

# Breaking News English.com

**British supermarkets ration fruit and vegetables – 6th March 2023**

## Level 4

Shops in Britain are short of fruit and vegetables. Big supermarkets are rationing things like cucumbers and tomatoes. They have given various reasons for the lack of supply, and why supermarket shelves are bare. Britain's biggest chain, Tesco, has limited some vegetables to just three per customer. Tesco said adverse weather and a drought in Morocco have led to poor harvests. It promised customers it was working to "get things back to normal".

Other factors are behind the rationing. Farmers are facing higher energy costs. It is more difficult for them to make a profit. In addition, a tomato disease has affected many farms across Europe. An expert said Brexit is also playing a part. He said: "If there are shortfalls in production in the EU,...this leaves less available for export to the U.K." U.K shoppers are shocked at online photos of supermarket shelves in war-torn Ukraine full of fresh produce.

## Level 5

Shoppers in Britain are hunting around to find fruit and vegetables. Britain's big supermarkets are rationing produce like cucumbers and tomatoes amid shortages from suppliers. The big chains have given various reasons for the shortfall in supply and why shelves are bare in supermarket aisles. Britain's biggest chain, Tesco, has limited purchases of some vegetables to just three per customer. Tesco said shortages were due to adverse weather overseas. It said a drought in Morocco had led to poor harvests. Tesco assured customers it was working hard to "get things back to normal".

Other factors are behind the rationing. Britain's farmers are facing higher energy costs. It is no longer profitable for many growers to operate. In addition, a tomato disease has wiped out various crops across Europe. An industry analyst said Brexit has also played a part. He said: "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 shocked at seeing photos on social media of supermarket shelves in Europe, and in war-torn Ukraine, full of fresh produce.

## Level 6

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.