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## EDITOR'S LETTER



**W**elcome to the October issue of *Speciality Food*, within which you'll find the usual news, product launches, exclusive expertise and opinion, and practical advice to help you navigate the upcoming festive season with aplomb.

We also dive deep into some of the biggest topics in the industry right now, including food waste – find out how to minimise wastage from your cheese counter on p. 36 – sustainability, thanks to the pioneering Christopher Dawson of Clearspring on p. 34, and organic with an eight-page special report covering everything from what UK shoppers are buying to the value of retailers to the domestic market, the overseas opportunities for British brands, and industry opinion on what the future holds for this vital sector.

We also share previews of two must-visit Italian shows: Welcome Italia (p. 12) and Bellavita (p. 14).

Plus, published alongside this issue is the 2019 edition of *Café Buyer*, our round-up of the most exciting goings-on in the hot drinks and food-to-go markets.

**HOLLY SHACKLETON** | EDITOR  
holly.shackleton@aceville.co.uk

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# The war on climate change

It's a global issue that greatly affects the food and drink industry, but what's being done to reduce emissions and plan for a brighter future?

Headlines have been dominated in recent times with constant news of the devastating effects of industry and human activity on the environment, one of which is the acceleration of climate change. Martin Noponen, climate director at the Rainforest Alliance explains, "Many regions are already experiencing higher temperatures, prolonged droughts, and episodes of intense rainfall. These factors can affect agricultural production in many ways: increasing the distribution and occurrence of plant pests and diseases, disrupting pollination, or limiting uptake of necessary nutrients and therefore impacting crop yields and quality."

It's not all doom and gloom however, as there is much that the food and drink industry can do and is doing to help create a more sustainable environment for the future. Earlier this year the government signed legislation that made the UK the first major economy to pass laws to end its contribution to global warming by the year 2050, meaning that all greenhouse gas emissions need to be at net zero by that time. According to the Committee on Climate Change website, UK emissions were 44% below 1990 levels in 2018.

Helen Munday, chief scientific officer at the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) commented, "The Government's announcement to set the UK on a course towards net zero

emissions of greenhouse gases was a very welcome and important step towards tackling climate change. As part of the wider food chain, food and drink manufacturers are well aware of the unprecedented pressures that climate change poses to future food production, competition for land use access and the need to tackle food waste. We have called on Government to bring forward the policies needed to meet this new challenging target. In particular, this will need to include policies on how to decarbonise heat production and to ensure that the people of the UK have access to sustainable and nutritious food."

It's not just the government that is making pledges; big businesses across the food and drink industry are stating their commitment to making a difference. This September

Nestlé announced its aim to achieve zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Helen states that the industry is playing a positive role in building "more resilient and sustainable value chains into the future." She explains, "Our members continue to show industry-leading dedication to achieving sustainability goals. For 2018, FDF members have once again reported reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, down 53% since 1990, and reduced water consumption, down 39% since 2008. FDF has promoted several initiatives, including the food waste campaigns Your Business Is Food and the Food Waste Reduction Roadmap, and is a founding signatory of the UK Plastics Pact along with many of our members."

Martin, Rainforest Alliance, says that climate-smart agriculture (CSA)

can be used to address many climate-induced challenges, an approach that combines the different dimensions of sustainable development under a climate change umbrella: "The methodology provides the tools and pathways for farmers and other stakeholders to build more resilient livelihoods and supply chains whilst helping to reduce the impact of farming on climate change. Some of the most commonly recognised CSA practices include reducing land degradation and the enhancement of agro-ecological systems and functions through appropriate soil management techniques, water conservation practices, and the establishment or improvement of agroforestry systems. At the same time, considering and developing responses to socio-economic risks and vulnerabilities such as the

design and delivery of technical capacity and resources or financial safety nets must be an integral part of any CSA strategy."

The NFU has also recently announced its plan for how the British farming industry can aim to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, unveiled in its report, *Achieving Net Zero: Farming's 2040 Goal*, which sets out three pillars of activity.

Dr Jonathan Scurlock, NFU chief advisor on climate change and renewable energy, explains, "What the NFU has done is to substantially increase our level of ambition. At the beginning of this year the NFU president Minette Batters officially announced we are aspiring to getting to net zero emissions in agriculture by 2040. We have some important asks for government, which recognises how agriculture can counterbalance its emissions."

How can the industry move forward together? "In terms of working with the supply chain we're very keen," he says. "We want to collaborate with processors and retailers, many of whom are themselves coming up with their own radical environmental changes, such as eliminating plastic packaging altogether or getting to net zero emissions across their own operations. Where we can collaborate with others across the supply chain our door is open to having those discussions."

## A TASTE OF ITALIAN HISTORY.



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## CHARLES CAMPION



### "The art of shopping"

Having successfully negotiated a summer that has seen us giving Boris the benefit of the doubt, we are now head down and tail up peddling hard in the race towards Christmas. Times, (and the retail environment) are a-changin' and for once it is the supermarkets that are paying the price for faulty planning.

Once upon a time Tesco's Metro stores were a new and convenient way to do the family shop. But the summer of 2019 has seen a programme of cutbacks. It's ironic, but earnest food writers have long espoused switching away from the jumbo weekly shop to buying fresh food more frequently – a couple of meals at a time. Tesco was faced with the switch from once-weekly shoppers to devotees of convenience stores. This has meant a good deal of "simplifying", "restructuring", and thousands of redundancies in the Metro estate.

The way we shop now is changing. Elderly readers may well remember grocers shops in the 1950 and 60s as places where you could ask the helpful chap in a brown coat for half a pound of raisins and watch him fill one of those blue paper bags before folding it closed. Sadly, we are unlikely to return to the kind of service made famous by Arkwright (AKA Ronny Barker). But some of the values from Open All Hours are unsettlingly near the mark. We live in a world that is re-appraising everything from plastic packaging to eco-friendly paper coffee cups and straws. Is it time to consider Arkwright's paper bags?

Is it time to consider the merits of buying grocery staples from bulk? We all know that the customer is always right and currently that same customer is doing his or her share of pondering. Bring back the blue paper bags.

People who have their own hens are understandably proud of their eggs and will happily bore all-comers about the deep orange yolks and firm whites. The egg section in supermarkets has had to become inventive. Selling eggs in ten egg packs; or blue shelled eggs; or very brown eggs; or varied sizes in the same packs... and now you can buy pullets' eggs – the hen fruit of young birds and about one third the size of the standard eggs. The PR spin suggests that pullet's eggs are prized by chefs because each contains less white and more yolk. Pullet's eggs are also a seasonal treat (the young birds only lay for so long before they become large birds and start a lifetime's full bore production). Despite these complications pullet's eggs now command a premium and sell in packs of four for about 50p an egg. Because of their lack of size you'll need to allow a dozen for each omelette.

Dean and Danny Thomas are Cornishmen that fly the Black and White flag of St Piran over the burger and burrito restaurant they opened near Saltash. So far so good, but when it came to the name they tripped up. The brothers called it "Foreign Muck" which turned out to be a sure way to incense the anti-racism lobby and the brothers found themselves embroiled in a storm in a media teacup. Who knew burritos had feelings?

# European Pizza & Pasta Show returns for fourth edition

The European Pizza & Pasta Show, which will be taking place during 13th-15th November this year at London's Olympia, is returning for its fourth edition.

Highlighting the pizza and pasta industry, the event brings together equipment manufacturers, specialist suppliers and service providers with the UK and European food wholesalers and retailers, pizza operators and pizzeria owners, restaurant chains and independent restaurants, hotels and catering companies.

The European Pizza & Pasta Show will be divided into six zones; Pizza and Professional Kitchen Equipment, Specialty Food and Ingredients, Pasta, Bakery and snacks, Drinks, Ice Cream and Desserts. Events not to miss include competitions and cooking Master Classes celebrity chefs such as Tony Gemignani, as well as a range of seminars and speaking events.





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## FOOD AND DRINK MANUFACTURERS



# Make sure your products meet new labelling rules

Labels on food and drink products made in the UK won't be able to carry EU health and identification marks or the EU emblem after Brexit. These are just a few of the changes food and drink businesses need to make.

Find out the steps you need  
to take at [gov.uk/brexit-food-labelling](https://gov.uk/brexit-food-labelling)

Get **ready** for Brexit



## JOHN SHEPHERD OF PARTRIDGES



### "2019 and all that!"

Over the past 47 years, and since Partridges first started trading, the year 2018 has proven to be one of the worst! It was Ye Rocky Shoppe Horror Picture Show.

Bad weather at the start of the year, rising business rates, rents and auto enrolment contributions coupled with local building works, pension fund shortfalls, bad weather and continuing political uncertainty were the background factors. It was hard to think how it could get any worse and although some trading elements have improved such as weather and building works, some like rates and pension contributions are not likely to get better anytime soon.

Incredibly we now pay £1,000 a week in business rates with no sign of our appeal being looked into in the near future. Also the threat of a no-deal Brexit would introduce tariffs of around 22% on average to our European imports, as far as we can make out, and as for pension contributions it's all about bond yields – so these are all areas outside our immediate control.

However – as John Major used to say – "no pain, no gain," and after a period of shock and outrage last year and kicking the metaphorical cat we slowly got our act together and did something about it.

The Christmas quarter ended up better than our expectations and the effort we made focusing on smaller cost areas has started to bear fruit – for the time being. Although the febrile nature of consumer confidence at the present time means that any form of complacency would be fatal.

Somewhat surprisingly 2019 has actually shown some bounce and hopefully not of the metaphorical dead cat variety – we need him to kick when things go wrong (metaphorically speaking).

In terms of trading performance January was actually down by 1.5% in 2019. February up by 6.3%, March up by 7.6%, April up by 6.2%, May up by 0.1% (thank goodness I bought that doughnut), June up by 2.9% and July up by 5.8%.

As I write this at the end of August, we are actually up 8.5% compared to August 2018 – admittedly with one extra Saturday of trade this year.

These figures are being compared to the poor figures of 2018, of course, but overall for the year we are about 4% up in sales and around 2% up in customers.

It is difficult to know exactly why 2019 has been such an improvement for us on 2018. Many factors play a part. A recent article on the BBC News website highlighted research showing that longevity in humans is strongly linked to a positive mental outlook. This is likely to be the case for businesses as well and independent food shops in particular. Although, adopting a positive mental attitude is easier said than done, especially when facing a barrage of bad news that you have no control over.

This is actually one of the main reasons I enjoy going to the Speciality & Fine Food Fair each September. To recharge the emotional batteries and experience the creative energy of so many producers of great food. And hopefully transfer some of it into our shop. Just before the rollercoaster of Christmas begins.

Fingers crossed for the rest of 2019!

## FUTURE FOOD AWARDS

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## Finalists revealed for Future Food Awards

The finalists and winners of each of the nine categories for the upcoming Future Food Awards, a collaboration between *Speciality Food* magazine, *The FoodTalk Show* and *Bread & Jam*, have been revealed. The co-founders of the Awards met last month at the FoodTalk offices in Ashford to judge the shortlisted finalists in each category. After much deliberation due to the high standard of entries, the judges – *Speciality Food* magazine editor Holly Shackleton,

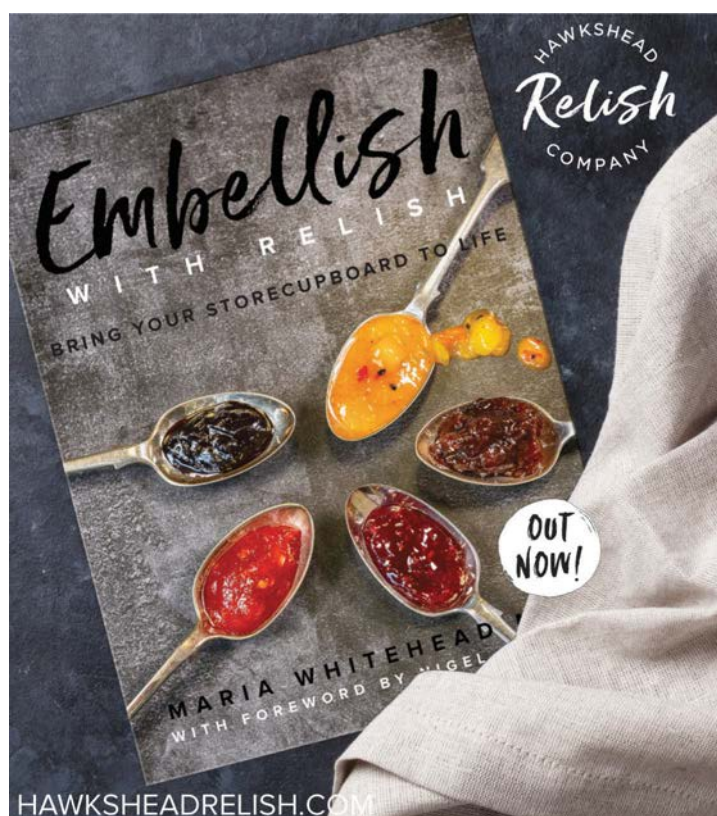
FoodTalk founder Sue Nelson and Bread & Jam co-founder Jason Gibb – named the 2019 category winners.

These nine winners will go on to pitch to the full panel of expert judges at the Bread & Jam festival on 3rd October 2019 at the Institute of Directors in London's Pall Mall to be in with the chance of being crowned the Supreme Champion.

For the full list of the finalists plus all of the judge's comments head to [futurefoodawards.com](http://futurefoodawards.com).

The nine category winners are:

- **NEWCOMER**  
BINARY BOTANICAL
- **FARM TO FORK**  
DORSET SNAILS
- **DRINK INNOVATION**  
LUHV DRINKS
- **IMPOSSIBLE TO CATEGORISE (WILD CARD)**  
NOURISH3D
- **FOOD TECH INNOVATION**  
VITA MOJO
- **FOOD INNOVATION**  
BEE APPROVED (VEGANISTA)
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# Food hall joins fight against food and packaging waste

Faversham-based food hall Macknade has unveiled a range of eco-friendly changes across the business. The new 'Unpackaged at Macknade' section features produce in dispensers, giving customers the opportunity to bring in their own containers to fill up on loose grains, pulses, rice, dried fruit, nuts and pasta. The business is also partnering up with other enterprises to repurpose fruit and vegetables and reduce food waste within its kitchen. Macknade is working with Wasted Kitchen, a food repurposing initiative run by Mighty Fine Things, as well as Indie Ecology founder and Food Waste Farmer Igor Vaintraub, who is assisting with composting waste food and working it back into the land for local farmers and growers.

Managing director Stefano Cuomo explains, "Fundamentally, the new Unpackaged at Macknade section means there is less waste, it's better for the environment and the unit costs are reduced. Additionally, our customers can now sample premium products in smaller quantities, instead of a 500g bag of premium pasta they can just choose



to buy just one or two portions. We have a large dispenser unit with 30 products; it has been so popular with customers that we are already looking to increase the range. Our butcher and deli counters wrap

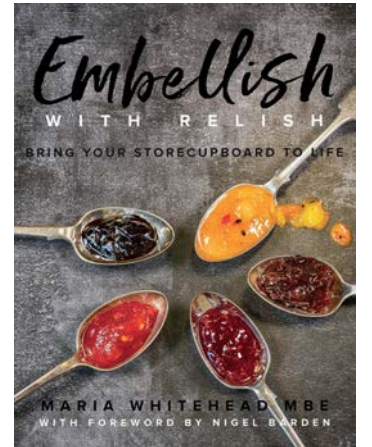
produce in waxed paper, wherever possible, which is recyclable, but customers can choose to bring in their own containers to take home cheese, deli salads or slice cooked meats."

# Hawkshead Relish livens up mealtimes with cookbook

*Embellish With Relish* is a new book just launched by Hawkshead Relish. The cookbook features a variety of dishes using kitchen staples, drawing on both familiar and exciting flavours from around the world to liven up mealtimes. Recipes include both classic family favourites and a selection of inventive, contemporary dishes, so there is something for everyone to enjoy. The 160-page cookbook features more than 50 recipes, such as Salted Caramel Brownies and Spiced Garlic Kiev, and includes the likes of Hawkshead Relish's Raspberry & Vanilla Jam, Salted Caramel Sauce and Hot Garlic Pickle.

Director Maria Whitehead says, "The idea behind this collection of recipes is to make people think a little differently about that stash of relishes most of us have sitting in the cupboard. We've split the recipes

into ten chapters, each starring one of our most popular Hawkshead Relish products and we hope everyone finds something to have a go at that will brighten up your family mealtimes."



# Traditional butchers offers plant-based meat alternatives

An award-winning butchers is now offering plant-based meat alternatives, said to be the first in the UK to do so.

Thurston Butchers in Suffolk, who have gained recognition for their homemade sausages, has begun selling plant-based products from West London company THIS, stocking THIS Isn't Bacon and THIS Isn't Chicken.

Alistair Angus who runs Thurston Butchers said, "People are probably

thinking it's absurd for a butcher to sell vegan produce. But I see it as an alternative – we actually get asked a lot by our customers for vegetarian or vegan alternatives so this provides a perfect answer. I'm also aware that people are thinking lots about their meat intake; I believe that people should be eating ethically sourced, local meat as often as they can afford. If they're looking into their meat intake and are looking for something different, then THIS is a great alternative."

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## SUE NELSON



### “Why smoking is good for you”

For centuries fish was the mainstay of families living along coastlines and on rivers, caught and eaten immediately or preserved by potting in butter or by smoking or salting. As we know, oily fish has been linked to many health benefits, including a lower risk of heart disease, improved mental ability, protection from cancer, alcohol-related dementia and rheumatoid arthritis. We are told we should eat at least two servings a week.

The standard smoked fish offering in supermarkets is smoked salmon, but the huge majority is produced using industrial processes. It is usually from Norway as it is significantly cheaper than British salmon and needs only be smoked in Scotland to be called Scottish smoked salmon, so even if it is described as Scottish the fish need not come from there at all. Quite often it is brined rather than salted to preserve moisture, and sprayed with liquid smoke rather than naturally smoked using wood chips. Sugar is added too to balance the saltiness required for a long shelf life.

The big industrial producers have been hit by a massive increase in the number of lice infecting salmon. In order to delouse these fish housed in huge tanks they use some pretty nasty chemicals. That is why supermarket smoked salmon often has an acrid taste.

Smoked salmon should be a delicacy as it used to be, not the commodity it has become. Good, properly smoked fish should allow the natural product to shine through

so you can actually taste the fish, with the smoke complementing and not hiding it. Most artisan smoked salmon is cold smoked at a temperature which allows the pores to open sufficiently to absorb the smoke but not cook it. The wood used varies from oak, beech and applewood to chippings from oak barrels, all lending a distinct but subtle taste profile. The lighter the smoke the more the flavour of the fish comes through, whereas whisky barrels or peat add a rich, distinctive taste.

If you close your eyes and savour a smoked fish, you can tell those that have been traditionally smoked by hand, a world away from the smoke ‘sprayed’ variety. It could be naturally pink or even dark red but should be firm in texture and not oily or slimy, and when it is cut it should be slightly transparent and shiny. It should also be fresh tasting and not too salty.

Some traditional smokehouses also ‘hot smoke’ salmon. This is achieved by raising the temperature after the initial cold smoke, so the fish cooks, becoming firm and flaky but moist and can be cut into wedges.

For something a little quirky, The Pished Fish produce “booze infused” smoked salmon using whisky, rum, gin, vodka, pernod, brandy and bourbon combined with some wonderful botanicals.

There are some great artisan producers who sit outside the production of industrialised smoked fish, and independent retailers will have a client base who can appreciate and tell the difference.

**Sue Nelson presents the FoodTalk Show with Holly Shackleton. [foodtalk.co.uk](http://foodtalk.co.uk)**

## IFE partners up with HRC and Pro2Pac for new annual show



The International Food & Drink Exhibition (IFE) is set to be joining forces with the Hotel, Restaurant & Catering (HRC) show to create the UK's largest food, drink, catering and hospitality event of the year.

The joint event, which also includes Pro2Pac, will have its first edition during 22nd-24th March 2021 at London's ExCel, and is then set to take place annually from then onwards. The uniting of the three shows will give the food, drink and hospitality industry a place to see the latest innovations, consumer trends and network with more than 45,000 retail, hospitality and foodservice professionals across three days.

Soraya Gadelrab, portfolio director of Food, Drink & Hospitality at Fresh Montgomery, said, “We are extremely excited about the opportunities we feel uniting the events will bring, and with more time pressure placed on everyone in the trade, we hope to provide an unmissable one stop shop for industry professionals on a global platform.”

## Food Matters Summit takes on the future of food and drink

**More than 100 international speakers will take to the stage at the inaugural Food Matters Summit to debate the issues facing the food industry.** The Summit, which takes place during the Food Matters Live event over 19th-20th November 2019, aims to connect organisations across the food supply chain, bringing

together disruptive innovators and established multinational companies to inspire the very best new thinking and accelerate innovation across the global food industry.

International food experts, government representatives, technology experts and

entrepreneurs will come together to examine three central themes over two days: The Food Revolution, Feeding our Future and Tomorrow's Innovation. Speakers will include restaurateur and lead of the UK's National Food Strategy Henry Dimbleby and Ben Elliot, Defra's food surplus and waste champion.

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**T**he food and drink industry has seen a sea of change over the last few years, with an increase in consumers adjusting their diets and consuming less meat and dairy products. The number of vegetarians, flexitarians and vegans has rapidly increased, with Millennials and the younger generation a strong force behind these developments. According to research by Mintel, Brits aged 25-34 are the most likely (40%) to have reduced their meat consumption in the last year. Environmental and ethical concerns are up there as the top reasons for people cutting down across the board, as well as health. This change has required brands to cater to the 'conscious consumer' and to think more creatively about how alternative ingredients can be used in products, paving the way for innovation. It's clear to see how much the free-from sector has grown in a short space of time, with a huge array of quality products to choose from.

Food consultant Elizabeth Head says that there is a plethora of products now out there for consumers; "Alternatives to meat and dairy are a growing trend within the food industry, accelerated recently by the increase in the number of vegans. There are many milk alternatives now such as oat, rice and nut milks, cheese alternatives are getting better, there are plenty of dairy-free spreads, coconut cream is a great alternative to use, and more recently everyone has gone mad for jackfruit as a great replacement for meat."

When it comes to dairy product alternatives, it's clear that the demand is there. Recent stats from Mintel show that 33% of British 16-24 year-olds are now opting for plant-based milk alternatives, and almost a quarter (23%) of Brits used plant-based milk alternatives in the three months to February 2019, up from 19% in 2018. A quick search in Ocado's dairy and lactose-free milk section brings up over 140 results,



## 2020: THE YEAR OF THE MEAT REDUCER

Demand for substitutes to conventional meat and dairy are sky-high, so what options are out there for shoppers?

from almond, coconut, soy and oat options to hemp and seed milks.

