



SEASONAL PROCUREMENT

A FUTUREPLUS GUIDE



+ WHY EAT SEASONALLY?

Eating seasonally involves preferencing foods that are naturally harvested in your region at particular times of the year. There are several reasons why eating seasonally can support a sustainable food procurement system.

- **Food miles** - When you opt for produce that is grown seasonally within your country, the distance it needs to be transported is reduced.
- **Energy** - When food is grown in season, it can be produced with a lower energy (and sometime water) demand.
- **Cost** - There is often an abundance of produce when crops are in season. This can often reduce the price of the produce.
- Eating seasonally and eating locally often go hand-in-hand. This can be a great way to create social impact by **supporting your local farming communities**.

+ THINGS TO CONSIDER

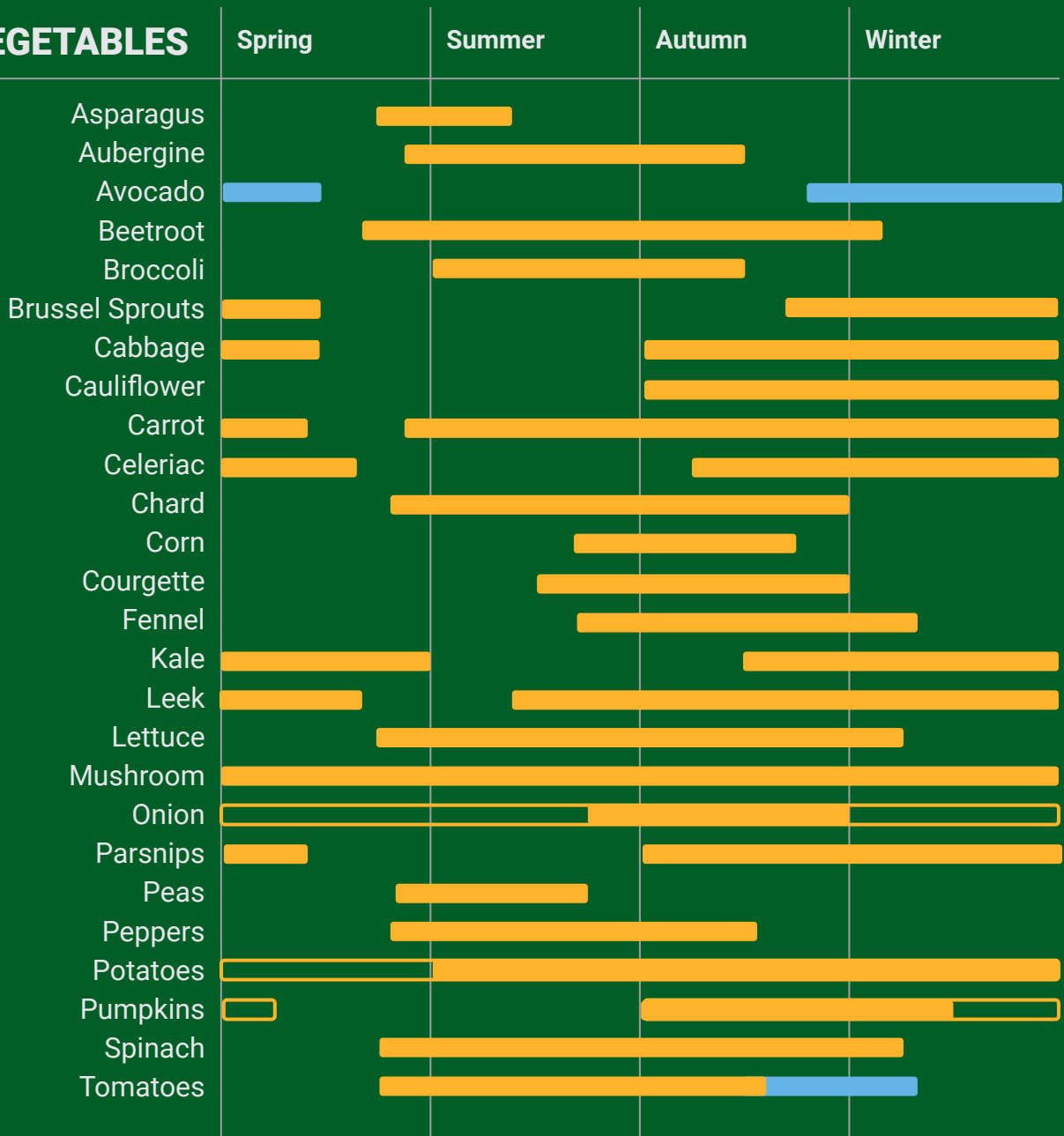
It's often worth considering how closely your suppliers sustainability and procurement values align with those of your business, as shared values make achieving goals easier. Some produce suppliers and food businesses specifically work with small scale UK growers to champion seasonal and local produce.

Some food items are not available all year round in the UK, so where their use is unavoidable, sourcing produce from the warmer Mediterranean regions is often the next best choice. These offer comparatively low food miles (compared to South America and Asia), yet the warmer climate allows for better growing conditions through the winter.

Ultimately if you are choosing to opt for a sustainable food offering, there are many factors that must be weighed up. Local and seasonal produce may help reduce food miles and energy requirements, but does not always mean that crops are produced in a way which minimises land and soil degradation, limits chemical use or meets high ethical standards. While procuring seasonal produce is a great first step, there are always many other factors to consider.



