

SPECIALITY FOOD

NEW PRODUCER EDITION

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“ There is no better time to get into food and drink ”



CEMAL EZEL, CHANGE PLEASE



TOM KERRIDGE:
“MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD”

- The 10 Start-ups To Know Now
- How To Survive Your First Year From kitchen table to shop shelf
- The Modern Producer Is it important to be mission-driven?

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EDITOR'S LETTER



Welcome to the New Producer Special issue of *Speciality Food*. We all know that the food and drink industry is a vibrant, fun and inspiring place to be right now, but how much do we really know about our changing sector? How about the people moving change forward – the innovators creating new brands and products to excite discerning consumers and make the world a better place? In these pages you'll meet the new generation of food producers, discover the latest products to hit the market, and find out what life as a start-up is really like. Welcome to fine food 2.0.

Holly

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"We have a responsibility to create change in the world we live in and love"

says Cemal Ezel, founder of Change Please and Supreme Champion of the New Producer Awards 2017

To all entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs, and people thinking about setting up a new food and beverage business, this is an open letter to you...

There is no better time to launch a new product in the food and drink space than right now. If you attended last year's fantastic Bread & Jam event, you'll have experienced first-hand how many people have recently launched exciting new businesses in food and drink; from nut butters and chutneys to freeze-dried fruit and different oils. Not only was it a lot of fun to taste the food and drink (for market research purposes only, of course!), it was incredible to be amongst such highly-motivated and inspired businesses and individuals working towards self-empowerment and financial freedom, while also thinking laterally about how their products can make the world a better place, one sip or bite at a time.

Consumers and retailers are waking up. Standard products don't always cut it any more. Instead, we're seeing a wave of people actively seeking products made with love and a greater purpose in mind. That being said, it's important to remain

mindful that the product is only 50% of what's needed to be successful – the skills of running a business and bringing your product to market are where most of the challenges lie.

I founded Change Please in 2015 with the aim of beating homelessness through coffee. There are now 17 Change Please cafés across the UK. Our coffee is supplied through a range of distributors, major catering companies, Ocado and retailers, and imminently, we'll be branching out much further afield to launch sites in Seattle, San Francisco and Perth in Australia. Our product has won Best Coffee, Best Brand and Best Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative at the World Beverage Innovation Awards and received a Great Taste Award in 2017, as well as the Supreme Champion accolade at the New Producer Awards 2017. We are lifting people out of homelessness on a monthly basis by employing them at our sites, providing Living Wage and offering support with housing, mental health and finding onward employment. While we're incredibly proud of all we've achieved, it's not been easy! From the idea through to delivery things have been,



and continue to be, hard work... and at times, I'll admit, a tad painful.

The key challenge faced was how to translate our idea and product into a something discoverable that people know and understand. I began by asking the following questions: What's Change Please's relevance in the marketplace? Who really cares – apart from me, my family and friends? How do we make our consumer's lives better? Is there a significant enough difference between us and our competitors, and if so, how on earth will we communicate that in order to drive people to Change Please coffee?

It's important to be honest with yourself. Change Please was my idea, so of course I understood the reasons why all the world and its mother should switch to our coffee. Everyone else needed to have the reasons relayed to them in simple terms. If you want to run a social enterprise, it's vital you separate sentiment from reality. Here are my three tips:

Start with your minimum viable product. I battled with this, but eventually decided it didn't have to be perfect. I see many new businesses striving

to perfect every tiny element of their product, procrastinating at each step, putting off the final leap until they feel everything is absolutely perfect. This is human nature. Stalling is natural when you fear rejection. Entrepreneurs by their very definition have to be willing to take risks, to be brave. I urge you to take the plunge – put it out there, listen to feedback and embrace criticism. It might feel like a punch in the gut, but it's your best friend. It's the information needed to grasp the bigger picture, to improve, hone and eventually perfect.

Next, be realistic. You can

“ Think laterally about how your product can make the world a better place, one sip or bite at a time ”

be the most experienced professional on the planet and still only possess a certain amount of knowledge and skill. No one can be top of their game at everything it takes to run a successful business – graphic design, sales, package creation, marketing and the million things inbetween. You can't do it all, so don't beat yourself up about it. Get out there and find your team. People want to help, either as paid employees, or – if

there's good reason – pro bono. Don't be afraid to ask. The key to success is understanding where you need help and asking for it.

Thirdly, celebrate every win. These are the moments that carry you through. If, back in 2015, I'd been told everything I'd need to do to get Change Please to where it is today, I'd have thought twice. But, looking back, I don't regret anything.

Finally, I believe that life is short and we have a responsibility to create change in the world we live in and love. I chose to take something people enjoy every single day, use it to raise awareness and, most importantly, to break down barriers and eliminate the stigma associated with this marginalised group. The world is full of busy people, rushing past those in need without a second thought. Change Please facilitates all-important human interactions which

communicate that homeless people do have the drive to work themselves out of their predicament. Everyone has a story – perhaps next time, stop and ask them theirs? How are they, what got them here and how can you help them? As Sam Cooke said, 'A change is going to come' – let's continue doing all we can to help this change come around more quickly.

Good luck in your journey. I hope you have fun along the way.

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JASON GIBB



“What makes a killer start-up?”

What makes a killer food and drink start-up? For me there are two key ingredients. First is the character of the founder (or founders). They need passion (the heart of a lion), resilience (the skin of a rhino) and focus (the tongue of a feeding frog). If they have all of that, then second, they need the right product.

I can't do much about your character, but I can help you work out if your product has legs – if there is a spot for it in the marketplace. Observing the fast-shifting food world over the last dozen years, I've noticed that brands that have launched successful products fall into one of the following five groups:

1. They've created their own category. This is tough. You need to persuade the buyers to take a big punt (and they hate that). But the payoff can be huge.
2. They've refreshed a stale category. Find an area of the aisle with little innovation and old-fashioned heritage brands then bring it up to date.
3. They've challenged the incumbent. And if you can challenge the incumbent with a mission-driven version of the product then you really are onto a winner.

4. They've introduced trends, ingredients and products from around the world. I'm talking about kombucha, bone broth, Thai ice cream rolls and popped water lily seeds (not arrived yet, but you heard it here first).

5. They've focused on a sociopolitical or sociocultural movement. Capture the zeitgeist around things like plastics, vegan food, protein, breakfast-on-the-go, or anti-sugar and you will find an audience-in-waiting. If you visit the Bread & Jam festival this October at the Institute of Directors in London (full disclosure, I run it) you will hear, and learn from, entrepreneurs who have taken each one of these strategies and triumphed.

I've learnt a great deal too, and I'm using the insight as I begin my own brand-building journey (again). The approach I've chosen is to focus on a sociopolitical movement – vegetarianism. I believe that you can only make this your focus if there is authenticity behind it. The brand is called Planet Jason. Planet Jason is a world beyond meat, where taste is king.

That's my pitch. Do you think I've nailed it?