The vegan cheese category has also come on in leaps and bounds. Gone are the days when a fairly plastic-looking (and tasting) faux 'cheese' was the only option on the shelf, in today's market there's everything from cheese inspired by Mozzarella to cream cheese alternatives. They can be made using nut bases, such as cashews, or coconut/coconut oil, and there's

something to suit different taste preferences. It's not just the sheer amount of choice on offer that shows how far this sector has developed in a short time, it's that companies creating free-from products are being recognised within the food and drink industry for quality, too. London-based dairy-free cheese producer Kinda Co., recently named The Seed Fund's 2019 champion, offers nine nut-based products, which includes

Feta-inspired Greek-style cubes, a cheesy Nacho Dip made with cashews and a Cheddar-esque Farmhouse block.

The market for meat alternatives is seeing huge growth, with more and more people becoming interested in reducing their meat intake and wanting a satisfying alternative. The Meatless Farm Co. offers meat-free mince, sausages and burgers, with CEO Rob Woodall explaining that the range still offers

a "meaty flavour profile." Creating a convincing texture has also been key to offering a delicious and versatile alternative to conventional meat products. He explains, "We make our plant-based products using three main proteins: brown rice, soya and pea protein. We have a patent-pending product range that's been skilfully developed to create a succulent texture and meaty flavour profile. Each ingredient plays a very important role, for example chicory root fibre binds the water and enhances the succulence when cooked, whilst the coconut oil we add gives the products a juicier consistency."

Rob predicts that the market for plant-based products will only continue to grow in the future, saying, "We'll see more and more consumers making the switch to plant-based, whether it's once or twice a week. 2020 will be the year of the meat reducer – it's not about these polarising views between 'vegan' and 'meat-eater' anymore, it's about balance and everyone working together to reduce their red meat intake as we know it's fundamentally better for our planet. If every UK household switched from a red meat meal to a plant-based meal, the reduction in greenhouse gases is the equivalent to taking 16 million cars off the road. The rise of plant-based eating is not a fad, it's here to stay and we'll see increased global demand."

Elizabeth agrees that the growing consumer awareness of the impact dairy and meat consumption has on the environment will continue to drive the demand for alternatives. "I believe the plant-based sectors will grow incredibly fast in the next few years. The way people are eating and becoming more and more aware of our planet will increase the need for alternatives. Plant-based snacks for convenience will see an uplift and I believe packaging will also have a big role to play within emerging brands in these areas," she concludes.

“ 2020 will be the year of the meat reducer – it's not about polarising views between 'vegan' and 'meat-eater' anymore, it's about balance and everyone working together to reduce their red meat intake as we know it's fundamentally better for our planet ”



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## Fancy a slice of the £443m vegan pie?





Take stock with our new food and drink round-up

## Vegan hot chocolate is “100% natural made”

Willie's Cacao has added a luxurious 100% natural vegan hot chocolate powder to its offering. Containing just two ingredients, it features 52% Medellin cacao and natural raw cane sugar for a creamy rich and hot chocolate powder.

The depth of flavour is due to what is said to be the world's best cocoa beans, the Medellin, revered for its soft, round fruity notes that adds a new dimension to the hot chocolate and makes it ideal for pairing with milk or nut milk.

Company founder William 'Willie' Harcourt-Cooze says, “I created this hot chocolate as there is nothing else out there like this. It's 100% natural made with the finest Medellin beans and has just two ingredients, pure cacao and natural raw cane sugar from Barbados.”  
[williescacao.com](http://williescacao.com)



## Range of all-butter gluten-free pastries now on shelves

The Original Baker has expanded its portfolio of savoury pastries with a range of all-butter, gluten-free products. Including three pies, four quiches, a classic pork pie, a variety of flavoured scotch eggs and pastry



blocks for consumers to make their own creations at home. The pastries are available in a range of frozen formats to suit the individual requirements of delis, farm shops, garden centres and high-end eateries who are looking to provide a quality gluten-free offering.

Sales and marketing director, Cheryl Barrett says, “Over recent years we have gained a much sought-after reputation as a leader in this niche, but rapidly expanding area of artisan food. We have been overwhelmed with the positive feedback and utter delight from coeliac consumers who are now able to enjoy ‘proper pastry’ that just happens to be gluten-free.”  
[theoriginalbaker.co.uk](http://theoriginalbaker.co.uk)

## Innovative bake-in-the box products come to market

Startup The Box Bakery has launched a range of bake-in-the-box bread and cake mixes. The fuss-free products make baking at home easy, as you simply add water, shake and bake in the box.

The Oxfordshire-based business' three-strong gluten-free product range features White Bread Mix with Sunflower & Linseeds, Wholegrain Bread Mix with Linseeds, Sunflower and Pumpkin Seeds & Quinoa as well as a Classic Chocolate Cake Mix.

John Goodwin, commercial director at The Box Bakery says, “Nothing beats the taste and smell of freshly baked homemade bread. Now with our unique Bake in the Box system your customers can create their own delicious Bread recipes in three easy steps. Just add water, shake and Bake in the Box, simple! This delicious range of bread mixes which are both vegan and gluten-free are great for everyday eating or for a special occasion, or alternatively try our Classic Chocolate Cake which is also gluten-free.”

[theboxbakery.co.uk](http://theboxbakery.co.uk)



## New gin alternative launch inspired by the coast

Interested in stocking more non-alcoholic options? Sea Arch is a new non-alcoholic gin alternative, offering top notes of cardamom, blood orange and grapefruit, with a smooth long-lasting finish. The beverage also draws on samphire, cardamom and sea kelp, hand-harvested from the South Devon coast, and lovers of gin will appreciate the unmistakable base flavour of juniper. The premium spirit contains 11 botanicals, twice-distilled in a traditional copper pot with spring water. The alcohol is then removed to leave behind pure flavour.

Sea Arch is the brainchild of Devon-based Sarah and Geoff Yates, with co-founder Sarah Yates saying, “Our vision was to produce a premium drink accessible to anyone, from one of Britain's most beautiful coastal towns. For many reasons, consumers want more choice from the sugary and one-dimensional soft drinks on the market. Crisp and celebratory, Sea Arch is made more beautiful without alcohol, while remaining calorie sweetener and sugar-free. It's a toast to Devon; to the sea, to life and all its possibilities.”  
[notginltd.com](http://notginltd.com)



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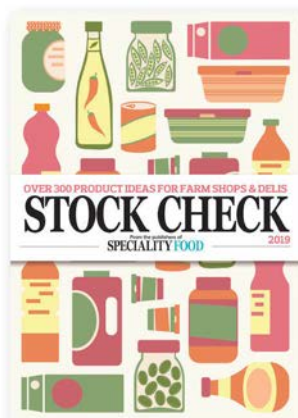
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## Kombucha brand unveils new blends



Equinox Organic Kombucha has unveiled two new blends and designs as part of a brand refresh – Espresso Coffee, said to be the UK's first craft brew coffee kombucha, and Peach & Turmeric. The organic drinks are traditionally brewed in West Yorkshire and are full of gut-boosting bacteria, as well as being 100% raw, low-calorie and low in sugar.

Founder Daniel Spayne says, "At Equinox Organic Kombucha, we always have one foot in the past and one in the future, using ancient brewing techniques to create exciting new blends and open up kombucha to everyone. Our Organic Espresso Coffee Kombucha will be enjoyed by kombucha and coffee lovers alike; whilst our new Peach & Turmeric is fruity, refreshing and rebalancing. Our sleek new design has been designed to appeal to our progressive audience." [equinoxkombucha.com](http://equinoxkombucha.com)



## Producer releases three-strong chocolate range

Organic and vegan chocolate producer Plamil has unveiled its Cocoabites range. The collection is made up of three products: Vegan White, Vegan Milky Smooth and Vegan Dark Cocoabites. The Cocoabites are milk, wheat and gluten-free and the fully recyclable jar packaging is made from plastic-free glass.

Managing director Adrian Ling

commented, "We are excited to be launching these innovative Cocoabites and at the same time continuing to pursue one of our key philosophies of green production. The three Cocoabite jars not only deliver fantastic flavour but they represent a new chapter in how people can have a more sustainable enjoyment of chocolate."

[plamilfoods.co.uk](http://plamilfoods.co.uk)



## New flours join company's award-winning offering

Craggs & Co has expanded its ancient grain product range to include a wholegrain emmer, wholegrain einkorn and dark rye flour. The three new flours join the company's award-winning white and wholegrain spelt flours.

Managing director Stephen Craggs says, "Our aim is to supply consumers with the highest quality ancient grain flour. All of our grain is grown either on our own 2,000-acre estate or by one of our carefully selected, assured growers. We know that consumers are increasingly opting to home-bake bread and cakes, they are also more health conscious and looking for ways to enhance their fibre and protein intake. Replacing traditional flour with our ancient grain flour is a simple and effective way to do this."

[craggsandco.co.uk](http://craggsandco.co.uk)

## Alcohol-infused mustards take to the accompaniment category

Artisanal mustard start-up, Mutiny, has released eight exciting alcohol-infused products set to liven up meal times. The mustards are handmade in Cumbria from quality ingredients and contain no artificial colourings or preservatives. The range includes Bloody Mary, Gin & Lime, Gin & English Mustard, Peaty Whisky & Honey, Tequila, Chipotle & Lime, Vodka & Chilli, Vodka & Horseradish plus Whisky & Orange Mustard.

David Hicks, founder of Mutiny, says, "I am really excited to launch Mutiny to the UK – I've been working on the range for some time and I believe that the unique collection of mustards we have created offers something completely different to anything else on the market right now."



"Each mustard has been crafted to ensure that every jar tastes exquisite, with an alcoholic punch for a premium flavour – however it's worth noting that you'd need to eat rather a lot in order to feel any usual alcoholic effects!"

[mutinyfoods.com](http://mutinyfoods.com)

## Refreshing botanical gin joins the market

Penrhos Spirits has launched a new addition to its range of gins. The Apple & Elderflower gin is a mix of the delicate floral tones of elderflower with the crisp fruity edge of apple, creating a light refreshing gin that is ideal simply mixed with tonic.

The brand is run by two Herefordshire fruit farmers distilling spirits infused with their own fruits and botanicals.

Co-founder Richard Williams says, "It was important for us to distil the fruits of our farm into our gin and that is what we have achieved. Our gins reflect our land, our home and everything that we love about it. We have been fruit farmers for a long time and to have the chance to make something so enjoyable from our fruit is a dream come true. We have been delighted by the response we have had and can see why the gin category is undergoing such a period of growth. People appreciate the passion behind it and love the fact that it can all be traced back to the farmer."

[penrhosspirits.co.uk](http://penrhosspirits.co.uk)



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# WELCOME ITALIA 2019

Discover Italian food and beverage at its best on 18th-20th October

**W**elcome Italia, the leading gastronomic event dedicated to Italian excellences, now in its seventh edition, is finally back to London! Three days of great food, wine and tourism, from 18th-20th October. The event will take place in the elegant location of the Royal Horticultural Halls, only a few minutes away from Victoria Station and Buckingham Palace.

Organised by the Italian Chamber of Commerce for the UK since 2013, Welcome Italia promotes Italian excellences and cuisine – more than 50 artisanal food and wine companies will take part in the event, either to enter or to strengthen their position in the British market.

Since its launch, the fair has been a valuable reference and a benchmark for many operators of the food and beverage sector, as well as for enthusiasts of the 'Belpaese'.

The first day, Friday 18th October,

is exclusively dedicated to carefully selected sector operators. On the same day, experts of Italian food and wine will host panels and conferences. The following days, Saturday and Sunday, are open to an audience of food and wine enthusiasts who will have the opportunity to purchase directly from the exhibitors, giving them an instant feedback on their products.

The Cookery Theatre will have a central role this year as well: an area of the venue specially set up to offer guests a unique experience with the best chefs and experts of Italian cuisine in the United Kingdom, and where seminars and conferences will also take place.

## What's on the Trade Day

### DISCOVER THE "TRUE ITALIAN TASTE": FRANCIACORTA WINES

The True Italian Taste, coordinated by Assocamerestero and promoted and

financed by the Italian Ministry of Economic Development, is a project born to promote and safeguard the value of authentic Italian food products all over the world. As part of the project, Giancarlo Caldesi will bring you on a journey through the famous wines of Franciacorta, which will be used to cook delicious dishes that will then be paired with the same famous Italian bubbles.

### "LONDON AS INTERNATIONAL HUB FOR ITALIAN FOOD COMPANIES" CONFERENCE

On Friday afternoon, The Red Pot London will hold a conference titled "London as International hub for Italian Food Companies". Thanks to its cultural diversity, London represents a strategical meeting

point between supply and demand of Italian products and the local market, as well as of other identities and cultures such as the Middle East, Central Europe and Asia. The event will feature speakers from, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Singapore and Poland.

### "MARCHIO OSPITALITÀ ITALIANA" AWARD CEREMONY

The "Marchio Ospitalità Italiana" is the only certification that guarantee that the awarded restaurants offers 100% Italian experience abroad.

### ENIT

ENIT, the Italian National Tourist Board, will be the main sponsor of Welcome Italia. Overseeing the promotion of Italy abroad, ENIT oversees advertising the various national tourism offers and the resources offered to tourists. On Friday afternoon, at 6pm, ENIT will hold a press conference to present their program and activities for the next year.

## Meet the Companies

### ARZACHENA COSTA SMERALDA

Located in the beautiful Sardinia, the village of Porto Cervo is the pivot around which the tourist paradise known as Costa Smeralda has developed. Beside luxury yachts, majestic villas, emerald sea and breathtaking panoramas, the area has an ancient and rich food tradition to explore. Local producers will present their food and wine excellences to the British market.



“ Since its launch, the fair has been a valuable reference and a benchmark for many operators of the food and beverage sector, as well as for enthusiasts of the ‘Belpaese’ ”

## NEED TO KNOW

**WHAT:** Welcome Italia 2019  
**WHERE:** Royal Horticultural Halls, London  
**WHEN:** Trade Day: Friday 18th October 1pm-7pm  
 Visitors Days: Saturday 19th October 10am-7pm  
 Sunday: 20th October 10am-5pm  
**WEB:** [welcome-italia.co.uk](http://welcome-italia.co.uk)  
**TEL:** 02074958191  
**EMAIL:** [info@welcome-italia.co.uk](mailto:info@welcome-italia.co.uk)

### SEBASTIANO DRAGO

Now in the business for over 90 years, the company has been representing for four generations the excellence in the field of fish preserves. Drago Conserve was able to achieve this milestone thanks to the passion dedicated to the business and to the perfect mix of tradition and innovation. Not only fish preserves, but also spreadable creams and pâté, as well as amazing pasta sauces.

### ACETAIA GIUSEPPE GIUSTI

Obtaining a great balsamic vinegar depends on the competence, experience and taste of its maker. Not only a careful selection of the grapes, but also the cooking system and above all the great complexity of the ageing process, with casks of various woods and sizes. Not to forget time, an important element of the natural process: traditionally, a generation prepares the balsamic vinegar for the next generation. Giusti Family is making Balsamic Vinegar in Modena since 1605.

### CAFFE MANARESI

Manaresi Caffè is an artisanal roast house situated in Florence and dates back to 1898 when it opened one of Italy's first stand-up coffee bars, located in Via De' Lambertini, in the heart of Florence, making it the oldest roastery in Florence and one of the oldest in Italy.

The espresso is a very special product, produced still to this day by hand in small batches, by a team of Italian artisan coffee roasters.

Entry to Welcome Italia is free to trade professionals only. Please visit [welcome-italia.co.uk/tickets/](http://welcome-italia.co.uk/tickets/) to book your tickets.



# WELCOME ITALIA 2019

## ITALIAN FOOD & BEVERAGE AT ITS BEST

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**W**hile we may not consider the Spanish a great cheesemaking nation compared to, say, the French, they are exporting many regional cheeses which deserve equal attention.

It is not a lack of cheesemaking history which means Spanish cheeses are less well known than those of other European nations. Rupert Linton, head of cheese at Spanish food importer Brindisa, argues that the Spanish simply wanted to keep all the cheese for themselves, "Regional Spanish cheesemakers had large local markets for their cheeses for much of the 20th century and were not so interested in developing their export markets," he explains. "When Spain joined the EU, food safety standards between the various European countries were harmonised which made export much easier, but by then French and Italian cheeses were well established in people's awareness."

Generally speaking, cow's milk cheeses are produced in the North of Spain along the Cantabrian coast and east into the Pyrenees where hardy cattle graze in the shadows of looming snowy peaks. Sheep's milk cheeses are produced inland in Cantabria and the Basque Country where shaggy sheep with long woolly coats live in high pastures, and further down into Castilla-León, Castilla La Mancha, Aragón and Extremadura. Goat's milk cheeses are generally produced along the Mediterranean coast where they graze the rugged cliff tops which are inaccessible to other hooved animals. "A preference for pasturing their flocks on complex local pastures allow cheesemakers to produce cheeses that each have a unique sense of terroir," explains Linton. "Artisan cheesemakers are proud to be preserving the rare breeds best suited to the mountain and high plain environments of inland Spain and although these breeds produce less milk, flavours are more concentrated."

There are now more than 100 types of Spanish cheese and more than 25 with PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) status. Here are the new essentials:

**MANCHEGO**

It is practically a crime to mention Spanish cheese without bringing in its heavyweight superstar: Manchego. A PDO sheep's milk cheese from the plateaus of La Mancha, it is prized for



# CHEESES FROM SPAIN

What comes to mind when you think of Spanish cheese? Chances are it's Manchego and... not much else

its buttery texture and well matured, creamy flavour with a slightly sharp, salty finish. Produced in barrel shaped moulds, the cheese is aged between 60 days and two years, with flavours ranging from grassy through nutty, caramel notes to a more developed leathery sweetness in the fully mature cheese. It is nearly always served with membrillo: a sweet, fragrant paste of quince.

**QUESO TETILLA**

Originating from Galicia in the northwest of Spain, this PDO cow's milk cheese is known for its distinctive shape: the Spanish word tetilla translates as 'nipple'. The milk of Friesian, Brown Swiss and Galician Blonde cows is combined to make a

young cheese (tetilla is aged for just seven days) which boasts a buttery smoothness and faint walnut-y flavour. The mildness of the cheese makes it perfect for pairing with crisp Galician wines such as Albariño.

**MONTE ENEBRO**

This creamy, soft goats' cheese is produced exclusively by one small, family-run dairy in the rolling hills of Avila, northwest of Madrid. A log-shaped cheese with a blue-grey ash rind which is developed using

penicilium roqueforti, the same mould used to make Roquefort. It has a chalky texture and a gentle, sharp lemony flavour when young, growing in pungency and developing a distinct farmyard note as it matures. There is no doubt this cheese comes from the milk of a goat!

**GARROTXA**

A traditional Catalan goats' milk cheese, Garrotxa was almost an extinct cheese until it was revived in the early '80s. Made from the milk

of Murciana goats, this semi-soft, wheel shaped cheese is cave aged in the Pyrenees. It has a striking, white interior with a creamy yet crumbly texture which verges on flaky. The flavour is delicate and milky with a slight nutty and herbal edge, making it quite distinct from other goats' cheeses.

**TORTA DEL CASAR**

This PDO sheep's milk cheese from Extremadura is named after its city of origin: Casar de Cáceres. It is a pungent cheese produced using a coagulant present in cardoons, or thistles, which brings a slightly bitter note – essential for balancing the rich intensity of this complex, slightly funky cheese. It is served by slicing the top off and scooping out the spreadable cheese inside – perfect served with plenty of sturdy bread or crackers.

**QUESO DE CABRALES**

Some of Spain's most impressive blues come from the Picos de Europas mountain range in the North where steep, jagged limestone peaks combine with cool, deep caves and magical alpine forests. The PDO protected Cabrales is made with unpasteurised sheep and goat milk (the former adds smoothness and the latter a pungent acidity) which is left to coagulate slowly. Aged for two to five months, the final cheese is very pungent, with bold, lactic aromas and a salty, sharp flavour.

**LA PERAL**

La Peral is a more modern style of cow's milk (and sheep's whey) cheese, made in Concejo de Illas in central Asturias. Aged between two and four months in limestone caves it is semi-soft, blue veined and distinguishable by its natural, pale yellow rind. It's buttery and mushroomy with some caramel and spice notes as it ages.

“ Artisan cheesemakers are proud to be preserving the rare breeds best suited to the mountain and high plain environments of inland Spain ”

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# SHOW PREVIEW: BELLAVITA EXPO LONDON 2019

Now in its sixth year, Bellavita Expo London continues to be an unmissable event for any food and beverage professional seeking the latest and most exciting of Mediterranean cuisine.

From 7th-8th November, Bellavita Expo brings the best and brightest of the Mediterranean to the floor of London's Business Design Centre for two days of knowledge sharing and interactive experiences, featuring its largest ever showcase of the best there is to offer in food and drink from the Mediterranean region.

Over the past six years, Bellavita has enjoyed uninterrupted year-on-year growth in scope and reputation, having firmly established itself as a global ambassador for Italian-made products to tens of thousands of guests in markets across the world, at many of the largest annual HoReCa trade shows taking place internationally, such as in Amsterdam, Chicago, Guangzhou, Hamburg, Toronto and Warsaw, with a presence most recently at Food and Hotel Thailand in Bangkok and ABASTUR in Mexico City. The response from the 6,000 guests present at 2018's London event – representing some of the largest names in British retail and hospitality – was strong, with 92% of guests intending to revisit, and 93% recommending Bellavita Expo to others.

Now, the UK's largest showcase of the finest Italian food and beverages goes Mediterranean, as Bellavita Expo introduces 85 new Spanish exhibitors who will be making their debut at this year's event, as well as suppliers of products from Croatia, Slovenia and Greece, while still committed to remaining an ambassador for quality made-in-Italy distributors at a time of

remarkably resilient growth and expansion for the F&B sector.

Aldo Mazzocco, CEO of Bellavita Expo says: "We are enhancing our visitor experience even further. More than just a trade show, we are transforming Bellavita Expo into a day of learning and opportunities for buyers and industry operators. This will make of Bellavita a new and inspiring appointment, not to be missed".

Over 350 exhibitors will be in attendance, displaying a vastly expanded range of 10,000 individual products, including the reveal of 1,200 never before seen in the UK market before. With representatives from some of the most iconic household brands to smaller artisanal producers, all products on display at Bellavita Expo are defined by attention to detail, authentic flavours, and high-quality ingredients for the UK trade. On display will be an array of diverse and novel products, from staple goods such as pasta, dairy and olive oil, to more unconventional fare, including donkey milk and chestnut honey.

