

OUR NEWS :

Hello everyone, here is our newsletter n° 14 for July and August 2012.

This month we hear from a melon producer.

Melon is now a leading product in our range of fruit and vegetables, thanks to new producers who have joined Biogaronne. We are now able to supply a quality fruit with regular stock throughout the productive season.

Enjoy the read ... and we'll talk to you all again soon,
very best wishes from Jean-Luc

Latest information about Vini Vitis Bio :

In order to be able to offer you a selection of dessert grapes of a consistent quality, Biogaronne has set up a personalised technical support service for each producer, in association with Vini Vitis Bio and the Lot-et-Garonne Chamber of Agriculture.

This support is carried out by Jacques Réjalot and Séverine Chastaing.

The visit on 20th June this year addressed the following points : protecting the vines against mildew and powdery mildew, managing weeds, coping with disasters, methods for calculating crop tonnage...

Having put this assistance in place well in advance of the harvest, the producers can also work collectively and exchange their experiences.

In October, we intend to invite Biogaronne clients to come and meet our producers and enjoy the quality taste of our grapes in the South West....



PRODUCTION PLANNING :

Products	July/August
Semi-dried garlic	15 to 20 t
Aubergine (eggplant)	20 t
Aubergine «graffiti»	10 t
Early Beetroot	5 to 10 t
Round /Webb/Oakleaf Lettuce	70 palets
Little Gem/Cos Lettuce	30 palets
Stick Celery	20 t
Smooth skinned Cucumber	4 000 colis de 12p
Courgette	200 t
Yellow Courgette	30 t
Green Haricot Beans	5 t
Flat Green Beans	10 t
Butter Beans	5 t
White bunch Onions	12 000 bunches
Semi-dried yellow Onions	15 to 20 t
Flat Parsley	10 000 bunches
Capiscum peppers	5 t
Red Kari Squash	20 t
Vine Tomatoes	40 t
Round Tomatoes	20 t
Beef Tomatoes	20 t
Roma Tomatoes	30 t
Figs	5 t
Raspberries	6 t
Blackcurrants	1 t
Redcurrants	1 t
Charentais Melons	100 t
« Mini » Watermelons	40 t
Peaches/Nectarines	20 t
Greengages	20 t
Greengages in conversion	40 t
Mirabelle Plums in conversion	15 t



BUILDING WORKS :

The work to demolish, rebuild and extend the reception bays for incoming produce from the producers, has been underway since the spring. We now have a reception area of 100m² able to accept 6 vehicles at a time on the bays.

A refrigerated store with a digital security lock is in place, which allows the transporters to deliver or load merchandise when Biogaronne is otherwise closed.

The final work to repaint the exterior walls on the transport side and the producers' side is programmed for mid-October.



THE PRODUCERS :

SZTANDERA Jean Michel - EARL SOLAGRI from Montaigu de Quercy Tarn et Garonne

I began farming in 1992. I took over a small family farm and then bought additional agricultural land. I now have 120 hectares of exploitable farmland of which 80 are organic or in conversion. My aim is to convert it all by 2013.

A large part of the land is destined for cereal crops : soya, sunflower, triticale as well as maize for organic seed. 2 hectares are for melon.

It was an allergy to the weedkiller products that I was using as well as some health problems that persuaded me to change over to organic methods. For some time, I had wanted to learn a new method of farming, which was more respectful of the soil and the plants.

I'm passionate about melons. I've been growing them for 20 years and my neighbours are always saying « You were born in a melon field! »



This crop is very sensitive to climatic conditions as well as to the soil type. My soil is clay/chalk which is very suitable for melon. Careful selection of variety and control of the irrigation are both equally necessary for a fruit with high quality in taste.

The first melons are planted 5th May, then I spread planting to every 10 days until the end of June, to harvest thereafter from 25th July to 25th September.

Conventional methods yield between 23 and 27 tonnes per hectare, however organic farming goes

from 12 to 24 tonnes per hectare. There's a real need to do further experimentation to find more resistant varieties which will give a more regular yield.

In traditional farming I would deliver my melons to a coop in Paloxes. The costs of packaging, sorting and calibrating were passed to the producer, and some years I would get only 30 cents per Kilo !! It was no longer viable.

From now on, I have put my faith in Biogaronne in order to develop my production. Being able to deliver my produce packaged enables me to round it off properly.



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