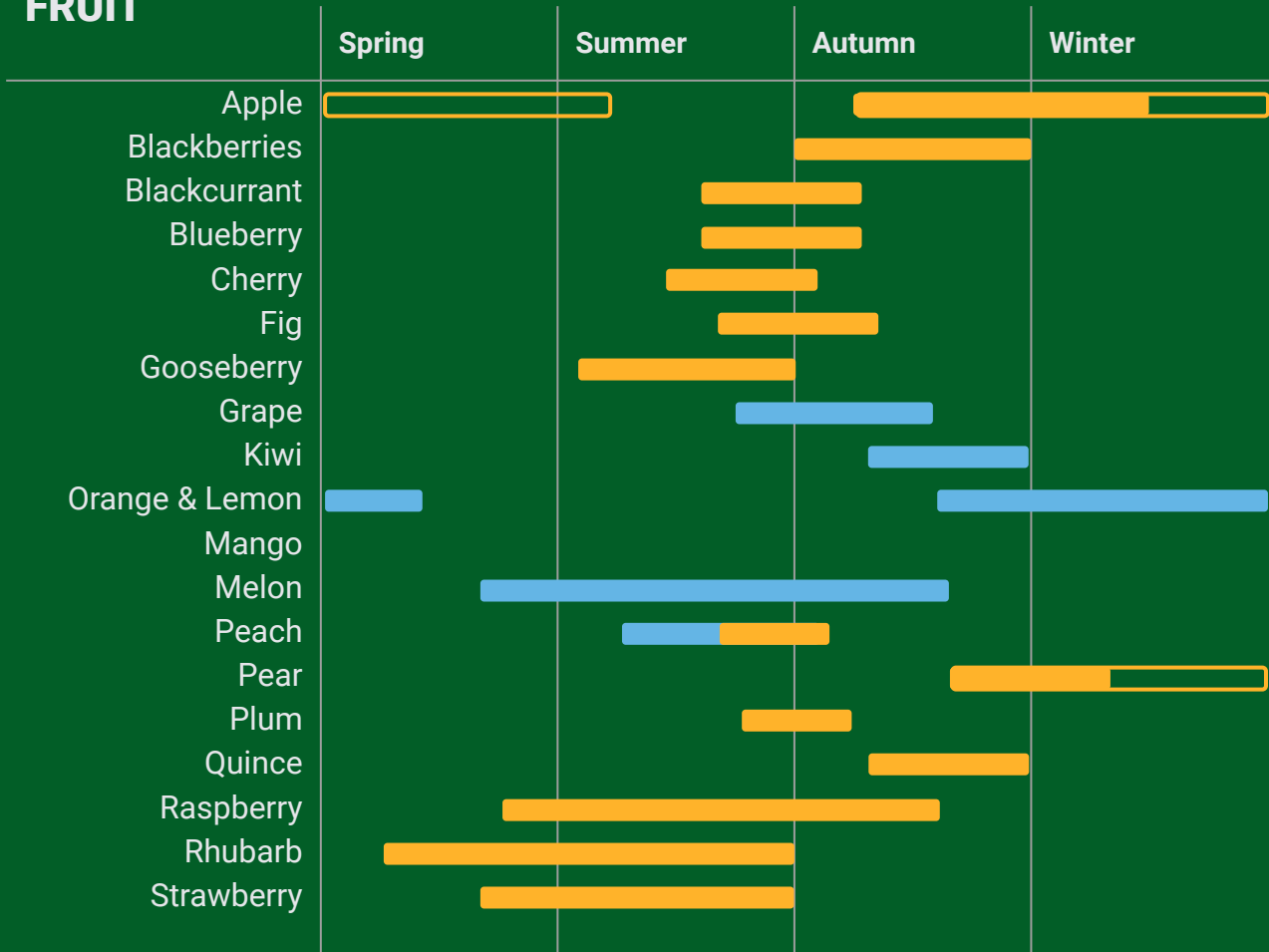
+ VEGETABLES




- UK produce season
- Produce that can be stored for consumption at a later date
- Mediterranean season (where UK production is not-possible / limited)



+ FRUIT



-  UK produce season
-  Produce that can be stored for consumption at a later date
-  Mediterranean season (where UK production is not-possible / limited)



+ MEAT AND FISH

Many wild-caught fish species are experiencing scarcity due to overfishing, while large fishing vessels can cause damage to marine habitats. Farmed fish is also often associated with poor animal welfare conditions and environmental pollution from production facilities.

The MCS [Good Fish Guide](#) offers a useful introduction into sustainable fish sourcing. To ensure seasonality of fish species, opt for fish procured through day-boats that operate from UK ports.

Modern animal husbandry means that many animal meats such as pork, chicken and beef are available all year round. The focus when sourcing these species should be on high animal welfare, and farming practices that focus on preventing environmental degradation.

Other meats such as game animals (venison, partridge, duck, goose etc.) are most widely available in the winter months, as this was traditionally the hunting season. Wild game is often associated with lower carbon footprints as it does not require feeding or housing.

+ NEED MORE HELP?

If you need some help getting started with a seasonal procurement plan, please get in touch: team@futureplus.co.uk

Alternatively, we offer consultancy services if you would like more comprehensive support in understanding what a sustainable food offering might look like for your organisation.