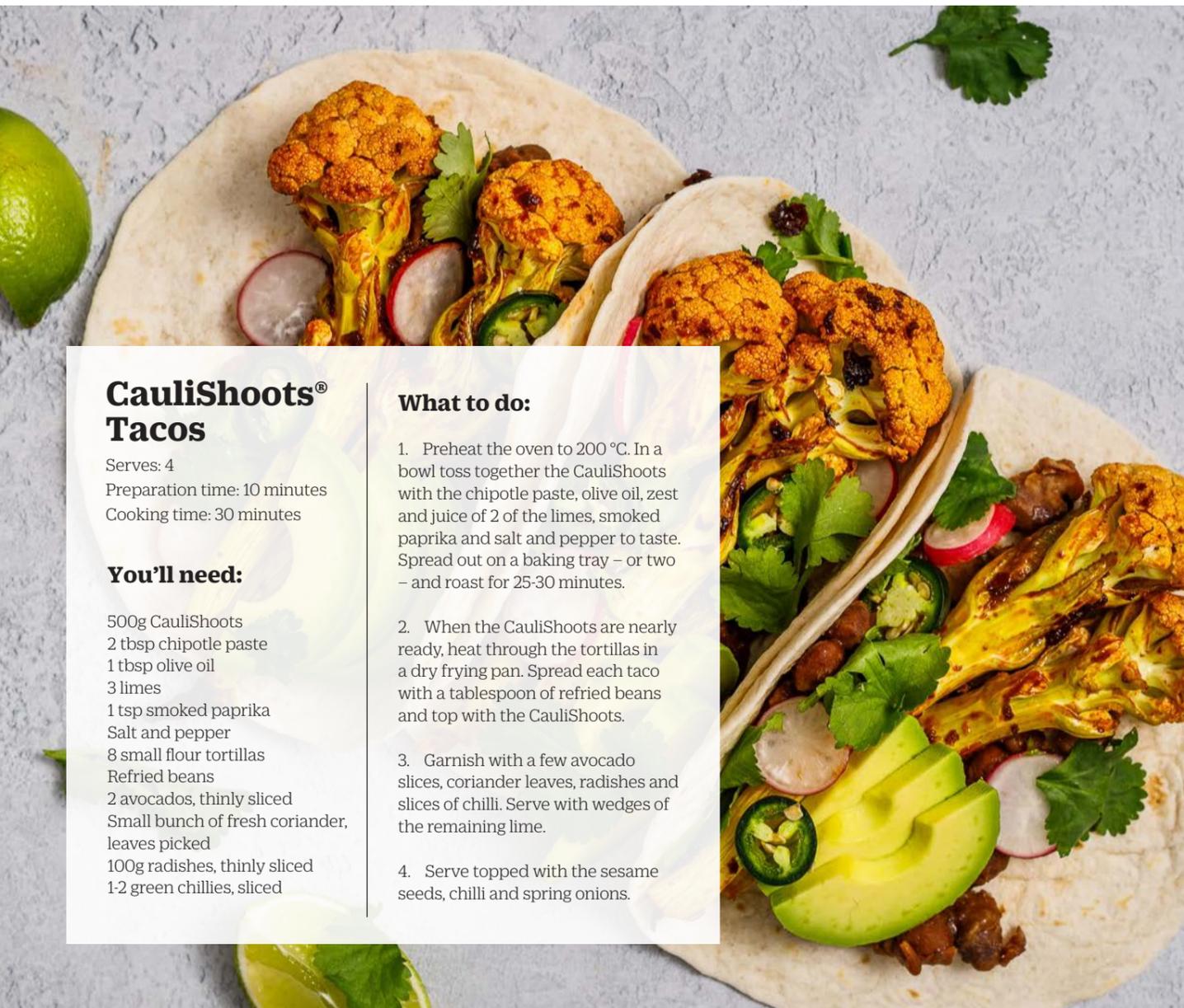
1. Mix the radishes, rice vinegar and caster sugar in a bowl and put to one side.
2. Put a large pan of water on to boil and steam the CauliShoots for 3-4 minutes until tender. Remove the CauliShoots and then steam the bao buns according to the packet instructions.
3. Meanwhile, add the soy sauce, agave nectar, rice vinegar, sesame oil, sriracha, ginger paste and garlic to a pan on a medium heat. Whisk to combine and bring to a slight simmer. In a small bowl mix together the cornflour and 2 tsp of water. Add to the pan and simmer until slightly thickened and glossy.
4. Toss the CauliShoots with the sauce and sprinkle with the toasted sesame seeds.
5. In a small bowl, mix together the vegan mayonnaise, gochujang paste and lime juice with a little salt.
6. To assemble the bao, spread each bun with a tsp of gochujang mayo, add a couple of sesame CauliShoots, a little carrot and pickled radish and finish with some coriander leaves and more sesame seeds.





