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EDITOR'S LETTER

NEWS IN BRIEF

Welcome to the May issue of *Speciality Food*. I hope it finds you well, full of plans for the coming months and – if you attended – inspired by your recent trip to IFE. As ever, the *Speciality Food* team was in attendance and greatly enjoyed discovering the latest products, making new contacts and catching up with established ones.

This issue will reach you ahead of Farm Shop & Deli Show, and I for one can't wait to embrace all that awaits us there. As you will see in our exclusive preview of the show in this issue (p. 27), there's a huge amount to look forward to this year – from talks, seminars and demonstrations from celebrity chefs to the annual myriad of products to sample and stock. Not to mention the final of the Farm Shop & Deli Awards! I'm honoured to have been on the judging panel this year, and was truly impressed by the standard of retailers across the board. I look forward to celebrating with the well-deserving winners.

Summer is also on its way, and at the end of the magazine you'll find a selection of features focused on seasonal comestibles, from soft drinks (p. 32) to barbecue food (p. 34). Also, we speak to three award-winning retailers to find out how they make the most of the season (p. 31). The good news: you don't have to have an outdoor



“We love discovering the latest products, making new contacts and catching up with established ones”

space to profit from the season. Not only that, but in this issue we highlight the best picnic foods to stock now (p. 20), shine the spotlight on some of today's finest dairy products (p. 25), and talk sugar-free (p. 11).

Plus, we're delighted to host an interview with Craig Sams (p. 12), pioneer of organic and sustainable food and the driving force behind some of Britain's best-known and loved food brands.

Last but certainly not least, I'm excited to announce that entry to the New Producer Awards is now open! Enter (for free) at specialityfoodmagazine.com/awards.

Holly

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NEW OWNER FOR KENT CRISPS AND KENTISH OILS

Kent Crisps and Kentish Oils has announced Laura Bounds as its new owner. Laura, who has been the commercial director for the brands since 2014, has overseen a Kent Crisps rebrand and grew the company by 52 per cent in this time.

She also plans to diversify and grow the business further, including new product development for Kent Crisps and diversification and factory growth for Kentish Oils, with a continued push to explore new markets.

Laura said, “As someone who loves the food industry and was born and raised in Kent, it brings me immense pleasure to employ local people and local producers. This makes it as authentic as it gets.”

MEAT NOT NECESSARY FOR BRITISH CONSUMERS

According to new research by YouGov, 56 per cent of British consumers think that meat isn't needed to make a good meal, with 18 per cent believing otherwise.

Data from the Meat and Poultry 2017 Report shows that 33 per cent have cut back for health reasons and 32 per cent are limiting their consumption due to trying vegetarian or pescatarian meals.

Stephen Harmston, head of YouGov Reports said, “Although Brits are far from falling out of love with meat, they are increasingly happy to leave it out of their meals. While health reasons are a big part of this, the cost of meat is a major concern to many.”

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Triggering Article 50: What Does it mean for our Industry?

Prime Minister Teresa May triggered Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty on 29th March, and Britain will be officially leaving the EU by April 2019

This means that for the next two years Britain will be negotiating a deal to leave the bloc, which is expected to be a complex and lengthy process.

This deal will undoubtedly have implications that will affect the food industries of Britain and Europe alike, and a mixed and widespread reaction has been heard across the sector. Some voices of pessimism have changed to that of pragmatism. Ian Wright, director general of the Food & Drink Federation (FDF), which was against the leaving the EU pre-referendum, has stated the importance of the clarity that the ensuing negotiations might provide the industry with.

He said, "The triggering of Article 50 provides us with a definitive time

frame for the UK to exit the EU and the clock is ticking. We hope this means we can move swiftly from the realm of speculation into one where real issues are being resolved.

"The results of the negotiation will have lasting implications for our people, businesses and economy. Food is at the heart of our culture, identity and security. It is vital that the government prioritises food and drink.

"FDF on behalf of manufacturers, alongside our partners across the food chain, will work tirelessly to help the government to secure the best possible outcomes on future trade, access to the right workforce, and regulation, and ensure a seamless border with the Republic of Ireland."

Lavinia Davolio, owner of Lavolio Boutique Confectioners, set up her confectionery business in 2013 and now supplies over 200 independent shops, including the likes of Fortnum & Mason and Partridges. She is wary of the impact caused by the UK disconnecting from the EU. Lavinia said, "Almost all of our staff are European. We have Italian, Irish and Polish staff, and we are concerned that our EU employees will intend to leave the UK, which will cause obvious disruption to our business.

"The price of produce has already increased and could rise significantly in the future, based on the pound value against the euro. A weakening of the pound has a prolonged effect on the overall cost

of small businesses, potentially at every stage of production. Ingredients are more expensive, transport costs are more expensive and staff costs have increased due to inflation.

"As a small food business, the impact of leaving the single market could cause our business to collapse. We could face import tariffs on our products which will increase their cost to the consumer to the point of making the business not viable. I join forces with every other food business in calling for urgent action from the government to ensure that essential imports of ingredients and raw materials from the EU and EU Free Trade Agreement countries do not face tariffs or costly non-tariff barriers. To this day we still do not know what is going to happen to food imports into the UK."

Jacqueline Champion, co-owner of Shrewsbury-based confectionery company Champion & Reeves remains more positive about the UK's withdrawal from the EU. She said, "We are not nervous and it is too soon to know exactly what the effect on our business will be at this stage. We do import some ingredients, which may increase in cost, but we believe that for us there will be greater exporting opportunities outside of the EU.

"So far, the immediate effect has been the reduced value of sterling, which makes our prices

more competitive. We have no precautions set in place at present, but we will continue to monitor the situation closely and react accordingly."

Needless to say, the farming industry goes hand in hand with the food market in many ways, and Meurig Raymond, president of the NFU, has emphasised that the importance of agriculture must not be underestimated. He said, "Agriculture is at the heart of this country of ours. It produces the raw ingredients for the largest manufacturing sector here – food and drink. The NFU is already engaging heavily with key personnel in the government – last week I met with Secretary of State Andrea Leadsom and was pleased that she shared our ambition to maintain free and open trade with the EU once we leave. Defra also acknowledged the need to ensure that future reforms to the immigration system accommodate the labour requirements of the food and farming sectors.

"This is a monumental time in the nation's history. We are being given a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future of UK agriculture. We can now work with Government to shape a domestic agricultural policy that promotes competitive, profitable and progressive farm businesses, designed to meet the specific needs of UK farmers."

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JOHN SHEPHERD OF PARTRIDGES



“Never trust an expert”

On a recent trip to Scotland I read an old adage that I do not recall hearing before: “A grain of truth does not make a loaf of success”. This reminded me of why it is always a daunting task to either give advice or indeed take it.

As I am now of a certain age and up until today managed to survive for a reasonable period of time running a business and the fact that we promote our Startisans scheme to assist start up food businesses it is not surprising that I am occasionally asked for advice. However, in my own experience, it is very difficult to measure the effectiveness of the advice either that I personally have been given over the years or indeed imparted myself. For example I can clearly remember at the start of my career being advised: “To close down the deli counters as they were a thing of the past, not to risk opening a new independent food shop as the multiples would soon dominate the entire market place, to buy from bigger wholesalers to get the best price, to increase the range of own label products, to decrease the range of own-label products, to not bother with Christmas hampers or staying open late or having a delivery service or stocking known value items (as they would lower the tone)”. In each of these pieces of advice there is undoubtedly a grain of truth but taken in their totality thank goodness we did not follow them. In fact it is difficult to think of an individual piece of advice that hit the nail on the head apart from the obvious types like “you are drunk – go home” as I have heard from the experiences of other people and definitely not my own.

Sadly, I can also recall some of

the advice that I have given that has proved to be unreliable: “Give it time and it will probably turn out alright. (It didn’t). Do not become overly obsessed with security. Don’t worry about refurbishing your shop if it is going well. Bottled water will never sell in the UK. Who needs PR? Focus mainly on the gross margins”. Basically it has always been the ‘If it ain’t broke don’t fix it’ sort of advice. (Although I still wonder about the PR sometimes). Apart from that I never saw the following trends coming: bottled water, gourmet sandwiches, smart phones, social media, Brexit, Trump or the latest series of Sherlock.

In my defence, I am not alone, though. Over a decade ago, in a well-known research paper, Dr John Ioannidis of Stanford University concluded that two out of three findings in medical journals are in fact wrong. There are many reasons why advice needs to carry with it a health warning. The advice should be couched in the appropriate context of “this is what I would do” or “This worked for me in the past”.

There are also questions that are by definition almost impossible to answer. How can I make money, obtain a Royal Warrant, choose a product around which to build a business for example? The simple fact of the matter is that apart from the basics of hard work, perseverance, luck and having a good support team there is not a lot of advice that can be specifically useful. However, to hear or read about the experiences of others, to be prepared to ignore them completely and to form your own conclusions as you make your way in life is probably how it works for everyone. In so many ways the question to be asked is not “how do I do it” but “why do I do it”.

Entries Open for Speciality Food's New Producer Awards

The entry stage for Speciality Food's New Producer Awards 2017 has officially opened, with start-up food and drink producers being invited to take part in the profile-boosting event.

The inaugural awards, run in association with Bread & Butter, are split into seven categories: New Concept, Innovator, British Brand, Sustainable Business, Young Producer, Crowdfunded Business, and Farm-to-Fork.

Those interested in applying can do so for free via the Speciality Food website, which will go on to be judged by a team of internationally-renowned retailers, distributors and food editors, giving applicants a money-can't-buy opportunity to get their product in front of some of

the most important decision makers in the fine food industry, including chair of judges, John Shepherd, MD of Partridges in London.

Winners will be unveiled at an awards ceremony taking place on Friday 6th October 2017 at the Bread & Butter Festival, held at the Institute of Directors in London.

Conceived with the intention of celebrating new food and drink businesses, winners will receive a New Producer Awards accolade and thousands of pounds worth of coverage in the pages of Speciality Food, as well as get their products in front of buyers, wholesalers and key influencers in the industry.

Holly Shackleton, editor of *Speciality Food* said, “This is a valuable opportunity for new brands to really shout about what they do,



promote their product and message to the industry, and be celebrated for their work and innovation. To show our support of these businesses, it's entirely free to enter.”

To enter the New Producer Awards, complete the online form at specialityfoodmagazine.com/awards.

Speciality & Fine Food Fair Announces Relaunch

The 2017 edition of Speciality & Fine Food Fair will be scaled down by 20 per cent from last year in order to underline the intimacy that the show is known for, says Kara Bowen, event manager at Fresh Montgomery.

The decision to limit the size of the show was taken after receiving feedback from last year's exhibitors.

The curation process will also be focused on showcasing an array of “new and diverse producers”. The layout of the event will be changed to ensure “improved visitor flow”, while the Speciality Chocolate Fair will be amalgamated into the main event via a Chocolate Trail section.

Kara also announced a new contemporary design for Speciality & Fine Food Fair 2017, taking place from 3rd until 5th September at the London Olympia.

Ambassadors of the fair announced so far include the Guild of Fine Food's John Farrand, chef Steve Walpole, Cotswold Fayre's Paul Hargreaves and chocolatier Will Torrent, with more to be revealed in due course.

Soraya Gadelrab, exhibition director said, “Recent exhibitor and visitor feedback has inspired us to take a step back and take a new look at the show. Producers and buyers flock to the event not just to do business, but to soak up its wonderful, vibrant atmosphere. It was important to us to retain all of those things that make it unique – whilst injecting a fresh energy to it. So in 2017, we have made a number of exciting changes with the aim to reinforce the specialist nature of the show, and enhance audience relevance and engagement.”

Entries Open for Irish Food Awards

Entries are now open to producers from Ireland to enter this year's Blas na hEireann Irish Food Awards.

The final of the awards, which are now in their tenth year, takes place at the Dingle Food Festival on 30th September. Last year's awards saw more than 2,500 entries to what are the largest blind-tasted food awards in Ireland.

Artie Clifford, chairperson of Blas na hEireann Irish Food Awards said, “These are what I call the ‘people's awards’. Our judging system is very rigorous. Our judges come from a range of food backgrounds: food scientists, chefs, restaurateurs, academics, journalists, authors, food champions, caterers and enthusiastic home cooks.

“Every product that carries a Finalist, Gold, Silver or Bronze sticker is picked up more quickly than those without. Our research has shown that the Blas accreditation has the highest recognition amongst Irish consumers, and using the award logo on pack has made a significant difference to businesses.”

Buyers from Harrods, Selfridges and Fortnum & Mason are among those to come to judge at this year's event. A buyers directory is circulated before the awards with a list of winners and contact details.

Previous winners of the show have revealed that the success has had a positive impact on sales. Last year's Supreme Champion was a Rhubarb & Apple cider from Stonewell in Cork. Daniel Emerson, founder of Stonewell said, “The accolade of winning Supreme Champion was a game-changing event for Stonewell. The prize not only commends our product and innovation but also vouches to the customer that we are a leading Irish producer of outstanding quality.”

Entries are open until 14th June 2017. To enter go to irishfoodawards.com



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"There were a lot of exciting brands at the show, which was really useful to my business. It's a great show to attend and presented lots of new ideas!"

Brett Rogers, New Product Development, Village Bakery

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“Trends bubbling under”

Earlier in 2017, when the year was but a pup, Greggs the High Street baker announced an impressive rise in several key financial indicators. For investors lucky enough to hold Greggs shares, dividends were up by 8.4%, and all of this despite a background of gloom doom and low interest rates. There is always something to cheer about if you look hard enough and a healthy options range now accounts for 10% of Greggs' turnover. The strategists at the bakers have pulled off something of a coup as there are very few bedfellows as uneasy as the Greggs “Balanced Choices” range and their own formidable sausage roll.

You have to admire a company founded on selling mighty sausage rolls to impecunious students, but which can still address the “food to go” market place with such spectacular results. The key to Greggs' High Street dominance (and whopping yearly sales of £894.2m) is that these bakers understand their customers. If some of those customers feel that they have fallen out of love with the greasy giant sausage roll, and want something more contemporary like the “Balanced Choice”, so be it. The trend has spoken. Don't invent, cook, or buy-in a new line because it is a personal favourite, only add something to the shelves if it is what the customers want. Problems come when marketers are tasked with predicting the future and the Next Big Thing.

Sometimes, however, the trend comes to you, and currently I have a kitchen full of bubbling jars and

exploding bottles. My wife has gone into fermented foods in a big way. The principle being that adding regular doses of fermented foods to your diet is powerful force for good, you can even prepare your own probiotic powder. It's time to make kefir (a drink that's the rowdy big brother of natural yogurt); to pickle anything that strays onto the work top – excellent salt pickles like the famous “new green cucumber” so popular in Jewish restaurants. Or how about cultured butter? Cure the cream before churning. Like so many “wonder” foods, the idea of fermented foods is not new: try the Korean national dish Kimchi – extra pungent fermented cabbage. Koreans also appreciate black and squelchy pickled garlic. In Shanghai most of the vitamin C in the diet for the winter months comes from pickled cabbage (which is pretty much the same as Central European sauerkraut). For maximum benefit, we should wash everything down with a glass of kombucha – a Japanese creation, (infuse black tea and let it cool, add a little sugar and then leave to ferment).

It can be confirmed that all these living foods have a powerful effect on the innards and that they might just be genuine health foods. If the idea of natural foods that do you good appeals, then becoming a veg fermenter is something you should try.

Meanwhile on our High Streets the mega sausage roll will still go head to head with “Balanced Choices” and it will be some time before Kimchi, Kombucha and Kefir become the people's favourite.



Cotswold Fayre Launches Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards

To help support young entrepreneurs taking their first steps into the food industry, Cotswold Fayre is launching its annual support scheme Young Food and Drink Entrepreneur of the Year.

Celebrating its fifth year, the initiative aims to help food entrepreneurs aged between 18 and 25-years-old with financial and mentoring support to make their new product innovation a success.

The winning applicant will be awarded £1,500 to help grow their company, as well as receive monthly mentoring sessions from chief executive of Cotswold Fayre, Paul Hargreaves, to discuss and develop their business plan and take things to the next level.

Paul said, “Starting a business myself 17 years ago, I completely appreciate that the hurdles to starting a business can be daunting. Our start-up support scheme is

unique in that we are not only offering a monetary support but I am also mentoring the winner throughout the first year to help them to accelerate their business plan.”

The winner will also work with Cotswold Fayre's in-house designer to develop a strong brand identity.

Last year's winner Olly Hiscocks, founder of Olly's Olives said, “Winning Young Food and Drink Entrepreneur of the Year has been a massive milestone for the business. The prize money has been invaluable in pushing our new products forward and the award has helped to attract new stockists.”

“Paul has been brilliant – he has such in-depth and extensive knowledge of the food industry, which I feel very lucky to have had a slice of! His mentoring has been extremely helpful and guided me in making the right decisions for the business.”

“The next six months are going to be huge for Olly's Olives with new products, new packaging, new flavours and even new offices – here comes the Olivolution!”

Applications for this year's award close on 30th June 2017. The application form can be found at cotswoldfayre.co.uk

National Living Wage Increase Comes into Effect

As of 1st April 2017 UK employers must pay full-time staff aged 25 and over a minimum of £7.50 an hour, a 30p rise from the previous £7.20. Employees between the ages of 21 and 24 will now receive £7.05 an hour, 18 to 20-year-olds £5.60, under-18s £4.05 and apprentices £3.50.

The new rate was originally announced by former chancellor George Osborne at his summer 2016 budget to give a long term boost to UK workers – Osborne's vision was

for it to rise to £9 by 2020.

Employers are being urged to make sure they are paying their staff correctly, as the National Living Wage will be enforced strongly.

Margot James, business minister said, “The government is committed to creating an economy that works for everyone, and today's rate rises are great news for some of the UK's lowest paid workers. More than two million workers will receive an above-inflation step up in pay, with some set for a £600-a-year pay rise.”

Not all have welcomed the

implementation.

Mike Cherry, national chairman at the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) said, “We know that the majority of small businesses were paying their staff above the NLW rate before it was introduced. Our research also shows that most small business owners absorb the cost of wage increases by taking lower profits. We're seeing increasing numbers of them not paying themselves or stopping their own pension contributions to meet these new employment costs. It's a target that must be adjusted if it becomes clear that the economy cannot bear the pace of NLW increases.”

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CLARE MCDERMOTT OF SOIL ASSOCIATION



Organic carries on up

The Soil Association's Organic Market Report was launched in February and showed, for the fifth year running, that organic continues to grow and more opportunities for retailers, businesses and producers are opening up.

The report revealed that organic sales are going from strength to strength, whilst non-organic sales continue to decline. The UK organic market is now worth over £2 billion, up 7.1% from last year, and it looks set to continue.

This is great news for organic businesses and there are now more than 8,000 stores nationwide that stock organic products, many of which are independent retailers who are selling the organic products shoppers can't find in a supermarket.

Who's buying organic?

Recent research carried out for Soil Association Certification analysing potential organic shoppers shows that the level of mistrust in the food industry amongst consumers has risen. Driven more and more by the TV, press and social media, people increasingly want to know where their food comes from and how it has been produced. Organically certified food offers vital reassurance and integrity to shoppers.

In addition there is a desire to be more informed. Organic provides a clear label that consumers can trust when they're out shopping and comes ready made with strong provenance and information on where and how it's produced. Independent retailers are well placed to counteract this mistrust, with a more personal retail offering and the opportunity to talk directly with customers. Soil Association Certification offers a marketing support pack for all retailers (free of charge) including a bespoke visual merchandising guide with thoughts on product placement and more detail about how to win the attention of the shoppers.

How to tick the boxes

In addition to looking for reassurance and certification when making their purchases, people are increasingly concerned about health and wellbeing. Organic is seen as

a shortcut to a healthy lifestyle, and the range and number of new products coming onto the market give retailers a great opportunity to harness this trend in store.

Obviously many already are winning those loyal customers, as the Organic Market Report shows that the independent sector is thriving, with many stores beginning to specialise in organic. Across the UK independent retailers have increased sales of organic by 6.3%. They are optimistic for the future too – more than 90% of independent retailers are expecting sales to rise or stay the same in 2017.

But it's important to keep an eye on people's buying habits. Soil Association Certification works to drive demand for organic through high profile campaigns like Organic September and the revered BOOM Awards for the best in organic, but it's also about retailers offering the things people want to buy. Through a support network across the UK Soil Association Certification brings together retailers, giving e-news updates, offering training days for those new to organic and linking new businesses and products at events.

Organic growth

More and more we're seeing organic cross between sectors – foodservice was the biggest grower in 2016, a whopping 19.1% of organic sold through this route. The new Organic Served Here award is a response to the wish to celebrate this and is a great way to tell customers that cafes and restaurants are selling organic, be that milk or coffee, sandwiches or full meals.

Let's work together

For sales to increase even more, consumers need to know where they can find organic. This is a great opportunity for independent retailers, farm shops, delis and cafes to set themselves apart and tell customers about organic products through visual merchandising, social media and day-to-day conversations. We expect the organic market to continue to grow and more and more consumers to be looking for organic so let's work together and grow this even more.

Find out more at soilassociation.org

“ The Organic Market Report shows that the independent sector is thriving, with many stores beginning to specialise in organic. Across the UK independent retailers have increased sales of organic by 6.3%. They are optimistic for the future too – more than 90% of independent retailers are expecting sales to rise or stay the same in 2017 ”

Bellavita Brings Forward Italian Showcase

Bellavita, the largest made-in-Italy food and drink trade show in the UK, has brought the event a month forward to 18th–20th June.

Held at the Business Design Centre in Islington, London, the three-day event offers buyers, chefs and hoteliers an opportunity to discover future Italian food and drink trends and innovations.

The event hosts hundreds of artisan producers from across Italy, and aims to champion the country's pioneers and their dedication to gastronomic excellence and diversity.

Aldo Mazzocco, CEO of Bellavita said, “We already run a very successful programme at the show with talks from some of the finest Italian chefs and sommeliers from across Italy. We want to do more for retailers by giving them easy to digest trends information for 2018.

“We're really excited that we can now gather so much intelligence

about the market and get a rare insight into what people are buying through the digital footprints they leave and intelligence gathered through our in-house surveys. We will share this information with the press and visitors to the show. Ultimately, we can really help our visitors spot the next big thing in Italian cuisine.”

Saul Leese, marketing director said, “Bellavita is a glowing example of how an event company should work with its customers and visitors. The company has incredible passion, as you'd expect from an Italian company, which is half the battle won. I'm now formulating strategic plans for expansion of international events and I'm very fortunate to be working with some of the finest event teams in the market sector including UBM and ITE.”

New additions for this year's show include: a Bellavita Expo Bar Theatre with mixology

demonstrations, inspiring dishes for Generation X created by renowned chefs in the Bella Expo Food Theatre, roundtable panel trend discussions with wine and food hospitality and food retail leaders, an Innovation Zone where new products are brought together, and an Italian Piazza hospitality zone to enjoy a moment of relaxation. Alongside the new elements there will be the Bellavita Best UK Sommelier Villa Sandi Award and the Bellavita Expo Product Awards Programme.

Bellavita Expo has also announced plans for international expansion, with new trade shows heading to Austria, Germany, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and South America in the next three years.

Aldo Mazzocco, CEO at Bellavita said, “Having had such strong success for our shows in London, Warsaw, Chicago, Mexico City and Amsterdam, these dynamic and growing markets present excellent opportunities for Italy's leading artisan food and beverage producers, and will bring up the total number of Bellavita Expo events to 10 internationally.”

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PROMOTION

PIPERS CRISPS SPONSORS CRICKET'S NATIONAL VILLAGE CUP

Pipers Crisps has announced that it will be supporting village cricket through sponsorship of the National Village Cup, a competition open to village teams across the British Isles that has been a part of the cricketing calendar since 1972



To celebrate, the crisp brand is giving consumers the chance to win a Pipers Crisps branded deckchair, via an on-pack promotion.

From 1st April 2017, there will be 100 surprise cards included in random packs featuring the promotional labeling. If consumers find a card, they will be able to swap it for a Pipers deckchair.

For retailers, foodservice outlets, pubs and bars, the on-pack promotion will be supported by social media activity and PoS materials, including counter-top display units and beer mats.

Alongside the competition, Pipers is also supporting local communities and looking for the people who make a difference to them through organising activities like cricket teas. The events do not need to be just cricket-related, and can include helping at the local fair, organising litter-picking or doing any one of the hundreds of small tasks that make local communities tick.

Pipers Crisps is asking consumers to thank their 'Community Team Player' by nominating them on the Pipers' Facebook page, on Instagram or on Twitter using #pipersheroes. Pipers Crisps will choose 500 'Community Team Players' over the summer and each of them will receive a mixed eight-pack box of Pipers Crisps as a small 'thank you'.

Alex Albone, founder of Pipers Crisps said, "Retailers will be able to promote the competition in a number of ways. Full details about the competition, and how consumers can enter, will be printed on all of our 40g packs and 150g sharing packs throughout the summer, so it's important to be fully stocked and well-merchandised. We're also offering a special 'village cricket' counter display unit to promote the competition – ideally this should be located close to the till for maximum impact.

"We're also encouraging our retailers to get fully involved in the promotion by offering them a prize for the best cricket-themed display. Later in the season we'll be inviting our retailers to send us a picture of their cricket displays – the one we judge to be the best will win a set of Pipers deck chairs.

"When it comes to promoting their Community Team Player, we'd encourage retailers to start a conversation with their customers about the competition, explaining the opportunity consumers have of winning a deckchair of their own and also of nominating their Community Team Player. Our retailers frequently play an important, central role within their community – they're in an ideal position to nominate or suggest potential candidates for the heroes awards."



Deli, farm shop and food hall openings and expansions across the country



SECOND OUTLET FOR BILLINGTON'S
Billington's delicatessen in Lenzie, Scotland has opened a second Billington's Coffee House branch located three and a half miles away in Milton of Campsie.

Customers of the award-winning Lenzie-based delicatessen can

expect the same food selection, as well as freshly-ground coffee, ice cream, fresh breads and a Cakes by Carey section that offers made-to-order celebration cakes.

The Cakes by Carey offering is operated by Carey Gray, a business partner of Billington's Coffee House, alongside owners Mark and Susan Billington.



Mark Billington, co-owner of Billington's Coffee House said, "Sue and I met Carey in 2003 and have been very good friends ever since. A discussion over coffee one day resulted in her making the decision to leave her post of 10 years as a medical receptionist for the NHS to become partners in this new venture."



YARE VALLEY OILS OPENS SELF-SERVICE SHOP
Cold-pressed rapeseed oil producer Yare Valley Oils has opened a new unstaffed shop at its Norfolk-based farm.

Customers can purchase items using a self-service debit machine – with contactless and chip-and-pin methods available – as well as insert cash into a deposit money tube. The premises is monitored by CCTV.

As well as selling the Yare Valley Range of oils via self-serve Kilner drinks dispensers and pre-bottled options, the shop also stocks Yare Valley farm-reared beef, potatoes and all-natural lip balms, as well as locally-made produce including cheese, apple juice, local meats, crisps, jams, chutneys, chocolate and flour.

Glenn Sealey of Yare Valley Oils said, "We ultimately put our trust in our customers and have found that people have not abused the system

when they're treated with respect. The actual money our customers pay is also secure, as it's paid through a 'feed me' pipe that goes through the wall into a secure box. We also take card payments with the ease and security of contactless or chip-and-pin. It is a wonderful community around here and a wonderful place for walkers, bikers and people who swim at our timeshare pool. They get to stop at a real working farm with beautiful views of the valley, make use of our WiFi and grab themselves a cup of hot tea or coffee.

"Diversification is key these days, especially for farmers. It means that we can improve our margins, but at the same time offer a better price for the customer. Also, as we do not have to pay for staff, this means that we can pass on the savings to our customers. The shop is set in the beautiful Yare Valley, which means it's a desirable place to stop, and acts as a great showcase to sell our own produce."

LONDON'S EAST VILLAGE WELCOMES TED'S VEG
Family-owned greengrocer and vegetable supplier Ted's Veg has opened its doors in Stratford's East Village, the former Athlete's Village during the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Joining 25 other independent shops, bars and restaurants, the Ted's Veg farm-style shop is the first brick-and-mortar location of Ted and Kath Dawson's farming business, which has supplied

produce to wholesale markets across the country since 1999. The business now has 23 stalls across London, including one at Borough Market. The produce, including vegetables, fruit, salad and flowers, is grown on the family farm in Boston, Lincolnshire, and picked fresh every day.

Ted's Veg is committed to growing chemical-free crops and also aims to fight to eradicate food waste by providing local charities with edible but unsellable fruit and vegetables.

Ted Dawson, owner of Ted's Veg said, "We are very excited to be opening our first shop in East Village. We are a business centred around family and community, so we wanted to expand into a place where we could become part of a neighbourhood, and that is exactly what East Village is."

Richard Lewis, retail and events manager at East Village said, "We couldn't be happier that Ted's Veg has chosen East Village for its newest location. At East Village,



the wellbeing of our residents is very important to us and we were really impressed with the dedication and passion of Ted's Veg in providing fresh flowers, fruit and vegetables every day. They are also committed to tackling food waste by distributing the produce which they don't sell to other communities."





HOLD THE SUGAR

Refined white sugar is on the naughty step. Consumers – and their kids – are seeking lower sugar treats, says Sally-Jayne Wright, and we can help

WE'VE KNOWN FOR YEARS THAT TOO MANY SWEETS ROT YOUR TEETH AND MAKE YOU HYPER. WHY THE HOO-HA NOW?

Media coverage of the controversial soft drinks industry levy or 'sugar tax' – effective April 2018 – has raised awareness. We've learnt how much sugar is used – in breakfast cereals, mayonnaise, pasta sauces, soups and ready meals. Heinz traditional tomato ketchup, for example, contains 22.8g of sugar per 100g, which makes it a high sugar product according to the NHS.

WON'T THE FUSS BLOW OVER?

We don't think so. Parents are concerned how much sugar their children are swallowing. There are nine teaspoons of sugar in a cola – hence the tax.

There's a sugar smart app you can download free from Public Health England to scan barcodes and reveal total sugar content. If you don't know there are 57 cubes of sugar in a 440g jar of Nutella, your teenager will soon tell you.

It was the popularity of sweet, addictive Nutella that gave father-

of-two, Kevin Bath, the idea for Jim-Jams, a Great Taste Award-winning chocolate spread. He said: "I'm surprised how health conscious 12-13 year olds are. When I tell them that Jim Jams has 83% less total sugars than Nutella, and they taste how good it is, they go out and buy a jar for themselves, never mind asking mum to buy it."

LAUNCHED IN 2015, JIM JAMS IS SWEETENED WITH MALTITOL. WILL WE SEE MORE USE OF ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS?

We already are. Heinz launched lower sugar ketchup in August 2014, followed in May 2015 by 50%-less-sugar baked beans sweetened with stevia.

DOES ALL THIS MEAN THE SUGAR RUSH IS OVER?

Not at all. Consumers will continue to crave sweet treats; they just want them healthier. We loved Raw Millionaire Bites, dairy-free, gluten-free, vegan and refined sugar-free snacks from Livia's Kitchen. Expect 'a crumbly oat base covered with a

salted, gooey date caramel, topped with smooth, rich dark raw chocolate' in 200g sharing tubs, £4.99.

Sold at Whole Food Stores, Skinny Bakery's wares include Skinny sweet potato brownies, £2.99/85g made with 46% sweet potato plus dates.

At Partridges Saturday food market in southwest London, we came across entrepreneur, Emilia Dem, selling Wonder Cubes marshmallows sweetened with apple paste. Instagram is awash with such low-sugar bakes.

HOW CAN I MAKE THE LOW-SUGAR TREND WORK FOR SALES?

Look for 'refined sugar-free' and 'lower sugar' on packaging.

Help parents to indulge their kids with a clearer conscience. Try Minioti ice cream. Launched by two concerned mums, it's made with Jersey milk and sweetened with calorie-free Stevia, £4.99/500ml. We liked the Great Taste award-winning strawberry recipe.