A number of producers catering to the ever-growing demand for more free-from products are also well represented, with gluten-free pastas, vegetarian and vegan alternatives and other substitutes taking to the stage this year; as an increasing number of consumers shun gluten, it is increasingly small regional producers who are answering the call for such goods.

In beverages, there will be a heavy focus in this year's topics on organic,

low intervention wines; volcanic wines, produced with grapes grown in the mineral-rich soil near active or dormant volcanoes, will feature, highly regarded for their earthiness and more complex aromas; and high-altitude wines, made from grapes grown in longer, cooler seasons, renowned for their more concentrated, tannic flavours, are not to be missed. Sparkling wines will, of course, feature heavily, with dedicated guided tasting and tips from the market leader on how sellers can shift even more of it – the United Kingdom being the fourth largest market in the world for fizz, and the biggest in the world for prosecco, which accounts for 62% of all sparkling wine sales in the UK.

## In-depth talks and masterclasses

Five dedicated live academies will offer guests the chance to experience products first-hand through tastings and masterclasses, with professional guidance and support. The dedicated food showcase, BeFood, will feature discussion panels with representatives from major distributors, including Salvo 1968, Alivini, Carnevale and others, as well as discussion panels with top restaurateurs. The Bellavita Pizza

Academy will lay bare the secrets of pizza-making, showcasing different techniques and styles, helping buyers with the choice of the right ingredients and maximising profits. Last year's Bellavita Expo celebrated the designation of the art of Neapolitan pizza making as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity with a day of pizza-making masterclasses led by pizzaioli (pizza masters) from Le Centenarie, the 10 oldest pizzerias in Naples.

BeWine, the area dedicated to wine, will be host to exclusive vertical and horizontal guided tasting sessions, with eminent Masters of Wine such as Peter McCombie, Caroline Gilby, Natasha Hughes, Nancy Gilchrist, and other WSET-qualified sommeliers, who will lend their considerable knowledge to masterclasses and tastings assisting buyers in choosing the right wine for their business. The BeWine theatre will also host panel discussions revealing the trends of the markets, its challenges and opportunities, with top distributors, the largest retail chains and top restaurants. BeMix is an area entirely dedicated to the world of mixology, where top bartenders will showcase their skills and share their knowledge through astonishing cocktail masterclasses and insightful presentations.

All together, Bellavita will host a series of keynote talks and masterclasses led by 84 prominent speakers from throughout the sector. These presentations stress inventiveness and a forward-thinking attitude towards food, with previous years' experiences focusing

on how to preempt consumer and industry buying trends, and how to respond to the challenges presented by the rise of digital commerce in distribution. This year, talks will focus on balancing cost and quality of ingredients for restaurateurs, maintaining healthy relationships with distributors, and the challenges of online vs. offline retailing.

Giorgio Locatelli, acclaimed London-based Michelin-starred chef and MasterChef Italia judge, said: "Bellavita is always a huge opportunity to learn and find new brands. I cannot wait to be part of it again." Chef Locatelli will once again be returning to Bellavita once again this year, along with fellow event ambassadors and loyal Bellavita trade media partners, such as *Speciality Food Magazine*, *Restaurant Magazine*, *Big Hospitality*, *Harpers*, and *The Buyer*, plus many trade associations.

## Networking opportunities

With 6,000 professionals in attendance this year from all corners of the food and beverage trade, Bellavita Expo offers guests the perfect opportunity to forge vital connections and industry partnerships with some of the biggest, most highly-rated names in retail, hospitality and export.

As sales of private label products continue to thrive across Europe, most of all in the UK, where over half the market share is taken by private label goods, a brand new zone for private label networking and product matching will launch at this year's expo, where distributors can meet and do business with



“ Bellavita has enjoyed uninterrupted year-on-year growth in scope and reputation, having firmly established itself as a global ambassador for Italian-made products to tens of thousands of guests in markets across the world ”





representatives from some of the country's largest retailers.

This event, in partnership with Veronafiere S.p.A. (Vinitaly) and Fiere di Parma S.p.A. (Cibus), titans of Italian food and drink exhibitions, will be the largest show Bellavita has ever embarked on. With the support of this strategic partnership, Bellavita Expo ensures a great networking and knowledge-sharing opportunity for buyers, distributors, restaurateurs, sommeliers, and head chefs to network and confer directly with Mediterranean producers and experts of the trade.

#### Bellavita Awards

Concluding Bellavita Expo will

be the annual Bellavita Awards ceremony, celebrating the excellence and calibre of some of the many products featured this year. A panel of 300 industry-leading buyers are invited to assign a score to products based on: taste, packaging, the story behind the product, innovation, relevance to the UK market and sustainability. Many of the products on display are eligible for consideration for Bellavita Stars. Judges will judge products and assign them a score, ranked from 4-10. All products scoring more than seven points receive one star, more than eight points receive two stars, and more than nine points receive three stars. Previously recognised products range from pastas, olive oils and wines, to chocolates, truffle butters and gins. Entrants are also eligible for three special prizes – the Taste Good Award, the Most Innovative Product and the Best Brand Identity, while a selected panel of head chefs will award the best product for high end restaurants.

Two special awards are also assigned by a select panel of sommeliers for the most interesting and disruptive wines. This year, a new award for the Best Organic Mediterranean Wine will also be

presented, based on the assessment of an elite jury of head sommeliers and wine buyers, who will select the best organic wine ready to enter the UK market, which will be awarded by Peter McCombie MW at the culmination of the expo.

At last year's Bellavita Expo, the top prize for the food category was bestowed on Alberto Triglia for its innovative, handmade 'Cappellettoni', a soft wheat flour and spinach pasta filled with 18 month old Parma ham and delicate Ricotta. In the beverage category, a bespoke organic bergamot soda from Verum, brewed with cold pressed Mediterranean citrus fruit, was crowned the winner.

Any buyers who are interested in acting as a judge at this year's show are welcome to get in touch with the organisers via the Bellavita website.

To register for your free ticket to attend, or to apply to be a judge, visit [bellavita.com](http://bellavita.com).

#### NEED TO KNOW

**WHAT:** Bellavita 2019  
**WHERE:** Business Design Centre, London  
**WHEN:** 7th-8th November  
**WEB:** [bellavita.com](http://bellavita.com)  
**TWITTER:** @BellavitaExpo

“ Bellavita Expo ensures a great networking and knowledge-sharing opportunity for buyers, distributors, restaurateurs, sommeliers, and head chefs to network and confer directly with Mediterranean producers and experts of the trade ”



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# THE ORGANIC REPORT 2019

OPPORTUNITIES ● BEHIND THE SCENES ● THE FUTURE

## PLANET & PEOPLE



**I**t feels only natural to be talking about organic in 2019. Environmental concerns are rife,

and consumer demands are putting the world to rights.

The current swathe of bad news has led to good: it seems nearly everyone is making an effort to lessen their impact on our planet, with knowledge being shared, new practices being rolled out and changes being made.

That's not to say that everyone is on board and the organic mission is complete. More education is needed regarding the credentials of organic, if and why it's worth the investment

– for both grassroots production and shoppers' wallets – and help, financial or otherwise, must be rolled out to those struggling to keep up with our world's needs.

It's important in this sea of negativity to remember that there are things we can do to help our planet and its people – that all is not lost (if we act now, that is).

And so, I present our Organic Report 2019. The Speciality Food team, alongside BIOFACH, has gathered information and expert opinion to form a comprehensive overview of the organic market in the UK and beyond.

I hope you find it a useful and insightful read.

**HOLLY SHACKLETON** | EDITOR

**ORGANIC SALES STOOD AT £2.2BN IN 2018, DEMONSTRATING A GROWTH OF 5.3%**

SOURCE: SOIL ASSOCIATION ORGANIC MARKET REPORT 2019

*“Organic has been recognised as an EU ‘Quality Mark’ because it delivers so much on environmental and social objectives, and ultimately helps consumers to understand and address the many complex issues and choices they face in making changes to a lifestyle that has a positive impact on the environment, soil health, land use and biodiversity”*

**PAUL MOORE, DIRECTOR, ORGANIC TRADE BOARD**



## THE WORLD'S LEADING TRADE FAIR FOR ORGANIC FOOD

### BIOFACH2020 into organic

“What's in store for visitors from the retail and catering segments and the entire supply chain? It's quite simple: diversity, internationality and inspiration. Or in other words, a 360-degree overview of the organic sector.

“Without doubt, BIOFACH is the No. 1 venue for an unrivalled product range – thanks to the around 3,500 exhibitors expected at the world-leading fair in 2020 – as well as impressive innovations, a wealth of inspiration in food and other products, plenty of opportunities for networking and high-level professional dialogue.

“The numerous highlights in 2020 are sure to include the congress theme “Organic delivers!”, which will look at how doing business in an environmentally friendly way impacts positively on the climate, water,

soil, biodiversity, the basic conditions of human life, the common good and human health. Also celebrating its premiere is the network hub and special show on a highly topical issue ‘All about water – is the basis of all life endangered?’

“Generally within the industry we are seeing the growing importance of the organic system not just on the retail side but also in the catering and restaurant segments – and you can experience all this and more at the world's leading fair for organic food. We are looking forward to seeing you at BIOFACH 2020 in Nuremberg!”

**DANILA BRUNNER,**  
DIRECTOR OF  
BIOFACH AND  
VIVANESS

#### NEED TO KNOW

**WHAT:** BIOFACH  
**WHERE:** Nuremberg, Germany  
**WHEN:** 12th-15th February 2020  
**WEB:** biofach.de/en  
**TWITTER:** @BioFachVivaness



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# SELLING ORGANIC

- What does 'organic' mean to consumers?
- What's selling (and what's not)?
- The role of independents

## WHAT DO CONSUMERS ACTUALLY WANT?

"The organic food and drink market is growing across the globe," says Mike Hughes, head of research and insight at FMCG Gurus. "Linked to the clean-label movement, this is being driven by consumers wanting maximum reassurance that the products they buy contain only real and authentic ingredients and are free from chemicals. Indeed, a Q1 2019

survey of 25,000 consumers across 25 countries by FMCG Gurus shows that 73% of consumers believe it is important that food and drink is 100% natural. The research shows that natural claims and organic claims are interlinked. For instance, a total of 44% of consumers associate natural food and drink products with being organic."

"In my opinion the growth in sales is down to the increase in conscious consumption," says Ros Heathcote, founder of Borough Broth. "Certification represents a level of trust and traceability that is reassuring to many consumers, myself included." "Customers are demanding organic because there's an increased awareness of the benefit of naturally produced food," adds food consultant and nutritionist Catherine Blackmore. "Consumer mistrust from food scandals strengthens the view that organic has a stricter stance on animal welfare, biodiversity and independent checks and controls."

**"40% of respondents said they had only started buying organic in the last two years"**

SOURCE: KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN ORGANIC TRADE BOARD STUDY: 2,000 RESPONDENTS OCTOBER 2018

**85% OF**  
HOUSEHOLDS ARE  
BUYING ORGANIC –  
1.4M MORE THAN 2014



WITH **40%** BUYING  
ONCE A MONTH OR MORE

**12% OF ONLINE**  
GROCERY SALES ARE FOR  
ORGANIC PRODUCTS



Source: Soil Association

## WHAT'S SELLING?



### WINNERS

THE BIGGEST SECTOR FOR ORGANIC IS DAIRY – **54%** OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE UK PURCHASE ORGANIC DAIRY PRODUCTS. THE SECTOR IS CURRENTLY WORTH **£339M** AND IS GROWING **2.3%** YEAR-ON-YEAR (YOY)

**50%** OF BRITISH HOUSEHOLDS PURCHASE AMBIENT FOOD AND DRINK PRODUCTS, GIVING THE SECTOR A VALUE OF **£294M**. AMBIENT ORGANIC FOOD AND DRINK IS GROWING IN SALES BY **5.3%** EACH YOY

**64%** OF UK CONSUMERS BUY ORGANIC FRUIT AND VEGETABLES. THE MARKET IS EXPERIENCING **0.5%** YOY GROWTH AND IS CURRENTLY VALUED AT **£267M**



### LOSERS

ORGANIC MEAT, FISH AND POULTRY ISN'T AS SUCCESSFUL, SEEING A **14.5%** LOSS YOY. **6.3%** OF BRITISH SHOPPERS CHOOSE ORGANIC OVER CONVENTIONAL IN THIS CATEGORY

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# HOME...

- The challenges and joys of organic production
- Innovative approaches to organic farming
- Does organic always mean healthy?

## THE ORGANIC FARMER

Richard Hollingbery, Godminster



**T**here are many challenges with organic farming, though we feel that the greatest challenge has been learning to manage the balance of fertility within the crop rotations. After 20 years of trials we currently operate a five-year inner rotation (to which the cattle can walk from the dairy) and an eight-year outer rotation.

We have learnt to decrease the weed burdens that we endure as organic farmers, mostly through timely and shallow cultivations as well as making composts properly, which has the effect of burning out the weed seeds.

The greatest benefit we have witnessed is that of a more balanced eco system and this means healthier cows, cleaner water, healthier soil, more diverse cropping, increases in insects and birds, and 25 acres of healthy and growing broad leaf and CO2 consuming trees.

We clearly add value as an organic business, but it costs more to look after the environment as though it's a system – and we will all see the benefits of this in the long term.

“Nature repays those who treat her kindly”

**\$323BN**  
PROJECTED VALUE  
OF WORLDWIDE  
MARKET BY 2024



**25%**  
GROWTH IN  
EXPORT SALES FOR  
UK BUSINESSES



## SOIL ASSOCIATION: "INDIES ARE AT THE FOREFRONT"



*“Independent retailers have been at the forefront of many of the recent successes in the organic market, with 6.2% growth in 2018 – almost 3% more than supermarkets,” says Alison Muirhead, business development manager at Soil Association Certification.*

*“Independent stores give their customers a high level of specialist knowledge and hands-on experience that larger retailers can only hope to match, while organic offers a level of trustworthiness not seen in other production methods. This combination, when done right, has the potential to encourage more and more people through independent retailers’ doors. As more shoppers seek out options with a lower impact on the environment, as well as returning to more locally-produced, low waste and unusual options, the opportunities for independents who value their customers’ needs and offer expert advice on organic continue to grow.”*



**PERIE EAGLETON,  
SEGGIANO**

## "MATTER OF PRINCIPLE"

The additional complexities of growing organic ingredients means a dearth of organic suppliers. And this is one of the reasons that “organic ingredients cost between 10 and 30% more than non-organic ingredients which will of course affect the bottom line,” explains Catherine Blackmore, food consultant and nutritionist.

Ros Heathcote, founder of Borough Broth agrees: “The hardest part is finding organic suppliers; when producing non-organic products there are far more ingredients available to you.”

“Having an organic sticker on your product seems to be converting into greater sales, but many producers claim that their decision to go organic is not all about the money – ethics come into play too,” says Jason Gibb, founder of Planet Jason and Bread & Jam. The business

decisions of Cecily Mills, founder of Coconuts Organic, are led by her personal choices: “I buy organic food for me and my family, so as a matter of principle there was never any question that my food product wouldn’t be organic.”

When it comes to the future of organic within the UK’s food and drink industry, Jason believes that “The relationships that start-ups forge with their suppliers play their part in the decision to go organic”. “What sets start-ups apart from larger corporations is the close connection to the supply chain,” explains Ros. “When a new brand is sourcing and processing ingredients there are fewer degrees of separation that sometimes long established, large entities can put in place. This connection drives transparency and encourages organic certification.”

**“DIT OFFERS A RANGE  
OF SUPPORT TO HELP UK  
BUSINESSES IDENTIFY  
AND ACCESS NEW  
MARKETS OVERSEAS”**

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## “Pros and cons”

**O**rganic certification guarantees the land where agricultural ingredients are cultivated is free from harmful pesticide or insecticide use and that any possible cross-contamination from contact with conventionally farmed produce is eliminated during processing, transportation and storage. The scope of organic certification checks also extends to sustainable farming methods, social responsibility and the humane treatment of animals, which benefit from eating only GM free organic feed. This is good news for animals, the land, our human gut, and it limits contamination of waterways and ground water.

Organic certification can mean improved provenance traceability within short supply chains, but doesn't always equate with authentic quality and provenance, though. For instance, an organic industrial extra virgin olive oil can carry the organic denomination as long as proper traceability records are maintained, even though the oil could be a mix from multiple suppliers and have passed through many hands over time.

The downside of organic certification is that on average it adds about 20% to the base cost of a product, which significantly increases the final price to the consumer. The increased costs are associated with a percentage decrease in production

volume as crops are more vulnerable, together with the costs of certification controls. In Italy EU funds are directed towards incentivising farmers to go organic which is both enlightened and helpful, but it doesn't mitigate the overall economic disadvantage of organic farming versus conventional.

When making brand selections, one has to seriously evaluate which products it's worthwhile certifying. Take artichokes, which are basically fleshy edible thistles, aren't of much interest to pests and don't get sprayed; it doesn't make much sense to add the organic price premium on to the already high cost of hand trimmed artichoke hearts. Figs and nuts aren't subjected to chemicals, so for the Seggiano brand we don't consider it essential on their certified organic cultivation either.

When it comes to a product like

pasta though, the organic issue is more acutely relevant, since wheat is often grown on glyphosate treated land. The crop can also be subjected to chemical sprays and the grain may be treated with insect repellent during storage, whereas organic grain would be stored in refrigerated or atmospherically controlled conditions. Although much of the residual chemical is eliminated through husking the grain, some harmful residue survives cooking to enter the human digestive tract and worryingly, studies show the presence of glyphosate in human breast milk.

These unpleasant facts are not evidenced on packaging and, ironically, consumers who choose wholegrain and wholemeal pasta or bread options for health reasons, will be exposed to higher levels of chemical toxicity if the products are

not organic, because more of the husk remains. This thinking informed the choice for both wheat and gluten free Seggiano pasta ranges to be organic.

Olives and leafy green crops are a challenge to deliver free of toxic pesticides. Our Seggiano Raw Basil producer uses a method of steam treating the soil in advance of composting and planting the basil, which sterilises rogue weed seeds and the basil is grown to organic standards, even though it's not certified. Organic olive producers, including ourselves, are resorting to spraying the olives with kaolin mixture – an inert chalk substance which washes off – in order to confuse and trick the olive fly which proliferate as climate change brings us evermore humid summer weather.

**Peri Eagleton is the co-founder of Seggiano.**

## FROM THE GROUND UP

Growing demand for organic – and a public which is increasingly recognising its benefits for planet and self – is certainly a positive thing, but that's not to say that organic-focused industry players are home and dry; the creditation comes with its own, complex, set of issues. Thankfully, there's a contingent of growers and producers willing to fight the fight.

“Access to labour and a changing climate are the two biggest challenges faced by our network of organic growers,” explains Dale Robinson, head of procurement at Riverford Organic Farmers. “Organic growing is an extremely manual job, most of the weeding is done by hand or through manually-operated machinery, which is expensive and time consuming. It's by far the biggest cost faced by organic growers. Another challenge our growers in particular face is finding the balance between varieties that have a good disease resistance, which also taste great. We grow for flavour, not just yield, so we're not always going for the most agreeable varieties.”

The natural world, the very entity being fought for by organic growers, is causing issues too: “We are seeing more extreme changes in weather, and it's the peaks and troughs that you can't predict that can wipe out an entire crop.”

## A BALANCED APPROACH

**P**arallel production is always harder to achieve but Tregothnan has evolved its own 675-year-old farming system. There are significant challenges with long-term woody crop establishment in the lush Tregothnan microclimate where weed control in the early years in a novel crop is problematic. There isn't a body of research to draw on to deliver effective organic growing on novel crops such as tea and a balance with known conventional practices was best.

Establishment with some conventional inputs is definitely better for weed control in the first four years of the crop, nothing is harvested until year six so there is plenty of time to convert to organics. A well-managed tea bush could live for over 400 years so it is worth spending time getting this right.

Chemical companies want you to use more product, and our own experiments have proved that actually very little is required to achieve the required results, in most cases. On the other hand, organic associations can become inflexible and dogmatic, stifling the development of exciting and sustainable new crops.

**Jonathon Jones, MD of trading at Tregothnan**



“Chemical companies want you to use more product, and our own experiments have proved that actually very little is required to achieve the required results”

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# & AWAY

- International opportunities
- Successful organic markets overseas
- What European markets can teach the UK

“On a global scale, the organic market is expected to grow from \$124.76 billion to \$323 billion by 2024, presenting the perfect opportunity for UK producers to capitalise”

SUE BISHOP, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE, LIFESTYLE AND LEARNING AT THE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE (DIT)



Categories such as soft drinks which have seen troubling headwinds due to issues around sugar, have found that implementing organic options has been a way to mitigate against a reduction in sales and create growth. And, although the healthy eating trend is present in markets across the globe, western European countries and North America have significant opportunities for UK producers to tap into.

In the Netherlands, for example, organic sales were up 8% in current value terms reaching a total of €679 million in 2018, with organic baby food being the highest growth product range in organic packaged food. Organic cooking sauces are also in high demand, with Dutch consumers favouring Asian varieties as they look to make this food at home.

Denmark has a strong organic market with an impressive 13.3% of total food sales, which is the highest market share in the world. According to Organic Denmark, more than

half of Danes buy organic food every week which presents Denmark as another potential market for UK organic produce to be well received.

US consumers are increasingly looking towards small UK SMEs for organic produce and innovative offerings. Organic dairy produce is seeing the most growth in the United States, especially in categories outside of organic milk such as cheese and butter. Organic ready meals are also showing a strong growth potential in the market, and with a low base of existing brands there is plenty of room for UK producers.

Source: Department for International Trade

“Denmark has the highest organic market share in the world: 13.3% of total food sales”

SUE BISHOP, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE, LIFESTYLE AND LEARNING AT THE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE (DIT)



*“We know that the UK organic sector under-performs on export. At the same time, businesses in our sector who do export are seeing impressive growth. Our last export survey revealed that of those businesses who do export, more than a quarter reported more than 25% growth in export sales. With growing distrust of food being a global trend, there is huge interest in independently certified, high-integrity, sustainable, high-quality food and drink from Britain. Soil Association Certification remains keen to support our licensees access overseas markets and help build the international reputation of products which meet our standards”*

LEE HOLDSTOCK, SENIOR BUSINESS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER AT SOIL ASSOCIATION CERTIFICATION

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## SPOTLIGHT ON: EUROPE

### DENMARK

Source: The Organic Trade Board  
 The Danish model is simple with one organic logo and one government-controlled certifier, and government subsidies in place to support producers, foodservice and retailers.