Fife Council throws support behind Scottish start-up hub

Fife-based new food and drink innovation hub, Bowhouse, has unveiled an expanded portfolio of makers based at its St Monans site, alongside new funding to support start-up food and drinks businesses.

The Fife Council Economic Development is supporting Bowhouse to help businesses by assisting them to test their products and better position their companies. Funding will provide a range of benefits designed to help companies grow, including business advice, collaboration opportunities and free pitches at Bowhouse Food Weekend events, which draw crowds of over 20,000.

The Bowhouse launched 10 months ago and now has seven micro-producers based at the venue, working on numerous kinds of food and drink products ranging from heritage flour to craft beer. Producers make use of a range of sizes of production units, which all come with full temperature control, gas, electricity and water.



Pamela Stevenson, lead officer of enterprise and business development at Fife Council said, “Bowhouse is an exciting development for Fife’s growing food and drink sector. We’re delighted to be working with the team there to encourage entrepreneurs to test the market, trade and engage in the wider opportunities around Bowhouse. This is part of broader activity taking place to boost Fife’s food and drink sector.”

Toby Anstruther, founder of Bowhouse said, “Bowhouse is a

place for making. Making food by transforming raw ingredients from the East Neuk’s farms and waters into finished products ready for eager customers locally and further afield. Bowhouse replaces a missing link in the food chain from farmer to consumer and there is a clear appetite for this, as our growing number of makers demonstrates. I’m delighted to be working with Fife Council to offer new food and drink businesses the opportunity to test the market, collaborate and grow.”

Kraft Heinz launches new platform to foster 'disruptive' start-ups

The Kraft Heinz Company has announced the launch of Springboard, an incubator platform dedicated to scaling and accelerating the growth of disruptor startup brands in the food and drink sector.

As consumers are turning their backs on processed food companies, Kraft Heinz has looked to support and developing brands that create healthy, organic or experiential products, assisting them by offering access to the corporation’s vast marketing and distribution resources, as well as product development and consumer insights.

The programme is initially only available to US applicants, with a UK launch yet to be announced, but it signals a movement of larger corporations fostering emerging food and drink producers rather than either buying them or creating competitor brands.

Last year the Unilever Foundry, a global platform for start-ups to engage and collaborate, predicted that corporates and start-ups will be working side-by-side in the same office space by 2025. Aline Santos, Unilever EVP for global marketing, mentioned that collaboration can no longer be viewed as an optional extra, and

it is now a strategic imperative. She said, “Start-ups are now widely recognised as invaluable sources of innovation, fuelling growth and providing pioneering business solutions.”

Kraft Heinz and its Springboard initiative have identified Natural & Organic, Speciality & Craft, Health & Performance and Experiential as key categories in which it sees opportunities to develop start-up brands.

Speaking about the project, Sergio Eleuterio, general manager of Springboard said, “We are committed to support and partner with teams that will impact the future of our industry. We are actively searching for emergent, authentic brands that can expand into new categories, and are looking to build a network of founders to help shape the future of foods and beverages.”

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PRESSURE? WHAT PRESSURE?

82 per cent of self-employed people in the UK say that working for themselves has “much improved” their life. According to a survey by AXA Small Business Insurance, just 7 per cent of those interviewed stated that they found life harder after starting up their own business

“Don’t get carried away with just the love of making something”

With artisan producers and farm shops getting the spotlight in BBC’s *Top Of The Shop* programme, we catch up with the show’s presenter, Tom Kerridge, about his experience with startups and indie retail

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO FRONT THIS SHOW?

People who produce artisan food have a huge passion for the process and craft of particular food production. This is something that as a chef I recognise and have a huge amount in common with. We all want to be involved with food for the right reasons: trying to create something that not only tastes fantastic but has real heart and soul and a depth of energy that comes to the end product. Artisan producers are such wonderful people to be around as their focus in life is just about great food.

HOW CAN THE INDUSTRY AND SHOPPERS BETTER SUPPORT SMALL-SCALE PRODUCERS OF GREAT FOOD?

Ask questions, gain a depth of understanding of how things are produced, and then you are able to see and visualise that you are not only supporting an industry, you are supporting a person – that is very important.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR START-UP FOODIE BUSINESSES?

Of course a business needs to make profit, it needs to operate on a professional basis, but first and foremost, you need to set it up for the right reason. Don’t get

carried away with just the love of making something, if your costings are all wrong, then you will end up not loving making it, or you will love making it but not for very long!

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY?

We are very lucky that there is a huge growth in food education, more and more people have an understand of history, provenance and heritage, not only of dishes but actual produce. This is incredibly exciting and a wonderful dynamic for the industry. The more food education done with fun, the better.



WILFRED EMMANUEL - JONES



“The world of start-ups is brutal”

Twelve years ago I had a dream to create my own brand. I wanted to create something different and challenging. I had no formal education and no idea how to run a business so I went on a long search for help and support. That search was fruitless, except that it was an education in what little help is available in the industry for start-ups.

What I learned was that the industry is full of fearmongers who prey on entrepreneurs’ naivety and fear. They are ready to take your money and offer little in return. This industry is peopled with those individuals who have never run their own business, and any success they may have had is of a bygone age and their experience is not relevant to today’s consumer. Entrepreneurs should be far more challenging towards these so called experts.

I have experienced at first hand how brutal the start-up world is. But my question is, does it need to be so? I have always felt that there is another way and that is why I set up The Hatchery. Many businesses fail within the first year and those that do pass that landmark may not survive to see their fifth birthday. I think

the seeds to start-up failure are planted at the very start of a business.

What I am searching for is entrepreneurs with great ideas but, more importantly, what it is in their backgrounds that is driving them and their idea. To stand a chance of succeeding you need to be passionate, almost obsessive, about something. You need to have a feeling of a greater purpose.

At The Hatchery I want to create a collaborative environment where an individual can develop, but they can also see the value in helping and supporting others. What you need in the early stages of your start-up is time and room to make mistakes and for it not to be fatal to your business. What is also needed at this stage are guardian angels, individuals with experience who are able to watch your back. Tragically most people only recognise their guardian angel after they have flown by carrying all the opportunities with them. To prevent this happening, from the very early days of a start-up they need to discipline themselves to look around, absorb what is happening, and, more importantly, to look up in order to move forward.

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Seedlip didn't start out as a business idea; it was more of an organic accident. I love growing herbs and vegetables at home, inspired by my family's farming roots, and while searching online for forgotten, hard-to-find herbs I stumbled across old cookbooks and learned about botany. I had my own design business at the time and wasn't looking for another business, so spent my evenings and weekends delving into botanical history as a hobby. I found myself reading a book called *The Art of Distillation*, which contained recipes for alcoholic and non-alcoholic medicines created through distillation. I'm a fan of arts and crafts at home, so bought a still and found the alchemy fascinating. Three months later I was in a very nice restaurant having dinner – it was a Monday night so I wasn't drinking – and was disappointed that having asked for a good non-alcoholic drink, I had been given a bright pink, overly-sweet fruity mocktail. In such a high class place serving such incredible food, how was there not a non-alcoholic drink of equal standing? In a world where we have cars which drive themselves, how is this too much to ask? This made me consider my hobby, and how I could connect it to my design and farming experience. It took two years to create the final product, and in November 2015 Seedlip launched in Selfridges.