Kantar and Nielsen data for 2015-2016 showed that while white sugar sales fell 21%, honey was up 8.9%, maple syrup 12.7% and agave syrup 19.10%. You'll please health conscious customers by stocking alternative natural sweeteners such as honey, coconut sugar, and carob, maple, date and agave syrups. Don't forget honey is not suitable for vegans. We love the chocolatey flavour and calcium content of carob syrup and predict increased demand for products such as Sweet Carob, a sesame and carob spread from Savvy Foods Ltd.

Dark chocolate should continue to do well because of cocoa's recognised health benefits. Look for lower sugar versions such as Hotel Chocolat's Less Sweet Sleekster selection or Cavalier Fairtrade Dark 85% chocolate with stevia, £1.69, 85g at Waitrose.

YES, BUT, WOULDN'T IT BE EASIER JUST TO EAT FULL FAT BROWNIES VERY OCCASIONALLY?

Life doesn't work like that.

“ You'll please health conscious customers by stocking alternative natural sweeteners such as honey, coconut sugar, and carob, maple, date and agave syrups ”



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When I was 20, I was travelling through Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan and became ill with hepatitis. That's when I realised what a difference diet could make to health. I was later inspired by a trip to a recently-opened macrobiotic restaurant in New York and decided to open one in London. If I had carried on running a restaurant I'd be dead by now – they're such hard work! In the restaurant we were serving foods like brown rice, miso and edible seaweed, which our customers couldn't get elsewhere. We were quite innovative; we intercepted brown rice on its way to rice mills to be made into white rice, and sourced the Japanese products from a family business in Croydon which supplied essential Japanese basics to embassies. It's hard to imagine now, 50 years later, but we were the only place in Britain where you could buy foods like sushi, tempura and miso soup. The press had a lot of fun when we opened! Our customers kept asking if we could package up some brown rice or miso for them, which became a bit of an annoyance for the chef, so we set up a retail operation in which we sold straightforward organic food. It was the first actual food store as opposed to health food shop. The business developed from there into wholesale and manufacturing, and gradually the public and industry woke up to the possibilities of organic.

I've long worked with the Soil Association, first as treasurer from 1990-2002, then chairman for six years, and then I moved across to chair the certification side for a few years and am still a director. The Soil Association had been around since 1947 and was made up largely of farmers or dieticians and nutritionists; there was no real commercial aspect to it. If you were an organic farmer and grew 100 tonnes of wheat, you would sell it to a miller who would either mill it as animal feed or for baking – it would lose its organic identity. We started buying wheat from farmers and grinding it then baking it into bread, so farmers could see all their efforts to be organic resulting in an organic finished product – that was the beginning of organic branding. My brother, Gregory, sat on the first organic standards committee which was created so that the practices were safeguarded. Then it was a couple of pages, but now I imagine it's more like 200! Whole food shops at that time, the early 1970s, were rather scruffy, with beans and grains on the floor and long-haired staff not wearing hairnets, which the Soil Association was a little uncomfortable with, but they gradually realised that the way to grow the profile of organic food was by one customer at a time.

People are funny. If someone goes into a shop to buy a Gucci handbag, a Primark handbag, a Marks & Spencer handbag or a John Lewis handbag, they're quite happy to pay 10 times as much for a product that flatters their self esteem or suits their outfit. It's the



THE INTERVIEW: CRAIG SAMS

Forward-thinker, innovator and founder of some of the UK's most respected brands

same with cars. A Fiat Uno will get you from A to B, but people still buy Aston Martins. When it comes to food, you get people in Chelsea who will travel to Battersea to get better-priced food at a Morrisons supermarket. It's as if people put more value into what they put around their bodies than what they put into their bodies. One of the big obstacles to our mission is the way the farming system is structured. We launched a product in the 90s called Super Spread which didn't contain hydrogenated fat, but the Government taxed imported coconut and palm oil to make sure that it would always be more expensive than hydrogenated rapeseed oil. It was Government policy that drove down the quality of food, by making it uneconomic to use a healthier fat in a product.

If people had to pay for the carbon footprint of the food they ate, organic food would be cheaper than non-organic – then who would buy non-organic? People are externalising the carbon cost of what they do, and that's changing slowly, but the Paris and Marrakech climate talks are leading to carbon pricing in food. Britain's on the case – whatever happens as a result of Brexit, we've committed to a more universal carbon pricing regime which includes food and transportation as well as manufacturing and energy. As this takes hold it will change the way people farm, and will benefit the countryside, too.

I'm a compulsive innovator, and not afraid to fail, but I'm happy to say that I've wracked up a few successes. Everything we did with

Whole Earth was relating to helping people's inner metabolism working well. My new project, Bio Char, a form of finely ground charcoal, does the same thing in the soil that high fibre foods do in the gut – it increases the population of the beneficial microbes that are part of the plant's immune system and so helps avoid disease. The products created using this still won't be fully organic, but the growers will start to see the way towards it. Organic tomatoes are perhaps 6% of the market, and now the other 94% are showing an interest in what we do, which is fantastic as it means that we're driving change at the production end rather than pulling organic products through individual consumer choice. I'm also working on Gusto Cola – a range of organic, low-calorie colas – which so far is kicking Coca-Cola in the shins. If they decide to produce organic Coke we'll have achieved quite a result!

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

INSPIRATION...

A German philosopher called Schopenhoeer said "all truth passes through three stages: first it is ridiculed, then it is opposed, and then it is accepted as being self-evident". That always reassures me when I think I may be mad. If it doesn't work out, it is buried quietly in a little coffin named 'Craig Sams' Ideas Which Didn't Work Out! Also, one from Zen macrobiotics: "The master in the art of living makes little distinction between his work and his play, his labour and his leisure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation, his love and his religion; he hardly knows which is which". I'm quite happy to continue on that basis. If I don't enjoy doing something, I don't do it. In general I try to steer clear of mind-damaging activity.

LESSONS LEARNED...

The biggest lesson I've learned is that it doesn't matter what your margins are, it doesn't matter what your sales are, if you can't pay your bills you're gone. I didn't really understand cash flow until I'd been in business for around 15 years. I didn't really worry about it when I was working in a restaurant, because as soon as you sell your product you're getting the money. In retail, you carry a bit of stock but that's topped up every week so you can be profitable and be cash positive as well. When you're manufacturing and wholesaling and carrying lots of stock – lots of which you're paying for before you've sold it – you can get into trouble. We got into a situation in 1982 where our balance sheet was fine but we couldn't pay our suppliers. Coming to understand that was transformative for me.

“ I'm a compulsive innovator, and not afraid to fail, but I'm happy to say that I've wracked up a few successes ”

MAKING IT WORK

One of my brands, Whole Earth, started as Harmony, the retail offshoot from our restaurant. Our first price list included things like Japanese seaweed, brown rice, aduki beans, sesame seeds, tahini and miso and patchouli essential oils, which gives some idea as to who our target customer was! As our business expanded internationally, we renamed Harmony to Whole Earth. These days the brand is famous for peanut butter, which was first launched in 1993 under the Harmony brand. By the late 80s we

were the second best-seller in the UK, behind SunPat.

Our big break was when we were on BBC Newsnight for about three minutes; it was the first Mind & Body exhibition at Earls Court, and we'd moved our entire peanut butter plant down there – it was very popular, not least because in a sea of essential oils and crystals, our rather archaic machinery really drew attention.

We were putting the peanut butter directly into jars and selling it, and within a month were in Safeway and Waitrose and have never not been since. In 1989 Nestle took over

SunPat and came out with a product called Whole Nut, in which they used palm oil instead of hydrogenated fat, and spent £5 million to blow us out of the market. That's when we realised the power of our brand, because their product went nowhere despite all of the money they'd spend on television advertising and the like. They quietly withdrew the product four years later.

The other items we sold were gradually being commoditised, so we had handed them over by 1982.

If you bought brown rice in Britain anywhere in Britain in 1975, it had

come through our warehouse, but by 1980 there were loads of wholefood companies selling similar products. It was hard to get anywhere with these items and when we approached Tesco with our brown rice, they went to their white rice supplier, Whitworths, to produce brown rice too. We moved on and decided to focus on peanut butter, and Green & Blacks came about as a result of this: the situation with Nestlé scared the pants off us and we were desperately scouring the world for supplies of organic peanuts. We found some organic farmers in Togo in West Africa who produced really tasty

peanuts, but they were suffering from aflatoxin (a mould residue) so we rejected them, but the french agronomist who was working with them told me that they grew cocoa beans too. We had a sample of 70% chocolate made up from those beans, and our minds were set. Whole Earth had always had a no-sugar focus so we had to create a new brand for this, and my girlfriend, Josephine Fairley – who soon became my wife – came up with the name Green & Blacks. We launched just that one product, 70% dark chocolate, and went from that to the range you see today.

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publications. Berating them won't do you any favours, but striking up a genuine conversation might lead to you being positioned on the radars of their audiences.

PERSONALISED MARKETING

Personalised marketing is an approach many larger companies employ that allows them to target different consumers with a multitude of creative content in one go. For instance, the material can be tailored to reach different audiences by analysing demographics, locations, times, interests or purchase history. So instead of one set television advertisement broadcasted to millions of viewers, you can have varying promotional material popping up as an advertisement on websites that can either target teenagers, an older audience, millennials – the list goes on – thus catering to their tastes and making your brand more engaging to them.

NEUROMARKETING

This approach is designed to target the unconscious desires of consumers and is making waves in the large-scale marketing world. Mainly the tool of major agencies that look after multinational brands, it applies the principles of neuroscience and studies consumers' sensorimotor, cognitive and affective response to advertising and marketing stimuli.

An example of this would be using eye-tracking technology to measure consumer response to advertising, with early feedback showing that viewers connect to adverts more when they star a person in them, especially images or video content that includes a baby. The same goes with the effective use of packaging, with brightly coloured or attractive designs holding consumers' attention for longer than muted packaging. Major brands have also conducted research that shows that matte packaging connects with viewers more effectively than shiny wrapping does. While it might be beyond your company's budget to go down this route, it's definitely worthwhile researching these findings and thinking about implementing them into your marketing strategy.



“A lot of times, people don't know what they want until you show it to them,” Apple's Steve Jobs once opined. While this might come across a bit on the conceited side, the sentiment certainly rings true. It's a powerful philosophy to follow in modern times, when food and drink producers can capitalise on the likes of digital marketing and social media to put their brand in front of potential new customers with ease.

While your brand might just be finding its footing in the marketing world, it's a wise option to break down and understand the different techniques that advertising and digital marketing firms utilise in order to maximise exposure.

CONTENT MARKETING

What was once perceived as a small mechanism of the marketing machine is now one of the most integral elements of successfully promoting brands. Marketing guru Seth Godin once said that, “content marketing is the only marketing left”, and he has a point. More and more brands find this approach

Marketing can appear to be a confusing world to navigate from the outside, but a well-executed strategy can open doors to a whole new audience

hugely rewarding as it is ideal in promoting interactivity with potential customers.

In a nutshell, content marketing encompasses creating and sharing online material such as videos blogs and social media posts. This approach doesn't promote a brand in an throwaway manner, but stimulates interest in its products or services via useful material. Examples would be instructional videos hosted on YouTube that walk a viewer through novel ways to cook with your product. It's subtle, original content that doesn't resort to in-your-face techniques.

This can work out costly, though, so it is important to establish what can be outsourced and when content can be created in-house. For instance, if you have a member of staff with strong copywriting credentials, then keep it in-house. If nobody in the team

boasts proficient graphic design experience, consider hiring a specialist. Little more can put off consumers than poorly designed and executed content, and that 'unfollow' button is just a quick click away.

Maintaining a regularly updated blog is the perfect example of organic and affordable content marketing. You don't need to have access to the latest expensive technology to create one, with most website domains incorporating a blogging feature. You could set up a WordPress account, upload images and post blogs all simply using your smartphone. Shouting about the latest company developments, new product launches or just documenting the day-to-day creation of your food or drink products gives you not only engaging content to share, but it's simple, quick and cheap, too.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Pinpointing key influencers – those with a huge social media fan base – relevant to your field is a good starting point. Interacting, or even forging a working relationship, with them can help bolster brand awareness, and visibility, and boosts target-based marketing. A prime example of this is food box delivery service, HelloFresh and its recent partnership with Jamie Oliver. Identified as the most influential person in food by advertising agency Telegraph Hill in its Britain's 50 Most Influential Foodies list, this relationship immediately brought the company into the public eye.

Not every company has the financial muscle to pair up with the likes of Jamie Oliver, though. On a smaller-scale, it does you no harm connecting with influencers, other food and drink brands, bloggers, celebrity chefs and relevant

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Take stock with our new food and drink round-up

FireFly Barbecue Range Undergoes Redesign



Sauce, rubs and marinade producer FireFly Barbecue has rolled out a new re-branded design across its entire range.

The company is a small home-based operation that has been mainly focused on selling stock at food shows, but founder Noel Bateman wanted to rebrand the range in order to attract prospective buyers and get the products listed in shops.

Noel Bateman, managing director said, "It was important that we utilised the same brand equities of the firefly and barbecue symbols to create the new identity. We wanted to maintain its recognition but update the way the identity was presented.

"The new design for the identity is simplified yet retains the brand's sense of fun and accessibility to appeal to everyone that is looking for more flavour from their food. The new Firefly is used to proudly present each product variant's own characteristics and heat levels using a combination of rich colour, typography and descriptions to create strong differentiation across the range of all products."

fireflybbq.eu



Great British Biscotti Co. Expands Range

Dorset-based The Great British Biscotti Co. has rolled out its latest snack and gift packs. The 30g snack packs are positioned to take on the growing on-the-go market and come in a range of savoury flavours, including Chorizo & Parmesan, Parmesan & Fennel and Indian Spice.

The gift packs are available in two versions, including a Sweet mixed pack that contains one each of the 100g-sized Simply Almond, Belgian Chunky Choc and Honey, Lemon &

Ginger, and a Savoury mixed pack that features Chorizo & Parmesan, Parmesan & Fennel and Indian Spice products.

Paul Rostand, director of Great British Biscotti Co. said, "The reason we wanted to release the gift pack format was to offer a product that is suitable to buy as a special gift for presents. It also allows customers to try some of the different varieties, rather than just one single flavour.

"They are a great addition for delis because they offer their customers

something new and will encourage customers to consider their outlets as also being a destination to buy gifts, in addition to speciality food."

The brand has also unveiled new flavours at this year's IFE, with savoury options Wild Garlic & Cheddar, Jalapeño & Cheddar, Sun-dried Tomato & Olives and Seaweed & Cracked Peppercorn, and sweet varieties Belgian Chocolate & Orange and White Chocolate, Cranberry & Pistachio.

greatbritishbiscotti.co.uk



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New Cider for Fowery Valley

Cornish cider maker Fowey Valley Cider has announced the release of its gold-blush Castledore variety.

Fowey Valley describes it as having "a very pretty, natural gold-blush hue and clean, crisp, medium-dry taste". It is produced using sharp and sweet apples from orchards within a 40-mile radius of the apple press at the Fowey Valley Cider cidery, located on the banks of the River Fowey.

Claire Vickers, marketing manager said, "This is the second release by Barrie Gibson of Fowey Valley Cider; his Sparkling Vintage 2012 was an outstanding, award-winning success. Barrie has rekindled many local cider-making traditions since he first started making cider 20 years ago, and he only uses these traditional methods and local apples in his cider making. The Fowey Valley was once famous for its orchards in times gone by, attracting Victorian day trippers to see the apple blossom in spring.

"This is a lightly sparkling, easy-drinking cider that also matches well with food; it's perfect for lighter, slightly warmer evenings."
foweyvalleycider.co.uk



Dartington Dairy Enters Speciality Market

Dartington Dairy from Devon has entered the fine food market, making its range of goat's milk ice cream available to the UK.

Produced by the farm's own herd of goats, farmers Jon and Lynne Perkin started to create the ice cream after founding Dartington Dairy on the site of a traditional dairy parlour.

Flavours include Madagascar Vanilla, Gin, Elderflower & Honeycomb, Dark Belgian Chocolate, Salted Caramel, and Garden Mint Chocolate Chip.

Martin Davidson, commercial director of Dartington Dairy said,

"Our goat's milk has a truly rich, clean and fresh taste and is a very bright white, denoting its purity. We use an innovative method of separating curds to make our ice cream, which gives it an extremely creamy texture and taste, but naturally reduces the fat content without the need for additives.

"There are not many goat's milk ice cream producers nationally, not to mention locally, so we saw a niche and opportunity to give the discerning consumer something different that's very much a true flavour sensation."
dartingtondairy.co.uk

Hawkshead Releases Black Garlic Ketchup

The Hawkshead Relish Company has unveiled a Black Garlic Ketchup as its latest condiment innovation.

The flavour of black garlic is created by baking whole, fresh garlic bulbs for 40 days at a low temperature to create a rich, smooth and balsamic-tasting flavour. Hawkshead then purées the garlic cloves by hand and combines them with fresh tomatoes, olive oil and Anglesey Sea Salt to produce the ketchup.

Maria Whitehead, co-owner of The Hawkshead Relish Company said, "The flavour of black garlic is exquisite and relatively new to the British palate, although seen on some adventurous menus. We wanted to bring this tremendous innovation to the general public in a way that can be easily appreciated and enjoyed! We've made it in a way that the unadventurous will just love as a dynamic dip for chips, while others will delight in its versatility in adding luscious flavour in cooking and preparation."

hawksheadrelish.com



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Cornwall's Trevarrian creamery is justly famed for its award-winning Camembert, Brie and Goat's Cheese. But it takes more than the richest local milk, a touch of Cornish cream and generations of know-how to craft soft whites of this quality, it also calls for pride and dedication to traditional recipes.



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GEORGE PAUL OF BRADBURY'S

“Rediscovering the White Knight”

In past articles I have noted the demise of some sectors of our regional cheese heritage, most notably Farmhouse Cheshire.

In the same graveyard are other names and types I only ever heard about, such as a traditional Derby cheese, which I last saw in 20 kilo blocks more than 30 years ago, looking like mild Cheddar, and far from the original traditional round wheel shape I believe.

White Stilton is one that has slipped too from the eyeline, and I must of course declare an interest, albeit that it's not something exclusive.

I recall white Stilton at Christmas in my younger days. Sharp, fresh, tangy and in the true Northern tradition, it was enjoyed with rich fruit cake, fresh apples or even crumbled on hot apple pie. Christmas was simply not Christmas without those extras that sat around our Christmas feast, including dates from Egypt, satsuma from Spain and, of course, chocolate coins.

White Stilton is a uniquely difficult cheese to make, produced as it is over two days, and where the pressing of the curd in the hoop is forbidden by the strict PDO regulations that surround this white version and its more illustrious blue offspring.

Probably more than 300 years has passed since it is thought that Blue Stilton evolved from its white mother, and written provable testimony is limited; in all probability Blue Stilton was an accident of creation.

After all, without refrigeration, with open texture and doubtful hygiene techniques, it's likely it blueed just naturally, and the story of the Bell Inn in Stilton, the stage coaches to London and the journeys of great writers acclaiming Blue Stilton carried that to well-deserved fame, whilst White Stilton has slipped into the shadows.

Maybe the crumbly, fractured texture made it less popular on counters as domination of this became the province of multiples in the 90s and deskilling, waste and

head office thinking spelt the death sentence of a number of formerly great British favourites. Doubtless the mass prepack brigades found this crumbly icon a hard product to master and just as easy to sideline.

White Stilton was possibly viewed as grandad's cheese, and was wrapped up in the consumer's mind with whether one liked Blue Stilton; all added to the lack of momentum.

A new lease of life arrived in the early 70s, when some enterprising individual thought to add apricots to White Stilton; the first leader of modern additive British cheese arrived from Millway, I believe. That stellar advantage has been steadily eroded, which is a pity as White Stilton is quite simply still the best carrier of sweetness of any crumbly cheese types.

Maybe as a pedigree PDO of some standing, the higher base cost, and indeed the actual erratic nature of supply made it easier for mass-produced cheaper types (Wensleydale et al) made anywhere throughout the UK to steal that advantage in additive cheese. That very limited band of dual makers of both white and Blue Stilton know full well the making challenge around this distinct cheese.

I do predict that White Stilton

will be back, whether in its home market or even in export ones, as this lost regional variety recovers its rightful heritage. It may have to modernise and be creative to reach new audiences, but there are several innovative makers in this sector who will come again to new markets; certainly Long Clawson and Shirevale are working hard down that road.

It is generally said that a prophet is never revered in his own land, and the decline of White Stilton's reputation in UK markets is in stark contrast to the recognition that it enjoys in export markets, where alternative base types have not yet overwhelmed its preference from many buyers, and in the USA in particular where it's readily recognised.

In common with many smaller types that frequently are shunned by the major retail players, it may have to seek new markets in food service, export and online. White Stilton will need to innovate and create a new identity for a new generation of buyers, and when it's again recognised and recovered to its rightful place, it may at least have a full sale and order position in a new dispersed market that will ensure it's not as vulnerable in the future. Arise the new white knight.

“ It is generally said that a prophet is never revered in his own land, and the decline of White Stilton's reputation in UK markets is in stark contrast to the recognition that it enjoys in export markets ”



ANDY SWINACOE, THE COURTYARD DAIRY

“Cheesemongering today”

Cheesemongering in the UK is stronger than it has been for some time. 20 years ago finding a good cheesemonger was nigh on impossible, with Neal's Yard Dairy and Paxton & Whitfield holding the fort. But since then people have become more educated and interested in food. On top of this many staff has come up through these companies to set up by themselves. And so as a direct result of these two factors there has been a rise of good new cheesemongers springing up. Operating at the top of the game and selling great cheese are Buchanan's, London Cheesemonger and Jericho, to name but a few.

I think that is positive in many ways – it improves the places people

can buy good cheese, allows a greater number of farmers to be supported as there are more outlets to sell cheese, and it also raises the game of other retailers who see how other people do it and hopefully adopt their practices and improve their cheese range. On top of this, many of these retailers can talk to each other, share ideas and ask questions. Hence the quality of cheese and the dedication towards farmhouse cheese improves.

However, an independent small cheesemonger is always going to face challenges. Aside from the rise in costs this year (living wage, business rates and auto-enrolment pensions) there are also constant

changes to the cheese market. More independent farmhouse cheeses is positive but the larger producers have now seen the growth in this market and started to market lines and products specifically at this artisan trend (packaged and labelled as such) which in reality are made to an industrial scale so don't have the same provenance and are cheaper. Many of them are tasty, too. Then it can become about price, and if these cheeses are 80% of the quality but only 60% of the price of a proper farmhouse cheese, and without the variance, the lines start to become blurred and it is difficult for those cheesemongers who champion traditional cheese to compete. They don't have the marketing might, and in the consumer's eyes price is still a dominant factor. Many of these cheeses eventually end up in a supermarket at some stage, and then the point of difference for why an independent should stock them is well and truly lost.

That's why, for me, there is still a big part to play in educating the consumer about the true story of their cheese, so when you scratch away at the story it holds up, rather

than just being a brand.

As supermarkets have also cottoned onto the rise in interest of artisan and farmhouse cheese, so they have improved their game. Consequently, many of them stock some very good cheeses, and not just the premium supermarkets. CoOp sell Von Mühlhelen Gruyère and even my local Tesco sells Langres (which is from the exact the same producer as a national cheese wholesaler who specialises in the independent trade). To compete with this is very difficult, which is why to be successful independent cheesemonger nowadays I do think you have to have product which is even a cut above this, and to know lots about it, and to sell it in tip-top condition. It might sound simple but I would argue a lot of the time the cheese turned over faster in the premium supermarkets will be in better condition than that left in the counter of a deli and not looked after for two weeks.

These challenges are very real, and unless you can offer better cheese the customer will simply continue to buy from the supermarket.

“ These challenges are very real, and unless you can offer better cheese the customer will simply continue to buy from the supermarket ”

Cheese Talk

New retail perspectives from industry experts

News, opinion and comment from dairy insiders

Great British Cheese Awards Back for Second Year

Following last year's launch of the Great British Cheese Awards, with over 7,500 people voting for their favourite cheeses, retailers and producers, the award organisers Great British Chefs and Peter's Yard have unveiled plans "to make the second year even greater".

The Great British Cheese Awards were launched to celebrate the best of British cheese produced and distributed by independent cheesemakers and retailers, with the awards differing from others as they encourage the general public to vote for their favourites.

Entries for the 2017 awards open on 3rd May, with retailers and producers having until 12th June to complete the free-to-enter online application form. Voting then opens to the general public who have

until 12th August to cast their votes which will determine producers and retailers shortlisted for an award. A panel of judges will come together to taste and judge the overall category winners.

Ollie Lloyd, CEO and founder of food website Great British Chefs said, "We launched The Great British Cheese Awards last year with the objective of producing a catalogue of great artisan cheese and to also discover up-and-coming cheesemakers. The response we received was way above expectation and we are grateful to the remarkable support from producers, retailers and especially the general public."

The overall category winners will be announced at an awards ceremony to be held in London on 11th October. To enter the awards visit greatbritishcheeseawards.com

Entries for Britain's Best Young Cheesemonger Now Open



The British Cheese Awards 2017 has announced that entries for its Britain's Best Young Cheesemonger category have opened.

The Young Cheesemonger 2017 competition is open to cheesemongers under the age of 30 and criteria includes knowing all cheese varieties, how to care for them and understanding how they are made.

Cheesemongers who are interested in taking part in the competition can download the entry form from the British

Cheese Awards' website (britishcheeseawards.com). The entry form consists of a brief history about the entrants' work in cheese and a response to the following question: 'You have £20 to shop for a cheeseboard for six people – which British cheeses would you buy?' The closing date for submitting completed entry forms is 19th April 2017.

Judges from the British Cheese Awards committee will go on to select eight finalists from the entries received, who will be asked to attend the competition on 1st June 2017 at

the Royal Bath & West Show.

On the day finalists will take part in three rounds. Round one includes a cut and wrap exercise where they will have to apply the technique to different weights of cheese by sight with no use of weighing scales. Round two is centred around identification, where contestants will need to taste and identify a number of unmarked cheeses. The third and final round involves a Mastermind-style quiz about British cheese. The winner will be announced later on at the same day.

The competition is part of the British Cheese Awards 2017, a pre-eminent cheese event in the UK and a celebration of British cheese. The awards take place on 31st May 2017 at the Royal Bath & West Show in Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

Peter Mitchell, chairman of the British Cheese Awards said, "We're delighted to welcome this competition back for its second year at the British Cheese Awards, thanks to the generous support from Rowcliffe. It's an important competition for the British cheese industry as it promotes the key role of cheesemongers whilst also engaging with younger generations on the wonderful world of cheese. I'm very much looking forward to reading the entry forms, helping to select the finalists and to watching the competition on the day."

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New Cheesemonger for Bristol's CARGO 2

The Bristol Cheesemonger is the latest business to join CARGO 2, a retail hub in Bristol constructed of converted shipping containers.

The Bristol Cheesemonger is a small independent business specialising in local and UK territorial cheeses. Building a strong

relationship with dairies and farms, it prides itself on going straight to the source to collect local and seasonal cheeses from within the West Country.

The CARGO development is an independent retail and restaurant hub located in Bristol's

new Harbourside Quarter. The other retailers joining The Bristol Cheesemonger are Gopal's Curry Shack, an Indian street food eatery, and Brace & Browns, a bar and kitchen.

Rosie Morgan, owner of The Bristol Cheesemonger said, "As the business owner, I am excited about the new opportunities moving to CARGO will bring my business, as well as being surrounded by such a variety of small independent retailers."

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PETER'S YARD

AHDB Dairy Board Appoints Two New Members

Mary Quicke, owner of Somerset-based Quicke's, joins Oliver Hall as new board members appointed to the AHDB Dairy board. They replace Tom Rawson and Jim Baird, whose terms of office ended on 31st March 2017.

Mary owns Quicke's, a family farming and cheese-making company with 550 crossbred cows. Most of the milk produces award-winning traditional clothbound cheese, with around 40 per cent of the cheese exported to the US and Australia. Oliver is based in Scotland, running a 300 cow spring calving

unit, while acting as an advisor to a number of dairy businesses. He also co-founded Evolution Farming, a multi-site dairy business milking 1,400 cows in the UK.

Gwyn Jones, chairman of AHDB Dairy said, "I would like to pay to tribute to the retiring board members Tom and Jim and thank them for their hard work and dedication; they were not easy to replace. It is important to maintain the high standards and diversity on the board and I am delighted with the depth and breadth of experience the new members bring. I would like

to welcome Mary and Oliver to the AHDB Dairy board. The industry is fortunate to have such high-caliber board members who are willing to put their time and effort into preparing the dairy industry for the challenge ahead."

Mary Quicke said, "Farming will be challenging in the transition post-Brexit – AHDB is best placed to support all farmers to deal with that transition. With the market information, knowledge, exchange, market development and business support, I am delighted and honoured to be a board member."

Industry Gathers for Inaugural Academy of Cheese Course



The founding committee of the Academy of Cheese hosted a Level One course on 30th March at Westminster College to initiate affiliated members into the organisation.

The day's training was attended by industry patrons, retailers, cheesemakers, wholesalers and potential training providers, all of whom successfully passed the end-of-course assessment.

The Academy of Cheese is a not for profit organisation that aims

to set the standard for developing and assessing the professional skill and understanding of cheese and elevate the role of all of those working in the cheese supply chain. The long-term objective is to promote cheese quality, provenance and range to a wide audience of cheesemongers, producers, chefs and enthusiasts.

Two years in development, the organisation has been financially supported by businesses including Bradburys, Harvey & Brockless,

Cropwell Bishop Creamery, Wyke Farms and more. Many of the patrons were at Westminster College to see the outcome and to trial Level One of the programme.

Kiran Dyer, marketing manager at Harvey & Brockless said, "From my induction as an Associate of the Academy of Cheese, I can already see how invaluable certification will be. Not just for the individuals that enrol but throughout the industry, and ultimately to consumers as well. Recognised industry standards provide an excellent opportunity to inspire talented people. This will help to build a stronger future for cheese – so that anyone who works in the sector can demonstrate their commitment and passion.

"Equally, consumers will become better informed about what they are buying and tasting. As knowledge is disseminated, standards are raised and people grow in confidence when talking about cheese. It's truly an exciting time to be part of this thriving sector."

Students are expected to be able to sit the Level One stage of the programme in December 2017, with the further structure of the course still in progress.

JUSTIN TUNSTALL
RETAIL
CONSULTANT



"Avoiding the 'b' word"

As a teenager in the early 1970s, prior to my first 'dinner party', parental advice didn't just cover which cutlery to use. I was also briefed to avoid discussion of politics, religion or money. Perhaps that's why I became a music, and later, a cheese bore. Of course this advice was completely misplaced when I became a student and such subjects were the very stuff of late night debate, over Nescafé and Gingernuts.

But do such topics belong in casual conversations with customers in a shop? If we refuse to discuss money we're not going to continue trading for long, so that needs to be transferred to the 'acceptable' list. In a cheese shop, religious discussion is perhaps best limited to the monastic traditions surrounding the affinage of washed rind cheeses. Politics? Ah, there's a challenge.

I have always taken the view that nailing one's personal colours to the retail mast is permissible for sporting teams – and maybe, if that's your thing, reality show contestants – but showing support for a political cause tends to alienate all those of a different hue. Some shops might still be viable if half their customers no longer felt that it was 'their' place, but I believe most of us can't afford the risk.

The current political elephant in the room, mention of which is avoided at all costs, is undoubtedly Brexit. Around these parts I know of only one shop that proclaimed its allegiance to either side: a second-hand bookshop in Bridport which still has 'Remain' posters up. I thought it might be shorthand for remaindered stock, but no, they're happy to foster lively and polarised debate in

store. I feel that would run counter to my proclaimed aim of selling more cheese.