The competition to attract organic consumers to store, who care about food values and environmental issues is intense between retailers and this helps drive it forward. The most notable thing that strikes visitors to Danish retailers is the clear messaging in store regarding organic and how it is helping retailers achieve their sustainability goals.

### FRANCE

Source: The Organic Trade Board  
 In France there are two distinct shopping channels of significant market size – the natural foods channel and the grocery channels, and competition to attract the organic and environmentally

conscious consumer is fierce. As a result, organic foods have become an important way of attracting high value organic shoppers who are prepared to support environmentally friendly product offers such as organic. Both channels are overt in their messaging and support for organic.

### GERMANY

Source: Bund Ökologische Lebensmittel-wirtschaft (BÖLW – the German Association of Organic Farmers, Food Processors and Retailers)

"In Germany in 2018 almost five farmers per day converted their farm to organic agriculture," stated BÖLW director Peter Röhrig stated

OVER **50%** OF  
DANISH SHOPPERS  
ARE BUYING  
ORGANIC ONCE  
A WEEK

at the most recent BIOFACH event. "Also on the new organic acreage, the equivalent of more than 150,000 football pitches are organic farms scoring points for the protection of soil, water, animals and the climate." This equates to 8.9% of the total agricultural land in Germany being cultivated by organic farmers. "[In 2018] Customers invested nearly €11 billion in organic food and supported the transformation towards an agriculture and diet considerate of future generations," stated Germany's The Working Group Organic Market.

THE ORGANIC FOOD AND DRINK  
SECTOR HAS **13%** MARKET SHARE  
AND GREW **13%** IN 2018



*"Most British firms underestimate the weight that Made in the UK Organic carries around the globe. While the usual alternative markets suspects tend to be Asia and North America, we would like to throw a new player into this mix – Eastern Europe. Geographical proximity, relatively undeveloped local organic manufacturing, fast-growing consumer interest in the wellness segment, and absolute fascination with 'Made in the UK' make these markets at the very least worth exploring. Made in the UK is automatically associates with what brands from the other countries spend millions to achieve: trust, quality, tradition"*

DAVID GILGUR, HEAD OF VIMES CONSULTING

## RENÉE ELLIOT



### "Organic, then and now"

When I first arrived in England in 1986, I didn't notice organic foods. Organic wasn't really on my radar, the political agenda or in the public arena. Sales of the UK organic food market the following year were valued at about £30 million, so organic was around, but certainly had not hit the mainstream. At that time, America was farther ahead with retailers like Bread & Circus, Wild Oats, Erewhon and Wholefoods operating from large format stores across the country.

Almost a decade later in 1995 when I opened Planet Organic, organic remained little known and food products in England were full of E numbers, hydrogenated fat, refined sugar and all sorts of artificial additives and preservatives. One of my goals was to bring organic into the mainstream alongside the efforts of organic farmers, growers, manufacturers, retailers and NGOs. There was much less awareness about food, health and ingredients. And raising awareness, which was essential to promote organic, was challenging.

Food scares were great for organic sales, because they woke

people up and encouraged them to learn and then to change. Remember that although this was at the time of commercialisation of the Internet, it was still early days. Organic hit the mainstream in early 2000 in the face of GMOs arriving in England.

This year, the organic market is valued at £2.33 billion, but remains a small percentage of the overall grocery market. Happily, though, organic foods have been joined by a range of healthy eating diets and trends that appeal to different customers. I'm encouraged that these trends such as free-from, plant-based, raw and others take consumers on a better eating journey.

My preference would be that these and future trends are based on organic and whole foods, but I'll cheer for anything that gets people eating better. There is still so much to do to raise awareness about health and wellbeing in order to push better eating up people's priorities. It's an on-going journey. I remain absolutely committed to organic because it is the most thoughtful, responsible and smart way to farm, live and eat.

**Renée Elliott is the founder of Planet Organic and co-founder of Beluga Bean**

AROUND **40%** OF **ORGANIC**  
SALES ARE CONCENTRATED  
IN THE **EU** MARKETS"

DAVID GILGUR, HEAD OF VIMES CONSULTING

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# THE ORGANIC SHOPPER

- Why do shoppers choose organic? ● What demographic is buying organic? ● Organic and health go hand-in-hand

## Retailer insight

Kellie Bubble, Unicorn Grocery



**W**e aim to work towards a more just food system, a hugely challenging task. Justice for the planet and those who inhabit it includes making good decisions around organic, Fairtrade and local. These are not the values of privilege, they are practical steps that aim to improve conditions and for the working poor around the world and the environment in which we all live. They are the values of the many not the few.

We tend to focus on seasonality and the conditions for the growers, we also try to build understanding on how important it is that we look after the soil. We need the healthy soil, insects and worms, and we need to feed the fertility not just take from it.



“Many consumers are starting to see past the marketing that made organic look like a premium product rather than the natural, simple product it is”

### WHY DO SHOPPERS BUY ORGANIC?

“Among 18 to 25 year-olds, the biggest influence to switching to an organic option is the environment”

**49%** WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

**61%** WILLING TO MAKE LIFESTYLE COMPROMISES TO BENEFIT THE ENVIRONMENT

Source: The Organic Trade Board  
Feed Your Happy research



## BRITISH STORES ARE MISSING OUT

Paul Moore, director of the Organic Trade Board



"In the UK, the market is largely determined by the activities of a few retailers who largely determine availability to organic products. While physical availability of organic foods in the UK has improved over the years, mental and visible availability has not, with British stores largely avoiding any overt messaging or signposting in support of organic. With the change to environmental consumerism, there is much to gain for British retailers in promoting an organic message and offer for their customers."

## DO CONSUMERS UNDERSTAND ORGANIC?



*"The growing popularity of organic claims can also be linked to increased*

*consumers feeling more aware about what such products are," says Mike Hughes, head of research and insight at FMCG Gurus. "A total of 65% of respondents say that they understand what an organic product is, whilst 61% believe that food and drink can be 100% organic. When questioned what makes a product organic, a total of 42% say all the ingredients must be organic, whilst 40% say most of the ingredients, 11% one of the ingredients and the rest being unsure. However, when promoting organic claims, it is crucial that links in marketing and packaging promotion are made to natural formulation. After all, when questioned what claims they prefer, 58% said natural claims compared to 26% who said organic (the rest of respondents being unsure)."*

Based on a consumer survey of 25,000 respondents conducted in Q1 2019

**36% OF 18-39 YEAR-OLDS TRY AND BUY ORGANIC WHENEVER THEY CAN VS 27% OF TOTAL RESPONDENTS**

SOURCE: KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN ORGANIC TRADE BOARD  
STUDY: 2,000 RESPONDENTS OCTOBER 2018



“We know that 1/3 of all food purchasing decisions are now based on health. And we see the ongoing growth of organic as part of that general consumer interest in nutrition and wellbeing. For example, the majority of baby food purchased in the UK is organic, which seems to show consumers inherently believe organic is best, the right thing to feed their children”

AL OVERTON, PLANET ORGANIC



# THE FUTURE OF ORGANIC

- What's next: industry opinion
- Viewpoints: start-ups and retailers
- What to stock



## The start-up view

**Jason Gibb, founder of Planet Jason and co-founder of Bread & Jam**

**T**he higher cost of organic ingredients, manufacturing and certification puts a lot of pressure on the margins, a complaint often heard from start-ups. Fortunately some of the costs can be passed on as "an organic shopper's basket size is more than double the value of someone shopping for non-organic items," according to the Soil Association's Tessa Hart. This is certainly great news for the retailer, who should really be thinking about a bigger organic range to attract these customers.

Ultimately, whether a new food or drink brand decides to be organic or not is a pragmatic decision. As Catherine Blackmore puts it, "in the beginning most food start-ups nearly always want organic certification, but after looking at the higher costs (and lower margins to them), they often opt to think about this further down the line in future product launches or find a happy medium by having a core non-organic range of products with one product being organic."

Whatever the decision, it's clear that organic certification and having an ethical, premium brand go hand in hand. As Trusha Patel, founder of the Spice Sanctuary says, "What's the point in offering high grades of product if they are not grown organically?"

And once you have sourced the organic ingredients and manufactured or processed your product in an organic certified kitchen, you then may need to find a certified packer who is willing to work with start-ups. "There aren't many options for getting products packed as even your packers have to be certified organic - most that are certified organic are larger operators with very high minimum order quantities," laments Dr Susan Thirakornratch, co-founder of One Earth Organics.



*"Our commitment to organics extends to our other efforts to prove the concept for sustainable food retail – no plastic bags (for 12 years now), loose fruit and vegetables since we opened, our industry-first plastic-free home compostable packaging, no food waste policy, renewable energy commitments and other efforts."*

AL OVERTON, PLANET ORGANIC

## TRENDS: WHAT TO STOCK

**PLANT-BASED FOOD AND DRINK  
 FERMENTED AND GUT-FRIENDLY  
 FOODS**

(KEFIR, SAUERKRAUT, KOMBUCHA)

**VEGAN FOODS**

(YEAST FLAKES, TEMPEH, JACKFRUIT)

**SEA VEGETABLES**

**ENERGY-FOCUSED SNACKS**

(CEREAL BARS, PROTEIN BALLS)

Source: Soil Association Organic Market Report 2019



## LOOKING FORWARD: THE INDUSTRY TALKS



*"Feeding the world is not an agricultural problem, it's a political one. People shouldn't be misled by believing we need to produce more food. The political focus should be on significant revenues lost from discarded food that should be flowing back to farms. Post-Second World War, farmers were sold the message of efficiency and productivity through using chemistry. But are farmers achieving better profits as a result? Farms have certainly become bigger but not because of the economics of production - remove financial support and many farms would not survive."*

ROGER KERR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE AT ORGANIC FARMERS & GROWERS



*"Working with our partners in Denmark and with our members, we have seen the tangible benefits of co-ordinating effort and messaging across the sector to deliver growth. Our EU and industry funded campaigns have been created to help make organic more accessible and relatable to a wider audience in order to grow consideration of organic as a positive choice, to build penetration across categories and ultimately drive growth in the sector."*

PAUL MOORE, DIRECTOR, ORGANIC TRADE BOARD



*"Annually the organic dairy industry boasts nearly one third of organic sales, and without wishing to mention the dreaded 'B' word, the price for organic milk availability in the UK is likely to show upwards pressure because currently there are substantial imports of organic milk from the EU – after all a long delay at the border will not be doing fresh milk any good..."*

RICHARD HOLLINGBERY, GODMINSTER

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#### 1 HAWKSHEAD RELISH EMBELLISH WITH RELISH COOKBOOK

On their 20th anniversary year, Hawkshead Relish have launched their very first cook-book, *Embellish With Relish*. The idea behind this collection of over 50 family friendly recipes is to make people think a little differently about that stash of relishes most of us have sitting in the cupboard. [hawksheadrelish.com](http://hawksheadrelish.com)

#### 2 WALKERS SHORTBREAD SHORTBREAD

Walkers Shortbread is a family company founded in 1898 in the picturesque village of Aberlour, in the heart of the Scottish Highlands. Today, Walkers Shortbread is still made by traditional methods, using the original Walker family recipe. Walkers have the perfect range to suit every Christmas occasion, such as: Mint Royals, Luxury Miniature Gin Infused Fruit Tarts and Walkers Festive Shapes Shortbread. [walkersshortbread.com](http://walkersshortbread.com)

#### 3 WALKER'S NONSUCH ASSORTED TOFFEE TIN

Great for giving and perfect for sharing is the new Walker's Nonsuch Assorted Toffees Tin. Designed to celebrate 125 years of toffee-making by the independent family company, the tin contains 700g of seven varieties of toffees and chocolate eclairs. Made using quality ingredients, all Walker's toffee is free from artificial colours, preservatives, hydrogenated vegetable oils and gluten. [walkers-nonsuch.co.uk](http://walkers-nonsuch.co.uk)

#### 4 THURSDAY COTTAGE GIFT PACKS

Thursday Cottage have introduced two new gift packs to their range for 2019, an all-year-round gift tin containing four traditional preserves and a cardboard Christmas cracker containing three special Christmas preserves. These and the rest of the traditional Christmas range can be seen on the website, or call 01621 814 529. [thursday-cottage.com](http://thursday-cottage.com)





## 5 BALLANCOURT PÂTÉ COLLECTION

"Ballancourt jute gift bags make a perfect gift for any lover of pâtés, which have been specially paired with Peter's Yard award-winning sourdough crispbreads," says James Evans of Ballancourt. "Available in three fantastic varieties: Game, Farmhouse and Fish. Gift bags can be supplied with either Ballancourt label or customer own-label." [ballancourt.co.uk](http://ballancourt.co.uk)

## 6 DRIVERS PICKLES HAPPY CHRISTMAS GIFT BOX

New for 2019, Drivers Pickles are introducing a Happy Christmas gift box. The gift box, which is vegan-approved, contains a jar of their fiery 1906 Pickled Onions, Christmas Pickle and Chunky Piccalilli. Gift boxes are available in cartons of four and are the perfect gift for any pickle lover. [pickle-lovers.co.uk](http://pickle-lovers.co.uk)

## 7 BOMBONS CUDIÉ CATÀNIES

Bombons Cudié is a family business located near Barcelona. Since 1946 Marcona Almond, homemade praline and the finest cocoa powder to produce our original recipe that has been passed down through three generations. and is still the best kept secret in the industry. The catànies are recognized worldwide and are sold in over 30 different countries. [bombonscudie.com](http://bombonscudie.com)

## 8 THE CHOCOLATE GIFT COMPANY CHOCOLATE BATON BARS

Using a delicious high-quality milk chocolate with 41% cocoa, an intense cocoa body and the richness of dark chocolate, it's incredibly creamy with sweet caramel notes. It contains 14% less sugar than regular milk chocolate. Available in either three, six or 12 Baton Bars and supplied with SRP and MOQ 100 bars. [thechocolategiftcompany.co.uk](http://thechocolategiftcompany.co.uk)





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**DID U KNOW**

# FESTIVE FAVOURITE

No Christmas cheeseboard is complete without Le Gruyère AOP. This festive season, share its story for ultimate counter appeal



**I**n family-run village dairies located in the picturesque western cantons of Switzerland, the internationally-renowned cheese Le Gruyère AOP is made by expert hands using skills passed down the generations for centuries.

## A heritage cheese

The history of Le Gruyère AOP begins in 1115, when the inhabitants of five neighbouring regions of Switzerland – the town of Gruyères in the Canton of Fribourg, Vaud, Neuchâtel, Jura and Bern – transformed the milk of their cattle herds into cheese. In the 900 years since then, the knowledge and techniques established by its original makers have been upheld to the delight of cheese lovers across the world. By 1762 the cheese was officially named and its provenance noted in the dictionary of the Académie Française, but despite this, the style of the Le Gruyère AOP was often imitated to create lesser-quality wheels until – following discussions held across Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – it was awarded AOC (Controlled Designation of Origin) accreditation across Switzerland then certified AOP (Protected Designation of Origin) across Europe.

The 170 dairies which produce Le Gruyère AOP are expected to uphold the rigid specifications set by the accreditation at every stage of the production process, from the cows producing the milk to the ageing of the cheese – keeping the high quality and unique, delicious flavour of Le Gruyère AOP consistent.

## Unique and versatile for all ages

This consistent flavour has played a huge part in earning and maintaining the worldwide popularity of Le Gruyère AOP, as well as numerous awards. Its distinctive yet subtle flavours are both unique and versatile, making it popular with consumers of all ages as well as delicious served in a number of ways, from a flavourful addition to a cheeseboard to melted in a fondue.

## HOW TO CUT LE GRUYÈRE AOP

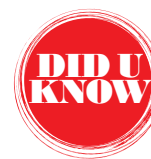
Cut the wheel in half using a cheesewire then cut into quarters using a double-handled knife – halve these quarters into eighths, then cut the top half into three wedges and the bottom into six slices. Wrap the cut portions with clingfilm in order to avoid the cheese getting into contact with the air.



## TASTING NOTES

**Le Gruyère AOP is available in three ages, each of which displays subtle differences in flavour:**

- **Le Gruyère AOP Classic** (aged six-nine months) is nutty, sweet and refined – delicious melted and popular with fans of mild cheeses
- **Le Gruyère AOP Réserve** (aged 10 months and up) is aromatic and full of flavour – its complex, mature flavours make it a popular choice for a cheeseboard
- **Le Gruyère AOP** can also be purchased aged 18 and 24 months – both options showcase a well-balanced but powerful taste



RATHER THAN BUYING CHEESES YOUNG AND MATURING THEM YOURSELF – AT A COST TO SPACE AND MONETARY RESOURCES – IT'S POSSIBLE TO HAVE THEM MATURED TO PERFECTION BY THE CHEESEMAKER'S OWN AGEING EXPERTS. FOR EXAMPLE, **LE GRUYÈRE AOP** WORKS WITH AFFINEURS WHO AGE THEIR CHEESE WITHIN THE LOCAL AREA, AND ONLY SEND THEM OUT WHEN THEY'RE AT THEIR BEST

“ The knowledge and techniques established by the original makers of Le Gruyère AOP have been upheld for 900 years – to the delight of cheese lovers across the world ”



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# FESTIVE PREPARATIONS

Ensure this is your most successful Christmas with eye-catching displays and plenty of customer engagement

**N**ow that the seasons have changed and autumn is officially upon us, the countdown to Christmas is on in the world of retail. With less than three months to go until the busiest time of year, it's time to start getting those final preparations underway so that when the time comes you are fully organised.

**Getting the timing right**  
Rhug Estate Farm Shop ensures that getting ready for Christmas is at the forefront of staff members's minds at this point in the year. Managing

director Graham Webster, explains, "The end of September/beginning of October is when everything starts to get ramped up at Rhug ready for Christmas. Our organic award-winning turkeys and geese are getting fat as they are free-range around the farm still at the end of October. Bespoke Christmas stock also starts arriving in the Farm Shop from October."

In order to engage customers, it's key to know when to start changing up the shop and promoting Christmas. Begin too early and the novelty can wear off right around

the key selling points, but it's also equally as important to grab the attention of those wanting to start shopping for presents and stocking up their cupboards early. Gradually transitioning into the festive season works well, as it means that regular customers will always have something new to look at when they visit.

**On display**  
Having your business stand out is crucial at this time of year in order to achieve the best sales possible. After spending months sourcing the best

Christmas produce, now is the time to maximise the selling potential. Think back to in-store displays and window dressings that worked well in previous years – how can you go one step better for 2019? Put your best stock in the window and at the front of the store to ensure that they are the first thing shoppers see when they come in. It's the time of year when people are looking for gifts for family and friends but also for treats for themselves, so the most enticing and appealing the display, the better.

Make it easy for customers to purchase products that pair well together, for example, by displaying a selection of wines, ports and cheeseboard accompaniments such as crackers close to the cheese counter. Customers are much more likely to buy if they are all within easy access of each other. Why not entice them even more by offering samples – such as an artisan cracker to try with a piece of cheese.

Major retailers and supermarkets often have smaller items around the till area as well, which is a great way to snag some last-minute sales. Consider offering some products that would work as stocking fillers or little gifts for children such as sweets and chocolates.

Karen Close, head of buying and value, reveals what works best for Blacker Hall Farm Shop: "Displays at Blacker Hall start to subtly change from mid-October, where we will gradually introduce more winter foods and streamline our typical summer products. From then, our sampling areas will feature products such as mince pies, fruit cakes and winter spiced cookies to give customers the chance to try before they buy for the big day. We try not to push Christmas themes until early November, as we find



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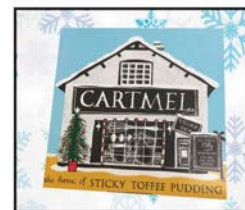


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Some images courtesy of Visit England





customers can disengage when bombarded too early. From then we focus heavily on Christmas themes including gifting, entertaining and traditional. Most point of sale comes in the form of handwritten and drawn chalkboards with inspiration provided through recipe displays and gifting suggestions. We carefully integrate departments to provide our customers with ideas and complete meal solutions – so we may place our delicious home-made roast potatoes and gravy with our wrapped joints of meat, for example. Throughout the shop we have Christmas music and decorations, with our Christmas brochures piled high."

#### Interacting with customers

Getting stock prepared and a plan for displays ready is the first port of call, but once the festive season really kicks off, it's all about the interaction with customers and hopefully turning what could have been just a one-off shop into more regular visits.

Ensure that members of the team are fully prepped in new Christmas stock, and if you're taking on extra staff, take the time to get them up-to-speed on the products.

Communication is the biggest tool when it comes to selling in-store, and staff should be confident explaining the backstory behind certain produce and able to recommend accompaniments or pairing options if needed.

At Rhug Estate every effort is made to engage with customers, with something suitable for all ages. Graham explains, "Everyone loves Christmas at Rhug so the decorations and trees go up around the business, including the entrance outside to inside the bistro/takeaway and farm shop. Tables are decorated especially for those ordering Christmas meals in the Bistro, staff wear Christmas jumpers, we have special Christmas events at the beginning of December including visits from Santa for storytime and breakfast with the children. We do an advent calendar countdown on our social media pages which includes an insight into Christmas offers across Rhug Estate. Most of our staff have been with us for many years and so already know the run up to Christmas routine. We have introduced bespoke Rhug hampers and Welsh cheese hampers to the farm shop so training on how to create them was introduced last



year. Even Santa has been visiting Rhug for many years so once we are in Christmas mode everyone pulls together to offer customers a great experience."

#### Marketing and signage

Amazing produce, creative displays and knowledgeable staff are all essential to a successful Christmas, but in order to fully maximise all the opportunities of the season, effective marketing is in order. Seize any chance to get visitors through the door, including hosting events in order to get customers to look forward to the produce to come. Create a sense of excitement around any events and activities by sending out updated newsletters, increasing signage in-store and promoting on social media.

Rupert Evans, owner of Denstone Hall Farm Shop and Café, explains his plans for Christmas this year, "We will be launching a dedicated social media campaign, but the centrepiece of our campaign will be our 16-page Christmas brochure, which distributes to 25,000 homes and covers everything from our turkeys to our gifts, our Christmas trees and the food in our café.

"It's a quality brochure and it represents a significant investment

in time and money for us, and although it's an unusual platform in this digital age, we see it as a brand statement that places us firmly at the front-of-mind. Big players such as John Lewis come into their own at Christmas and we want our customers to see Denstone Hall in the same way. We will be tracking orders this year to record where our customers are based, while everyone who places an order is invited to come in and claim a free cup of coffee."

