

SPECIALITY FOOD

NEWS, COMMENT AND BUYING IDEAS FOR FINE FOOD RETAILERS



Farm Shop & Deli Show 2019
Stand C39

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EDITOR'S LETTER



Welcome to the March/April issue of *Speciality Food*. As I write this, the sun is beating down and, in East Anglia at least, we're enjoying unseasonably warm weather.

With fingers crossed that this is a taste of things to come, within this issue we've delved into the sweet world of ice creams and summer desserts to find out what shoppers will be craving come the warmer months (p. 24). And if you're thinking of refreshing your drinks shelves for the summer, we've got just the ticket – a look at all the current and upcoming trends affecting the drinks industry, from foraged ingredients to heritage beverages (p. 19). You'll also find a spotlight on the factors shaping the cheese industry right now (p.36), plus, as the coming month features three of the biggest trade shows in the food and drink calendar: IFE, Natural Food Show and Farm Shop & Deli Show we share a preview of each from page 40.

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Crisis management: could your business survive a storm?

Your business's good name may be your most valuable asset, but would you know how to protect it in a social media storm of negative press?

If there's one thing we can thank the last months of Brexit uncertainty for, it's the opportunity to war game business scenarios. But what of the every day crises your business faces that can be controlled? Just how would you manage a storm in your own shop? It's easy enough to imagine: an employee lose a finger while slicing ham; activists launch a hate campaign against your decision to stock foie gras; a vocal social media user states that a pasty from your shop gave him food poisoning. The chances of reputational damage have never been higher, so how do you effectively manage a crisis?

"When I get the call it's usually three o'clock on a Friday when the boss has left or is uncontactable on a train or plane," says Abby Mangold, MD and founder of Mangold Consultancy (mangoldconsultancy.com) and crisis comms whiz. Abby is one of a band of professionals quietly

working to help businesses prepare for their worst nightmare: a high-profile crisis that puts reputations on the line. "When it's your baby, the business you've nurtured for years, and suddenly you're facing *The Daily Mail*, the trade press, the BBC... that can be very difficult. You can feel pushed into making a statement when you don't actually know what you're saying. It can be quite overwhelming."

The good news is indies have an advantage. "I've done an enormous amount of work in the food industry," says former BBC journalist Abby. "The thing that strikes me about indie fine food businesses is there's intrinsically a lot of trust in those brands. Studies have shown people don't trust big business – these days corporations are up there with politicians and journalists when it comes to public perception – so when you're perceived to put quality or animal welfare ahead of profit

I think you get more latitude. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't be really careful. Reputation doesn't last forever and a name built up over a number of years can be destroyed very quickly."

So how can you mitigate the likelihood of a public relations disaster: a food safety breach perhaps, or an accusation made by an employee? The key is to think and plan ahead, advises Abby. "With new clients we often do a reputational risk audit, looking at vulnerabilities in the business. Preparing for the most likely ones means really thinking about how you'd respond: what would you say? What should key people in the business be doing as the crisis unfolds? Time and again I see clients having issues less with the press and more with social media, so who is monitoring your social media? Best practice is to have a clear social media escalation plan to follow. It starts with a holding statement

and continues with on-going communication."

Transparency yes, but also an economy of information. "There are times during crises – particularly at the beginning of a situation – when you don't know an awful lot. If there is an issue that's in the public domain you need to acknowledge you're aware of it because if you don't you can look foolish, but you have to be careful not to make promises or suggest how a situation will be handled before you know the facts. People will want answers, but it's better to say 'We don't know but as soon as we do you'll be the first to hear' than to speculate or lie."

"My word of 2019 is authenticity. Whatever happens – good or bad

– organisations that communicate authentically really stand out. The way you usually communicate with customers – newsletter, daily tweets, facebook posts – will have a particular tone and language. Often during a crisis we see a change in tone and customers feel 'that's not them, the suits have come in'. In my experience when the boss is engaged with all communications – with customers, suppliers, employees – usually that comes through and people believe what they're being told. The absolute golden rule is never to delete a comment posted by the public. Because it says 'I like you when you talk nicely but I won't have you talking badly'. Some incorrect opinions may be heard more because they are retweeted or liked, but you should still be in there as much as you can giving the correct information."

Ultimately, when the going gets tough, the tough get going. "In journalism we talk about today's story being tomorrow's chip paper," says Abby. "Sometimes you just have to get your hard hat on, get down in the ditches and know it's going to be a Twitterstorm for a few hours but it'll move on. You can't count on that as your crisis management policy but interest does move on."

“ Reputation doesn't last forever and a name built up over a number of years can be destroyed very quickly ”

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JOHN SHEPHERD OF PARTRIDGES



“Eshops Fables”

Are online sales a friend or a foe to speciality food shops? I recently heard that for 2018 in the UK approximately 17-20% of all retail sales were made via ecommerce.

I also heard, although my hearing is not as good as it once was, that the food multiples (as in major supermarkets) have estimated their overall online sales to be 10% of their turnover. It is true to say that our own online sales have grown by 48% last year alone. Which sounds great. However overall they still represent only about 2% of our sales. For us this is still an important factor, but there is no doubt about it – online sales should be higher.

This, however, is one area where information is hard to find: how well speciality food shops are doing or indeed even how well our suppliers are doing online? NASDAQ has indicated that by 2040 up to 95% of all retail purchases will be through ecommerce. At present the UK is number two on the list of countries that spend the most online surprisingly, to me, followed by Sweden. Apparently 80% of British people have shopped online and 50% have made repeat purchases. Which still seems sounds high to me.

Of course like many speciality food retailers we are somewhat squeamish about advertising our online offerings which is a contributing factor for proportionately low sales. So what are we at Partridges actually selling online? Mainly it is our own-label products. The top seller being Chelsea Flower Teabags and a plethora of other teas, smoked salmon, gin and jute bags followed by various brands of crackers, peanut butter, biscuits and at seasonal times

stuffing, chocolates, tomato juice, cheeses, hams and American products.

Unsurprisingly our busiest times are Christmas, Thanksgiving and Chelsea Flower Show time. Surprisingly however our early winter months compete well with summer for online sales which probably is the same reason Sweden is third in the world rankings of online purchasing – our old nemesis, inclement weather.

Price seems to be more important for our online sales as customers now have the luxury of comparing prices and quality of website with a whole range of competing providers. Last week I googled the words ‘Christmas Hampers’ and there were 28,800,000 results. This week there are 29,200,000.

So where does this leave the good old attributes of the local deli? The engaged, friendly and knowledgeable staff, better customer service, product sampling, quality, taste, flavour and theatre? These attributes will always be sought after but to what extent, if at all, can they be replicated online? What has taken me aback about online sales is the amount of delicatessen produce – cheese and hams particularly – we sell albeit through online platform partners. It highlights what customers are prepared to buy on a screen rather than over a counter and they often become regular, repeat purchases.

A problem when trading with online platform partners is that ‘deductions’ have a habit of turning up at the time of payment. Several specialists I know have experienced the same phenomenon and one owns a number of shops in Europe. Concluding on a positive note, by the time you read this it will be spring (nearly). That is Season 2 – the third busiest of the six season speciality food year.

FUTURE FOOD AWARDS

Brought to you by Speciality Food and FoodTalk

Speciality Food and FoodTalk join forces to celebrate the innovators in food and drink

The movers and shakers in the UK food and drink industry are invited to enter a brand new awards – The Future Food Awards 2019. A collaboration between *Speciality Food* magazine’s New Producer Awards and those of popular podcast *The FoodTalk Show*, *The Future Food Awards* are here to celebrate and support inspirational businesses and showcase the innovation taking place across the industry.

The awards have nine categories that give food and drink businesses ranging from small-scale producers to technology-driven innovators their time in the spotlight, and are open to food or food tech sector businesses that have been trading for up to five years.

The categories are:

- Young Producer
- Newcomer
- Mission-driven
- Farm-to-fork
- Food Innovation
- Drink Innovation
- Food Packaging
- Technology
- Impossible to Categorise

A panel of industry professionals will judge the entries and whittle them down to reveal a winner from each category. These nine winners will go on to pitch to the full panel at the

Bread & Jam festival on Thursday 3rd October 2019 at the Institute of Directors in London’s Pall Mall for the chance to be named the Supreme Champion of the Future Food Awards.

It’s a fantastic opportunity for finalists who, along with a trophy, will receive promotion in *Speciality Food*, prime slots on *The FoodTalk Show* and money-can’t-buy access to experts in the industry. Jason Gibb, founder of Bread & Jam said: “It is an exciting year to be part of the Future Food Awards as they are opening up to a larger field of inspiring, emerging challenger brands - I’m proud to be on the judging panel of one of the few awards that are free to enter and offer winners such great exposure and support.”

Speciality Food editor Holly Shackleton commented:

“The Speciality Food team hugely enjoyed delving into the start-up world for the New Producer Awards, and I can’t wait to get even more involved with foodie trailblazers for the Future Food Awards. It’s a pleasure to discover the most exciting and innovative businesses in the sector today, and to give them the time in the spotlight they deserve.” Sue Nelson from *The FoodTalk Show* also said: “We want to encourage innovation across all categories and I’m so happy to be working with the experienced and enthusiastic team at *Speciality Food*. I can’t wait for the entries to arrive!”

Entries will close at midnight on 30th June 2019. If your business is a taste of what’s to come in food and drink, enter for free or find out more at futurefoodawards.com.

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ALONGSIDE



HOME TO



CHARLES CAMPION



“Bring on the afternoon telly”

The signs are all there and after studying the runes the BBC has devised a winning programme for that difficult afternoon telly slot. Now the seemingly unstoppable charge of grinning television antique dealers is faltering. There's a programme that showcases farmers and they are an attractive and articulate lot. *The Farmers' Country Showdown*, in keeping with television's obsession for a competitive edge, it seems that every programme must set one family against the other. Ever since *Countryfile* awoke from its slumbers to perk up our Sunday viewing the countryside has been much in vogue.

Numerous soaring drone shots of stunning scenery have worked their magic and all the farming families work implausibly hard while living in the prettiest parts of Britain. Then the other shoe drops and the various Country shows become battlegrounds where plump sheep vie for rosettes. As viewers we're supposed to revel in carefully staged 'jeopardy' polarising delighted winners and plucky losers – such is the reality of the reality television business. It must all be very galling for those pundits and professors who previously spent a decade trying to encourage the public to move closer to producers. It is certainly a mammoth opportunity when tens of thousands of customers get to visit the local producers' food tent at their nearest agricultural show. At the show (as well as shopping for cheap jeans and implausible hats) Joe Public will also be meeting fluffy lambkins; plump piglets; mighty bulls and a fast track to cider and a burger... agricultural shows are all about the countryside putting its best

foot forward and should be nurtured.

Meanwhile back on the High Street things seem to be growing increasingly toxic in the marketplace of the supermarkets where in 2019 they look like closing many branches. Interestingly, the preferred strategy of the closing teams is to start by removing the in-store bakeries, fish counters, butcheries and deli counters thus saving money on specialist staff. Perhaps some good may come of all this as there could be an influx of available skilled retail workers and hopefully an influx of available shoppers who have been forced to search out independent shops to buy their butchery and bakery.

Early this year the Lion dancers celebrated the Chinese New Year. We are currently in the year of the pig (if you are referring to a modest concern) or the year of the boar (if you are talking swanky restaurant). This New Year saw the rehabilitation of one very special pig. It turns out that for many years Peppa Pig had been banned and classified as a 'gangster' by the Chinese authorities who detected porcine dissent in respect of the Communist Party. Times change, and now in her role as the New Year's internet superstar Peppa is a hot property in China and received official permission to screen her seminal film *Peppa's Chinese New Year*. Not only does this epic feature fireworks and dragons, but also two new characters that will sound familiar to anyone knowing their way around a Chinese menu – “Dumpling” and “Glutinous Rice Ball”. Surely they have missed a trick by not going straight for that delicious classic – Salt and Peppa Spare Ribs?

Finalists for Farm Shop & Deli Awards 2019 announced

The shortlist for the sixth edition of the Farm Shop & Deli Awards, which celebrates retailers' success in speciality sectors and regions has been revealed. The judges have whittled the nominees down to 50 businesses as finalists across 11 different categories, the winners of which will be unveiled at the Farm Shop & Deli Show on 8th April at the NEC in Birmingham.

Chair of judges and food & drink journalist and broadcaster

Nigel Barden commented: “I am delighted to continue to be involved with the Farm Shop & Deli Awards. It's a fabulous initiative for the sector and offers the best way to recognise and reward excellence for the UK's local, artisan and high street speciality retailers. These awards are so important for the industry. One really big factor is the quality of judges. They're really right across the board from retailers, from producers, from food and drink journalists.”

SOME OF THE CATEGORY FINALISTS:

DELICATESSEN OF THE YEAR

Bayley & Sage, Battersea
Broad Bean Delicatessen, Ludlow
Forest Deli Ltd, Coleford
Giddy Grocer, London
Ginger Whale Delicatessen, Cleckheaton
Guzzl, London
MacFarlane's Delicatessen, London
The Bees Country Kitchen, Chorley
The Olive Tree Deli, Mold
Thomas of Helmsley, Helmsley

FARMSHOP – LARGE RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Cannon Hall Farm Shop, Barnsley
Chatsworth Estate Farm Shop, Bakewell
Cobbs Farm Shop & Kitchen, Hungerford
Newlyns Farm Shop, Hook

FARMSHOP – SMALL RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Battlefield1403 Farm Shop, Shrewsbury
Eggs To Apples Farm Shop, Etchingham
Minskip Farm Shop, Boroughbridge
Parc Y Bocs, Burns Farm Shop, Kidwelly
Tori and Bens Farm, Kings Newton
Waterperry Farm Shop, Oxford
Welbeck Farm Shop, Worksop

FOODHALL OF THE YEAR

Bakers & Larners of Holt, Holt
Cunninghams Butchers & Food Hall, Newry
Delifonseca Dockside, Liverpool
Shrewsbury Market Hall, Shrewsbury
Webbs Garden Centre, Droitwich
Weetons Food Hall, Harrogate

Indie organic sales grow by 6.2%

Indie retail is a key sector driving growth in sales of organics, according to the Soil Association's new *Organic Market 2019* report. In fact growth independent retail channels has clocked 6.2% over the last year, almost double that experienced at supermarket tills. The Soil Association cited better distribution via food hubs, an increasingly conscious consumer and indies' fast reaction to the 'unpacked' trend for the up tick in sales.

“Organic is in the right place to capitalise on many of the consumer trends we're currently seeing across retail,” commented Clare McDermott, business development director at Soil Association Certification. “We know that more shoppers are looking to purchase sustainable products to reduce their impact on the planet, and this has combined with an increasing value being placed on transparency and traceability in the food system, more local and online shopping, and increasing interest in healthy options – where organic is often seen as a signpost to healthy choice.”

“Because organic is legally certified, shoppers can trust that the food they are buying has been produced with the utmost care for the environment, animals and land, as well as being fully traceable.”

The one stop shop for gourmet Italian food and drink

Just Gourmet Foods launched in 2018 with a simple purpose: to bring quality clean, artisanal Italian food and drink products to the UK – and founder Gianfranco Perri is inviting buyers to sample its range at the upcoming Farm Shop & Deli Show, taking place at Birmingham's NEC from 8th-10th April 2019.

From the finest Italian olive oil to speciality ambient items and sweet and savoury delicacies, Just Gourmet Foods is dedicated to supplying the best of Italian food and drink.

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JULIE BYRNE, SCHOOL OF ARTISAN FOOD



“Feeding growing demand”

The artisan food movement is growing as more and more people seek out food with provenance and quality. Many of the students who have passed through our doors since we opened 10 years ago are now successfully running artisan food businesses, feeding the growing demand across the UK.

It's been over a decade since our founder Alison Swan Parente decided to establish The School of Artisan Food after she realised that there was a lack of skilled artisan bakers. Talking to cheesemakers and butchers, who were also struggling to find skilled people, it was evident there was a need to provide education and training in the 'lost skills' of artisan food production.

For me, it's all about getting the conversation started and connecting people with good food. I want everyone to have the opportunity to understand food provenance, be adventurous about what they eat and to be confident and creative around food. Food is a fantastic way to bring families, friends and communities together and blend traditional techniques with exciting innovation.

are allowed to develop slowly and naturally, rather than curtailed for mass-production. Good, seasonal, locally sourced food which is cooked from scratch is for everyone. We are all about inspiring everyone from school children to industry professionals to grow, produce and make food without unnatural additives and preservatives, and which sacrifice uniformity and a long shelf life for taste, transparency about ingredients and integrity in sourcing.

To help meet the increasing demand for skilled producers of high-quality and sustainable artisan food, students can now sign up to the UK's first ever artisan food production degree and learn all aspects of artisan bread baking and patisserie, cheesemaking, butchery, charcuterie as well as develop an understanding of fundamental business concepts needed to become successful food producers and retailers.

Artisan producers understand and respect their raw materials with which they work. They have mastered their craft and have a historical, experiential, intuitive and scientific understanding of what makes the process successful. They know what tastes good and are also sensitive to the impact of their production on people and the environment.

Understanding and mastering artisan processes, such as bread making, cheese making, brewing and charcuterie and confectionery, produces a great sense of achievement and wonderful new skills. One thing is clear: the future is bright for artisan food and drink here in the UK.

Record number of products unveiled at TasteWales

Over 100 new food and drink products will be launched by the food and drink industry at the forthcoming BlasCymru/TasteWales international trade event, which takes place from 20th to 21st March. The milestone has been reached in part thanks to initiatives put in place by Food & Drink Wales over recent years, such as the Cluster Network approach that brings like-minded businesses together to share best practice and develop new ideas. This has been boosted further by the support on offer to start-ups by Cywain and the innovation-focused Project HELIX programme.

The new products to be launched vary widely and include new yogurts, baked products, new food service offers and product packaging. Some of the food world's leading speakers and thinkers will be taking part in the event and accompanying conference, as Welsh food and drink continues to develop its reputation on the international stage. It was announced last year that industry giant Princes has been unveiled as headline sponsor, with a range of other companies lending support for the largest showcase of Welsh food and drink ever put together. Speakers include Claus Meyer, whose Noma restaurant has been named the world's best on four occasions. Commenting ahead of BlasCymru/

TasteWales, Welsh Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths (pictured), said: "We can clearly see that the extra support given in the food and drink industry over recent years, from a Cluster Network approach through to food innovation and start-up programmes, continues to help the industry in leading the way in new innovative products. With the challenge of Brexit it is more important than ever we support Welsh food and drink businesses in every way we can and help ensure their future sustainability. Surpassing 100 new products to be launched during the event makes it an added celebration of what Wales

has to offer both to the domestic and international marketplace."

One of the companies launching new products at TasteWales is pioneering vegetarian and vegan business, The Parsnipship Ltd. Commenting on their plans, Director Flo Ticehurst said: "We have four new lines coming out, two veggie and two vegan burgers. We were inspired to start our business after years of being disappointed at the meagre offerings available for vegetarians and vegans. The upcoming trade event is a great time to showcase some new products as well as our wider offer." Visit tastewales.com for more information.



20 years in the business – something definitely worth celebrating!

We started up James Gourmet Coffee back in March 1999 wanting to share some of the very best gourmet coffees from around the world to the cups of the ever-growing, coffee loving population of the UK. Leap forward and with the aid of our team we are now sending coffee all over the globe. Remaining small, we have never lost sight of the quality or the passion for what we do. Along this journey we have met some amazing people, been visited by a princess, but the most pleasure has been from knowing that we have continued to serve some truly incredible customers. So many that have remained loyal to us, and in fact we are honoured to have some that have been with us from the very start. Thank you.

Peter & Anni James

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Registration open for Food & Gift Show 2019

Hundreds of brands are due to be showcasing exciting products tailored to independent buyers at the Food & Gift Show, taking place on 8th May 2019 at Cranmore Park Exhibition Centre in Solihull. The show, hosted by Associated Independent Stores (AIS), will see products across a variety of categories including gift food, home fragrance, cards and wrap, confectionery and speciality drinks, and brands such as Wilkins & Sons, Cottage Delight and Skinny Prosecco. Register at foodandgiftshow.co.uk

The FFFFI expo prepares for seventh edition in Barcelona

The Free From Functional Food (Ingredients) (FFFFI) exhibition returns for the seventh edition and will be held at Gran Via Fira de Barcelona from 28th-29th May. The show, which is Europe's leading innovation platform for the free from, organic, vegan, functional and ingredient food industries is set to showcase trend predictions, market analysis, product innovations and networking over the two days. Up to 4,500 visitors, which includes international trade buyers, 350 producers, manufacturers and key global industry figures are expected to attend the show, which

focuses on five key categories: Free From, Vegan, Natural/Organic, Functional and Ingredients. The show has a new format for 2019 which involves four conference programmes with a packed schedule of keynote talks and seminars; Meet the Expert networking meetings as well as the opportunity to find and meet commercial, strategic and technological partners with international matchmaking.

Pre-registration is now open including a Social Network function. For the latest updates and to pre-register head to freefromfoodexpo.com.



Shake up at Tesco with up to 90 counter closures

Tesco has announced it will be closing food counters in around 90 of its stores in a bid to "simplify" the business, and cited customers using the counters less due to time constraints as the reason for the change.

The counters in the remaining 700 stores will be running either full or flexible offers for customers. In its statement the supermarket giant said that up to 9,000 roles could be impacted. Jason Tarry, CEO, UK & ROI at Tesco said, "In our four years of turnaround we've made good progress, but the market is challenging and we need to continually adapt to remain competitive and respond to how customers want to shop. We're making changes to our UK stores and head office to simplify what we do and how we do it, so we're better able to meet the needs of our customers."

Responding to the news, Mark Kacary, managing director at The Norfolk Deli said, "We always view the excuses given by supermarkets with a very large pinch of salt. They've claimed fruit and vegetables are sold wrapped in excess packaging because customers wanted it, and now the claim is that counters are being closed due to a lack of customer demand. If that is true, then it will be because businesses like ours have introduced customers to proper handmade artisan cheeses and charcuterie which is cut to order. The somewhat bland, tasteless cheeses on a typical supermarket counter do little to lift the soul and are usually no different to the pre-wrapped offering on the shelves. These closures do not worry us in the slightest as we see this as a new opportunity to expand our offering in terms of the products on sale and the potential to open new premises."

Changes afoot for Keelham Farm Shop

The award-winning Keelham Farm Shop is looking to expand after securing a partnership with Growth Partner LLP and investment from Santander bank, with chief executive Victoria Robertshaw telling the *Yorkshire Post* that she hopes to open the first new shop within 18 months, somewhere in Yorkshire. The business, which supports over 400 local producers and farmers in the area, opened the original store in Thornton in the 1970s and added a Skipton base in 2015. The business intends to return the former to its roots under the sole ownership of James Robertshaw to become Robertshaw's Farm Shop.

