

Demand for sweetcorn increasing as temperatures rise

Detail Introduction :

Sweetcorn is not an easy crop to grow in the UK as it demands a lot of sunshine and it doesn't like cold soils but one company has a long history of growing it in the UK.

Barfoots is the UK's largest grower and importer of sweetcorn, founder Peter Barfoot CBE, pioneered the mass supply of supersweet corn to the UK retailers during the late 80s and 90s.

"Despite the challenges, Peter realized that his local area of Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and West Sussex, might be good for it, and he was right," explains Kim Barfoot-Brace. "Firstly, because we have the highest light levels in the UK – if you moved our farm just 20 miles north, you'd significantly reduce the quality and the yield. Secondly, because the Isle of Wight is to the South West of us, it acts as an offshore windbreak between us and the prevailing Atlantic fronts."



This special microclimate Barfoot's UK farms are situated in ensure the earliest crop possible, with the season running from July to October. The company grows sweetcorn on 1500 hectares.

"We've done a lot of work over the years, playing with different varieties and different techniques, to get it as sweet and juicy as it is now."

The quality of the soil and the biodiversity balance means everything when producing healthy and tasty crops said Kim. "To farm successfully, you need to be a custodian of nature, we farm the land so we can do it forever. Our packing facility is powered by our own waste, and we'll be certified 'Net Zero' across the farm too soon. Our founder Peter was awarded his CBE for services to sustainable farming."

Barfoots follows the sun around the world to offer year-round, consistent delivery of the sweetest, freshest corn on the cob, transported by sea and road to minimize carbon.

"Following the end of the UK season, we then head to Europe for the Autumn, with Barfoots Espana suppling until early December before we turn fully to Africa. Barfoots Senegal, in partnership with SCL, start harvesting in late November until late May. We then move back in a northerly direction, with Morocco and then Spain, Greece, France, and Germany providing the goods in Spring until we

return to full swing in the UK."

Demand for sweetcorn is good, and at this time of year it increases heading into spring, good weather brings week-on-week demand growth.

"Our biggest challenges just now are supply chain cost inflation, like all other produce all costs are rising. The costs of growing a crop, logistics, and importing have all increased and are still rising. Also inbound logistics from sea freight vessel disruptions."