

## PLAN NOW FOR INFLATION IMPACT

There is no escaping the reality that catering and hospitality operators face a very challenging period, with various factors making a spike in inflation almost inevitable across the rest of the year. These include labour shortages throughout the supply chain, along with higher packaging, import, distribution, and fuel costs. Businesses that plan ahead and keep menus flexible will be in the strongest position to stay competitive.



### Poultry

Poultry supply is a major concern as the impact of Covid continues to be seen globally. Demand is high across the board, and prices reflect this. As operators plan for Christmas, the best advice is to either place orders early to get the best pricing, or offer alternatives.



### Vegetables

Make the most of UK-grown carrots, cauliflower, broccoli and onion on menus while available, with descriptions such as "served with fresh seasonal vegetables".

### Fish and seafood

Many imported products are affected by higher distribution costs and continued disruption to supply. High quality fish and seafood from UK waters are the best value, but there are issues affecting price and availability, such as labour shortages in crab processing plants.



### Beef

As demand increases, all beef cuts including roasting joints, steak, and mince for burgers have seen significant price rises. As menus move from barbecues to roasts and joints, operators should check with suppliers regularly for the best value.



### Pork

Pork belly and ribs are in high demand, with many suppliers tempted by the high prices being paid in East Asia. Bacon and gammon are also starting to rise in price as demand outstrips supply. Less popular cuts will be better value for slow roasted and pulled pork dishes.



### Potatoes

UK crops are likely to be in higher demand after floods affected European growers, with supplies for frozen chips particularly affected. Spotlight fresh, UK-grown potatoes on menus.



### Berries

Feature English strawberries and raspberries while at their best. To enjoy the intense flavours, serve at room temperature with cream or ice cream as a dessert, or added to a cocktail or sparkling wine.



### Cooking oil

Oil is an essential ingredient in the production and preparation of many staple foods, and increased demand and reduced global supply is pushing up prices. It will be hard to avoid increased costs for cooking oil and associated products over coming months.

### Wine

Bad weather is adding to logistics challenges in several key wine-producing regions. There is a dramatically reduced harvest in New Zealand, while mildew has damaged the French grape crop. Prices will be higher so operators should build flexibility into their wine lists to benefit from offers.

## New ways to save your business money - and time

Fresh produce, frozen food and store cupboard staples are all likely to see price increases in the months ahead, but however challenging the market, there are ways to minimise the impact. Operators who place bigger orders with fewer delivery drops will be less affected by minimum order levels and higher delivery charges.

Of course, there is an onus on suppliers to raise their game, and the best of them will, as always, bend over backwards to make sure their customers get the service and products they are paying for.

However, operators who are prepared to meet them halfway, and plan their orders sensibly and sustainably, will be best placed to benefit. For the supply chain to work effectively, co-operation between suppliers and operators is essential.

Working with suppliers to make the most of produce when it's at its best in terms of availability, quality and value will be more important than ever.

### Rachel Dobson

Managing director  
Lynx Purchasing



### Salads

UK leafy salads are good quality this summer, with a great range available. Wet weather affects the crop, so be prepared to switch according to availability. As the UK season ends, suppliers will switch to imports, with higher costs and potential delays. Generic menu descriptions such as "seasonal salad" give maximum flexibility.



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