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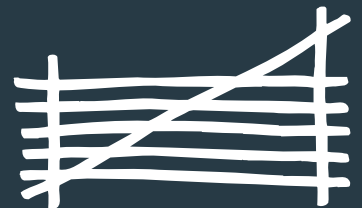
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ALTERNATIVE SWEETENERS

A year after the controversial sugar tax came into force, Sally-Jayne Wright takes stock

As an awareness-raiser, the soft drinks industry levy was a success. Consumers learnt there was sugar in unexpected places – mayo, pasta sauces, ready meals and processed cheeses. As families reviewed their eating habits, sales of refined white sugar fell £5.2m (Kantar Worldpanel, 2017). Sales of agave nectar, honey and maple syrup increased as did those of the plant-based sweetener, stevia – up 4.5%.

Many big brands swapped sugar for sweeteners, not always with good results. In May 2015, Heinz introduced 50% less sugar baked beans sweetened with stevia; two years later, they replaced them with a new improved no-added-sugar recipe. Irn Bru swapped half the sugar in its famous drink for aspartame and met with an outcry and a 50,000-signature petition. Anticipating problems, Coca Cola, PepsiCo and Red Bull did not change their classic recipes and offered diet versions alongside.

Buyers like sweeteners that sound natural and unprocessed

At Waitrose, mother-of-three, Jess, 44, is buying agave nectar for her kids' porridge. She buys it because it's squeezable, has a lower GI than sugar and is natural. Like honey, though, agave is sugar in a different form. Honey, perceived as healthier than sugar, is 80% sugar; heat-treated, blended honeys are heavily processed.

Jess is unsure about stevia because it sounds artificial. In fact, this relatively new, natural sweetener comes from a shrub. Even so, some stevia products are highly refined while some artificial sweeteners such as sucralose come from naturally occurring substances. No wonder there's confusion.

Another challenge is using sweeteners. Some, like stevia, are much sweeter than sugar so you need far less; others are only a third lower in calories so dieters can't go crazy. It takes a confident home baker to adapt a cake recipe to work with agave nectar or fructose.

WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE?

NO- AND LOW-CALORIE SWEETENERS USED IN SOFT DRINKS AND DESSERTS

Aspartame (used in Canderel), saccharin, sucralose (used in Splenda), acesulfame potassium and cyclamate.

POLYOLS OR SUGAR ALCOHOLS

Erythritol (favoured by dieting chef, Tom Kerridge), isomalt, maltitol, mannitol, sorbitol and xylitol.

WHAT 'NO ADDED SUGAR' MEANS

No sugar, glucose, fructose, sucrose, maltose, honey or syrup has been added but this food may contain low- and no-calorie sweeteners and naturally-occurring sugars such as milk lactose or fruit fructose.

Award-winning treats containing sugar substitutes

Designed as a healthier Nutella, the Great Taste Award-winning chocolate spread, Jim Jams, is sweetened with maltitol. In 2018, the Swiss-owned, Latvian chocolate company, Choclette, won a Great Taste star for its reduced calorie, no added sugar Red Chocolate Delight bars sweetened with maltitol, erythritol and polydextrose. Minioti's strawberry Jersey ice cream is sweetened with stevia and scooped one star.

Is substitution a good thing?

There's a school of thought that sweeteners, just like low fat foods, don't satisfy our dopamine or appetite centres. The sweetness leads the body to expect a calorie-laden feast which it doesn't get, leaving us hungry. In *How Not To Get Fat*, nutritionist Ian Marber advises avoiding sugar in all its forms – including honey and artificial sugars – because, in his experience, it creates cravings.

There are several challenges for the food industry in swapping sugar for artificial and low-calorie sweeteners: mouthfeel, taste, side effects, ease of use. If polyols are eaten in solid form they make your mouth go cool – helpful in mint ice cream, strange in a Twix bar. Consuming large amounts can cause wind and diarrhoea.

Some people find stevia has a bitter, metallic after-tang and many agree with the visitor to the Diabetes UK forum who "can't bear aspartame". Distaste for this ingredient is undoubtedly why Fever-Tree with its Naturally Light Tonic sweetened with fructose grabbed market share from Schweppes Diet Tonic. Fructose works well as Fever-Tree and Cawston Press have shown.

Yet another issue is shelf life. Lower sugar jams and Instagram-able treats sweetened with pulverised dates don't keep as well as the traditional alternative.

Come back sugar, all is forgiven?

Food consultant, Simon Wright, who has never worked for a sugar company, argues that sugar is the least bad sweetener the food industry has at its disposal. It brings the benefits of sweetness, mouthfeel, bulk, texture, stability, moistness and flavour (including caramelisation via the Maillard reaction).

He is sceptical about the government health agency, Public

Health England's, target to cut the calorie content of processed foods by 20% by 2024. It is working with the food industry to encourage sugar reduction using three strategies; reduced portion sizes, substitution of healthier products and reformulation of

mainstream recipes. Wright says: "Reformulating cakes, biscuits and chocolates is much more challenging than simply replacing the sugar content of soft drinks with an intense sweetener."

Ironically, the food industry must now solve one of the problems it has

helped to create – a population with an artificially sweet palate. How many younger people do you know who like grapefruit?

The reverse argument is that chocolate, cake and ice cream made with full fat dairy and real sugar give pleasure, and pleasure – in moderation – is very good for our health.

Why stevia use is complicated

Approved in 2012, pure stevia has no calories and a glycaemic index of zero. The downside? It's often blended with dextrose, maltodextrin and sucrose to improve the taste which may raise blood sugar levels. Thankfully, food manufacturers are learning that some flavours, such as citrus, work better than others to disguise the bitterness in stevia-sweetened recipes.

“ Consumers have learned that there is sugar in unexpected places – mayo, pasta sauces, ready meals and processed cheeses. As families reviewed their eating habits, sales of refined sugar fell £5.2m (Kantar Worldpanel) ”

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What is vegan 'meat'?

Over the last couple of years the plant-based meat market has exploded, with a host of exciting products for consumers to try. In fact, according to Mintel research, the share of meat-free new products carrying a vegan/no animal ingredients claim nearly doubled between 2014-17. So what exactly is vegan 'meat'? Most meat alternatives that contain no animal ingredients are made from soy or wheat, and Quorn products are made using mycoprotein, which is a fungal protein. Some meat alternative products do still contain traces of animal products such as eggs or milk, so it is important to check the label that it is suitable for vegans. Quorn, for example, does now clearly print a green vegan symbol on the front of the packaging to ensure clarity that those products do not contain any animal ingredients. Interesting new ways of creating plant-based foods are making their way through however, such as the use of jackfruit, which has the right consistency to create an alternative to pulled pork or chicken. Upton's Naturals has a range of jackfruit products with different flavourings including Thai Curry and Bar-b-que.



VEGAN 'MEATS'

With veganism set to be a hotter topic than ever in 2019, we take a look at the range of meat alternatives flooding the market

The taste test

There's a whole range of plant-based meats on offer, from sausages and nuggets to mince and kebab, many of which do have a similar look and taste of the real deal. For some consumers it can be easier to transition to a plant-based diet if there are foods available that remind them of what they have been used to, so that the taste of the meal is still relatively familiar. In the same Mintel report (November 2018) it states: "Tasting like meat is the top enticing factor for 26% of non-/infrequent eaters of vegetarian/meat-free foods." Gone are the days of mushy potato and vegetable-filled patties that only the truly dedicated vegetarians and vegans could eat, as today's products offer tasty, flavourful foods that fill the meat void.

The Waitrose & Partners Food & Drink Report 2018-19 discovered that almost 13% of Brits involved in

the research identified themselves as vegetarian or vegan and a further 21% as flexitarian, which means that they are eating a reduced amount of meat. In order to attract the attention of these groups, vegan 'meats' do need to look appealing, with lots of alternatives closely resembling meat in terms of colour and texture.

According to Mintel, "There is also some interest in products that replicate meat in other ways, with 15% of this consumers group agreeing that meat-free burgers which 'bleed' are appealing; rising to 25% of 16-34 year-olds.

Alyson Parkes, research analyst at Mintel, commented, "Several companies have recently launched revolutionary plant-based burgers that mimic the same 'bleeding' quality as animal-based meat burgers when cooked. This meat-replicating feature certainly makes the concept of meat-free foods more newsworthy and intriguing for consumers which, combined with health credentials, ethical claims and environmental considerations, creates a compelling proposition. This visual aspect also makes these products highly 'Instagrammable', and can help

catch the eye of experimental foodies, as well as a wider audience." There have been a couple of burgers hitting the market which aim to do just that - Iceland released its No Bull burger coloured with beetroot extract and paprika to give the raw meat effect, and Beyond Meat's 'bleeding' vegan offering that can be sampled at Honest Burger.

According to statistics from The Vegan Society, 35% of British consumers say they make a point of regularly having meat-free days and that a "staggering" 92% of plant-based meals consumed in the UK in 2018 were eaten by non-vegans.

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In order to catch the attention of people flirting with the idea of trying a more plant-based diet, not only can adopting the look and taste of meat be an appealing factor, but now retailers are also experimenting with how the products are positioned on the shelves. Sainsbury's recently announced that it was trialling positioning meat alternatives in the same aisle as meat, fish and poultry across 20 of its stores as a way of making the products more accessible. The popular Wicked Kitchen range of plant-based ready meals from Tesco steers clear of obvious vegan labelling on the front of the packaging, perhaps allowing for customers not specifically looking for vegan foods to be more willing to pick them up and give them a go while browsing the shelves.

Brands to stock

There are so many brands supplying meat alternatives - some that have been in the game for decades and others that are just hitting the market. According to its website, after debuting its first Holiday Roast in 1995, Tofurky now has a plethora of options to choose from including sausages, burgers and deli slices. Viverra offers veggie chicken piece, kebab and mince with some products just being suitable for vegetarians, and Gosh! delivers beetroot burgers and sweet potato and red pepper sausages. Linda McCartney's range includes meatballs, hoisin duck and fish goujons, and Quorn has a variety of nuggets, strips and sausages. During Veganuary and Meat Free Monday customers may be more likely to consider something different from their usual choice of meats. The trend for finding delicious alternatives to meat is one that will only become stronger, so now is the time to jump on the bandwagon and add to your stock.



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MEET THE PRODUCER

Meet Thea Brook, whose vegan kitchen The Brook has emerged from food service to bring world-class plant-based meals to a freezer cabinet near you

You might be surprised to hear the woman behind one of vegan food's most exciting start-ups waxing lyrical about dairy, but then Thea Brook, founder of The Brook, isn't quite your average entrepreneur. "The year before I went vegan I had to give up dairy for health reasons," she explains. "I loved cheese, and would always cook with cream and butter, so I made it my mission to find a way I could continue eating those great flavours."

What started as a personal project has evolved into a capsule range of top-notch plant-based ready meals, handmade in small batches to simple but ingenious recipes that deploy some clever tricks. "There are so many new ways you can use natural plant ingredients to get some great flavours going," says Thea. "For example adding sun-dried tomato or lemon to give the tang you get from mature Cheddar." She should know; her five-year journey to retail has been a steep learning curve.

The Brook started life at a Surrey arts centre where Thea served vegan meals. Her approach, to cook the best dishes possible that just happened to be plant-based, filled a gap in the market. "There was a lot of junk food emerging for vegans and then there was the raw, health-focused food, but not really anything in the middle," she explains. "People who'd been vegan for 20 years would eat at the restaurant and say 'I've never eaten food this good.' It really was amazing."

A nine-month pop-up in Hackney followed, during which Thea's food



“ I loved cheese, cream and butter; I made it my mission to find a way I could continue eating those great flavours ”

bagged a prestigious award from *Time Out*, bringing a new audience to The Brook and nudging Thea to think big. "Running a restaurant you're quite restricted in terms of reaching new people – people were always saying 'I'd love to come and try your food but I live too far away' – but I thought if we made a range to go into people's homes it doesn't matter where we are based."

Last October The Brook launched a crowdfunding campaign to help fund the conversion from restaurant to test kitchen and production site. "I was nervous," Thea admits. "When you run a business the public only see what you want them to, but once you crowdfund everyone knows if your bid succeeds or not." She

needn't have worried. "We actually hit our goal on day one. By day three we were on 140%."

The prospect of Veganuary 2019 further galvanised the business; Thea and her team worked hard to get The Brook market-ready in time for the annual spike in interest around plant-based foods. A meal box scheme soft-launched in a 'test kitchen' phase for three months, allowing customers to order boxes with a set eight meals at a reduced price. "They tried the dishes and gave feedback on everything," says Thea, "taste, instructions, packaging." The result of this intensive period of trial and adjustment is a range that's been well and truly market tested. "We've

had constant live feedback," says Thea. "It was like beta testing; it has allowed us to see which dishes work best and what people really love."

The fruits of The Brook's collaboration with its fan base will

be on show at IFE, with a range that includes both classics – Sausage Casserole, Rich Bourguignon and Mac & Cheese – and more inventive dishes, such as Jackfruit Rendang and Seafood Stew. "We've deliberately chosen 10 dishes that not only got great feedback through the test kitchen but are also aimed at a flexitarian palate. They're great for people who want to include more plant-based meals in their week but not because they don't love animal-based food."

"We have a Seafood Stew that's based on seaweed rather than fish but has the flavours you might expect in a San Francisco seafood chowder. It really hits that spot if you want something with that great fresh flavour. The Bourguignon we've developed has a rich umami red wine base you'd associate with beef but we've used jackfruit instead. It's marinated overnight so it really takes on those flavours. They're ideal if you've had a long day at work and want to grab a meal that gives you the flavours you expect."

With the market for vegan food exploding, The Brook is hitting its stride at the perfect moment. "Supermarkets are coming out with plenty of products, but when you look at what they have you realise their recipes are in their infancy. We appreciate we're in a unique position. After perfecting our dishes for five years we've got a great head start." They certainly have; according to Thea most of The Brook's customers aren't even vegan. "They just love the food."



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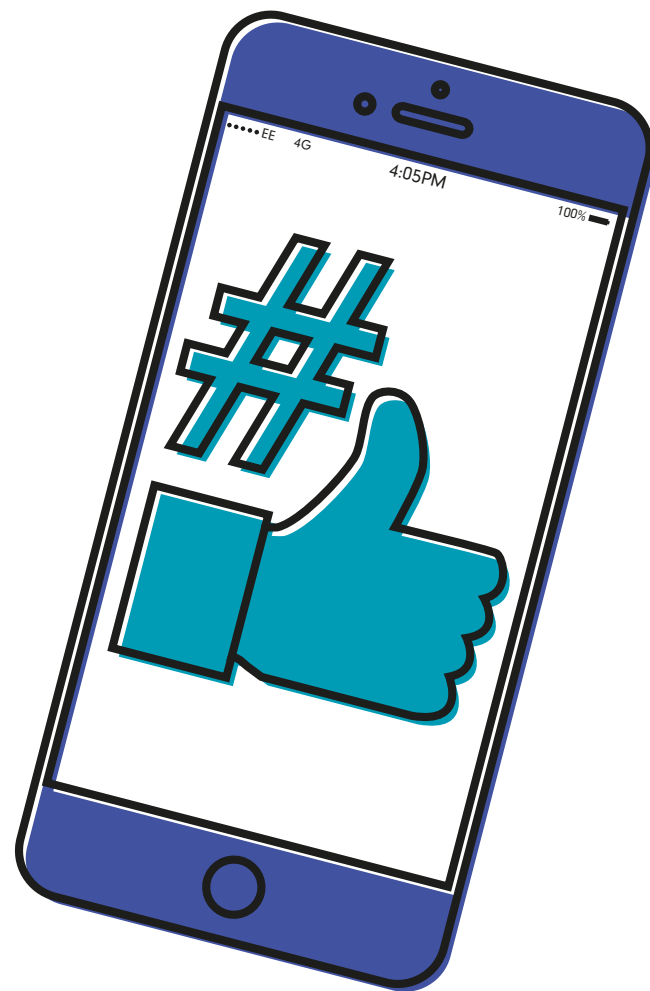
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Take stock with our new food and drink round-up

Pipers Crisps discovers 'hidden gem' tomato source

In line with its mission to ensure quality provenance for its snack flavours, Pipers Crisps has partnered with a new source of tomatoes to boost the taste of its Tomato flavoured crisps.

From April 2019, the tomatoes for these crisps will be sourced from Arreton Valley in the Isle of Wight, known for its rich, fertile soil and a unique maritime climate which gives the tomatoes some of the UK's best sunshine levels. The tomatoes are left to mature on the vine and only picked when they reach the peak of their flavour potential. The Pipers team considered the sharp and rich finish of the Arreton Valley-sourced tomatoes ideal to create the bold flavour their products are renowned for.

Renamed Pipers Arreton Tomato Crisps, the snacks are vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free and available in both 40g bags and 150g sharing bags.

Rachel Wilkins, product manager at Pipers Crisps said, "Pipers is,



and always has been, incredibly proud of the quality, consistency and provenance of our flavour ingredients. So much so, we tell the story behind our flavours on the back of every pack of crisps we sell. We're constantly on the look-out for flavours with provenance and we think Arreton tomatoes is an absolute hidden gem." piperscrisps.com

The Original Baker brings artisan pastries to indies

The creator of popular gourmet pastry business Yorkshire Baker has launched a new brand to supply a range of artisan pastries to independent retailers.

The Original Baker range consists of gluten-free pies and quiche, as well as a selection of sausage rolls including Mature Cheddar & Bacon, Hog Roast and Mediterranean Vegetable, and has 'farm to fork' principles at its heart.

Gill Ridgard, founder of The Original Baker said, "Discerning shoppers look to buy something special from the independent farm shops and delis, we have seen phenomenal growth in the sales of our all-butter pastries and a growing demand for high quality gluten-free pastry products." theoriginalbaker.co.uk



Epicure reinvents a popular classic

Heritage brand Epicure has released three new mayonnaises to its line up of premium kitchen cupboard staples.

The world's third most popular sauce, according to MarketWatch, sales of mayonnaise are rising and Epicure is set to capitalise on the trend by offering speciality shoppers a high-end version. Made using high quality, free-range eggs and no artificial ingredients, Epicure's three-strong range is both delicious and versatile.

The range includes Classic: a luxurious option for fans of traditional mayonnaise; Smoked Garlic: a versatile option with a

hint of smoked garlic; and Habanero Chilli: a classic creamy mayonnaise with a satisfying hit of chilli.

Jason Beaumont, brand director said, "Epicure has a long history of working alongside independent retailers to deliver the most flavoursome and innovative products to consumers across the UK. The brand's heritage is all about sourcing the best of the best, to bring end users a product that stands out against its competitors. Our brand-new mayonnaise range provides retailers



with a chance to capitalise on customers looking for a premium-led alternative from a well-trusted supplier of fine foods. Following our exciting rebrand last year, this range also highlights Epicure's ambition within the independent sector moving forwards." epicure.com



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Tracklements add a touch of spice to Special Edition range



Cotswolds-based condiment company Tracklements has launched a new addition to its Special Edition range: a Chilli & Chorizo Jam.

A combination of pan-fried chorizo sourced from The Bath Pig, jalapeno chillies, red pepper and a carefully considered blend of spices, the condiment is surprisingly versatile and, thanks to its punchy flavours, a little goes a long way.

It's delicious served on crackers with cheese, white fish, on a burger, with eggs or mixed into pasta sauce, making it a great value addition to shoppers' storecupboards.

Becky Vale, marketing director at Tracklements said, "Our Special Editions are exactly that; we only make three a year and they are only available whilst stocks last. Strikingly individual with innovative flavours, they create interest at the fixture and are made to delight consumers thereby maximising sales for specialist retailers."

tracklements.co.uk

A new trio of free-from treats from Honeybuns

Honeybuns, the popular producer of sweet baked goods, has added to their range of gluten-free treats – and they taste just as indulgent as the brand's Classic range of flapjacks, brownies and shortbreads.

Made using naturally free-from ingredients such as virgin coconut oil, coconut milk, date paste and flaxseed, each of the three new launches are assured gluten-free and registered with the Vegan Society.

The new launch range consists of Millionaire's Slice: the brand's signature polenta and almond shortbread based topped with

date-based caramel and dark chocolate; Dark Chocolate Brownie, a rich and slow-baked treat with a fudgy texture, topped with dark chocolate flakes; and Oaty Raspberry Bar, a soft flapjack sweetened with sultanas with an intense raspberry flavour.

Emma Goss-Custard, owner of Honeybuns said, "Honeybuns have extended their wholly gluten-free cake range with three gorgeous vegan flavours. We wanted to offer seriously indulgent treats



that happen to also be vegan. Our customers requested classic cake flavours so we created Millionaire's Slice, Dark Chocolate Brownie and an Oaty Raspberry Bar to be enjoyed by everyone."

honeybuns.co.uk

Street-food inspired seasonings hit UK market

The Dorset Spice Shed have produced a range of four flavourful seasonings for adventurous shoppers to include in their street food-inspired repertoires.

The range was inspired by the great street-food cuisines of the world, when The Dorset Spice Shed's founders noticed that much of the food being consumed was either vegetarian or vegan.

Directed at the growing vegan market, the four-strong range consists of Jamaican Jerk: delicious cooked with chicken alternatives,

jackfruit and cauliflower; Flamin' Fajita, for chicken substitute strips, peppers and aubergine; Satan's Shawarma, great with Seitan, tempeh, tofu, aubergine and cauliflower; and Sriracha Noodles, ideal for stir-fry dishes.

Richard Mabb, founder said, "Add spice to your vegan grocery range with our industry-first StreetFood seasonings. Inspired by world street cuisines our plant-based blends deliver great flavours for fast no recipe wok, grill, oven-bake and BBQ cooking."

dorsetspiceshed.com



Pioneering seed-to-bar range comes to Britain

Caribbean-based confectionery company Islands Chocolate is pioneering the seed-to-bar chocolate movement with the launch of a new range of bars.

The brand grows their own cacao from seed on family-run farms in the Grenadines and St. Vincent before turning it into chocolate at origin.

Islands Chocolate's mission is to create a tangible benefit to the environment, the local community and the ultimately the flavour of the chocolate by creating hundreds of jobs for islanders – paying above Fairtrade's recommended rates – supporting community projects and planting 300,000 trees.

There are four bars in the range: 72% Cocoa, a dark chocolate bar with notes of banana and woody undertones; 80% Cocoa & Nibs, boasting citrusy notes and fruity crunch from cacao nibs; 80% Cocoa Cinnamon & Nutmeg, a warming combination of dark chocolate and spices; and 85% Cocoa, the darkest bar in the range with an intense but subtle richness.

