

British supermarkets ration fruit and vegetables

6th March 2023



Shoppers in the United Kingdom (U.K.) are having to hunt around to find supplies of fruit and vegetables. Britain's major supermarkets are rationing produce like cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes amid shortages from suppliers. The big chains have cited various reasons for the shortfall in supply that has left shelves bare in green-grocery aisles. Britain's biggest supermarket chain, Tesco, has limited purchases of certain vegetables to three per customer. Tesco attributed its shortages to adverse weather overseas. In particular, it said a drought in Morocco had led to poor yields. Tesco assured customers it was working day and night to "get things back to normal".

Other factors are being blamed for the rationing. Britain's farmers' union said higher energy costs meant it was no longer financially viable for many growers to operate. It also said a tomato disease has wiped out a lot of crops across northern Europe. Industry analyst James Walton said Brexit has played a part in distribution problems. He said: "The EU accounts for much of the UK's import volume. If there are shortfalls in production in the EU, then it makes sense for EU producers to serve their local demand first. This leaves less available for export to the U.K." Many shoppers are perplexed at seeing photos on social media of supermarket shelves across Europe, and in war-torn Ukraine, laden with fresh produce.

Sources: [cnbc.com](https://www.cnbc.com) / [thehill.com](https://www.thehill.com) / [france24.com](https://www.france24.com)

Writing

We should all grow our own vegetables. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

shoppers / hunt around / fruit / vegetables / shortages / cucumbers / supermarket / rationing / energy costs / crops / Brexit / imports / exports / perplexed / war-torn

True / False

- 1) Shoppers in the U.K. are hunting in forests for vegetables. T / F
- 2) There is a shortage of peppers in the United Kingdom. T / F
- 3) A UK supermarket is limiting the number of veggies customers can buy. T / F
- 4) The supermarket said a drought in Morocco caused shortages. T / F
- 5) Energy companies are blaming UK farmers for vegetable shortages. T / F
- 6) U.K. farmers are making big profits despite the vegetable shortages. T / F
- 7) The EU said it would supply the UK with whatever vegetables it needs. T / F
- 8) The article says Ukraine has more vegetables in shops than the UK does. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. shoppers | a. puzzled |
| 2. rationing | b. mentioned |
| 3. produce | c. held responsible |
| 4. cited | d. limiting |
| 5. yields | e. full |
| 6. blamed | f. foodstuff |
| 7. viable | g. amount |
| 8. volume | h. consumers |
| 9. perplexed | i. harvests |
| 10. laden | j. feasible |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Would you like to be a farmer?
- c) Should we all grow our own vegetables?
- d) What are your favourite fruit and vegetables?
- e) Do you think the UK's Brexit was a good idea?
- f) When was the last time you were perplexed?
- g) Why does war-torn Ukraine have vegetables but Britain doesn't?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the supermarket bosses?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. hunt around to find | a. three per customer |
| 2. limited purchases of certain vegetables to | b. back to normal |
| 3. Tesco attributed its shortages to adverse | c. for export to the U.K. |
| 4. a drought in Morocco had led | d. supplies of fruit |
| 5. get things | e. torn Ukraine |
| 6. Other factors are being | f. out a lot of crops |
| 7. it was no longer financially | g. blamed for the rationing |
| 8. a tomato disease has wiped | h. to poor yields |
| 9. This leaves less available | i. viable |
| 10. in war- | j. weather overseas |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of supermarkets?
- What do you think of the quality of supermarket vegetables?
- Have you ever experienced food rationing?
- What do you think of the rationing in the UK?
- How would you feel if supermarket shelves were bare?
- What do you like about your favourite supermarket?
- What challenges do farmers face?
- What advice do you have for shoppers in the UK?

Spelling

- hunt around to find upsilpes
- amid rosthgaes from suppliers
- shelves bare in green-grocery ealssi
- veseadr weather overseas
- a uhtdogr in Morocco had led to poor yields
- Tesco resudas customers it was working
- it was no longer financially bveila
- Industry anylsta
- iustridiotbn problems
- there are shtrafslllo in production
- Many shoppers are eplrexpded
- war-torn Ukraine endla with fresh produce

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. d	3. f	4. b	5. i
6. c	7. j	8. g	9. a	10. e

Role Play

Role A – Tomatoes

You think tomatoes are the best fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): apples, bananas or lemons.

Role B – Apples

You think apples are the best fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): tomatoes, bananas or lemons.

Role C – Bananas

You think bananas are the best fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): apples, tomatoes or lemons.

Role D – Lemons

You think lemons are the best fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): apples, bananas or tomatoes.

Speaking – Fruit

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| • Tomatoes | • Lemons |
| • Bananas | • Pineapples |
| • Kiwis | • Cherries |
| • Apples | • Plums |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	T	4	T	5	F	6	F	7	F	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.