Nonetheless, the effect of the Brexit vote will have impact on the cheese world and customers will be asking questions that lead inexorably to that taboo subject. I can skirt round a lot of them by laying the blame at exchange rate shifts – if a punter's holiday in Tuscany is now costing a lot more in sterling, then they can connect the dots and accept that their lump of Pecorino may cost more, too. British cheese may be more affordable over the channel and other seas as a result of the cheaper pound. That may put some cheeses out of stock, as supply is diverted to new markets – and undoubtedly entrepreneurs starting new cheese dairies or adding equipment will be paying more for that as most kit comes from mainland Europe, adding to their costs – and in time, ours, too.

Where's the opportunity in these uncertain times? Consumers may be having an attitudinal shift towards British-made produce. If neither the food miles concept, nor the terroir argument managed to lure them towards British cheeses up to now, perhaps jingoism and cost will do the trick in the future. It's up to us to suggest a domestic alternative when a shopper winces at the new price of the Continental cheese they have purchased for years. June's British Cheese Awards will celebrate the best of our locally-made cheeses – I have always made a point of looking at the medal winners with a view to stocking them.

On balance I think I'll still avoid talk of Brexit wherever possible and wait to see what transpires as the drama continues to unfold.

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burtschips.com



MANGAJO DRINKS

This real brewed craft iced tea company pairs green tea with a range of juices including lemon, pomegranate, and goji and acai berries. Refreshing and low in calories, they contain no added sugar or sweeteners, artificial flavourings, colouring or preservatives. Plentiful in antioxidants, they are a great healthier option to standard soft drinks.

mangajo.co.uk



NO-NO FLATBREADS

"The UK's original baked flatbreads are made from 100% natural ingredients," says Marion Lebreton, brand manager at Empire Bespoke Food. "The brand offers a range of delicious family-friendly flavours which complement all types of dip, like hummus or guacamole, and are ideal with salmon or cheese. No-No meets the growing demand for healthier snacking options in the most versatile and delicious way!"

nonoflatbreads.co.uk





HARI GHOTRA SPICE KITS

The Hari Ghotra Tikka and Korma spice kits are a picnic must for lovers of spice, as they offer great flavour and make marinating meat, fish or vegetables for your picnic easy and delicious. Each pack contains a combination of spices with easy-to-follow instructions and lots of recipe suggestions.
harighotra.co.uk



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odysea.com



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patgormanpies.co.uk



GINGER BAKERS LEMON & POLENTA CAKE

"We are lucky to be nestled in the stunning Lake District where we use a plentiful supply of local, natural and carefully-sourced ingredients," says Lisa Smith, founder. "Our Lemon & Polenta tray cake is perfect for sharing on lazy summer picnics, and not only is it deliciously moist and fragrant but it's gluten-free too, so can be enjoyed by all cake lovers."
gingerbakers.co.uk



Cutting cheese well is incredibly important to a cheesemonger. A good cutting from a fantastic, artisan cheese makes for such a great visual and eating experience. If you can't do this well why would a customer come to you for their cheese rather than go to a supermarket?

Cutting cheese well is important as it impacts on different aspects of your business. These include the following:

Customer satisfaction - knowing how to cut cheese to the weight that the customer has requested is important for the simple reason of pleasing your customer. They are not going to want to take home a piece of Cheddar that you have cut that is 550g when all they requested was 200g. Also, showing customers that you know how to competently cut the cheese that you stock not only shows you know what you are doing, it also plants the seed of expertise in your customers' minds.

Stock management and the bottom line - The first piece of advice that I was given when training to be a cheesemonger was only open a cheese when you need it. As soon as it is open it loses moisture, the shelf life and the quality deteriorates and you effectively lose stock. It's a similar process when you look at when and how often you cut cheese. Only cut cheese as and when it is needed - so that you maintain its quality and its longevity. Also by cutting cheese to order it means that you don't have lots of small pieces of cheese to sell, which is bad as smaller cuts of cheese have a much shorter shelf life and they look really unattractive on a cheese counter. Its counter intuitive but often its better, if a customer is looking for a small piece of cheese, to cut a small piece from a larger piece rather than to split a small piece in two.

Staff training

Staff training on how to cut cheese is absolutely vital. Proper training helps the profitability of your business. We carry out a number of different training activities to help



HOW TO: CUT CHEESE

Dan Bliss, retail manager for Paxton & Whitfield's flagship Jermyn Street shop, gives us her low-down on the essentials of cutting cheese

the team not only on how to cut cheese properly but also how to maintain their cheese cutting skills.

These are:

Team-training half hours:

We hold weekly sessions where we focus on various topics and skills. How to cut cheese is one of the regular sessions that we run. It gives new and existing members of the team time to learn, talk and improve their skills. We also use the training to get the team to check for faults and blemishes in texture, colour, odour, as well as checking best before dates etc. They then have the knowledge that if the cheese is not looking its best

not to sell it.

Cheese cutting competition:

We also run an internal competition every year to find the best, most accurate cheese cutter in the shop. It's a really fun event, gets everyone motivated to want to do their best and it's also an opportunity for the team to have some fun together whilst promoting an important message.

On the job:

Ultimately the best training is on the job as there is nothing like working on a cheese counter on a busy day to help you focus on getting your cheese cutting right and serving customers.

Do you have any equipment care tips?

Yes, the most important one is to keep everything as clean and tidy as possible - from the knives you are using, the cheese counter you are cutting on and the actual cheese itself. This avoids cross contamination and it makes how you are serving your customers more attractive.

Don't use blunt knives to cut cheese, either get the knife sharpened or replace the knives you are using. Using blunt knives doesn't create a good cut and damages the surface of the cheese, which is not good for how it looks and also for its longevity.

GRUYÈRE - THE CHEESE, THE TOWN, AND THE REGION - ARE NAMED AFTER A CRANE, OR GRUE IN FRENCH, WHICH PURPORTEDLY LANDED ON THE SHOULDER OF THE WARLORD WHO FOUNDED THE CIVILIZATION. YOU CAN SEE DEPICTIONS OF IT ON THE STATUES, FLAGS, AND DOORWAYS OF EVERY AREA VILLAGE, AND ON SEVERAL WHEELS OF THE CHEESE

DID U
KNOW



With the cheese wire, a really important piece of equipment for a cheesemonger. If the wire gets a kink, replace it. Kinks lessen the strength of the wire and also create uneven cuts of cheese.

Finally, we segregate our blue cheeses from our other cheeses to stop cross contamination. This follows through into how we use our knives - we have separate knives and boards for cutting blue cheeses and any other cheeses that contain other allergens than just milk.

(NB you don't need separate utensils for pasteurised/unpasteurised cheese).



THE DOS AND DON'TS OF CUTTING CHEESE

Do:

- Cut cheese to provide customers with as much of the cheese experience as possible (i.e. from the rind through to the centre of the cheese). Balance the rind to cheese ratio, you mustn't end up with pieces where rind predominates
- Avoid touching cut cheese with bare hands (use waxed paper or, if a hard cheese, only touch the rind) and only place cheeses on a clean surface, for instance place on waxed paper and not directly onto the scales
- Ensure all equipment in contact with cheese is clean

- Ensure your hands are clean and wash them frequently. Also, wash them if you've been handling other food products, like cured meats. This helps to stop any cross contamination
- Use the right tool to cut the cheese. For example, a cheese wire for hard cheese and a cheese knife for washed-rind or softer cheeses

Don't:

- Use the wrong knife
- Use a blunt knife to cut cheese

- Use the same knife to cut different styles of cheese, i.e. cutting blue cheese and then using the same knife to cut Cheddar. This is wrong and causes cross contamination

- Cut on an unstable surface. There are so many health and safety issues in doing this

- Forget to wrap the cut cheese well. If you've trained the team to cut cheese you should also train them in how to wrap cheese well in waxed paper for customers to take home and when putting the cheese back on display



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MEET THE RETAILER...

Cheesemonger Paxton & Whitfield has been selling cheese for more than 200 years.



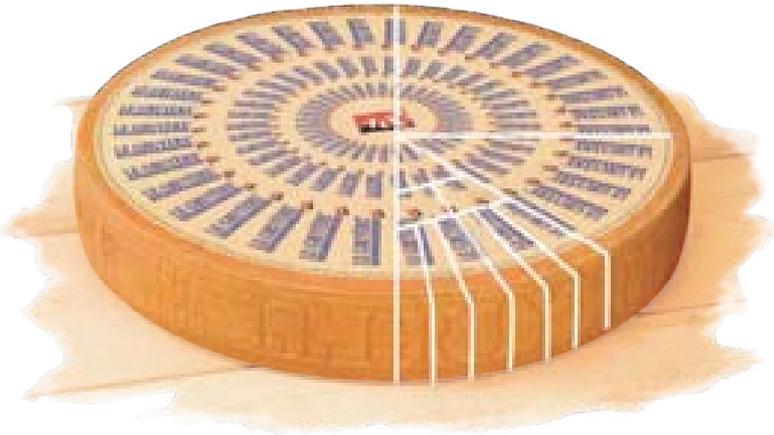
Today it carries a wide range of delicious and expertly produced British and Continental European cheeses that it not only retails but also wholesales to other cheesemongers, delis and food halls. It also has a delicious range of fine foods to accompany cheese as well as a collection of cheese

serving accessories, both of which it also wholesales. There are now five shops, two in London, one in Bath, one in Stratford-upon-Avon and the website. Its wholesale team is based at Paxton's distribution hub at Bourton on the Water, Glos. Paxtons remains an independent, family owned business and currently holds two Royal Warrants to supply cheese to the Royal Households of HM The Queen and HRH The Prince of Wales.



HOW TO CUT LE GRUYÈRE AOP

- Use a cheese wire to cut the wheel in half, then use a double-handled knife to cut it into quarters. Half these quarters into eighths, then cut the top half into three wedges and the bottom portion into six slices. Wrap the pieces of cheese in film in order to avoid it getting into contact with air.
- Good cutting practices are necessary to keep large wheels of Le Gruyère AOP fresh and profitable. Not only will precise cutting avoid wastage, but this in turn will mean that the wheel is being properly utilised and sold to its full potential. Ensure cut cheese is wrapped in film to maintain quality.



“ Train your staff well, with regular reminders of your standards. This will keep the teams skills fresh, make customers happy and ultimately help the bottom line ”

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AOP = PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)



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Cheeses from Switzerland.





PREVIEW: THE BRITISH CHEESE AWARDS 2017

Celebrating its second year under the ownership of the Royal Bath & West Show, the British Cheese Awards goes from strength to strength and this year includes a new award – the Best Specialist Cheesemaker Award



The British Cheese Awards 2017, the pre-eminent cheese event in the UK and a great celebration of British cheese, will take place on Wednesday 31st May 2017 at the Royal Bath & West Show, Shepton Mallet, Somerset. The judging and the presentation of the prizes at the awards dinner will all take place on the same day. As well as Supreme Champion, the Reserve Champion, the four Country Awards and the eight main Category Awards, there will also be 13 Special Awards. Within the Special Awards there is a new award this year for Best Specialist Cheesemaker.

Last year's competition attracted over 900 entries from 148 makers. Cheeses entered came from over 54 counties that covered the length and breadth of the UK and Ireland, showing just how vibrant the British cheese industry is today.

For 2017, 70 judges will judge 135 classes of cheese in nine categories. Judges will score the cheeses on presentation, texture, aroma, flavour and balance. Dependent on the scores that each cheese receives, gold, silver and bronze medals will be awarded.

New Award: Best Specialist Cheesemaker

This new award has been created to celebrate the contribution that specialist cheesemakers make to the British cheesemaking industry. Be



it in different styles, flavours or milk used, British artisan cheesemakers are an extremely innovative and important part of the British cheese community. For this award, Gold Award winners from any category of the awards who are members of the Specialist Cheesemakers Association will be judged again to decide the winning cheese.

Young Cheesemonger of the Year Award

This exciting competition to find Britain's Young Cheesemonger for 2017 will take place on Thursday 1 June 2017. Becoming an expert cheesemonger is more than just learning about how to cut cheese. It's about knowing all the cheese varieties, how to care for them and

understanding how they are made. The finalists for this award will have been selected by judges from an entry form where entrants, who must be under the age of 30 to enter, had to respond to the following question: 'You have £20 to shop for a cheeseboard for 6 people – which British cheeses would you buy?' The final eight entrants will then take part in three rounds: round one – a Cut & Wrap exercise where they will have to cut and wrap five different weights of cheese from five whole cheeses by sight with no use of weighing scales; round two – Identification, where contestants will have to taste and identify five unmarked cheeses; and round three – where each contestant will take part in a Mastermind-style quiz and give

responses to questions asked about British cheese. The winner will be announced later on the same day.

The Awards Dinner

The awards dinner will take place on the evening of the same day as the judging, Wednesday 31st May. As well as being about promoting the fantastic range of cheeses produced in the UK the awards are also a great opportunity to network and meet up with colleagues and friends in the industry. Nigel Barden, the renowned BBC Radio 2 food journalist, will host this year's awards dinner. Winning an award means that not only will the cheesemaker be recognised for the high standard of their product, it will also give them the opportunity to market their award-winning cheese to buyers and consumers over the following year.

British Cheese Marquee

As well as the awards, there will also be the British Cheese Marquee where British cheesemakers who have entered the awards have the opportunity to sell their delicious products to visitors. There will also be a variety of cheese tastings and talks for visitors to enjoy. So, from traditional farmhouse Cheddar to more adventurous cheese, such as highly fragrant washed rind cheeses, there will be a great selection of products to try and buy.

IN DETAIL

WHAT: The British Cheese Awards 2017

WHERE: The Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 6QN

WHEN: Wednesday 31st May – Saturday 3rd June 2017

WEB: britishcheeseawards.com

TWITTER: @BritCheeseAward

FACEBOOK: BritishCheeseAwards

By car: The show is situated on the A371 between Shepton Mallet and Castle Cary. From the Bristol area, turn off at M32 and take the A37. From Devon or Cornwall, turn off at junction 23 off M5. From the East, take the M3, A303 or A371.

By train: Nearest stations – Bristol, Castle Cary, or Templecombe. Website: nationalrail.co.uk



“ Last year's awards were a great celebration of cheesemakers' passion and variety. We are looking forward to seeing what these cheesemakers, renowned for their excellence and commitment to quality, will put into competition for this year. The Royal Bath & West Show is a fitting setting for the awards. The Royal Bath & West of England Society has a heritage in supporting rural activities that spans centuries, encouraging agriculture and commerce, as well as providing a marketplace for countryside product ”

PETER MITCHELL, CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH CHEESE AWARDS

CREAM OF THE CROP

A mixture of innovative dairy products combined with locally-produced classics can ensure that this oft-overlooked section of your establishment is the crème de la crème



With the UK consumer now more than ever focused on quality rather than commodity, delis, farm shops and food halls really have the upper-hand on the multiples as far as yoghurts, cream, butter and milk are concerned. While the dairy industry has taken quite a battering at the hands of the supermarket price wars in recent times, farm shops and delis have long been universally recognised as the go-to purveyors of high quality dairy products.

Capitalise on this industry loyalty by ensuring that you're stocking a diverse range of dairy products, such as gourmet yoghurts, smoked butter, luxury clotted cream and kefir. It is also worth forging a relationship with your local dairy to cater for the interest in provenance-focused products – being regionally-relevant is a point that resonates with many shoppers.

Dairy developments

Abernethy Butter is a producer that has experienced a surge of interest in flavourful, hand-

crafted butter, with its range even being championed by the likes of Nigella Lawson and Fortnum & Mason. What started as a weekend hobby by founders Allison and Will Abernethy has developed exponentially. "We now produce about one and a half tonnes of butter each month, which equates to 700 rolls each day, all by hand," said Allison. "We supply over 200 shops and restaurants across the UK and Ireland and these figures are still growing! We now employ four part-time members of staff to help us produce and package the butter every day and have expanded into bigger premises."

Abernethy Butter is the only company in Northern Ireland which makes butter by hand from start to finish, Alison tells *Speciality Food*. "We have dedicated ourselves to the art of butter-making using skills that have been passed down through our family for generations," she explains. "Our cream is sourced from a local farmer who milks his own cows and pasteurises the milk. The cream is a bi-product for him and we buy it to make the butter."

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bodnant-welshfood.co.uk



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Over the past few years, the company has developed new products to enhance the business. "These include Hand Smoked Butter and a Dulce & Sea Salt Butter" lists Allison. "These have been extremely popular with all of our customers. We have deliberately chosen unusual flavours to give our customers something different to the usual flavoured butters that they find on supermarket shelves."

Another dairy product with an innovative NPD is premium milkshake maker Shaken Udder's YogOaty range. Positioned as an on-the-go, lunchbox snack for kids, it's a yoghurt pouch packed with protein, slow-release energy oats and contains no added sugar. Andrew Howie, co-founder of Shaken Udder, says that the YogOaty project has been a two-year project from concept to launch. "We carried out a large piece of research and it showed that parents were after a healthy yoghurt on-the-go snack or breakfast item for their children," explains Andrew. "We felt that yoghurt was a great base for this, with oats and fruit being perfect partners to create a more filling, delicious and nutritious snack with no added sugar or nasties."

Straight from the source

One person that understands the potential of high-quality dairy produce is Ben Watson, owner of Ben's Farm Shops. Once operating under the Riverford Farm Shop name, Ben's Farm Shops benefit from being in close proximity to the affiliated Riverford Dairy, which Ben explains makes the shop the ideal testing ground for the dairy's NPD. "I think we virtually stock the

full range of the Riverford Dairy products," he says. "We can stock some of their lines, like butter, that they don't have massive quantities of, so it works well for them, too"

"The dairy section is very important to the shop. The West Country is traditionally a dairy region, so having a good range of local products is important to us as a farm shop," he explains. "We also sell some Brue Valley Farm butter, as well as Yeo Valley and Holy Cow Organic products. Yeo Valley yoghurt is one of those benchmark products, and it outsells the others by quite a bit. Riverford doesn't actually offer flavoured yoghurt, but everything else sells well, including its crème fraîche, curd, cheese, milk and cream – I think the clotted cream is extremely good."

While having a dairy located a stone's throw away is definitely an advantage for a fine food outlet, having a farm shop attached to your dairy business really helps with getting the produce directly from the source, which is the case for Craig's Farm Dairy in Dorset. "The retail side of the business is relatively new to us," explains Trevor Craig, owner. "It's just over two and a half years old. It's a relatively small part of the business, however it's going very well for us and we're very happy with it."

As well as selling via the farm shop, Craig's Farm Dairy supplies its dairy items to local retailers and establishments, too. "We produce milk, whipping, single, clotted and double cream, ice cream and butter, which comes salted, unsalted and we're now doing a smoked version as well," he says.

The dairy itself was set up 30 years ago; Trevor has witnessed the

dairy industry change dramatically over those years, and is now seeing an uplift. "The free-range cows have a very natural diet and way of life – we've been doing that for the past 30 years. Now it's become very en vogue to show cows out to pasture, but as far as I'm concerned, that's what a cow is designed to do: eat grass!"

Trevor acknowledges that milk is still a very undervalued product. "Everybody compares it to water, which I don't think is right. With what goes into producing a pint of milk: the care and dedication to the animal and the land; how it grazes; how it's fed; all its husbandry; what it produces and all of the nutrients and health benefits with its vitamins, calcium and rehydration properties, it's been sold down the drain by the big chains to be perfectly honest. We have been trying our hardest here to get the message across over the past 30 years – this is a premium product and needs to be treated as such."

Another dairy-cum-farm shop that prides itself on a locally-focused approach is The Organic Farm Shop. "We have been milk producers for many years," says Hillary Chester-Master, co-owner. "Will and I sold the 120 cow dairy herd in 2006 and started a micro-herd of Native Shorthorns. We were milking 11 cows, but are now around 25. We set up the processing dairy about eight years ago so that more of the farm produce can stay in the local area."

The Organic Farm Shop also produces its own butter, "about 10 packs a week, at hardly the cost of production price, which is enormous, but we could sell much, much more," says Hillary, "and we also sell Yeo Valley Butter."

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PREVIEW: FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW 2017

Innovation, fantastic fare and a wealth of experience under one roof



Back for its seventh year, Farm Shop & Deli Show returns to the NEC in Birmingham from 24th to 26th April 2017 with a whole host of speakers, stands and awards for food retailers to explore. The 2017 show is set to be the biggest yet, with over 450 exhibitors on hand to showcase their food, drink, gifts and equipment products.

Excitement is mounting as stands and displays are being prepared and perfected, and all this effort and thought is made solely for specialist retailers with a passion for quality and fresh-thinking. The event is free to attend and it is the perfect place to find inspiration, learn about the latest trends, source products and suppliers or simply network with friends and colleagues. It's a chance for retailers to take a step back, invest in their own business, spot new lines, see, touch and taste potential products

and chat face-to-face with suppliers.

Online registration is open at farmshopanddelishow.co.uk and a visitor badge will gain additional access to The Forecourt Show and National Convenience Show which run alongside. The show is supported by FARMA and The Giftware Association.

Industry experts take to the stage

There will be a wealth of experienced and stimulating speakers, offering insight into industry trends as well as sharing business inspiration and advice. Farm Shop & Deli Live will be the place to learn how to maximise profits whilst embracing innovation, all chaired by renowned chef, broadcaster and writer, Richard Fox. Known for his passion and industry expertise, Richard will guide audiences through a programme of

exciting live sessions and thought-provoking debates.

Visitors to the opening day of the show can witness brothers Tom and Henry Herbert from Hobbs House Bakery as they divulge their trade secrets. The famous baker duo will share their success story and the recipe for their mouthwatering sourdough whilst revealing insightful tips for retailers from their own Hobbs House stores.

Building relationships with customers is vital for small food retailers and author, BBC Apprentice candidate and TV presenter, Saira Kahn, is perfectly placed to share her knowledge on how to get customer engagement right.



Patricia Michelson, the founder and director of London's La Fromagerie will also take to the stage. La

Fromagerie in Marylebone is famed for its cheeses, and in her session Patricia will demonstrate how local stores can maximise sales through a superior display.



Melissa Cole, award-winning beer writer and sommelier will talk about the dos and don'ts for creating the ultimate craft beer with her interactive tasting session, whilst Richard Fox cooks up some deli classics for the perfect combination.



Paul Hargreaves, CEO of Cotswold Fayre, is set to be a popular speaker as he talks about the essential skills of harnessing people power. Paul explains: "I hope to empower retailers and producers to go back to their businesses and put new ideas and vision into practice. I find that



many businesses within this sector are too insular and could learn a lot from others if only they spent time together. This session is a start to do just that. I guarantee that people will take home at least one good idea that will make their business more profitable."

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Charlie Turnbull owner of Turnbulls Deli in Dorset will be hosting two sessions; 'Liquid gold – sourcing superb olive oils' and 'How to expand your digital delicatessen'. Both sessions are on the 26th April and, as in previous years, are set to draw in the crowds. Charlie is a passionate supporter of Farm Shop & Deli Show and says: "Independent retailers need to find quality foods that taste noticeably better to define their offer and pull customers into their shops. Farm Shop & Deli Show is a goldmine for that. Attendees should come and listen as e-commerce is coming whether we like it or not and I can show you how to start in the shallow end of the e-commerce pool and then grow this with your business."

Another session being eagerly anticipated is that of Karen Fewell from Digital Blonde. As online retailers are becoming more prominent, so is the use of digital marketing. Karen's session, on the final day of the show, recognises that social media marketing is not just for Millennials. Speaking ahead of her session she explained: "With retailers needing to market to everyone from Millennials to Baby Boomers, it can feel overwhelming knowing where to start, which channels to use and what to say. In this session, I'll be clarifying how different generations behave online and sharing practical insights to grow a customer base and increase online engagement."

Celebrating success
 The show will once again play host

to The Farm Shop & Deli Awards. These prestigious awards recognise independent retailers selling regional fresh farm produce or with a deli counter. The awards recognise the best in class in the specialist independent retail market. Now in its 4th year these honours celebrate the very best standards, levels of service, product innovation and community involvement in this sector.

Nigel Barden, chair of judges, says, "It'll be a privilege to hand over the accolades at the awards and to witness the look on the winners' faces that clearly illustrates how all their hard work has paid off."

The winners will be announced on the main stage on Monday 24th April at 3:15pm.

Nigel will be accompanied by 2016 'Farm Shop & Deli Retailer of the Year' winner Arthur Howell, a butcher from Norfolk, who will give an insight into how business has been since his triumphant win last year.

The finalists for 2017 Farm Shop & Deli Awards are:

BAKER OF THE YEAR

Bondgate Bakery (Otley) / Hambleton Bakery (Rutland) / Hobbs House Bakery (Tetbury) / The Hungry Guest (Petworth)

BUTCHER OF THE YEAR

Brace of Butchers (Dorchester) / Cunningham Butchery and Food Hall (Kilkeel) / Meat NW5 (London) / The Pink Pig Farm (Scunthorpe) / Walter Rose & Son (Devizes)

CHEESEMONGER OF THE YEAR

Cheese Please (Lewes) / Cheeses of Muswell Hill (London) / Paxton & Whitfield (Jermyn Street, London) / The Courtyard Dairy (Settle)

DELICATESSEN OF THE YEAR

Arch House Deli (Clifton) / Billingtons of Lenzie (Glasgow) / Delliah Fine Foods Leicester (Leicester) / Papadeli (Bristol) / The Gourmet Pig (Fishguard) / The Norfolk Deli (Hunstanton)

FARM SHOP – LARGE RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Bodnant Welsh Food Centre (Talycafn, Conwy) / Chatsworth Estate Farm Shop (Bakewell) / Drewton's Farm Shop (South Cave) / Keelham Farm Shop Ltd (Thornton)

FARM SHOP – SMALL RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Cross Lanes Organic Farm Ltd (Barnard Castle) / Dahlia's Farm Shop (Blackpool) / Foxholes Farm Shop (Hertford) / Roots Farm Shop (Northallerton) / The Gog Farm Shop (Cambridge) / Uncle Henry's (Grayingham) / Welbeck Farm Shop (Worksop)

FISHMONGER OF THE YEAR

Latimers (Whitburn) / Ramus Seafoods (Harrogate) / The Fresh Fish Shop Ltd (Haywards Heath)

FOODHALL OF THE YEAR

Bakers & Larners of Holt (Norfolk) / Cranstons / Brampton Food Hall (Brampton) / Delfonseca Dockside (Liverpool) / Ludlow Food Centre (Shropshire)

GREENGROCER OF THE YEAR

Andreas of Chelsea (London) / K.D. Davis & Sons (Rotherham) / Rafters of Driffield (Driffield)

LOCAL SHOP OF THE YEAR

FINK (Boroughbridge) / Shropshire's Own (Shrewsbury) / Siop Pwllglas (Ruthin, Denbighshire) / Stock Ghyll Fine Food (Ambleside)

MARKET OF THE YEAR

Horsforth Farmers Market (West Yorks) / West Malling Farmers Market (Kent)

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Brace of Butchers (Dorchester) / Court Farm Shop (Cheltenham) / Donaghy & Sanderson (Pitlochry) / Love Cheese (York) / The Lambing Shed Farm Shop (Knutsford)

ONLINE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Dukeshill Ham Co Ltd (Telford) / Farmison (Ripon) / Parsnips and Pears (Colston Bassett) / The Cornish Fishmonger (Saint Columb)

STAND L71

FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW
 24-26 April 2017 NEC Birmingham

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Innovation is at the heart of this event as Farm Shop & Deli Show showcases concepts and creations in ingredients, equipment, drinks, products and digital tools to aid customer service, inspire and boost profits. Visitors will be able to touch, taste, try and talk to the exhibitors to see how they can grow their business.

Retailers are recommended to check the show's website to see all the exciting new launches in the line-up for this year's Great New Idea award.

Here's a small taste of the mouthwatering ideas and clever concepts that are in the running this year:

POPCORN SHED

Popcorn Shed was founded by two cousins (Laura Jackson and Sam Feller) who, after spotting a gap in the market, gave up their corporate city jobs to experiment with fancy

popcorn flavours. They have been known to blow up a popcorn machine in their early experiments but have now perfected popular flavours such as Salted Caramel and Pecan Pie – both up for the Great New Idea Award.

Self-professed 'kernel-in-chief' Laura says, "We finally hit on a winning formula, and so many requests followed from friends and family that we ended up storing it in the garden shed. Our families started calling it the Popcorn Shed, and that's how we named our business."

Their secret family recipe is kept under lock and key at their 'Shedquarters', but Laura and Sam are passionate about sharing their resulting gourmet creations with the world. Handmade in small batches and packed in cleverly designed shed-shaped boxes, Popcorn Shed Gourmet Popcorn is available online and in various outlets, including Harrods.

"This is our first time exhibiting at Farm Shop & Deli Show." Laura says, "We've heard great things and we're really looking forward to it!" Pop to their Stand No. J110.

COFFEE LOGS BY BIO-BEAN LTD.

Coffee Logs are carbon neutral briquettes made from recycled coffee grounds. Each log is made up of grounds from 25 cups of coffee. For use in wood burners and open hearths, they burn longer, hotter and cleaner than wood and all for

less money. They produce a pleasant woody smell when they burn – so you get all of the benefits of a clean, green, high-performance biofuel without your home smelling like a coffee shop.

bio-bean founder and CEO Arthur Kay came up with the idea while studying architecture at UCL. He was designing a sustainable coffee shop when he realised that large quantities of waste coffee grounds are produced all over the UK. He had the idea of converting this waste stream into energy and discovered that coffee waste contains lots of energy. Three years on and bio-bean have built the world's first coffee recycling factory in Alconbury, Cambridgeshire where waste grounds are recycled into Coffee Logs.

Pippa Henderson, marketing and communications executive says, "The team at bio-bean are really excited for Farm Shop & Deli Show 2017. It will be a fantastic opportunity to talk about our amazing product, Coffee Logs, start more conversations with stockists and partners and discover some of the best farm shop and deli products the country has to offer." Find them at Stand M111.

FORI BARS

Described as "the love child of premium jerky and a top-notch granola bar," Fori bars are meat-based snack bars for the modern hunter-gatherer. Launched in winter 2016, the protein-bar-with-a-twist combines high-quality meat with fruit and seeds and comes in Piri Piri Chicken, Moroccan Lamb and Chilli Beef varieties.

Based in Wales, the company name Fori comes from the Welsh verb, fforio, which means to explore. It is also a derivative of forage. And with a mission to change the way people snack or forage for the better, Fori founder, Carl Austin says, "We use organic apricots and dates, to avoid sulfites and sorbates. We also use cranberries infused with natural pineapple juice."

Fori bars are the ultimate explorer snack bringing a new approach to old recipes – those that the native Americans created, food that Shackleton ate on his voyages and that explorers have eaten for hundreds of years. They are a Great New Idea contender with a rich heritage. Venture to their Stand No. J90.

Also causing a stir in the Great New Idea Award stakes are:

Clear Skin Herbal Tea from Cindy's Tea Ltd which claims to be a great all round tonic for your skin.

Low Sugar Brownies, Blondies, and Greenies from Adonis Smart Foods which were created in response to a lack of low sugar snacks and contain mainly nuts, seeds and fibres.

Marienburg Premium Oak Lump Charcoal which is 100% organic charcoal made from oak and ash tree wood. Prior to manufacture wood is dried in natural conditions for several months with no chemical additives used.

Raisthorpe Oak-Aged Yorkshire Gin which takes mineral water from an ancient spring in Raisthorpe and then distils this with fresh botanicals and watercress.

Farm Shop & Deli Show visitors are encouraged to vote online for their favourite food, drink, product or equipment innovation in the Great New Idea Award. To vote (and for a chance to win £250), look for the Great New Idea badge on this list farmshopanddelishow.co.uk/products and complete the voting form on the page of your favourite idea.

“ With the wide range of producers who will be showing, Farm Shop & Deli Show is now seen as the go-to show for this sector of traditional and speciality retail products ”





want the buyers and deli owners to understand that to get the best flavours and textures simple is sometimes best, especially when our sauces are also vegetarian, vegan and carnivore-friendly AND they are certified gluten-free, too. The fact that we can spread the word about our products at Farm Shop & Deli Show is just fantastic."