Having experience running my own design business helped in the sense of having the confidence to make the jump, understanding a little about finance and being able to work for myself. It was a small-scale operation and we were selling a service rather than a product which makes a big difference, plus I had two business partners so the risk was shared, but with Seedlip I decided to go it alone as I wasn't sure how it would all turn out – even now I'm perfecting the 'swan look': appearing serene on the surface and madly scrabbling around under the water.

I was voracious when it came to asking around for advice and picking the brains of people who had been in my position. I found that people in the food industry were very generous with their time and happy to 'pay it forward', but I was aware that their time was precious so made sure that I was very clear on what information I wanted to glean from them. I read *Starting a Business For Dummies*, I learned how to use spreadsheets, and I scoured the internet



VIEWPOINT: BEN BRANSON

Start-up success, founder of Seedlip and drinks industry pioneer – this entrepreneur knows how to stand out

to find out what I needed to know. I wasn't afraid to ask stupid questions; unless you've been there before, you won't know the price of a glass bottle, which is the best type and how to fill it – they don't teach you that kind of thing at school, so you rely on people who have gone before you. There are lots of principles that apply to various business categories, so I went beyond the food industry to ask questions about things like setting up a business legally and banking. The chances are that everyone knows at least one person who can help in some way.

One of the greyest areas for me was trying to get some detail on what it takes to start a business – I didn't want insider information on other peoples' business models, just some guidance on what to do and expect. Equally on

how to actually get a product made and packaged. There are so many things you need to consider in all sorts of areas, so if a list could be produced of the 1,000 things to know it would prove invaluable. Everyone can make a product in their kitchen, put it in a bag, slap a sticker on it and sell it at a market, but how do you move a business on from that? That's the kind of thing the wider industry needs to be supporting start-ups with – making passion projects into viable businesses.

I don't believe in the mantras that have come from the tech world, like that you should spend a minimal amount of time on product development then put it forward to customers to decide whether it's right or not. A website can be altered every day but a recipe can't; you can't poison someone with an outdated

website but you certainly can with bad food. With Seedlip I didn't do lots of consumer research because it was a totally new product – they wouldn't have known what they were tasting. They could tell me whether it's nice or not but they had no frame of reference to gauge whether or not it would be a success, so I had to make sure that it was as perfect as it could be before launch. There are ways of testing and learning as you go – invite friends of friends round for dinner to try your product, or give it to someone you know to share with a friend for some independent feedback. When you start talking to retailers and distributors, you'll burn bridges by changing the price, or look, or taste of your product. The same theory applies to branding – you could get someone you know to knock up a logo for you so you can get the product out there quickly, but you'll probably find yourself redoing the design in due course. If you spend time and energy doing something properly the first time round, that should tide you over. You need to have confidence in your work and fully believe in what you're doing; if you don't, how can other people have faith in your business and product?

It couldn't be a more exciting time for the food and drink industry. We have consumers who are excited about quality food and want to know more about where it's from and who made it, and a load of producers who are taking the same curiosity and doing something about it. There are so many people changing the standards of the food and drink that's available to us, and it's great that people are willing to pay for that – a market has been created. Both the supply and demand are there.

TALKING POINTS

MISTAKES...

I met a lot of people who I wish had been more honest with me. I'd ask a simple question and they would mislead me; there are a lot of grey areas in this industry and a lot of time and money can be wasted by people not giving straight answers.

LESSONS LEARNED...

It's not going to take six months, and it'll cost more than £10,000. Don't rush processes or be unrealistic about how long things will take – every step is important.

“ You have to be a little bit crazy and have a deluded optimism to make a food business a success ”

THE BIG PICTURE

The reason I'm doing this is not because I want to get rich – there are a lot of faster routes to money than creating a new category and launching a weird new product nobody has heard of. It's borne out of everything I love and am passionate about first. Start-ups need to be clear on what they're doing

and why – you can have a plan to make lots of money, but you have to be aware that this is no get-rich-quick option – you've got to love what you do.

Genuine innovation is always well-considered. Does your product meet a need in peoples' lives? Is there a demand for it? Don't expect everyone to love what you do. There is a place for fads and short-term

solutions – they offer business opportunities and fulfill needs – but creating unique products involves building something with longevity, and this is important as it's going to take time both for you to create the product and then for the industry and public to come around to it. Remember that people don't like change: it takes time for peoples' habits to evolve and for

them to welcome new things into their lives. Niche isn't a bad thing by any means – carving your own can prove invaluable.

It's important that people go into this business with open eyes and that the myths of 'overnight success' are allayed. Friends and family will tell you that your product is amazing because they believe in you

and want you to go far, but you need someone to temper that positivity with reality – it takes time and money to run a food business. It's not always an easy ride. You'll have to ask questions or be in situations you won't want to, but if you have someone who can make you aware that tough times will happen and mentor you through them you'll survive.

FOOD MATTERS

Alternative proteins

Quinoa took the world by storm a few years back, with the mainstream press deeming it the ultimate superfood. Cue consumers flocking to supermarkets, learning to cook – and pronounce – it, and it's now a staple of foodies' cupboards. Nowadays it comes in a whole raft of guises beyond the usual salad, with the ancient grain found in the likes of snack bars and cereal. Amaranth, quinoa's lesser-used ancient grain cousin, is starting to make its way into shoppers' baskets, too, and is lauded due to it being considered more digestible than other seeds and grains. The Whole Grain Council refers to it as a "protein powerhouse" as it's a 'complete protein' – meaning it contains lysine, an amino acid missing in most other grains.

Another protein source that has people talking is cricket flour. While edible insects have been available for some while, Jimini's was the first brand to bring along a serious retail range. Its cricket flour protein bars might not appeal to the coveted vegan market, but they've amassed quite a following as they're a great source of protein and antioxidants.

Natural and organic

According to the Soil Association's 2018 Organic Market report, the UK organic market is now worth £2.2bn – the highest it's ever been, having grown 6% in 2017. Findings from the report revealed that while the entire organic sector is noting record sales, the use of organic produce in foodservice is notably on the rise, with £84.4m spent on organic in foodservice over the past year. This equates to around £1.62m spent on organic in the catering and foodservice sector every week across the UK. "Our consumer research



From gut health-boosting drinks to snacks made from insects, we take a look at the trends that are shaping the future of healthy, functional and better-for-you food

shows that a growing number of people are on the lookout for organic when they dine out," says Clare McDermott, business development director at Soil Association Certification, "but 67% of people told us that they find it difficult to know whether organic is on the menu, which is why schemes like Organic Served Here are so important for driving more growth of organic in foodservice."