Wilf Marriott, founder of Islands Chocolate said, "We are on a mission to change peoples' understanding of chocolate, championing a much more sustainable, long-term, 'seed-to-bar' movement. Rather than buying in beans from far away locations to make artisan chocolate in Europe, we grow our own cacao from seed on our family-run farm in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, before turning it into chocolate at origin. Making it this way is much better for the environment, the local community, and the overall flavour of the chocolate."

islandschocolate.com



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BRITISH CURED MEATS

There were fewer than 20 makers of home-grown charcuterie in 2010, says Sally-Jayne Wright. Now there are over 200

Ordering a board of British charcuterie at the Beckford Bottle Shop restaurant in Bath, food critic Giles Coren noted that home-grown selections were: “unheard of 10 years ago, intriguing five years ago” and now “quite ubiquitous and very good indeed”.

Menus across the land reflect this. At the Corn Stores restaurant in Reading, there's a £20 English Cured Meats Board with piccalilli. Over at The Pig and Pallet in Topsham, they're offering game charcuterie made in Devon by the owners. Chef Tommy Heaney in Cardiff makes his own cured meats, as does head chef Kuba Winkowski at the Feathered Nest Inn in the Cotswolds. Ever tried wild boar and paprika lonza? Gloucester Old Spot fennel salami?

WHY WAS 2018 A TURNING POINT?

It saw the first British Cured Meats Festival at Borough Market and the first British Charcuterie Awards. The latter attracted well over 400 products from more than 80 producers. Category names show the variety: everything from British Regional Products such as haslett, Bath chaps and Lincolnshire chine, to Soft and Spreadable Products including pates, rillettes and n'duja.

WHAT'S BEHIND THE TREND?

It's a logical extension of the renewal of interest 15 years ago in local food, heritage breeds and nose-to-tail eating. Tapas bars Brindisa, Barrafinna and Iberica created a demand for Spanish-style cured meats. British breeders of rare, high welfare animals just needed the confidence, time and skills to develop home-grown versions. If it is that or go bust, you learn fast.

The 'craft movement' – as explored by Tim Hayward in *Food DIY*, 2013 – was another influence. Foodies took to their sheds in droves to brew, cure, pickle, smoke and ferment. Some, like the owners of Trealy Farm, Monmouthshire, changed career to pursue their passion.

WHY GO BRITISH WHEN THERE ARE SUCH GOOD IBERICO DE BELLOTA HAMS, ITALIAN SALAMIS AND FRENCH SAUCISSONS SECS?

Britain has higher animal welfare standards and buying British supports our farmers. A weaker pound has made Continental meats relatively more expensive. Plus customers love to try something new. More to the point, Henrietta Green, founder of the British Charcuterie Awards, reckons last year's winner, Beal's Farm Yorkshire Mangalitza air-dried ham can compete with the best Italian ham on depth of flavour.

SHOULDN'T WE DO OUR OWN THING?

Absolutely. Henrietta reckons there's “huge scope to develop distinctive-tasting new products which reflect the terroir.” A particularly promising area is game charcuterie, which is why the British Charcuterie Awards have a new competition category for 2019 – Best Game Product. There's also masses of potential to explore domestic traditions and develop more lamb and goat products.

WHAT ABOUT SOFT CHARCUTERIE?

Most traditional recipes are French so it's harder to create something uniquely British. Stringent environmental health regulations also pose problems. Artisan producer, Adrienne Treeby of Crown & Queue, enjoys a challenge and her latest creation – Devil's Mortar – is a squidgy, spicy, spreadable sausage inspired by a

1700s Scottish recipe. It contains locally smoked peppers, cayenne, tomato and a dash of anchovy oil.

OKAY, I'M CONVINCED. WHERE DO I START?

Search Google for local producers. As provenance is no guarantee of excellence, follow up with a search of award-winners. Visit the British Charcuterie Live Awards and Great Taste Awards websites. You could also approach a supplier such as Tempus Foods, Cannon and Cannon, Cobble Lane Cured or Harvey & Brockless and ask for recommendations.

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT FOR PEOPLE WANTING 'ETHICALLY-SOURCED' MEAT?

Look for meat from organic producers and those who belong to the Pasture for Life movement. At Peelham Farm in Berwickshire, the owners make a salami from ruby, as opposed to rose, veal. Calves stay with their mothers until weaned, leading to far less stress for the animals.

ANY TIPS FOR MAKING MY BRITISH SECTION A ROARING SUCCESS?

- Slice your meats freshly and offer filled rolls and boards at lunchtime. Hire rather than buy a slicer to test demand.
- Be generous with tastings.
- If nervous, go for reliable sellers, local or not. The British Charcuterie Company in Brighton told us that Yorkshire Mangalitza ham and Cornish seaweed and cider salami were best-sellers.

AM I ALLOWED TO ASK WHAT THERE IS FOR VEGANS?

Vegan food expert and blogger, Sean O'Callaghan, aka Fat Gay Vegan raves about the Scottish-based company, Sgaia; they offer pastrami, speck and Italian pepperoni made from a soy and wheat gluten mix.

IS THE BRITISH CHARCUTERIE TREND HERE TO STAY?

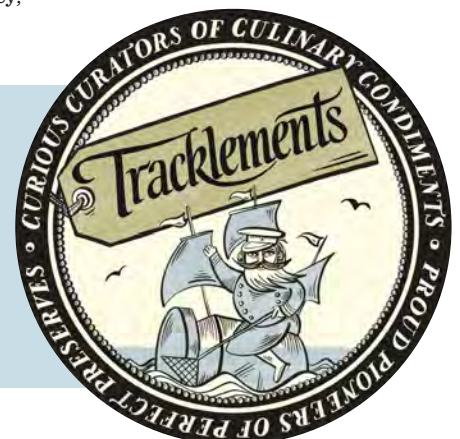
Oh, yes! Henrietta Green compares the charcuterie scene now to that of British cheese a quarter of a century ago: “Where were British cheeses 25 years ago? But then Juliet Harbutt started the British Cheese Awards and now it's quite acceptable to serve an all-British cheeseboard.”

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Over the past 20 years, the British drinks industry had seen something of a grand revival. Beginning in the 'noughties', when micro-breweries were springing up across the country, the ensuing decades have seen a return to the traditions of distillation, the revival of once-popular 'historic' beverages, and of course the embracing of non-alcoholic and low alcohol options.

Appealing to field-to-fork enthusiasts

Whilst gin has been on-trend for several years, boutique distilleries are now challenging convention by offering a plethora of unusual and revivalist flavours. Gin-based fruit liqueurs, drawing on traditional recipes, are also seeing a surge in popularity. Cambridgeshire-based Pinkster Gin launched Hedgepig Gin Liqueurs in 2018, producing a variety of colourful and potent offerings which take inspiration from the forgotten fruits of the English countryside: bullaces, gages and quince alongside the more familiar, and quintessentially British, raspberries and gooseberries. Foraged from orchards and fields and all locally-sourced, these drinks appeal to field-to-fork enthusiasts, offering a definitive 'pudding gin' which pairs well with cheese and desserts.

The trend for unusual botanicals and foraged ingredients has been instrumental in the development of these products. Company founder Will Holt believes that consumers are "going back to nature, establishing a connection with the countryside and shunning mass-produced products. Quality over quantity. People are drinking less, but better. Hedgepig has been well received by adventurous, discerning shoppers looking for a premium product with unusual ingredients and a quirky backstory. Brand Foragers, you could call them." With its elegant packaging and rich historical heritage appealing to both mixologists and independent retailers, Hedgepig also donates 50p from every bottle sold to the British Hedgehog Preservation Society. For Hedgepig, there is never a compromise on quality. Even though their passion for sourcing locally was initially frowned upon by the industry, it became just that which made them stand out from other



WHAT'S NEW IN DRINKS?

Hannah Freeman explores what's to come from the ever-evolving beverages industry

producers. As Will explains, "For some ingredients, such as bullace, a member of the plum family, we're literally rummaging around on our hands and knees. Whilst it's early days for Hedgepig, we firmly believe that foraged and fruity products have a rosy future. Furthermore, independents can firmly get behind local producers."

Rethinking our approach to mead and English wine

British vineyards are thriving. French Champagne houses are buying land in the south of England to establish vineyards while climate change is pushing viticulture north, and Britain is set to capitalise on this. There is now greater respect for British wines, ABVs are higher, and there is more consistency in the products. British wine is seen on the

cartes of the UK's finest restaurants, a real testament to its quality. One of the UK's longest established makers of English country wines, Devon-based The Lyme Bay Winery – established a little over 25 years ago – has received dozens of awards for its products which have diversified over the years and now include cider, English grape wine, liqueurs and mead. Although originally known for their fruit wines – Blackberry, Black Beer and Raisin, Nettle, Elderberry to name but a few – in recent years they have planted over 26,000 vines and now offer red, white, rosé and sparkling varieties of wine. Mead has also enjoyed a welcome comeback over the last few years, with The Lyme Bay Winery currently offering eight varieties including Black Cherry, Chilli and a seasonal spiced Christmas Mead. Speaking of

which, the time is now to rethink our approach to mead. No longer disregarded as merely a drink made from honey, it is becoming a drinks category of its own merit – as grapes become wine, so honey becomes mead. Over the past three years mead sales have grown 10% year on year, as it quickly moves away from being regarded as a 'historical hang-up'. Now firmly in the mainstream consciousness, mead is one of the success stories of the crafts drinks movement. Loaded with rich historical and literary heritage, mead offers producers a chance to flex their creative muscles. Drunk neat or over ice, it pairs exceedingly well with Chinese

and Indian food, takes sticky toffee pudding to a whole new level, and also works wonderfully with cheese.

New players are making a mark on the spirits sector

While Scotland is often recognised as the traditional home of the UK's distilleries, the current trends are leaning decidedly south of the border. Companies like Wales' Penderyn Distillery, Norfolk's St Georges Distillery and The Cotswolds Distillery are making their distinct mark on the industry, whilst rum is predicted to be quite a trend for 2019 and producers are offering some rather eclectic flavours to tempt the tastebuds. With last summer's number one cocktail – the Negroni – still trending, there are some excellent British bitters and vermouths now on the market with which to make it. London-based brand Asterley Brothers produces Dispense Amaro, Estate Vermouth and Britannia Fernet using recipes dating back to the 17th century, reviving a great English tradition of bitters and offering the British-and-proud consumer a wonderful alternative to more familiar imported products.

Challenging the stigma attached to non-drinkers

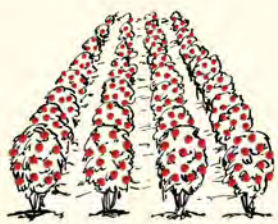
Alcohol consumption amongst the millennial generation is falling steeply. This has created a gap in the market resulting in some interesting non-alcoholic beverages. The soft drinks industry is growing up and taking on some very exciting options. Today's consumers are happy to experiment with new flavours and are proud to call themselves teetotal. Club Soda, an online club focused on 'Mindful Drinking', is leading the way in contemporary temperance. It encourages members to explore their drinking habits and make adjustments and changes where they feel it's necessary. The stigma associated with being a 'non-drinker' is being challenged and mindful drinking, teetotal or otherwise, embraced.

The options for those seeking to

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reduce their alcohol consumption are very varied – from contemporary twists on familiar classics to the embracing of kombucha and shrubs, via a plethora of soft drinks claiming health benefits. Kombucha, made from fermented tea and understood to be a gut-friendly beverage, has found its niche in pubs and bars across the country. Real Kombucha, founded in 2016, makes three varieties in bottle format and on-tap, allowing non-drinkers to enjoy a ‘pint’. Kombucha is a great option for the calorie conscious, having fewer than 50 calories per conventional serving. Company founder David Begg says that Kombucha, “once seen as a hipster fad, is finding a mainstream audience. People are drinking less and they’re looking for something sophisticated to fill that void when they’re out with their friends or having a meal. Nothing else in the non-alcoholic world hits the spot in quite the same way, with that fermented bite you tend to miss from an alcoholic drink.” He believes that with many bars becoming more innovative with their dispensers, on-tap Kombucha offers a real alternative for the non-drinker. The future of Kombucha is bright, with an almost infinite variety of flavours, depending not only on tea variety, but fermentation technique and flavour additions.



on year, many mainstream brands have turned to Sucralose over aspartame while artisan makers look to stevia (a South American leaf-based natural sweetener) and concentrated fruit juices. In 2017, the UK soft drinks market was worth £15,000,000 and this is increasing as more and more people from all age brackets are changing the way they drink. Benefiting from these trends are companies specialising in unusual alcohol-free beverages such as South Wales-based Lurvill’s Delight Botanical Sodas, who have re-invented a late Victorian recipe originally the brainchild of two miners seeking to raise money to send poor families to a new life in America. Their original recipe, packed full of foraged, native ingredients has been tweaked for modern tastes and is now enjoying 21st century success.

Another widening market are drinks with health benefits. Smoothies and juices have upped their game and have moved a long way from just offering an easy five-a-day, with the seeds being sown towards the embracing of



scientifically backed healthy drinks. London based Luhv Drinks make 100% plant-based products, and have worked with experts at King’s College London to investigate exactly how their ingredients work nutritionally. Founder Chris Beech believes that Mother Nature has an abundance of ingredients to offer, and, understanding ‘how’ these ingredients work should be at the base of product development. Rather than creating a drink and attaching healthy ‘buzz words’ post-

development, the science behind the desired health benefit should be addressed. By setting an industry benchmark, he hopes that one day all consumers will understand why products are healthy. In fact, Chris cites consumer education as a future trend: he says that people want to know what they are drinking, how it affects their bodies – and if this knowledge can be married with convenience, then all the better.

Although the dynamic of the British drinks industry is changing,

despite recent tax increases and the looming prospect of Brexit’s effects, it is still growing. Innovative new drinks are constantly emerging, many from centuries old recipes produced with a new enthusiasm, whilst the traditional industries – such as cider production and brewing – are also moving with the times. As we can see across the food and drink industry, consumers are looking for integrity, authenticity, provenance and a little bit of nostalgia.

Asking what makes a drink healthy

The Soft Drinks Industry Levy has created changes in the dynamics of the British soft drinks industry; companies are focusing on reducing sugar content and looking at alternative sweeteners. With artificial sweeteners becoming more unpopular with consumers year



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THE SF GUIDE TO: GETTING YOUR NAME OUT THERE

Why you should invest in own-branded products – and the options you should look into

“We are very proud of our branding and we’re always keen to promote and share it with customers and potential visitors to our shops,” says Clare Jackson of Slate Cheese. With two Suffolk delis to its name, Slate Cheese has landed on a successful way to spread the word and make the most of its eye-catching logo: a range of own-branded items for within the shop and beyond. “Around the shops we have our branding in several places (namely staff aprons, name badges, signage outside and an awning).” The

Slate team has made sure that the branded items work hard for their positions in the store; “At the till we have branded postcards to go in customer bags with their purchases. We also give these out at events such as local wedding fairs – they have all our contact details on them for people to get in touch. Hard copies of our newsletter are also branded and put into bags; with these we like to share cheese information with customers, tasting notes and so on, so that they associate our brand with sharing our excitement for learning about cheese.”

Mike Lukjaniec, director at Polmac – a High Wycombe-based supplier of customised food packaging made using wood from sustainable sources, a great option for products such as loose chocolates and confectionery, speciality tea and coffee and premium quality cheese – is a fan of this approach. “Smart food companies know that promotional products can be an effective way of delivering a specific marketing message to a target audience,” he says. Just like Slate’s branded bags for life, described by Clare as, “smart grey bags which are really handy for

“ Promotional products can be an effective way of delivering a specific marketing message to a target audience ”

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carrying around all sorts of things,” Polmac’s promotional gift boxes are “designed to keep a company’s branding in front of a customer for as long as possible,” says Mike. “Promotional wooden gift boxes are particularly good at this because once the product is consumed, the customer typically keeps the box and uses it for a different purpose, particularly if it’s high quality. Promotional wood gift boxes work on the principle that if you give someone a gift, they’ll feel the need to give something back in return. This may include customer loyalty, repeat business, a testimonial and/or a recommendation to another business.”

Word on the street

Items which take your branding out of shop – and home – are worth investing in. “All our paper carrier bags are hand-stamped with a bright turquoise version logo – it’s time consuming but we feel it is important as it does a little bit of advertising for us as people walk around town and back to their cars,” says Clare. “We also have branded bags for life which people love. We have the town names on these bags as well as our logo – customers like to remember their visits to the Suffolk coast. The bags for life are a useful ‘gift’ for customers; we often have promotions for a complimentary bag with any spend over £30 or £40.

Sarah Ward, key account director at B Smith Packaging – a supplier of bespoke packaging solutions – agrees. “Investing in own-branded items is a massive marketing opportunity as your customers are walking around promoting your brand. The bags

ONLINE OPPORTUNITIES

For Slate, it’s just as important that online customers receive the same brand treatment as those in-store. “For customers purchasing cheese via our online shop we dispatch their cheese in branded boxes and wrap individual pieces of cheese in branded wax paper. We hope that they will keep this paper on their cheese as it sits in their fridge to remind them where to get more!”

often carry our clients’ Twitter, website and phone number and we have carried out marketing activities where the bag has been a promotion and had good response rates.”

While B Smith Packaging can offer a wide range of own-branded products depending on a retailer’s requirements – including the recent addition of bespoke glassware in line with the move towards gin bars and craft ales – it’s jute, jute and cotton bags plus bags for life which have particularly led to uplift in sales for their customers. “Many trends are being driven by the end user,” explains Sarah, “and offering bags that are FSC certified and striving towards sustainability and lower carbon footprints are all key to our agenda and offering.”

With sustainability and brand loyalty high on the list of priorities for today’s speciality shoppers, own-branded items – from waxed paper for cheese to bespoke product packaging and bags for life – are well worth the investment for independent retailers keen to grow awareness of their business.

MEET THE PRODUCER

Meet Barnes and Natasha Edwards, custodians of The Garlic Farm's 50-year heritage



Have you ever wondered what a garlic farmer eats for breakfast? The habits of Barnes Edwards, an Isle of Wight native who married into the garlic-growing Boswell family, don't disappoint. "I like to have a sandwich of toasted sourdough, with lashings of our garlic and chilli mayo, and then I crush two or three cloves of our fresh garlic onto that, add baby leaf spinach and finally Halloumi or bacon on top."

It's the perfect set up for a busy day on the farm's 150-acre site, which is just starting to buzz with the first of around 250,000 visitors it welcomes every year. This free attraction allows guests to wander around its trial beds and fields, sample every product the family makes and explore the garlicky dishes served at the restaurant and café. "We invest in consumers heavily here at the farm," says Barnes, "so we make real fans of what we produce, and in turn we feel that supports retail across the country. Getting our products in front of consumers is an absolute cornerstone of the business. We've built a proper visitor attraction, and we give a lot for free in the hope that a wonderful experience here on the farm creates a connection with our products when visitors are back in their local farm shop, deli or



independent retailer."

Today Barnes and wife Natasha handle the day-to-day running of the farm, which grows around 40 varieties of garlic, but the family has been harvesting garlic on the Isle of Wight for around 50 years. "What's important to us is the light intensity," says Barnes. "The sunlight on the island is unmatched across the UK and that's good for garlic. It doesn't mind the cold – in fact it needs it – but sunlight is good for healthy plants with big bulbs." The company produces an impressive range of condiments, sauces, oils, snacks and more, but the humble bulb is at the heart of operations. "For those that retail the range successfully, fresh garlic is normally the best seller," says Barnes. "That goes for fresh and particularly smoked. We really

invest to deliver a garlic that's full of flavour. Garlic can have great punch, but it can be very subtle too. We're working with chefs who are interested in it not only for its own character but its flavour-grabbing properties. It can bring out other notes in food. I think the subtlety of garlic is often under sung."

The family certainly hasn't underestimated its uses, and the advent of black garlic has given the team a whole new ingredient to play around with. "Black garlic opened up everything," says Barnes. "At the farm we make a black garlic ice cream – our black garlic sundae is very popular in our café – and it's what we use in our beer. It has totally changed the game in flavour profiles. It's in our soy teryaki, our hoisin; we have a black garlic mayonnaise." And

consumers are on board for this journey of discovery. "Food is so exciting if you let your imagination run wild," says Barnes. "You'd think black garlic vodka would be utterly absurd and just wouldn't work. If it hadn't we'd have just shelved it, but in fact it's been really exciting and has allowed us to collaborate with other local producers to make the ultimate Bloody Mary. We serve many many hundreds of them at our garlic festival on the Isle of Wight in August and it's been picked up by Bayley and Sage across their six London stores. It's gathering pace, because the product is really good, and it's an example of just what garlic can do."

Health

Innovations in taste aren't the only factor driving demand. Garlic,

along with other naturally probiotic veg, is having a moment thanks to its beneficial effect on microbial populations of gut bacteria. So is The Garlic Farm feeling it? "It's quite niche but it's remarkable how quickly that niche is expanding," says Barnes. "We are not the first to see garlic as the heart of all flavour and central to our health; mankind has had a relationship with garlic for several thousand years. We hosted a fermentation course here on the farm recently and ancient recipes like kimchi are gaining interest. There's a very long connection with garlic across cultures and across continents; it feels good to be keeping the magic of the mighty bulb alive!"

March will be busy for the team, with IFE and Harrogate Fine Food Show plus a packed schedule of farmers markets and of course swelling numbers of holiday makers to welcome at the farm. "We're farmers, producers, retailers, and we serve food and offer accommodation – all around the unusual joy of garlic," says Barnes. "That's a complex organisation to hold together, and it's all down to our amazing team that we can do that with such conviction. There's so much going on!" It's going to be a busy year for The Garlic Farm, and they wouldn't have it any other way.



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ICE CREAM & DESSERTS

Hoping to sweeten sales figures next quarter? We track three trends sure to set tills ringing this summer

Last summer's scorching weather wasn't ideal for everyone – soaring temperatures and low rainfall saw faltering yields of staple veg – but for one industry it was a gold rush. "Ice cream was one of the star performers of 2018 with recent statistics stating YOY sales growth of 12.9% (in the 52 weeks ending 2nd December 2018) and volumes up 7.1%," says John Hyman, chief executive of the British Frozen Food Federation. Global warming makes a repeat of such events more likely, but in the absence of certainty what else might drive sales of summer desserts?

1 Functional In days gone by catering to customers motivated by health concerns would have come down to a binary choice: full fat or low fat. With today's consumers likely to be 'watching their macros' – keeping tally of their carb, fat and protein intakes – and swayed by functional claims relating to active ingredients, things are a little more interesting. "We've seen a massive shift to Greek style (both full fat and low fat) over the past 10 years as consumers become more food savvy," says Chris Timotheou, managing director of family-run yoghurt producer Tims

Dairy. "There's far more appreciation for natural, fresh ingredients and a better understanding of the 'good fats' that can be found in milk and cream. Low fat yogurts are still popular but the concept of eating higher fat content to keep you fuller for longer is being readily adopted, even for dieting." Tims Dairy has launched three new live yoghurts – Mango & Turmeric; Chocolate & Orange Marmalade; and Rhubarb & Rose – to meet demand for functional desserts that hit the right flavours. "Gut health awareness has also become a massive trend as growth in fermented and bio-live

products reflects the consumer demand for better gut health," adds Chris. "All of our Greek-style yogurts are bio-live and this message has become increasingly important across our packaging and marketing. We've seen the huge impact and awareness around sugar consumption."