DAMBUSTERS BEER CHUTNEY BY JENNY'S JAMS OF LINCOLN
Favouring dried apricots over the conventional raisins and using Bomber County Ale from Tom Wood's Brewery, Dambuster Beer Chutney is really taking off.

Jenny Smith is a trained chef and has been hand-making her award-winning fruit preserves for over 10 years. But it was when she got chatting with a neighbouring trader at the Brigg Market in Lincolnshire that the idea for her unique chutney was born. He invited her to explore making a chutney using the company's Bomber County Ale.

Jenny set to work, choosing to use a mix of locally sourced vegetables, along with dried apricots, in her own recipe. "I thought carefully about the chutney and realised that so many recipes feature raisins and sultanas, so I set about creating something really different," says Jenny.

"It goes extremely well with Cote Hill Yellow Belly cheese, with sausages (Lincolnshire, obviously), and with ham in a sandwich," says Jenny.

The name, 'Bomber County Ale',

derives from Lincolnshire's wartime history. By the end of World War Two, the county was home to as many as 45 airfields including that of Squadron 617, aka the Dambusters. So, the names, 'Dambuster Beer Chutney' and 'Bomber County Ale' are a reverent salute to the county's aviation heritage. Jenny's Jams can be found at Stand D40.

BUTTERNUT SQUARES BY INNATE FOOD LTD.

Innate Food founders, Elsa Valentine and Tess Walker believe that food is a combination of art, science and maths. With a vision for putting health back into snack foods, they've developed a range of colourful snack squares in three distinctive flavour combinations.

Something akin to a clever cracker, their Butternut Squares boast a crunchy, air-dried blend of butternut squash, onion, pepper, coconut, almond, lemon, garlic and spices. Also available in Beetroot as well as Spinach & Coconut flavours, all three of the Innate varieties are in the running for the Great New Idea Award.

A good deal of thought has gone into their snacks which are nutritionally balanced, offer slow release energy and by default are free from gluten, grains, soy, dairy and refined sugar. They are also both paleo-friendly and vegan.

Elsa and Tess met on the idyllic South Island of New Zealand at a remote high country lodge. Elsa says, "We pretty soon discovered that we shared a mutual passion for adventure and a deep fascination with food, health and wellbeing. I moved back to the UK to embark on the Innate venture and then asked Tess if she'd be interested in moving over to work with me." Find them at Stand J60.

Even more reasons to attend

DRAGONS' PANTRY

A fun and nail-biting highlight of the live sessions on Farm Shop & Deli Show stage is Dragons' Pantry. With a bank of discerning dragons ready to pounce on entrepreneurial offerings, participants will have just 15 minutes to clinch a deal, gain recognition, garner advice or return home with nothing but food

IN DETAIL

WHEN: 24th-26th April 2017
WHERE: NEC Birmingham
WEB: farmshopanddelishow.co.uk
TWITTER: @FarmShop_Deli #FSD2017

for thought. Tuesday 25th April and Wednesday 26th April will see different dragons fiercely grilling hopeful entrepreneurs.

BRITAIN'S BEST LOAF

Sponsored by Rank Hovis, Britain's Best Loaf is back. There are five categories: sourdough, wholegrain, white, innovation and new last year is the gluten-free category.

"This event is a fantastic opportunity for Britain's bakers to showcase their skill and the quality of their products to their peers and potential customers," says British Baker editor Vince Bamford. "It is always a hard-fought competition and I'm sure our expert judges will once again have to make some tough decisions in deciding who takes the individual category awards and, of course, the ultimate accolade of Britain's Best Loaf."

Last year's overall winner was Bexhill Farm Kitchen with their winning White Tin. See who clinches the top spots this year when the 2017 winners are announced on 24th April at 1:30pm from the main stage.

Celebrating a successful show in style

The Farm Shop & Deli Show organisers have also announced an After Party which will be open to exhibitors and visitors. Guests will enjoy a fun evening of comedy and entertainment where they can relax with new contacts, meet old friends and network with the industry in an informal setting.

This new event takes place on Tuesday 25th April at 7pm in the Kings Room of the Hilton Birmingham Metropole. Tickets include entertainment, dinner, beer, wine and a pay bar. Attendees will enjoy a sumptuous Indian Buffet with the entertainment being provided by well-known TV, radio and live stand-up comedian, Dominic Holland. Those wishing to attend can find out more and book tickets at farmshopanddelishow.co.uk/fsdlive/after-party



Exhibitors bring quality, taste and passion in abundance

The 2017 Farm Shop & Deli Show exhibitors are ready to showcase their products with gusto. There is something for everyone. From honeycomb in a crate to frozen rosé wine popsicles, cutting-edge display

lighting solutions or the ultimate pork pie, Birmingham really is the place to discover new brands and passionate producers.

Julian Abel, managing director of no-nonsense cooking sauces Nowt Poncy says, "As a start-up company we're really excited to be exhibiting at our first major exhibition. We

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JOHN SHEPHERD, MD OF PARTRIDGES

Summer is a season that lasts for 8 months in terms of outside space at Partridges. Starting from March 1st – St David's Day – and finishing up with our Artisan Chocolate event in late October

We are, of course, very lucky to have an outside seating area (for about 40 people) at the front of our shop on the Duke of York Square, and also to have a small patio at the back of the shop. When they work well on sunny days they can work very well indeed, probably boosting shop sales by as much as 20% on good days.

The shop is set back about 50 paces from the pavement and has no display windows to speak of. You would not know from a distance that we are in fact a food shop and when it rains in the evening customers have a disinclination to get wet. To counteract this we were given permission to put extra seating and tables with large umbrellas outside our front doors to help the café sales – which, together with the small patio at the back of the shop, can boost sales by as much as 20% on a good day – and also to run an artisan food market on the Square every Saturday to drive footfall. Although the market runs for 50 weeks of the year it is obviously a lot busier in the summer months and to add focus we run a number of events directly outside our shop to maximise sales. The patio we tend to use more for product launches, small get-togethers and hopefully this year an iconic Christmas display. Also

this year we are planning to launch our very own Chelsea Flower Gin in a floral environment in May on the back terrace.

There can be a downside, however. Occasionally the focus of the shop, and of the staff, gets distracted by external activities and basic sales patterns and priorities in the shop get disturbed. Also, adequate toilet facilities are required and need to be maintained to cope with the increased numbers of visitors to the outside areas. Finally, the increased staffing needed to support the outside activities can be deemed extravagant on a when rain falls on the roof and the wage percentage goes through it. So it is always important not to forget the day job of providing artisan food to loyal customers rather than just drinks to passers by.

For our three shops that do not have external areas as such, we still try to pretend they do and put some artisan traders outside at weekends to create a buzz, even in very limited spaces. Maintaining the best possible window displays to attract customers to what is going on inside the shop is essential. For us, tastings and demos work very well, especially at weekends, and so if you cannot do it outside, do what you possibly can inside as space allows to replicate the summer vibe.



Sue and Anthony Johns, owners of Johns of Instow

HOW DO YOU BOOST YOUR SALES DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS?

We are fortunate with our location on the North Devon coast to be able to serve a high tourism trade along with our loyal year-round customers. Picnics and fresh deli produce from homemade sandwiches and cream teas, local cheeses and charcuterie to Devon clotted cream ice cream and chilled soft or alcoholic drinks are always in high demand to take away or to eat in the cafés.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR A RETAILER WHO WASN'T BASED IN A HOLIDAY HOTSPOT?

Encourage your customers to try as many products as you can with different samples on tasting in-store. Even better if you can get a local or artisan produce to visit your shop for

a tasting session, which can then be promoted through social media and posters in-store. Host events to entice people to come and visit you and, if you have a café, offer a changing range of seasonal dishes that will keep customers coming back on a regular basis.

AND FOR A RETAILER WHO DOESN'T HAVE AN OUTDOOR SPACE?

Create strong merchandising displays of fresh and seasonal produce. Picnic products as mentioned above, but also summer is a fantastic time for sourcing an abundance of seasonal soft summer fruits from local and British producers. Strawberries, raspberries and tomatoes make eye-catching displays and result in high sales with a quick turnaround on produce. Pop easy recipe cards next to the stock and you'll give your customers even more reason to buy!

JACK REEVES, BUTCHERY MANGER AT UNCLES HENRY'S



"Our main promotional event during summer is Open Farm Sunday, which is on 11th June.

Every year we love to see our customers enjoy this unique and educational day out. We work closely with our farming partners to show the real 'farm to fork' story. Our different zones tell a journey: you can touch animals and see hatching chicks in the animal discovery zone, plant your own seeds and enjoy tractor rides in the nature zone, and get involved in cheese and bread-making in our Lincolnshire Market area. We promote our hog roast, which is served on the day, and is also available to hire for other events."

“Tastings and demos work very well, especially at weekends, and so if you cannot do it outside, do what you possibly can inside to replicate the summer vibe”

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FOR THE CONSCIOUS CONSUMER

With extensive details about products just a quick Google away, consumers are becoming increasingly vigilant when it comes to the ethical standards behind the items they decide to buy. In fact, according to Ethical Consumer Markets Report 2016, the value of ethical spending in the UK grew to £38bn in 2015, making the ethical goods and services sector now worth almost double the tobacco market in the UK.

One market where this trend is hugely prevalent is the soft drink, juice and smoothie



category. Froosh is an exemplary example of a company which pays close attention to the finer details in the production process of its 100% fruit smoothies. "Years ago we started sending consumers, customers, media and our own staff off on working visits to fruit farms in developing countries," says Anna Hagemann Rise, group communication and public affairs director at Froosh. "We did this in order to become experts in the fruits that we buy. We wanted to learn everything about their origin, process and handling, from earth to table. Yet, while working on the farms, we realised that there was another big learning



curve for us in visiting farms in Ethiopia, Malawi, India, Thailand, Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala. That is how the fruit farms have the ability to change peoples' lives, to build sustainable communities, and support the farmers with not only income, but also schools for their children, emergency services and nutritious meals. We learned that trading with developing countries is the absolute best tool to fight poverty. These stories are very close to our hearts, and we have not only visited the fruit farms more than 25 times in the past five years, but we have made a coffee table book showing farmers from all over the world and their personal stories, made 20-plus movies about our trips and the impact of trading with developing countries, engaged in various political debates, participated in large political events and given more than 50 guest lectures to university students." The range, which consists of eight flavours, come in either glass bottles or paper cups made from environmentally-friendly cardboard. "We decided to use glass bottles for three reasons," explains Anna. "It keeps the product fresh for nine months due to the glass preventing the air from penetrating the product, which is not only a good business case for us and our customers, but minimises food waste. The glass is 100% recyclable, and is pretty good looking, right?"

FOR THE DISCERNING DRINKER

Andrew Jackson, marketing director for Fentimans Botanically Brewed Beverages, tells *Speciality Food* about the importance of keeping it craft:

"In today's crowded marketplace, consumers are savvy enough to understand which products are created by real craft producers with credible back stories versus manufactured brands trying to seize on a growing trend. The trend of consumers wanting a premium soft drink and switching to sophisticated alternatives is adding real value to the market. As the only brewers of botanical beverages in the UK, Fentimans' soft drinks and mixers meet discerning consumers' demand for unique drinks, offering complex flavours with every sip.

"During summer, people are looking for naturally lighter, fresher and more floral drinks without compromising on flavour. With one in five people choosing a soft drink at a bar, they are now a likely consideration for adults looking for a grown-up soft drink option at home this summer. Fentimans Wild English Elderflower and Sparkling Lime and Jasmine ticks all of the boxes for excellent summer soft



drinks. The former is quintessentially English, a delicate yet full-flavoured drink that is sweet on the nose with a light aroma and delicate floral notes. This drink is doing particularly well in independents and appealing to a female audience. The latter, and our newest flavour, has been introduced to act as a credible alternative to alcohol and is perfect served in a wine glass to accompany a meal. Its initial refreshing

dryness is quickly balanced by the botanical sweetness of hyssop, lime flower and juniper berries, making for a complex and aromatic drinking experience.

"Launching specifically for the summer season, we will also be introducing 750ml sharing sizes of all of our popular soft drinks, providing a delicious treat to be shared with family and friends."



FOR THE SOFT DRINK LOVER

London-based chef, Duncan O'Brien, founded Dalston's in 2012 with the intention of creating an all-natural great-tasting alternative to cola. Since then, the company has developed more flavours, all made by hand, using real ingredients, less sugars and no additives. Duncan tells us why Dalston's



drinks are the ones to stock this summer:

"The range is a great summer product to stock for delis, farm shops and food halls as people are increasingly looking for high-quality non-alcoholic drinks that are made with care. Ours aren't packed with sugar, which gives us a bit more appeal than some of the other classic-style sodas on the market. Essentially, we're making drinks everybody knows, just with a more hands-on connection with

our ingredients and lots of attention to flavour and quality.

"The ingredients we use come from all over the world. London has a great history of spice trading and we work with a local family business that has been trading spices for generations. For our lemons and oranges we work closely with a producer in Sicily, our lavender comes from France, our apples come solely from Gibbet Oak Farm in Kent – the list goes on and on. We've got a good connection with most of them, which means we're always learning about what we're using. We make drinks to be enjoyed by everyone – we're drinks makers, not marketeers."



FOR THE MODERN CLASSIC FAN

"It's all about the taste. There is no compromise, only the best goes in the bottle," explains Gabriel David, founder and owner of Luscombe Drinks. Gabriel believes this ethos is what stands Luscombe Drinks apart from its competitors. "We meticulously craft our flavours from natural and raw

ingredients with minimal processing and a fanatical attention to detail."

It is this deep-seated respect for ingredients that has established Luscombe as a must-stock for deli and farm shop owners. "We are proud to use organic ingredients harvested from our own orchards and trusted



growers," says Gabriel. "We source the highest-quality fruit to make the very best drinks from raw ingredients. We are fanatical about using fruit to get our flavours and do not use additives, synthetics or concentrates in any of our drinks."

The 24cl and 32cl-sized bottles are an ideal accompaniment for picnics and refreshments on-the-go, with the larger 74cl-sized bottles a popular choice for alfresco dining. "Luscombe Ginger Beers are always hugely popular during the summer months, as are our citrus flavours, such as Sicilian Lemonade and St. Clements," lists Gabriel. "Wild Elderflower Bubbly is also a classic summer staple, and a great alternative to Champagne. As is the Damascene Rose Bubbly. It's a delicate bubbly and a celebration of the majestic rose of the Orient, crafted with Muscat grape juice, Damascene rose water and Sicilian lemon, combined with Devon spring water. We also produce a Devon cider from a range of weird and wonderful locally-grown apples."

FOR THE SOPHISTICATED SIPPER

With 95 years' worth of lemonade-producing history behind it, La Mortuacienne's iconic image is one that instantly commands reverence. "When we discovered this traditional and authentic French lemonade that's produced in the heart of France, it was obvious to us that this range needed to be a part of our offering," explains Marion Lebreton, brand manager at importer Empire Bespoke Foods.

The business is still family-run in Besançon by fourth generation family members, Marion tells us. However, the range has expanded to cover seven flavours, including Clear, Cloudy, Orange, Pink, Mandarin, Grapefruit and Pomegranate, which are available in 330ml screw top and 1ltr swing top old-style bottles. "With their authentic French flavours, the unique bottle shape and premium look, shoppers can identify at a glance the unique positioning of La Mortuacienne. The resealable top also preserves the fizz of the lemonade for longer," says Marion.

"The range is completely exclusive to independents," says Marion. "Shoppers love to find local products, and with the company production based in the heart of France using local water, it answers this demand for authenticity and traditionally-produced drinks perfectly. Adults are also looking for alcohol alternatives that make them feel a part of the occasion. Key drivers are traditional flavours, stylish packaging and provenance; this makes La Mortuacienne the number one choice! With their nice colours and authentic shape, the lemonades are a great gifting idea or a premium treat for children for special occasions."



8 x 150ml Indian Tonic Water

8 x 150ml Club Soda

8 x 150ml Indian Tonic Water Perfectly Light

8 x 150ml Bitter Lemon

8 x 150ml Ginger Ale

8 x 150ml Sicilian Lemonade

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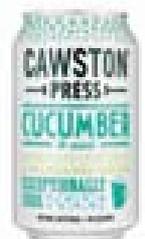
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mangajo.co.uk



FIRE UP YOUR SALES

From meats to marinades and sauces to pickles, make sure your establishment is well-equipped to flourish this barbecue season

While the UK is infamous for its wet weather, that hasn't managed to put a spanner in the works of the barbecue trend in Britain. The premium burger trend and predilection for American-style diner cuisine hasn't faltered since it first came to prominence a few years ago, with the gourmet burger bar market estimated to be worth £3.2bn in 2016, up 22% from 2011, according to research by Mintel.

"The barbecue occasion is already huge, but appears to have even more scope for expansion," explains Marcus Blowers, category insight manager at RH Amar. "The enduring popularity of American-inspired food and a growing trend of eating fired and smoked meats during the barbecue season is leading to a surge in interest in authentic ingredients that add value to the overall occasion. An interest in new flavours that are often associated with dining alfresco – including Brazilian, South African 'braai' and Korean – adds to the sense of occasion and encourages shoppers to trade up to premium, high quality ingredients, especially when entertaining."

Marcus believes that the mix-and-match nature of alfresco dining provides the perfect platform for consumers to be a bit more experimental when devising recipes. He says, "Many shoppers see a barbecue as the perfect opportunity

to try new foods and ingredients, with 64% of consumers saying they find it fun to try new types of table sauces at a barbecue."

Stubb's is an Texan company that produces an eclectic range of sauces that are ideal for the summer season. "Our aim is to bring indulgent flavours from around the world to UK consumers, and these barbecue sauces do exactly that," says Zareen Deboo, brand manager at Empire Bespoke Foods, which imports and distributes Stubb's. "They have real authentic Texan flavours like no other. In fact, Stubb's is the number one premium barbecue brand in the USA – we wanted to introduce it to the UK as Americana is becoming trendier."

Empire's Stubb's range features two authentic barbecue sauces, including Original and Sticky Sweet Texan flavours, as well as a Liquid Smoke and Wicked Habanero Pepper Wing Sauce. "The wing sauce is a great addition for spicing up traditional flavours like no other," says Zareen. "It's made with real habanero peppers and can use it to turn up the heat on wings, meats, vegetable skewers or anything else you dare try it on."

For those looking for something a little less fiery, Zareen recommends traditional mayonnaise brand Delouis. "The company was established in 1885 by the Delouis family when they acquired a vinegar factory in Limoges, France," she

explains. "The business introduced mayonnaises in 1976, and the family constantly strives to make great quality products and keep strong links with tradition."

The cooling satisfaction that mayonnaise can bring to a barbecue is not to be underestimated, says Zareen. "Mayonnaise has always been one of Britain's favourite sauces, however nowadays variants of the condiment are trending, and the Delouis range has varieties perfect for the barbecue season," she adds. "They also sell an Aioli and Tartare Sauce, with the entire range only containing natural herbs and spices. The original mayonnaise is the best-seller, followed very closely by the Aioli."

Barbecue authenticity

A food that no barbecue aficionado can live without is the humble gherkin – its strong, tangy flavours is a welcome addition both in taste and texture to an indulgent burger. One brand that has established itself as a picnic table staple is Mrs Elswood. There's a reason for this, explains Marion Lebreton, brand manager at Empire. "Mrs Elswood has become an iconic British brand thanks to its consistency and high quality," she says. "British shoppers, and in particular the kosher community, absolutely love the moreish cucumbers. We also believe that the character of Mrs Elswood contributes to an emotional

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attachment to the brand.”

The range is available in six flavours, including Haimisha, Sweet & Sour, Whole Sweet, Spears with Dill, Sweet Spears, Sweet Sandwich Slices, Burger Gherkins and Hot Dill Cucumber, available in four differently cut sizes, making them a perfect addition to include in a side salad for extra crunch and a burst of flavour.

The brand was established 70 years ago and care, time and attention are important factors that have contributed to cementing its reputation as the barbecue stalwart it is today. “The range is produced at the height of the cucumber growing season during June and July every year,” explains Marion. “The cucumbers are grown by selected farmers across Germany and Holland, then harvested and hand-selected for their shape and size before being pickled, packed and delivered direct from the growers to

maintain freshness and full flavour. The unique flavour and seasonality of Mrs Elsworth’s pickled cucumbers make them an absolute store cupboard essential.”

Noel and Sharon-Anne Bateman are foodies who understand the satisfying nuances in barbecued cuisine, and set up their company FireFly Barbecue to offer UK shoppers the chance to taste authentic US-inspired barbecue cooking. “We set up the company in 2013 as a hobby, really, as we both love having parties and barbecuing is such a social way of cooking,” says Noel. “After a holiday in America, we discovered that each of the southern states have their own style of barbecue, and the flavours were such that you could not find over here. So we started making our own rubs and sauces, based on each state’s individual flavour profile, but tailored them for the UK palate using

simple ingredients.”

What sprang from this experimentation process was high-quality rubs, marinades and sauces that showcase the distinctive flavours of states such as Kansas, Louisiana and Memphis, to name a few. The company has also undergone a recent rebrand, with eye-catching packaging conveying the high-quality flavours within, all created without using any additives, flavouring or artificial colours.

Maximise meat sales

When you think barbecue, you undoubtedly think meat. Whether it’s succulent pulled pork, sticky barbecue ribs or classic American hot dogs, the barbecue is a meat lovers’ paradise. Jack Reeves, butchery manager at Uncle Henry’s in Lincolnshire, has noticed a surge in demand for gourmet meats. “From early last year we noticed an

increase in customer demand for pulled pork, so our home-reared pork shoulder cuts have been very popular,” he says.

It doesn’t just stop at trendy, street food-style varieties of meat; Jack explains that traditional products can be equally as popular. “During summer our homemade burgers are always a firm favourite with customers, and the range includes our delicious home-reared Pork & Apple alongside Beef, Fajita style and Lamb & Mint,” he says. “Other products in our summer range include our BBQ Packs, baby back ribs, steaks and kebabs. Not forgetting our fantastic home-produced sausages with over 12 varieties available at any one time. Our traditional Lincolnshire is our best-seller, but the flavoured varieties such as Caramelised Onion, Red Arrow (containing sun-dried tomatoes and garlic) and Firecracker (which is made with chilli jam) are also really enjoyed by our customers.”

The Uncle Henry’s butchery counter is well-positioned to cross-sell, with the farm shop’s mixed array of fresh and ambient products at their beck and call. “Our local bread suppliers deliver daily and the range of fresh bread baps during barbecue season are always popular, along with the Stokes sauce range, marinade sachets and Gordon Rhodes mixes” he explains. “Fresh produce of salad, tomatoes, new potatoes and our homemade

coleslaw are essential barbecue items, and we also sell locally-produced charcoal. The farm shop stocks napkins, beer, gin, wine and cider, and we’ve introduced a wider range of condiments, such as The Sauce Shop and its range of hot sauces and delicious caramelised onion relish.”

Summer promotions are a tried and tested method for attracting custom, notes Jack. “Our sausages are available as mix-and-match three packs for £10 and during the summer we add in other items to this promotion, such as burger packs and seasoned chicken breasts,” Jack says. “Every month we also select a sausage, cheese and wine of the month, which carry a 10% discount for the entirety and are chosen accordingly.”



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“The enduring popularity of American-inspired food and a growing trend of eating fired and smoked meats during the barbecue season is leading to a surge in interest in authentic ingredients that add value to the overall occasion”

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SPOTLIGHT ON: OILS, VINEGARS & DRESSINGS

Three experts share their take on these long-time stalwarts of independents' shelves



FROM THE IMPORTER

Charles Carey, The Oil Merchant

Before 1985 you would be more likely to find a bottle of olive oil in a wine shop than a delicatessen, and certainly more likely to find it in the chemist. If you had a good Greek, Spanish, French or Italian store around the corner an olive oil lover, a fan of Elizabeth David, could rejoice. Come to think of it, were there many delicatessen?

Now there are many more bottles of olive oil, and many more places that sell them, so what should a good shop stock to show some individuality?

Let's start at the "commercial" level, where the oil is blended to a standard and to a price. Olive oil, the blend of refined and virgin oil, certainly has its place in a kitchen, and therefore on a shop shelf. Light, delicate, it is good for frying, and for beating into fresh egg yolks to make a mayonnaise. But if you are short of space, leave this to the supermarkets.

Then, let's move up to commercial extra virgin olive oils, good for lower temperature frying, for marinating, basting, for making vinaigrettes with balsamic vinegar as the other main ingredient. Quality can vary tremendously, so find a good Greek and Spanish importer, check their pricing, and compare them to what the supermarkets are selling under their own label. And taste them: do they have different and interesting flavour profiles, will they suit your customers' purposes for everyday use, are they too strong and assertive to use raw, will they add to the sum of the ingredients of a dish, or detract from it?

And now for the most fun: selecting your estate bottled extra virgin olive oils. We use these to finish hot dishes, where the aromas leap out at you, on a steak just off the griddle, for example, and for salads of course. But we do not mix them with balsamic vinegar; we

think this detracts too much from their personality. Use a good red or white wine vinegar, or a squeeze of lemon juice. Try to find four oils of different intensities, hopefully from different countries. Italian oils still seem to be the most popular, Spanish producers are now snapping at the Italian heels, and whereas it used to be very difficult to sell Greek oils at this level, now a number of producers have taken it upon themselves to produce wonderful oils and put them in spectacular bottles.



FROM THE DISTRIBUTOR

Joe Wall, Cress Co

WHAT ARE THE MOST POPULAR BRANDS OF OILS, VINEGARS AND DRESSINGS YOU STOCK?

The Cress Co. offers retailers a wide selection of high quality oils, cold-pressed oils, flavoured vinegars and dressings. As well as the more established brands that include Stokes, Odysea, Lucy's Dressings, Cullisse Highland Rapeseed Oil, The Really Garlicky Company, Summer Harvest and Scarlett & Mustard, we aim to support regional and upcoming brands too like Gusto, Charlie & Ivy's, Honest Toil Extra Virgin Olive Oil and The Little Herb Farm's handmade vinegar dressings. Fundamental to the range is offering our customers products that have exceptional taste, quality and realistically priced.

AND VARIETIES/FLAVOURS?

For dressings, classic flavours like Balsamic and Caesar always sell well, but as summer approaches we see an uptake in fruit-inspired or chilli infused as they are more

suited to summer eating and barbecues. Authentic Greek extra virgin olive oil and British cold press rapeseed oils continue to perform well.

WOULD YOU SAY THIS HAS CHANGED RECENTLY?

The emerging stars in this sector are bread dipping oils and flavoured vinegars which follows the trend of casual dining and entertaining.

CAN YOU SEE ANY TRENDS FORMING?

Products that are naturally infused are becoming more prolific, especially as consumer demand for more natural products continues to rise.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS IN THE FUTURE FOR THE OILS, VINEGARS AND DRESSINGS SECTOR?

With the continued awareness in provenance and the increase in home entertaining, this category should continue to perform well. There are opportunities to reduce the seasonality of the sector and to develop lines more suitable for winter dishes.

“Understanding the taste of a product first hand increases the bond of trust between retailer and customer making a sale much more likely”



FROM THE RETAILER

Angus Ferguson, Demijohn

WHAT OILS AND VINEGARS HAVE BEEN PARTICULAR POPULAR RECENTLY?

Tayberry vinegar and our new harvest Villa Montalbano Extra Virgin Olive Oil, pressed end of Oct 2016. Interestingly, these are two of our most intensely-flavoured food products.

AND NOT SO POPULAR?

Apple vinegar and pure rapeseed oil. These gentle tasting products are less exciting on the palate and therefore can be seen sometimes as a less attractive purchase.

DOES SEASONALITY AFFECT THIS AT ALL?

Yes absolutely. July, when we have been picking elderflower for the elderflower vinegar, there is a run on the elderflower demijohn! Those who understand the olive oil harvest know that the best time to buy fresh olive oil

is soon after the harvest, in the first few months of the year when it is at its best.

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO BE POPULAR THIS COMING SUMMER?

We are hoping to launch a new damson vinegar and a new rhubarb vinegar this year so watch out salad eaters, salads are going to get even more exciting!

HOW DO YOU UPSELL WITH OILS AND VINEGARS?

Our customers benefit from being able to taste all of our products and really enjoy understanding how best to use that product in a recipe. As many of our bottles link together to create sets, there is a wonderful opportunity for a customer to buy a small amount of all the ingredients for a particular dressing. Our Elderflower & Lemon Oil Ball is a great example of this. Together they can make a delicious vinaigrette so it makes sense to buy both products.

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Update your shelves with our pick of the best

1 THE LITTLE HERB FARM: Raspberry & Rosemary Vinegar

The Little Herb Farm's Raspberry & Rosemary Vinegar Dressing is made using juicy Scottish raspberries and fresh rosemary grown on the family farm. As this dressing contains no oil, it has a clean, fresh taste, and being gluten-free, fat-free and suitable for vegans and vegetarians is perfect for all. Lindsey Anderson, owner says, "at The Little Herb Farm, we like to drizzle our Raspberry & Rosemary dressing over a mango and chicken salad - yum!"
thelittleherbfarm.co.uk



4 THE FRENCH DRESSING COMPANY: No 14 French Dressing

"It's often been said that it's the little things in life that make a big difference, and we couldn't agree more," says Gillian Foreshew, founder. "From a secret family recipe, our award-winning dressings are lovingly made and it's our commitment to detail such as the use of extra virgin olive oil and freshly squeezed lemon juice that ensure the perfect blend and perfect taste for each and every one of our numbered dressings."
thefrenchdressingcompany.com



6 COCONUT KITCHEN: Miso, Lemon & Sesame Dressing

This dressing is a Japanese-style, vegan-friendly dressing for salad leaves, noodles or it can be used as a dip for meat or vegetables, and "it's also great with cured fish, sushi or sashimi," says Paul Withington, director. "A nutty sesame flavour with a citrus tang and hint of wasabi, it will really liven up your food!"
thecoconutkitchen.co.uk



2 ACEDOMODENA: Condimento Bianco with Thyme

Thyme is an ancient herb which classically contributes to the overall flavor of a dish - bringing the other flavours into focus, without overpowering them. Acetomodena's thyme-flavoured white condiment is therefore a perfect vehicle for the thyme flavor, delicate yet strong and focused. Gary Paton, foreign sales and export said, "It is fantastic used as a glaze over roasted pork, with roast chicken, scrambled eggs, white fish, beef fillets or with leg of lamb."
acetomodena.it



3 AVLAKI AGATHERÍ GROVES: Extra Virgin Olive Oil

"Grown 5/600 metres above sea level, the terrain is limestone and marble, the climate often severe in winter, Agatherí produces top quality olives which make oil that is exceptionally subtle on the palate with long lasting afternotes," explain Avlaki owners Deborah and Natalie. A "complex and sophisticated oil with a long finish", this is a subtle and high quality product which works well as a finishing oil in a number of dishes.
oliveoilavlaki.com



5 ODYSEA: Organic Grape Molasses

An ancient sweetener called "Petimezi" in Greek, Odysea's Organic Grape Molasses is an intense, sweetly aromatic syrup made from concentrated must of organic grapes grown in the Messinia region of Greece, an area famous for its vineyards. Great as a natural alternative sweetener, it can be used in marinades and dressings or stirred into drinks as a cordial.
odysea.com



7 A LITTLE BIT: Lemon & Tarragon Dressing

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alittlebit.co.uk



8 TRUFFLE HUNTER: White Truffle Oil

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trufflehunter.co.uk



“Products that are naturally infused are becoming more prolific, especially as consumer demand for more natural products continues to rise”

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Last Words

Jimmy Doherty

“Life is good”



We're well and truly starting to warm up here on the farm. The Easter holidays are upon us, which is our first real chance to show off all the hard work of the last year. Investment in our infrastructure is ongoing and we're always striving to improve the customer experience, recently refurbishing the outside area with new rustic brick paving outside our restaurant which will make it much easier in terms of access and give us a lovely new outdoor dining area for the summer months.

