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By Ed Leahy

Wednesday 10th July 2019, 10:45 GMT

## ***Herman plums hit Waitrose shelves***

Early variety is the first UK-grown plum crop of the season, coming a week earlier this year



**W**aitrose has kicked off the British plum season with this year's crop coming in a week earlier than 2018.

The first batch of homegrown "Herman" variety plums will be delivered today, grown by Michael and Christiana Bentley from Castle Fruit Farms in Gloucestershire.

The Bentleys have grown plums for Waitrose for 13 years, with the farm producing fruit for the retailer for over 30 years.

The Herman variety has a purple shiny skin and is traditionally the first plum variety to be picked each season.

The variety also boasts a "free stone" which falls away from the fruit easily, however they must be carefully harvested by hand to avoid bruising.

Tim Stevens, stone fruit buyer at Waitrose & Partners said: "The arrival of British plums is something our customers really look forward to. Thanks to our long-standing relationship with our expert growers, we're able to provide

shoppers with the very best British plums.

"They are a delicious and versatile fruit perfect for summer desserts, jams or simply scrumptious eaten straight from the fruit bowl."

Waitrose are pricing 550g of Herman plums for £2.20, and will be available in 121 branches.