

Supermarkets across New Zealand are facing lemon shortages with the citrus fruit not being in season locally, and the pandemic is still causing delays in imports.

Countdown has put a stop on online purchases of lemons, and New World Victoria Park had no lemons when the Herald visited.

Although limited numbers of imported lemons are available at central city Countdown supermarkets, a staffer told the [New Zealand Herald](#) they are snapped up as soon as they are put on the shelves.

"Lemons are currently out of season at the moment, and there's a little way before we get to feel the full benefit of the local lemon season in July," said Emma Wooster, Corporate Affairs Manager at Foodstuffs NZ.

"Popularity, seasonality and the weather play a role in the flow of product onto and off of supermarket shelves, especially in our fruit and veg sections."

At some New World stores, shoppers are being limited to one lemon each at the cost of between NZ\$6 (US\$4.12) and NZ\$10 (US\$6.87) per kg.

"The global supply chain continues to be lumpy due to the knock-on effects of Covid-19 and we expect this to continue throughout 2022," Wooster said.

"So if you see a gap on the supermarket shelf and it's not currently in season in NZ, it's likely to have been held up on the boat and will be back soon."

A Countdown spokeswoman said the local supply of lemons is extremely limited at the moment because lemons are a winter crop.

"We do currently have a mix of local and imported fruit in our stores, however, demand is really high, so to help manage this we have temporarily removed lemons from the online store," she said.

"The good news is we have some imported lemons arriving early next week from the USA, which should hopefully hit the shelves by late next week."

As an alternative, lime is available on supermarket shelves, but the prices range from NZ\$29.99 (US\$20.61) to a whopping \$39.99 (US\$27.49) per kg.