

# Update

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Beacon Commodities



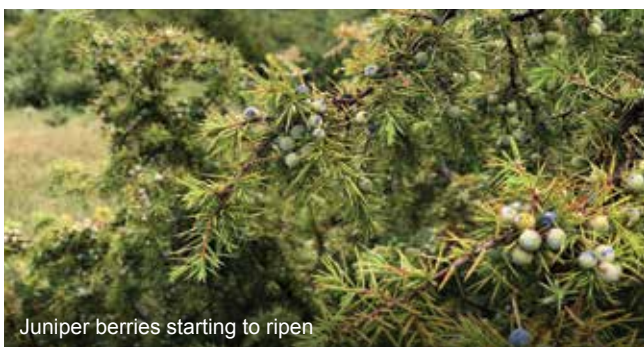
Well it is safe to say that the 'Gin boom' continues on an upward curve both here in the UK and across the globe! Newspaper articles, television shows and magazine features appear almost daily on the popularity of gin and the opening of a new distillery. As you can imagine the demand for Juniper is on exactly the same course.

## Macedonia

Tommy has recently returned from a sneak preview of the 2018 crop in Macedonia. Although we are still 2-3 months away from the harvest a visit at this time of year helps to forge a plan with our collectors and provides an insight of what we might expect from the 2018 crop.



The mountains on a damp day



Juniper berries starting to ripen



Ripened Juniper – a good sign!



Juniper selfie

Tommy spent most of the day with his head buried in Juniper bushes and what a relief it was to see berries on the bushes. A long way to go until harvest but a relief in any event. There was a fear that after the glut in 2017 the bushes may lie dormant for a year and not throw a crop this year.

At this time of year the berries are ripening and turning from green to that characteristic blue/black colour we are all used to. There were signs in the areas we visited that we could expect an average crop with no signs of the problem experienced in 2016 of the berries not ripening.

Macedonia was wet, unlike the rare English summer we are experiencing! They have had a very wet June with consistent rain throughout the month. This does result in nice big and plump berries but there is no doubt that the berries will have a higher moisture content than normal. Every crop is mechanically dried but this year it will be even more important. There is huge skill in drying the berries to a consistent level without 'cooking' the berries by trying to cut corners and dry them too fast.

There were signs of some recent hail storms with a number of berries found lying on the ground around the bushes. These storms are quite common at this time of year but fingers crossed they are not seen too often over the coming months.



Berries on the ground having been knocked off by hail

## Collectors

It was interesting to learn a little more about other crops some of our collectors work in. This year has been brilliant for strawberries with great quality and a large yield. Similarly there were positive reports with cherries and the mushroom harvest was just about to begin. Fingers crossed for good weather conditions for the Juniper harvest.



## The market

A strong demand for Juniper will keep prices around the same level as 2017 if not a little higher due to increased drying costs. Only time will tell and with a key 2-3 months to go, it is too early to speculate.

We hope the above provides a useful insight into the situation in Macedonia. Obviously there are many other countries where Juniper is collected and we will have our ears close to the ground with reports on what to expect in 2018. If you have any further questions then please do not hesitate to contact us.



Please feel free to look on our website within the 'Blog' section at the short video Tommy has put together showing the mountains and bushes.

