

Britain's favourite fresh produce magazine since 1895



By Tom Joyce

Tuesday 22nd July 2014, 14:41 GMT

Produce prices soar in Israel

While Israel's military bombardment of Gaza continues, Hamas's rocket fire is pushing up prices of fruit and vegetables in Israel, as workers flee



Israel's recent and ongoing military assault on the Gaza Strip has once again brought death and destruction to what many commentators were already coining the world's largest open-air prison.

According to Israeli officials, the campaign is designed to halt the rocket fire into Israel by Hamas, the organisation that governs Gaza and is labelled a terrorist group by many countries, including Israel, the US, the EU and Japan, although many nations, such as China, Russia, Iran and much of the Arab world, do not.

A report in Globes stated that the rocket fire had led to a jump in prices

of certain fruit and vegetables in Israel due to irregular harvesting, as some farmers refuse to work in such conditions.

Wholesale tomato prices have risen by 47 per cent to ILS 6.5-6.8 (€1.40) per kilogram, melons by more than 180 per cent to ILS 5.6-6 (€1.20-€1.30) per kilo.

Cauliflower prices have increased by 130 per cent to ILS 7.6-8 (€1.64-€1.73) per kilogram, while cabbages are up by 46 per cent.

Aharon Bitton, a farmer from Kibbutz Erez, commented: "The workers don't want to work. The Thai, Bedouin, and Sudanese workers are all fleeing out of fear."

Farmers from the Ein Yahav-based Yofi Shel Yerakot (Beauty of Vegetables) Cooperative told the Jerusalem Post that vegetables that had not been harvested in time and were therefore over-ripe may have to be sold to the Palestinian vegetable market in the West Bank.

Critics of the latest Israeli attacks argue that these actions stand no hope of bringing peace since they do not address the continuing illegal occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel, nor its illegal blockade on Gaza.