The meteoric rise of brands such as Halo Top, which delivers indulgent-sounding flavours (Cookies and Cream, for example, or Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough) that are nonetheless low in calories and high in protein, suggests consumers are pleased to have their cake and eat it. The ultra-processed recipes, however, won't please true foodies. Time, perhaps, to lay upon customers the old adage that a little of what you fancy does you good.

2 Kids According to stats from Kantar Worldpanel, kids' ice cream – hand-held ice creams deliberately marketed to children – encountered an impressive 20% year-on-year growth in the 52 weeks up to November 2018. Holding just under 12% of the total market share in ice creams this is still a small category, but one that's growing fast. At the premium end of the market innovation centres around perceived health benefits, with fruit, yoghurt and free-from products doing well. Any plans to extend the sugar tax to this category, however, is deeply opposed by the Federation of Food and Drink. "We believe it's wrong in principle to single out individual nutrients or product categories for punitive treatment," says Kate Halliwell, the organisation's head of UK diet and health policy. "There is no evidence that the levy will make any lasting or significant difference to obesity. Responding to consumer demand, food and drink manufacturers have been reducing sugar, fat, salt and calories in their products voluntarily for over a decade. But this can't happen overnight. Shoppers can see that our food and drinks are changing, with more healthier options and more low- and no-sugar variants available too.

However, every reformulation must carry loyal consumers with it; if you change the recipe and people don't like it they won't buy it."

3 Alcohol Another big category for growth last year was 'adult refresh', with Kantar Worldpanel reporting that year-on-year sales of ice lollies specifically aimed at adults, and with flavours such as mojito, grew a whopping 38%. There are plenty of producers in the category, with Lickalix and Poptails by Lapp among others persuading shoppers to abandon their own efforts and buy a commercially-made 'poptail' when they're on the go. Last summer was an important moment for the category, with Sainsbury's, Tesco, Waitrose and even B&M stocking alcoholic lolly lines to snap up sales from Aldi, which launched its 4.5% ABV poptails in summer 2017.

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THE SWEET STUFF

Is your selection of cakes and puddings working hard enough to pull in profit? We look at the trends bringing home the dough

If filling your cake and pudding shelves has become a box-ticking exercise, it's time to reassess your range. Home baked goods with strong regional stories will always sell, but health-savvy consumers are looking for a little bit extra when it comes to spending their daily budget of calories. Providing a truly memorable indulgent experience? Now that's the way to shoppers' hearts.

That's not to say that they will only be satisfied with a full-fat, sugar-laden treat, though. Gluten and dairy-intolerant consumers crave indulgence too, so it's well worth stocking a few free-from and vegan-friendly options alongside your conventional selection. Thankfully, there are plenty of brands out there which are on a mission to satisfy these cravings.

As well as innovative new formats, keep an eye out for vegan and free-from versions of classic puddings and desserts so that your free-from customer base no longer feels left out in the cold.

Speaking of classic desserts, traditional options are still strong sellers – know anyone who would turn down a Victoria sponge? Neither do we – so it's important to keep some classic options in your portfolio, too.

1 PLANT-BASED

"Vegan is only 3-4% percent of the market in the UK but it's growing like crazy," says Kim Lanza, co-founder of Hoxton-based producer Gato & Co which supplies Fortnum's, Whole Foods Market and others. "Flexitarianism is growing too." Kim and her team have spent a year

reformulating part of their range to make key products vegan-friendly. Catering to the voracious demand for plant-based products makes sense from a marketing perspective, but is it pricier to produce vegan desserts? "Replacing free-range eggs with aquafaba is expensive but not a different ballpark," says Kim. "The real challenge is getting it to work. You can make a pudding that tastes delicious but has a huge sinking hole in the middle, or something looks beautiful and is shelf-ready but the taste falls flat. It's so tricky getting that balance."

Gato is part of a new generation of producers picking a line between indulgence and health to create a product that promises to deliver on both counts. "Traditional recipes that are full fat and full sugar would have to be an occasional

indulgence but ours can be a much more regular treat," says Kim. "We see it happening in snacking – the crossover of health and indulgence. We're just doing that same thing with desserts."

2 THE HYBRID

Street food trends will come and go but the 'cronut', has changed the game when it comes to fine baking. Created by chef Dominique Ansel in 2013, this croissant-donut crossover perfectly marries high patisserie with trash culture, bringing fine food and true indulgence together into one snack that instantly went viral. Six years and countless imitations down the line, the London outpost of Dominique Ansel Bakery produces one flavour a month (February's filling was mixed ganaches of raspberry and Nutella), charging £4.50 per pastry and requiring online orders to be placed 48 hours before collection. At Cheltenham bakery Baker & Graze the 'cruffin', made by baking laminated dough in a muffin case, or the 'Lamington croissant', make perfect vehicles for indulgent toppings: craggy shards of honeycomb toffee, tempered chocolate or slices of caramel-poached pear. "We sell well across our range," says co-founder Adam Hall, "but the more skillful, the more glamorous and photogenic

side of our range gives customers confidence in everything we do. It's a helping hand."

3 CLEAN LABEL

Coined as early as 2013, this term refers to the replacement of chemical-sounding emulsifiers, stabilisers, preservatives and sweeteners with natural-sounding alternatives. "I think what's happening in the industry is going under consumers' radar because it's so subtle," says Association of UK Dietitians spokesperson Gillian Killiner (121dietitian.com), "but when I look at the labels I think 'Mmmm, they're adding that nicer-sounding ingredient instead of commercial fillers. Manufacturers are moving towards the inulins, for example." This plant fibre, which is naturally sweet, is a smart way to create bakes that hit consumers demand for low sugar and high fibre without compromising on sweetness. Another example is chestnuts, which ingredient suppliers are touting as a solution to manufacturers keen to add a natural creaminess to gluten-free bakes. Chestnuts are high in fibre, low in fat and naturally sweet.

Rethinking recipes to remove the nasties is, on the face of it, an excellent idea and brings plenty of opportunities to innovate. But do

“ Providing a truly memorable indulgent experience? Now that's the way to shoppers' hearts ”

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today's 'clean' sweeteners – maple syrup, coconut sugar and inulins really bring benefits? "I'd rather that than aspartame or any of the phenylalanines," says Gillian, "but what bothers me is when people are being persuaded to buy more of these products believing they're healthy. Clean label is a positive development for people who are clued in – they can have something that's semi-processed but without some of the very artificial fillers, binders and sweeteners – but for consumers who are wowed by a healthy-sounding ingredient I'd say 'What else is in the ingredients list that you should be thinking about?'"

4 INSTAGRAM

Instagram has long been credited with changing the restaurant scene, but its impact on bakery – celebrating the bombastic, the rainbow-hued, the super-sized and downright kooky (bubble wrap waffle, anyone?) – is undeniable. "Instagram's been important to us from day one, and our products are very photogenic," says Adam Hall. "People love seeing them, love talking about them. I did a post yesterday about new donut flavours and it went absolutely mad. People like to have a bit of involvement; it's a great place to launch new ideas and get a bit of feedback."

It's also a great place to rally an army of loyal fans to see you through quiet spells. You don't have to be Peggy Porschen, the Belgravia baker with 367,000 followers, to make your bakery section a local foodie destination. If you (or your supplier) are nailing photogenic bakes it's the perfect platform to drum up support.

5 BEST OF BRITISH

Britain's baking heritage is a huge money spinner, with destinations such as Bakewell and Eccles (now part of Greater Manchester) anchoring these world-renowned bakes in proud communities. At Bakery on the Water in the Cotswolds, classic scones, Chelsea buns and lemon meringue pies wow holiday makers. "We get millions of tourists coming to this part of the world – we probably have more international customers than local,"



says the shop's Clare Keyte, "so they are looking for quintessentially British bakes."

The continued popularity of the *Great British Bake Off*, itself an amazing shop window for regional cakes and puddings, breathes new life into classic recipes. It continues to remind a new generation of prime time viewers that simple British bakes, made with the finest ingredients, take some serious beating.

6 SEASONAL 2.0

Okay, so you've got hot cross buns at Easter and panettone at Christmas, but show-stopping seasonal bakes with long heritage have more to offer. Pump Street Bakery's limited run of Colomba di Pasqua, a sweet fermented Easter bread with an almond-studded sugar crust, last March is a great example. Traditional European baking rituals, celebrated by books such as Nigel Slater's *Christmas Chronicles*, and documented across social media platforms, make perfect celebration purchases, repaying bakers who dive deep into religious food culture. Twelfth Night's galette des rois, Eid or Easter's stuffed shortbread maamoul or Rosh Hashanah tispishti give culture vultures the chance to celebrate in style.

7 'FILTHY' TREATS

Love or loathe this adjective in a food context, it's come to

signify a crowd-pleasing approach to an indulgent experience worth remembering. For Adam Hall at Baker & Graze, which recently applied the term to its chantilly-filled donuts with chocolate sauce and praline topping, hitting customer's sweet spot has always been part of the game plan. "One hundred per cent," says Adam. "People like to indulge, and feel a little bit guilty enjoying that moment and splurge on it. If they want something healthy we have a range of options. But people going for that always choose a cake after too – a dulce de leche croissant or something overfilled. Also people are conscious of their money, so they want to get a decent-sized item for their money." The maximalist approach of modern bakery – exemplified by fillings that squidge out of donuts and toppings that drip down the side of muffins – treads a fine line. Using the very best ingredients, finely balanced flavours and skilled techniques delivers a treat that doesn't leave customers with the sugar hangover and unpleasant mouthfeel of cheaper baked goods. "Everything is very measured," say Adam of Baker & Graze's approach. "It's indulgent, but you can go over the top and go too far. Things can get messy, but ours is a very skilled approach. We make everything from scratch, and alongside those very sweet flavours – chocolate, caramel, honeycomb – we also have rose, pistachio, and passionfruit. More delicate flavours."



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“ The *Great British Bake Off* continues to remind prime time viewers that simple British bakes, made with the finest ingredients, take some serious beating ”

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1 BREW TEA COMPANY BREAKFAST TEA

On a mission to champion a new kind of premium tea, Brew Tea Company are passionate about sourcing great quality teas and overseeing the process from beginning to end – from picking and harvesting to the final cup of tea. With nine blends in its portfolio and as a B Corp-certified brand, it's a great option for independents looking for ethically-minded quality teas.
brewteacompany.co.uk

2 DRIVERS PICKLES CHUTNEY & PICKLES

Drivers Pickles is a fourth generation family company producing a range of premium pickles, chutneys and relishes. Their internationally award-winning products are made using only the finest ingredients from around the world. They make the perfect accompaniments to hot or cold platters and salads and are a great choice for sandwich fillers. A must-have in any kitchen pantry.
driverspickles.co.uk

3 GAROFALO PASTA

Garofalo is unique due to its ability to use artisan knowledge to create products on an industrial scale. Under the Garofalo brand there are traditional wheat, organic wheat, organic whole wheat and gluten-free pastas, all made with only the best ingredients, all high in protein, all vegan and stocked in the UK for immediate delivery from your local wholesaler.
pastagarofalo.it/uk_en



4 COTTAGE DELIGHT JAMS & PRESERVES

Cottage Delight's delicious recipes are part of its mission to inspire food lovers, taking them on a journey of discovery using exciting flavours and culinary creativity, whilst adding a much needed dollop of delight into the speciality food sector. The range includes marmalades, jams, curds, chutneys and sauces.

cottagedelight.co.uk

5 HAWKSHEAD RELISH CONDIMENTS

An artisan producer of award-winning preserves based in Hawkshead Village in the heart of the English Lake District, Hawkshead Relish's range of over 100 relishes, pickles and preserves are handmade using traditional open pans, without artificial flavourings, colourings or preservatives. All are free from nuts, gluten, additives and preservatives and are suitable for vegetarians.

hawksheadrelish.com

6 EAST END FOODS COOKING SAUCES

East End Artisan Cooking Sauces are available in four flavours: Butter Chicken, Tikka Masala, Jalfrezi and Korma. A new range of artisan cooking sauces made with fresh ingredients in an open pan, artisan cooking kettle, this range is also gluten-free, dairy-free and nut-free with no artificial colours or preservatives.

eastendfoods.co.uk

7 BALLANCOURT FINE FOODS PÂTÉ

Ballancourt Fine Foods specialises in a wide range of quality French foods. All products can be provided with bespoke labelling at no extra charge and have the added benefit of a long shelf life. The extensive range of ambient pâtés, terrines and rillettes is second to none with a variety of jar sizes to suit all needs.

ballancourt.co.uk

MEET THE PRODUCER

Brew Tea Co is flying the flag for speciality teas in the UK. We speak to Phil Kirby, co-founder, to find out why and how

One thing that is clear when you speak to Phil Kirby, the co-founder of Brew Tea Co, is the absolute passion that he has for the subject. After running tea bars with his wife and business partner, Aideen, he felt that the tea industry was missing something, and seven years ago set up Brew Tea Co in a bid to fill that void. "When you go to a café and get a tea it can feel like a rip-off compared to what your coffee-drinking friends are getting. I wanted to champion things being done better and introduce a premiumization in tea – knowing where the product was picked and harvested and how to turn that into a nice cup of tea."

Starting out with a love for the product and a drive to evoke change, Phil and Aideen got to work: "Aideen would buy the tea, create the blend and packaging and put everything together and I would then drive around Manchester and Liverpool and try to get cafés to buy our tea. Fast-forward to today and there are about 20 of us in the business. We are a full-on manufacturer so everything that you see on the shelves we make in-house, which is quite different for the tea industry which tends to be contracted out and not particularly transparent in the way that perhaps coffee or beer is."

With nine core blends to their name, the company use 100% rolled whole leaves and all-natural ingredients, and are proud that they were the first independent tea company in the UK to gain B Corporation accreditation. But the innovation part, for Phil and Aideen, is more focused around how the beverage is actually drank. "Tea can sometimes be a little bit unfashionable so you have to be a bit different in order to catch people's eye," Phil explains. "Everybody goes to a farm shop or deli to buy stuff that is more interesting than they would get in the supermarkets, and the challenge with tea is that there isn't really the opportunity for people to go and really enjoy the



cup of tea that they bought – we are trying to raise that bar. We are not trying to change the product you drink but the way you drink the tea, so it's a slightly different approach which fits in really well with cafés and speciality retailers as it sets us apart from everyone else. What we are trying to do is educate. We have

grown our business by shrinking our range rather than expanding over the years and focusing on advice – how can we help a retailer to sell more tea through their stores? How can we help them get customers back through the door? Growing and engaging with independents is critical."



Brew Tea Co is certainly living up to its reputation of a company with a mission based on adding quality experience and excitement to the tea industry, with the exclusive reveal of a market-first ready-to-drink cold brew iced tea launch – coming in the next few weeks. "This year is going to be all about iced tea for us," he continues. "We've had so many enquiries from people about iced tea, from customers as well as stockists. There isn't really anybody in the market doing these kinds of speciality products and we can see that there is an appetite for it. We've taken our core line of English Breakfast and cold brewed that for 15 hours before adding some really simple ingredients, a little bit of agave and lemon juice. If you're going to try iced tea for the first time then this is the one that you should try!"

Educating both stockists and consumers is key, and the team will be running some cold brew sessions in the tasting kitchen at Tea HQ in Manchester, alongside the regular monthly training events that have grown to be an important part of the brand's ethos. "Stockists can come to Tea HQ, have a tour around the factory, see how everything is made and learn about how it's been bought and sold. We run a session on everything from growing, harvesting and processing through to the taste of the finished product," Phil explains.

With the market for speciality tea open and ready to be wowed, there are big plans afoot for the future of Brew Tea Co: "Business has grown at about 40% on average year-on-year so it's allowed us to do more and reduce the cost of good tea to the end user. We recognise that to get people to think about tea differently requires us to talk to more people, and we would like to be at the forefront of change going across all areas – for people to buy our tea direct to home, our speciality stockists to rely on us for the latest influences in the tea market and to be known as successful start-up that changed the way people think about tea."

“ How can we help a retailer to sell more tea through their stores? How can we help them get customers back through the door? Growing and engaging with independents is critical ”



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CHEESE UNCUT

News, opinion and comment from dairy insiders

Nantwich cheesemaker scales up

Cheshire's JS Bailey, the cheesemaker behind British territorial brand Calveley Mill, has secured a £400k Rural Development Programme grant to expand its production.

The Nantwich firm, which produces a growing range of continental and flavoured cheeses, is putting the funds towards a £1.5m expansion project that will create 15 new jobs and increase production of its cheeses, which include a marmalade white Cheshire and a mango and ginger Wensleydale.

"We are very grateful for the support we have received from the council and the Skills and Growth Company, to help make this all possible and for helping us secure such a substantial grant," commented company director John Bailey.

Quicke's launches new Cheddar

Devon cheesemaker Quicke's has added a new young Cheddar to its range.

Buttery Clothbound Cheddar is matured for just three months but promises 'character and depth that is often associated with more mature cheeses'.

Particularly notable is a pronounced buttery flavour that's to be found in the early stages of Cheddar maturation. Like other Cheddars in the Quicke's range, Buttery Clothbound Cheddar is made with milk from grass-fed herds raised in accordance with Natural England's Higher Stewardship Scheme.



Cheese industry salutes Mary Holbrook



The dairy industry said goodbye to one of its finest last month following the death of revered cheesemaker Mary Holbrook.

Known to some as the godmother of British goat's cheese, Mary started making cheese at Sleight Farm near Bath in the late 70s, creating Tynsboro, Sleightlett, Cardo and Old Ford.

"When I started working at Neal's Yard in '91 she was already

an enormous presence at the dairy; we had amazing cheeses from her," David Lockwood, managing director of Neal's Yard told *Speciality Food*.

"Whatever she did she did it well. She was adamant that she wasn't going to compromise on the things she believed in. It wasn't that she wasn't commercial – she was – but she also had tremendous belief in her principles. She was absolutely going to make what she believed in,

and recognised that it's a lot easier to make a business add up when your cheese tastes amazing. In her work she was always observant and took care in what she did. Those qualities allowed her to make amazing cheese."

Of the future of Sleight Farm, Catherine, Mary's cousin, told *Speciality Food*, "The goats have been kidding for the last six or so weeks and, eight days after Mary's passing, we started to milk the goats again for the first time since the autumn. We have spent the last two weeks setting curd, making cheese and tending to the animals, just as Mary wanted. We plan to continue in this way, making Tynsboro, Sleightlett, Cardo and Old Ford in just the same way, for the rest of this season. Mary had plans for the future of the farm after her death and her family are working together to see if this can be achieved. It is a very special place of high-quality pasture that has remained free of intensive farming. We hope to keep it that way."

UK's first vegan 'cheesemonger'

The UK's dedicated bricks and mortar store for plant-based 'cheese' has opened in Brixton, with owners of La Fauxmagerie promptly issued with a letter of warning from Dairy UK regarding legal use of dairy-specific words such as 'cheese' and 'butter'. In a statement sisters Rachel and Charlotte Stevens, whose shopfront describes their outlet as a 'plant-based cheesemonger' highlighted the prominent use of qualifiers such as 'vegan' to highlight the dairy-free nature of their produce. All parties have stated that dairy and dairy-free should be able to coexist in a marketplace with clear demand for both.

"I think the dairy industry reacting as it has is definitely a sign that they're feeling threatened by the vegan cheese," says producer Ami Tadaa, whose own Tyne Cheese is stocked at the Brixton shop. "Right now makers have upped their game, and the opening of La Fauxmagerie just proves that the movement is gaining momentum."

Ami's cultured cashew nut 'cheeses', which are sold in a variety of flavours including white truffle oil, za'atar and smoked paprika, are selling well at the London outlet. "We don't even try to replicate dairy cheeses, we try to make something that's different but can be enjoyed on any cheese board," says Ami. "That's why we have some out-there flavours. We sell to lots of different delis who also sell dairy cheese too. Vegan cheese is definitely crossing over; some vegans are 100% but you have to be realistic. People who aren't vegan are willing to try new things and make plant-based part of their lifestyle too."

A spirit of co-operation and camaraderie within this blossoming industry looks set to continue. "I think all the companies are kind of grouping together, especially because of the backlash from the dairy industry," says Ami. "I hope that we're part of something bigger. With vegan food popping up in supermarkets more and more it feels like vegan is growing; it's on the rise."

British Cheese Awards open for entries

Cheesemakers are being invited to enter The British Cheese Awards, now in their 26th year, for their chance to be recognised as the best producers in the UK's vibrant cheese industry.

At the Royal Bath & Best Show in Shepton Mallet, Somerset, on Wednesday 29th May, a panel of 70 renowned judges will judge 124 classes of cheese in 13 categories, looking at presentation, texture, aroma, flavour and balance. The presentation of the prizes will take place on the same day.

This year sees two new Cheddar awards being presented – for Best Block Cheddar and Best Traditional Cheddar – as well as the popular four Country Awards and nine Main Category Awards.

Visitors to the awards, this year being hosted at Exmoor Hall at the Royal Bath & West Showground for the first time, will be able to both see the award-winning cheeses and purchase them, making it a must-attend for cheese lovers.

Julius Longman, chairman of the British Cheese Awards said, "Since the awards were first started we've seen a large increase in the number of cheesemakers entering. In 1994 97 cheesemakers entered the

awards; in 2018 there were 148.

"Over the past 25 years of the awards it's not only the number of cheesemakers that have changed, the number of cheeses made from milks other than cows' milk have too. For example in 1994 there were 20 cheeses made from ewe's milk entered into the Awards, in 2018 there were 59, an increase of 195+%. In fact last year's Supreme Champion from White Lake Cheese, Sheep Rustler, is made using ewes' milk.

"The awards are a great celebration of British cheesemakers' passion and variety. We know that winning an award gives cheesemakers heightened interest with consumers. This means that any cheesemonger or fine food deli stocking an award-winning cheese with a British Cheese Awards sticker on it can showcase this to customers, talk to customers about the cheese and where it comes from. With consumers' continued interest in food and its provenance, this is very important.

"We are looking forward to seeing what these cheesemakers, renowned for their excellence and commitment to quality, will put into competition for this year."

CONSUMERS 'CONFUSED' SAYS ARLA

60 per cent of consumers from the UK and other Northern European markets don't recognise that dairy products are a natural source of essential nutrients such as calcium and B vitamins, says a YouGov survey commissioned by Arla Foods. The large dairy corporation points to 'prevalent confusion', suggesting more education is needed in the fight against dairy-free alternatives.