Clean label

Clean label is considered a consumer-instigated movement which calls for a return to 'real food' and some transparency surrounding what's included in products. Products which eschew artificial ingredients or chemicals and only contain natural ingredients are deemed clean label.

While there is no strict, set in stone description for the term, the movement's general ethos of clear packaging and simple, easy-to-understand ingredients has made it a standard bearer

within food manufacturing. It's recognised that products that don't follow its general principles aren't likely to fare well with consumers, with the general public considered to be more demanding when it comes to transparency than ever.

Heart health

The general consensus is that a varied diet featuring fish, vegetables and whole grains is the best way to maintain a healthy heart. Consumption of wild salmon and sardines is encouraged as they both feature a high volume of omega 3 fatty acids, which increases 'good' cholesterol levels and reduces the risk of a heart attack.

The news that dark chocolate is considered good for the heart was unsurprisingly met with widespread positivity. According to experts, dark chocolate which contains at least 70% cocoa has been linked to lowering blood pressure, as its flavonols relaxes arteries and increases blood flow.

Fermented

Gut health has become one of the chief areas of concern according to a number of reports and studies, with some articles stating that a healthy gut can help prevent anxiety, fatigue and weight and skin problems. In order for the gut to be at its healthiest, there needs to be the right balance of bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract. Beneficial bacteria can be found in a number of foods, with fermented products reputed to contain an incredibly high concentration of healthy bacteria.

Hurly Burly, a company that makes gourmet fermented raw coleslaws with exotic ingredients, has captured the imagination of the market. Brands have taken note of the rise of fermented foods, and have released their own products accordingly, with dairy company The Collective recently announcing it will be launching its own kefir product.

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PRODUCT RUNDOWN



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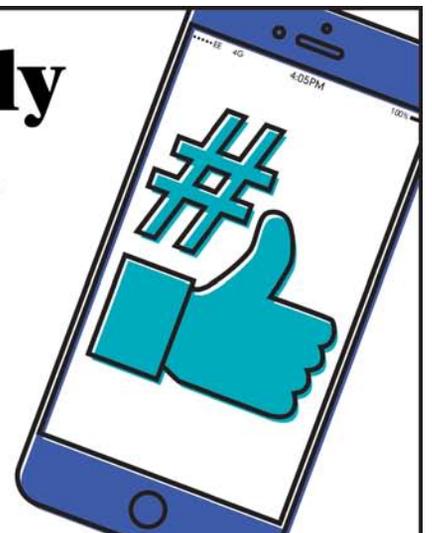


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Best of Hungary

Best of Hungary is a new family company offering a delicious journey through the "Pantry of Europe", where century old gastronomic traditions meet a unique climate and excellent geographical conditions.

Since the middle ages, Hungarian delicacies were served around the tables of Europe. They want to rekindle this tradition, and introduce truly unique artisanal Hungarian honey, paprika, goose liver, vinegars, oils and truffle delicacies. Who could be better positioned to bring the best that Hungary has to offer than two Hungarian foodies living in Wales. Best of Hungary is offering healthy and organic food deliveries from the heartland of Hungary, where genetically modified crops are forbidden, so all products are GMO-free.

They source all their products directly from the manufacturers, most of whom are real family-owned businesses. They work with people who are dedicated to delivering only the best products.

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Yorkshire Crisps

The latest addition to Yorkshire Crisps' range – Oyster, Chilli & Lemon flavour – is now available in single 40g foil bags, as well as the Sheffield-based company's famous re-sealable 100g drums.

These deliciously moreish, hand-cooked crisps, which are Yorkshire Crisps' take on the recently trending 'fish and chip' flavours, are produced from locally-grown potatoes with totally natural flavourings and are free from artificial flavours, colours and preservatives as well as MSG and GM ingredients and are gluten-free.

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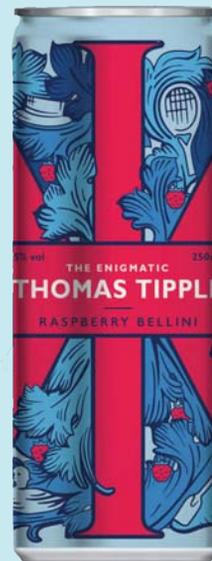
Thomas Tipple

Thomas Tipple is a premium brand of pre-mixed cocktails in a 250ml slimline can (5% ABV). He was born in the creative minds of a certain Hammersmith-based agency to reflect all things British that his creator wanted him to embody.

For its inaugural range of drinks, he chose celebratory Champagne-inspired recipes of Raspberry Bellini and Passionfruit Mimosa. Made from sparkling wine and natural ingredients, we serve fresh, delicious and low-alcohol tipples to be enjoyed during a picnic in the park or on a commuter train. With its convenient format, the beautifully designed cans are easy to serve chilled, transport and recycle. The initial run will be limited in quantity so get your shops stocked with the quirkiest of RTDs in time for the great British summer.

Due to launch this summer in select retailers. Please contact Thomas directly for your queries or orders.

07534053108 thomas@thomastipple.com
thomastipple.com



Walker's Nonsuch

Family company, Walker's Nonsuch, specialises in making deliciously creamy toffee in all sorts of mouth-watering varieties. Using the original recipe, the toffee team use just good ingredients like whole milk and butter along with over 100 years' cooking experience. The recipe is free from artificial colours, preservatives, hydrogenated vegetable oils and gluten, too. The latest addition is the new Salted Caramel, a quality toffee with a natural caramel flavour sprinkled with Anglesey sea salt.

Walker's toffees are perfect for sharing and great for giving. To see the full range see the online shop walkers-nonsuch.co.uk with so many varieties there's a favourite for everyone.
01782 321 525 hello@walkers-nonsuch.co.uk
walkers-nonsuch.co.uk



field fare

field fare's new authentic Pizza/Focaccia Dough Balls are a fabulous addition to their loose-serve range and are perfect for home-made pizza or a focaccia loaf.

Using a traditional Italian method to optimise the flavour and texture, the dough balls are quickly frozen ready to prove by the customer when thawed.

Each ball will stretch to a 9" disc to smother with your favourite topping or kneaded into the finest focaccia loaf.

No preservatives, no additives, no colouring. Just the finest and simplest of ingredients including Spanish extra virgin oil, flour from a British flour mill (family-owned since 1562) and active fresh British yeast!

01732 864 344

enquiries@field-fare.com
field-fare.com



First Quality Foods

Love snacking but want to cut down on sugar? Then you'll love the new, delicious Ma Baker Sugar'd Out flapjacks.

Handmade in the UK with British oats and natural ingredients, Sugar'd Out Flapjacks are wheat-free, vegan and have no added sugar, syrup, artificial sweeteners or additives – but the same great taste and oaty goodness of a classic flapjack!

