



Fruit and vegetables to the United Kingdom.

Trends and opportunities

The market

The single most important trend is the need for supply of almost all products 52 weeks a year. Having been treated like a commodity sector and sold only on price in the past, fresh produce is now starting to be marketed more like grocery products, with a higher profile. This means development of new products, greater store prominence, generic and specific marketing campaigns. Retailers have driven the sector by expanding the product ranges to increase purchasing.

The market for fresh produce is becoming more diverse as consumers demand greater variety and higher quality. Speciality varieties are marketed as premium produce and hold a higher value. The trend of double income families and a desire for convenience food has led to a range of new products. These include:

- ✍ Snack packs of baby carrots
- ✍ Packs of baby apples and bananas aimed at children
- ✍ Cut and peeled ready-to-cook packs of stir fry or casserole vegetables
- ✍ Washed mixed salads with dressing and crouton sachets
- ✍ Peeled, pitted and sliced fruit lunch packs with forks
- ✍ Ripe-and-ready-to-eat packs of avocados, pears, etc
- ✍ 'Flown for freshness' labelling

Fruit

Retail value of fresh fruit is A\$7.4 billion with 90 per cent of fruit imported. The major changes have been in soft citrus, berries, exotic fruit and pears, all of which have seen increased sales. The average UK multiple supermarket now offers:

- ✍ Two varieties of avocado
- ✍ Two or three varieties of banana
- ✍ Four to six types of apples
- ✍ Five or more varieties of citrus fruit

Vegetables

The UK remains self-sufficient in many traditional vegetables, and new storage techniques and seed varieties have improved domestic production. Exotic squashes, peppers and chillies are now grown outside in southern England.

Sixty per cent of produce sales are vegetables. Although potatoes remain the dominant vegetable, the trend is away from loose product to part-cooked, ready peeled, chipped and value-added potato. Potato and green vegetable consumption has decreased since 1970. Potatoes are also under threat from easy to prepare carbohydrates such as rice and pasta.

[Organic produce](#) is a growing area that also commands a premium of up to 30 per cent. Importantly, 70 per cent of organic products are imported, much from outside of the European Union.

Opportunities

There are a number of key areas where there are opportunities for Australian suppliers, principally:

- ✍ **Fresh temperate fruit** such as premium apple varieties, cherries, nectarines, peaches, late navel oranges, soft and easy-peel citrus, table grapes and berry fruit.
- ✍ **Fresh exotic fruit** – particularly, mangoes, tropical fruits and Australian native fruits (limited).
- ✍ **Fresh vegetables** – limited opportunities but with possibilities for onions and root vegetables.

Competitive environment

Most imports of vegetables come from Europe, mainly Netherlands and Spain, which have well-developed intensive horticulture. Both countries supply tomatoes and capsicum all year round.

More information

For further information please contact Austrade on 13 28 78 or email info@austrade.gov.au

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