LONDON CHESEMONGER PENS NEW BOOK

This month will see Morgan McGlynn, owner of Cheeses of Muswell Hill and resident cheese expert on Channel 4's *Sunday Brunch*, launch a new book encouraging foodies to have a go at creating fine cheeses. *The Modern Cheesemaker: Making and Cooking with Cheeses at Home* is published by White Lion Books.



EXPORTS OF
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STILTON AND
WENSLEYDALE**
ARE AT A
RECORD HIGH,
WITH THE EU
ACCOUNTING
FOR **81%** OF
ALL CHEESE
EXPORTED

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"We're a resourceful bunch"

It's almost exactly 10 years ago that I sat down to create the first business plan for my cheesemonger. It was flexible, to say the least, and the variance twixt desired turnover and worst case was wider than 1970s flared trousers. I pondered whether the concept was really something that residents and visitors to my home town might support, and guessed at the size of their shopping baskets. Would £75 artisan cheese orders for dinner parties be the norm, or would I forever be cutting 'a quarter of mild Cheddar' for a phalanx of little old ladies?

In the event, my clientele was a mixture between those two extremes; my overheads were low, margins were healthy and cash flow reserves adequate to enable me to trade for a while, then adjust my plans to reflect the reality of the project's uptake. As an independent trader, I was able to react quickly, without needing to justify any re-positioning to investors, and thus ensure that the business could mature.

I've spent time recently with some food businesses that are trying to make sense of their plans and budgets for the next financial year. We currently face a great deal of uncertainty on the future shape of Britain's trading relations with other countries. This may, of course, be settled by the time you read this, but on recent experience, possibly won't be. Consequently these businesses have been looking at how they can trade in a variety of different scenarios – with duties and exchange rates merely two factors in what seems like a four-dimensional game

of chess. Yet, there are resourceful people behind these enterprises and I'm sure that whatever happens they'll cut their cloth accordingly and make a decent fist of the reality in which they find themselves. I'm sure that they'll be focusing on the elements of the plan over which they can have some control, rather than gnashing teeth over matters outside their influence.

Recently I watched the BBC's *Made in Great Britain: Cheese*, an interesting hour that explored the changing ways in which cheese had been made in Wensleydale. With Courtyard Dairy's hugely knowledgeable Andy Swinscoe as expert 'host', we saw four artisans from various fields try their hands at making cheese with methods used in the Middle Ages, Victorian times, the 1920s and finally, utilising contemporary equipment. I was captivated by the way in which external events had shaped the production methods. The Norman conquest brought monks and their cheesemaking into the area. When Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries, cheesemaking moved to multiple farmhouse production, mostly by women, each on a very small scale. As 'science' impacted the world, post Industrial Revolution, we saw consistency come into the process and production lines of white clad workers each doing a part of the cheese preparation.

Whatever the world at large had thrown at them over 900 years or more, cheesemakers had found a way to persevere and to refine their craft. The events of the next few months may be challenging, but from producer to retailer, we've proved ourselves a resourceful bunch.

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parts and on wire shelves, Cheddars in a slightly warmer area on wooden shelves, blue cheeses kept cooler on wooden shelves with straw mats," says Vickie.

Cheese care at home

"My preferred advice to customers is to buy little and often" says Patricia. "To keep the cheeses in good condition at home, use a Tupperware or similar style of box and line the bottom with a damp cloth. Lay a piece of dampened paper towel on top and then close the lid and place somewhere where it is not too cold." She recommends that the cheese is checked every day; if cared for in this way, it should be fine for three to four days. Vickie recommends keeping cheese separate from other foods which may affect the flavour, and even keeping a cabbage leaf or piece of celery in the box with the cheese to create a little moisture.

Patricia's team use the La Fromagerie website to share advice with their customers, and staff are happy to send notes by email when requested. "So many complaints come in because a customer has not kept the cheese properly or failed to understand why something has dried out or become unpleasant to eat, she says. "Having good clear instructions on cheese care for customers is just as vital as how businesses look after their cheese."

CHEESE CARE:

How to make sure your cheeses leave your shop in perfect condition

Staff training

Staff training is an invaluable part of caring for cheeses properly. "The key to avoiding costly mistakes is investing in staff training," says Tracey Colley, director of the Academy of Cheese. "Retailers need to understand the time, care and passion that goes into making the cheese on sale. To guarantee the delivery of a perfect product to customers, this level of care and commitment needs to continue." Tracey prescribes a set regime and making sure it is adhered to. "Businesses need to allocate enough time for daily set up and clean down, receiving, unpacking and storing deliveries," she says. Cleanliness is key, and Patricia Michelson of

La Fromagerie prefers that her staff "keep washing their hands throughout the day rather than wearing disposable gloves that cross-contaminate."

Creating the right environment

"In broad terms you should be looking to refrigerate cheese at between 5-8°C," says Tracey. "However, if a cheese is very young when it arrives and you want to bring on the maturation process then this will affect how you store and treat that particular product. Similarly, if a cheese is already ripe then you'll want to keep it cool to extend its shelf life."

"Most shops have fridges that

are very cold, and the chilled blast simply dries out rinds and wrinkles up crusts," explains Patricia. "The immediate thought process is to cover everything in clingfilm but that doesn't really help, especially when dealing with handmade farmhouse cheeses. So, if you are thinking of being a specialist cheese shop you need to sort out the way you chill your area." This could prove a large investment for a retailer: "It is expensive and it requires someone who understands cooling units with low density chill." But there is an inexpensive alternative. "One idea is to put dampened cloths on the surface areas of the chilled units," she continues, "then place a straw mat

or piece of marble or slate on top and wrap your delicate cheeses in a cellophane wrap."

"We keep our cheese in a specially-designed cheese room," explains Vickie Anderson, director at Liverpool Cheese Company, "but once they are cut and in the serve over fridge they spend the night there. During the daytime we will often take the harder cheeses out of the fridge and display them on the counter, but they go back in the fridge for the night. The following day all the cheeses are unwrapped, checked and re-wrapped."

Once your cheeses are cut, they should be wrapped in clingfilm – but not too tightly, as it needs to 'breathe'. "Delicate cheeses can be wrapped in double wax paper," says Patricia, and cheeses like Brie "suffers if kept too cold, as it gets hard and unpleasant to eat." Washed-rind cheeses need to be well wrapped "to ensure that the rinds don't dry up and crack," and goats cheeses need to be kept in a cool – not cold – environment.

Softer cheeses, blue cheeses and cheeses with additives are kept refrigerated all the time at Liverpool Cheese Company. "In the cheese room we check the humidity and store the cheeses in the area best suited to them – soft in the colder

“One of the fundamental principles of cheese care is an understanding that different cheeses have different needs”



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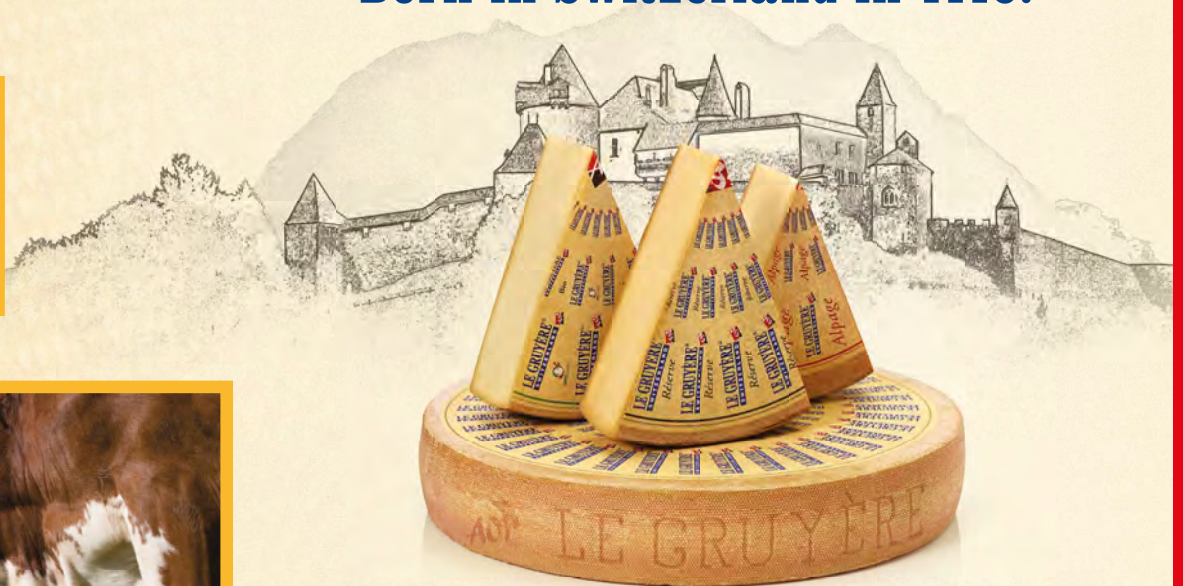
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GOING FOR GOLD

Vegans vs 'curd nerds': cheese tribes are picking a side, but should you? We explore the passions stirring the cheese market

It's a fact universally acknowledged that we live in increasingly polarised times. Left vs Right; Leave vs Remain, and when it comes to food an argument that is barely less political: Veganism vs Dairy. While the plant-based side of the debate is enjoying exploding support (more of which in a moment) the dairy camp is having a pretty amazing time too. "There are some fantastic artisan producers new into the market," says Chris Chisnall, chairman of The International Cheese & Dairy Awards. "There are a few that I deal with in my day job [as marketing manager at Bradburys]. We welcome those guys into the International Cheese Awards, with the specialist cheesemaker class, and a novice cheesemaker class."

These new makers are bringing with them a new generation of cheese superfans – of 'curd nerds' – catered to by the increasingly popular Cheese Fest UK, a touring celebration of melted cheese, books such as *The Modern Cheesemaker* by cheesemonger Morgan McGlynn who runs Cheeses of Muswell Hill. "We lost the art of cheese," says Patricia Michelson, founder of La Fromagerie which has three London shops and an off-site wholesale business supplying restaurants. "All those recipes for fantastic cheese were put in a drawer and forgotten about. Now those recipes are being read, revived and updated."

Back to the future

Earlier this month La Fromagerie's Marylebone shop hosted a Women in Cheese event, celebrating the women instrumental in reviving forgotten British cheeses, rescuing ancient recipes from the archive and breathing new life into our dairy heritage. "People are bringing back old traditional recipes, bringing back native herds to regional farms, seeding pastures and making cheese during the best months of the year," Patricia cites Sally Hatten of Stonebeck Raw Wensleydale as an example, a cheesemaker who in 2007 took over tenancy of a farm in Nidderdale, North Yorkshire, replanting a hay meadow and reintroducing a Northern Dairy Shorthorn herd. "Sally's gone through years of research to find the right farm, bring back the animals, seed the pasture and start to make a Wensleydale. She's looked at old recipes, adapted them and brought them to life again for the modern world."

"You only have to look at Bronwen Percival's book *Reinventing the Wheel* [subtitled *Milk, Microbes and the Fight For Real Cheese*] to understand how things have gone full circle. Hafod is another good example; it's taken a long time but it's terrific. So you have to look back to go forward." Do we live in exciting times for the British cheese scene? "Of course," says Patricia, "and I have to be upbeat because people keep throwing things about Brexit at me. It depresses me, but out of that will come some exciting things."

Patricia refers, of course, to a topic that has rumbled, like distant thunder, in the background these last couple of years. This month will no doubt see plenty of drama as the UK's deadline to exit the EU approaches. For our domestic cheese industry – both production and retail – the stakes could hardly be higher. "In 2016 the UK imported 45% of its cheese, most of which originated from the EU," says Dr Judith Bryan, chief executive of Dairy UK. "The EU is by far our most important market and accounts for over 90% of both our dairy imports and exports. Given this, Brexit inevitably risks the availability of European cheeses to the UK market and vice versa, depending on what is eventually agreed and the manner in which we leave EU membership. In the event of a no-deal Brexit, the flow of dairy products between the UK and the EU would be severely disrupted for a variety of reasons related to inspections and certification requirements, tariff regimes and potential changes to labelling." If the vision of a truckload of delicate Brie De Meaux over-ripening on the hard shoulder at Calais gives you the shivers, you're not alone.

Enter the 'fermentinos'

For some in the dairy business, storm clouds on the horizon stretch beyond the mid term – the impact of Brexit – to a long-term trend that they feel may cause permanent damage to dairy. In 2016 David Dobbin, the then chair of Dairy UK, described the popularity of plant-based milk alternatives among teenagers as a 'demographic timebomb'. Indeed, the uptick in interest around veganism, a macro trend that's being felt in all sectors of food and drink, may finally be impacting on cheese. Last month saw the UK's first 'plant-based cheesemonger', La Fauxmagerie, open in Brixton. A bumpy ride in the press ensued over



its use of the term 'cheese', but the shop has struggled to keep up with demand since opening. This bricks and mortar outlet is an exciting development for the indie brands it stocks, including Newcastle's Tyne Cheese; East London's Kinda Co.; Glasgow's The Nutcrafter Creamery; Black Arts Vegan, which specialises in soy-based melting cheeses; Northampton's The Naturally Vegan

Food Company and more. February also saw VBites, the vegan brand owned by Heather Mills, announce 10 new vegan cheeses made at a newly-expanded plant in Newcastle.

This blossoming interest in dairy-free cheeses is hardly surprising given the stats; according to data released by Waitrose in November one in eight Britons identifies as vegan or vegetarian

and a further 21% describe their habits as 'flexitarian'. That's a third of the public reducing their intake of animal derivatives. So should traditional cheesemongers consider this shift a threat to their livelihood? Chris Hall, owner of Bermondsey's Giddy Grocer, is very happy to stock vegan cheeses among her all-British selection of dairy cheeses, many sourced from Neal's Yard. "They sit

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else entirely," says Chris. "We were Mirko's first stockists and we sell tonnes of his cheese. Our customers are quite open minded, they know we only stock products that we're wholeheartedly behind so they trust us to introduce them to something a bit adventurous."

For the uninitiated, most vegan cheeses are 'fermentinos', created by fermenting nuts (often cashews) with a live culture to create an unexpectedly broad range of textures and flavours. Chris, for one, isn't concerned that the exploding interest in plant-based foods endangers heritage dairy products. "It's not necessarily an anti-dairy thing, it's just about looking for a more varied, diverse way of eating," she suggests. "I think that's really heartening for anyone involved in exploring food.

People want something that's going to give them a bit of excitement. They know what classic cheeses taste like, now they want something with a bit more edge."

A third way

Catering to vegans when your existing range features dairy, meat, honey and other animal derivatives is not without its anxieties. Farms aggressively targeted by vegan activists in the recent 'Project Calf' may think twice about marketing their retail business to what can seem a rather tricky demographic, but any fears of bad PR are unfounded, says Dominika Piasecka of the Vegan Society. "Offering vegan cheese alongside dairy cheese makes clear commercial sense, because such products can be enjoyed

by everyone, including vegans, vegetarians, the lactose intolerant, the health-conscious, dairy reducers, and those who simply want to try something new," she points out. "Although there are individuals who cross the line in every movement, the vast majority of vegans are compassionate people who would be grateful to be offered a vegan option in a cheese shop they wouldn't otherwise wander into. Innovation and fresh ideas are key for a thriving business these days, and providing vegan food options that anyone can enjoy may be just what your business needs to grow in popularity."

So a plant-based offering could be great for your cheese counter, but could the surge in vegan dent the market for dairy? If Dairy UK is worried, it's not showing it. "The dairy market remains stable and largely unchanged and has even shown small increases in the popularity of certain foods like cheese and yogurt-based drinks," says chief executive Dr Judith

Bryans. "What we're seeing is consumers experimenting with new products like plant-based alternatives, whilst still continuing to purchase and consume dairy products at the same time. Nine out of every 10 people in the UK have milk and cheese in their fridges, dairy is still an immensely popular category, chosen by consumers not only for taste but in recognition of the nutritional value it offers." The takeaway? The explosion in vegan cheese is a chance to engage a new customer base in the wonderful world of fermentation, where flavours and textures of the unexpected will always win new fans.

Paying homage

"There's a lot of debate, shall we say, in the dairy world about the role of vegan cheese and the rise of veganism," says Chris Chisnall. The International Cheese & Dairy Awards – itself founded in 1897 – which judged globally-produced cheeses across more than 240

together brilliantly," she says. "Over the last year I've tried a lot of vegan cheese that are not to my liking, shall we say, but then Mirko came in and was so full of passion and enthusiasm..." Chris is talking about Mirko Parmigiani of Palace Cultures, who started selling his fermented nut cheeses around a year ago. "Actually I don't think of it as an alternative version of cheese but something

“ Customers know what classic cheeses taste like, now they want something with a bit more edge ”

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classes last year, is listening keenly. “Ultimately we pay homage to dairy farmers and producers in the UK and around the world,” says Chris. “That said we can’t ignore consumer trends. We’re a show that has constantly modernised and changed its approach to the dairy industry. We continue to discuss a vegan non-dairy cheese class and it’s something we may well introduce this year.

“I think the large amount of growth in veganism is from a very small base, and it’s also quite a loud demographic in terms of social media. So in terms of damaging dairy in the short to medium term, I can’t see that happening. Dairy is entrenched in the diets of the Western world, and cheese is an important protein source. But do we need to watch the long-term trends? Absolutely. I know Dairy UK are looking at how to market to that young demographic, 20 to 35 year olds. We need to be doing more to talk about dairy and the dairy industry to this young population and make sure they love it as we do.”

Interesting collaborations are generating excitement in brewing, baking, and many other food and drink industries, giving brands the chance to step outside their core range and generate a little limited edition buzz for loyal fans. Cheesemaking, of course has its own tradition of collaboration; affinage offers an opportunity for cheese sellers to make their mark on a cheese. “That’s why we source from Neal’s Yard,” says Chris Hall. “They do such exciting things with the cheeses they have, rind-washing and ageing them to create something really interesting.”

Of course the creativity of cheesemakers and sellers is always exercised within the stringent



“ The danger is not modernising, not marketing to a younger demographic and not allowing through a new generation of cheesemakers ”

boundaries of food safety. “You have to be really careful, and understand the science,” says Patricia Michelson. “We are known as affineurs – we have four different rooms in our warehouse for different styles of cheese so they can be ripened properly. We wash rinds and do rubbing too, for example with some of the smooth hard rinds such as on pecorinos and parmesans that need a slight oiling to stop them from cracking. We work with the cheesemaker to understand how the cheese has developed right from the get go, because disturbing a rind can interrupt the natural fermentation of the cheese or cause very dangerous bacteria to form. Cheese is very sensitive; interfering

with it shouldn’t be undertaken lightly. It’s not something you just ‘have a go’ at it. If customers take home a Camembert and play around, when big black spots appear on their fluffy white rind they’ll think ‘There’s something wrong with the cheese’.”

Despite the dangers of tinkering with such sensitive products, innovation is undoubtedly in the air. Cheesemakers themselves are also getting in on the act; last year Cheddar makers Quicke’s and Montgomery’s swapped truckles for a maturing experiment that saw each of these venerable dairies produce an entirely fresh product. An industry that is, perhaps appropriately, known for its sacred cows, is awake to the opportunities of experimentation.

The future is cheese-coloured

The timing for a golden age of innovation in cheese couldn’t be more perfect; channels such as Instagram allow dairies and retailers to invite cheese fans in on the creative act, to engage with the live history of cheesemaking as it happens. It’s a trend that other food makers – most notably craft brewers but also artisan bakers, apiaries, distilleries and more – have been quick to exploit. “It’s something we need to harness because it’s extremely difficult for small producers of dairy to break into that market,” says Chris. “There are a lot of technical and quality constraints on them from wholesalers; they need

to adhere to certain principles and it’s not cheap for a start-up to do that. As I understand it craft beer has a lot less restrictions, so it is a challenging market to break into. And we’ve got to support those artisan players. What we’re seeing in British cheese is more new cheeses coming through than in, say, France. We have a rich vein of new artisan makers coming though.”

Exploring and promoting the diversity of our cheese heritage, rather than being constrained by history, is the key to winning new audiences to take the industry into a glorious future. “We do have a rich heritage, especially in Britain,” says Chris, “but the danger is not modernising, not marketing to a younger demographic and not allowing through a new generation of cheesemakers. Yes there’s heritage, but in 100 years [the British cheese scene] will be very different to what we see today. In 100 years from now the new artisans of today may well be represented by the second and third generation cheesemakers – their offspring – just as today’s cheesemakers are often several generations from makers who were around in the 19th century.”

IN NUMBERS

● According to most recent stats from Kantar Worldpanel the value of cheese sales is on the up, with hard and soft continentals showing biggest growth (6% and 6.4% respectively). The figures, which record sales for the 52 weeks ending 15th July last year, show the dominant Cheddar dropping 0.5% in volume sold, with sales of low fat and processed cheeses contracting.



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CAVE-AGED. IN PEACE.

Natural Food Show is back at ExCeL London on 7th-8th April with its biggest and widest choice of natural, organic, sustainable, vegan, free-from, and fair-trade food and drink. Part of Natural & Organic Products Europe, the show attracts over 10,000 attendees (from 91 countries) and will feature over 400 diverse exhibitors. Helping to shape the future of food, this “must attend event” is the place to see what’s new and next in the constantly evolving natural and organic world.

The movement towards healthier, wellness-oriented lifestyles around the world – complemented by a growing consumer awareness of sustainability, naturalness, and ethical labelling – has notably influenced everyday spending habits on all-natural and organic food and drink.

According to the Soil Association’s 2019 Organic Market Report, the UK organic market continues to experience steady, healthy growth, with sales increasing by 5.3%. That means almost £45 million a week is now spent on organic. With organic sales on target to be worth around £2.5 billion by 2020, this strong growth is certainly reflected at the Natural Food Show which has experienced year on year growth since its inception.

“This show is truly one of the best places to spot new talent, not least because the trends and NPD on offer are second to none. Whether it’s a new take on an established product you’re looking for, or something brand new to knock your socks off, you’ll find it here,” says Holly Shackleton, editor of *Speciality Food*.

Renowned for displaying a comprehensive array of new product launches (UK and international) and three dedicated theatres full of expert speakers – visiting buyers and retailers to the show can stay up-to-date with the latest product innovations and discover what’s next for the year ahead.

So, what’s trending in the world of natural and organic?

“In food, the vegan/plant-based



NATURAL FOOD SHOW 2019

A world of speciality natural and organic innovation

juggernaut shows no signs of slowing,” says Jim Manson, editor of NaturalProductsGlobal.com, who will be revealing the latest global trends in natural and organic at the show (Natural Products Talks Theatre).

“A raft of innovative new organic product launches has helped get 2019 off to a good start. The increasing organic offer from the leading discounters is also a very striking trend. More generally, I think we will see growth in simpler, more ‘honest’ food products – a reaction to what has been called the ‘nutritional cacophony’,” says Manson.

