

Dear School,

It has been great to have the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme up and running again, with schools up and down the country welcoming pupils back, we have been glad to play a part of that. We have taken the decision to write to you at this early stage of the year as we are about to enter the first week of citrus consumption, and we wanted to bring some important information to you about this.

You will receive your first deliveries of soft citrus during the week commencing 5th October, and we are aware of some concerns with the skin colouring. Some of the citrus has been reported as having black spots and a green tinge, we wanted to reassure schools that this is perfectly normal, and we have outlined some key facts below:

1) Thin Skin,

- a. One of the main characteristics in early season Satsuma varieties (Iwasaki, Clausellina and Okitsu) is that they have a **THIN SKIN**.

2) Black Marks,

- a. These black marks, which are a de-greening burn, only affect the early Satsuma Varieties such as Iwasaki, Clausellina and Okitsu. These varieties are normally picked mature internally, but with the skin still green. So, this fruit goes through a de-greening process by putting the fruit in a cold store at a high humidity of over 95%, and temperatures of around 20 degrees Celsius for 2-3 days and the colour changes from green to a Yellow/Orange. As this variety has a thin skin, the fruit which is more advanced can occasionally develop de-greening burns which are the **Black Marks**.

3) Green Tinge,

- a. When de-greening the fruit it is not recommended to carry out the process for too long, otherwise you run the risk of causing more de-greening burns. So, it is better to leave some green tinged fruit with fresher appearance than make it too yellow and a tired fruit, the **Green Tinges** do not affect the eating quality.

Whilst we appreciate that some of the soft citrus may not have the most appealing appearance, it should not affect the quality of the product regarding taste and texture. We do sample all fruits and vegetables throughout the supply chain, and this has shown to be the case with the early season citrus. We can assure you that this will be temporary and with each week that passes on the calendar you will see an improvement relating to the 3 points mentioned above.

Please note that the consumption calendar shows the suggested day of consumption, for each product in a particular week, but is subject to change. If you feel a product would benefit from being eaten a day earlier and the other product would remain fresher for longer, please swap them around.

Kind Regards

School Fruit and Vegetable Team

