

SPAIN

■ climate impacts
■ in focus



Globally:
2023: [hottest year](#) ever recorded
2024: [predicted to be](#) even hotter



Europe is warming at [twice the global average](#) since 1991

World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and EU Copernicus Climate Change Service

3rd
consecutive
year of
[drought](#)

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Catalonia is suffering the worst drought in the last century, We have never faced such a long and intense drought since rainfall records began.

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The situation is so bad that Catalonia [declared](#) a drought emergency in February 2024.

July's heatwave in Spain and five other Mediterranean countries, coming after more than a year of new record high temperatures globally in each of the 13 preceding months, would have been [virtually impossible](#) without human-driven climate change.

Head of the regional government of **Catalonia**, [Pere Aragonès](#)



3
years

without rain in some areas of the region by Feb 2024.

66%
reservoir levels
[in May](#) even
after restrictions
lifted

FOOD

[Greenpeace's 2023 report](#) outlines the effect of climate change on Spanish agriculture.

As one of the UK's biggest suppliers of fresh produce, climate impacts in Spain affect availability and price of products here. >>

IN THIS FACTSHEET

FOOD

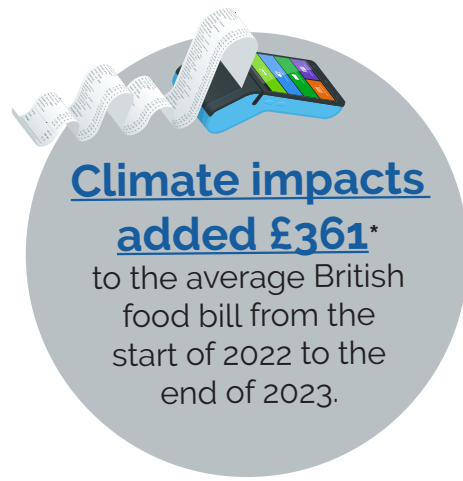
HEALTH

TOURISM

Extreme weather means farmers cannot grow crops as normal, but fresh fruit and vegetables are essential for healthy diets. Price increases will hit the poorest families hardest, putting children at risk of malnutrition.

Non-indigenous foods from Spain in 2023

Food items we cannot grow at commercial scale in the UK.



*This figure is likely to have risen given the climate impacts we have seen in the first six months of 2024 alone.

32%

of oranges

158m kg worth £187m, including: 43% of our clementines (42m kg worth £52m), 40% of our navel oranges (51m kg worth £48m) and 25% of our mandarins (39m kg worth £59m).

In May 2024, extreme weather and disease [hit Brazilian orange production](#) which contributed to an [orange juice crisis](#). Though the UK doesn't import oranges from Brazil directly, it is one of the world's biggest suppliers so shortages there drive up prices on global markets for orange products.

61%

of olive oil

38m kg worth £192m. Production has been hit so badly by drought that the price of olive oil in Spain is [up 272%](#) from 2020; it is now the [most shop-lifted](#) product there. Additionally, olives are affected by the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa* whose spread is [being worsened](#) by climate change.

86%

of Cava

12m kg worth £33m (though, as Cava has PDO, 100% of Cava that ends up in the UK will have originated from Spain). Intense droughts this year have hit grape production so badly that Cava firm Freixenet had to [furlough 80%](#) of its workers in Catalonia in April.

87%

of Rioja

27m kilograms worth £123m (though, as Rioja has PDO, 100% of the Rioja that ends up in the UK will have originated from Spain).

39%

of sweet peppers

81m kg worth £151m.

49%

of lemons

55m kg worth £61m.

25%

of melons

29m kg worth £26m.

33%

of watermelons

54m kg worth £36m.

17%

of grapes

42m kg worth £95m.

Indigenous foods from Spain in 2023

Food items we do grow in the UK but import when they're out of season.

73%

of cauliflower
and broccoli
imports

99m kg worth £154m. In 2022, the last year for which UK horticulture stats are available for brassicas, imports accounted for almost half (45%) of total supply.

Water shortages in Spain have caused cauliflowers to become a '[luxury product](#)' and 'a crop for specialists'.

14%

of tomato
imports

53m kg worth £112m. In 2022, the last year for which UK horticulture stats are available for tomatoes, imports accounted for more than four fifths of total supply (85% of 456m kg).

Last year, the historic [multi-year drought](#) in Spain affected tomato growing. The [heat has persisted](#) into this year, with the country [continuing to suffer](#).

86%

of lettuce
imports

107m kg
worth £149m.

64%

of courgette
imports

29m kg
worth £36m.

59%

of spinach
imports

16m kg
worth £32m.

58%

of strawberry
imports

33m kg
worth £111m.

46%

of raspberry
imports

12m kg
worth £93m.

43%

of cucumber
imports

12m kg
worth £93m.

42%

of garlic
imports

13m kg
worth £32m.

33%

of cherry
imports

4m kg
worth £16m.

20%

of onion
imports

75mkg
worth £56m.

10%

of carrot
imports

5m kg
worth £5m.

5%

of potato
imports

38m kilograms
worth £44m

HEALTH

There are many ways climate change harms human health:

- more intense and frequent heatwaves, storms, flooding and wildfires
- acting as a multiplier for diseases, their causes and carriers
- impacting on our mental health
- worsening air quality
- threatening food and water security.

In July 2023, the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Europe declared the climate crisis and related extreme weather events [a public health emergency](#).

[A study](#) published in July 2023 showed there were 61,672 heat-related deaths in summer of 2022 (from end May to the start of September); 11,637 of these were in one week alone (18-24th July).

Spain saw 11,324 heat-related deaths - the second highest number in Europe.

It had the third highest heat-related mortality rate at 237 deaths per million.

[A new study looking at 2023](#) - the second warmest year on record in Europe, and hottest globally - calculated there were nearly 50,000 (47,690) heat-related deaths. But the study also concluded that the mortality level was 80% lower as a result of adaptation to the threat over the last twenty years, including public health measures (e.g. information about the dangers of heat), and individual measures (such as seeking shade, drinking water and checking in on vulnerable people); it recommends more adaptation strategies are needed to save more lives. Spain had the fourth highest rate of deaths, at 175 per million.

TOURISM

In 2023, UK residents [made more than 86m visits](#) outside the United Kingdom; just over a fifth (21%) of those visits (18m) were to Spain, the top destination for Britons travelling overseas.

NO VACANCY



In mid-July 2024, [AEMET](#), the Spanish weather service, warned of temperatures of 38-40°C in the west and southern parts of the country, including Madrid, Seville, Mallorca, and Valencia, with some temperatures going as high as mid-40's.

People are being warned to protect themselves and look out for vulnerable people, with some areas [introducing restrictions](#) on working outdoors as well.

The European Travel Commission [recently suggested](#):

76% of tourists reported that they were adjusting their travel habits to allow for climate change

17% say they will avoid destinations with extreme temperatures.