Whilst expert nutritionist Shona Wilkinson says: “2019 is all about Ethics Ethics Ethics. It’s not enough to just have a good product

nowadays, our consumers are demanding so much more and have huge environmental expectations. They are also willing to pay more for products, which show environmental responsibility.”

“I also think it will be an interesting time for the way companies think about the way they package their products. The demand is there from the public, and the suppliers are listening. Pukka, for example, are now packaging their teas and lattes in material that is 100% compostable,” she says.

A world of vegan innovation

With over a third (39%) of the show’s pre-registered visitors to date looking to source both vegan and vegetarian food at the show, the Vegan World area provides the perfect hot spot to see and sample the best choice of the latest vegan food and health products from all over the world – including brands from the UK, Europe, Southeast Asia, Canada and USA. There are over 80 exhibiting companies in the Vegan World area (supported by The Vegan Society)

and hundreds of vegan products throughout the show.

From plant-based seafood to dairy free food-to-go snacks, some of the products on the menu include: Follow Your Heart UK (vegan egg, dairy-free smoked gouda and pepper jack slices); British pulse and grains pioneers Hodmedod; Boost Ball (protein balls); Singapore Coconut Company (organic coconut butter, flour and oil); MozzaRisella (Italian vegan cheese); Upton’s Naturals (jackfruit meat alternatives); Bravura Foods (Vegan Bakery and Free From Mallows); Conscious Chocolate; Co Fro (vegan and paleo frozen dessert); Clives Pies; Eco Free From (vegan mousses); CLF Distribution (Just Natural, Organic Kitchen, Prima Italia, Soakin, and Vegan Deli); Specialist Supplements; GreenVie Foods – Plant based Cheeses; Mummy Meagz (cake bars); Huski Home (rice husk cups); One Planet Pizza; Love Seitan; Daiya Foods (dairy-free cheese, pizza, and cheesecake); Tofurky (meat substitute); Benevo Vegan Pet Foods; Smart; Just Wholefoods (soup, custard powder, and jelly); Atlantic Natural Foods (‘tuno’ – a plant based

seafood alternative); Nutrislim (protein powders and shakes); Moo Free Chocolate and many more.

The Organic Hub

The Organic Hub, hosted by the Soil Association and the Organic Trade Board, will showcase over 40 certified organic brands for 2018, ranging from some of the UK’s biggest to newest organic innovations

“Natural & Organic Products Europe gives a great platform for innovative organic brands to showcase their range and communicate why organic is important to them,” says Finn Cottle, trade consultant at Soil Association Certification.

“Organic is in the right place to capitalise on many of the current consumer trends as shoppers are looking to purchase sustainable products to reduce their impact on the planet. It is a really good time for organic as the market is in its seventh year of growth, with a steady +5.3% rise in 2018,” says Cottle.

Brands in the Organic Hub include The Green Milk Company, Carley’s of Cornwall (nut butters),



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NEW LAUNCHES FOR 2019

The following is just a taste of some of the latest NPD on offer this year:

● **Topas GmbH** is launching its Vegan Superhero Burger, a 100% organic plant-based burger with a firm, juicy, and slightly grainy texture, like meat.

● **Planet Organic** is introducing its Nut Butter Cups made with two thick layers of raw chocolate enveloped in a roasted nut butter centre; gluten-free, vegan, soy and refined sugar-free.

● **Gusto Organic** is launching its Fairtrade Sicilian Lemon drink with Yuzu; a refreshingly complex take on the ever-popular lemonade genre.

● **Nova Organic Energy** is launching its Organic Energy Herbal Blend and Organic Energy Drinks made from natural ingredients like green tea, ginkgo bilboa, reishi mushroom, and more, to help sustain natural energy.

● **Monari Federzoni spa** is launching Bongiorno – Organic Vinegar drink made with balsamic vinegar of Modena, apple cider vinegar and natural flavours including honey, apple, lemon, ginger, berries and orange.

● **Premcrest Distribution** is launching Divine’s Temptingly Rich high cocoa dark chocolate range made with specially sourced organic cocoa from São Tomé.

● **Organica Vita London** is launching The Organic Adventure Food Set, offering healthy food products in one practical “takeaway” packaging for those outdoor sports enthusiasts.

● **Food Forge Pte** is introducing Purity CocoSnow, made with a proprietary process using coconut kernel, this snowy vegan powder can be added to melted dark chocolate, nuts, fruit, or seeds.



Borough Broth Company, Pure Joy Honey, AUSHA (superfood powders, infused teas, and organic nuts), Rokit Puds/Buddah Teas, PLAYin CHOC, Raw Pot, Heath & Heather, Devon Cottage Organic Fudge, Spice Root, Premcrest Distribution, James White Drinks (fruit and veg juices), Organico Realfoods (Fish4Ever, Organico, Wild Thing and Artysan), Mr Organic, Community Foods (Crazy Jack Snacking and Tarantella), Sweet Revolution (superfood lattes), Alara Wholefoods, Cocofina, Clearspring, Good Mushroom Nutrition, Biona/Amisa/Bonsan, Living Ayurveda Products, Infinity Foods (Wholesale), Raw & Wild (pre-sprouted nuts), and Ayurveda Pura London.

There will also be plenty of new innovations to see and sample from market-leading brands like Community Foods, Meridian Foods, Marigold Health Foods, Suma Wholefoods, Unilever UK, Windmill Organics, Rude Health, The Metropolitan Tea Co, Alara Wholefoods, Perkier Foods, Natural Balance Foods, and Essential Trading.

Whilst companies exhibiting for the first time include: Bevie, Okami Bio, One Planet Pizza, Love Seitan, Atlantic Natural Foods, Minor Figures, Nature Shift, Hilltop Honey, Nova Organic Energy, BeeBee Wraps, Mummy Meagz, The Real Olive Company, Fiovana Drinks, Nutritionist Blend, Eaten Alive, Other Foods, Mama and the Chocolate Factory, and many more.

The New Product Showcase is home to hundreds of the best new products launched over the last twelve months, whilst trending products around the world await at international pavilions from Italy, Maine (USA), Peru, Greece, Thailand, and China. Plus, the addition of the new Enterprise Europe Network Matchmaking Lounge will help visitors facilitate important meetings with exhibitors at the show.

“Natural & Organic Products Europe has always been a go-to for us for the best in innovation, niche products and ingredients we’ve never seen before. You’ll see by the sheer number of my team walking around the show that we rely on this chance to meet new brands and get

a real understanding for the biggest new trends in the industry,” says Nick Janda, head of trade at Holland & Barrett’s head of trade.

Natural Food Talks – first speakers confirmed

As well as a raft of products to discover, the show will feature three dedicated theatres hosting a mix of free exclusive Keynotes and interviews, research updates and panel discussions. Among the first speakers confirmed for the Natural Food Talks theatre are: leading nutrition expert Patrick Holford, Lee Holdstock, trade relations manager at Soil Association, Simon Wright, founder of OF+, Cliff Moss, managing director of the Healthy Sales Group, Christine Tacon CBE from Groceries Code Adjudicator; and a session with natural food pioneers Craig Sams (founder of Green & Blacks and Gusto Organic) and his brother Gregory Sams.

Register for a free trade pass

For more information and to register for a free ticket, please visit naturalfoodshow.co.uk



“ Natural & Organic Products Europe is the place to be for retailers looking to tap into the growth opportunity organic offers. A dynamic and exciting event where you can source the breadth of the certified organic offer, see the latest innovations in line with consumer trends from new brands and established ranges, network with like-minded businesses working together to grow organic and learn more about what’s driving momentum for organic ”

AILEEN NICOL, CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR AT THE ORGANIC TRADE BOARD



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IFE 2019

The Home of Food & Drink Innovation from 17th–20th March at ExCeL, London

Taking place 17th–20th March at ExCeL London, IFE is the place to discover new products and trends, learn from renowned experts and get the first look at what's to come for the food and drink industry.

The UK's leading and largest food & drink industry event, The International Food & Drink Event (IFE) is back for its milestone 21st edition. It is a biennial celebration of cutting-edge food & drink manufacturers and thinkers, bringing together 1,350 exhibitors and top retail, wholesale and distribution, import & export, foodservice & hospitality buyers from 111 countries under one roof.

Once again the UK plays Host Nation to IFE with Defra's Food is GREAT campaign playing a central role in showcasing the best of British & Northern Irish food & drink. The 'Food is GREAT Britain and Northern Ireland' campaign is a UK Government initiative to support British and Northern Irish food &

drink exports and to increase positive public perception and demand of UK food & drink worldwide. A number of Defra hosted events will take place across the 4 days of the show, including an interactive sensory journey for buyers and chefs to experience - don't miss the UK Tastes & Tales by Food is GREAT Britain and Northern Ireland campaign.

Buyers and industry professionals are given the opportunity to meet future-focused brands from around the world, hear thought-provoking talks from key figures across the industry, and experience a vibrant schedule of tastings and trend forecasting.

IFE is co-located with Pro2Pac, the complete processing & packaging event, making it a must-attend show for professionals across the food & drink industry.

Trends and Innovations

The most up-to-date innovations and insights will be on display at IFE



2019 for buyers with an appetite to explore the latest trends in food & drink.

According to new research by The International Food & Drink Event (IFE), the three top trends which impacted food and drink businesses in 2018 were plant-based food and veganism, the free-from movement and alcohol-free beverages.

The survey of members of the UK's leading & largest food & drink network also revealed that sustainable packaging, gut-friendly foods and sugar-free options are the most prominent trends which businesses are looking to leverage in 2019 - a demonstration of the growing influence of the consumer interest in health and wellbeing.



IFE 2019's packed trends schedule includes:

TALKING TRENDS

Prominent experts from the food & drink industry will take to the Talking Trends theatre throughout the four-day event to share their expertise, opinions and predictions with the audience. The line-up

“ Events such as the International Food & Drink Event (IFE) 2019 are an excellent way to connect with others in the industry and enjoy a sense of camaraderie. I've visited the event as a guest for many years and I've always found it a source of inspiration and enjoyed seeing the new products emerging into the market from both the larger players and the new businesses ”

CHRISTOPHER FAULKNER, FOUNDER OF THE FOOD SERVICE EXPERT



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CHEESY DOES IT

At IFE 2019, Elite Imports will be revealing the launch of its specialty cheeses made just for the grill! Rougette Bonfire Grilling Cheeses, the latest cheese innovation from Käseerei Champignon, are served hot, fresh off the grill and are perfect for sharing.

The product line includes two types of cheese, made with all-natural ingredients: a mild and creamy soft-ripened cheese, which comes in two individually packed cheeses per unit; and a semi-soft cheese marinated in herbs, available in a convenient ready-to-grill pan. Both cheeses are unique and approachable in flavour profile and truly bring something special to the summer barbecue experience. Head over to stand N2812 to try them for yourself!



includes Ella Mills, Founder of Deliciously Ella; Al Overton, Senior Buyer at Planet Organic; Maria Antidormi, Insight Consultant at Anima Insight; Derek Sarno, Director of Plant-based Food Innovation at Tesco; and James Hacon, Managing Director of Think Hospitality, as well as leading plant-based influencers.

TASTING TRENDS

New to IFE 2019, the Tasting Trends area is a multi-sensory experience which takes visitors on a journey as they see, smell and taste the food & drink set to shape the future of the industry. Plant-based food is hot on the agenda, as are fermented foods, good fats, stress-relieving food & drink and spicy flavours. The area also looks at why fewer Brits are drinking alcohol – a big topic in the future of the sector. Each day of IFE, the Tasting Trends area will showcase a different trend:

- **Sunday 17th March – International Food Trends** featuring exhibitors such as Vertical Farm, The Wasabi Company and chefs Tony Kitous and Tokunbo Koiki
- **Monday 18th March – Gut Health & Plant-Based** presenting chefs such as Jay Morjaria, Lauren Lovatt and Stina Eriksson
- **Tuesday 19th March – Flavour Trends** including delicacies cooked by Iñigo Urrechu and Steve Walpole
- **Wednesday 20th March – Conscious Food** where renowned

chefs Jareth Mills, Sam Ashton-Booth and Vicky Enderson will be cooking up a storm

TREND TRAILS

IFE's renowned Trend Trails are back by popular demand, to delve even deeper into the trends shaping the future of the food and drink industry. They will help visitors navigate their way around the event one key insight at a time, visiting some of the most progressive brands in the fields of food to go, plant-based, private label, circular brands and global innovation movements.

THE BIG DEBATE

An interactive session which will run daily at The Hub between 2.00 – 2.45pm, The Big Debate will feature lively panel discussions from leading industry experts from companies such as The Association of Convenience Stores, Food & Drink Federation and WRAP, on the most relevant and diverse topics impacting the sector. These include:

- The Future of Retail
- Brexit
- Packaging Waste & Sustainability
- Food Waste & Sustainability

Award Winning

The longest-running and most established awards scheme in the industry, The World Food Innovation Awards will take place at IFE 2019. In association with FoodBev Media, the awards are a celebration of creativity and excellence across every



WORLD'S ONLY PGI-RATED PEPPER TO HELP UK RETAILERS GROW MARGINS EXPONENTIALLY

BoTree, producer of 100% organic, single-source Kampot pepper and other unique seasoning products, will be at stand N2585 at IFE 2019. Kampot pepper is the only PGI-rated pepper in the world and the most vibrant untapped segment in seasoning. Pepper grown in the Cambodian region of Kampot is the only premium, non-industrially produced pepper worldwide and can yield retailers up to 10 times the margin they usually realise from other specialty pepper.

"We've all seen the growth in the gourmet salt market and it's a shame that retailers are not making the most of the item that sits right next to it: pepper. Consumers have bought into high quality salt: why should they pair it with pepper that doesn't match the taste, provenance and worth?" says Peter Schaebbicke, founder of BoTree. "Retailers now have the opportunity to tap into a new segment that will give them healthy returns, with consumers primed for the offer of real gourmet pepper and a region, Kampot, that can deliver it."



ITA PAVILION | 17-20 MARCH 2019 | IFE: THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD & DRINK EVENT | EXCEL LONDON

The Italian Trade Agency will bring a fabulous delegation of around 60 Italian food and wine producers from all over Italy. From coffee to charcuterie, to cheeses to olive oils, to wines and many more. Come and taste our food excellence at stands **S3910, S3920, S3930, S3940, S4030, S3830.**

Visit our website:

www.extraordinaryitaliantaste.co.uk



“ Since its launch 42 years ago, IFE has remained at the heart of the food & drink community. Food & drink trends are always evolving, and IFE has maintained a strong focus on showcasing the latest innovations. This is achieved through creating new interactive attractions and selecting exhibitors who are launching exciting innovative products ”

SORAYA GADELRAH, EVENT DIRECTOR FOR IFE

NEW LAUNCHES FOR 2019

The 2019 event will feature 1,350 cutting-edge exhibitors who will be showcasing the industry's latest trends and innovations, and there are a number of new and exciting products set to launch at this edition of the biennial event. From internationally-inspired store cupboard essentials, to innovative water brands and distilleries – not to mention delicious snacks and confections – these fresh-to-market products ensure that the show is a must-attend event for buyers and suppliers.



JELLEY'S ORGANIC VODKA – STAND N2277

For its first time exhibiting at IFE, Jelley's Distilleries will be launching its range of award-winning organic vodka distilled in the English countryside using

organically-grown grain. Available in Pomegranate & Rosemary Vodka, Grain/Straight Vodka and Elderflower Vodka, all are sure to delight lovers of premium spirits. Sample the products and enjoy live mixology demonstrations at stand N2277.



BUTTERMILK – STAND N2964

On-the-go snacking just got a lot sweeter – at this year's event, the popular Cornish confectioner will

be launching its newest snack bar: crumbly caramel sea salt fudge enrobed in Belgian milk chocolate. This latest innovation from the brand is packaged in a compostable cellulose wrapper thanks to the brand's recent focus on sustainable packaging. Also new to IFE 2019 are chocolate caramel sea salt fudge and caramelised cacao nib Easter eggs. Taste them on stand N2964.



Eaulab – STAND N2415

A new challenger brand set to disrupt the bottled water category, EauLab utilises the power of plant-based ingredients to offer an innovative way to drink water, thanks to its Intelligent Drinks Systems. Coming in recyclable aluminium cans, the product aims to help reduce the amount of plastic entering the ocean. Find out more at stand N2415.



IN THE BUFF™ – STAND N2782

In the Buff is a range of plant-based protein condiments, which have been specifically created to be healthy and versatile. The brand is built on the values of being transparent, honest, a little bit cheeky and fun, but also confident in its own skin to challenge the norm. At IFE 2019, In the Buff will be showcasing its new flavours Turmeric Fusion and Chipotle Spice Protein Ketchup, as well as its original Sweet Paprika Protein Ketchup on stand N2782.



NATIVE SNACKS – STAND N2652

A pioneering snack within the booming health & nutrition sector, these savoury popped lotus seeds are

launching at IFE 2019 with a view to offering shoppers healthy and delicious snacks which have a long-lasting social impact. To do this, the brand is working in partnership with the Bihar Development Foundation to donate a percentage of its sales to support health camps in Bihar, India. Visit stand N2652 to try three delicious flavours: Jalapeño & Kaffir Lime, Pink Salt & Black Pepper and Cheesy.



AMBOORA – STAND N2670

Launching into the British market at IFE 2019, Amboora will be showcasing its range of authentic North African tagine cooking sauces including Moroccan Fragrant Tagine Sauce, Moroccan Preserved Lemon Tagine Sauce, Moroccan Fish Tagine Sauce and Moroccan Shakshuka Sauce. Taste the sauces and watch cooking demonstrations in action at stand N2670.

category of the global food industry. Discover the most successful brands in the business at the special awards ceremony on 18th March.

Brought to you by industry experts

To celebrate the milestone edition of The International Food & Drink Event, its organiser Fresh Montgomery has collaborated with seven industry experts to identify the trends, insights and knowledge that will be most valuable to its visitors – buyers, distributors and foodservice professionals alike.

The IFE 2019 ambassadors are:

● **Christopher Faulkner**, founder & director, The Food Service Expert
● **Sandra Sullivan MBE**, director, The Food & Drink Exporters Association

● **Tony Kitous**, founder & creative Director, The Comptoir Group

● **Milena Lazarevska**, head of origination, future brands, Sainsbury's

● **Kate Houssaye**, quality manager, New York Bakery Company Ltd

● **Sarah Whiddett**, head of insight & customer experience, Bidfood

● **Christine Tacon**, Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA)

International Trade Hub

At IFE 2019, The Department for Internal Trade (DIT) will be hosting

SOUTHOVER FOOD COMPANY ENTERS RETAIL SECTOR AT IFE 2019

The multi award-winning Southover Food Company is delighted to announce the launch of Southover Sussex Cured, a delicious new range of premium cooked meats.

This is Southover's first product range created specifically for retail customers and will be showcased for the first time at IFE 2019. Exhibiting on stand N3025, visitors will be able to taste the delicious Southover Sussex Cured meats which are made using quality local ingredients, 'tried and tested' family recipes and are traditionally butchered.



is GREAT campaign and E-Exporting Programme, which will be running throughout the four-day event in the North Hub.

Two events in one

IFE 2019 is co-located with Pro2Pac – the complete processing & packaging event for the food & drink industry. Pro2Pac showcases the best manufacturing and packaging solutions and innovations and is a must-attend event for food & drink businesses looking for inspiration and innovative solutions.



“ It is invaluable for the industry to unite together, meet with old and new acquaintances and share insight and knowledge. Meeting with like-minded individuals from both the UK and internationally, as well as future-focused brands, helps to ensure the sector is keeping future growth keenly in its sights ”

SANDRA SULLIVAN MBE, DIRECTOR OF THE FOOD & DRINK EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (FDEA)

IFE STAND N3250T



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* OAT DRINK WITH DATE & VANILLA

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SANDRA SULLIVAN
DIRECTOR OF THE FOOD & DRINK EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (FDEA)

“It is invaluable for the industry to unite together”

“The coming year is arguably going to be one of the most challenging – and interesting – for the UK food & drink industry with Brexit on the horizon and the terms of our withdrawal from the EU to become clearer over the coming weeks. In the exporting world, companies are understandably looking for certainty around the future trading landscape as the UK leaves the EU.

“With a lack of clarity around what regulations will apply, potential issues around access to labour and an increase in the cost of raw materials, there are many areas of concern which will impact the sector. However, exporting is a viable way to grow your business. Rising incomes, urbanisation and modern retail mean that global demand will rise and the UK’s reputation for quality, safety and traceability in our food chain are strengths exporters can trade on.

“According to the Department for International Trade (DIT), companies that export see a 34% increase in productivity within their first year of exporting and are 11% more likely to survive if doing business overseas (*Food and Drink Exporting Guide 2017*, FDF and FDEA). For British brands, exporting outside the EU could provide an answer to help continued business growth and buffer against

any shortfall as a result of Brexit.

“It’s also worth keeping in mind how innovative the home market is. British food and drink companies are quick to respond to trends in the market and as such we are considered a forward-thinking, adaptable nation; an attractive quality in an exporting partner. This is reflected in the fact that in 2017, exports of food & drink exceeded £22bn, up 9.7% on 2016. Exports of branded goods increased by 12.1% to reach £5.8 billion (HM Customs & Excise).

“Whilst certain products are recognised as British e.g. shortbread and stilton, modern UK cuisine is a fusion of many different cultures and traditions. The UK food industry has a reputation for innovation and high standards. It’s this innovation that we as a country are renowned for that we need to keep in firm focus as we move into 2019.

“That’s why events like IFE are more important than ever. It is invaluable for the industry to unite together, meet with old and new acquaintances and share insight and knowledge. Meeting with like-minded individuals from both the UK and internationally, as well as future-focused brands, helps to ensure the sector is keeping future growth keenly in its sights.”

The show hosts a full schedule of free-to-attend attractions such as seminars, workshops and networking opportunities. Leading experts will also hold debates on the Outside the Box Stage on issues such as sustainability, global packaging trends, plastics and Brexit. 120 suppliers will be exhibiting, including Tetra Pak, Adpak Machinery Systems, Ilpra Systems UK and Ravenwood Packaging. Distinction in the packaging arena will be celebrated with the Pro2Pac Excellence Awards and the Pro2Pac Student Design Challenge, co-ordinated by event organiser Fresh Montgomery and the Packaging Collective.

REGISTER TO ATTEND

For more information on IFE 2019 and to register for free, please visit ife.co.uk

To register for your free entrance ticket to Pro2Pac and for more information, visit pro2pac.co.uk

SAFIR

Safir is a leading brand of Tunisian origin and known for manufacturing and exporting a wide range of olive oils, peeled tomatoes, sun-dried tomatoes, spreads and condiments. Safir is part of Ayachi Group, a family-owned business based in Mansoura Seliana, a modern farming town in northern Tunisia.

