

Update

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Beacon Commodities



Another year on and the 'gin boom' is in full flow. We now turn our attention to the Juniper harvest. This vital ingredient for the distillation of gin is under high demand and at Beacon Commodities it is time to finalise all our purchases following a full year of planning.



Stretching the hamstrings



Do some work!

Demand

The greater the popularity of gin, the higher demand for Juniper, both for distillation and then use in oil extraction and food products. This increased demand was not hard to predict. When you are dealing with a wild product that is harvested once a year, it has reaffirmed the need for us to plan at least 12 months ahead. We have previously mentioned our travels back in June that formed part of this plan.

Collection

Both Tommy and Michael managed to squeeze onto a Wizz Air flight for the sunny hills and beautiful autumn colours in Macedonia. The Balkans have been experiencing some excellent weather and as a result collection across all the regions continues with the quality improving day-by-day. The good weather is also bringing down the moisture content of the berries.



Removing the needles by the natural mountain breeze



Working hard!



Autumn colours in Macedonia

Quantities have dropped significantly compared to the 'glut' of 2017 but are nowhere near the disastrous levels experienced in 2016. A relief for Tommy's grey hair count (but all too late for Michael's). In 2017, many areas were being harvested more than once as there were large quantities of berries all ripening at different stages. This is not the case this year with collectors harvesting once and then moving into different areas.



Ripe and unripe berries

We have seen a mixed spectrum of quality but on the whole signs are positive. As with every Juniper crop, great importance is placed on the processing and specifically the drying.

Back in June, we reported that the Balkans was experiencing a wet summer meaning the moisture content of the berries has been quite high. Even with the recent good weather, the drying of this year's crop needs to be done with great care and attention.

Collection will continue as long as weather conditions allow and we are continuing to purchase more stock safeguarding any future shortages or fall-out from Brexit. There are many 'old wives tales' that Juniper exists on a 3 year cycle. Alternating between good, average and poor. With this in mind, a poor year is never far away!

We hope the above provides a useful insight but if you have any further questions then please do not hesitate to contact us.



Juniper ready for processing