#### RETAIL INSIGHT...

We asked Karen Close, head of buying and value at Blacker Hall Farm Shop, what speciality Christmas produce is popular with customers.

"Our mince pies are an absolute hit. Last year we introduced a buttery crumble-topped pie, which flew off the shelves. We even have a mincemeat flapjack which is just too good for words! Our Turkey Royale is also incredibly popular, along with luxury pigs in blankets. Last year our fishmongers reported great sales in fish platters as customers loved them as starters. For our vegans we introduced a nut roast, which proved popular with the meat eaters too."

“ We will be launching a dedicated social media campaign, but the centrepiece will be our 16-page Christmas brochure ”

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“ We do an advent calendar countdown on our social media pages which includes an insight into Christmas offers across Rhug Estate ”



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## PARTNER CONTENT



## HOW TO ACHIEVE PREMIUMISATION WITH PACKAGING THIS CHRISTMAS

With tips and advice from leading packaging manufacturer, Saxon Packaging

During your preparations for the festive season, it's important to note that consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of their environmental impact and are beginning to choose brands accordingly. There has been an increase in the number of new and existing brands, as well as other manufacturers who are searching for alternative sustainable packaging methods (such as corrugated cardboard) and USPs to distinguish themselves from their fellow competitors in what is already a heavily saturated market.

It is the packaging that encourages the consumer to lift a product off the shelf and read the description. Brands are beginning to recognise this by investing in high quality, premium packaging. Due to varying factors, the need for brands to stand out, appeal and communicate with their consumers is paramount, and premium packaging during the festive season is fast becoming the key marketing tool for drinks manufacturers to achieve this. Consequently, we have seen a large increase in demand at Saxon Packaging for premiumisation and the use of Litho Printed packaging.

### WHAT IS PREMIUMISATION?

Premiumisation is a term which came into use in the late 1990s and has enabled brands to increase engagement with their customers. It has also created opportunity amongst brands who historically were not labelled as luxury and those who are new to the industry. Milly Stilinovic states in her article for *Forbes*, 'Premiumisation: The Most Affluent Retail Trend...' that "premiumisation is ultimately to make luxury more exclusive or more affordable." Various packaging and print processes have facilitated this trend and have evolved, offering a wide range of ways brands can 'premiumise' their products using luxury packaging methods.

### HOW TO ACHIEVE PREMIUMISATION

When thinking about premiumisation over the Christmas period, start with good quality packaging material, which can then achieve a standout appearance by using a disruptive shape, eye-catching graphics, high quality print (such as litho), print finishes and film lamination.



Don't forget that, as well as seeking appealing packaged products, consumers are also looking for an emotional connection. The product itself can influence this, and quality graphics will draw the consumer in but the touch and feel of the packaging will resonate longer. With continued individuality, brands recognising and understanding their target audience is paramount, as luxury to some may not be luxury to others.

It is important to focus on reflecting brand personality, encouraging engagement, forging and building on relationships with consumers during the build up to the festive season.

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# IN THE MIX

From traditional gins to spiced rum and tonics with a twist, Kayleigh Rattle explores the products you should be stocking

**T**he alcoholic drinks market reached £48.9 billion in 2018 (Mintel: *Alcoholic Drinks Review*, February 2019), with UK spirit sales amounting to more than £11 billion (Wine and Spirits Trade Association). With this sector offering many opportunities for independent retailers, it's important to pick the right products for your business – here we reveal the drinks which are currently shaking up the industry.

## Gin reigns supreme

In recent years, gin has propelled sales in the white spirits category, with £1.9 billion being spent on the spirit in the UK alone last year – up 41% from the previous year, according to WSTA. With more than 130 gin distilleries now existing in the UK, it can be tricky to know where to begin when choosing products, but one thing's for sure; this has been the summer for colourful gins, with fruit and floral infusions such as blood orange, parma violet and rhubarb and ginger proving extremely popular with customers.

But there's a feeling from retailers that, in spite of all of this choice, customers still want to embrace tradition: "For us, gin sales are still on the increase, but we're noticing people are leaning more towards full-strength, traditional, juniper-forward gins, and are stepping away from liqueurs and what we would call 'gimmicky' gins", explains Charlotte Clark, co-director of gin shop,

The Cranny, in Tenby, Wales. "As a result, we're now decreasing the number of liqueurs we stock, purely because we've noticed sales decrease so dramatically."

## Rum on the rise

For Charlie Brown, owner of Leigh-on-Sea bottle shop Vino Vero, gin may undoubtedly still be the spirit du jour, but there's another tippie hot on its heels. "Gin still seems to reign supreme, but sales have definitely slowed in the last year, with rum becoming more prevalent. We're selling a lot of East London Liquor Company Demerara Rum and The Duppy Share rum, in particular."

In fact, according to Nielsen, rum sales have grown by more than £25 million in recent years, and the Wine and Spirit Trade Association reports that close to 35 million bottles were sold in the UK in 2018. Nielsen also observes that flavoured and spiced rums are the standout varieties in this growing sector, something Charlotte Clark has also witnessed, "For us, we are seeing a large increase in the sale of dark spirits, especially rum and spiced rum," she says.

## Mixing it up

Given the ongoing success of spirits such as gin – and now, rum – the continued demand for premium and craft mixers and tonics from consumers is to be expected. Nor should it come as a surprise that 2019 has seen a flurry of new launches

with the rise of darker spirits, we're seeing a similar trajectory in the sales of ginger ale and cola, in particular Fever-Tree's spiced orange ginger ale, and Fever-Tree's Madagascan cola."

## Low/no-alcohol

In spite of these wins across the spirits and mixers category, it's no secret that the trend – and demand – for low or no-alcohol drinks continues to rise, too. According to Mintel's *Alcoholic Drinks Review* (February, 2019) there's now a clear 'trend for moderation' when it comes to alcohol consumption, with more than 47% of the consumers surveyed claiming to have reduced the amount

of booze they've consumed in the past year. But, rather than seeing this as a threat to business, this consumer shift can also be regarded as an opportunity to market, and a chance to bolster stock with alcohol-free spirits such as Willow and Seedlip – the latter of which clocked up sales of close to one million bottles last year – as well as a more diverse offering of tonics and mixers, to cater for both drinkers and non-drinkers alike.

## Point of difference

But how can independent retailers compete with supermarkets in this competitive area? For Charlotte, it all comes down to offering customers an experience, whether that's drinks tastings, samples, or specialised guidance when choosing products. "While we do find it hard to compete with supermarkets, we feel we have an edge; we don't just offer the sale of bottles, we also offer an experience," she says. "People can ask for our advice on the right spirits for them, and then taste them in-house, which is something they cannot necessarily do at a supermarket. There, people tend to make their purchases solely based on price and branding."

## What's next?

So what's in store for the remainder of 2019, and beyond? "For 2020, we expect to see huge increases in the sale of dark spirits, but do feel gin will continue to have its moment", predicts Charlotte, "Though I do also think people will experiment less with new gins, and will be more inclined to stick to the brands they know and love." It's clear that while diversification of product and discovery remain essential, it's also important not to overlook customer favourites.


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“ It all comes down to offering customers an experience, whether that's drinks tastings, samples, or specialised guidance when choosing products ”



## 1 LONG TAIL MIXERS Blood Orange, Island Spice and Ginger Lime

Long Tail Mixers is an emerging and unique brand dedicated to providing rums, bourbons and whiskies with the ideal pairings.

Created by friends Alex and Tom, the mixers come in three flavours: Blood Orange, Island Spice and Ginger Lime. They have been blended from natural ingredients with carbonated spring water to produce unique and balanced mixers that are designed to enhance and complement the flavour notes of your favourite dark spirit but not overpower. They're low in calories and can be enjoyed as soft drinks.

Co-founder Alex Jollivet says, "Long Tail mixers bring unique pairings to enhance and complement dark spirits. Our carefully selected range of flavours are blended from natural ingredients with carbonated spring water to produce unique and balanced mixers, perfect to pair with your spirit of choice or to enjoy as soft drinks on their own."

[drinklongtail.co.uk](http://drinklongtail.co.uk)



## 2 WICKED WOLF Exmoor Gin

Launched in September 2015 under the banner 'The Spirit of Exmoor', Wicked Wolf Exmoor Gin is a premium craft gin made from botanicals, distilled and blended on the banks of the picturesque River Lyn, North Devon.

Wicked Wolf Exmoor Gin uses the combination of 11 exotic botanicals producing complex layers of citrus and pepper notes finely balanced with the distinct flavours of juniper and coriander. Hibiscus, cardamom and kaffir lime leaves have been artfully blended with these traditional aromatics creating a full-flavoured, smooth gin.

Julie Heap at Wicked Wolf Gin says, "Each aromatic is prepared by hand, infused and distilled separately resulting in 11 individual distillates which are then skilfully blended in 100 litre batches. This approach allows us complete control over the strength of each flavour, and enables consistency across each batch. The gin is filtered at each stage of the production process, producing a 42% ABV, smooth, full-bodied and elegant spirit."

[wickedwolfgin.com](http://wickedwolfgin.com)



## 3 PINKSTER Pinkster Royale

A sustainably festive treat from pink gin pioneers Pinkster, this liqueur is made from gin-soaked recycled raspberries left over from its fresh raspberry-based gin.

With no added sugar and plenty of red berry sweetness, Pinkster Royale, a cassis-style drink using raspberries rather than blackcurrant, is delicious served with a glass of fizz. At 24% ABV, the recycled raspberries have retained a remarkable amount of alcohol. Like any fruit-based liqueur, it makes a great cocktail ingredient and can also be enjoyed neat over ice.

Pinkster Royale is the business's third and final by-product, following hard on the heels of the best-selling Boozy Berries and Gin Jam. All the raspberries are grown locally in the Cambridgeshire HQ, allowing the business to champion its fresh fruit credentials at a time when many other gins are relying on fancy flavourings.

Pinkster director Will Holt says, "Our latest tippie will pimp up your Prosecco with a fruity hit. Safe to say, I think we've now finally squeezed every last drop from the fresh raspberries that make Pinkster."

[pinkstergin.com](http://pinkstergin.com)

## 4 TWELVEBELOW Low Sugar Tonics

TwelveBelow is the UK's first naturally low sugar tonic, with only 2.5 grams of sugar per 100ml and less than 12 calories per serving. This makes it the UK's only 100% natural, genuinely low sugar tonic, as classified by the Food Standards Agency, with 70% less sugar and 58% less calories on average than market-leading light tonics. The new range comes in four great-tasting flavours, including Classic Premium, Apple & Garden Mint, Pear & Cardamom and Rhubarb & Ginger. The products are made with a dash of organic agave and contain no artificial sweeteners or preservatives.

Co-founder Melanie McNelly says, "The idea for the company started when we began to really look into light and slimline tonics, and we were shocked to find they still had a high sugar content with artificial sweeteners and the taste overpowered spirits. Our tonics have been developed to not only complement a whole host of spirits, but to taste great as a standalone drink without the high sugar content. We understand that the modern drinker is looking to enjoy a delicious drink but is more health-conscious than ever. TwelveBelow genuinely delivers on that need."

[twelvebelow.co.uk](http://twelvebelow.co.uk)



## 5 ORKNEY GIN COMPANY Johnsma's, Mikkemas and Rhubarb Old Tom Gins

The Orkney Gin Company prides themselves on the high quality of their products. Their multi award-winning gins are hand-crafted in ultra-small batches using seven times distilled premium grain spirit and the finest botanicals. The rich folklore and traditions of Orkney serve as the inspiration behind Orkney Gin Company's unique products. Johnsma's is named after Orkney's midsummer, its floral notes capture the long, light days, where the sun rarely dips below the horizon. Mikkemas takes inspiration from the harvest festival, and is made from a mixture of secret mulled spices, it's a smooth and warming gin.

Rhubarb Old Tom is also a full-strength gin, made to the Old Tom style so it is lightly sweetened, complementing the tart rhubarb, which thrives in the Orcadian climate. Owners Gary and Andrea Watt say, "We use botanicals foraged from Orkney's unique landscape, and only the highest quality ingredients carefully chosen from around the world to create our multi award-winning hand-crafted Orcadian gins."

[orkneygincompany.com](http://orkneygincompany.com)



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# TIME TO CELEBRATE

Ensure that you are the one-stop-shop for all things party food by stocking everything from indulgent treats to free-from snacks

**W**ith Christmas getting closer and closer, it's time to start thinking again about one of the staples of this season: party food. The festive period – which covers Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year – is that chance for family and friends to get together, with the host needing to cater for a variety of wants and requirements. Food that can be picked up and eaten while mingling is ideal for this type of occasion, so it's key to have a range of products in stock. Party hosts are looking for food that is easy to prepare but also good quality, such as a selection of great cheeses, artisan crackers and premium snacks.

When thinking about party food the image that is instantly conjured up is of bowls of crisps, dips and sausage rolls, and while these are classic items for good reason, there are certainly more exciting products that are available now.

## Dip in

Dips are one of the essentials for any party spread, and a good quality hummus, guacamole or cheese dip can be really versatile when accompanied with the likes of crudites, crackers or crisps. Hannah McCollum is the founder and MD of ChicP, a company that creates raw vegetable hummus. ChicP uses surplus produce, vegetables that could otherwise have gone to waste, in order to make products that are

tasty and healthy, and are made in a sustainable way. "Our ethos is to educate people about living more sustainable lives and reducing food waste, while also helping British farmers by using their excess and connecting them to other suppliers," she explains.

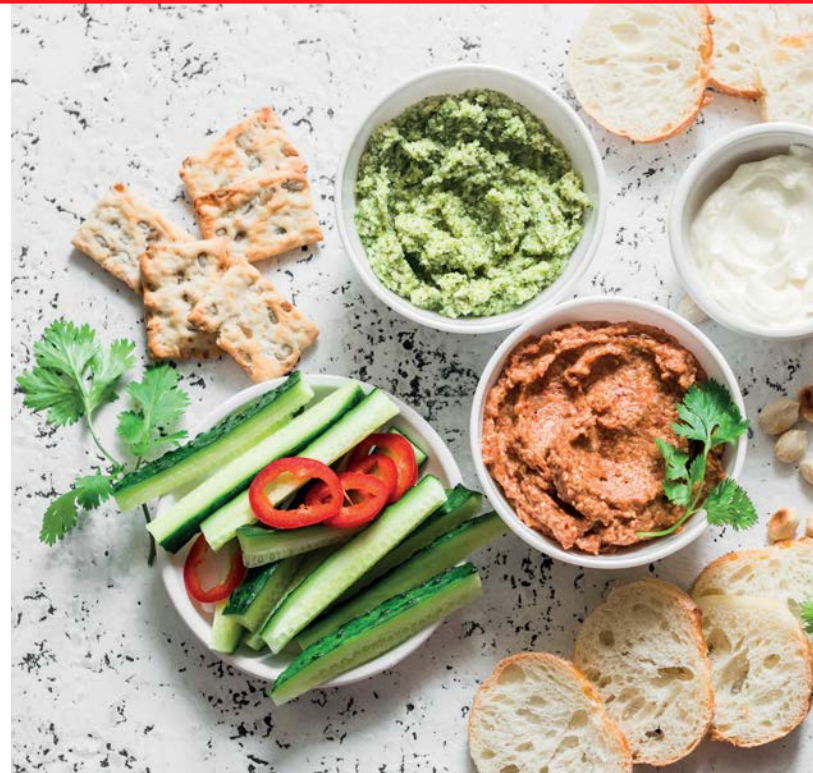
Adding extra interest with a colourful appearance and different flavour combinations can go a long way in enticing shoppers – among ChicP's offering is Beetroot & Horseradish, Carrot, Ginger & Tumeric and Banana, Avocado & Cacao. Hannah continues, "I've found that there is a greater variety of flavours on the market now and shoppers are more adventurous with flavours but for entertaining are more likely to go with colourful ones and not too adventurous. More and more people are buying dips and hummus for themselves and parties, and they are becoming increasingly prominent on party menus. The colours and versatility of dips or hummus means they can be used on platters, as finger food, in canapés and also mains. They often brighten up a table and are a real 'go to', especially being predominantly allergen-free. They're also a perfect dish to make when needing to use up leftovers."

Having a selection of exciting-looking dips is a great starting point for customers and offers the opportunity for retailers to cross-sell with plenty of accompaniments.

Crisps, for example, are ideal for eating with a wide range of dips. With the food industry focusing more on health these days, manufacturers have been producing an array of 'healthier' crisp options using produce such as quinoa, sweet potato and beetroot. Spare Snacks is one brand that offers not only crisps made from vegetables, but also apples and pears too.

## Expand the free-from range

With the increase of people choosing or needing to follow vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free or even flexitarian diets, a party food spread is the ideal setting to incorporate plenty of these options, giving people the ability to pick and choose. Gluten-free breads, crackers



and pastry items are ideal to have in stock, for example. Lavinia Cooke, general manager of Delifonseca, has also taken note of the demand for meat and dairy alternatives. She says, "On the topic of party food trends, there has been a definite shift towards vegetarian and vegan options and just generally healthier alternatives. From our own experience, customers ordering food for events catering are now asking for much higher percentages of meat and dairy-free options, with some opting for an entirely vegan

platter. In our opinion, the secret to creating a great vegan party spread is not to replicate meat or dairy products but instead, to take inspiration from worldwide cuisines to incorporate heaps of flavour with herbs and spices. Indian and Thai dishes are often a great example of how to do vegan options well for this reason. This trend is reflected in the sales within Delifonseca's food hall with our free-from products proving to be some of our bestselling this year. As a result of changing food trends and people

“ In our opinion, the secret to creating a great vegan party spread is not to replicate meat or dairy products but instead, to take inspiration from worldwide cuisines to incorporate heaps of flavour with herbs and spices ”

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world. Food and drink from the same place typically pair amazingly well together. Our Chorizo Thins pair with Rioja and our Mangalitza Salami Chips, for example, pair with Pilsner – both products are from Eastern Europe,” he says.

Be sure to keep food and drink pairings in mind when stocking shelves ready for party season and consider displaying together for shopper convenience. Prepare staff to be able to recommend pairing options, as visitors are not only coming in to pick up quality produce but also to receive that extra customer service and expert advice. When it comes to recommending cheeses and accompaniments, for example, why not also show customers how to properly store and cut the cheese, as well as how to best display the produce for the occasion.

Lavinia Cooke reveals a few pairing items that go down well with customers at Delifonseca; “Findlater’s Pates are a reliable hit with customers and we often suggest pairing them with Miller’s Toasts or Kent & Fraser Gluten-Free Crackers. For party ‘snack’ foods the slightly quirkier items always sell well. Some of our favourites include Savoursmiths Champers & Serrano Crisps and Snackgold Black Truffle Crisps. These were particularly popular over the festive period, as were the Garden Growers Broccoli Crisps.”

seen consumer demand for food that pairs up with certain drinks increasing in recent times. “I started this business two-and-a-half years ago supplying one customer (Heston Blumenthal’s The Fat Duck Group out of my village hall) and today we are a team of eight supplying around 500,000 packs a year across some amazing food and drink outlets across the UK driven by our core proposition, Made For Drink. This demand has come from not only the on-trade where you expect, pub groups like Bell & The Dragon, and specialist retail such as Daylesford Organic, Fortnum & Mason, Harvey Nicholls but also core grocery. Our approach has to always look to other drinking cultures around the

adopting a more mindful approach to what they eat, the stock that we sell has changed to reflect this diversity.”

## Food pairings

Hosting occasions with party food are the ideal opportunity to pair up food and drinks that complement each other well. We are all familiar with the amazing combination that is cheese and wine, but what about other perfect pairings? Daniel Featherstone, founder of Made For Drink, says that he has

## RETAILER PERSPECTIVE...



Lavinia Cooke, general manager at Delifonseca, on the food and drink trends within party foods.

### WHAT FOODS AND DRINKS ARE BECOMING MORE POPULAR AS PARTY FOOD OPTIONS WITHIN SPECIALITY FOOD AND DRINK? ANY NOTEWORTHY TRENDS?

Our outside catering division has experienced a significant increase in requests for hot hand-held ‘bowl’ food rather than the more traditional buffet style. Party food has always been important, but it is a real feature of a special occasion and without a doubt a talking point amongst guests. Meat and charcuterie products are still selling well and will always be a staple on our shelves, but we find that people

are treating themselves to smaller amounts of a more luxury product so that it feels like a real treat rather than buying in bulk quantities for everyday consumption.

### ANY PARTICULAR BRANDS OR PRODUCTS THAT SELL WELL AT DELIFONSECA FOR PARTY FOOD OCCASIONS?

When it comes to party food, and Christmas party food in particular, people want to impress without creating too much work for themselves in the kitchen. In the shop, the best party food sellers are still easy-to-do options such as pates, dips, antipasti and charcuterie

– items that require little if any preparation and pack a punch in flavour.

### WHAT ABOUT DRINKS?

As for drinks, gin hasn’t shown any sign of slowing down. There was a slight move towards gin liqueurs and strong fruit-flavoured varieties, but people seem to have reverted back to more classic gins, albeit with a hint of something extra. Our bestsellers include Turncoats Cascade, Three Graces Rose Gin and Chase Pomelo & Pink Grapefruit. However, we have seen a change in the fizz market, with our customers starting to move from prosecco to other types of sparkling wines. Langlois Cremant de Loire has definitely become one of our best fizz sellers and the magnums are a great hit at Christmas and for parties.



### THE ISLE OF RAASAY GIN

Handcrafted in the Hebrides this is a complex but well-balanced, zesty dry gin with an expert blend of 10 botanicals.

[raasaydistillery.com](http://raasaydistillery.com)



### WELL & TRULY SEA SALT & CIDER VINEGAR CRUNCHIES

Crammed full of flavour and crunch, these are 40% lower in fat and vegan too, making this snack a satisfying winner.

[wellandtruly.co.uk](http://wellandtruly.co.uk)



### DOUBLE DUTCH CUCUMBER & WATERMELON

Slightly sweet aroma with a refreshing and crisp taste profile, the natural sugar and watermelon allows the mixer to support a range of spirits.

[doubledutchdrinks.com](http://doubledutchdrinks.com)



### THE CAN-D FOOD CO. PREMIUM CANDIED SMOKED SALMON

Uses the finest sustainable Scottish-farmed salmon and a combination of curing, brining and smoking. The result is a savoury-sweet treat.

[can-d.co.uk](http://can-d.co.uk)



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[getjekl.com](http://getjekl.com)



### OLIVES ET AL GARLIC & THYME PITTED OLIVE POUCHES

Plump and juicy pitted green olives to an Andalusian recipe with garlic, thyme and Olive Oil in snack-sized 30g pouches.