Ma Baker's new Sugar'd Out range features three best-selling flavours: Raspberry, Apricot and Blueberry.

With 10g of dietary fibre and only 4.6g of naturally occurring fruit sugars, Sugar'd Out are perfect for breakfasts, on-the-go snacks or mid-afternoon pick-me-ups.

0870 777 1910 contact@firstqualityfoods.co.uk
firstqualityfoods.co.uk



Great British Biscotti Company

As part of its ongoing mission to extol the humble biscotti's full-bodied flavour potential and universal appeal, Dorset's favourite artisan bakery are proud to announce the arrival of two new biscotti sub-categories: Over The Pond and Quintessentially English.

The four new 'home-grown' flavour marriages include: Stilton & Raisins, Red Onion Marmalade & Walnut, Spiced Apple & Chocolate and Sour Cherry & Double Chocolate.

Whilst our 'stateside' compendium includes: Pecan Pie, Banoffee Pie, Pumpkin Pie and Toffee Apple.

07715322868 paul@greatbritishbiscotti.co.uk
greatbritishbiscotti.co.uk



Fresh Coffee

The disposal of coffee capsules is a massive problem and these ground-breaking capsules solve this as they simply and safely break down into raw materials in a domestic compost heap in a matter of weeks. These capsules can just simply be added to your composting bin, compost heap or food recycling bin.

There are four organically grown coffees: Colombian, Guatemalan, Costa Rican and Espresso Decaffeinated.

The capsules offer a full oxygen barrier to keep the coffee fresh with a 24-month shelf life, home compostability and superb extraction and compatibility with all types of machines.

07795212478 sphelps@fresh-coffee.co.uk
fresh-coffee.co.uk



Butlers Farmhouse Cheeses

Butlers Farmhouse Cheeses are proud to introduce Button Mill. Made with milk from the family's pedigree herd, this complex and creamy cheese is a true handmade luxury. The cheese is made in small batches, and is carefully nurtured through a seven-day make to create its distinct rind.

Button Mill is pure serendipity; its persona is modest and understated, yet the taste experience takes you away from all what's going on around you, a moment so sumptuous that more often than not only the wrapping remains.

01772 781 500 matthew.hall@butlerscheeses.co.uk
butlerscheeses.co.uk



Lotus Bites

Lotus Bites are positioning themselves as the thinking person's popcorn, acquainting discerning snackers with a nutritious, iron and phosphorus-rich 'super seed' that's brimming with beneficial nutrients, (iron, phosphorous, zinc, magnesium, calcium) yet reassuringly low in calories.

Lotus Bites champions three deliciously distinct flavours that will appeal to health conscious snackers of all ages: Turmeric, Pineapple and Beetroot & Tomato.

07717753587 jumana@lotusbites.co.uk
lotusbites.co.uk

ACTIPH Water

ACTIPH Water is the first alkaline ionised bottled water launched in the UK. Focusing on balance and hydration, ACTIPH undertakes a unique three-stage process of purifying spring water, adding electrolytes and supercharging by ionisation.

This process creates a highly alkaline water designed for those who want to live an active lifestyle. With an alkalinity of pH9.0+, ACTIPH has the highest alkaline level available on the market.

Water is the fastest growing beverage category and this sub-segment of functional water is growing at 27.6% (IRI, 52 w/e 21.05.17). Retailers can capitalise on this trend by stocking ACTIPH as the first in this new category.

Appealing to a broad consumer audience, this new category enables retailers to boost their existing drinks offering across the bottled water category, helping to drive profits.

ACTIPH Water is available in 600ml and 1 litre bottle sizes with an RRP of £1.39 and £1.99.

07894497296
jamie.dh@actiphwater.com
actiphwater.com



Coldpress

As a committed 'cold pressure' trailblazer it was only ever going to be a matter of time before Coldpress joined the health conscious, nut milk debate.

Coldpress's new, five-strong fruity nut milk family includes: Raspberry, Pear Beetroot Almond Drink, Strawberry, Oat Cashew, Spiced Oat Almond, Blueberry, Cherry, Guarana Almond Drink & A Banana Raw Cocoa.

According to Coldpress marketer, Ellie Rose, "Our vision from the outset was a tasty, nutritionally well-rounded range which not only exceeded other dairy-free drinks but appealed to everyone."

0208 899 6699 info@coldpress.co.uk cold-press.com

Ceiba Drinks

Ceiba Drinks (pronounced SAY-BA) has just launched a range of drinks that combine the exciting and true taste of Sri Lankan Cinnamon in a fruit-based drink. Refreshingly different, low in sugar, thirst quenching and 100% natural, Ceiba is available in three subtle exotic flavours including: Coconut; Lime & Ginger; and Mango & Passionfruit.

Using the finest Sri Lankan 'Ceylon' Cinnamon (not an extract or powder) – these cinnamon infusions deliver great aroma and crisp flavour. Blended with natural fruit purees and sweetened with natural agave syrup, drinks from Ceiba are truly special, plus are packed full of health benefits.

Cinnamon is great for the immune system and the metabolism, as well as having 13 health benefits which include lowering blood pressure.

Ceiba is the drink of the UK summer and the one to enjoy if you are looking for an alcohol-free alternative or a soft drink that is sophisticated and grown up!

07557142343 info@ceibadrinks.com ceibadrinks.com



In the Buff

In The Buff, a new plant-based condiment brand, has launched its first product which is set to tap into the growing trend for people wanting lower salt and sugar and higher protein items, which contribute to good nutrition as well as tasting great.

The first product to be launched is Sweet Paprika Ketchup, which makes its debut this month. The product is higher in protein and lower in salt and sugar than other well-known ketchup brands, and is suitable for vegans, coeliacs and anyone who wants to cut their carb intake.

With 12.7g of healthy protein per 100g, it contains no nasty stuff. It also comes in completely recyclable packaging, and once opened will need to be refrigerated but stays great to eat for at least four weeks.

In The Buff is being targeted at a group which creative agency Southpaw has defined as 'Everyday Athletes'. These are consumers who adopt an athlete's mindset to life, fitness and wellbeing.

07827293100 nick@in-the-buff.uk
in-the-buff.uk



Raw Gorilla

Be more gorilla! Like gorillas, we care for our environment and rely on nature for its delicious natural food.

We have taken a Rawvolutionary approach to breakfast and snacking, all products are naturally nutritious, protein and fibre rich, organic and unprocessed. Our products are perfect for those who appreciate wholesome yet delicious goodness.

We use only 100% Organic wholefoods and plant-based ingredients, adding only unrefined superfoods such as raw cacao, activated nuts, seeds, some fruits, and that's it!

Absolutely nothing artificial is added: no additives, refined sugars, colourants or preservatives.

07974961507 david@rawgorilla.co.uk rawgorilla.co.uk

Old Rectory Preserves

Old Rectory Preserves is a Norfolk-based artisan maker of multi-award-winning jams, chutneys, jellies and marmalades.

