

OUR NEWS :

Hello everyone, here is newsletter n° 15 for November 2012.

This month we meet an onion, shallot and garlic producer.

This produce now represents a significant tonnage in our range, the soil in the Gers department lending itself to the cultivation of liliaceae.

We can therefore supply quality vegetables, fresh at the beginning of the season and semi-dried and then dried from September to March.

Enjoy your reading and we'll talk to you again soon.

Best regards, Jean-Luc



PRODUCTION PLANNING :

Produits	Novembre
Dry garlic	5 to 8 tonnes
Yellow onions	15 to 20 tonnes
Red onions	15 to 20 tonnes
Red beetroot	5 tonnes
Bunches of carrots	12 000 bunches
Carrots in sand	10 tonnes
Oyster Mushrooms	1 tonne
Chinese cabbage	20 to 30 tonnes
Red and smooth green cabbage	10 tonnes
Chou Rave	8 to 10 000 items
Butternut squash	50 tonnes
Musk squash	30 tonnes
Spaghetti squash	5 tonnes
Pumpkin	50 tonnes
Purple turnip	10 tonnes
Yellow turnip Boule d'or	10 tonnes
Black round radishes	5 tonnes
Flat parsley	8 to 10 000 bunches
Leeks	20 to 30 tonnes
Potatoes <i>Charlotte, Ditta, ...</i>	50 tonnes
Swiss chard	5 tonnes
Spinach	5 tonnes
Fennel	5 tonnes
Lamb's lettuce	20 to 30 palettes
Lettuces <i>Batavia, red & green Oak leaf, ...</i>	150 palettes
Grapes (from cold store)	
<i>Seedless EXALTA</i>	5 to 8 tonnes
<i>Muscat de Hambourg</i>	5 to 8 tonnes
<i>Ribol</i>	10 to 12 tonnes
Sharon fruit	5 tonnes
Summer Kiwi	10 tonnes
Hayward Kiwi (end November)	40 to 50 tonnes
Dried walnuts	30 tonnes
Physalis (Cape gooseberry)	2 to 3 tonnes
«Ariane» Apples	15 to 20 tonnes





The « Natural Size » experiment:

At the beginning of September, more than a hundred organic producers and professionals met up at Guillaume Vlemmings', manager of Biogaronne, in order to look at the new range of seed varieties available from Vitalis, the organic seed specialists. One open field plot and a greenhouse were dedicated to the « grandeur nature » (natural size) experiment. Céline Sabathier, responsible for technical-sales for the south west presented more than 70 varieties of open field or greenhouse vegetables to the many participants.

These were selected for their agronomic qualities, their resistance to parasites and their flavour.

The visitors discovered the new varieties of organic seeds available to them : Beef tomatoes, « Cœur de pigeon » tomatoes, cherry vine tomatoes, orange cherry tomatoes ... as well as new varieties of coloured peppers of different shapes, cucumbers, melons, fennel, courgettes, pumpkins and of course the multivarious lettuces.

It was a true festival of colour, and now for our market gardeners to put all their know-how to use to increase our range for next summer.



A visit to the vineyards:

Over one mid-October weekend, we were delighted to welcome clients and to help them discover, on site, the work achieved by Biogaronne in partnership with Vini Vitis Bio et la Chambre d'agriculture d'Agen (the Agen Chamber of Agriculture).

Jacques Réjalot explained to us how technical monitoring had been carried out throughout the project. : measuring sugar levels, the weight of the grapes, advice during periods of treatment, working the soil, estimating the tonnage of the harvest by producer and by variety Saturday afternoon was dedicated to a visit round Madeleine, Thierry and Alain's vines. Everyone picked and enjoyed the ribol, muscat de hambourg, centennial and exalta grapes.

Saturday evening was also an opportunity for interesting exchanges of information, for the producers as well as the sellers whilst enjoying a meal of gastronomic delights from the south-west.

On Sunday morning we met up at Guillaume's. We visited the nursery, the aubergine, cucumber and vine tomato greenhouses, as well as the open field lettuces.

These productive meetings enabled the producers and the organic fruit and vegetable buyers to talk face to face. An experience to be repeated !



THE PRODUCER :

GAEC TREMOULET

Colette, Francis and Rémi from Saint Puy Gers

I have been a member of GAEC (Farming groups in commun) with my parents, in organic farming since 1980, when the farm was in polyculture on 80 hectares and we had Blonde d'Aquitaine cattle.

Following my agricultural studies, I set up in organic farming in 2004. I had to buy 70 hectares, part of which was irrigated, which enabled me to diversify my crops: garlic, onion and shallot.

In cereals we produce wheat, sunflower, soya, lentils and chickpeas on about 170 hectares. It is worth

noting that the wheat yield for organic crops is half that of conventional crops. The price paid for organic sunflower is only 40€ per tonne more than conventional crop. Unfortunately, the cost of organic fertilisers increases every year, reducing our margins and therefore our income.

We grow onions on about 4 hectares (half red and half yellow), garlic on 1.5 hectares and shallots on 0.5 hectare. We have



basic soil with a ph of 8.2, which means chalk clay. Located in the triangle between Condom, Nérac and Lectoure, in the centre of the Gers, the land has little rain, because the summer rainstorms follow the Garonne or the Baise valleys. That is why we are equipped with an irrigation system for the onions, in particular.

The bulbs are planted in February/March. You need to take care when planting because if they are too close there is a risk of diseases and if they are too far apart they grow too big.

Straight after planting, the weeding begins with the use of a harrow-weeder, then watering from springtime. Red onions yield less

than yellow onions, which is why they are sold at a higher price. The harvest is from mid-July for the semi-dried then when the onions are dry I spread them out flat, in normal temperature not refrigerated.

The job of taking off the stalks and packing is done manually, which takes more time, but it is better sorting and allows us to take out the damaged onions, garlics and shallots, thus giving us a quality product.

I've been delivering to Biogaronne for two years now and it's going well. I am satisfied with the price paid and the regularity with which they pass on my products.