[olivesetal.co.uk](http://olivesetal.co.uk)



### CLEARSPRING ORGANIC JAPANESE BROWN RICE CRACKERS – BLACK SESAME

Gluten-free Japanese crackers are a delicious way to enjoy organic wholegrain brown rice, with mineral rich sesame seeds and tamari.

[clearspring.co.uk](http://clearspring.co.uk)



### KINDA CO. NACHO DIP

This dairy-free cheesy, cashew-based dip is packed full of bold, spicy flavours. A great option for nachos, dunking sweet potatoes wedges or drizzling over chilli.

[thekindaco.com](http://thekindaco.com)



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I was brought up – in the small town of Opunake, New Zealand – on seasonal vegetables grown by my father, when the sheep population was over 20 times that of humans. Pasture was taking over, and the biodiversity of our ‘green’ country was shot in order to cultivate animals for our own nutrition. I didn’t understand why despite being at the top of the evolutionary pyramid we felt the need to do this, and to simultaneously destroy most of the natural vegetation and forests. In 1974, having worked on three organic farms in New Zealand, I moved to the UK to study biodynamic agriculture at Emerson College Sussex where I considered how I could best support farmers around the world.

My choices were to become an organic farmer myself or to build a platform to bring organic farmers’ produce to market, and having realised that selling my own food at the garden gate wouldn’t make much of a difference I decided to focus on the latter. There was a need for passionate people like myself to support sustainable farming, and the organic farmers I was helping were very appreciative: they were struggling, and having an external voice who understood the challenges they were facing was invaluable. Conversely the conventional farmers who neighboured the organic farms I was helping were angry. In a well-balanced organic farm with hedgerows the good pests eat the bad pests, but on the conventionally farmed land pesticides had killed off the good pests so the intruding ones were a menace. This delicate balance – and other related challenges – still isn’t widely recognised, and there is little to no support locally or from Government, so it’s up to individuals like me to step in.

I saw that nature had to be destroyed on a large scale purely to grow animal fodder for us to eat, which led me to consider the vegan and vegetarian options available to me. There weren’t many around in Seventies Britain, as you can imagine, but a contact of mine recommended miso soup – a ringer for the gravy I used to enjoy – which opened my eyes to Japanese cuisine. In 1979 I travelled to Japan and was astounded by the depth of understanding the nationality had of how to make the most of the vegetable kingdom. I started working with a Japanese trading house in 1980, using it as a base to convert farmers and producers to organic in order to attract international consumers. Back then, Japanese food was full of artificial additives and preservatives which put shoppers off; I was keen to harness the knowledge that the country had protected for generations, their understanding of how to get the very best out of vegetables. For 250 years the country



## VIEWPOINT: CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

Heritage, authenticity and the planet are the key forces driving Christopher Dawson and his renowned business, Clearspring

had closed its doors – nothing in, nothing out – and I was passionate about sharing this expertise on how to maximise nutrition and flavour from the vegetable kingdom.

When I was 19, working on a farm in New Zealand, I used to take tomatoes to a market. The other traders asked what I was doing, saying that we were in the water business not the food business: how much water you can pump into something, making sure it doesn’t burst, before it gets sold. The concentration of nutrients in organic food is much higher because there’s not as much water to dilute them. Organic agriculture is all about building the soil, but chemical agriculture tends to use the soil as a medium – it’s the water and chemical fertiliser that create the product. Conventionally farmed products can be water bloated, whereas organic versions are concentrated and based on what that soil can deliver. There are soils in the UK now which have little value after having had tractors and bulldozers on them year after year, and nothing’s been done to build the soil back up.

I’m also worried about the potential of more GM foods coming into this country if Brexit does happen. People talk about British beef and other British-made products, but they’re primarily fed using GM soya and grains which have come from abroad and the Amazon. We have to get people to understand the chain of what they’re eating, and what it is doing to the planet. It’s going to be hard to relate to, but we need to recognise that we are destroying the planet.

### TALKING POINTS

#### LIVESTOCK FARMING

**I support plant-based foods. If you want to eat what I call ‘animal food’ you’ve got to take responsibility for what you’re eating – it’s impossible for humanity to have it 24/7. Have meat and fish when it’s seasonally in abundance, when nature provides a surplus. To farm animals and use quality vegetable foods to feed them isn’t ecologically possible long-term. Offer the option of meat or fish, which hasn’t been over-farmed or cultivated, in season. The more a consumer and retailer can relate to the seasons the more they will benefit, mentally and physically.**

#### INDEPENDENT RETAIL

**Independents should pride themselves in being able to bring seasonal foods to the consumer, including products like ours, and help consumers reconnect with the abundance of nature.**

“Independents should pride themselves in being able to bring seasonal foods to the consumer, including products like ours, and help consumers reconnect with the abundance of nature”

### MAKING IT WORK

Through the Clearspring brand I support 40 brands from Japan and 40 from 14 other countries, and without us tens of them would go bankrupt. We supply 55 countries in total, and in some countries – our mission is a struggle; some supermarkets have destroyed local food culture and consumers have got used to artificially cheap food. When you introduce speciality food to these markets, shoppers see it as expensive and question the organic certification. Educating consumers as to why organic food costs what it does is key to what Clearspring does; we spend a lot of energy on our website to make it educational. Soon we’ll launch videos on our website,

profiling Japanese producers who are doing things differently to the mainstream brands, in order to highlight that there are people within the food industry upholding heritage skills and the country’s traditionally taste and nutrition-rich foods. We have direct relationships with these producers, and by sharing their stories people have really bought into what we’re doing.

Because of the Commonwealth, British people are open-minded and international flavours are readily accepted here. However, there’s not a strong commitment to organic. People have been more focused, sentimentally, on Fairtrade and free-from and haven’t yet grasped the importance of organic. They don’t realise that long-term,

non-organic is more expensive than organic; we’re destroying our water table, rivers and beaches because of the quantity of nitrates used – it’s phenomenal, and it is all running into our water systems. People don’t see this chain reaction which is causing hidden costs, they’re only seeing simple messages like ‘buy one, get one free’ on poor quality, unsustainable food and drink options.

Some supermarkets are selling food and drink so cheaply, often at the expense of the producer. We don’t enjoy things in season as we used to; if we can’t get the same items every day we think there’s something wrong. That’s why I enjoy shopping in the markets and making that investment to support farmers. I’ll happily buy products with a

blemish, whereas a lot of people believe that if they’re paying more for a product with an organic label it should be perfect – they don’t realise that a blemish is natural. We’re losing our connection with traditional, natural foods. Today, only 10% of heritage seeds are still in use – we’ve lost 90% in a century. We’re losing our old fruit varieties where the yield was less but more nutritious; the hybridisation of seeds and fruit and vegetable varieties has destroyed the intrinsic qualities of the vegetable kingdom.

I’m not here to push the Clearspring brand purely for commercial reasons, I’m trying to get consumers to see that this is the way forward – and the benefit to themselves, the planet and their grandchildren.



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According to critic, Jay Rayner, in *The Guardian*, own-baked bread with house-cultured butter was a key restaurant trend of 2018. Flavoured butters, both restaurant-made and bought-in, are popular too. At the Black Bull Inn, Sedburgh, Cumbria, chef Nina Matsunaga serves kimchi butter with her rye sourdough and also whips up miso, Marmite, and lard and crackling butters. Over at the Harbour Inn, Annalong, County Down, diners savour Abernethy Dulse butter with their wheaten and treacle bread.

**WHAT'S BEHIND THE TREND?**

Eating out as above. Another influence is clean eating. The hoo-ha about trans-fats did spreads no favours and while they're no longer hydrogenated, most contain palm oil. In a wish to eat natural foods, many customers are returning to butter. Revived interest in crafts such as pickling, curing, cheesemaking and fermentation has had an impact, too.

**WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT BUTTER?**

Mouth feel and flavour. Salted butter enhances the taste of anything it accompanies and butter – which contains vitamins A, E, K and D – is one of the greatest finishers of a dish.

**IS THAT WHY MANUFACTURERS USE NAMES LIKE FLORA BUTTERY?**

You got it. They know nothing tastes as good as butter.

**WHAT KIND DO WE EAT MOST OF?**

Sweet (meaning fresh, not sugary) cream butter because it tastes neutral. Salt was originally added as a preservative and now most people prefer salted cream butter.

**WHAT IS WHEY BUTTER?**

Produced from the whey left over from the making of hard cheese, it is lower in fat than cream butter and tastes cheesier. Many mass-produced, supermarket cream butters contain a proportion of factory cheese whey.

**I LOVE THE LACTIC TANG AND SILKIER TEXTURE OF EUROPEAN BUTTERS LIKE LESCURE. WHY DON'T WE MAKE MORE IN BRITAIN?**

The sharper taste is down to fermentation – a bacterium called



## CRAFT BUTTER

Never mind designer bread, foodies are enjoying ever fancier butter on their artisan sourdough says Sally-Jayne Wright

diacetyl produces a buttery taste. We used to make soured cream butters in this country until wartime food shortages and rationing; quantity, not quality, became the driving force. Cleverly, the French kept calm and carried right on fermenting.

The good news is that cultured butter is back. Former chef, Grant Harrington, was so inspired by what he tasted when working at Swedish restaurant, Faviken, he started Ampersand in 2014 to supply Michelin restaurants and delis.

A cultured butter made in the New Forest by Bloxs Dairy won three stars at the Great Taste Awards 2019 and Dorset Dairy's butter scooped two. In this year's

British Cheese Awards, Ludlow Farmshop won Gold for their lightly salted cultured butter.

**WHY SHOULD CONSUMERS PAY MORE FOR ARTISAN BUTTER?**

Makers of mass market butter may use milk from several different areas, 'even it out' at the factory and add colour. Artisan butters handmade from grass-fed cows' cream are more interesting. They offer flavour nuances depending on the breed of animal, its diet and the climate. Beta-carotene in grass gives a natural sunshine yellow. Hand-paddling with wooden tools ensures flavour isn't lost and the lactic bacteria in cultured butter make it as nutritious as yoghurt.

**WHOSE BUTTERS DO YOU LIKE?**

Quality hard cheesemakers such as Lincolnshire Poacher and Appleby's make good whey butter.

Bungay – made at Suffolk's Fen Farm Dairy – is the UK's only raw cultured butter. It beat 47 countries to win a Super Gold Award at a world dairy competition in France this June. Fen Farm Dairy also make an outstanding cheese, Baron Bigod, but when Charlie Turnbull of the Academy of Cheese hosted a tasting there, the excellence of the butter was what surprised delegates most.

Charlie also likes Shirgar Welsh Salted butter from Ocado. It won three Great Taste Award stars and judges likened its balance of sweet and salt to 'alchemy'.

**HOW CAN WE MAKE THE MOST OF THE BUTTER TREND?**

Give anyone buying cheese a pre-packed free sample of craft butter. Remind customers that 'a little of what you fancy does you good' and that it's inconsistent to serve fine cheeses and great bread with bog-standard butter. Butter in rolls, rounds and wooden boxes looks more artisan than blocks.

**ANY OTHER IDEAS?**

Explore flavoured butters such as Abernethy, which makes Smoked, Black Garlic, Dulse and Seasalt versions. In April the new company Sublime Butter launched a range of butters designed to complement meat, fish and vegetables. The numbered recipes include: Garlic, Rosemary & Mint; Truffle, Parmesan & Black Pepper; Horseradish & Tomato; and Chimichurri.

**WILL THE BUTTER TREND LAST?**

Fingers crossed. Selling exceptional butter is a huge opportunity for fine food retailers provided they can overcome customers' health prejudice and inexperience. We need gently to remind them that official guidelines to cut back on saturated fat have not resulted in slimmer people. Delis must also promote the deliciousness of traditional butter to consumers more used to industrial spreads.

As with real bread, we need a Real Butter Campaign. Who'd have thought we'd ever be prepared to pay £4.50 for a wood-fired, slow fermented, sourdough loaf at a farmers' market. Trend Watch did just that, last Saturday, and it was worth every penny.



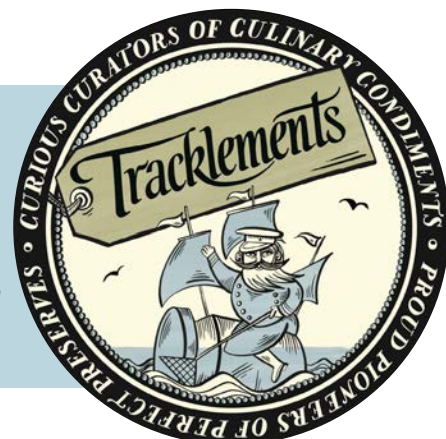
Selling exceptional butter is a huge opportunity for fine food retailers provided they can overcome customers' health prejudice and inexperience



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PETER'S YARD



# WASTAGE

How to turn food waste into an opportunity

**F**ood waste is hitting the headlines, with consumers, manufacturers and the foodservice sector alike seeking to avoid the social and environmental repercussions – and revenue loss – associated with it. Independent retailers are more vulnerable to wastage due to lower volumes and cut and wrap counter service. “Controlling wastage is extremely important to us here at Slate as wastage eats into our margin, reducing profitability of the business,” explains Clare Jackson, co-owner of Suffolk’s Slate Cheese. “When you own your own business, it becomes horribly clear that any waste is money; is profit, is your wages,” agrees Philip Wilton of Wildes Cheese.

“Low volume wastage arises

when it takes three plus weeks to sell a whole cheese that has only three weeks to go before its end date,” explains Charlie Turnbull, cheese expert at the Academy of Cheese. “For cheese, when the time to sell is a fraction of the period before the end date occurs, wastage drops significantly. The key is to maintain an average sell period for a cheese of less than 75% of its in-counter life; stocking cheeses that routinely butt against their use-by date leads to excess wastage.” One also needs to be careful to avoid cheeses picking up unwanted moulds from neighbouring cheeses, he says, adding that “Affinage of soft cheese is essential, and protecting ‘vulnerable’ cheeses from white and blue moulds and drying out is also key.” Keeping

cheese in great condition is key for the Slate team, too, who “wrap the cut face so that it doesn’t dry out; regularly scraping the cut face with a sharp knife to keep it free of surface mould,” according to Clare. The Academy of Cheese takes care to remind retailers that while cheese may be ‘in date’ from a quality perspective it can be past its date, so frequent quality checks – covering off shape, appearance and texture – are integral to a healthy cheese counter.

Charlie suggests stocking according to seasonal demand, which, as an aside, “makes the number of cheeses in your counter a proxy for how well you are doing as a cheesemonger.” Smart stocking is a key part of Slate’s anti-wastage arsenal, too. “The volume of our

weekly orders is flexed according to time of year, taking account of our expected footfall and also seasonal preferences,” Clare explains. Promotions play a part, too, “As cheeses near their best before or use by date we promote them to push through sales,” she says. “This promotion can involve showcasing on the tasting board and/or price discount.”

Affinage skills are a must, as is daily checking of your cheeses – and staff training can make a big difference, too. Clare agrees; “Keeping wastage to a minimum is the responsibility of the whole team and forms a key part of our training so that everyone keeps an eye on date checking and keeping the cheese in good condition.”

## Sampling

Tasters can have a big impact on cheese waste, explains Charlie. “As well as reducing the quantity of cheese you can sell, they degrade faster than larger pieces of cheese kept in a chiller so have to be replenished frequently.” Plus, consider the impact on the cheese you’re cutting tasting morsels from; “Tasters can mis-shape the cheeses you are taking the cheese from, especially if you are using a knife or scraper to offer a taster,” he explains, “which may mean the cheese has to be trimmed (more wastage) before it can be sold.”

Charlie suggests using scrapers to provide customers with shaving tasters of the cheeses they’d like to try as “they have the least collateral wastage and require personal involvement with the customer”.

## What to do with cheese waste

“We rarely get leftover pieces of cheese as we cut exactly what the customer needs from the block,” says Philip, “but should we get any left over it gets grated, frozen and used in cooking (I particularly love macaroni cheese and grilled cheese sandwiches for supper).” As a cheesemaker, Philip has found that whey – rather than retail offcuts – is the most wasted in the cheese world. “Many of us pay a waste management company to take the stuff away,” he says, “but Wildes Cheese has taken many steps to make productive use of this by-product. You can send whey to your local pig farmer as pig food, and if you are lucky you get the odd string of sausages back as payment. A proper win/win situation – free food for pigs (and money saved) and the free collection of a waste product (and money saved).” The business has also worked with a land reclamation company who pump whey into dead industrial land. “The whey helps restore the natural fertility of the soil,” explains Phil, who continues, “Our most exciting venture to date is working with a gin company using our whey to create a cheeseboard gin... I mean, who wouldn’t?”

Slate’s Clare recalls an important consideration which can all too easily be forgotten: “Throwing cheese away goes against the grain – it’s dreadful to see artisan cheese go in the bin after such care has been taken to make and mature it.”

“Throwing cheese away goes against the grain – it’s dreadful to see artisan cheese go in the bin after such care has been taken to make and mature it”



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## JANE BOWYER, CHEESEMAKERS OF CANTERBURY



### “New traditions”

I had always been in the dairy industry, but one thing kept niggling me – Kent, a great dairy county, had no cheesemaking tradition! I sold my business and looked around for a way to change that.

Like many others, I had to look further afield for help and inspiration. That's when I came across a couple wanting to retire and sell their business making Ashmore, a Farmhouse Cheddar-style cheese. It is a good example of the eclectic, free-form way many new cheeses develop in Britain. The original recipe came from a handbook for smallholders published by a Scottish agricultural college. That found its way into the hands of David Doble. He first made it in Kent, then Sussex with his wife Pat, before moving to Ashmore on the Wiltshire/Dorset border. They were willing to sell, but only if I and my team went down to learn how to do the job properly. The advantage of a lack of a cheesemaking history can be a freedom from the hand of tradition.

When we entered the market, the constant reaction from people coming to our stands was, “Just one cheese? Haven't you got any others?” The demand was for variety, so we supplied it: hard, soft, cow's, goat's, and later sheep's milk cheeses. I would spend five minutes describing my soft cheese, and then they would respond, “Oh, you mean a Camembert?” So, to save everyone's time, we called them Chaucer's Camembert and Bowyer's Brie.

Recently the PDO for Camembert, which demanded it be made in Normandy from cows in Normandy, was relaxed. Now the milk can come from anywhere in France. The pressure from the multinationals on artisanal cheesemaking in France and other traditional cheese

nations gives us room to showcase our products. If France is going to downgrade what Camembert means in France, why shouldn't we use it to describe our much more strictly defined version here in Kent?

I know we may face harder times selling to mainland Europe, but there are some positive signs out there. Global forces are bound to affect small British cheesemakers. Look at what's happening on the other side of the world. China, a country that is predominantly lactose intolerant, is now the world's third largest producer of milk. It has a growing appetite for cheese. Half of New Zealand's dairy farms are owned by China to feed that appetite. Rising income and a desire for the good things in life are a driving factor in the demand for dairy. India is another of the world's top milk producers. It too has a rising middle-class and, unlike China, a predominantly milk tolerant population.

When they and the affluent classes in other burgeoning economies go looking for the best cheeses, made with real love and respect for their origin and ingredients, will they turn to Lactalis and the like or to those makers using their local milk to tailor cheeses to their local demands? That, in turn, will affect our home market. When British retailers look abroad for supplies of cheap cheese they will find themselves outbid by larger, richer markets. They will then have to increasingly turn to UK producers. Faced with a choice of expensive mass-produced imports, surely our artisanal cheeses are going to be seen as a good buy?

We opened for business in the year the banks crashed us into an international recession. I believe we are responsive enough, and creative enough, to cope with our next set of challenges too.

## ROSIE MORGAN, THE BRISTOL CHEESEMONGER



### “Cheese is fascinating”

My decision to open a cheesemongers specialising in local and seasonal cheeses was influenced in many ways. As a business owner and consumer I feel that supporting local business, farms and dairies is essential. I've worked in speciality food and drink the majority of my working life, and starting a business which enabled me to facilitate this passion, as well as being very challenging, was a decision I am very pleased I made!

I started working in a specialist cheese shop in Tavistock, Devon when I was 15. Right from my first day working at Country Cheeses, the huge complexity and differences of the product became clear, and it was instantly something which I found interesting and important.

Growing up in rural England enables you to see how important supporting local farmers and businesses are. The countryside in this country is beautiful and in many ways managed by farmers who work tirelessly. I saw first hand the positive impact supporting local business can have on the local community and the local area, allowing it to thrive.

Cheese is fascinating. With subtle differences in flavour and numerous different variants which affect it as an end product, this will continue to be a point of interest for me and something which I love discussing with my customers. As an industry, I feel it is very collaborative. The farmer, the cheesemaker and the cheesemonger work hand-in-hand. Discussion about feed and pasture variation are openly discussed and how this affects the flavour of the cheese and impact on the end product amongst a whole host of other contributing factors. The time of year, diet of the animals

and quality of the milk have huge effects on cheese as an end product. Animal husbandry is key, and farms and dairies work continually and tirelessly to ensure that the animals are in the best possible condition.

With most food and drink, once you scratch the surface there is an exacting science into how it is made and the skill which goes into it. This is something which I personally feel must be supported, understood and championed. When local people support their local food supplier or a local business which supports other local businesses, this support feeds directly back into the area they live and work.

I feel it is important also to showcase the amazing and wonderful variety of produce we supply in the West country and throughout the UK. We do have many requests for Continental cheeses, of which most cases we have a local equivalent which we suggest and tends to go down well!

Running your own business is hard and I take my hat off to anyone who does it, regardless of industry or sector. Even though I find it very challenging running my own business, I also find it incredibly rewarding. Not only do I learn a lot out myself on a daily basis, I am also continually learning fascinating facts about the industry and how it is growing and supporting itself and others who work alongside it. The general public I believe are also really engaged with the industry and are equally passionate and supportive. The hunger for cheeses as well as learning about it as a product and an industry is huge and the general public are incredibly support and informed, equally passionate about the support they can give local businesses and local farmers.

# Cheese Talk

New retail perspectives from industry experts

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New retail perspectives from industry experts

## Lithuanian Džiugas cheese gains PGI status

Džiugas cheese has continued to make a name for itself by gaining a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) from the European Commission. This officially recognises the unique characteristics of the cheese, its historic production base in Telsiai and its connection with the Lithuanian legend of the Giant Džiugas, and as well as assurance of the quality of the product.

The vegetarian, lactose-free hard cheese is matured for anything from 12 to 60 months and can be used in a variety of ways – such as part of a cheeseboard, or it can be grated or shaved to add depth of flavour to salads, bakes or sauces. Džiugas is available as a grated cheese in re-sealable packs that preserve the quality of the product and enable it to be conveniently stored in the fridge.