Lambing has almost finished and we've had a whole host of new arrivals – both lambs and pigs! Daniele, our stockman, now has a new generation to add to the breeding programme which is a very pleasing result of all the planning and preparation work we put in. These will go to continue to serve our on-site butchery and add to the daily-changing home-grown menu in the restaurant.

Executive chef, Jon Gay served up some of this amazing produce at an exciting charity event at the end of March – the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation's CEO Cookoff held at Old Billingsgate Market. It was an amazing event which raises money for the Food Foundation which provides food education schemes throughout the UK. UKHarvest was also supported as part of the event – they seek to save quality surplus food from going to landfill and redistributes it to people in need. Jon's team consisted of him, sous chef Andrew Turnbull and and CEOs Philip Orwell (Venture Three) and Melissa Robertson (This is Now). Preparing his dish of Gloucester Old Spot, onions and trotter gravy in front of an audience including the

Duchess of Cambridge, Jon and his chief executives helped raise over £500,000 and provided a fantastic platform to showcase our produce and his creativity.

Our zookeeper has welcomed more new arrivals! Hiccup and Bobo are two beautiful raccoons – a pair of sisters we've re-homed from a private collection. They are six months old and hand-reared due to their mother dying and will be a fantastic addition to the visitor experience. They will be available for our new Close Encounters products where visitors will be able to get up close and meet some of the zoo residents on special pre-booked visits.

A favourite with all visitors is the Butterfly House which is open again for the season. Preparation goes on for months with the planting of

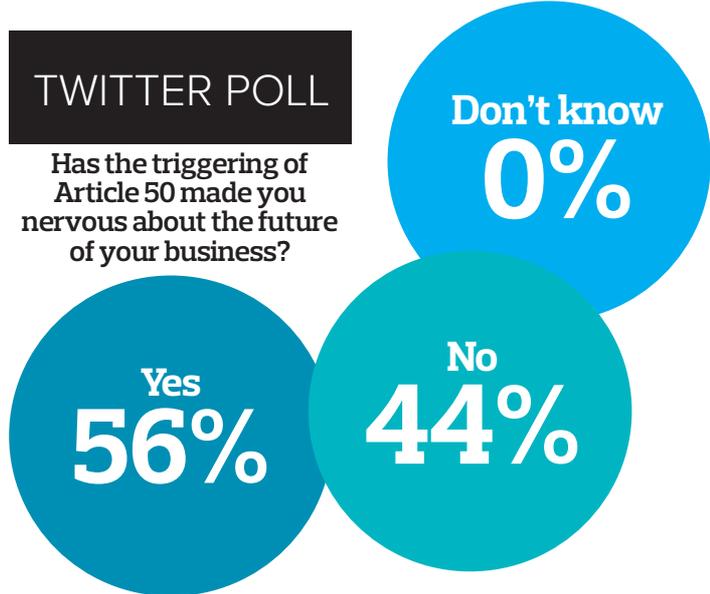
flowers suited to the species which will be making it their home. Visitors come from far afield to explore the tropical walk-through and it's a really important part of our schools programme within our education offering.

Preparations are well underway in the butchery for Easter orders. Orders for cuts of spring lamb for the Easter Sunday roast are already coming in and will be winging their way around the country in time for delivery. The butchery is another area where experiential offerings will be available. Sausage-making and butchery courses will be programmed of 2017 which will give people a chance to get behind the scenes and learn about our traditional rearing and butchery practices – all part of our mission to help people share the good life.

Life is good on the farm and we have so much more to share with you over the year – more improvements, our festival plans – it's never ending and so exciting. See you next month.

TWITTER POLL

Has the triggering of Article 50 made you nervous about the future of your business?



“ Investment in our infrastructure is ongoing and we're always striving to improve the customer experience ”



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To create is to be human. Whatever we do – work or play – a human being is at her or his best when creating. This can be physically creating something, working out better ways of doing stuff, having new ideas or working out ways of propagating our products or message. Being creative is what we do. (Just for any accountants reading this, I am not advocating creative accounting – you too can be creative in legal ways!) Even in the most mundane jobs it is possible to be creative e.g. to create better customer service if you are in the service industry. Even being a better colleague can create a better atmosphere at work. This assumes we are being proactive i.e. we are in control of our lives. Unfortunately, many of us are instead reactive, and driven by things we have to do. This stifles creativity. To function properly as human beings, we need time to recharge our batteries (and top up our creative juices), but so

SPECIALITY BITES

Paul Hargreaves of Cotswold Fayre



“
A human being is at his or her best when creating
”

many of us do not do this. For most of us this may mean being on our own away from others.

I expect most discoveries or inventions (the ultimate in creativity) happened when those people were on their own. Do you imagine Isaac Newton was running a barbecue in his back garden when the apple fell on his head? Probably not – I would suspect him to have been on his own when he ‘discovered’ gravity! Was Michelangelo out shopping when he had the vision of the magnificent painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel? Probably not! We need time on our own for creativity to flow. How do we achieve this when there are always things to do, emails

to answer and social media updates to post?

Easy! For one, turn your phone off, shut down your computer, turn off the TV and get rid of all other distractions. Personally, I find it easier getting away from my house, where there are often reminders of what I should do. Going for a walk is a good one, or sitting in the garden. I don’t do this every day, but if I don’t have “me time” at some point during the week, I am likely to go mad at worst or get stressed and certainly not be in a good state of mind to come up with any good ideas. Some people find it helpful to have a certain place they go to think, or a certain time of the week when they

do this. Rhythm and routine certainly help.

Many religions have a Sabbath or holy day of some description, and it does seem as if our biological make-up means that humans perform best if we have a fallow day each week. Recent research shows that zoo animals become stressed if they are on view to the public seven days a week, so many zoos now close the enclosures in rotation for one day each week.

Too many of us are continually answering e-mails or sending social media updates all seven days a week. It really isn’t good for you – stop it! By doing so you will have better relationships with your family and loved ones if you are present to them for at least one day a week (for a start) rather than being continually distracted. So not only will these few tips help you be better at your job, but they will also help your family life. What reason is there not to put them into practice?

5 MINUTES WITH... LOIS WILSON

co-founder of Saint Aymes



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

I would be working in advertising as an art director.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

Sales associate at Abercrombie & Fitch.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

Film, fashion and good food.

WHAT'S THE WORST JOB YOU'VE DONE?

Data entry.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE MEAL?

Lamb chops with garlic mash and peppercorn gravy.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF YOUR JOB?

Being able to do several different tasks in one day, from photography to web design to making chocolate.

DO YOU LIKE TO COOK?

Yes.

AND YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE?

Not being able to call in sick.

HOW ABOUT THE FOOD INDUSTRY – IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO CHANGE?

Yes. I think that the food industry especially chocolate lags behind in design and the full immersive experience.

TEA OR COFFEE?

Coffee, always.

WHAT'S YOUR MOTTO?

If your dream doesn't scare you, it's too small.

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

I really try to avoid weird food. I hate bananas.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?

Escape from Camp 14.

SWEET OR SAVOURY?

Sweet with a hint of savoury.

DIARY DATES

April

24th–26th
FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW
NEC, Birmingham
farmshopanddelishow.co.uk

24th–26th
NATIONAL CONVENIENCE SHOW
NEC, Birmingham
nationalconvenienceshow.co.uk

May

3rd–4th
THE FOOD & DRINK TRADE SHOW
Three Counties Showground, Malvern
thefoodanddrinktradeshow.co.uk

4th
TRE BICCHIERI TOUR 2017
London
winetecalondon.co.uk

5th–7th
BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW SPRING
Harrogate
bbcgoodfoodshowspring.com

8th–11th
TUTTO FOOD
Milan
tuttofood.it

22nd–24th
LONDON INTERNATIONAL WINE FAIR
Olympia, London
londonwinefair.com

23rd–25th
SWEETS & SNACKS EXPO
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sweetsandsnacks.com

23rd–25th
CAFFE CULTURE SHOW
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MAGAZINE

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SPECIALITY FOOD

2017

THE MODERN CHEESESELLER

How To Sell Cheese Now

The Courtyard Dairy

La Cave à Fromage

La Fromagerie

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Brindisa

THE VALUE OF AFFINAGE

Experts talk
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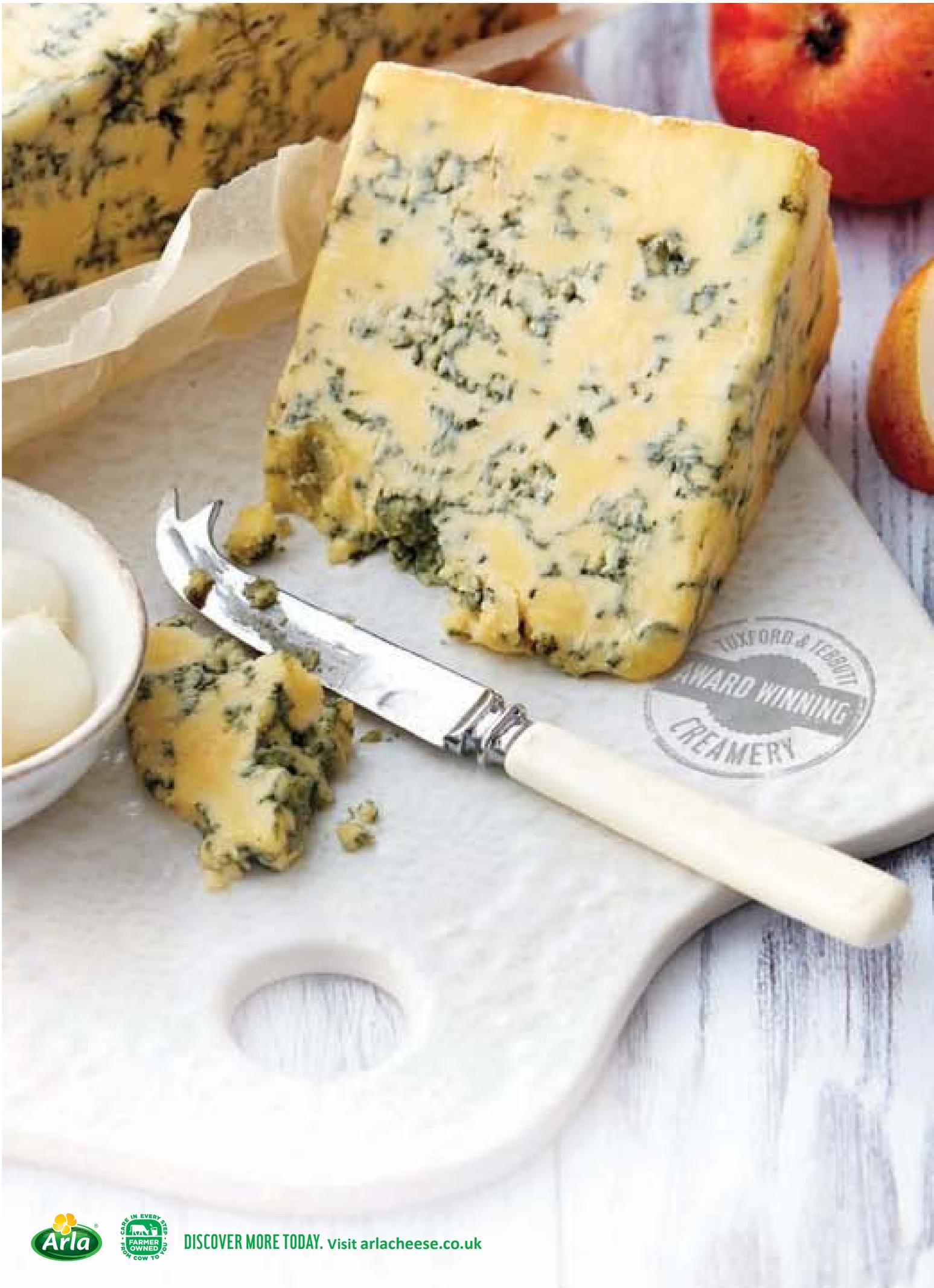
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WELCOME TO CHEESE BUYER

Essential reading for anyone who is serious about cheese, Cheese Buyer brings you advice and opinion from those in the know



Welcome to the latest edition of *Cheese Buyer*, the annual cheese industry special from the publishers of *Speciality Food*. The world of food and drink is constantly changing, not least due to Brexit and the resultant negotiations, and we're here to shine a spotlight on a sector which not only fills those in the food industry with pride, but also leads the pack when it comes to the fine reputation of British produce abroad.

For generations, inimitable cheeses like Stilton, Cheddar and a number of territorials have been earning themselves a secure position in the counters of discerning cheesemongers across the Continent and beyond, and *Cheese Buyer* is honoured to be reporting on the industry at a time when a new wave of innovators is coming to the fore to help move this strong reputation forward.

In the following pages, we speak to a number of revered cheese sellers to uncover their picks of the contemporary clan as well as the classic British cheeses they wouldn't be without (p. 10), plus from p. 18 onwards we highlight the producers you need to know.

“ *Cheese Buyer* is honoured to report on the industry at a time when a new wave of innovators is coming to the fore to help move the cheese industry's strong reputation forward, both at home and abroad ”

From centuries-old cheesemakers bringing ancient techniques and recipes to the market to modern brands carving their own niche, we've got it covered.

We also take a look at the world of international cheese, and gather the recommendations of cheese sellers and distributors throughout Europe. Some of their choices will already be cornerstones of your counter, but you're sure to discover one or two which will be new to you and your customers, too.

Of course, stocking your counter is only part of running a cheese

shop, and once these cheeses are on your premises they must be properly cared for to reach your customer in optimum condition. Introducing affinage to your business can seem a tall mountain to climb when you're new to the skill, so we've spoken to a renowned French cheesemonger and affineur, a cheese grader and a dairy technology consultant to share their expertise (p. 14). The consensus? Affinage would prove a valuable string to your bow.

Another profitable way to set your business apart from the crowd is to offer a number of exceptional, perhaps lesser-known accompaniments, and we highlight our top cheese partners as well as make a few pairing suggestions of our own (p. 16). Whether you simply place these items on your shelves or are inspired to run pairing events, now's the time to offer your customers the full cheese experience.

I hope this publication proves valuable in your quest to produce the perfect cheese counter.

Holly

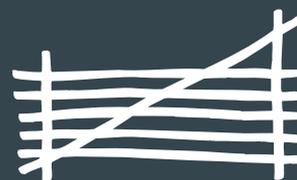
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“LET’S GROW AND PROSPER”

Words of wisdom, in these changing times, from La Fromagerie’s Patricia Michelson

How perplexing it is for my business – do I need to change the name from La Fromagerie to The Olde Worlde English Cheese Shoppe for a touch of irony? Of course we’re not going to do this, but I believed the name was very apt when I started the business 26 years ago as I strived to be a refiner and maturer of artisan raw milk cheeses and follow the style of French affinage cellars.

An homage to traditional ways of working in France has now rather left a bitter taste since Brexit has resonated a desire to become an island again, but I am hopeful that having had the time as Europeans we will move forward to create new ways of showing

regionality in our food and drink, and especially our cheeses, with enterprising producers willing to make not copies of Continental varieties but British versions suited to their part of the country, with flavour profiles to match. We have seen artisan cheesemaking suffering in Europe of late, with even the great Camembert now only made in larger dairies and no single herd dairy cheeses available for export.

There may be a feeling of an uncertain future for artisan farmhouse cheesemaking on the continent, but it has never been so buoyant in Britain – especially with a core of young new cheesemakers. I look in my Cheese Room and see such a fine

array of cheeses, including Almnas Tegel from the island of Hjo, Southern Sweden, a selection of US farmstead cheeses that would make you wonder in disbelief they actually came from the land of canned spray cheese, and British cheeses proudly presented in their fine coats of many different rinds. As a cheesemonger I imagine that I will continue to fly innumerable flags, and enjoy the cheeses of many countries, because it is simply so exciting to be able to have them on the shelves; but what will the challenges be to business?

Prices, of course, are a big question mark, and whether we can maintain the status quo or fight with our margins. Rents and rates have given us more than enough headaches, and minimum wages must be acknowledged or even surpassed – especially if your business is in a city like London where living standards are costly. How will the government help small independent businesses like cheesemongers? Or more pertinently, British cheesemakers? Machinery and

dry feed are bought in Europe and many dairies buy rennet and starters from there, too. Prices will obviously go up if duties and taxes are imposed on imports, thereby making the end product more expensive. It all filters down, and if we are to export, the same rules apply. If we are to buy more British cheese to compensate for less from the Continent, how are we going to be supported by the government with decent transport facilities?

If there is one thing I’ve learned working with Continental businesses, it’s their efficient transport services to the UK. It is often easier to get cheese from the mountains in Savoie than from East Anglia; it’s very frustrating but I would need to see a concerted effort to get reliable transport links available all over the country running efficiently and regularly through the week, that are also cost effective, in order for us to be able to enjoy all the regional cheeses and hopefully new cheeses from single producers. If that is the one thing that happens, it will be worth leaving the Union for!

Of course, cheesemongers can just concentrate on local cheeses if they wish, if they decide that they have enough variety to showcase to their customers. However, I want to see more enterprise in some businesses being able to continue bringing in great farmhouse cheeses from the Continent, and maybe now wholesale them in smaller units to other shops and businesses wanting to still keep a few foreign items. If the transport improves and is more affordable, I want La Fromagerie to be able to send these cheeses to other parts of the UK; after all, my business has had many years to hone our way of working with cheese, and as an independent company we would be delighted to be able to let other businesses sell alpine and other mountain cheeses, as they are not only delicious but also reflect the place and land with memories of holidays and travels. I sincerely hope that there will be entente-cordiale between us, allowing a generosity of spirit with trade links and genial working relationships. It may be a big ask, but can we live and work in harmony, grow and prosper, and find equal opportunities for all? It would certainly be in all our best interests.

“ It may be a big ask, but can we live and work in harmony, grow and prosper, and find equal opportunities for all? It would certainly be in all our best interests ”



THE MODERN CHEESE SELLER

Meet Morgan McGlynn of Cheeses of Muswell Hill – a thoroughly modern independent

“AS A YOUNG WOMAN, THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE SECTOR WHO THINK I SHOULDN'T BE HERE”

Being a younger woman helps my business to stand out from the crowd. This is quite a male dominated industry, and I've found that when I took over at 21 I was laughed at quite a lot. I was patronised, told I didn't know what I was doing. It was a real uphill struggle, both to set myself apart from other people in the industry and make a name in my own right. As a young woman, there were a lot of people in the sector who were fantastic towards me, but also a great number who thought I shouldn't be there. A lot of people would ask, “Who does she think she is?” The physical side of the job can be a challenge. We often have to move a 50 kilo cheese from the store room to the shop – around 100 metres – and it's an absolute killer every time! Sometimes I wonder if I'm cut out for that side of things, but then I feel proud of myself for carving my own path. I definitely depend on my partner

to an extent – he helps with things like hanging signs – but I love the fact that these days women can have our own trade; we don't need someone to back us and we can be quite independent. In my case, I've had no choice but to be that way.



“IN A NUMBER OF WAYS WE'RE QUITE OLD FASHIONED – THE SHOP IS 39 YEARS OLD NOW, SO THE SHOP ITSELF HAS A LOT OF HISTORY”

Some of the people walking into the shop today would have walked in nearly four decades ago, too, and we make sure we're offering them the same service which has kept them coming back time and time again. I've always been excited to put my stamp on the shop, though. One of the biggest changes I made was to focus on buying from tiny suppliers. It takes a huge amount of effort, and I'm not in the shop as much as I'd sometimes like to be, but ultimately I need to spend time with the producers in order to support their work fully.

“SMALL-SCALE CHEESES ARE THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY”

The more people that try proper, high quality cheese from a cheesemonger the better, as they'll recognise the difference between that and cheese from a supermarket and always buy from indies. I can't imagine that the popularity of independents will lessen – we, as an example, are going from strength to strength and I hope that continues. We've recently set up a wholesale arm focusing on British cheese, which has gone down brilliantly. It's offering a platform for small-scale, almost village cheeses which few people have heard about – so they can start to be appreciated further afield. They're not being exhibited enough, but they represent the future of our industry.

“CUSTOMERS DESERVE TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT THE PRODUCT THEY'RE BUYING, FROM THE NAME OF THE FARMER TO THE COLOUR OF HIS TRACTOR”

When someone enters a cheese shop, they want to be greeted by someone who knows everything about the cheese they're after – rather than a Waitrose or Sainsbury's counter, where what's written on the label is everything you get. It's become a lot more popular to find out where one's food is coming from, so people are coming to us for expertise. They deserve to know everything about the product they're buying, from the name of the farmer to the colour of his tractor – these silly little stories you'd only know if you'd visited and spent time on the farm. I take my team on farm visits once a month, which makes a great difference. Also, knowing the people you're buying from. It's nice to know that person made that cheese, or that the milk from those cows you saw last week have produced this one. It's massively important to me, and I hope that comes across to our customers. As a result of the horse meat scare, people have realised that they need to take more care in what they're buying – it's all well and good a product saying something on a label, but can you really trust a label? Buying locally and British has definitely become more popular in the past couple of years, and will continue to do so with everything that's going on – Brexit, climate change – so we definitely plan to continue to support our British suppliers.

“ Customers deserve to know everything about the product they're buying, from the farmer's name to the colour of his tractor ”

“ I think our social media presence goes some way in explaining how we came to be named Most Loved Shop in London ”

“I'M ALL ABOUT TRYING SOMETHING COMPLETELY NEW”

About six months ago, we got a cheese in from Italy and were the first people to have it in London, let alone the UK. It was a chocolate blue cheese, and it's so good! It's a complete 'Marmite' cheese - I loved it as soon as I tried it, whereas some people have spat it out in the shop! I first came across it as a tiny sample a lady handed to me in a carrier bag, and is now a really big seller. It has chocolate alcohol injected into it and is coated with cocoa powder. This is no novelty cheese; it's very highly respected in Italy - the British palate is just not used to it yet, but they go crazy for it when they try it! We sell a lot of accompaniments in the shop, and, as with our cheese selection, are keen to sell things which are completely different. A few weeks ago we had Dixie from Aphrodites Pomegranate Ketchup in the shop; her product goes amazingly with cheese, has beautiful packaging and

has gone down really well with our customers. We try to look for things which our customers haven't seen before, which perhaps aren't out in the market yet and are a little bit different, or are from a tiny producer who maybe doesn't even have packaging yet.

“PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO GO ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND SEE A DESCRIPTION OF A CHEESE, THEY WANT TO SEE WHY YOU LIKE IT AND HOW TO EAT IT”

Social media plays a huge part in running a modern day business. Whether I'm posting about cheese or my day to day life, people can relate to me and the business which really helps them connect with the shop. It's important to be on every format - SnapChat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook - they're all used continually across the board, and you have to be on all of them to hit



all the markets. I find it's best to publish what you find interesting, rather than what you think people will want to see. You can post a photo of a great Cheddar, but by the third time you've posted a Cheddar image people will start to get a bit bored. I tend to post things I cook with cheese, to inspire my followers, and always take photos of cheese boards when I'm out for dinner - the

good, the bad and the ugly! So long as you have a face and are using your own voice, and not just saying things you think your customers will want to hear, you'll do well. People don't want to go on social media and see a description of a cheese, they want to see why you like it and how to eat it. At first I found being on social media really nervewracking - I considered it a very open platform and that I was really putting myself out there - but it's done wonders for us and we've now got about 20,000 followers across social media... amazing for such a teeny shop! Everyone's becoming a lot more foodie, which is great - not least for us in the industry, as people are more perceptive to what we're doing than ever before. I like to think Britain is catching up with places like New York, where people queue up for two days to get a cupcake which everyone's been talking about. It's just so exciting! I think our social media presence goes some way in explaining why we got a massive support for last year's TimeOut awards; it was truly overwhelming to win. To win Most Loved Shop in Muswell Hill, let alone Most Loved Shop in London, is incredible, and still blows my mind.

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STILTON: AN ENDURING
BRITISH FAVOURITE

BRING ON THE BRITISH NEW WAVE

Some of Britain's most renowned cheesemongers tell us why a fresh crop of new cheesemakers are infusing the industry with excitement

Fans of contemporary British cheese would be surprised to discover that the industry wasn't in particularly fine fettle back in the 1980s, when compared to how it appears today. The limited dedicated cheese shops that could be found would sell a minimal range, mainly relying on Cheddar, the seasonal demand for Stilton and the occasional Brie purchase. However, out of the monotony sprang a movement of fresh-faced enthusiasm, with farmhouse and small-scale producers reviving old styles and reinterpreting Continental favourites with a British twist. This roused the British cheese renaissance that's prevalent today.

These days, cheese constitutes a major part of the UK food and drink export strategy, with exports 7% up in 2016 compared to 2015, according to ADHB Dairy statistics. Total Cheddar exports were also up 3.5% on the previous year, with exports to outside of the EU increasing by 20%. It appears that Britain is giving the major

players a run for their money, too, with 750 different cheeses made on these shores, around 350 more varieties than produced in France.

Bath's The Fine Cheese Co. has been a maturer, wholesaler, retailer and exporter of artisan British cheeses for 20 years, and since its inception has focused on nurturing and supporting British cheesemakers. Ann-Marie Dyas, owner, believes that this is a fruitful time for British producers. "We are exporting across the world and finding markets not just for Cheddar and Stilton, but cheeses like Old Smales and Wyfe of Bath," she says. "The creativity in our UK cheese industry is way ahead of Europe; we may have some ground to make up but we are getting there."

Stocking over 100 British cheeses, The Fine Cheese Co. is well-versed in the diverse offerings available from these shores. "Raw milk cheeses like Baron Bigod, hand-ladled in the traditional way and made with loving care, has its own unique taste," Ann-Marie



SINODUN HILL



COURTYARD DAIRY

explains. "Then there is Tom Calver of Westcombe Cheddar fame making English Ricotta. We definitely have the French and the Italians on the run."

It's satisfying to live in a time of talented artisans dedicated to the art of cheesemaking, who are willing to expand the quality of the UK's cheese portfolio. When it comes to new cheesemakers we should be keep an eye out for,

THE FINE CHEESE CO.'S ESSENTIAL BRITISH CHEESEBOARD

Ann-Marie Dyas shares her five must-stocks – a showcase of modern British cheeses alongside long-time favourites

CHEDDAR

As we are from the West Country I really have to start with a raw milk Cheddar. Please don't ask me to choose between Montgomery, Keen's or Westcombe – they are all special in different ways

STILTON

Another must-have is this second pillar of British cheese. I am a huge fan of Colston Bassett for its remarkable consistency of quality and super creamy finish

RACHEL

This cheese from Whitelake Cheese is a supple-textured washed-rind goat that is original and delicious

TUNWORTH

This is Stacey Hedges' brilliant take on a hand-ladled Camembert. It has a 'cabbage-like' aroma and flavour

LORD OF THE HUNDREDS

A very fruity and rich ewe's milk cheese made by The Traditional Cheese Dairy, it is Pecorino-like in style

“ The creativity in our UK cheese industry is way ahead of Europe; we may have some ground to make up but we are getting there ”

cheesemaking profile. Andy echoes Ann-Marie's enthusiastic outlook on the UK cheese industry, especially the young crop of artisanal producers. "It is moving so fast," he says. "There are more and more cheesemongers and makers who care about producing and selling a really quality product made by small-scale farms. It is exciting to see this dedication towards quality and farming sustainability. Every year there are new cheeses – they are so different and many are fabulous!"

When it comes to the trends that are propelling the demand for British artisan cheese, Andy highlights an array of producers. "Mario Olianas from just outside Leeds is doing some really interesting things with Italian recipes and cheeses he knows – they're very tasty and a bit different," he explains. "Tom and Clare up at Whin Yeats Dairy are making a really interesting Wensleydale-type cheese, too, which is a brilliant example of that profile."

Andy believes that these aren't just halcyon days destined for the history books, and there's still plenty more to come. "I think we



BARON BIGOD:
A MODERN-DAY CLASSIC

will continue to see more small farmhouse cheesemakers spring up, as the trend continues to gather momentum," predicts Andy. "Soft and lactic cheeses are in as they see returns faster and the flavours are really approachable, but it would be really nice to see even more territorial cheeses rejuvenated by small farms, too."

The mainstay of The Courtyard Dairy's selling output are territorial

and traditional-leaning, explains Andy. "Especially Lancashire, Harord Cheddar and Stichelton, however people come to see us for something a bit different, and it really does depend on what is in season," he says. "Right now St James sells amazingly well; it is local, tastes amazing and has a great story. It has also just come back into season, so that gives it a nice bounce."

THE COURTYARD DAIRY'S MUST-STOCK CHEESES

Andy Swinscoe offers a lesson in curating a well-rounded British cheeseboard

HAFORD CHEDDAR

It's really good at the moment – we have a batch from February which is just amazing!

ST JAMES

This is really different – so rich and full of flavour

HEBDEN GOAT

A herby goat's cheese which is relatively unknown but the closest thing for me to a proper French goat's cheese

YOUNG BUCK BLUE

A smooth, rich and buttery blue cheese

KIRKHAM'S LANCASHIRE

The crowd-pleaser that everyone loves – I enjoy its profile, which is soft, buttery and rich

“ It's satisfying to live in a time of talented artisans dedicated to the art of cheesemaking, who are willing to expand the quality of the UK's cheese portfolio ”

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INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

We go continental? Cheese Buyer speaks to connoisseurs of Italian, French and Spanish cheeses about why they're integral options for your cheese-selling arsenal

La Cave à Fromage has four cheese shops dotted around London and Brighton and a sister wholesale company that stocks Michelin-starred restaurants like Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons. David Deaves, retail divisional manager of La Cave à Fromage, talks to us about the UK's appetite for French cheese

"There are so many great French cheeses available, but people can be habitual when buying both cheese and wine. My theory is they know it, like it and trust it so they know they will enjoy it. The demand for French cheese can vary in our shops depending on their location. Our South Kensington store has a high demand for French cheese, whereas our Hove location has a bigger demand for British cheese. We saw an increase for French cheese during the Christmas period across all of our shops. I think there will always be a demand for French cheese in the UK; people automatically associate France with cheese.

"French washed-rind cheese can be overlooked quite often, however I put this down to the fact that British palates may not be accustomed to strong smelly

LA CAVE À FROMAGE'S 5 TOP SELLING FRENCH CHEESES

- Brie de Meaux
- Comté Grande Reserve
- Radette
- Brillat-Truffe
- Mont d'or

cheeses like Epoisses and Munster. When it comes to selling French cheese it's important to get to know what your customers like, and present them with options to taste. If they ask for Brie De Meaux, offer them a taste of Brie de Melun – this gives the customer a choice and expands their repertoire.

"My favourite French cheeses have got to be: Selles-sur-Cher, a charcoal-coated goat's cheese from Central France; Fougerus, which is made in Ill-de-France and similar to a Brie but packs a lot more flavour; La Napoleon 24 months, an ewe's milk cheese from the Midi-Pyrénées that has a firm and creamy texture but a spicy sharp finish; Bleu des Causses, a cow's milk cheese from the Midi-Pyrénées; and Langres La Cave, a cheese we mature from the Champagne region that's washed in Marc de Bourgogne by our affineur, which gives it a rich and fruity taste. It's vital that our whole team has

a good understanding of cheese and wine – it enables them to suggest and upsell. Quince sits very well next to ewe's milk cheese, dessert wines work well with salty blues, and we always to ask the customer if they need crackers or bread.

Alison Trozzi, director of Just So Italian, an Italian-centric wholesaler with two delis, certainly knows her Gorgonzola from her Burrata. She explains what Italian cheeses will make your counter sing

TOP SELLERS

Our top selling cheeses are Parmigiano Reggiano, Gorgonzola Dolce, Taleggio, Buffalo Mozzarella and Provolone Piccante. I think their popularity lies in the fact that they are the best-known Italian cheeses and the general public are aware of how to serve them.

