

# LOVEJOYS

3rd October 2018

Dear Customer

## **2018/2019 Potato crop update**

Unfortunately the unpredictable weather this year has decimated potato crops across the UK and North West Europe and I feel I need to write to you regarding this year's crop, as everything seems to have been against our growers:

1. The Beast from the East - temperatures were too low to plant new crop potatoes on time, with delays of up to 4 weeks.
2. A very wet April - fields were too waterlogged to allow growers to get tractors and equipment on to fields to plant the main crop. In some cases they were delayed by up to 6 weeks.
3. The Summer heatwave - temperatures were way above average through June, July and part of August. In addition to this, rainfall amounts were way below average. Potato plants shut down in high temperatures and perform best with average rainfall.

The combination of all these weather events has lead to various estimates on yield, but the crop yield is expected to be at least 25% below average. In addition to this, the total acreage of potatoes planted in the UK has fallen by 3% this year.

The net effect of these issues is a severe shortage in supply. The spot price of potatoes for the 2018/2019 season is expected to reach levels that have not been seen since the drought of 1976. Three to four times the five year average is our estimate on price. Potato tubers will be smaller than average leading to a small sample.

As ever, here at Lovejoys we will do our best to provide you with a consistently high standard, but I wanted to make you aware of the potentially difficult season our growers are faced with. We will do our best to keep the cost down so you do not have to compromise on standards.

Kind regards.

Neil Mortimer  
Managing Director