In addition, Džiugas has recently added a 'Premio Roma' award for its 100-month maturity to its formidable list of international awards.

zpienas.it



## Crowdfunding campaign launched to produce Scottish Mozzarella

The Buffalo Farm has launched a crowdfunding campaign to gather funds to be able to create Scotland's first home-produced Buffalo Mozzarella. Farmer and owner of the Fife-based buffalo farm and butchery business Steven Mitchell has launched the campaign, called the Founders Club, with a target of £800,000 in order to be able to build a manufacturing facility, milking parlour and slurry store. Supporters will also be offered the chance to secure rewards comparable to a 10% return on investment, delivered in buffalo vouchers and more.

Steven says, "My plans will create up to six new jobs and produce a quality and delicious product. There is a current UK market of £79 million and a 12% year-on-year growth within the Mozzarella market and so I strongly believe that Scotland needs a quality home-produced alternative to imported Mozzarella. The funny thing is that if I had a pound for every time that someone has asked me if I would make Mozzarella I wouldn't need to be crowdfunding at all! But I do need your help. We have a fantastic customer base and I would love those loyal fans, as well as new ones, to get behind the creation of another emerging Scottish premium product!"



## Scottish cheesemaker to start producing goat's milk cheese

Errington Cheese has ceased production of its Dunsyre Blue cheese after a dip in sales following a well-publicised legal battle. The company won a legal fight with South Lanarkshire council, which wanted its products declared unsafe to eat due to an outbreak in E-Coli, but the publicity led to customer demand for the cheese declining. The Scottish cheesemaker has announced that it will be revamping its offering and will be producing cheese made from goat's milk, after welcoming Yorkshire dairy goats to

the farm. Errington Cheese says that the new cheese will be available in the autumn.

Selina Cairns, director at Errington Cheese, commented, "We are excited to welcome these lovely goats to our farm. I am pleased to say they are settling in well and seem to have adjusted to the new surroundings. We have even had some kids already who are doing well. This is a positive next step for us here at Errington Cheese and despite the issues with local authorities; we're ready for you to try something new."

New

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## FROM THE RETAILER...

We ask Andy Swinscoe, owner at The Courtyard Dairy, what cheese are proving popular with customers right now...

“A real hit of late has been Fellstone, made by Tom and Clare Noblet near Kirkby Lonsdale. They’ve only been making cheese for a couple of years but in the last six months their cheese has definitely come into its own and is a real hit with our cheesemongers and customers. An old-fashioned ‘Dales-style’ hard cheese, it is young – three months old – and has great buttery and lactic flavours, with a supple, moist texture. Baron Bigod and Young Buck Blue are also consistently in our top five bestsellers and are relatively new cheeses in the UK scene that have really taken the raw milk and farmhouse cheese industry by storm. Consistently great flavours and real stand-out cheeses week-in week-out. They should be on every good cheese counter.”

## South Caernarfon Creameries achieves record sales

Welsh dairy farming co-operative South Caernarfon Creameries has revealed record sales of £52.9m.

The figures follow a major £13.5m investment into its production and packaging facilities back in 2016. The creamery, which makes Dragon-branded cheeses and butter plus a wide range of award-winning

products for the retail, wholesale and export markets, saw a 17% increase in sales in the last financial year.

The business has also created 11 jobs, taking the total number of staff up to 130. The dairy produces 14,000 tonnes of cheese a year using 100% Welsh milk from 130 farming members across north and mid-Wales.

## UNIQUE CHEESE RESTAURANT COMES TO LONDON

A cheese conveyor belt style restaurant has recently opened as part of the new KERB food market in London’s Seven Dials. Pick & Cheese is run by the founders of The Cheese Truck, and showcases a range of British cheeses from producers including Quicke’s and Gringa Dairy.

## VEGAN CHEESE BUSINESS NAMED START-UP CHAMPION

London-based dairy-free cheese producer Kinda Co has been named as The Seed Fund’s 2019 champion. Founder Ellie Brown picked up the award and will now receive a year of business support and mentoring.

IN THE LAST  
12 WEEKS,  
CHEESE HAS  
SEEN AN  
IMPROVEMENT  
IN GROWTH  
OF £9.2M

SOURCE: KANTAR WORLDPANEL  
(AUGUST 2019)

## CHEESE FACT FILE...

### BLEU D’AUVERGNE

- **Country of origin:** France
- **Milk:** Cow
- **Type:** Blue, semi-soft
- **Tasting notes:** Creamy and smooth, with a buttery and tangy flavour



## JUSTIN TUNSTALL RETAIL CONSULTANT



## “When ‘cheese’ is not cheese”

I took a call just as I was about to sit down for the judges’ lunch at Nantwich. It was from a friend of over 50 years and historically, a great customer at my cheese shop. “I’ve gone vegan,” he said. “I’ve bought a selection of vegan cheeses and want you to come round and taste them with me.” I’d judged a few vegan ‘cheeses’ for a number of award schemes, but always found them wanting. Nonetheless, I agreed to join him and bring an open mind. Contempt prior to investigation can lead to missed opportunities.

Indeed, joining my table at the International Cheese Awards, I mentioned this unexpected call. A quick consensus was that this would qualify as one of the rings of hell and an event best avoided. But as I thought more about the opportunity, I became more and more intrigued.

On the day I was not overwhelmed by the majority of products that we sampled. I was also aghast at the retail prices some commanded – up to £70 per kilo. What these would-be cheese substitutes lacked was a dynamic present in real cheese, the glorious balance between ripeness and ‘going over’; most felt completely lifeless and somehow cold – manipulation didn’t release oils and aromas, nor did it break down the texture to make the cheese more pliable. However, I still have the option to eat cheese, and can fully understand and respect those who won’t. There was no back story or provenance about the cheeses, and perhaps most importantly, no sense of connection to the land. These felt like science experiments rather than

produce from a terroir.

When I lived in the Arabian Gulf in the 1970s, pork products were banned, and beef bacon and sausages were the closest we could obtain. Not quite what we wanted, but with enough of an echo of a full English to keep us quiet. Similarly, fully observant vegetarians have striven to source a Parmigiano-style cheese, but made with non-animal rennet. I thought the plainer cheeses to be sorely lacking in character, and suspect that artisan vegan producers may find a niche in fermenting ingredients like tempeh to deliver something that’s tasty, precious and needs care to serve at its best.

The vegan cheeses to which I was drawn were those with stronger flavourings, whether ‘blue’ or with chilli. Thus, when I learned that Heather Mills was investing some of her phone-tap payout into a vegan ‘cheese’ range in association with Norseland, I was fascinated. These won’t be chosen by conventional cheese lovers, but Norseland’s clout should enable better distribution than these products have enjoyed to date and their expertise in flavourings will give opportunity for vegans to enjoy something new. Ms Mills’ involvement will add a commitment to plant-based living to which fellow vegans will be drawn.

I reckon that cheese retailers might find it worthwhile to stock some long-life pre-packs of these vegan ‘cheeses’ to satisfy the increasing number of pop-in punters looking for vegan cheese, and as a top-up for dinner party cheeseboards to cater for a vegan guest or two.

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# BRITISH CHEESE: BEYOND THE CLASSICS

Cheesemonger Emma Young highlights the UK cheesemakers worth knowing now

**B**ritish cheese, in terms of production, producer numbers and availability, has been back on the increase since the 80s, however ask the average cheese consumer (from the UK or beyond) to name five British cheeses and the majority will still default to the most well known classics of Cheddar, Territorials and Stilton.

Don't get me wrong, these cheeses are classics for a reason – they are delicious, part of our cheese history and the most widely made and distributed – however, there are cheesemakers all around the country making traditional recipes, newer styles and Continental replicas, many of which are still emerging and lesser known.

British cheese has not long been known for its large variety, unlike its neighbour France, but this has changed hugely and alongside the classics and large scale-produced block cheeses there is a world of artisans and smaller producers that have yet to get their widespread recognition.

It is our job as retailers and cheesemongers to continue with these classics but also to discover and promote these newer styles in order to expand the current knowledge of consumers, informing them of the vast selection throughout the UK. Here is an insight into a few 'new age' producers who have found gaps in the market and Continental replicas made on UK soil, as well as some cheesemakers keeping tradition and ethical farming practises in the modern world.

## The Ethical Dairy

I had the joy of meeting the team from the Ethical Dairy last year at Speciality & Fine Food Fair. They make a variety of unpasteurised cheeses such as the Alpine style Rainton Tomme, Fleet Valley Blue and the farmhouse Carrick. As the name suggests, they are doing something slightly different in their farming rearing practices. The cheeses were great and adding to

this, I had no idea that such specific farming practices were being used for any UK dairies. I work for a French cheese company, Mons Cheesemongers, and so I am familiar with the farming practices of the Salers Cow, and the team at the Ethical Dairy are doing the same. Our industry is continually under scrutiny for animal cruelty and intense farming yet there are farms such as those in France and now the Ethical Dairy who work even closer than most with the milking cycle and the wellbeing of the cows and calves together. The Ethical Dairy keep their calves with their mothers to suckle. As with Salers, the calf gets first dibs on the milk before the farmers take the remaining milk. This provides a calm and fair experience for the cows, calves and farmers alike. They state that Rainton Farm is the first commercial dairy in the UK to be following the cow with calf method and they want to demonstrate that it is viable and sustainable at scale. This is a super exciting project and I really hope that this will lead to other farms in the UK following suit.

## Chillies Farm Dairy

A stroke of timing, luck and being in the area visiting wine producers led me to find Chillies Farm Dairy earlier this year. They are a small

dairy based on a family farm near High Hurstwood in the heart of Sussex. They rear gorgeous Anglo-nubian goats with adorable floppy ears, and make goats cheeses and kefir. As with the Ethical Dairy, one of the strongest messages at Chillies Farm is that they believe in keeping their girls as free from stress as possible. Therefore they do not take the kids away from their mothers immediately at birth, instead they keep them together for at least three months until they are ready to be weaned. They make a variety of cheeses including younger goats cheeses and fresh lactics, the bloomy rinded Willow and a washed rind Livarot-esque cheese named Hazel.

## Fielding Cottage

I came across Fielding Cottage at the International Cheese Awards and was excited to try all their cheeses. The founder Sam Steggles launched the company just 10 years ago in 2009 after pondering over how to incorporate his love of farming, working with animals and his business mind. Sam came across the health benefits of goats and goat's milk, and the company started making cheeses, selling goats meat and also a range of skincare

products. Goat's milk is known for certain properties which help to alleviate symptoms of eczema. Fielding Cottage make a range of varieties from Goat Curd all the way up to their Norfolk Mardler, a vegetarian, wax-coated mature goats cheese. The word 'Mardle' is Norfolk dialect, meaning to gossip or chat – something I could definitely do over a few wedges of this!

## Shepherds Purse

Yorkshire-based Shepherds Purse have been handmaking cheeses near Thirsk in North Yorkshire since the late 80s. Judy Bell MBE was not born

into cheesemaking; she was a pharmacist by training and also starting to work part-time as an osteopath. In her profession, she started to come across a considerable amount of people who were allergic to cows milk and suffering from skin conditions and asthma. Having read about the benefits of switching to sheep's milk and viewing a cow's milk cheese dominated market, Judy saw a gap and decided to start making sheep's cheese as an alternative to cow's milk cheeses. She was mentored by a local cheesemaker called Les Lambert and the rest is history. Her first cheese, Olde Yorke, was

“ Ask the average cheese consumer (from the UK or beyond) to name five British cheeses and the majority will still default to the most well known classics of Cheddar, Territorials and Stilton ”

WILMA AND DAVID FINLAY,  
THE ETHICAL DAIRY



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KATIE, JUDY & CAROLINE BELL,  
SHEPHERDS PURSE



### Kupros Dairy

Following neatly on from the Yorkshire Fettle, another dairy named Kupros Dairy make a range of cheeses based on Continental counterparts. They are a family-run dairy in North London, inspired by their Cypriot grandmother who used to make cheese in Akanthou, Cyprus to continue the family history, but in the UK. They use milk from Lacaune Sheep – those used to make Roquefort and Perail in France – in Lancashire which they collect every day. One of their cheeses is called Anglum, a frying cheese which is similar to Halloumi. As with all their cheeses, this is made by hand in the traditional method, allowing the raw milk to do its work and be largely responsible for the final flavour and

not just the cultures. They also make a London Fettle which they batch ferment in small barrels for their depth of flavour.

I could go on. And on. And on. There are so many cheeses available, a huge amount which I have yet to discover and too many to write in one piece. For too long we have had the unfortunate image of having a limited selection of cheeses in the UK, but from this snapshot you can see that we create an abundance of varieties. Many Continental cheeses are made with traditional rennet, so it is nice to see so many British cheeses made using vegetarian rennet, opening up a further market of consumers who had previously been restricted in terms of the cheeses available to them.

entered into an International Cheese Show and came away immediately with a gold medal. Shepherds Purse make a variety of pasteurised and vegetarian cheeses such as Yorkshire Blue, Harrogate Blue, Bluemin White and Yorkshire Fettle – a Mediterranean salad style with similarities to Feta PDO.

“ It is our job as retailers and cheesemongers to continue with the classics but also to discover and promote newer styles in order to expand the current knowledge of consumers, informing them of the vast availability throughout the UK ”

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# FOODIE TRIBES

Nick Wyke explores what they want and how to give it to them

**W**e are all tribal, and foodies are no exception. Marketers love to categorise their target audiences into segments or 'tribes'. We reckon there are at least half a dozen key social groups who are passionate about great food and who typically shop at independent stores.

Below we take a look at them in more depth, identify their core characteristics and shopping habits and ask how independent retailers can best position their offerings to appeal to these diverse groups.

## MILLENNIALS & TRENDSETTERS

Broadly defined as people born from the early 1980s until about 2004, this is a generation said to spend more on dining out than on saving for retirement. They have grown up with bags more choice than previous generations, are open-minded and curious, and food plays an integral part in their lifestyle.

### WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

In a nutshell, Millennials want their food quick, easy, fresh, organic, ethically sourced and non-processed. New and exciting global flavours. Cool packaging that's resealable, recyclable, easy to open and portable – especially snacks on the go. Truth and transparency matters. They want to know where their food is grown and by whom and love the convenience and adventure of meal kits and being able to customise their meals.

### WHAT'S IN THEIR SHOPPING BASKET?

Fairtrade coffee beans, quinoa, avocado, ham and bacon that has been dry-cured in-house,

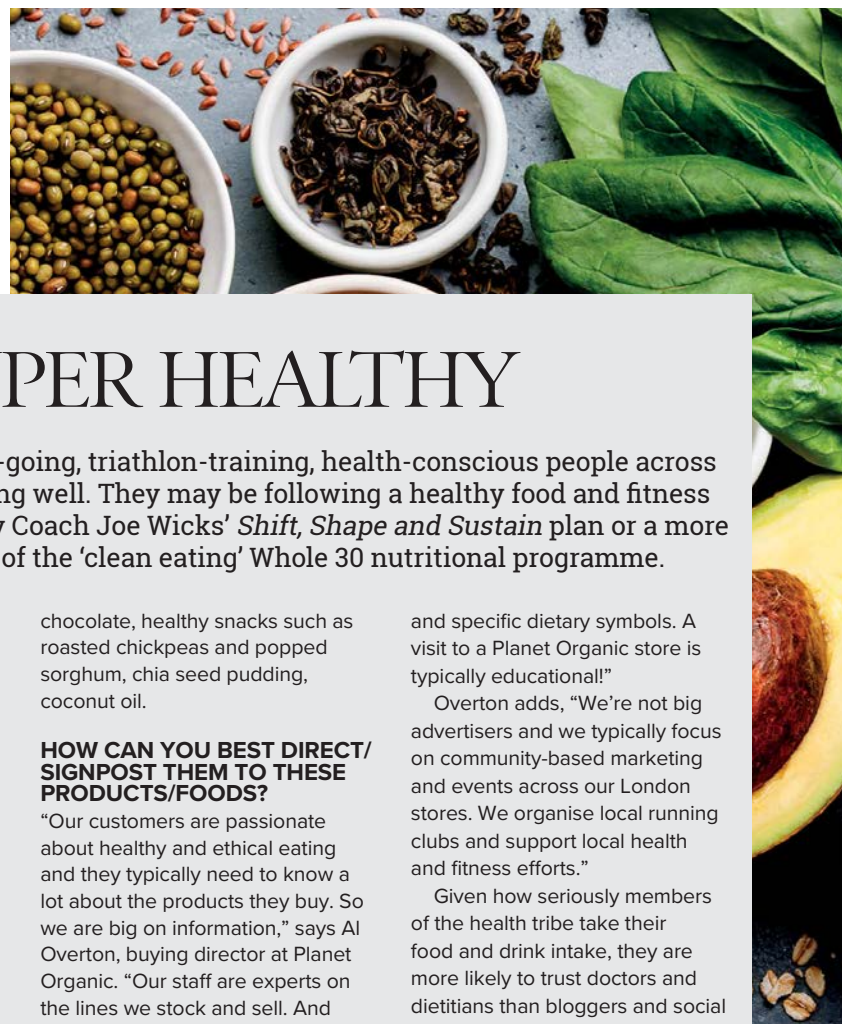
alternative milks, granola, hot sauce, smoky jackfruit masquerading as pulled pork.

### HOW CAN YOU BEST DIRECT/SIGNPOST THEM TO THESE PRODUCTS/FOODS?

To attract and retain Millennials you need to plug in to their desires and lifestyle. They like to feel that their food is part of a broader experience, which is why they passionately follow brands with a social mission. Millennials love a cool environment, too, so if they're a core market then it's good to create a unique and modern vibe in your store. Highlight new flavours and good-looking packaging on social media where they will be engaging with other customers.

“Keep it fresh and stay one step ahead of the competition. When a product shows up on the shelves of the local supermarket then we drop it and find a replacement”

MARK KACARY, THE NORFOLK DELI



## SUPER HEALTHY

Forward-thinking, gym-going, triathlon-training, health-conscious people across all ages who enjoy eating well. They may be following a healthy food and fitness regime such as The Body Coach Joe Wicks' *Shift, Shape and Sustain* plan or a more permanent version of the 'clean eating' Whole 30 nutritional programme.

### WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Nutrition. Low-fat, low-sugar, high-protein whole foods to fuel busy working and family lives. New ways to achieve a healthy and nutritious diet. They are also looking to 'indulge' without the guilt.

### WHAT'S IN THEIR SHOPPING BASKET?

Milled organic nuts and seeds, cold-pressed juice, fermented drinks, alternative milks, protein powder, low-sugar snack bars, pulses, low-carb alternative grains such as cauli rice, raw dark

chocolate, healthy snacks such as roasted chickpeas and popped sorghum, chia seed pudding, coconut oil.

### HOW CAN YOU BEST DIRECT/SIGNPOST THEM TO THESE PRODUCTS/FOODS?

"Our customers are passionate about healthy and ethical eating and they typically need to know a lot about the products they buy. So we are big on information," says Al Overton, buying director at Planet Organic. "Our staff are experts on the lines we stock and sell. And beyond the verbal know-how, there's a lot of detailed point-of-sale

and specific dietary symbols. A visit to a Planet Organic store is typically educational!"

Overton adds, "We're not big advertisers and we typically focus on community-based marketing and events across our London stores. We organise local running clubs and support local health and fitness efforts."

Given how seriously members of the health tribe take their food and drink intake, they are more likely to trust doctors and dietitians than bloggers and social media fitness professionals for health information.

“Our customers are passionate about healthy and ethical eating and they typically need to know a lot about the products they buy. So we are big on information”

AL OVERTON, PLANET ORGANIC

## TOURISTS AND SEASONAL VISITORS

Visitors to Britain from all over the world and those on staycations. The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics show that almost 38 million tourists visited the UK in 2018. The biggest two groups were from America and France, closely followed by other European neighbours. The number of Britons holidaying 'at home' has increased due to concerns over Brexit and the weak pound.

### WHAT'S IN THEIR SHOPPING BASKET?

Fudge, marmalade, tea, cheese, chutney, Marmite, haggis, whisky, Pimm's, cheap and expensive varieties of chocolate and biscuits.

### WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Food or drink that is local and representative of an area where they have visited or stayed. A product that will be perceived as British 'back home', perhaps branded with royal warrants, pastoral scenes, iconic buildings, Union Jacks and

packaged to carry home. Some of these traditional products were going concerns when America, as we know it, was just a dream in Alexander Hamilton's brilliant mind.

### HOW CAN YOU BEST DIRECT/SIGNPOST THEM TO THESE PRODUCTS/FOODS?

"Learn to know what will and won't work in your area and be a food hub for your region," says Mark Kacary. "Summer is the busiest time for The Norfolk Deli. We've learnt that ready meals sell better to September couples than to busy families in the

peak season.

"But families love to pick up our in-house pastries in the morning and our renowned fresh local crab which is available all summer. We've also teamed up with some holiday providers to make it easy for their visitors to buy a welcome basket packed with local staples and treats."

Encourage customers to try other products, adds Kacary, "If they come in for a Norfolk cheese I might offer them a bit of Cornish Gouda to taste. This keeps the counter alive and interesting for them."

“Learn to know what will and won't work in your area and be a food hub for your region”

MARK KACARY, NORFOLK DELI





## FREE-FROM INGREDIENTS CHECKERS AND SENSITIVE SOULS

A growing group of people that can be seen examining the ingredients list on the side of packaging. It's a wide spectrum ranging from people with a medically-diagnosed food allergy who can't eat gluten, dairy, or nuts, for example, to a wider group who 'believe' themselves to be allergic or intolerant to one or more foods.

### WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Whether it's shellfish, eggs or cow's milk, they are seeking to avoid foods and ingredients that may trigger an adverse reaction for them. They want clearly labelled foods and wider ranges of specially manufactured free-from foods.

### WHAT'S IN THEIR SHOPPING BASKET?

Freshly baked specialist bread, carefully selected gluten-free goods such as pasta, quiche, biscuits and brownies, alternative milks and vegan foods.

### HOW CAN YOU BEST DIRECT/SIGNPOST THEM TO THESE PRODUCTS/FOODS?

"Our staff are fully trained to provide information on allergen-free products and we often give advice to people cooking for others with specific dietary requirements," says Cooke. "Over recent years we always ensure there are gluten-free and dairy-free products on the salad

and cake counters, as well as in the restaurant.

"In-store tastings of free-from products are the best way to generate interest and introduce customers to new items. These tastings usually go hand-in-hand with social media campaigns to promote the product. It's lovely to introduce people to new products who previously might have assumed that allergen-free foods were tasteless."