DEMAND

There is a constant demand for Italian cheese in the UK. It's the second biggest selling category across our entire range of products, and it has been that way for years. I think that holidays to Italy and food programmes on television both have helped to promote sales.

MY ULTIMATE ITALIAN CHEESEBOARD

This is obviously a very personal choice but I would always go for a variety of textures and milks, including a blue, Pecorino and something creamy. Gorgonzola Dolce as it's luscious, creamy and blue; Pecorino Sardo for a spicy and nutty sheep's milk cheese; Taleggio Vero DOP which is richer and smoother than a regular Taleggio; Ubriaco al Vino Rosso as this 'drunken' cow's milk cheese has been steeped in red wine and always creates a talking point; and Capra al Pepe, a semi-hard goat's cheese covered in a black peppercorn crust.

PAIRING

In our shops we always have a display of accompaniments for cheese on top of the counter. Serving them with Italian Ciappe flatbreads or Puglian taralli are the best way of tasting the cheeses. Depending on the kind of cheese we would then recommend an Italian chutney, such as fig or green tomato, or suggest for customers to try them in the traditional Italian way with some honey, such as chestnut or dandelion.

Spanish cheese is not limited to Manchego, explains James Robinson, meat specialist and product trainer at Spanish food specialist Brindisa

WHAT ARE BRINDISA'S MOST POPULAR CHEESES?

Monte Enebro has been our best-selling cheese for more than 20 years. It is a superb goats' milk cheese made with pasteurised milk that is rich, creamy and dense. It is coated with penicilium roqueforti (normally found inside blue cheeses), which produces a thin grey speckled rind. This provides a spicy contrast to the smooth depth of the interior. It is so popular



THE INIMITABLE PARMIGIANO REGGIANO

because its quality is undoubted; once tasted, it's never forgotten. The cheese was created by Rafael Baez some 30 years ago and the dairy is now run by his daughters. Our second best-selling cheese is a three to four month-matured Manchego, made with unpasteurised ewes' milk. This is an excellent example of an affordable Manchego, with well-judged balance between flavour and texture. It is competitively priced for the quality of cheese produced by the Villarejo dairy.

WHAT'S THE DEMAND LIKE FOR SPANISH CHEESE IN THE UK?

We have seen a considerable increase in sales volumes of our cheeses over the last five years; what was initially a pragmatic response to the domestic financial crisis in Spain has now been grasped as a business opportunity by many, particularly younger, Spanish cheesemakers. We have been fortunate to be able to introduce some exceptional cheeses to the UK market. British audiences are more open than ever to tasting new products and we're much more receptive to foods from overseas.



BRINDISA

WHAT SPANISH CHEESES DO YOU THINK ARE UNDERAPPRECIATED IN THE UK?

Pretty much every one, apart from Manchego! Brindisa lists over 60 Spanish cheeses, the largest collection available in the UK, so that's indication of how many more varieties there are to explore.

COULD YOU SHARE SOME SPANISH CHEESE PAIRING ADVICE?

When it comes to pairing Spanish cheeses it makes sense to stick to Spanish wines in particular. The country has a wide variety of styles, grape varieties and terroirs,

meaning that there is almost always a suitable wine for any cheese. I like to experiment with sherries, which run the gamut from bone-dry Finos to ultra-sweet Pedro Ximenez wines. It is better to match by locale, rather than using traditional, one-size-fits-all pairings.

Membrillo, quince paste, has long been a favourite with Manchego, but it's also excellent with blue and other hard sheep's milk cheeses. There are some fine dry biscuits, excellent with cheese (or ham). Little Picos de pan breadsticks, or more traditional Galician ships' biscuits are a great, neutral accompaniment to cheeses.

BRINDISA'S TOP CHEESE PICKS

LUNA NEGRA

A soft, creamy, ash-covered goat's cheese from the province of Avila

CABRA DEL TIETAR

From the same dairy as Monte Enebro, this is a hard goat's milk cheese with distinct notes of fudge and a clean aftertaste

GRAZALEMA DE OVEJA

A remarkable sheep's milk cheese from the mountains of Cadiz in Andalusia. This cheese is dense but crumbly, moist but sweet and intensely flavoured

TORTA DE BARROS

This raw milk cheese, in a style typical of Extramedura, is made with cardoon thistle rennet, with an almost liquid centre, a rich, silky texture and with a distinct touch of bitterness on the finish

VALEDEON PICOS BLUE

Another blue from the mountains of northern Spain, with a distinctive coating of maple leaves, and made using 90% cow's milk and 10% goat's milk

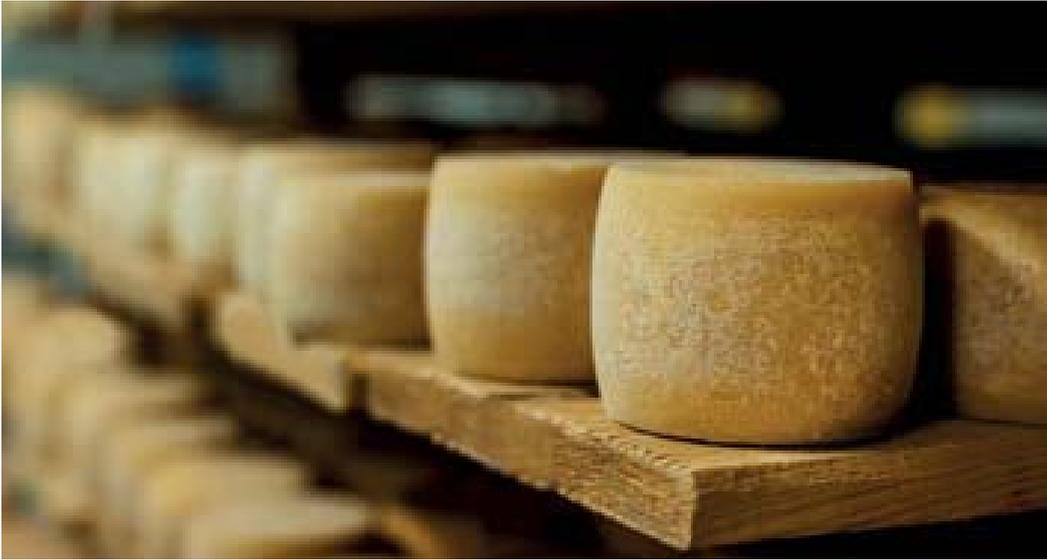
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THE ART OF AFFINAGE

Ever considered adding affinage to your cheesemongering repertoire? Three experts explain why and how you should



ALEX AND LEO GUARNERI: OWNERS, DIRECTORS AND CHEESEMONGERS AT ANDROUET, LONDON

“LET THE CHEESE SPEAK” Nicolas Aznarez, Matthieu Saupin and Alex Guarneri, Androuet

HOW IMPORTANT IS AFFINAGE IN CHEESEMONGERING?

Affinage is one of the key points of a good final product regarding taste, texture and smell. It's a

succession of considerations applied to the cheese from the first day in the cellar until it goes out for sale. Without affinage you will never bring a cheese to its ultimate quality.

WHAT MAKES IT SUCH AN ART FORM?

It's an art because you begin with a vision of how you would like your cheese to be (for example, if you want your cheese to become creamier or firmer). Afterwards, the cheese will tell you during its maturing process how you should look after it (for example, if the cheese is wet at the bottom you know you'll have to turn it).

It's also an art because the cheese is changing every day. Every cheese is different due to the quality of milk, which will vary along the seasons and the temperature and humidity present on the day the cheese was made. Every cheese begins with milk, but you have a huge number of potential possible cheeses to create.

DOES A CHEESEMONGER NEED TO BE VERY SKILLED IN ORDER TO BECOME AN AFFINEUR?

It's take time to understand and listen to the cheeses. In the same way as a chef, an affineur needs to understand the chemistry of its product, but also not to be too strict with those rules. One needs to let the heart of the cheese speak.

“TASTE PERCEPTION IS KEY”

Bruce Macdonald,
cheese grading
consultant and
founder of the Guild
of Cheese Graders



The affinage part of the process of delivering quality products to our consumers is as important as any of the previous stages.

Each style of cheese has its own requirements. These include temperature control, air distribution, humidity, packaging, rind/surface, turning, timescales, seasonality, frequency of sampling, the material it sits on, and care of or washing the rind.

Observing and controlling small changes can make the difference between “good” and “perfect”. When cheese starts to go “wrong” it invariably continues this path.

Retailers who mature their own cheeses are demonstrating an

THE ANDROUET GUIDE TO AFFINAGE

DOS

- First, every day you should look at your cheeses as they evolve really quickly
- You must store them in the right conditions and understand your cellar, because humidity and temperature will be different according to height and location (for example, it's always colder and drier next to the vent)
- You should accept that the cheese may go wrong and there is nothing you can do about it

DON'TS

- You should never over-wrap your cheese as doing so will not allow them to breathe. One consequence of this is that ammonia will be trapped in the cheese instead of evaporating, which is something you definitely do not want to happen
- You should never stop at your first idea because that's the cheese that will show you the path to take

“ Without affinage you will never bring a cheese to its ultimate quality ”

“ Observing and controlling small changes can make the difference between ‘good’ and ‘perfect’. When cheese starts to go ‘wrong’ it invariably continues this path ”

intimate level of knowledge of their products. This surely will bring benefits in terms of customer recognition of their skills.

For retailers starting out on this route, there is a lot of expertise available, whether this is about the maturing environment, the process or the cheeses themselves, although working closely with the cheese suppliers is best.

However, there is one part of the process which is common to all affineurs and graders, and that is taste perception. Some members of the industry either overlook, aren't fully aware of, or don't understand taste perception.

To properly select and describe cheeses, understanding taste perception

is vital. Everyone's is different. Some people are bitter-blind, some confuse bitterness and acidity, and yet they may not be aware of these problems. Additionally, there are many factors which can affect taste including ageing, health, diet, colds and flu.

I use a kit with “Indicative levels for taste recognition as recommended by BS 5929 Part 7:1992, ISO 3972: 1991.” This helps my clients to better understand their own taste perception, thereby helping them to improve their ability to discern flavours.

After all, our customers buy cheese mainly because of its flavours, and the more we know about flavour perception the better we will be able to meet their quality aspirations.

“SEEK EXPERT ADVICE”

Paul Thomas, dairy technology and hygiene consultant and author



Affinage can be interpreted in different ways. In France, the affineur is someone who collects,

usually partially ripe, cheese from the cheesemaker and takes responsibility for its maturation and distribution. In the UK, with few exceptions, it is more common for the cheesemaker to take responsibility for the affinage of a cheese.

That said, for cheesemongers seeking to add value to the cheeses they sell, there is certainly value in understanding the preferred growth conditions of the bacteria, yeasts or moulds involved in the ripening of cheeses they stock.

If the cheesemonger wants to ripen a cheese to perfection, they need to optimise the conditions for the growth of the desired ripening microflora

and minimise spoilage.

There are plenty of courses available in practical cheesemaking and even some which look at the microbiology and biochemistry of cheese ripening and flavour development.

There is a great body of knowledge out there, and cheesemongers can benefit from it just as much as cheesemakers do.

While food safety at retail level can usually be managed through pre-requisites alone, where affinage changes the intended use of a cheese or involves an additional process, such as rind-washing, the cheesemonger will need to notify their EHO. They will need include it in their HACCP and establish suitable verification methods. A single 'positive release' sample sent for microbiological analysis does not do this and is a very poor way to manage food safety.

Seek expert advice!

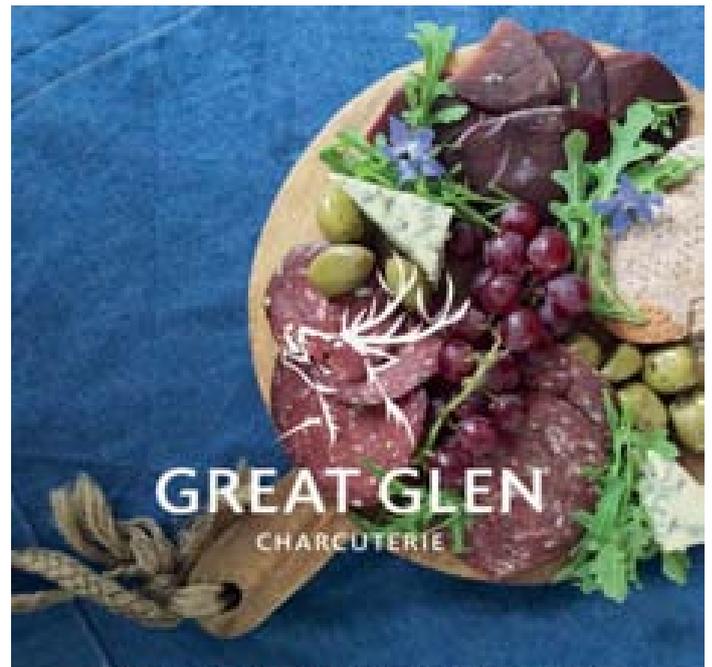


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MIX AND MATCH

Mastering the art of perfect cheese pairing not only puts you in good standing as an expert, but also provides a valuable opportunity to cross-sell

CHUTNEYS, PICKLES & JAMS

Sweet, spicy, piquant, rich and tangy – chutneys, pickles and jams are where creativity can really run wild when it comes to pairing options. However, you will need to beware of opting for overly extreme flavour pairings. Customer flavour preferences can differ considerably; while some consumers will want to top a soft, mild cheese with lashings of fruit and sweetness, others would much rather a dollop of heat to perk up its creaminess. A well-stocked section of chutneys, pickles and jams will provide your customers with ample opportunity to select their preferred style, and as the products tend to boast a long shelf-life, you won't run the risk of being lumbered with an abundance of out of date stock if they take a while to sell.



COTTAGE DELIGHT OLD ENGLISH CHUTNEY WITH CIDER

One of Cottage Delight's best sellers, this is crammed with lots of fruit and vegetables and a dash of cider.

cottage delight.co.uk



TRACKLEMENTS HOT HABANERO JAM

Perfect for those who like to frequent the upper end of the Scoville scale, this features potent chillies that pair nicely with an extra mature Cheddar.

tracklements.co.uk



THE BAY TREE FARMHOUSE PICKLE

A go-to jar for creating a truly satisfying ploughman's sandwich.

thebaytree.co.uk



HAWKSHEAD WESTMORLAND CHUTNEY

This is the perfect ploughman's pickle, dark, rich and packed with succulent fruit. This is the popular first chutney the company produced.

hawksheadrelish.com



STAG BAKERIES STORNAWAY SEAWEED WATER BISCUITS

A favourite amongst cheese lovers. Top with soft, lemony cheese and fig jelly.

stagbakeries.co.uk



THE FINE CHEESE CO. TOAST FOR CHEESE

A thin, light and crisp toast. The apricots, pistachios and sunflower seeds variety works well with delicate goat's cheese.

finecheese.co.uk



CRADOC'S VEGETABLES CRACKERS WITH BEETROOT & GARLIC

These pink square-shaped biscuits are speckled with garlic and pepper, and really complement the nutty, grassy notes of a stronger goat's cheese.

cradocssavourybiscuits.co.uk



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petersyard.com

CRACKERS AND BISCUITS

The percussionists of the cheese pairing world, crackers and savoury biscuits provide a steady backdrop for cheese and chutney to do their thing. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that the flavour characteristics of these vehicles should be overlooked, as they can come in a plethora of exciting guises. From lightly seeded oatcakes to floury rye crispbreads, they should act as a foundation that doesn't overpower the cheese and other accompaniments stacked on top, but subtly complement them.





CHARCUTERIE

There's nothing quite like a well-curated cheese and charcuterie board to pique a devout foodie's interest. Both foods have a similar make-up consisting of protein, fat and salt, which means they match well. Texture is a pivotal factor that needs to be taken into consideration. While silky thin Prosciutto di Parma might match pleasantly with a gooey cheese in the flavour department, their mutual suppleness might make for a fiddly texture clash. Try Prosciutto di Parma combined with Parmigiano Reggiano, robust and peppery cured meats like salami with a cooling ricotta, and spicy sausage with a striking blue cheese.



**GREAT GLEN CHARCUTERIE
WHOLE GREEN PEPPER SALAMI**

This salami is made with pure venison and gently spiced with added green peppercorns. It's delicious with roasted peppers and cream cheese.
greatglencharcuterie.com



**WOODALL'S
CUMBRIAN HAM**

This cut is traditionally hand-cured using an old family recipe, lending the hams a prosciutto-style flavour after six months spent maturing.
woodallscharcuterie.co.uk



**THREE LITTLE PIGS
RARE BREED CHORIZO - MILD**

Perfect for pairing with cheese as it contains all of the typical chorizo flavour without the whopping heat.
threelittlepigschorizo.co.uk



**CORNISH CHARCUTERIE
COPPA**

A delicious cured meat prepared from the shoulder of farm-reared Lop pigs. It's beautifully seasoned and is cured and matured for four months.
cornishcharcuterie.co.uk



**ADNAMS
SPINDRIFT**

A golden beer that's full of flavour with a crisp refreshing citrus taste, wonderful orange peel aromas and a full white head from the wheat added to the brew.
Pair with nutty cheeses.
adnams.co.uk



**MAGIC ROCK
CANNONBALL IPA**

High in alcohol and hugely hopped, its fruity, resinous hops compete against a sweet and malty backbone, while a bitterness builds to a mouth-puckering crescendo.
Pair with a washed rind.
magicrockbrewing.com



**BEAVERTOWN
SMOG ROCKET**

This smoked porter from Tottenham-based Beavertown uses nine different malts for a big flavour of molasses, raisins and caramel cut with the resinous US hop Chinook.
Pair with Stilton.
beavertownbrewery.co.uk



**SAMUEL SMITH
ORGANIC STRAWBERRY
FRUIT BEER**

The smooth distinctive character of the matured beer works well with pure organic strawberry juice.
Pair with burrata.
samuelsmithsbrewery.co.uk

BEER

While the world of cheese and beer pairing could still be perceived as being in its infancy when compared to the more documented area of cheese and wine, there are a fair few guiding principles that will put you in good stead. One of the most important things is to find a balance. A funky and tart sour beer will most likely complement a striking and pungent washed rind, whereas the peppery, floral nature of a witbier (wheat beer) will pair gorgeously with a fresh and buttery cheese. Beer and cheese pairing nights can work well as an after-hours event at your deli, and will illustrate your knowledge of not only artisanal cheeses, but the flourishing craft beer movement as well.





CLASS OF THEIR OWN

“Crafting award-winning cheeses demands enormous skill, dedication and a whole lot of passion. Thankfully, it’s what we do best,” says Phillip Holford of Arla

“Who doesn’t adore a chunk of fine cheese? From powerful Cheddars and distinctive reds to tangy blues and buttery whites, traditionally-made varieties are as popular today as they’ve always been. That’s why, here at Arla, we’re proud of our six hand-selected award-winning British creameries which are passionate about keeping traditional cheesemaking alive.

We admit it: we’re simply mad about cheese. But not just any old cheese, mind you. The kind we love is crafted by master cheesemakers using recipes handed down from generation to generation. And it’s still made in local creameries, too, where the subtle variations in climate and pasture creates distinctive cheeses with a character

all of their own.

By supporting our creameries and helping them craft fine cheeses, we’re extremely proud to bring heritage varieties to more and more cheese-lovers nationwide. A fine example is our Trevarrian creamery. Here, the experts craft Camembert, Brie and goat’s cheese to rival those made anywhere in the world. Exquisitely rich and buttery, these are true classics. And they delight international judging panels just as much as shoppers, if the regular haul of major awards is anything to go by.

Nature and nurture

Of course, the master cheesemakers enjoy a few natural advantages, such as the sweetest Cornish milk which they enrich with just the right splash of cream. But it also calls for

time-honoured recipes and that most important of all ingredients – passion.

Constantly striving for perfection, Trevarrian always ensure their whites display a distinctively silky texture and creamy mouth feel. It’s this love of cheese making that makes all the difference, something Cheryl Donald, process co-ordinator at Trevarrian, is passionately aware of. Cheryl says, “My granddad made cheese for 20 years, and my proudest moment was when I phoned him up and said, ‘Granddad, I’m making cheese just like you did!’”

Trevarrian’s Cornish Camembert is a real speciality. Mould-ripening the cheese gives a wonderful blend of complex flavours which complement the subtle earthy aroma and clean mushroom notes. Ageing the cheese allows these flavours to mature and become more powerful.

Their Cornish Brie boasts a beautifully mild, buttery flavour with a hint of sharpness. For those who love strong whites, this classic cheese can again be aged at home to intensify the flavours.

The creamery’s unique Gevrik (Cornish for ‘little goat’) is a legendary goat’s cheese. Mould-ripened for extra flavour, aficionados adore the oozing snow-white centre with its delicately mild taste and nutty edge.

Blue cheese heaven

Another of our creameries is the iconic Tuxford & Tebbutt which has been handcrafting Stilton since 1780. The world’s oldest maker of the ‘King of English Cheeses’, the creamery still occupies the same spot in Melton Mowbray, and is one of just six creameries in the world permitted to make Blue Stilton.

Time is a great teacher, and 237 years of experience has allowed Tuxford & Tebbutt to perfect their recipe to create a revered cheese that sweeps the board each year at international competitions.

The magic of crafting cheeses has never waned for quality controller Peter Hughes, who says, “I’m still passionate after working at Tuxford & Tebbutt for 27 years to make the highest quality cheese we can.”

Vats, salt, hoops

It all starts with open vats and freshly pasteurised milk. The cheese is then simply salted and milled into hoops, where it’s lovingly turned for up to five days before being carefully trundled to the maturing sheds. Each cheese is individually matured and graded by hand at regular intervals. Timing is everything, and the master cheesemakers apply all of their skill to bring their Stilton to fruition. The result is worth the wait; a delectably rich cheese with rounded, complex flavours, finished with a touch of piquancy and a creamy mouthfeel.

Shropshire Blue, too

The creamery also crafts the equally delicious Shropshire Blue. Perfected by hand, the master cheesemakers watch over this cheese like hawks to ensure absolute precision at every step of the process.

This Shropshire Blue boasts a robust nutty flavour and delightfully smooth and creamy texture, plus, of course, that highly distinctive colour. Natural Annatto is carefully added at the crucial moment to give the cheese a rich orange hue – which contrasts beautifully with the delicate veins of blue.

Discover more about Arla Cheese

Finding out more about the fascinating world of Arla Cheese is easy. Simply go to arlacease.co.uk and read all about our award-winning creameries, the passionate cheesemakers who work there, and how we craft the finest champion cheeses. After all, it’s what we do best.”

“By supporting our creameries and helping them craft fine cheeses, we’re extremely proud to bring heritage varieties to more and more cheese-lovers”



KALTBACH CREAMY FACT FILE

APPEARANCE:

A 4.2kg wheel of uniform semi-hard cheese. There is a smooth, natural black rind and a label on top

TEXTURE:

Semi-soft mountain cheese. A few pea-sized holes are sometimes on show

COLOUR:

Pale yellow/ivory

AROMA:

Fresh and sweet

FLAVOUR:

A strong, mature and well-rounded aromatic flavour

PAIR WITH:

Crusty bread and a good Spanish red wine

FROM THE CAVE TO YOUR COUNTER

Kaltbach Creamy's reputation is catching up with its Swiss cave-aged cousins, Emmi tells Cheese Buyer

Lying deep within the Santenberg sandstone mountain in Switzerland are the Kaltbach caves, the home and maturation chambers for world-renowned cheeses such as Kaltbach Le Gruyère AOP, Kaltbach Emmentaler and the increasingly popular Kaltbach Creamy. The caves have been used to age cheese since as far back as the 1950s. Located in the municipality of Mauensee, it has been owned by speciality Swiss cheese importer Emmi since 1993. In 2005, Emmi launched its Kaltbach brand to market speciality cheeses from the sandstone cave.

The cave boasts 94% air moisture and temperatures range from between 10 and 12.5°C all year round – these conditions are created due to the cave's mineral-created climate. Originally, when the cheeses were first left in the cave to mature, the cheesemakers became alarmed due to the cheese changing colour, but they discovered that when the rind colour changes, the cheese is actually ripening into a perfect consistency and mellow taste.

Cave-aged Kaltbach Le Gruyère AOC will spend 12 months stored

in these carefully controlled conditions, enabling it to develop to gourmet perfection. The full-flavoured but smooth raw milk classic has a distinctive rustic rind and tangy taste which results from this intense maturing process. The same goes for the much-loved Kaltbach Emmentaler AOC, which is also aged for a minimum of 12 months. This hard cheese boasts a black-brown patina, which sets it apart from the Gruyère.

Cave-aged character

"The Kaltbach caves are vital in the cheese maturation process," explains Stephen Kimber, Emmi's head of cheese sales in the UK. "They provide a natural and consistent temperature and humidity, which is vital for maturation and enabling the Kaltbach cheeses to develop their distinctive flavour. Not all cheeses are selected or able to survive in caves, so only certain cheeses are specially selected."

One of those specially selected cheeses is Kaltbach Creamy, a semi-hard variety with a natural black rind. It is matured in the caves for five months to develop a creamy and buttery texture



with a strong, mature taste. Its distinctively creamy texture is achieved thanks to a high proportion of cream, which sets it apart from other semi-hard varieties of cheese.

Since developing the cheese, Emmi has witnessed it garner a reputation to rival its Gruyère and Emmentaler cave-mates. "We launched Kaltbach Creamy in the UK in 2014 and have seen sales grow 150% in two years," says Stephen. "The sales growth is all down to the taste performance of the cheese. It is extremely moreish and is a very 'universal cheese product'; it appeals to all ages and all palates. It also represents good value."

Coveted and creamy

To meet the growing demand for its cave-aged cheeses, Emmi extended its underground maze-like cave system between 2008 and 2010 from 970 to 2,130 metres, thus creating room for around 150,000 cheese wheels. This forward-thinking contributed to more varieties of its portfolio of Kaltbach cave-aged cheeses being made available, with a landmark 100,000 wheels of Kaltbach Creamy leaving the cave in 2016.

The development process of Emmi's cave-aged cheeses doesn't end there, with the company keen to create other options for the public to enjoy. "The future of the Kaltbach caves is extremely exciting," he says. "Along with our award-winning Kaltbach Le Gruyère, Emmentaler and Creamy, we are constantly striving to find the next cheese that will benefit from the unique Kaltbach cave-ageing process. We are looking at hard goat's cheese at the moment, as well as other hard and soft cheeses."



“HE WHO DARES WINS”

A thriving shop is only part of Baron Robert Pouget's fine food empire

WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND YOUR SHOP, HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?

Back in the early 80s, I was a director and shareholder of a property company that was developing shopping malls in

southern England. One of these malls had a cheese specialist, Peter Glanville, which, as I observed, was doing brisk business. One day, a friend Gerry Stevens and myself were in Oxford and quite by accident, wandered into the

Covered Market. We both loved it, and when we noticed that one of the units was available to rent, we decided to take it and go into the cheese business.

HOW DID YOU FEEL YOU WERE ABLE TO START A CHEESE SHOP WHEN PRESUMABLY YOU WERE INEXPERIENCED IN CHEESE RETAIL?

“He who dares wins,” as Delboy was fond of saying. Gerry was the manager and producer of a couple of well-known pop groups at the time and I, apart from my involvement in the property company, had varied interests which included film production and furniture design. So starting a cheese shop with very little expertise apart from being fond of the stuff seemed like the right thing to do. But I was fortunate to know Pete Glanville, who had now started the Cheltenham Cheese Company, and who very kindly agreed to give us the basic information and contacts to set us on the right path.

DID YOU THINK OF OPENING OTHER SHOPS?

We did – by mid-1985 we had opened a branch in Kingston upon Thames, one in Epsom and one in High Wycombe. We soon realised that managing cheese needs far more care and attention than the general run of retailing. The logistics of managing four specialist cheese shops turned into a nightmare and we decided it was not worth pursuing.

SO NOW YOU ONLY HAVE THE ONE SHOP?

Yes, we sold or disposed of the other shops and kept the original shop in the covered market. Instead of expanding our retail operation, we branched out into wholesale and production.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING BASED IN A MARKET, RATHER THAN ON THE HIGH STREET?

The high street retail shop will be seen as more substantial and possibly create a more upmarket image, but the main advantage of being in a market environment is that once the roller blinds are up there is no barrier between your counter and the prospective customer. No shop front and front door to intimidate and lead the customer to hesitate from coming in and browsing. The second advantage is that you do not pay rent or business rates on the space in front of the shop on which the customer stands, so you are effectively getting a lot of extra space rent and rate-free.

HOW DOES A RETAIL SHOP FIT IN WITH YOUR OVERALL OPERATION?

The shop operates separately from the wholesale and production company, which is based at our warehouse a few miles outside Oxford. But it is important not just for the obvious reasons of profitability but for the variety of cheese we can stock and move, especially now that we are investing so much in internet sales. Last year we launched our retail website – oxfordcheese.co.uk – where we offer a large proportion of the cheese available for sale in our retail shop. Our emphasis is on artisanal cheeses, especially from the Alpine region, and ewe's milk and goat's milk from the French regions. We have been very surprised, agreeably so, by the way sales have taken off; we were run off our feet at Christmas and sales are continuing to hold up. We also offer a same day delivery service on the website, by bike, to the whole of Oxford within the ring road. Although the cheese shop is a very important part of our total business, the main thrust of our company is the production and sale of our brands: Oxford Blue, Oxford Isis, College White and Oxford Sauce.



“ Although the cheese shop is a very important part of our total business, the main thrust of our company is the production and sale of our brands: Oxford Blue, Oxford Isis, College White and Oxford Sauce ”

Oxford University Women's
Henley Boat Race



Available direct from **THE OXFORD BLUE CHEESE COMPANY LTD**
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AWARDS, EDUCATION & EXPANSION

As Cornish Blue continues to collect awards, we look at what's next

Philip and Carol Stansfield started making Cornish Blue on their farm on the edge of Bodmin Moor in Cornwall in 2001.

Awards have played a key part in the growth of Cornish Blue, starting in 2004 when they won the Tesco Cheese Challenge, a competition for cheeses that weren't stocked by Tesco.

In 2006 Cornish Blue was Supreme Champion at the Bath and West Show, and then in 2010 Cornish Blue was honoured to be named World Champion cheese. To this day, only one other British cheese has been World Champion.

The awards continue to flow for Cornish Blue, the latest one being the People's Choice at the 2016 Great British cheese awards.

While awards continue to play a key part in the company's marketing strategy, Philip Stansfield thinks that the next big step is education.

"As the number of cheese producers grows it's going to be increasingly important that the buying public understand the reasons why they should buy artisan products as opposed to mass-produced and often lower-priced alternatives," he says.

As sales continue to grow, one of the challenges for Phil and his team is keeping up with demand.

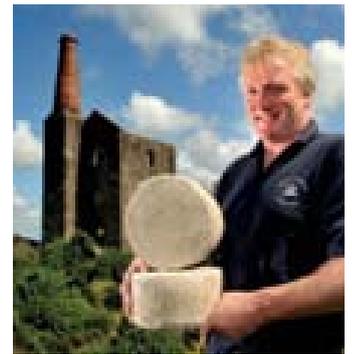
In 2015 the company completed a production facility expansion, but already Phil is planning the next expansion, both of production facilities and the cows that produce all the milk for Cornish Blue.

"We have to keep moving forward," he continues. "Cornish Blue sales continue to rise as more and more delis, farm shops, restaurants and cafés want to stock it, and we are seeing a growing demand from the wholesalers who supply Cornish Blue to supermarkets across the UK. We are also keen to find ways of growing our export sales."

Sales are also now coming from innovative sources, as Phil explains:

"We receive a regular stream of enquiries from people looking to use our cheese as a wedding or birthday cake base. A number of local businesses use our presentation boxed cheese as a unique, and, of course, extremely tasty, business gift".