The company's range of flavours is inspired by classic combinations of fruit and herbs, and where possible the producer uses heritage fruit varieties.

New preserves in the range include Blueberry Lemon Basil, Apricot Plum Almond and Plum Cherry Cardamom. Old Rectory Preserves also has concocted two brand new marmalades: Bergamot & Vanilla and Mandarin & Lime Blossom Honey.

On the savoury front, as well as a Red Onion Relish created in partnership with Elveden Estate, a Sweet Red Pepper & Chilli Relish has just launched.

01953 789 910 aa@oldrectorypreserves.com
oldrectorypreserves.com



A Little Bit

The latest innovation from fresh herb champions, A Little Bit, captures the fruity taste of early autumn's hedgerow harvest. A uniquely, complex accompaniment containing a heady mix of aromatics – from freshly picked thyme to warming hints of cinnamon and ginger. The herbs and spices are boosted by the ripest, most succulent blackberries – famed for their sweet and earthy undertones.

Rich, robust and wonderfully rounded – this vividly coloured, velvety ketchup is the perfect partner for burgers, lamb, sausages, venison and other game dishes, whilst equally satisfying with chips. Lovingly made in the UK, using fresh, all-natural ingredients; sourced wherever possible from home soil.

The newest condiment joins an expanding line up of quality cooking sauces, dressings and ambient dips. Every recipe is 100% free of preservatives, colourings and additives, is gluten-free and suitable for vegetarians and vegans. The new-look, horticulturally-inspired packaging emphasises the brand's exceptional values and distinctive heritage.
01885 498 308 sophie@alittlebit.co.uk
alittlebit.co.uk



PROice

PROice offers a healthy ice cream and frozen yogurt alternative - packed with natural ingredients and clean proteins, the body's building block for healthy bones, muscle and skin.

Created by Granny Gothards, the goal is to create a brand for everyone no matter their lifestyle.

Available in the range are peanut-packed High Protein ice cream, which delivers a protein punch to repair and maintain healthy muscles with 15G of protein per serving; Berry Burst Frozen Yogurt, which is low in fat and sugar and full of refreshing summer berries; plus Energise banana yogurt, perfect to add a boost of energy to your day and Strawberry yogurt, a taste of summer with a cheeky hit of protein.

01823 491 591 amanda@proice.co.uk proice.co.uk

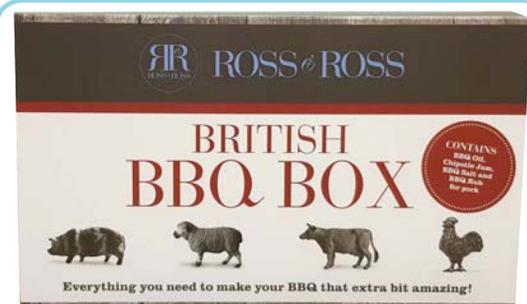


The Primal Pantry

The newest addition to snack bar range are high-protein bars fortified with hemp. The bars are a powerful addition for any consumer who is looking to improve their diet and muscle strength with a healthy form of protein.

Suzie Walker, nutritionist and founder of the brand comments: "People are being bombarded with protein messaging, but many of these products, whether they be snack bars, powders or drinks are laden with artificial sweeteners, poor quality protein and unnecessary ingredients. Hemp protein brings you the same nutritional profile as whey but requires minimal processing."

The new high protein range comes in four flavours: Cocoa Brownie, Cocoa Orange, Mixed Berry and Double Espresso.
01628 947 440 hello@primalpantry.com
primalpantry.com



Ross & Ross Foods

The British BBQ Box includes a 250ml BBQ Oil Original, BBQ Jam, BBQ Pork rub and a BBQ Salt. We have combined all the necessary elements for the BBQ lover into a neat gift box.

The British Roast Dinner Box, developed from the success of the Christmas Roast Dinner box includes a Roast Chicken Rub, Pigs in Blankets Dust, Roast Potato Oil and Roast Dinner Dust (brand new to the range - ideal to add to a Yorkshire Pudding mix, over vegetables or meat). This box will make the chef of the household very proud, carving their best roast dinner yet!

01608 645 503 orders@rossandrossfood.co.uk
rossandrossfood.co.uk



Ossa Organic

At Ossa we believe in the restorative, healing properties of premium bone broth. It can act as a base from which to build a diet that encourages healing and restoration from modern ailments such as adrenal fatigue, stress and tight joints. Our range of broths are made of only the highest quality bones, filtered water and organic vegetables.

We cook our bone broth slowly to extract nutrients such as collagen and potassium – it contains no additives or MSG, is cooked in stainless steel pots to prevent leaching, and our pouches are BPA free.

info@ossaorganic.com
ossaorganic.com



Papalino Ltd

Papalino Ltd have been supplying authentic Calabrian ingredients to the UK food industry for eight years. We believe our traditionally made Nduja from Spilinga is one of the best available. Versatility is the reason for this products increasing popularity.

The simple combination of pork meat and chilli peppers in a spreadable consistency allows chefs to use it in an unending range of recipes, including many modern additions to menus, like cheese boards, meat-based platters, artisan sandwiches. You will also find Nduja in the kitchen of people from all backgrounds because of the way it enhances many staple pasta and pizza recipes.

Our premium Nduja is fiery in taste with absolutely no added artificial preservatives. This is our best-selling product; we can supply it in various packaging, including a new easy to use squeeze tube, at competitive rates. Please contact us for more details and a free sample.

07711482038 info@calabrianfood.com
calabrianfood.com

Sheppy's Cider

Sheppy's is one of the oldest and most distinguished cider making families in the world with a rich history. Real cider, real knowledge - and real heritage. Today, sixth generation Master of Cider, David Sheppy, is at the helm. His passion, knowledge and expertise are behind every drop of Sheppy's cider.

The traditional cider makers recently launched an updated format – craft cider in 330ml cans. Available in two premium varieties: VAT 14 Classic Cider and VAT 07 Cloudy Cider.

Sheppy's new look cans are a nod to the cider makers' 200 year history, and are named after the actual vats they have been using for years to help mature their cider. This is the next step for the craft cider makers and helps promote responsible drinking, with a single serve size. Perfect for summertime alfresco dining, a BBQ with friends or a weekend picnic.

01823 461 233 info@sheppycider.com
sheppycider.com



MEET THE PRODUCER

Since launching The Sweet Beet, founder Lizzy Hodcroft has not only created a fast-growing range of quality condiments, but also discovered personal enlightenment through entrepreneurship



The Sweet Beet founder, Lizzy Hodcroft, is inspiring customers, producers and entrepreneurs across the food industry with her passionate ambition. Not only has she forged a food brand and helped it blossom into a fine food industry favourite, she is also a spokesperson for mental health within the start-up community as well. Although Lizzy now has a burgeoning business and charisma that's infectious, it hasn't always been easy. She suffered from depression during her formative years, which she spent hopping between Scotland, England and Texas.