At Delilah Fine Foods in Nottingham they have seen a huge surge in this group but don't have a dedicated free-from section as they feel that most packaging already covers this clearly. They will, however, highlight products like wine where the labelling is not always so obvious and it can be harder to know if it's, say, vegan or sulphite-free. "On our fresh products we have found that by using a label such as 'Chocolate cake (suitable for vegans)' we have much less waste than when we labelled it 'Vegan only,'" says the owner Sangita Tryner.

“Shoppers are a lot more savvy about what they want and expect high-quality, tasty products that are free from the relevant allergen, rather than the often poor substitutes that were the only option a few years ago”

LAVINIA COOKE, DELIFONSECA

## RETIRED AND COMFORTABLE

This large group, we are reliably informed, is the one watching the most terrestrial TV (younger audiences are streaming content on demand). But all that food programming, as well as Radio 4, *The Archers* and urban-living offspring keep them up-to-speed on food fads and farming issues.

### WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Baby Boomers (the post-war generation born between 1946 and 1964) say taste matters more than the convenience that Millennials prize so highly. They find both, however, in the likes of gourmet ready meals. They are seeking quality, awards badges, and to recreate a product or dish that they've tried abroad. Meat still plays an important part in the week's menu and their local deli is a great place to buy reliable meat products from farmers they might even know. They are loyal to trusted places and products. Many Baby Boomers are interested in expanding their culinary horizons while keeping an eye on health concerns such as managing their salt intake.

### WHAT'S IN THEIR SHOPPING BASKET?

Locally sourced cheeses and charcuterie; gourmet ready-meals such as casseroles, lasagnes, fish pies and tagines, made using free-range meat and with a focus on sustainable ingredients, homemade pies, pâtés, deluxe hampers, wine and gin.

### HOW CAN YOU BEST DIRECT/SIGNPOST THEM TO THESE PRODUCTS/FOODS?

Find that sweet spot that offers both quality, taste and value for their hard-earned savings. Pallant of Arundel, a specialist delicatessen and wine

merchant in the heart of the West Sussex town, largely relies on its well established reputation and an annual mailshot in a local magazine promoting its seasonal hampers. So far, so traditional. However, it has found staying open until 9pm on Friday to be fruitful. "We serve charcuterie, cheeses and open a few bottles of wine to sell by the glass, including one from the surrounding vineyards. It's about creating the right environment in the shop. People will often take home extra edibles or a bottle of the wine they've tasted," says Mark Robinson, co-owner of Pallant.

As with many independent food stores in coastal towns around the country, the core customer at The Norfolk Deli is often a retired individual or couple. So, always looking for new ways to cater to the needs of his clientele, Mark Kacary offers a custom-made service to his regulars. "Not everyone wants to pay the premium for better quality meals. They bring in their own dish and ask us to make, say, a moussaka, then they can take it home and pass it off as their own."

“It's about creating the right environment in the shop”

MARK ROBINSON, PALLANT OF ARUNDEL

## LUNCHTIME LOCALS

Usually people working in local businesses who can't stomach the thought of a pre-packaged supermarket sandwich for lunch every day. Independent food stores in urban areas tend to thrive on this daily flow of discerning customers.

### WHAT ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

Quality and variety. A choice of different breads and flavour combinations that they might have tasted at a street food market.

### WHAT'S IN THEIR SHOPPING BASKET?

Freshly made sandwiches, toasties and wraps, daily-changing seasonal salads and soups, and freshly brewed coffee. A cake or snack for the afternoon and occasionally an ingredient or two for supper.

### HOW CAN YOU BEST DIRECT/SIGNPOST THEM TO THESE PRODUCTS/FOODS?

"Our two neighbourhood stores rely on a lot of repeat customers," says Ian James, founder of Melrose and Morgan in London. "For the lunchtime crowd we make sure they know the price point before they order. People often have a fixed budget to spend on lunch and we don't want them to feel caught out at the till."

Mark Kacary has busy lunchtimes during the summer holidays when people are looking for freshly made sandwiches rather than "dull, grab-and-go supermarket" products.

His aim is to give people a better lunchtime experience and Instagram works well to promote such offerings as the US-style Vego Ego, a combination of nut butter, red onion, avocado spinach leaves and a chilli mango chutney. "Generous fillings and some unusual combinations, that's what makes us different. Word of mouth also works well with many people telling us they've enjoyed the best sandwich they've ever had."

“For the lunchtime crowd we make sure they know the price point before they order. People often have a fixed budget to spend on lunch and we don't want them to feel caught out at the till”

IAN JAMES, MELROSE AND MORGAN



# READY, STEADY, COOK

Busy consumer lifestyles means that demand for convenience foods is still strong, so what ready meals and soups should you be stocking?

**A**s the winter months start to draw in, it's the time of year when comfort food is at the forefront of people's minds. Long gone are the fresh summer salads, with warm, hearty meals being the food of choice for those cold dark days. However with so many people juggling busy lifestyles it can be difficult to find the time to spend on crafting a satisfying meal, which is where ready meals and soups come in. In the past, ready meals conjured up images of a cheap dish full of added salt, sugar and preservatives that was thrown into the microwave in order to have a speedy meal in a matter of minutes. The sector has developed into one that is still able to cater for the need to have a hot meal in a short amount of time, but with a much larger array of quality products. According to figures from Statista, revenue in the ready meals segment amounts to £9,802m in 2019, showing that this is indeed a sector that is growing.

A business that takes care to provide a full and varied product line in order to cater to a wide range of customers

is field fare. MD Karen Deans says that they have been "very careful" to provide that comprehensive range of frozen foods; "Across over 60 ready meals, we have covered off comfort food, high dining, vegetarian and vegan meals, classic international dishes, authentic Italian fresh pastas, luxury desserts; plus pies, fish and baked goods, sold individually and without packaging, as part of our campaign to reduce packaging and encourage our stockists to support BYO container initiative on our loose serve lines. Even scratch cooking is supplied in the ready-prepped likes of our frozen fruit and vegetable mixes, including a popular Country Soup Mix and a Mediterranean Veg Mix, which straddle the lines of homemade and ready made.

"We have also developed different sized ranges, responding to a changing ready meal market that has come about through premiumisation of products, healthier and more innovative recipes and a growing appreciation, in our case, of the quality of frozen foods. Frozen is no longer thought of as the poor cousin to fresh, but as both convenient

and environmentally more sound, in many cases. It is not just people living alone or elderly couples that are buying ready meals now. Busy families are now turning to the odd ready meal, without guilt or shame. So we have developed larger desserts to feed them, in response, and dishes to feed multiple hungry mouths."

## Health credentials

While speed and convenience is top of the priority list when it comes to reasons for people to purchase a soup or ready meal, health is becoming more of a concern as well. Many consumers are still keen to eat healthily, which means that the desire for not only a wide range of products is necessary, but also products that are made from good quality ingredients and are not packed to the brim with preservatives, sugar and salt. Food consultant Elizabeth Head agrees that convenience and health both need to be considered, "I believe consumers are wanting fresher ready meal options and although they still need the convenience, they want to be more involved and feel they have





IN ALL COUNTRIES, **CONSUMERS** ARE SPENDING **LESS** TIME **PREPARING** MEALS, WITH **19%** OF AT-HOME MAIN MEALS **'READY-TO-EAT'** AS OPPOSED TO **HOMEMADE**. THAT PERCENTAGE IS **HIGHEST** IN THE UK, AT **24.7%** – UP **ONE** PERCENTAGE POINT ON **2014**

KANTAR WORLDPAANEL'S EAT, DRINK & BE HEALTHY: HOW AT-HOME CONSUMPTION IS CHANGING REPORT

actually cooked something. With this in mind I think quick gourmet meal kits are what many consumers are looking for, particularly for those who are incredibly busy but still wish to eat well and feel good. Brands are most definitely putting health on the top of their agenda as it is becoming more and more important given the rise in obesity. It is their responsibility to produce healthier products particularly for the next generation."

Catering to those that follow a vegetarian, vegan or gluten-free diet, amongst others, is also key in this sector. Field fare is ensuring that all customers are catered for, by placing emphasis on its free-from offerings. Karen explains, "Given that the

free-from market has grown by 133% over 2013-18 (according to Mintel) and that it is the critical Millennial market that is particularly driving this market, it has to be important and our stockists are recognising the fact. We are busy expanding our free-from range as a result, to include vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free lines, including a Chocolate Torte that ticks all those boxes and just won a prestigious Great Taste Award. Consumers are now often choosing free-from as a lifestyle choice, rather than a dietary enforced one. The quality of the product and the expectations of it in terms of innovation of recipes, flavours and provenance are consequently on a par with 'mainstream' lines.

"We continue to source our products from specialist producers, as a result, whether free-from, or not. Our Vegan Pasties have been made by Proper Cornish, multiple award-winning pie makers in Cornwall since the 80s, our gluten-free savoury pies are produced by pie supremos, The Pie Life, and our vegan burgers are produced by Paramount 21, a family-run business since 1988, based in Devon. Products, stockists and suppliers are all having to up the ante in response to a trend that will only grow and expectations that will not accept compromise."

### The packaging issue

With the food and drink industry making conscious steps across the board to reduce the amount of plastic and non-sustainable materials used within packaging, the convenience sector is one that is also in the process of making changes. Ready meals would often come in small black plastic containers to be heated up in and then discarded, with soups also regularly packaged in round plastic containers. Waitrose & Partners announced in July that it was launching coloured packaging made from recycled plastic for its ready meals, made predominantly from mixed coloured PET bottles and trays which are more widely recyclable. The retailer also revealed what is said to be the "world's first" home

### WINTER WARMERS



Stock a variety of classic hearty dishes to keep customers satisfied in the colder months.

Ready meals such as lasagne, pies and pasta bakes will always be popular, but be sure to also have in stock a few meat and dairy-free alternatives, as well as gluten-free. Piemister, for example has created gluten-free versions of its classic pie recipes, such as the Gluten Free Ranger, made with free-range British chicken and Wiltshire Ham Pie with Leek & Thyme.

Customers are interested in soup all year round, but in the autumn and winter in particular there's nothing better than a hot bowl of a flavourful soup. Keep a variety of flavours on the shelves to cater to all, with traditional flavours such as pea and mint and minestrone always proving popular. Punchy soups drawing on global flavours are also appealing to give customers something new to try. Clearspring offers a selection of Instant Miso Soups which have a rich, satisfying taste.



compostable packaging for its Italian ready meals, which replaces the hard-to-recycle black plastic with a fibre-based tray.

Healthy meals is just part of the ethos that is key to the brand ByRuby, a company that prepares a host of ready meals, which are then frozen for the consumer to cook at home. ByRuby focuses on cooking in small batches using local ingredients where possible and preventing food waste. Meals include Courgette & Mung Bean Soup, Cottage Pie and Thai Beef Curry. The company is not only passionate about the food itself, with

its biodegradable cardboard trays and eco-friendly wool liners which can be upcycled by customers at home. Co-founder Milly Bagot says that having eco-friendly packaging is "hugely important" to the business. She says, "We are very passionate about sustainability and the impact our brand has on the environment. All our packaging is recyclable/biodegradable. We use very little plastic, only the film to seal our meals is plastic. Everything else is recyclable cardboard. Hopefully with progress and development we will be able to go plastic-free 100% in the future."

“ Brands are most definitely putting health on the top of their agenda as it is becoming more and more important given the rise in obesity. It is their responsibility to produce healthier products, particularly for the next generation ”

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- Weyhill Farm Shop



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# THE INDEPENDENT SHOPPER

Chef and restaurateur Tom Kitchin is the owner and executive chef of several restaurants including The Kitchin



**M**y wife and I spent many years in London and Europe before moving back to Edinburgh to open our restaurants back in 2006. Despite having lived here for the past 13 years with my wife and now four boys, it still manages to surprise me with its diversity and continually evolving food scene. We're incredibly fortunate to have some of the best produce in the UK on our doorstep and so many independent food spots championing this.

Since we often spend weekends driving the children to football matches, we often do a quick stop

at Bross Bagels in Portobello. I particularly like the Big Apple New York pastrami bagel that they do. The shop is set up by Canadian-born comedienne Larah Bross who for years has been an advocate of bringing Canadian bagels to Scotland. They are really delicious and always freshly baked.

For lunch I would head to my favourite restaurant, Southside Scran.

This is our latest bistro restaurant located in the Bruntsfield area of Edinburgh. The set lunch menu is a fantastic option to the usual A La Carte and is priced at £21.50 for three courses. I may be biased, but this is a real foodie place and reminds me of being back in Paris.

Another favourite lunch place in town is l'Escargot Blanc run by Fred Berkmler, who although French, is incredibly passionate about Scotland and our produce. The restaurant has a brilliant oyster and charcuterie bar in town which is perfect for a quick business lunch.

If I'm short on time and need something to grab and go, around Edinburgh we have these Scandinavian coffee shops that do great open sandwiches and delicious coffee. Peter's Yard / Söderberg, is a Scandinavian coffee shop that does great open sandwiches. They bake their own bread in-house including the rye bread, and their sandwiches are the perfect on-the-go snack. I really like the smoked fish or crayfish sandwich.

If the Edinburgh weather is decent, I will head down to the grassmarket area of Edinburgh after dinner for a few drinks with my wife. We particularly like the Cold Town House terrace with stunning views over Edinburgh castle. They do a great selection of cocktails and if anyone is still feeling peckish, they have a pizza oven for late night snacks.

IJ Mellis is my go-to cheese-mongers. The founder, Iain Mellis worked in the British cheese industry for almost 15 years before setting up his shop in Edinburgh.

His cheese is made of the highest quality ingredients which gives the cheese exceptional characteristics. Not only do we serve this cheese in the restaurants, but I also enjoy taking a cheese selection for any picnic opportunity.

## TWITTER POLL

In your opinion,  
organic is...

AN  
EXPENSIVE  
LUXURY  
**7%**

NECESSARY  
FOR OUR  
FUTURE  
**54%**

WORTH  
EXPLORING  
**31%**

CONFUSING,  
NEED MORE  
INFO  
**8%**

## SPECIALITY FOOD MAGAZINE

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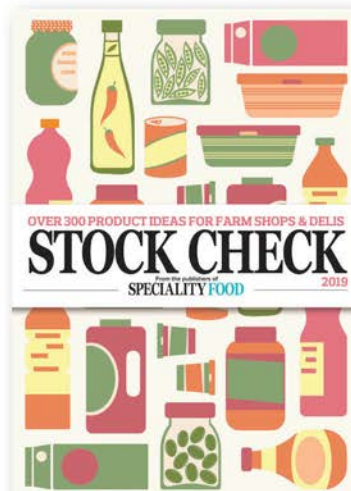
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- Food Matters Live Preview
- Last minute Christmas ideas
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## TALKING SHOP



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specialityfoodmagazine

At the start of September I had the pleasure of attending the Speciality & Fine Food Fair for the first time, and was blown away by the amazing brands and products I saw there. Wondering amongst the stands filled with wonderful drinks, confectionery, snacks and so much more, it was a great opportunity to say hello to familiar places in the industry but also to discover new companies. I particularly enjoyed the Discovery Zone which housed lots of start-ups, an area filled to the brim with innovative products and lots of buzzing conversation.

Since reflecting on the show it has prompted me to think about how important a brand's image is and how, in some cases, it can be the difference between a purchase or a customer walking past. No matter the quality of a product, the need to catch a customer's eye enough to make them pick it up, turn it around to read the ingredients on the back and decide whether it's something they

are willing to spend their money on is crucial.

Within the drinks section of the show there were so many products to look at. With spirits such as gin still being hugely popular there was such an array of options it can be hard to know where to start sometimes, so often it's the packaging and brand message that has to work hard to attract attention.

For example, I was walking around and stumbled upon the stand of Broken Clock. While reading the name on paper may not instantly give away that this is a newly launched vodka company, the stand certainly let me know what this brand was about straight away. With the stand said to be based on a Georgian

garden-themed drawing room, it was clear that this was a drinks brand that values the tradition and history of the spirit, with its Lingerin Vodka product. Sometimes displaying an obvious visual representation of what the brand is all about is what is needed to grab the attention of consumers.

While Broken Clock caught my eye for its eye-catching branding, Trip Drinks stood out with its minimal

and contemporary packaging and brand image. Using a pastel palette for its three-strong CBD soft drinks products, it creates a strong visual that draws potential customers in and prompts a conversation about CBD and its core ingredients.

When it comes to creating a brand story, it's important to think like a customer as well as a founder, CEO or entrepreneur. What would make someone stop for a chat at your

stand at a trade show or decide to pick up your products in a shop? While taking note of current trends in terms of colours, imagery and font when it comes to packaging is wise, it's more important that the products produced stay true to the values and essence of the brand. Are you focusing on indulgence? Wellness? Health? Whatever your brand identity is, say it loud and say it proud. While innovation is needed in a competitive market, products don't always have to be the most cutting edge or original idea, but they do need to be genuine, as that's what consumers respond to.

**What are your thoughts? Get in touch with us at [lucy.macdonald@aceville.co.uk](mailto:lucy.macdonald@aceville.co.uk).**

“When it comes to creating a brand story, it's important to think like a customer as well as a founder, CEO or entrepreneur. What would make someone stop for a chat at your stand at a trade show or decide to pick up your products in a shop?”

## 5 MINUTES WITH... DUNCAN O'BRIEN, FOUNDER OF DALSTON'S SODA

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

Complaining about whatever industry I was in.

### WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

General dogsbody at a now sadly closed corporate events business called Mavis Hall Park.

### WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

Music, art, talking to all the actively engaged people I meet. All the different places in the UK are pretty inspiring – even the outwardly grim ones are hiding some diamonds!

### WHAT'S THE WORST JOB YOU'VE DONE?

Practising a form of autism-therapy called Son-Rise with two very autistic children. Not the worst job for any other reason than it was highly challenging and exhausting with very slow progress. I have so much respect for all types of care-giver.

### WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF THE JOB?

The people.

### AND YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE?

When people use tiny tasting cups in professional soft drinks tasting – soda is for glugging not sipping! Try it with some Dalston's and you'll see what I'm talking about.

### HOW ABOUT THE FOOD INDUSTRY?

The best thing is that food and drink is everywhere, the worst thing is that it's everywhere – getting away from work can be tricky, you'll be on holiday and spy a fridge full of drinks and just find yourself eyeing it up.

### WHAT WOULD BE YOUR LAST SUPPER?

Might serve as a method of execution too but seeing as it's the last one, go heavy:



**Aperitivo** - L.N. Mattei Blanc with Dalston's Rhubarb Light.

**Starter** - Cullen Skink.

**Main** - Chateaubriand of Aberdeen Angus paired with a Tomassi Amarone.

**Dessert** - Crème brûlée. Espresso. Grappa.

### TEA OR COFFEE?

Yes please.

### WHAT'S YOUR MOTTO?

**Jokingly:** Style before purpose (although I've never been much of a dresser).

**Seriously:** Work hard and be thankful.

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

An uncooked scallop just pulled out of the sea onto a small boat. Weird because it was absolutely delicious and I'm petrified of all things slimy.

### WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?

*Tropic of Capricorn* by Henry Miller.

### SWEET OR SAVOURY?

Depends on context but if I could only have one I'd go with savoury.

## DIARY DATES

### October

**30th Sept-2nd Oct**  
**THE RESTAURANT SHOW**  
Olympia, London  
[therestaurantshow.co.uk](http://therestaurantshow.co.uk)

**5th-9th**  
**ANUGA**

Cologne, Germany  
[anuga.com](http://anuga.com)

**18th-20th**  
**WELCOME ITALIA**  
Royal Horticultural Halls, London  
[welcomeitalia.co.uk](http://welcomeitalia.co.uk)

### November

**7th-8th**  
**BELLAVITA EXPO**  
Business Design Centre, London  
[web.bellavita.com](http://web.bellavita.com)

**13th-15th**  
**THE EUROPEAN PIZZA & PASTA SHOW**  
Olympia, London  
[pizzapastashow.com](http://pizzapastashow.com)

**19th-20th**  
**FOOD MATTERS LIVE**  
ExCel, London  
[foodmatterslive.com](http://foodmatterslive.com)

**21st-24th**  
**TASTE OF LONDON**  
Tobacco Dock, London  
[london.tastefestivals.com](http://london.tastefestivals.com)

## January 2020

**12th-14th**  
**TOP DRAWER**  
Olympia, London  
[topdrawer.co.uk](http://topdrawer.co.uk)

**19th-21st**  
**SCOTLAND'S SPECIALITY FOOD SHOW**  
SEC, Glasgow  
[scotlandsspecialityfoodshow.com](http://scotlandsspecialityfoodshow.com)

## TRIED & TESTED

### LA BREWERY CITRUS HOPS KOMBUCHA

After coming across this brand at the Speciality & Fine Food Fair I was keen to try one of the four flavours on offer. I decided on Citrus Hops, the latest flavour to launch from the company, which, while having the distinctive taste that comes with Kombucha, was also pleasantly refreshing with the citrus notes. This is also a great option for non-drinkers to sip on, and knowing that the fermented beverage is also good for the gut makes it even more enjoyable!

[labrewery.co.uk](http://labrewery.co.uk)



### DIVINE CHOCOLATE SMOOTH DARK WITH TANGY CLEMENTINE

This limited edition treat from Divine is deliciously smooth 70% cocoa dark chocolate with that zing of orange that is reminiscent of Christmastime. With *The Great British Bake Off* back on screens there's been an abundance of cakes and sweet treats about the office, but I've found myself still reaching for a square of this for that 3pm pick-me-up. It's also vegan-friendly and Fairtrade.

[divinechocolate.com](http://divinechocolate.com)



### MANILIFE DEEP ROAST SMOOTH PEANUT BUTTER

"A peanut butter like no other" claims the Manilife website, and while I'm not usually one for bold marketing claims, I don't disagree. This nut butter has an unparalleled depth of flavour which has worked well in a number of iterations – I've used it in smoothies and baking as well as to add savoury richness to Asian dishes. A bit too strongly flavoured for some, perhaps, but I love it.

[mani-life.com](http://mani-life.com)



### BOBBY'S SCHIEDAM DRY GIN

I know, I know – gin is everywhere at the moment, and it can be hard to sort the wheat from the chaff, but this new gin is well worth a shout out. Beautifully fragrant with notes of spice (including fan favourites cinnamon and pepper) and rosehip as well as zesty with citrus notes, it's perfect for the undecided among us who struggle to put themselves in a camp when it comes to their favourite gin variety.

[bobbysdrygin.com](http://bobbysdrygin.com)





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