what's more refreshing than a summer cocktail?

Well, perhaps a summer fruit jelly with blood orange sorbet? We've taken the classic flavours of a summer cocktail and transferred them into a dessert. To celebrate the start of our British strawberry season, we have paired a summer cocktail and British strawberry jelly with fresh oranges, a cucumber and mint syrup, borage flowers and leaves, and blood orange sorbet, and finished with sosa strawberry krispies and strawberry powder from Wild Harvest - summer on a plate!



CauliShoots® Tacos

Serves: 4
Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 30 minutes

You'll need:

500g CauliShoots
2 tbsp chipotle paste
1 tbsp olive oil
3 limes
1 tsp smoked paprika
Salt and pepper
8 small flour tortillas
Refried beans
2 avocados, thinly sliced
Small bunch of fresh coriander, leaves picked
100g radishes, thinly sliced
1-2 green chillies, sliced

What to do:

1. Preheat the oven to 200 °C. In a bowl toss together the CauliShoots with the chipotle paste, olive oil, zest and juice of 2 of the limes, smoked paprika and salt and pepper to taste. Spread out on a baking tray – or two – and roast for 25-30 minutes.
2. When the CauliShoots are nearly ready, heat through the tortillas in a dry frying pan. Spread each taco with a tablespoon of refried beans and top with the CauliShoots.
3. Garnish with a few avocado slices, coriander leaves, radishes and slices of chilli. Serve with wedges of the remaining lime.
4. Serve topped with the sesame seeds, chilli and spring onions.



The new darling of the culinary world and much favoured by Michelin-starred chefs, the maitake mushroom (also known as hen of the woods or dancing mushroom) is absolutely delicious and packed with umami-rich flavour. It works brilliantly on the barbecue and pairs really well with Asian flavours such as teriyaki and gochujang. If pan-seared, it makes a great vegan burger to rival any manufactured plant-based alternative.

Everyone loves a good roastie. Here we have taken our own Chef's Choice potatoes, parboiled them, ruffled them up to get a great crispy crust, and roasted them in goose fat with fresh sage, garlic and lots of sea salt. To add a bit of finesse, we've finished with deep-fried sage leaves and thinly sliced garlic.



Portobello mushrooms have a great, rich, meaty flavour and texture and make a great alternative to meat 'replacers' in a burger. So we've gone large. These XL portobello mushrooms have been allowed to grow for a few extra days to achieve the size and give the chef more plate coverage. Ideal for main courses, they are incredibly versatile; they can be used in a whole host of different applications. Here we have topped a roasted mushroom with a rich and creamy risotto.

We are very proud to be working with Julienne Bruno; they create fantastic vegan alternatives to classic mozzarella varieties. Here we've paired burella (a delicious vegan alternative to burrata) with our Fresh Kitchen balsamic pickled strawberries, micro basil, rocket and pink peppercorns for a delicious summery starter.





I am really pleased with and proud of our new product launches for the summer. From the innovative to the classical, we've worked with our trusted producers and suppliers to curate the range, and we think there's something for every chef. As always, the quality is top-notch, so we really hope you enjoy experimenting with these great ingredients. Happy cooking!!

- Ian Nottage, Head of Food Development

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Registered Office: Enterprise House, Eureka Business Park,
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