"I struggled growing up – I found it hard to discover where I fitted in, and that eroded my confidence and put me in a bad place," says Lizzy. "I moved over here after going through some rehabilitation, and after moving to Newcastle permanently, I needed to figure out what I wanted to do." She found herself gravitating to the food industry as a chef, with the idea of being creative and on-the-go proving incredibly appealing. After undertaking a cookery course

at college, she found herself working in different hospitality environments, including the growing street food scene. While she flourished in her work, Lizzy was ambitious for more, which led to the evolution of her street food business into The Sweet Beet in 2017.

After being approached by a raft of retailers wanting to stock the products she was creating at the street food stall, Lizzy got to work on crafting a business. "We created The Sweet Beet around our passion to create more opportunities for people to discover and have adventures in food," she explains. "The Sweet Beet plays on the spelling of 'beet', as we want consumers to find their own 'sweet beet' – we really want to empower home cooks to be creative in the kitchen and have exciting experiences. We want to empower as many people as we can – we just happen to do that with condiments!"

The Sweet Beet's array of condiments is certainly whipping up a culinary storm where Tex-Mex-style flavours are intermingled with exotic and on-trend ingredients. The

range currently comprises five products: a Great Taste award-winning Maple Bacon Jam, Habanero Lime Jelly, Strawberry Chipotle BBQ, Texas Beer Jelly and Oak Smoked Apple Butter. Maple Bacon Jam is leading the charge with fans telling Lizzy that they devour it straight from the jar, but every variety is loved in its own way due to the brand's versatility. "We want people to feel that childlike wonder when they're discovering new ways to use our range." The company provides retailers with recipe cards, which are also available online, helping consumers to incorporate the products into their recipes at home. "We have

excellent recipes for searing scallops and glazing pork using our products," she explains. "But we also have whisky-based cocktail recipes – the oak-smoked Old Fashioned goes down very well!"

Lizzy vehemently believes that entrepreneurialism can provide a process of discovery and enlightenment for people struggling to find their true calling in life – she credits The Sweet Beet as the catalyst for her own recovery. "Giving something a try, and having the world respond in such a positive way – that was a huge turning point for me," she explains. "It became a path to recovery, self-discovery, and ultimate

transformation. I've learned more in the last two years running The Sweet Beet than I have doing anything else in my life, and I've met some of the most brilliant people in the process."

And while forming a company can provide founders with a sense of purpose and creative and professional fulfilment, that's not to say the experience doesn't come with pitfalls. Lizzy is quick to stress that although those who run companies may give off the impression they're a roaring success, it's important to forge a platform for start-up owners to reach out and voice concerns if they're dealing with any difficulties, professional or otherwise. As an alumni of the popular start-up accelerator scheme NatWest Entrepreneurial Spark, Lizzy hosts monthly mental health workshops for entrepreneurs.

She explains, "I think it's brilliant how entrepreneurship, especially through food, can be such a healing process – I don't think young people are made aware of how much value they have to give the world, and how empowering running a business can be."

“ We want to empower as many people as we can to find their own Sweet Beet – we just happen to do that with condiments! ”



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HOW TO SURVIVE YOUR FIRST YEAR IN FOOD & DRINK

What does it take to make it past the 12-month mark? Nick Wyke finds out

Take your time

Not many entrepreneurs coast through their first year in business. Especially in the highly competitive food world. Setting up a food business is an exciting time, but it's fraught with challenges. Whether it's the branding, product development, sales or distribution, moving through the gears from the euphoria of an idea to building a sustainable business is rarely anything but a taxing journey.

Pacing yourself and setting realistic goals is a good strategy to avoid too much disappointment. Stephanie Peritore launched healthy nut butter company, Mindful Bites, in February 2017, but only after 18 months of fine tuning the product development.

Taking her time paid off. "I think we got the products right and the brand seems to be speaking the language of our target audience," says Peritore. But she underestimated how long it can take to have an innovative product, like her nut butter sachets, listed in a traditional retailer – from the

initial meeting to the product being on the shelf took several long months.

"You have to work very closely with the retailer and distributor and factor in marketing, distribution costs, promotions and free-fills to the price," says Peritore. The end result needs to be commercially viable for the business. "I have walked away from conversations which ultimately would have put the business at risk of losing money."

Be prepared

When Tim van Berkel and Caro Warwick-Evans decided to set up The Cornish Seaweed Company in 2012 they thought it would be a simple case of harvest seaweed, dry it, put it in a bag and sell it. "It turned out that nobody knew how to cook with it, let alone wanted to eat or try it," says van Berkel. "I think we were a bit optimistic in what we thought we could achieve. The regulatory process, and actually running a food business with all the health and safety conditions attached, turned out to be a lot harder

than anticipated."

It was draining, too. In the early days they would borrow a friend's bakery to pack seaweed in the evenings until almost midnight. "Neither of us was paid for a few years, and we didn't see much growth or return," says van Berkel. "That is disheartening. The only reason we got through that hard phase was because there were people and organisations that believed in what we did and supported us."

Elsa Valentine and Tess Walker, founders of Innate Food's square vegetable snacks, wandered into their first year with a strong core concept, some product ideas and an untamed readiness for adventure. "We optimistically envisaged that our small-scale experimentation and product development would seamlessly translate into larger scale production and we were excited to get out there and introduce our new brand and products to all who would listen... we didn't have a set idea on exactly how far we'd get, but were just very clear on our principles and ultimate vision."

Be agile

Amid all the excitement and energy, the early stages of a food start-up are a good time to iron out 'teething' problems. What might seem like a nuisance to get right in the short-term can reap dividends over time. And having a core mission and vision that you believe in can prove invaluable when deciding how to tackle these problems.

In Peritore's case she was concerned about the pouch format of one of her products. "It was not as eco-friendly as it could have been. Pouches require a lot of air and transporting air was something that went against my personal ethos and the values the brand was built on. So, I went back to the drawing board and redesigned the packaging which led to a reformulation of the product."

It's a challenging junctions like these that companies have to be agile and make the decision to persevere or pivot on the test in front of them. "I always try to understand why something might not work, refocus and come back with a stronger proposition," says Ben Whitehead, founder of Sparefruit, which he set up in 2016 to make air-dried fruit crisps from surplus produce.

Innate's Valentine and Walker looked on 'failures' as opportunities for accelerated learning. "We made a fair few assumptions and merrily overlooked some critical variables within our process which tripped us up in due course, but it was a fascinating process," says Valentine.

Seek guidance

Many food entrepreneurs agree on the benefits of seeking guidance from experienced others. "Getting a mentor is great," says Peritore, "but also foster relationships with people just one or two steps ahead of you as they will know first-hand what you are going through and can provide precious pragmatic advice."

"When I face setbacks I try to think laterally and to surround myself with amazing people and mentors," says Sydney Chasin, who started working on The Healthy Crop as a 'side hustle' during her final year of university. She launched her first brand, lil'POP snack, in February.