So how does Phil see the future? "I'm very excited by the future. I can see more and more artisan producers emerging and as such creating a bigger sector. The challenge is that between us we need to persuade more and more people to be choosy when it comes to their food and to educate them of the benefits of consuming the wonderful cheeses and foods we produce."



Cornish Blue

sweet, creamy and artisan

Serve your customers a world champion cheese!



INTERNATIONAL CHEESE AWARDS
NANTWICK 2016
GOLD AWARD



cornishcheese.co.uk

Don't forget our delicious Cornish Blue pates Pear & Walnut and Fig, available in 200g trays.



To offer Cornish Blue in your deli, farm shop, cafe or restaurant and to take advantage of our sample pack offer please call us on 01579 362 416 or email enquiries@cornishcheese.co.uk

Rowcliffe always have and always will champion, support and nurture small producers that have a genuine provenance story, a proven tradition of quality and, of course a stunningly good product. They are passionate about and protective of their artisanal award-winning fare, and distribution channels are paramount to ensure this ethos does not get lost in translation. The team at Rowcliffe feels a great responsibility to ensure that the product sold has a unique story and that the consumer will appreciate the time, care and attention that has gone into its make. Without doubt, Rowcliffe's distribution point is the wonderful range of independent speciality food stores and delicatessens across the UK and Ireland. These are the people who know exactly how the Rowcliffe range should be sold.

Being mindful of the lay of the land, Rowcliffe feels a responsibility to support the business goals of its customers. Over the last 50 years, Rowcliffe has built its business to be independent-centric and relishes doing things 'a little bit differently' to other distributors. For them, they focus on a key list for successful selling.

Product exclusivity and range

The last thing Rowcliffe customers want is to stock a product readily available in a larger high street retailer at a lower price point, or a brand saturated by its exposure. The Rowcliffe buying team prides itself on securing exclusive supply agreements on quality products across Europe, ensuring our independent customers have a unique selling story, can differentiate from the larger stores and, importantly, stay ahead in their local area in terms of their offer. Its Dutch Beemster Gouda, Swiss Le Cret Gruyère and Italian Parmigiano Reggiano

“WE WANT INDEPENDENTS TO THRIVE”

Experience, innovation and support: Rowcliffe is here to help you stand out from the crowd



are just some of its exclusive cheeses, and the business is proud to be partnering with a forward-thinking Bourgogne-based producer to produce an exquisite new PGI-accredited range. Paired with its Italian range of Castellino

Olives and Italpestos Pesto, along with its wonderful Mossy's Original Bio Yogurt Rowcliffe, it offers a 'one stop shop' approach. Rowcliffe also offers its own Clemency Hall range of cheeses, selected specifically for the perfect

product mix. It continually works with producers on new product development to drive innovation and keep ahead of the curve. This all supports independents to widen the gap between them and the competition.

In-store customer service

Approachable, helpful store staff are, without doubt, a key driver in a consumer experience, however there's nothing more reassuring than stores that know their range like the back of their hand and can answer any questions as well as suggest both food and beverage pairings. Product training is key; before a consumer is going to part with their hard earned cash, they need to know they are investing in something special, believe that the price point reflects the product's quality, and are confident in the tasting experience they expect. When staff share expertise and enthusiasm for a product they will trade consumers up from a generic off the shelf purchase to a full food experience. Rowcliffe invests in dedicated area sales managers who are relentlessly on-hand to support with product range consultation, training and presentation. They will nurture new stores and their staff and can help to layout a cheese counter, propose a charcuterie display or look at the overall aim of a store utilising products in the correct places for maximum exposure and cross selling. A bit of help from a company who has been doing this for 50 years is worth asking for!

Peace of mind

With an industry-admired food technical team, Rowcliffe ensures optimum product condition by working closely with producers in the development stages, using decades of experience to help with consultation and even operational advice to ensure the final product is a commercial success for both producer and retailer.

“We live and breathe our independent customers and offer support on so many levels. Indeed, we are proud to have created and sponsored the Young Cheesemonger Award, an innovative and exciting award which gives entrants the recognition they deserve. We influence policy and system-makers for the benefit of independents, and actively head up a number of key food organisations to promote the interests of small producers and retailers. Our business is geared to support in whichever way we can; let's work together to feed the interest in and demand for quality food”

JASON FISHER, MD OF ROWCLIFFE



When it comes to creating a successful cheese counter, one of the first considerations is what will form the foundations of your offering. What will position you as an expert in the field of fine cheese, a cheesemonger with taste? One cheese whose reputation precedes it is Le Gruyère AOP, a Continental cheese from Switzerland which has been wowing discerning lovers of cheese for generations.

In Gruyères, 900 years of tradition and provenance come together to produce one of Europe's best-loved cheeses. Created since 1115 in family-run village dairies located in the western cantons of Switzerland, the cheese was awarded national Controlled Designation of Origin (AOC) status in 2001, followed by European Protected Designation of Origin (AOP) status in 2011, which ensures that the cheese maintains the tradition, taste and provenance which make it so revered across the Continent and beyond. The rigid specifications the 164 Le Gruyère AOP-producing dairies use to create each wheel (averaging just 14 per day) are strictly adhered to, and ensure that every stage of

LE GRUYÈRE AOP: THE CHEESE COUNTER CORNERSTONE

*A unique flavour and trusted provenance
make this ancient cheese a must-stock*

production – from the cows producing the milk to the affineur aging the cheese – is traceable. Not only that, but strictly only 100% natural raw cows milk is used. Together, these standards mean that the taste and quality of Le Gruyère AOP is consistently high.

What makes it so popular? For one thing, its subtle yet distinctive flavours which are not to be found in any other cheese. Truly a cheese of distinction, its quality is consistently high thanks to the exacting methods used in its production – which go some way in explaining its numerous awards.

Who buys Le Gruyère AOP? Not only is the cheese welcomingly versatile and suitable for use in a number of dishes as well as

cheeseboards, it is naturally both lactose and gluten-free so suitable for coeliac and lactose-intolerant consumers.

By stocking Le Gruyère AOP, you can be sure of not only a consistently high quality cheese which will sell well, but a consumer base ready and willing to enjoy its unique taste and learn more about this long-revered Alpine cheese.

TASTING NOTES

- Between six and nine months, Le Gruyère AOP Classic has a sweet, nutty and refined taste. This cheese is wonderful for everyday and is particularly loved by children and those adults who love a mild, sweet cheese. It is also fabulous for cooking as it melts superbly to produce a wonderful creamy consistency
- Starting at 10 months, Le Gruyère AOP Réserve has a full-flavoured and aromatic taste, which will please lovers of aromatic subtlety. This is a mature and complex cheese, ideal for a cheeseboard
- Some wheels will be matured up to 18 or even 24 months for lovers of strong sensations. Perfect for cheese connoisseurs!

LE GRUYÈRE D'ALPAGE AOP

Every summer, cattlemen in the valleys throughout the Western cantons of Switzerland prepare their herds for the voyage up the mountainside. The tradition of moving the animals up the lush lands is known as *Alpage*, and has been practiced for centuries. During the summer months the cows yield rich and luscious milk as they graze freely throughout the day. Only one wheel of this exceptional Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP is made a day; nutty, sweet, complex in flavour, this is a rare cheese not widely available in the UK.

“ In Gruyère, 900 years of tradition and provenance come together to produce one of Europe's best-loved cheeses ”

LE GRUYÈRE®

SWITZERLAND



Traditional. Artisanal. Exceptional!

Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland - a 900-year tradition of artisanal cheesemaking.



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The makers of Gruyère AOP have been producing artisanal cheese since long before the term was popular. For over 900 years, Gruyère AOP has been made by hand, in small batches, using the same recipe, along with the experience and know-how of skilled cheesemakers. This is followed by aging and ripening of the cheese by equally skilled affineurs, utilizing centuries-old technique and knowledge.

This authentic recipe and the care that goes into every wheel makes Gruyère AOP the finest choice for your family and friends. Enjoy it as it is, or in your favourite dishes.

For recipes and more, visit us at gruyere.com

Gruyère AOP

Born in Switzerland in 1115.

#GruyereAOP



All Natural, only from Switzerland.
Naturally Gluten- and Lactose-Free.

www.gruyere.com

AOP = PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)



Switzerland. Naturally.



Cheeses from Switzerland.

www.cheesesfromswitzerland.com



We built a second parlour to enable our cows to graze more. The cows were grazing at two cows to the acre, and this brings them back to one cow to the acre. This means that more of the cows' feed will be grazed grass, which has a wonderful effect on the flavour, aroma and virtuous fats in the milk. All of that concentrates 10-to-one in the cheese, so we are expecting even more delicious varieties.

The shortage of grazing has provided a real limit to the number of cows we could have, since we wanted sensible amounts of grazing for them. The new milking parlour and its grazing platform enables us to increase the amount of milk we produce, and so the cheese we produce. We are experiencing good growth in demand both in this country and abroad, and having the extra milk means we can supply that demand.

A grass-based system means that the milk is more seasonal in volume – we have extra milk from the peaks in grass growth in the spring and autumn flush of grass. We've worked to build tracks, fences and water troughs so we



GREENER PASTURES

Mary Quicke of Devonshire-based cheesemakers Quicke's tells Cheese Buyer how the completion of a new parlour has contributed to even tastier cheese

can get cows out for much longer without damaging the soil. We grazed until nearly Christmas, and started grazing again on Valentine's Day. That means that

our cows' milk has that lovely grass-fed hit for most of the year – that is technically described as 'cow breath'. If you've had the pleasure of smelling a cow's breath,

you know that it's a glorious thing; warm, green and animally. A grass-based system means that you will also get a lot more of those precious conjugated linoleic acids in the milk – our milk already had double the amount you find in standard milk and we will be looking for a similar upgrade. You will also get an even better Omega-3 and Omega-6 ratio. Both of those are meant to offer good health benefits; other cheesemakers in this country tend to have a more usual UK dairy farming diet, and therefore their cheese cannot boast these benefits.

What's next for Quicke's? Well, we're currently waiting for the extra-grazed grass cheese to mature. Plus, we've got a neat little infographic to tell the story of the grazed grass in our cheese, which we can supply to retailers. I'm so happy that our Vintage Cheddar is available again from May. We've put some work into shelf-ready packing, so our pre-cut pieces sit better on a shop's shelf. We've also applied some tweaks to the recipe of Double Devonshire and Devonshire Red, so they are gorgeous, buttery and fresh. And a third parlour is a twinkle in my eye...

QUICKE'S
DEVON
ENGLAND



GRASS FED MILK
MAKES THE
BEST CHEESE



OUTSTANDING COMPLEXITY
OF FLAVOURS



SEASONAL VARIATIONS IN
GRASSY AROMAS



PERFECT BALANCE OF
OMEGA 3: OMEGA 6

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Italy has gifted the world with a distinctive array of gastronomic delights. Our ongoing love affair with Italian cuisine means every cheese counter carries a selection of must-stock items. That family of Italian dairy essentials is about to grow a little larger!

For the first time, Nonno Nanni ('nonno' means grandfather), one of Italy's premium, soft cheese specialists, will be available in the UK through a new distribution partnership with AJA Portfolio brands. With almost a quarter of the market share in the quality Stracchino sector, Nonno Nanni's success in its home country can be attributed to its ongoing commitment to creating genuine, delicious cheeses. With all the natural goodness of milk, Nonno Nanni's cheeses – Stracchino, Robiola, Caprino and Squaquerello – deliver the fresh taste of an age-old Italian tradition to Britain.

UK retailers will be able to sample the Nonno Nanni range at this year's Bella Vita exhibition, taking place at London's Business Design Centre in June, and Nonno Nanni will be showcasing products at Welcome Italia in October.

Rich heritage

The story begins in the heart of the Veneto region, in a rural town 40 kilometres to the northwest of Venice, in 1947. Here Giovanni Lazzarin, known to all as 'Nanni', started his own small cheesemaking business with two simple wood-burning boilers on which to heat the milk he sourced from a local farmer. From this humble start, Nonno Nanni has become one of the most recognisable dairy brands in



ITALIAN TRADITION COMES TO BRITAIN

Get to know Italy's popular Nonno Nanni range of award-winning soft, fresh cheeses

family are among the business' 200 employees – a genuine family affair. People are key to Nonno Nanni's success and community engagement is an important aspect of the company's CSR policy.

Socially and ecologically responsible, Nonno Nanni is committed to the welfare of the region's dairy herds and dedicated to the wellbeing of their staff. The business is also devoted to environmental sustainability. It uses electricity from renewable sources and has made concerted efforts to offset the CO2 emissions

that are generated during day-to-day operations. In fact, it has been said that Nonno Nanni produces Italy's first 'eco-friendly' Stracchino.

Over the years, the company has embraced advances in manufacturing technology to ensure it continues to create a consistent, high-quality range. Combining the cheesemaker's art with modern manufacturing techniques, Nonno Nanni maintains artisan quality, guaranteeing outstanding, authentic fresh products. An innovative, forward-looking



business with one foot firmly rooted in traditional values – it's a balance that has kept them in good stead for almost 70 years. This approach has proved to be award-winning, as at the International Cheese Awards 2016 Nonno Nanni's Il Fresco Spalmabile Lactose-free won both a silver and bronze medal, while at the World Cheese Awards the brand's Caprino won a Gold medal, and Caprino, Robiola and Il Fresco Spalmabile Lactose-free all received silver medals.

Stracchino – One of the most consumed soft cheeses in Italy, Stracchino, the best-selling deli counter product in the range, is a cows' milk cheese with a very soft, creamy texture and a mild, delicate flavour which uses no preservatives. Nonno Nanni masterfully make their cheese by combining locally-sourced, pasteurised dairy milk and cream with a unique starter culture containing two billion live



milk enzymes per gram. The result is a fresh, natural product with a 24 day shelf life. As the cheese matures it gradually softens whilst retaining its freshness and flavour. It's ideal by itself, spread on bread and great combined with tomatoes and extra virgin oil. Pack size: 125g

Robiola – A classic fresh, soft, airy cheese with a light, creamy consistency and an intense, full flavour. As well as being spreadable on crackers or sandwiches, Robiola is also a versatile ingredient – its pleasing richness works well in everything from starters to desserts such as cheesecake. A 100% authentic Italian product, Robiola has a 45 day shelf life. This cheese was Gold medal winner at the International Cheese Awards 2014 and 2015. Also available in lactose free – winner of 2016 Product of the Year (Cheese) – Food Awards (Italy). Pack size: 100g

Caprino made with cows' milk – This is a beautifully white, looser textured, soft fresh cows' milk cheese. Caprino takes its goat-y name from the traditional cylinder shape that it is formed into. Creamy and intensely flavoursome, this can quickly be adapted into antipasti or summer salad dishes, as well as being great with bread or crackers. Caprino has a 45 day shelf life. Also available in lactose free. Pack size: 80g

Squaquerello – Famously smooth, with a deliciously melting consistency, Squaquerello is fresh and natural tasting, with no preservatives. This soft cheese contains a higher level of starter cultures to deliver extra flavour. Spectacular served with vegetables or simply eaten from the spoon, Squaquerello also adds creaminess to risotto, pasta or can be used in a cheesecake. 24 day shelf life. Pack size: 125g

For Nonno Nanni sales in the UK contact James Mckeown at AJA Portfolio Brands Ltd via info@portfoliobrands.it



Italy. Processing in excess of 60,000 tonnes of fresh milk each year, the business still retains close links with the region's dairy farmers. Nurturing good relationships ensures Nonno Nanni receives the highest quality ingredients to make its award-winning cheese.

In true Italian style, Nanni's passion, as a pioneer of fresh cheese production, has been handed down from father to son to grandson. Today, eight members of the third generation of the Lazzarin



North Yorkshire-based producer of traditional, handmade cheese, Shepherds Purse has a long-running history of producing distinctive cheeses. Created in small batches on the Bell family farm using cow and sheep's milk to provide characterful flavours, the portfolio is instantly recognisable. Established in the 1980s by Judy Bell and with ownership passed over to her daughters, Katie and Caroline in 2012, Shepherds Purse has become a bonafide frontrunner of the British artisanal cheese market.

One of Shepherds Purse's most popular varieties is Mrs Bell's Blue, made from ewe's milk and considered to be one of the best ewe's milk blue cheeses in Europe. The milk's grassy sweetness and the saltiness of the cheese deliver a rich, complex flavour that's a tad milder than a Roquefort but punchy enough for any blue

BLUE CHEESE OF DISTINCTION

Cheese Buyer speaks to Shepherds Purse about the award-winning Mrs Bell's Blue, a favourite of Raymond Blanc and Rick Stein

cheese aficionado to savour. Judy had always planned to produce a European-inspired cheese. "Mrs Bell's Blue began development in the 1990s alongside the creation of our first cow's milk cheese, Yorkshire Blue," explains Caroline Bell, marketing director of Shepherds Purse. "The aim was to develop a soft, creamy and mellow Continental-style blue cheese, like many of the cheeses that we as a family enjoyed. The development took place over years rather than months and there were many mistakes along the way, but the results made it all worth it."

Flavour forward

The list of Mrs Bell's Blue devotees doesn't just end at famous chefs; the cheese has garnered an impressive array of accolades and positive press since it launched. "It has enjoyed success over the

years at international awards, from winning Reserve Supreme Champion at Nantwich in 1997 to winning Champion Sheep Milk Cheese in 2016 and Super Gold at the World Cheese Awards in San Sebastian," says Caroline. "It has a complex flavour profile thanks to the meadowy sweet characteristics of the sheep milk contrasting with the mellow blue flavour and the salt. It's a well-balanced flavour and the texture melts in the mouth.

Its signature flavour qualities and quality ingredients means that Mrs Bell's Blue remains a standout cheese on any blue cheese counter. "It is one of only a handful of British soft and creamy sheep's milk blue cheeses on the market," explains Caroline. "It is unmistakably a 'Shepherds Purse Blue' as it melts in the mouth and can be counted on

to deliver flavour-wise every time. As consumers' palates become increasingly more sophisticated, the complexity delivered by Mrs Bell's Blue is appreciated more and more."

Perfect pairing

The piquant and creamy character of Mrs Bell's Blue makes it a delectable pairing option and works wonderfully when incorporated into recipes, too. Crumbling and stirring it into a sweet potato and chilli soup or adding it to a wild mushroom tagliatelle brings a whole new flavour profile to the dishes. Caroline is equally as enthusiastic about its potential to complement other options on a cheeseboard: "Walnuts and honey go so beautifully with Mrs Bell's Blue. My mouth is watering at the thought!"

Cheese-loving independents will be pleased to hear that Mrs Bell's Blue comes in a multitude of different sizes, including a 170g cutting, a 350g quarter, a 700g half moon and a 1.4kg full truckle, allowing plenty of options for curious shoppers to enjoy. There are also lots of recipe suggestions on Shepherds Purse's website, which can provide customers with a source of culinary inspiration.

“ As consumers' palates become increasingly more sophisticated, the complexity delivered by Mrs Bell's Blue is appreciated more and more ”





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“Over the last 10 years the business has changed, and rather than just being a box mover or wholesaler we’re now a cutting, packing and distribution business,” explains Chris Chisnall, marketing director of Bradburys. This is testament to the progressive nature of the company – it has a proven track record of adapting its approach while always having its sights firmly set on quality.

The business was established over 130 years ago by the Reverend William John Bradbury, and while the Bradbury family are no longer part of the company, Bradburys still remains in its birthplace of Buxton in Derbyshire. Over the years the business has diversified and evolved from being a traditional-style wholesaler of cheese to a specialist packing and distribution business involved in foodservice, wholesale, retail and export markets.

Sourcing specialists

The company’s cheese portfolio has shifted over the last decade, with it now handling Continental and cheeses from overseas – Chris is keen to work with producers from around the world – rather than being European-orientated.



COMMITTED TO QUALITY

The combination of a rich and varied history and a forward-thinking attitude has contributed to Bradbury’s enduring success

A strong focus on consumer trends and a dedicated sourcing team means Bradburys isn’t fixed to one particular category, though, which reflects the company’s bespoke approach. “Our business is unique, as unlike some other businesses we’re not owned by French,

Swiss or Italian suppliers,” says Chris. “We can effectively source depending on consumer trends in the marketplace, which allows us flexibility. If artisan British is the next big thing, we’ll push our sourcing team towards looking for new smaller makers. If Eastern

European cheese is suddenly a trend, we can cater to that.”

Bradbury’s investment in cutting, packing, slicing and portioning cheese has made the company the go-to service for handling a cheesemaker’s products, with the team dedicated to visiting and finding out first-hand what direction a producer wants to take with their cheese. “We also encourage them to come and have a look at our facility, because that gives them a lot of confidence in our abilities and technical know-how,” explains Chris. “Ultimately, we’re going to be handling that cheesemaker’s brand, and they need to have confidence that we’re going to expertly convey their values to UK customers.”

The company is also committed to ensuring that the cheesemaking scene continues to flourish, and has invested in artisan producers like Northumberland Cheese Co. “We have also invested in Shirevale, a White Stilton producer in Cropwell Bishop,” explains Chris. “We’re giving them access to a market that they may not have had before, helping them to develop a strategy in how to grow their business, and assisting them in developing different varieties of products.”

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PURVEYOR OF THE BLUES

What's the secret to Colston Bassett's continued success? Billy Kevan, dairy manager, fills us in

WHAT TECHNIQUES ARE APPLIED TO ENSURE THAT THE RANGE IS ALWAYS CONSISTENT?

There are so many influences that affect the cheesemaking process. These have to be taken into account to reliably make a top-quality artisan cheese. The expertise of our cheesemakers

ensures our cheese achieves the highest standards during every make.

The driving force behind Colston Bassett's consistency has been an absolute adherence to time-honoured, labour-intensive production techniques. All our processes are undertaken by

hand; from mixing the milk in the cheese vats, cutting the curds, hand lading, salting and mixing, through to filling the hoops.

Gentle handling of our curds is a key aspect in our production process this is why we hand ladle all of our curds and is one of the reasons Colston Bassett Stilton is renowned for its creamy, smooth texture. The end result speaks for itself.

WHAT ACCOLADES HAVE YOU WON OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS?

The past few years have seen Colston Bassett achieve incredible awards success. Personally I see these accolades as living proof of our consistency. It is difficult to quantify the direct impact that awards have on sales throughout the supply chain. However, winning two Supreme Champion titles in one year and repeatedly receiving three Great Taste Stars for our cheese isn't going to do any harm. If it helps to introduce our product to a wider audience then I'm all for that!

TELL US ABOUT YOUR INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Colston Bassett Dairy was established as a co-operative at the

start of the last century and still operates in this way today. The committee remains progressive in its outlook and recognises the need to invest for the future.

As our business has grown, maturation and storage space was becoming an issue; recent investment in modern storage facilities has made our process more efficient.

WHY SHOULD RETAILERS STOCK STILTON AND SHROPSHIRE BLUE ALL YEAR ROUND?

Colston Bassett Stilton and Shropshire Blue are cheese counter essentials. One area that we've been actively promoting is using Colston Bassett as a cooking ingredient through our 'Clash of Cultures' campaign. Six international chefs have created globally-inspired recipes that incorporate our quintessentially British cheese. The resulting recipe booklet has been hugely popular with independent retailers as it can help to uphold blue cheese sales during quieter periods – a bonus for everyone.

MULTI-AWARD WINNING CHEESE from a *co-operative of farmers* since 1913

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JARLSBERG THROUGH THE YEARS

1956

Ole Martin Ystgaard, professor at the Agricultural University of Norway, collaborated with students and food scientists to produce a cheese which combined a unique texture and flavour with round air pockets – the resultant cheese was named Jarlsberg

1960–65

The Cantarella family introduced Australia to Jarlsberg, swiftly followed by the UK and Canada. Exportation to America then commenced, and the cheese has since gone on to become one of the most popular imported cheeses in the USA

1978

Norseland Foods Inc. was founded in America by the TINE cooperative of Norwegian farmers to support Jarlsberg's popularity and uphold the brand's principles. They did this by overseeing the production of Jarlsberg from the dairy farms in Norway to the finished product on shelves, therefore maintaining the quality which made it so popular with the American population

1988

Just 10 years after the founding of Norseland Foods Inc. and 13 years after the cheese was introduced to America, the ten millionth wheel of Jarlsberg was shipped to the USA – bringing the nation's overall consumption of the cheese to 100 million kilograms

2000

The production of the Jarlsberg sold in America is relocated to the US

2001

The American population buys their 15 millionth wheel of Jarlsberg. Lined up, the wheels would cover the distance between New York and Los Angeles

2016

Jarlsberg celebrates its 60th birthday and annual international sales of around 27,000 tons per year

Home to some of the UK's most popular cheeses, Norseland UK has a wide range of cheeses in its portfolio – including fiery Mexican and enduringly popular smoky Applewood – but with the trend for all things Scandi showing no sign of waning, the time is ripe to explore the brand's Norwegian offering.

First and foremost is Jarlsberg, the best-loved Norwegian cheese across the world. Despite the cheese itself being so well-known internationally the recipe remains a closely guarded secret, which only helps to drive the popularity of its unique texture and inimitable flavour.

Why buy Jarlsberg?

UNIQUE FLAVOUR

Matured for three months, the classic Jarlsberg has a sweet, nutty taste, which pairs beautifully with its creamy texture and distinctive round holes. It's an impressively versatile cheese; used in cooking it transforms everyday dishes into something special, it's delicious as a snack, and thanks to its mild flavour it works well on a classic cheeseboard. Jarlsberg Reserve is a full-bodied cheese with sweet and nutty notes. Made with pure Norwegian milk and aged for a

TASTE OF NORWAY

With Norway Day on the horizon (May 17th), now's the time to discover Norseland's Norwegian range

minimum of 12 months, this is a cheese to impress.

FINE MILK

The standard of milk used in Jarlsberg is of key importance to its makers. Each year, more than 1.4 billion litres of high quality cow's milk is delivered by over 13,000 dairy farmers.

ONE-OF-A-KIND TEXTURE

A unique chemical reaction is behind Jarlsberg's distinctive, perfectly-round air holes. A culture in the milk breaks down the lactic acid, forcing air between the curds which continues as the cheese matures.

PROTECTED FLAVOUR

A food-grade plastic rind is applied to the cheese before maturation in order to protect the delicate flavour

of Jarlsberg, meaning it reaches the end consumer tasting just as it should.

Also in Norseland's Scandinavian range are Snøfrisk, an award-winning semi-hard goats cheese with a delicate, tangy flavour. Its home of Ørsta, on Norway's south west coast, is partly to thank for its quality – the goats producing the milk inhabit an area boasting magnificent fjords and mountains, which results in pure white cheese; hence the name – Snøfrisk means 'snow fresh'.

Another popular Nordic cheese in Norseland's Scandi offering is Gudbrandsdalen, which inhabits the other end of the flavour and colour scale. A classic brown cheese, it's made with cow's cream and goat's milk and works well on cheeseboards and in desserts thanks to its rich, caramel-like flavour.

“ A household favourite in Britain for over 60 years, Jarlsberg's mild, nutty and sweet taste makes it the perfect addition to a cheeseboard ”

Norseland

innovative cheese specialists

Award Winning Cheeses

to captivate your customers and boost your sales



Snøfrisk®

Semi-hard ripened cheese made from pasteurised goat's milk. Easy to slice with a pure, rich, mild flavour.



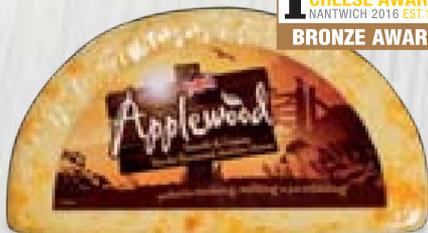
Jarlsberg® Special Reserve

Smooth, distinctive, rounded taste. Made with Jarlsberg's secret recipe since 1956. Matured for 12 months.



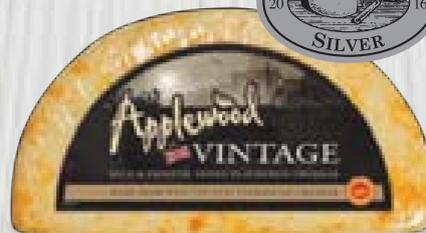
Gudbrandsdalen

Classic Norwegian brown cheese made from the best quality Norwegian goat's milk and cow's cream.



Applewood®

Smoky, smooth and with a dusting of paprika. Made from quality West Country Cheddar. UK's No.1 Smoky Cheddar*.



Applewood® Vintage

Smoky, smooth and creamy. Made from 12 month matured West Country Cheddar.



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Add an extra kick to culinary escapades, dare you try it!... UK's No.1 Spicy Cheddar*.

*Kantar Worldpanel 52w/e 26th February 2017

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A variety of the above are available from Harvey & Brockless, Carron Lodge, Hawkrigge, Midland Chilled, Anthony Rowcliffe & Son.

For sales enquiries and to try our delicious cheeses, please contact:
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As a leading distributor of high quality, continental cheese and dairy products, Eurilait, a subsidiary of the two leading French dairy cooperatives, Laita and Eurial, is well positioned to offer an extensive range with an inherent understanding of the needs of the farm shop, delicatessen and small retailer. Based in Somerset, it operates from a 44,000-square-foot facility where it cuts, packs and distributes in a wide variety of formats and holds a BRC grade A+ certification.

Eurilait's products are unrivalled in quality and heritage; a network of 20 certified creameries throughout western France produce market-leading goat and cow's milk cheeses, as well as butter, cream and yoghurts. A full range of Continental cheese from throughout Europe is available, sourced from long-standing, trusted partnerships.

Eurilait's Merci Chef goat cheese is made by the award-winning Soignon dairy, owned by its parent company Eurial, and benefits from over 100 years of cheese-making experience and tradition. Eurial is, in fact, the number one goat cheese producer in the world, processing 190m litres of goat's milk every year.



INTERNATIONALLY INSPIRED

Eurilait makes sourcing sought-after Continental cheese a breeze, explains James Millward, managing director

A growing number of food programmes have fuelled a consumer desire to experiment with cheese beyond the world of Cheddar and Edam. As a result, the UK consumer is experimenting with new flavours and is looking towards the specialist retailer

for inspiration. It's fantastic to see growth in Continental and speciality cheeses as consumers seek out a new experience; positive growth in spend (+6.8% YOY) on Continental cheese during 2016 has been cited by Kantar Worldpanel, to January 2017.

Eurilait's insight and understanding of the market, in line with current trends, is the key to creating the right products – the company has witnessed growth in Feta and Halloumi, soft Italian cheeses and cheeseboard essentials such as Manchego and continental blues which meet the needs of the adventurous, variety-seeking shopper.

Nurturing expertise in its people by undertaking initiatives such as training by the Craft Guild of Cheese Graders is part of the company's success – it has scooped over 100 awards in three years – and is now forging closer relationships with the food industry by becoming a Business Partner of the Craft Guild of Chefs, too.



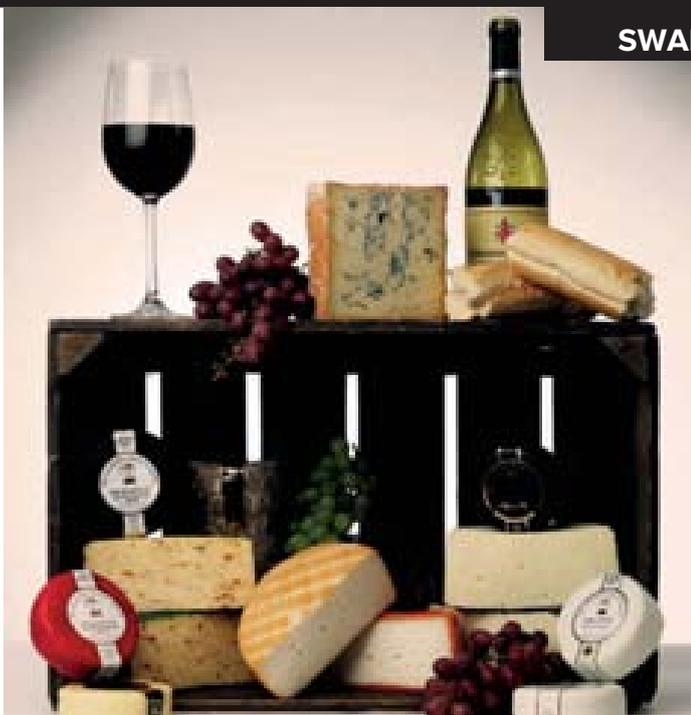
EURILAIT
YOUR SOLUTION FOR SPECIALITY DAIRY

SOIGNON

Merci Chef!
Produit en France

PAYSAN BRETON

For the love of cheese x



FAMILY AFFAIR

Following its 30th anniversary, we catch up with The Swaledale Cheese Company about its past, present and future

Swaledale cheese has been made in the dale that shares its name for centuries. Brought to the Yorkshire Dales in the 11th century by Cistercian monks, the traditions and methods of creating the cheese had been handed down for generations until it came to Louise and Sam Reed to adopt the cheesemaking custom. The Swaledale Cheese Company was handed down to the brother and sister duo by their parents, David and Mandy, in 2012, and since being at the helm of the business they have witnessed it go from strength to strength.