The group has been working in the agri-food sector for more than 50 years, where its fingerprint of knowledge and experience is passed down from generation to generation. People of Mansoura speak a language of passion based on tradition and modernity. It is the story of a world of flavours, cultivated by the sun and love of the earth.



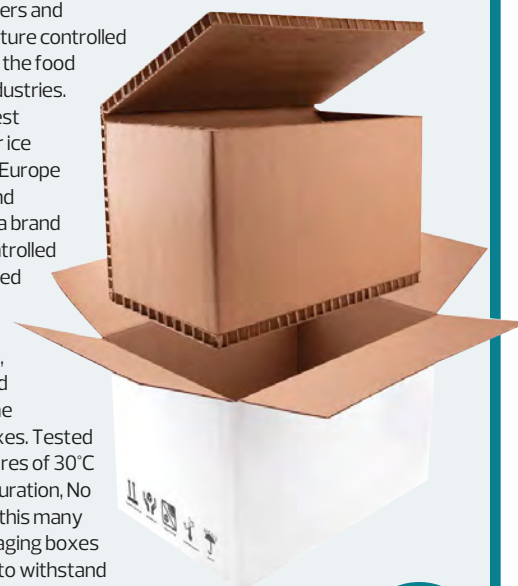
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Stand
S2913

HYDROPAC LTD

Manufacturers, designers and innovators of temperature controlled packaging solutions to the food and pharmaceutical industries. Hydropac are the largest manufacturer of water ice packs and gel packs in Europe and will be launching and showcasing at the IFE a brand new Temperature Controlled Packaging solution called Envirocool™.

Envirocool™ is an organic, biodegradable, recyclable and recycled product that ticks all the environmental tick boxes. Tested to extreme temperatures of 30°C for a minimum 24hrs duration, No other product can tick this many conscience-free packaging boxes and be strong enough to withstand extreme courier misuse.



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Stand
N2784

THE YORKSHIRE CRISP COMPANY

The Yorkshire Crisp Company offers a range of deliciously moreish, hand-cooked crisps in 11 delectable flavours including gluten-free and vegetarian options. They are available in 100g re-sealable drums and 40g single bags as well as 50g drums and 150g large sharing bags (selected flavours). The range of products expanded in 2015 with the launch of Yorkshire Popcorn. This perfectly popped gourmet popcorn is available in three delectable toffee-coated flavours in 90g drums – Luxury Toffee; Strawberry & Cherry Toffee, and Coconut Toffee – as well as three traditional-style varieties – Salted, Sweet, and Salt & Sweet, in 40g drums.



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Stand
N1861

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Bloody Mary Ketchup
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FARM SHOP & Deli SHOW
8-10 April 2019
NEC Birmingham

ife
The International Food & Drink Event
17-20 March 2019
ExCeL London

hawksheadrelish.com

FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW 2019

Experience the best of the fine food industry at the dedicated event, running 8th–10th April at Birmingham's NEC

Every year, the Farm Shop & Deli Show brings together the latest artisan market trends, making it an unmissable event for delicatessen, bakeries, butcheries, food halls, farm shops, restaurants and garden centres. Returning to the NEC from 8th–10th April, visitors will have the opportunity to meet with over 400 producers who will reveal their very latest launches and innovations across categories including fine chocolates and hot drinks, to healthy snacks, condiments, cured meats, premium alcoholic drinks and many more.

Now in its ninth year, Farm Shop & Deli Show provides an unrivalled opportunity for specialist buyers, independent retailers, wholesalers, chefs and caterers, giving them the very latest industry insights. At the same time, some of the industry's most formidable names offer their expertise to producers to help them grow and nurture their businesses.

Artisan food continues to be forefront of consumers purchasing decisions, leading the way across a busy timetable of talks and workshops, which are set to offer visitors a wealth of inspiration and advise on the latest trends. In line with this increased consumer demand for artisanal products, a new wave of exciting exhibitors will represent all corners of the speciality sector.

Among the key suppliers gathering at the NEC in April will be Cook with its remarkable range of hand-prepared freezer food; Godminster and its selection of vintage cheeses including the award-winning Oak Smoked Vintage Organic Cheddar; and Devonshire-based premium snack brand Burts Chips with its classic core range and 'Better-For-You' variants. Speaking ahead of the show, Burts Chips' sales and marketing director Simon Knight commented, "The Farm Shop & Deli

Show is a great opportunity for us to showcase our impressive local credentials, as one of the first crisp brands to tap into the trend for high quality ingredients that are locally sourced in the South West."

Healthy & Natural @ Farm Shop & Deli Show

Alongside these exhibitors at the NEC in April, healthy snack brand Munchy Seeds will be singing the virtues of seeds as nutritional powerhouses. As the growing interest in protein and healthier snacking continues to be a driving factor of purchase, 2018 has seen great success for the brand with the launch of its new 25g snack packs. Lucinda Clay, co-founder of Munchy Seeds, commented, "Consumers want more accessible products that they can slip in a pocket, gym bag or desk drawer and nibble on when they need a boost. Our new sizes have been designed to meet this need."

Joining Munchy Seeds on the mission for healthier snacking will be The Precious Pea, which produces a range of high end, low fat and organic humous made with Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Boasting flavours such as turmeric, rose harissa and kalamata olive, the brand will introduce visitors to the unique tastes that are making healthy snacking more enjoyable.

Following the trend for organic ingredients, Loving Foods will showcase its organic, raw and unpasteurised fermented food and drink range. Bursting with beneficial bacteria, vitamins and minerals, its kimchi, sauerkraut and fermented drinks are sure to tick the boxes for buyers looking to tap into the gut health trend. LA Brewery will also be exhibiting its range of fermented kombucha sweet teas. Brewed and bottled in its microbrewery in Suffolk, the drinks are full of natural goodness to hit the mark for the health-conscious consumer.

While healthy snacking continues to prevail, the confectionery sector has not been exempt from the shift towards products that pack an abundance of health claims. RED chocolate will offer visitors a taste of its gourmet treats with half the number of calories of normal chocolate with less fat and no added sugar. Created by master chocolatiers in France and Switzerland, the bars are made with carefully selected cocoa beans from the Ivory Coast. Alongside RED, Popcorn Kitchen will showcase its all-natural sweet treats, including its salted caramel and double chocolate varieties.

Farm Shop & Deli Show is also set to celebrate the boom in artisan wines, spirits, craft beers and ciders. The gin trend is noticeably still strong, but visitors can expect to see flavoursome twists on classical favourites. The 2019 exhibitor line-up features Pinkster Gin made with real raspberries, GinTing with its natural botanical blends and Sipsmith's lemon drizzle gin. As over a quarter of all gin shoppers claimed to have bought a flavoured gin last



year, an increase from 7% five years ago (Kantar), the exhibitor line-up clearly reflects this. However, those looking to remain level headed are not to be excluded and Seedlip's offering of the world's first distilled non-alcoholic spirit is a must try.

A wider range of exhibitors

Alongside a diverse range of food and drink, the development of

the show has led to a growing and popular focus on other areas of the speciality market. Exhibitors representing categories including stationery, candles, furniture and home goods will be present, as well as those offering equipment, labelling and packaging.

Speaking of the addition of new categories for the 2019 show, Mat Rose, commercial director at Farm Shop & Deli Show said, "We wanted

“ Artisan food continues to climb in consumers' consciousness and is noticeably one of the growth areas for UK food and drink. Customers are looking for experiences outside their usual high street favourites and the Farm Shop & Deli Show gives retailers the tools they need to provide this. The innovation we can expect to see at this year's show is a marker of what is to come in the speciality food and drink industry in 2019 and beyond ”

MAT ROSE, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR AT FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW

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From food and drink gifting hampers to eco-friendly produce packaging, the 2019 show is all encompassing.”

Included in this mix is Bee Green Wraps, the natural, organic and compostable alternatives to cling film; Bag it Don't Bin It and its canvas and Fairtrade alternatives to plastic bags; and Prestige Wickers' handmade baskets that span from brightly painted hampers to traditional storage solutions for retailers and consumers alike. Speaking ahead of its first time at the show, Prestige Wicker said, “We're thrilled to be exhibiting at this high-profile event and showcase what we do. The show offers a great chance to network and meet brand owners, press and others.”

A host of industry experts

Alongside top produce, equipment and gifting options on show, visitors will also be drawn to listen to a host of industry experts speaking at the Farm Shop & Deli Live Stage. Each

session will offer a wealth of advice and insights on hot industry topics such as sustainability, store design and a definitive guide to deli counter essentials from beer, wine and cheese to pioneering plastic free and plant-based offerings.

The Happy Pear brothers, David and Stephen Flynn, will share details of how they built their plant-based food empire by maximising diversification and expanding their in-store presence. The duo will share details on the launch of their retail range in Waitrose and how understanding their customers led to a successful online offering. The talk is a must see for visitors looking to learn from their triumphs and challenges along the way and put advice into practice straight away.

Continuing along the theme of addressing customers' current eco-worries, the plastic to palm oil responsible retailers' round table with Richard Fox from Love Food Hate Waste will demonstrate simple hacks to reduce excess packaging, create a sustainable store and make



a difference. With plenty of practical tips to put into action immediately, the author, chef and broadcaster will inspire visitors to improve their customer experience.

This year's exhibitors prove the industry is undergoing a health revolution and a host of industry speakers will back the decision to invest in the wellness market. Emily Foster, Founder of Glowing Potential, will delve into the £3.2 trillion wellbeing sector (Global Wellness Institute) with advice on Instagram-friendly food and drink to tap into shoppers looking for nutritious food that tastes as good as it looks. The 'Healthier beer' discussion led by David Ware from Greens Brewery, Rob Fink from Big Drop Brewing and Graeme Loudon from CGA, will offer insight into the importance of expanding beer

BUSINESS ADVICE

The abundance of free business guidance is an undeniable benefit of Farm Shop & Deli Live, whether it be product focused or advice for practical in-store activations. A series of industry experts will be on hand to offer advice on matters of the moment including store design, the importance of a sound social media strategy and maximising shopper spend. Offering such advice will be Karen Fewell from Digital Blonde in a psychology-led talk on how to supercharge sales and marketing. With relevant real-life examples on how to grow a business, owners looking for actionable advice won't want to miss this discussion on the second day of the show.

to open up the show to speciality producers across wider categories, which is why we have introduced a new area of the show dedicated to home goods, gifts and in-store solutions. This provides visitors with the full farm shop experience when they come to Farm Shop & Deli Show and offers buyers everything they need under one roof to create a well-rounded store that really caters to shopper demands.

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FARM SHOP & DELI AWARDS FINALISTS 2019

At 3:30pm on Monday 8th April, the ultimate accolade of Farm Shop & Deli Retailer of the Year, as well as nine regional winners and the Newcomer of the Year, will be announced at the Farm Shop & Deli Show.

BAKER OF THE YEAR

Bondgate Bakery (Otle)
Hobbs House Bakery (Tetbury)
Lovingly Artisan (Kendal)
Mayfield Farm Bakery (Harlow)

BUTCHER OF THE YEAR

Aubrey Allen (Leamington Spa)
Battlefield1403 Butcher (Shrewsbury)
Elderslie Butchers (Elderslie)
Hugh Black & Sons Butchers Ltd (Bathgate)
Surrey Hills Butchers (Oxshott)

CHEESEMONGER OF THE YEAR

Cheese Etc, The Pangbourne Cheese Shop (Reading)
The Cheese Lady (Haddington)
The Cheese Shop (Chester)
The Little Cheesemonger (Rhuddlan)

DELICATESSEN OF THE YEAR

Bayley & Sage (Battersea)
Broad Bean Delicatessen (Ludlow)

Forest Deli Ltd (Coleford)
Giddy Grocer (London)
Ginger Whale Delicatessen (Cleckheaton)
Guzzi (London)
MacFarlane's Delicatessen (London)
The Bees Country Kitchen (Chorley)
The Olive Tree Deli (Mold)
Thomas of Helmsley (Helmsley)

FARMSHOP – LARGE RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Cannon Hall Farm Shop (Barnsley)
Chatsworth Estate Farm Shop (Bakewell)
Cobbs Farm Shop & Kitchen (Hungerford)
Newlyns Farm Shop (Hook)

FARMSHOP – SMALL RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Battlefield1403 Farm Shop (Shrewsbury)
Eggs To Apples Farm Shop (Etchingham)
Minskip Farm Shop (Boroughbridge)
Parc Y Bocs, Burns Farm Shop (Kidwelly)
Tori and Bens Farm (Kings Newton)
Waterperry Farm Shop (Oxford)
Welbeck Farm Shop (Worksop)

FISHMONGER OF THE YEAR

Fyne Fish (Cockermouth) Ltd (Cockermouth)

GREENGROCER OF THE YEAR

Andreas of Chelsea Green (London)

FOODHALL OF THE YEAR

Bakers & Larners of Holt (Holt)
Cunninghams Butchers & Food Hall (Newry)
Delifonseca Dockside (Liverpool)
Shrewsbury Market Hall (Shrewsbury)
Webbs Garden Centre (Droitwich)
Weetons Food Hall (Harrogate)

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Bayley & Sage (Battersea)
Broad Bean Delicatessen (Ludlow)
Forest Deli Ltd (Coleford)
Giddy Grocer (London)
Guzzi (London)
Minskip Farm Shop (Boroughbridge)
The Cheese Lady (Haddington)
The Little Cheesemonger (Rhuddlan)
Waterperry Farm Shop (Oxford)

ONLINE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Farmers Choice Free Range Ltd (Fareham)
Farmison & Co (Ripon)
Milk and More (Aldershot)
World products ltd t/a indianmart (Markfield)

VILLAGE STORE / LOCAL SHOP OF THE YEAR

Campbell's of Leyburn (Leyburn)
FINK (York)
Good Food (Catford)
Helperby Stores Deli & Café (York)



Farm Shop & Deli Awards 2019 Winners Revealed

From top tier advice to exciting announcements, the live action will also see the new Farm Shop & Deli Award winners take home these coveted accolades on the first day of the show. Back by popular demand and hosted by chair of judges

and renowned food and drink broadcaster, Nigel Barden, the awards recognise top independent retailers across UK and Northern Ireland. Nigel and his fellow judges will be looking for the most impressive levels of innovation, service, initiative and community involvement.

On stage will also be the current titleholder, Debbie and Callum Edge of Edge & Sons Butchers, who will share their secrets of success and how winning the 2018 Awards has catapulted their growth over the last year.

The prestigious awards will crown creative winners across 12 categories including Baker, Butcher, Cheesemonger, Delicatessen, Farm Shop Large Retailer of the Year, Farm Shop Small Retailer of the Year, Fishmonger, Food Hall, Greengrocer, Local Shop or Village Store, Newcomer of the Year, and Online Business of the Year. Nine regional awards will also be handed out, plus the overall Farm Shop & Deli Awards Retailer of the Year.



offerings to include gluten-free to zero alcohol. With a quarter of young people classing themselves as non-drinkers, as recently published in the journal BMC Public Health, this is key for both producers and retailers looking to keep on top of the trends.

To Drink or Not to Drink

One way brands are tapping into the sobriety trend is with new soft drink flavour innovations, capturing a crowd of customers demanding more from the drinks sector. One such exhibitor,

Dalston's Soda Company, will be introducing four brand new flavours of its classic cans of soda, including real squeezed elderflower, real squeezed rhubarb, fizzy blackcurrant and fizzy rhubarb. Ahead of Farm Shop and Deli Show, Dalston's commented, "Young people are dramatically reducing their alcohol intake and looking for healthier, booze-free alternatives so this really is the time for natural soft drinks to shine."

Soft drinks are set to have their moment in the limelight, but

retailers and caterers also need to ensure their coffee offering remains strong if they want to perk up their profits. According to the British Coffee Association, approximately 95 million cups of coffee are drunk in the UK every day (British Coffee Association) and customers are increasingly looking to artisan retailers for both in-store offerings and an extensive range of beans, pods and ground varieties to take home. The Espresso Brothers, Elliot Wallis and Alex Redgate, will take to the Farm Shop & Deli Live stage to give their top tips for

growth and offer guidance on how retailers can claim a share of this crowded market place.

However, merchants with a discernible alcoholic drinks offer, or those looking to introduce one will also be able to pick up practical tips, with a session from The Wine Tipster's Neil Phillips and Anthony Johns set to explore how to build customer loyalty with a refreshed alcohol offering to make use of the lucrative weekend crowd.

Attendees can also expect to hear from The Gin Guild who will take visitors on a 'gin-spired'

journey into today's arguably most lucrative spirit category. According to Kantar, 1.5m more UK adults are drinking gin than four years ago, meaning retailers need to find their way to the best-selling brands for their customers. Rob Dorsett, master distiller at Langley Distillery, will provide listeners with a wealth of inspiration-packed advice on how stocking and showcasing a gin offering can lift sales.

While a wide drink offering is paramount to any catering outlet, a delectable cheese counter

“ We wanted to open up the show to speciality producers across wider categories, which is why we have introduced a new area of the show dedicated to home goods, gifts and in-store solutions. This provides visitors with the full farm shop experience when they come to Farm Shop & Deli Show and offers buyers everything they need under one roof to create a well-rounded store that really caters to shopper demands. From food and drink gifting hampers to eco-friendly produce packaging, the 2019 show is all encompassing ”

MAT ROSE, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR AT FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW

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Baker's Baking Industry Award winner, Paul Barker will also share experience from his 35 years in the industry, including behind-the-scenes work on *The Great British Bake Off*.

Additionally, for bakers looking for further reason to take their place in the Farm Shop & Deli Live audience, the story of how Warrens Bakery rose from with ashes with Alexandra Martin as retail operations director, is sure to inspire a business growth mindset among visitors. Martin will share how Cornwall's oldest pasty maker turned its fortunes around to become a fresh force in the bakery industry, now with 54 shops and an additional 30 franchises across the UK.

Dragon's Pantry

Live line-ups will continue to take centre stage throughout the three days, with the Dragon's Pantry pitches promising to introduce visitors to the best new product ideas in. The budding entrepreneurs will face a panel of fearsome judges in the ultimate retail rest, where they will present their 15-minute pitch in the hope of winning professional advice from some of the top names in the industry.

Farm Shop & Deli Show is co-located with National Convenience Show, The Forecourt Show and the second instalment of The Ingredients Show. Together they will bring together suppliers from across the food and drink retail industry. To register your interest for all the free-to-attend shows and receive more information, visit farmshopanddelishow.co.uk.



Academy of Cheese's Structured Learning Course. Visitors will be able to pick up tips on how to conquer the cheese category, as well as try some delicious samples and have questions answered by the Academy's founding director, Tracey Colley.

Star Bakers

Another slice of action to be sure to catch on the first day of show is British Baker's Britain's Best Loaf competition. Join the judges as another batch of bakers rise to the challenge to become British Baker's Britain's Best Loaf 2019. Baking's upper crust will battle it out to win this prestigious title and take home the crown across a range of categories, including Best Wholegrain, Best Sourdough and Best Gluten Free Loaf.

Budding bakers will also want to make their way to the Farm Shop & Deli Live Stage for the Knead to Know talk to discover how Paul Barker from Cinnamon Square developed his innovative techniques of blending bread with botanicals. As the British

carries just as much importance in farm shops and delis. Exhibitors offering tastes of their finest cheeses over the three days include Shepherds Purse Cheeses with its award-winning speciality range, Hampshire Cheeses with its new Winslade variation and family-run company Carron Lodge, to name a few. Visitors with a commitment to cheese will also want to enjoy the session with cheesemonger Ruth Holbrook from Paxton & Whitfield, who will offer a taste of the



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COFFEE'S HEATING UP

The popularity of 'a cup of joe' is reaching new heights, and little wonder – the varieties on offer are enough to tempt any and all aficionados

For anyone within the food and drink industry – or even with a passing interest in it – the stats will come as no surprise. 79% of Brits drank coffee in the month to June 2018 according to Mintel's *Coffee UK 2018* report, with the drink outranking the nation's most iconic beverage – tea – when it came to out of house purchases. More consumers drank coffee on the go than tea and hot chocolate combined (76%, 39% and 35%, respectively), Mintel stated [*Coffee Shops UK 2018*], while estimating that the UK coffee shop market would reach a value of £3.75 million, a growth of 7.3%.

This spells opportunity for independent retailers looking to open an on-site cafe, or even just invest more attention in their retail coffee selection. Quality, the hallmark of the indie, plays a big role in the rise of coffee in the UK. "When it comes to coffee, a good espresso is no longer a luxury, it's an expected standard," says Trish Caddy, senior foodservice analyst at Mintel. "Elsewhere, thirst for premium specialty products like single-origin coffees and super-premium small batches is causing these products to inch towards the mainstream. With a plethora of options available to stock and serve, is now the time to jump on the bandwagon – and is fresh coffee always preferable to instant?"

According to the *Coffee UK 2018* report, the British shopper seems to think so. 58% believe that coffee made from grounds tastes better than instant coffee, while 20% would be embarrassed to serve instant coffee to house guests. However, something that instant coffee brands have the upper hand on is variety. Take Little's – while it boasts a rare five varieties of flavour-infused ground coffees, it has a portfolio of 11 flavoured instant coffees ranging from Hazelnut and Amaretto to Maple Walnut and Chocolate Orange. A thirst for variation is reflected in Mintel's research on

coffee shops, too. Mintel's Trish Caddy states that, "With four in five coffee drinkers wanting to customise their drink, coffee shops that offer create-your-own options will thrive in today's challenging high street conditions."

Trend talk: cold brew

With Mintel reporting that 32% of Britain's coffee drinkers are interested in making cold-brew coffee at home, Lincoln & York was right on with its decision to add the trending beverage to its roster. Karen Yates-Hills, commercial director explains, "Witnessing the US cold brew coffee market boast an impressive 158% year-over-year growth since the summer of 2015 urged Lincoln & York to harness their 25 years experience in sourcing, roasting and brewing coffee to concoct and develop our own cold brew coffee product (Black Eye Cold Brew) here in the UK."

Since then, she says, "cold brew has polled as the second quickest growing beverage product in the UK (34%) behind the flat white (49%) (Allegra Insights Project Cafe 2019). Add to that the fact that 'cold brew coffee' is now searched for on Google over 5,000 times each month, it's safe to say it's catching on."

"Large scale chains such as Costa, Starbucks and Cafe Nero have recognised this and adopted cold

brew onto their menus relying on the emphasis surrounding its authenticity, artisan credentials and health and wellness factors," she continues.

Cold brew's role in the next generation of coffee brands and consumers is sizeable, with its kaleidoscope of potential flavour notes, versatility and premium

feel all factors to consider.

Karen explains, "Another factor to the success of cold brew will be its adaptability and scalability. Although its potential growth in the UK is still undetermined, we envisage that every coffee shop, bar, hotel and restaurant will be demanding it by the box load, as it transcends into the

next coffee culture craze. Black Eye Cold Brew is already part of the revolution, having launched in 2018 at the London Coffee Festival. The initial feedback was glowing, with particular comments surrounding the deep, rich flavours of 'boozy chocolate'."

