

Vegetable producers in northern and western Europe are contemplating halting their activities because of the financial hit from the region's energy crisis, Reuters reports.

The publication recounts that surging power and gas prices will impact crops grown through the winter in heated greenhouses and those which need to be placed in cold storage.

Tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers are among the potential affected vegetables, along with apples, onions and endives.

European farmers warn that the situation could further threaten food supplies, as growing produce in greenhouses could become unsustainable. Growers in France have reported quotes for electricity contracts with prices ten times over those of 2021.

Greenhouse industry group Glastuinbouw Nederland says up to 40% of its 3,000 members are in financial distress.

Additionally, the cost of fertilizer, packaging and transport are all on the rise and jeopardizing margins. According to Reuters, even in warmer countries like Spain, fruit and vegetable farmers are grappling with a 25% increase in fertilizer costs.

The anticipated hit to production and jump in prices means supermarkets may switch to sourcing more goods from warmer countries such as Morocco, Turkey, Tunisia and Egypt.

Jack Ward, chief executive of the British Growers Association, said it was inevitable production of fruit and vegetables would shift to warmer climes.