"The past five years have been about me, Sam and the team maintaining the business while we all settle into the new roles," Louise says. "We've been learning a lot." That's no overstatement, as The Swaledale Cheese Company produces an extensive array of different cheeses, including cow's, smoked, blue, sheep's, goat's and additive varieties. The company has achieved PDO status for its Swaledale Cheese, which now boasts a dedicated following.

Keeping the company in the family is something that Louise and Sam feel very strongly about.

"It's massively important to keep the business as part of the family – it was our parent's baby and dream," Louise explains. "They worked for years to build it, and it's mine and Sam's legacy from them. For me, I think the business and all its achievements is a way for my daughter, Evie, to be close to her grandparents and have a relationship with them."

Year of importance

2017 is a significant year for The Swaledale Cheese Company as it celebrates its 30th anniversary. The company was originally set up in 1987, and has since grown year-on-year. "As the company turned 30 in February, we are planning to roll out a year of celebrations," Louise says. "We've launched a rebrand and promotions and plan to expand the business into new markets."

Louise believes the company will continue with its upward trajectory. "The future is hopefully a very bright one," she says. "We plan to grow the business and expand its product range, and continue to add mine and Sam's personality and stamp to the history books of Swaledale." Watch this space.



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1987 - 2017

Producer of Award winning fine artisan cheeses including a range of cow's milk cheeses including Traditional Swaledale PDO, Sheep's and Goats cheeses and more!

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WHY IS THIS SUCH A SIGNIFICANT YEAR FOR THE WENSLEYDALE CREAMERY?

It has been a big start to 2017 for The Wensleydale Creamery as we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the formation of our dedicated Milk Producer Group. The Creamery, based at Hawes in Wensleydale in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales, now sources milk from over 40 local farms, contributing more than £12m to the local economy through milk payments, wages and purchases.

We're passionate and proud of our Yorkshire heritage and provenance and are delighted to be celebrating 20 years of working closely with our Milk Producer Group as we move into the 21st year. It's a significant landmark and achievement that the group continues to work together and support each other 20 years on!

Our family of farmers is integral to the production of our award-winning cheeses, yogurts and butter, and it's vital that we support them to ensure a sustainable milk future for the Yorkshire Dales. We are now actively looking for more Yorkshire farmers to join the Milk Producer Group.

We believe that we have a responsibility, along with other

YORKSHIRE BORN AND BRED

There have been major developments over at The Wensleydale Creamery, Sandra Bell, marketing manager, tells Cheese Buyer

British food producers, to continue to support and grow our British supplier base to safeguard UK farming and ensure a sustainable future for us all.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR MAJOR INVESTMENT AND NEW VISITOR CENTRE

There has been significant investment, around £5m, in our new dairy and cheesemaking facilities, including our cheese blending and packing operation, plus further investment in whey processing technology and equipment.

We continue to invest in our popular on-site Visitor Centre, with the recent completion of our new interactive Cheesemaking Viewing Gallery as part of our Yorkshire Wensleydale Cheese Experience. Visitors can discover a wealth of exciting information and now see 'behind the scenes' of Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese

being handcrafted by our master cheesemakers from touch screens, as well as watching first-hand from the Viewing Gallery.

HOW WILL THIS INVESTMENT HELP THE CREAMERY?

Our new dairy was a significant investment, with both cheesemaking and cheese-blending facilities, but one which was vital to ensure we have the capacity to meet demand for growth and innovation in the UK and internationally. Streamlining processes and the addition of whey processing will ensure we are more efficient, enabling us to operate successfully, and allow us to meet the challenges of the marketplace.

Whilst we're custodians of tradition, with a 1,000 year history, we're relevant to the 21st century. What will never change is the quality, provenance and unique, authentic taste of Yorkshire

Wensleydale cheese.

Our popular Visitor Centre continues to perform well, attracting over 250,000 visitors each year. It is important that we review, refresh, develop and invest in our offer in order to not only meet but exceed our visitors' expectations and experience when they are with us. We're a proud showcase for fantastic Yorkshire food and drink.

WHAT ELSE HAS THE CREAMERY GOT PLANNED FOR 2017?

There are big plans ahead for us this year. We are celebrating 25 years since the management buyout of The Wensleydale Creamery. It was thanks to this buyout in 1992, following the closure of The Creamery earlier that year, that cheesemaking in Wensleydale was reborn, and we are planning some exciting things to celebrate this year!

We continue to monitor market trends, retaining our traditional methods of handcrafting cheese to time-honoured recipes whilst being innovative with the development of new cheese recipes and products. We have some exciting new product plans in the pipeline for the deli and dairy category, and will continue to shout about our recently launched Blue 16 cheese.

“ Whilst we're custodians of tradition, with a 1,000 year history, we're relevant to the 21st century. What will never change is the quality, provenance and unique, authentic taste of Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese ”

Love Wensleydale Cheese... make sure it's from Yorkshire!

Not all cheeses bearing the Wensleydale name are actually produced in Yorkshire!

By stocking Yorkshire Wensleydale your customers can be assured that they are buying an authentic product, traditionally handcrafted with integrity in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales.



Yorkshire Wensleydale
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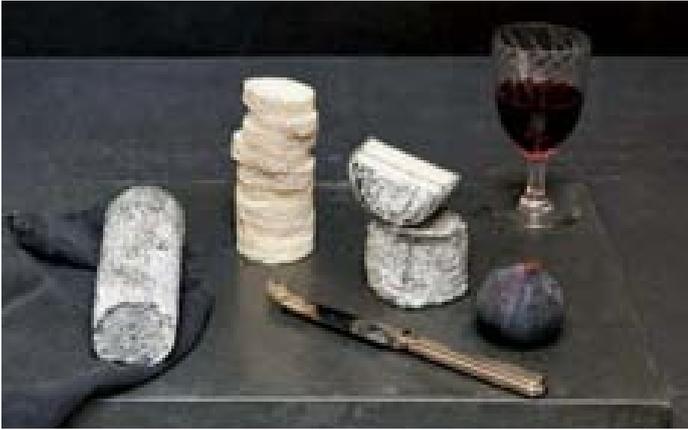
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CHEESES OF CHARACTER

Harvey & Brockless' Owen Davies tells us about the fine food maker and distributor's new goat's varieties and the growing demand for artisanal produce

ARTISAN CREDENTIALS

The value of provenance is becoming increasingly recognised and is deeply rooted in the creation of artisanal cheeses. It traces

the complexity of flavours and also forms an experience and a conversation piece – front of house staff have something to talk about which engages customers. Whether

it is on the cheeseboard or forming part of a recipe, almost all artisan cheeses have their own unique story, which is a great sales tool for retailers and front of house.

NEW CHEESES

We introduced three new unpasteurised goat's cheeses last September, as we noticed a demand for goat's milk cheeses and at certain times of the year were unable to fulfil the demand with our existing range. George Bramham heads up our dairy at Broomhall Farm in Worcester. He spent considerable time in France with one of our highly regarded French goat's cheesemakers perfecting the art of making goat's cheese. The varieties are Blanche (a gooey, sensuous little cheese), Clara (ash-coated with a creamy, buttery-tasting interior) and Ashlynn (a pure white interior set against an ash-coated rind with a thin layer of charcoal running through its centre – it is stunning).

INGREDIENT TRACEABILITY

Having tried using pasteurised milk to create our own cheeses, we found it just didn't deliver the depth and complexity of flavour found in raw milk. We now source raw milk locally from farmer Helen

Wallis. Her herd of 400 goats are meticulously cared for; the majority of the feed is grown on her farm, which shows in the quality of the milk.

RAW MILK

There's an increasingly positive awareness around the benefits of eating unpasteurised cheeses, despite some arguments over the risks in the press lately. When I visited the makers of Baron Bigod, I was introduced to drinking raw milk for the first time. You can really feel the goodness when you taste it – it's packed full of healthy flora and fauna that help to fight off harmful bacteria. We support Raw Milk Appreciation Day on 22nd April, which is a great celebration of all raw milk products.

BESPOKE CHEESE CUTTING

We understand that food costs are continually being looked at, along with staff costs and waste. In answer to this we offer a bespoke cutting and portioning service at a fixed price, reducing the added labour cost if prepared in-house. We have speciality cheese-cutting facilities at our London depot with the ability to cut and bespoke pack to our customer needs.



The Butlers family has been farming in the Inglewhite area of Lancashire since the 1930s. Richard and Annie Butler used milk from their own herd to make cheese by hand in the farmhouse kitchen – cheese was even matured in the family bedrooms! Now, their granddaughter Gill runs the business along with great grandsons Daniel and Matthew, and the milk which makes their award-winning cheese still comes from the family farms thanks to Gill's brother, Andrew and niece, Nicola.

The cheese that started it all for the family is the traditional Farmhouse Mature Lancashire cheese which is still made in small batches to the original family recipe in the dairy at Wilsons Field Farm. It takes a great deal of time, but Butlers still proudly makes this cheese with a small amount of starter culture and extreme care to produce the signature "buttery crumble" texture that is the hallmark of this cheese. After maturation, anything between seven and 14 months,

A TASTE OF ADVENTURE

Cheese Buyer finds out how family-run Butlers Farmhouse Cheeses has garnered critical and celebrity acclaim

the cheese has developed a rich, savoury flavour.

It's easy to understand why Butlers Farmhouse Lancashires have earned so many awards over the years. The most recent are three gold medals at the 2016 Global Cheese Awards, one each for Butlers Farmhouse Crumbly, Creamy and Tasty Lancashires, and the prestigious Gold medal for Lancashires at the 2016 British Cheese Awards for Butlers flagship rinded Trotter Hill Tasty Lancashire – marking it out as an essential addition for leading speciality cheesemongers across the country.

Butlers have never been ones to stand still, and nowhere is this more



obvious than with the favourite of cheese lovers and chefs: smooth, creamy Blacksticks Blue. This is a modern cheese with a sense of adventure and daring, too! With its

striking amber hue, soft and squishy texture and full rounded blue tang, it proudly stands apart from other blues. Since its creation back in 2003, it has won an incredible 65 awards and has been lauded by north west celebrity chefs Simon Rimmer and Nigel Haworth as well as many further afield.

Some people are unsure what to do with blue cheese beyond the cheeseboard, but Blacksticks Blue is a versatile ingredient which can add a twist to many dishes, from steak pie to stroganoff. Current marketing and social media is engaging with fans in their 1,000s who are slicing Blacksticks cheese to melt on steaks and burgers, crumbling the cheese with breadcrumbs and herbs into field mushrooms for grilling or trying more adventurous dishes such as tartiflettes and fondues. This summer, Blacksticks Blue will be on the road at a number of festivals up and down the land, so offer your customers a taste of the unexpected and give Blacksticks Blue pride of place amongst your speciality blue cheese display.

“ Offer your customers a taste of the unexpected and give Blacksticks Blue pride of place amongst your speciality blue cheese display ”

DARE TO BE **OUTSTANDING**
with **BLACKSTICKS[®] BLUE**

A distinctive, quirky British Farmhouse Blue with its striking amber hue and smooth and creamy texture. For those with a taste for adventure. #MakeAMealOfIt

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PIONEERS IN CHEESE

Rightfully renowned for its Blue Stilton heritage, Long Clawson also uses century-old expertise to create a diverse range of other exciting English cheeses, too

With a company history dating back to 1911, Long Clawson has evolved alongside the cheese industry to keep up with consumer demand for eclectic options. Today, over 40 farms in the Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire areas supply the company with approximately 70m litres of milk every year, ensuring future prosperity for years to come. Twinned with that network is a dedicated vision to develop a repertoire of speciality cheeses, including fruit blends, savoury blends, a Leicestershire Red and a number of formats for Blue Stilton. “We have produced additive cheeses for almost 50 years,” says Janice Breedon, marketing manager at Long Clawson. “Our first offerings were launched in the late 1960s. The market saw incredible growth for this category in the mid-2000s and this has gone from strength to strength with customers increasingly more receptive to new flavour combinations and ideas. The evidence of the success

of the additive cheeses is during Christmas, where flavours include alcohol and some more intriguing presentations, which are testament to the acceptance of this category by consumers.”

Bastion of blue cheese

Most cheese lovers will immediately recognise the Long Clawson name from its revered Stilton and blue cheese portfolio. Its Blue Stilton is made in the heart of the Vale of Belvoir by master cheesemakers, who began crafting the cheese over 100 years ago. Each Stilton is individually graded and hand-selected to ensure the finest quality. The cheese is aged for between eight and 12 weeks and has a rich flavour and distinctive blue cheese taste emanating from the veins radiating from the centre of the cheese; it's this level of attention to detail that has made the cheese a pillar of the company.

“All the offerings that Long Clawson produces are important to its repertoire,” explains Janice, “but at the heart of our business

is Blue Stilton. As this cheese has PDO status, flavour development is limiting, which is why different format options are so important. The sliced market is in growth – it's currently worth approximately £140m and unit growth is at 7% year-on-year. Blue Stilton is Britain's favourite blue, so to introduce a slice which offers customers a great flavour and in a convenient format makes perfect sense.”

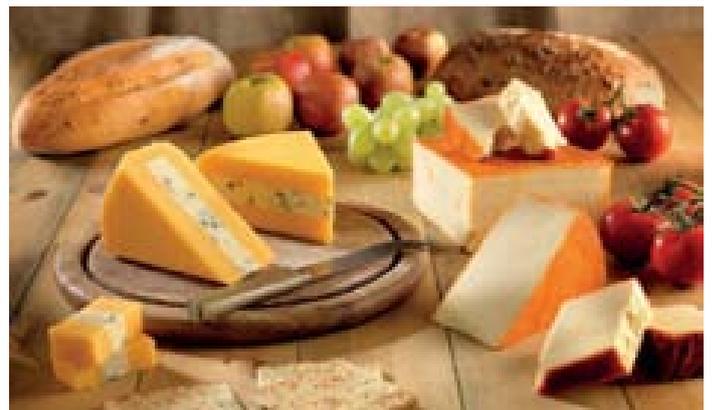
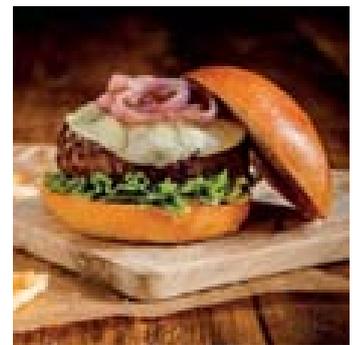
Red success

One of Long Clawson's biggest success stories is its Rutland Red, which has plenty of accolades to its name. “We launched our Leicestershire Red in 2007,” says Janice. “We'd worked for a long time to develop a traditional Leicester cheese in the area it took its name from – we are the only dairy in Leicestershire to make a pasteurised Red Leicester cheese. As a specialist cheesemaker, we knew we had the expertise to

develop something we could be proud of. In 2008 – just a year after its launch – it won Supreme Champion at The Global Cheese Awards and Best UK Non-Territorial Cheese at The British Cheese Awards. Since then it's gone on to win over 40 awards, including Super Gold at The World Cheese Awards.”

It's easy to understand why Rutland Red has proven successful, with its flaky open texture, slightly sweet caramelised flavour and rich golden orange colour. “Our Rutland Red is cloth-bound, buttered and left to mature for up to six months,” explains Janice. “This aids the development of the rust red coat. The richness of the orange colour comes from both the addition of Annatto – a natural plant dye – and butter.”

Such is the attitude of Long Clawson that it is still looking to diversify and expand on its facilities and offering. “We are currently in the middle of an extension and improvement programme which will see £22m invested in facilities over the next five years,” explains Janice, “A new cold storage facility was opened in 2016, and a packing hall is due to open this summer. We are committed to the long term and investment and sustainability is key. We want to lead the speciality cheese market with new cheese and new formats.”



“As a specialist cheesemaker, we knew we had the expertise to develop something we could be proud of”

CLAWSON
Cheesemakers Since 1911

Rutland Red[®]

Traditionally made and lovingly crafted by cheese making experts in the heart of the Vale of Belvoir

It is clothbound, buttered and matured for up to six months creating an intensely orange, visually stunning cheese with a sweet, caramelised flavour

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TASTEFUL TRUCKLES

Cheese Buyer speaks to Richard Newton-Jones, commercial director for Snowdonia Cheese Company, about the iconic Welsh brand

SO FAR, WHAT HAVE BEEN THE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017?

2017 had an incredible start, as our iconic Black Bomber was announced, for the second time, as the Best British Cheese Brand in the annual Best Brands

supplement. The extra mature Cheddar was launched in 2001, so to receive this accolade definitely was a sweet 16th birthday present.

This award is voted for by independent retailers, which includes all of the deli owners,

cheesemongers and farm shop managers that we've developed relationships with over the years, making it all the more rewarding.

WHY DO YOU THINK THE BRAND HAS BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL?

Snowdonia Cheese Company has successfully created a family of cheeses that are bursting with character. Consumers are really attached to our cheeses! The range of 10 colourful waxed cheese truckles offers something truly distinct. Each cheese is carefully made to deliver real depth of flavour, from the chilli hit of Red Devil through to the perfectly balanced Green Thunder.

Flavour-added cheeses should capture the imagination. We're also careful to ensure that we offer pairing and serving suggestions to help consumers get the most from their cheese selection. It helps that Snowdonia Cheese Company is known as the original in this format, and the vibrant wax coatings are an essential part of our striking brand identity. Similarly, we're immensely proud of our Welsh farming heritage. The valleys, lakes and mountains of North Wales significantly inform and influence

the cheeses we produce and that is conveyed in everything we do.

ARE THERE ANY NEW PRODUCTS IN DEVELOPMENT?

Another aspect of the business' ongoing strategy is innovation. A more recent addition to the range is Ruby Mist, which has rich warming hints of port and brandy.

This summer we are reintroducing Red Storm, one of our best performing cheeses. Unavailable since the middle of 2016, it takes up to 18 months to mature, so we're keen to welcome it back.

WHAT'S YOUR PROMOTIONAL FOCUS OVER THE COMING MONTHS?

This summer we're supporting retailers' summer sales with a dedicated 'Smokin' Snowdonia' campaign. Making the most of the current barbecue trend, we've created a series of burger recipes incorporating cheeses from our range. These will feature in printed POS and take-home recipe cards. Snowdonia's cheeses lend themselves as a complex accompaniment to barbecued meat and vegetables.

Black Bomber voted
Best British Cheese

In Fine Food Digest's Best Brand Survey





snowdoniacheese.co.uk

Offering a strong range of French Alpine cheeses such as Emmental, Comté and Gruyère in a variety of formats is Entremont, which “originally was a specialist in the hard cheeses of the Savoie region in the Alps,” says sales manager, Jerome Reignier. “The number one cheese produced by Entremont is Emmental, which is really the Cheddar of the French – it’s the one you will always find in our fridges. In France, this is mostly consumed in a grated format and the retail sector mostly sells it in that form. In the UK the grate of cheese is quite thick and wide, but because Emmental is less fatty, and drier, the grate is very fine, making it perfect for dishes such as onion soup. We offer classic Emmental in portions, grated, sliced or cubes or cosettes, which are smaller cubes.”

“Together with Emmental and Gruyère, we have a number of speciality cheeses from Savoie and from Jura, which borders Switzerland: Comté, Morbier, Reblochon, Beaufort and Abondance. These cheeses have a special flavour which culminates in the floral notes originating from



THE HOME OF ALPINE CHEESE

Discover a range of fine mountain cheeses at Entremont

the meadows where cows graze and where hay is collected to feed them in the barn. The deep, lasting flavours of these cheeses are the result of using this raw milk and allowing long maturation times. Comté, has been increasing in popularity in recent years. I believe Morbier, Reblochon and especially Abondance should gain more

awareness from UK consumers

Easily recognizable the Abondance wheel can go from a golden yellow to a brown colour. the firm but supple ivory-yellow paste is creamy and velvety, exceptionally well balanced with fruity hints of pineapple and hazelnut. The handcrafted wheel is made using traditional methods in

the Savoie mountains.

The milk used comes from at least 45% of Abondance cows. Fed from natural pastures in summer and hay during winter, the feed is guaranteed without GMO or silage. Abondance is a raw milk cheese and the feed impacts directly the quality of the cheese.

The flavours of these cheeses are quite unique, Jerome says. “When you buy an Alpine cheese you first taste the saltiness and the milkiness on the front of your tongue. Then, as the cheese spreads in your mouth, you get another flavour, which is more complex. The nuttiness, the bitterness and acidity comes in. As you swallow it, other notes emerge. Our cheeses can have a finish that’s reminiscent of roasted coffee, fudge and crusty bread. You can still taste an Entremont cheese a few minutes after you have eaten it. We offer quality with flavour in a range of handy formats, ideal for the farm shop or delicatessen.”

“Once people taste these flavours, they will be hooked,” Jerome says. “The Emmental products will also have appeal for people looking for an affordable alternative to Cheddar.”

Entremont

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EXCITING TIMES FOR GODMINSTER BRIE

An award-winning cheese from the heart of the Somerset countryside

Godminster is based in the rolling green pastures surrounding the picturesque town of Bruton in the heart of Somerset. The farm was certified organic in 1999 and today encompasses over 1300 acres of beautiful countryside. Godminster Farm is home to nearly 300 organic dairy cows and boasts fruitful orchards filled with a variety of delicious fruits and herbs which inspire many of the Godminster products.

Godminster Organic Brie is an award-winning, traditionally air-ripened soft cheese that is handmade using fresh milk from their single herd of dairy cows. They graze on pastures only a mile away from the dairy itself, ensuring the Godminster cheesemakers

have deliciously fresh and creamy organic milk to produce tasty organic Brie and the distinctive Vintage Organic Cheddar encased in Godminster's signature burgundy wax.

The Godminster Organic Brie range features three carefully crafted flavours: Traditional, Black Pepper and Garlic & Chive. All three are created by Godminster's skilled cheesemaking siblings, Steve and Malcolm Dyer, and all are wrapped by hand which ensures a quality that can only be achieved with an artisanal product.

The Godminster range has won several awards over the years, including gold awards at the International Cheese Awards, British Cheese Awards and Global Cheese Awards in 2016. The most

recent accolade is a coveted Great Taste Award for their Heart-Shaped Traditional Organic Brie. It joins a Great Taste roll of honour that includes biscuits, chutney and their infused 'Fruits & Roots' Vodka Spirit range. These awards are the result of almost two decades of hard work from Godminster's founder Richard Hollingbery and his dedicated team.

Godminster recently won a portion of an £8.7 million grant fund available from the South West Growth Fund to expand the brie making facility.



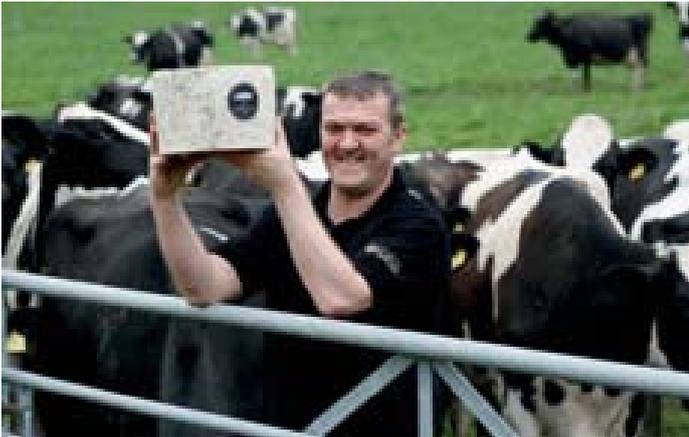
Deborah Bradfield, Godminster's commercial director says, "Since the brie was launched in 2013,

demand has grown year on year. In the last 12 months' sales are up 34%. Our recent grant funding from South West Grant Funds will enable us to invest in more machinery, a new fridge store and create six more jobs. We're excited at the prospect of supplying more farm shops, delis and wholesalers nationwide with our award-winning Organic Brie range."



Explore the **GODMINSTER®** Range...





WELSH PRIDE

Aled Rowlands, cheesemaker at Bodnant Welsh Dairy talks us through its cheese range, expertise and awards

The Bodnant Dairy was built to establish artisan cow's milk cheese production in Conwy, North Wales. Since its inception in 2012, the dairy has created a range of award-winning cheeses based upon traditional and regional Welsh recipes.

True artisan cheese

With fresh Welsh milk coming from a local, single Friesian herd half a mile away, we are able to offer the highest quality, consistently with full traceability. The cows graze on the lush green pastures in the foothills of Snowdonia. Our farmer

transports the milk tank with his tractor three times a week to our dairy. Our team of cheesemakers then pasteurise the fresh, raw milk to produce cheese with unique flavours using traditional artisan methods.

Traditional artisan methods

We produce small batches from the evening and morning milk, handling them with great care to retain the natural taste of the milk, and this results in the cheeses being full of flavour. Our Welsh milk has a high butter fat content and we leave all the cream in the milk to achieve a creamy flavour.

The cheesemakers hand-salt the cheese to control the production process and maintain a consistent flavour profile and hand-bandage in muslin cloth in order to allow the cheese to breathe and develop its flavour within our cheese maturing stores. The cheese rounds are regularly hand-turned by our cheese makers to develop the textural characteristics and flavour. The team hand-cut all our cheeses into rounds, quarters and wedges. Our cheeses are also hand-labelled and some are now hand-wax dipped!

Retail ready and delicatessen artisan range

We offer a full delicatessen range from 10kg wheels to 750g quarters, plus complete retail-ready pre-packed wedges with shelf-ready packaging for chiller units. We have recently added a gifting option to our range, with hand-waxed wedges.

Our cheeses continue to be recognised, and last year won awards at the British and International Cheese Awards as well as three stars at the Great Taste Awards for our Traditional Welsh Caerphilly.

Aberwen was our first cheese to be produced – it's a farmhouse-style cow's milk hard cheese that is matured in our stores for five months and is based on a 300 year old recipe. This gives it its creamy full-rounded flavour. Abergoch is a coloured cheese adapted from the Aberwen recipe – it is milder and creamy with a slightly nutty flavour. Abermwig is a smoked cheese, smoked over naturally fallen Welsh beechwood using a two-day cold smoking process. Our Traditional Welsh Caerphilly is created from the traditional territorial recipe and offers a young, fresh, lactic taste.

Traditional Artisan Welsh Cheese

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Based in the village of Ditcheat, Somerset Barber's Farmhouse Cheesemakers are the oldest surviving cheesemaking business in the UK and the oldest Cheddar makers in the world. Now with the sixth generation at the helm, the Barber family continue to evolve the business and add to the legacy of cheese making since 1833 providing a unique heritage which continues to thrive and develop into new markets at home and internationally.

As Giles Barber explains, "The conversion of the best grass grown in the near perfect conditions offered by the Somerset and Dorset countryside into milk, and ultimately into cheese, in principle remains unchanged. Although the cheese-making process has evolved over the generations the one truth that remains constant is that without the best quality milk you will never make the best quality cheese. The best quality milk can only be obtained from the healthiest and happiest cows.

Since Barber's started farming and making cheese in Ditcheat in 1833, milk production from the Barber's own family farms has expanded considerably. "We now farm across 11 of our own separate farms which are all smaller herds based on the traditional outdoor grazing system. We completely understand the vital importance of the quality of the milk and the welfare of our herds and in working with the countryside on which we depend," says Giles.

"In addition to the milk produced from the family's own farms, and to meet the increasing demand for Barber's cheddar, we work with many other family dairy farms across Somerset and Dorset to provide us with all of the milk we need.

"Our relationship with all of our farmers is critical. Working closely with them to ensure that milk we purchase consistently meets the quality assurance expectations of our customers remains really important," he explains.

From January this year, to support and underpin these requirements, Barber's launched new standards required of their own and all supplying dairy farms – 'Barber's Assured'. These new standards are designed to recognise and underpin 'best practice'



BARBER'S ASSURED: QUALITY GUARANTEED

*A close relationship with farmers is key
for this Somerset Cheddar-producer*

throughout the milk supply chain.

"We wanted to endorse, encourage, and reward the highest standards from our dedicated farmers and so we have provided further support to incentivise the new specification through the application of a price premium to support the quality levels," says Giles.

So what are the standards? "Milk quality is crucial as the core ingredient upon which our entire business is dependent. Barber's Assured protocols ensure that milk is of the highest and consistent quality. This supplied to the family's two production facilities, at Ditcheat, Somerset, and Ford

Farm, Dorset".

Milking parlour hygiene and dairy plant wash protocols are required to ensure that appropriate dairy chemicals and rinsing processes are used.

"In addition to the quality cheese ranges produced, premium grade high whey protein powders to Infant Formula standards are also marketed. It remains crucial that all of our products are produced completely free of any chemical residues from any part of our supply chain and this starts on the farm.

"Our customers consistently tell us that the health and welfare of all of our cows is one of the most important factors to them in

choosing their cheese. So, animal welfare standards are a critical part of the new Barber's Assured programme. One area of increasing focus is a requirement for more limited and better managed use of antibiotics. Whilst limited use of them is important to ensuring a healthy herd, antimicrobial resistance is also an increasingly important issue of focus for consumers and the industry alike. The Government's commissioning of the O'Neil report published last year including a focus on the role and responsibility agriculture has within this increasingly high profile resistance debate.

"We have taken this responsibility seriously," says Giles. "For example, we have integrated the necessary safeguards within our new protocols to reduce third and fourth generation antibiotics used within animal treatments. In addition, to ensure where farmers have no choice but to treat animals to combat disease, all milk from treated cows must be tested clear with an antibiotic detector test before admitting any milk for sale to us."

Barber's are also encouraging a closer working relationship between their farmers and their on farm veterinary practitioners; not just in the reduction of antibiotic prescriptions, but in animal disease herd health prevention plans with protocols introduced to manage BVD and Johnes Disease.

To provide added farmer support, the Barber's Assured package had a phased introduction, with the provision of 'in house' assistance and vet-led workshops to deliver the new standards.

Giles concludes, "Our farmer's high quality milk to the Barber's Assured standards is a pivotal and integral part of the Barber's proposition to our expanding range of customers in the UK and abroad. We're very proud of the fantastic work that they do and they love being involved with a cheese that they can rightfully call their own".

Whilst sourcing high quality milk has remained a consistent attribute of 184 years of Barber's heritage of cheese, Barber's Assured underpins milk quality to a new level to confidently meet the increasingly competitive standards customers require and expect.

“ Milk quality is crucial as the core ingredient upon which our entire business is dependent ”



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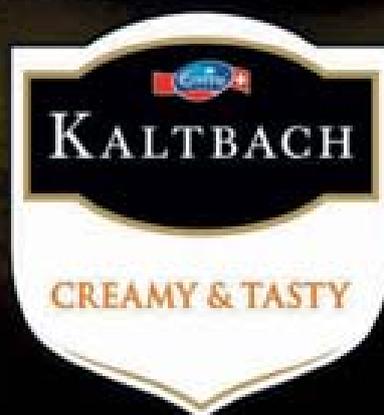
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