As well as tapping into cold brew's health credentials and authenticity, Lincoln & York's launch appeals to the trade's desire for convenience. "Arriving as to customers in a 10 litre bag-in-a-box with Vitop tap, and without the need to be refrigerated, Black Eye can be served as stand-alone over ice, through a nitro tap for added textures, or as a mixer for mocktails and cocktails," Karen suggests.

"Moreover, despite it having 0% sugar, it maintains a satisfyingly sweet taste, and carries the same caffeine kicks coffee lovers crave. It also provides the premiumisation through its flavour, making it an ideal offering for the new, more sophisticated consumer of today."



FROM THE RETAILER...

Nick Punter, Suffolk Food Hall

WHAT BRANDS DO YOU STOCK?

The main brand we stock is Butterworth and Son which is the coffee we use in our Café and Restaurant, they are coffee roasters from Bury St Edmunds and we have a great relationship with them. We also stock coffee from Harris & James, Frank and Earnest, Coffeelink and Little's.

IS COFFEE A GOOD SELLER FOR YOU?

Well, definitely for us as we have an on-site café here at the Food Hall, with a range of coffees available and cake to go with it! Especially when the sun is out (or the weather is nice

enough to sit outside) as there is a fantastic outdoor area with views across the Orwell Estuary. We also stock a few brands in the Food Hall itself, both instant and filtered, from local suppliers and further afield. Our restaurant also sells a range of coffees which are popular both in breakfast and lunch times and even during events.

HOW IMPORTANT IS COFFEE TO SUFFOLK FOOD HALL'S OFFERING?

Coffee is a major part, because we have a range to suit everyone. I think coffee has grown in popularity, especially in the younger generation; I would still count myself as young but

back in my young adult life I probably wouldn't have gone near coffee (for the taste) but it has grown on me, but with young adults now it's all the rage as they say. Our coffee is a big seller in the café, both sit down and to-go and with a range of cakes to accompany them.

HAVE YOU NOTICED A CHANGE IN WHAT CUSTOMERS WANT FROM THEIR COFFEE?

I definitely think speciality coffees are on the rise. The latte will always be a fan favourite but now comes in a range of flavours; seasonal favourites such as gingerbread and pumpkin spice are very popular in our café and obviously the development of milk alternatives has also made a difference in the coffee choices provided. We have also seen more and more people drink coffee at our events and even with their afternoon teas.



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feelgoodcoffee.com



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aromistico.coffee



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wearlittles.com



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newkingscoffee.co.uk



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"KANTAR WORLD PANEL'S OUT OF HOME, OUT OF MIND REPORT STATES THAT NEARLY HALF OF GLOBAL SPEND ON SNACKING AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IS SPENT ON OUT OF HOME CONSUMPTION (41%)"

fame locally as a result of their thoughtfully considered range of freshly prepared lunch options; The Norfolk Deli is renowned for its exciting and always delicious range of sandwiches, while The Deli in Mersea, Essex, is a popular option for office workers wanting to purchase something more premium than is available from the Tesco around the corner and the independent supermarket next door.

Finally, food waste and excess packaging must be considered; with consumers increasingly concerned about food waste and looking to make sustainable choices, it's important that retailers are offering these eco-conscious customers planet-friendly options.

With shoppers increasingly strapped for time and eating on the go, and a plethora of options out there to stock, this is a sector well worth a second look.

Retailer insight

The food hall at Oxford Street's Selfridges is dominated by its food to go department, and across the retailer's portfolio there's a huge range of options on offer for hungry, on-the-go shoppers. The business has recognised that its customers are after variety and excitement when they're on the move just as much as when they're eating in a restaurant or at home, and has catered to this with aplomb. According to a buyer at the business's London outpost, it boasts, "A broad selection of food cuisines and options from around the world. We have over 15 food to go offerings in our foodhalls, from Pret to Kamon sushi – we offer our customers a broad range of choice."

The retailer works with its concession partners to constantly have newness and innovation at the heart of its business, having found that shoppers often come to Selfridges for a taste of something exciting which they haven't experienced before. It spots these opportunities and caters to shopper wanting to explore them, but trends are not the be all and end all of the



SUSHI HAND ROLLS BY INIGO, CURRENTLY HOSTED AT SELFRIDGES' LONDON STORE

Selfridges offering. "Trends can be led by ingredients and food choices," he says. Ultimately, though, ease will always win out against passing consumer wants. "For example vegan is now at the forefront, but our customers still primarily head towards convenience and efficiency."

Health is of increasing importance to shoppers across the UK, and Selfridges has ensured that its range ticks that box. "We offer a selection that caters for all occasions, healthy salads, hand rolled sushi, fresh sandwiches, freshly prepared salads," he says. On the drinks side, they "offer a huge selection of cold pressed juices and alternative dairy and kombucha. Shoppers seeking less virtuous options are well catered for, too, with options such as middle eastern wraps and salt beef sandwiches on offer. The store also stocks "true comfort food, including cupcakes and vegan doughnuts made in London," not to mention its renowned confectionery department.

As far as Selfridges is concerned, food to go is worth investing in: "We have over 20 concessions that offer food to go options, plus we now have several flexible pop up sites in our London foodhall that are used for new food to go operators and exciting new trends in food. We feel our customers love to explore and discover new and exciting brands at Selfridges. For example, our current concession of inigo hand rolls – they specialise in a range of hand rolls created to be eaten on the go – has been a big success."

GOURMET TO GO

Time poor and convenience-led, today's consumers are hungry for quality out of home options

Today's shoppers are living increasingly busy lives, eating on the go seemingly now more than ever. In fact, Kantar Worldpanel's *Out of Home, Out of Mind* report states that nearly half of global spend on snacking and non-alcoholic beverages is spent on out of home consumption (41%) – with the figure rising to 70% when it comes to coffee. What options are there for independent retailers wanting to cash in on this movement?

Traditionally, food to go would be synonymous with convenient but lower quality foods – drive-through burger joints, salt-laden supermarket sandwiches, a bag of crisps and a can of Coke. But consumers are not as happy as they once were to sacrifice quality and flavour for convenience, and the industry is swiftly responding to ensure that Brits can enjoy delicious food and drink on the go.

Brands are building on the success of conventional out of home options to offer consumers a taste of indulgence they may not have experienced in the past. Cans of alcoholic cocktails and premium beers are being added to chiller cabinets to be picked up just as a soft drink or bottle of water would be. Chocolate brands are adding small versions of their sharing-sized bars to their portfolio so Brits can enjoy quality chocolate on the go. And we've all seen the increasing variety of products in the bars and bagged snacks arena, with options for consumers ranging from air-dried fruit and vegetable crisps (or even salmon skin) to superfood-laden bars and protein balls – a far cry from the snack aisles of just a few years ago.

While there are a number of food and drink products ready to cater for this demand, stocking your shelves with on the go products isn't the only option. The lunchtime

“Consumers are no longer happy to sacrifice quality and flavour for convenience, and the industry is swiftly responding”

crowd have always sought quality alternatives to pre-packaged sandwiches and snacks, so a range of freshly-made options is sure to go down well. Whether you source these from a local maker or produce them fresh in-house is up to you, but if you're located in a town or next to offices it could well be worth adding this string to your bow. Some delis have found

"OUT OF HOME PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR IS MOST DEVELOPED IN THE UK, WHERE SHOPPERS SPEND AN AVERAGE OF \$525 ANNUALLY ON AWAY FROM HOME PURCHASES – ALMOST DOUBLE THAT OF SPAIN, THE MARKET WITH THE SECOND HIGHEST SPEND (\$225)"

KANTAR WORLD PANEL'S OUT OF HOME, OUT OF MIND

1 MA BAKER Protein Flapjacks

Handmade in Bristol with wholegrain British oats, Ma Baker's new Protein Flapjacks have 20g of protein per bar and come in four classic flavours: Chocolate Brownie, Blueberry Muffin, Banana Chocolate and Peanut Butter. High in protein and a good source of fibre, these flapjacks make consuming additional protein throughout the day easy and convenient and are an ideal on-the-go snack for slow release energy.

These aren't your typical dry and chalky protein bars. This twist on Ma Baker's best-selling Giant Flapjacks means you can have a tasty, high protein snack to keep your energy levels up throughout the day, plus they're available in bright, colourful packaging with a six month shelf life.

"We're very excited to be extending our well-established Ma Baker range with these Protein Flapjacks," says Caitlin Sewell from First Quality Foods. "Our dedicated fitness foodies have worked hard to develop a high protein snack that also tastes sensational with four luscious flavours. Because they're packed full of slow-release energy oats, chocolate chunks and real fruit pieces, these are no run-of-the-mill, chalky protein bars!"

mabaker.eu



2 FRUITY BEAUTIES Snack Bars

The ethos at Fruity Beauties is to provide a fun and tasty healthy snack bar that is full of goodness. The bright packaging and colourful characters are an enticing way to introduce children to a healthy option. These bars offer one of the recommended five-a-day portions of fruit and contain no artificial colours or preservatives. Proud of producing bars that are 100% organic and Fairtrade, this brand also caters to vegans.

Alicia Porter, director of Fruity Beauties said, "Fruity Beauties bars are a little snack that makes the smile wide. A zingy and tangy, softly textured treat that is packed with tasty goodness and heartily fruity. Fruity Beauties is ready to get the juices flowing! Just fruit and fruit alone, these yummy and scrummy organic goodies are not only delicious and nutritious but come with the assuring Fairtrade certification which means we work closely with our lovely suppliers to ensure that the wonderful farm workers who grow and harvest our hearty fruit get a fair deal too and are paid properly for their goods and services. This drives us and helps us feel good about what we do here at Fruity HQ."

fruitybeauties.co.uk



3 MR LEE'S Noodles

Mr Lee's is a worldwide, award-winning brand of premium noodles in a cup made using authentic recipes and the finest ingredients, certified gluten-free, low-sugar and made with no nasties. Offering a variety of exciting flavours including Coconut Chicken Laksa, Warrior Fighting Shrimp and Zen Garden Vegetables, the range's ingredients are freeze-dried rather than dehydrated to lock in more taste and nutrients.

Damien Lee, founder and CEO of Mr Lee's Pure Foods Co. said: "This spring we have further improved our innovative, authentic and tasty recipes. We have also introduced generous, game-changing chunks of 100% chicken breast into two of our flavours, alongside our already market-leading amounts of freeze-dried veggies and proteins."

mrleesnoodles.com



4 COLDPRESS Juices and Smoothies

Pioneer of the HPP process for fruit juices, Coldpress is all about getting juice to work as hard as possible in order to maximise on delicious flavours. Using cold pressure, which is said to be the next best thing to freshly squeezed as it is a gentler way to retain vitamins and minerals from the fruit and vegetables, the company has a range of fruit and veg cold pressure-processed drinks such as Pink Lady, Valencia Orange and Pumpkin Power. After dabbling in nut milks and juice-themed coconut waters, Coldpress will be ringing in the changes with a new logo and improved range of products in 2019.

Speaking on this, company founder Andrew Gibb said, "HPP is best restricted to the more niche veggie drink arena where daintier flavour profiles (kale, spinach, cucumber, beetroot) might benefit from a less intrusive production process."

cold-press.com



5 PURELY Plantain Chips

Healthier snacking options are proving ever-popular, and at Purely plantain is the ingredient of choice. The brand offers its Plantain Chips in three flavours – Naturally Salted, Wild Garlic and Nice and Spicy – as a natural, vegan plus gluten and guilt-free option for snacking. Packed with beneficial fibre, potassium, magnesium and vitamins A and B6, the brand also uses only sustainably farmed plantain from Ecuador.

Purely co-founder, Stefania Pellegrino said, "Whilst our discerning London estate provides robust reassurance that our range won't ever compromise great taste in its quest to produce a low-in-sugar treat with a 30% lower fat footprint than traditional potato crisps, 2019 priorities include taking this incredible South American tradition into the everyday treat fixtures of forward-thinking retailers."

welovepurely.com

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Editor
Holly Shackleton, 01206 505981
holly.shackleton@aceville.co.uk

Editorial Director
Emily Seddon
emily.seddon@aceville.co.uk

Group Advertising Manager
Sam Reubin 01206 505936
sam.reubin@aceville.co.uk

Senior Account Manager
Jessica Stevenson 01206 505901
jessica.stevenson@aceville.co.uk

Account Managers
Lydia Allis 01206 505934
lydia.allis@aceville.co.uk

Kristine Gudrupa 01206 505934
kristine@aceville.co.uk

Accounts Sue Carr 01206 505903

Art Director
Lee Whiteford
lwhiteford@btconnect.com

Illustrations Louise Abbott

Publisher Helen Tudor 01206 505970

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THE INDEPENDENT SHOPPER

Ollie Lloyd, CEO of Great British Chefs



While I did not train as a chef, people assume that I must be quite skilled considering that I am one of the founders of Great British Chefs. Really, I am a marketing guy who found himself in the wonderful world of premium food. Since an early age, I always believed the mantra 'you get what you pay for' and in the world of food, this is very true. I remember my father getting frustrated by my desire to buy the most expensive version of things when we were out food shopping, but I think over time he has come around to my view.

I cook a lot at home and having two kids under the age of five means

I try and get them to eat a whole range of foods. Going shopping for food at a local store (whether near my home or when travelling) is, for me, one of life's great pleasures. I recently visited Suffolk Food Hall which I thought was amazing and a great example of what independent shopping should look like.

I am very lucky to live in Highbury, North London, and am spoilt for choice in terms of where I can source my ingredients from. The food scene in London has changed so much

over the last 10 years and we now have a range of quality butchers and fishmongers in the area – not to mention a whole host of farmers' markets and other specialist outlets.

My go-to butcher is Turner & George which I honestly believe sells the best meat in London (and I have visited a good few). They have an incredible range of steaks from both the UK and further afield alongside an ever-expanding choice of sausages. Their goat is amazing, as are their herb-fed chickens. The people that work there are very knowledgeable, charming and always keen to flag some of the unique things that they have in stock.

I am trying to eat more and more fish and vegetables during the week and I love nipping into to Moxon's on my lunch break. They often have gurnard, large juicy scallops, frozen octopus, whole hake, sushi-grade salmon and even weird delicacies like goose barnacles!

My other greatest indulgences are some of the amazing shops in and around Highbury Barn. I love the selection available at Highbury Vintners and I am spoilt to have a Le Fromagerie on my doorstep, which sells an incredible range of artisan cheeses kept in perfect condition. Da Mario is an old-school Italian deli that has a huge range of imported Italian ingredients, fresh pasta and great panettones at Christmas. I also love going to Spencer's Bakery with the kids on Saturday morning in Stoke Newington or to my all-time favourite bakery E5, which is a little further away but worth the journey. The farmers' market at Chapel Market is fantastic and hosts fantastic seasonal produce on a weekly basis.

The truth is that shopping for food is one of my favourite activities. Luckily, I have somehow found a wife who agrees and, to date, our children have not rebelled!

TWITTER POLL

Do you face staffing issues as a result of Brexit?

YES
50%

NO
33%

DON'T KNOW
17%

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These days, I'm considered a 'slow drinker' and am a contented designated driver.

I haven't always been this way; I spent my 18th birthday at the village pub, full of glee at being able to legally order drink after drink; my university days went by in a haze of cheap wine and happy hours at London bars; and cocktails undoubtedly added a bit of zing to my twenties. But now that I'm in my thirties I'm happy to go without – so long as there's a viable alternative, that is. I often find myself representing the non-drinker as the conversation of drinking tribes – apparently they can be clearly defined – crops up, more regularly than before.

The tribes prescribed are, quite simply, drinker and non-drinker. But I don't think it's as clear cut as that. We also have to consider the myriad of attitudes towards alcohol represented in the middle ground. My dad's a proud teetotaler, having not had an alcoholic drink for 30

years, but is unusually closed-minded about seeking out alternatives to sparkling water when he goes out for a meal. My theory is that he's been through decades of disappointment, of turning up to a bar or restaurant and being offered only overly-fizzy, sugar syrup-based options like Coke and lemonade, orange juice from a carton or, latterly, a sugar-filled J2O, so simply doesn't put any energy into accompanying his meal with anything other than water. I know the feeling – too often I have been in a restaurant or retailer where the non-alcoholic options are at best uninspiring or at worst an unsophisticated option designed for kids. Personally, I'm excited by the non-alcoholic options coming onto

the market right now. Kombucha and shrubs offer the 'kick' so often missing from soft drinks, and increasing numbers of producers are looking to botanicals to enliven and add interest to their drinks.

The question is: how can the industry inspire long-disappointed non-drinkers to try something new and – this is crucial – to spend more than they're used to on a non-alcoholic beverage?

Speaking as a Millennial, I'd say that my generation is open to new options

and eager to spend energy and money seeking out quality and innovative alternatives. We're constantly connected to social media and use it as a resource for inspiration and new ideas, so it makes sense for brands to approach us via these means. But what of the generation above us, those proven to have more disposable income and time to relish their choices? I would feel uncomfortable trying to speak for an entire generation based on the words of one family member, but the answer

may be in sampling. Bringing quality options straight to this shopper to avoid them having to do the leg work – after that having proven fruitless for so long – might be the answer. A tasting evening could do well and bring in a bigger footfall than you might have thought.

Great taste, quality and innovation are key. Non-drinkers have been fobbed off with below par options for too long, so let's give them the attention they've long deserved. A good point of reference is [joinclubsoda.com](https://www.joinclubsoda.com) – a club which both inspires "mindful drinking" and provides a catalogue of non-alcoholic or low-alcohol options.

Do you cater for non-drinkers? Email holly.shackleton@aceville.co.uk to let us know.

“ How can the industry inspire long-disappointed non-drinkers to try something new, and to spend more than they're used to on a non-alcoholic beverage? ”

5 MINUTES WITH... OLIVIA WOLLENBERG

founder and director of Livia's Kitchen



WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING IF YOU WEREN'T IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY?

I studied psychology and neuroscience for five years before I started this business – it will always be a passion of mine.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

Working at Great Ormond Street Hospital whilst I was studying.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

My team and social media followers. Having them spur me on is incredibly inspiring and motivating.

WHAT'S THE WORST JOB YOU'VE DONE?

At the beginning of the business, I was having to do every single thing myself. The baking, the deliveries, the finances, the admin etc. It was just me.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF THE JOB?

Seeing my products on shelves and being tagged in comments from people loving them will never get old. I also think watching my team grow and develop has been a fantastic part.

AND YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE?

Recruitment and fundraising!

HOW ABOUT THE FOOD INDUSTRY?

The food industry is incredibly exciting. It's constantly evolving at such a fast pace and I love being involved.

TEA OR COFFEE?

Tea. I'm obsessed with homemade ginger tea at the moment and I love a matcha latte.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR LAST SUPPER?

The biggest bowl of avocado pesto pasta. Its absolute heaven. I've even got my entire team hooked!

WHAT'S YOUR MOTTO?

Always live and love fully and don't do anything by halves.

WHAT'S THE WEIRDEST THING YOU'VE EVER EATEN?

Oysters.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?

I loved *If I Could Tell You Just One Thing* by Richard Reed – one of the founders of Innocent.

SWEET OR SAVOURY?

Sweet. All day, every day.

DIARY DATES

March

17th–20th
IFE

ExCeL, London
ife.co.uk

18th–20th
PRO2PAC

ExCeL, London
pro2pac.co.uk

26th
TRE BICCHIERI 2019

Royal Horticultural Halls,
Westminster
winetecalondon.co.uk

28th–31st
LONDON COFFEE FESTIVAL

Old Truman Brewery, London
londoncoffeefestival.com

April

2nd–4th
WORLD TRAVEL CATERING &
ONBOARD SERVICES EXPO

Hamburg Messe, Germany
worldtravelcateringexpo.com

7th–8th
NATURAL & ORGANIC
PRODUCTS EUROPE

ExCeL, London
naturalproducts.co.uk

8th–10th
FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW

NEC, Birmingham
farmshopanddelishow.co.uk

8th–10th
NATIONAL CONVENIENCE
SHOW

NEC, Birmingham
nationalconvenienceshow.co.uk

8th–10th
THE INGREDIENTS SHOW

NEC, Birmingham
theingredientsshow.co.uk

TRIED & TESTED



HOLLY, EDITOR

THE CULTURED COLLECTIVE SMOKED CHIPOTLE CHILLI KRAUT

The trend for fermented food is going nowhere fast, and I for one am happy that's the case. Kombucha has been

around for a couple of years now – I'm a long-term fan – and

kimchi has been hot on the lips of foodies around the UK in a big way, but top of my list right now is kraut. This traditional European speciality has been available in the world section of supermarkets for as long as I can remember, but quality, artisan versions have up until now been hard to come by. I'm making the most of my discovery of The Cultured Collective's option by having it on everything – cheese on toast, bibimpap, even veggie burgers – and highly recommend you do the same. Their kimchi is great, too (plus there's a vegan option for fish sauce avoiders).

theculturedcollective.co.uk



DALSTON'S REAL SQUEEZED RHUBARB

I'm a proud descendent of the Rhubarb Triangle, and so make it my mission to try every new rhubarb product which enters the market (it's great fun). So I was delighted when Dalston's – purveyor of truly delicious and healthier – than-you'd-think soft drinks – launched not one but two rhubarb drinks into their range. The

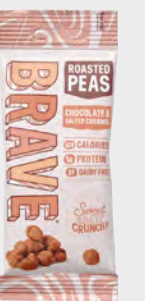
classic Fizzy Rhubarb is as satisfying as you'd imagine, full of rhubarb tang and a third less sugar than mainstream brands of sparkling soft drinks, while the Soda Light (an Elderflower option is also available) is a thirst-quenching and surprisingly low calorie option. Both a real treat.

dalstons.com

BRAVE CHOCOLATE & SALTED CARAMEL ROASTED PEAS

Said to be a world-first, sustainable British snack brand Brave has released this unique product to my utter delight. Any snack that boasts healthy credentials catches my eye and these contain 50% less sugar than chocolate-coated nuts and 40% less than sweet popcorn flavours. A moreish option that has the ideal combination of sweet, salty and crunchy (as well as being suitable for vegans) these are a treat to reach for when you need an afternoon pick-me-up.

bravefoods.co.uk



ODYSEA DATE MOLASSES

When a product is both healthy and versatile, it's a great discovery – a treat, in my book at least. Not only is this date molasses, made purely from the juice of pressed dates, deep, treacly and thick, but it's got a myriad of uses, too. I've used it as a healthier alternative to maple syrup in baking, it's taken the place of sweet balsamic vinegar on my bowl of berries and ice cream, and it makes a pleasure of porridge.

A must-stock for retailers wanting to satisfy both the health-conscious and foodie crowds.

odysea.com

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