"It's so easy to get tunnel visioned when difficult hurdles arise, but creative, sideways, out-of-the-box thinking helps overcome them. Having industry figures who have been through similar challenges at the other end of the phone has helped streamline solutions," adds Chasin.

Be resilient

Whitehead's Sparefruit snacks were quick to gain listings with prestigious retailers such as Planet Organic and Selfridges and even scooped a Great Taste award. But there are things he would have done differently: "I think we jumped into some trade shows and industry training initiatives early on, thinking it would really grow our business, and we were incredibly disappointed." He also regrets believing a 'do-as-you-would-be-done-by' mentality could work

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with most people in business. The harsh truth: "Doing business can be brutally ruthless and you have to be stoically resilient."

With no shortage of challenges, it's important to celebrate every little success along the way. Chasin's key successes have been the solutions to her 'failures'. "My proudest moment was watching the tens of thousands of packaging units fly off the press because packaging took us nearly six months to sort."

Be open to feedback

All start-ups face rejection and criticism, not least because taste and food are such subjective metrics. Chasin keeps a journal of all feedback, both positive and negative. Most of the criticism has 'sculpted and informed' the brand that exists today. "In regards to rejection, we have always asked for feedback on the reason why, and looked at rejection as a 'not yet', as our product is highly innovative and new to the UK and European market."

How you deal with negative feedback can make or break an entrepreneur. "If it comes from somebody who has dedicated time to understand the brand and our products, and also has knowledge of the industry, I can only take criticism on board with gratitude," says Peritore.

"This type of criticism helps to improve the offering and ultimately allows the business to grow over the long term."

Foot stamping and door slamming aside, Valentine and Walker respond to criticism openly and view it as an interesting chance to take on board another perspective. When one customer was upset about a faulty product, they found that once they'd apologised and explained to him that it was just the two of them trying their best, and offered to send him more, he quickly revoked his comments and instead became rather supportive. "We have only dealt with one incredibly discouraging buyer," says Valentine, "he was jaw-droppingly rude and so

expected they kept overheads down by doing things on a shoestring. This allowed them to stay dynamic and respond to changes in demand without being crippled by big expenses.

With the benefit of hindsight, van Berkel gives this advice to those starting out: "Plan for success and take your time doing it, but allow for failure or changes in circumstances. Once you have a roadmap and have done your research, you will be less stressed, work more efficiently and it will be an altogether better experience. And work together. Doing it alone will be a lot harder than with someone else – more people can pick each other up and share the workload."

Finally, once you're up and

“Having a core mission and vision that you believe in can prove invaluable”

there wasn't a lot to be done in that case. It's a good exercise in not taking things personally."

Think long-term

Since launching in 2012, the Cornish Seaweed Company has become the biggest seaweed producer in England. It's not been an easy journey. When growth was slower than

running, it's good to check you're still fired up for the long run. In order to do this Peritore practices something called 'radical candour': "If the reason why you started is still there and the market supports the business, then the obstacles are just part of the package. After all, they are written in the DNA of each start-up."



“Setting start-ups on the right path”

The success of any food and drink start-up is dependent on numerous factors. One essential element can undoubtedly be attributed to great branding. A brand is a complex entity. To bring a truly great brand to life, you must interrogate exactly what it represents, what drives it and what the future holds. It's not simply a straightforward design job of producing a 'logo'. Before the crayons come out, you first need to scrutinise your business; determining what your brand means to you and what you want it to mean to others.

Find experts that can help!

This might sound obvious, but lots of brand owners attempt to take on every aspect of running their business. I cannot emphasise enough the benefit of engaging expert services – an initial strategic investment will pay dividends.

Meet with a range of potential agencies for an initial 'chemistry' test. Good brand development is all about building relationships based on trust. Having an external agency onboard will provide a greater sense of perspective. They'll assist in

defining, refining and articulating your brand proposition and objectives by immersing themselves in your business. Appoint an agency that is not afraid to challenge your thinking. As a brand owner it can be easy to become too emotionally involved with the design process, losing sight of the overarching commercial objective along the way. A good strategic team will prevent this happening.

Have a constructive debate around the values, vision and culture of the business – it will lead to a more authentic brand identity. Remember, your brand will continue to develop over time. Each design iteration should serve a purpose. Consider and budget for brand evolution as an ongoing part of your business' development, interwoven through how you communicate and deliver with consistency. Your brand is integral to how you do business so remember these three points. First impressions really do count. You need to build trust with your partners and customers by conveying a compelling brand narrative. And finally, none of this is an overnight process so be prepared to take the first step in a long and hopefully rewarding journey!

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PRODUCERS ON A MISSION

Ellen Manning explores the new breed of food and drink entrepreneurs: socially conscious, environmentally aware and determined to make a difference

Producers are on a mission. For all of them that involves producing great-tasting food and drink. For some there's an added personal drive – chasing a dream or keeping the family business alive. But for a growing number, there's an extra mission that goes beyond all of this to a greater good, whether that's

helping others, the environment or something else.

For Sophie Hobson, head of communications at the School for Social Entrepreneurs, food and drink businesses seem to be having a “moment in the sun”. “I think it's partly because food and drink products are so easy for consumers to try out if they're seeking ethical alternatives –

as more and more consumers are,” she says. “The decision to buy ethical is much more straightforward than switching your household electricity to

an environmentally-friendly provider, for example. And mission-driven food and drink businesses and social enterprises tend to have stories that are easy to grasp.”

“Do something good in the world”

For Africa-inspired health food brand Aduna, the mission is to create sustainable livelihoods for small-scale producers in Africa by bringing their superfoods to the rest of the world. If you've heard of baobab fruit, that could well be thanks to Aduna, which also works with other African products including moringa leaf and Super-Cacao. “I used to work in advertising,” says co-founder Andrew Hunt. “Making products that I didn't believe in or actively disagreed with.” After a “complete meltdown” a six-week voluntary trip to The Gambia turned into four years. “It was during that experience that I saw the potential for business to have a fairly profound and sustainable impact on the lives of some very poor communities.” Fast forward a few years and he and Nick Salter have transformed the obscure baobab into a so-called ‘superfruit’ whilst helping millions of rural households in Africa.



Jason Gibb's journey involved a similar pilgrimage.

After a decade as a TV producer, he bought an abandoned olive grove in Italy and started an olive oil business that grew to supply the likes of Selfridges and Harrods. Keen to share what he had learned, he went on to found food founders' festival Bread & Jam and is now working on his own vegan brand Planet Jason. “I wanted to do something that I could go home at the end of the day and think ‘yes’, I have done something good in the world,” he says. “For me a mission-driven business is one that wants to change the world. And these aren't just food people, they are people who have got a mission bigger than food at the centre of their ambition.”

“Heart of the local community”



For Ed Mason, co-founder of Five Points Brewery, that mission is a bit closer to

home. When he and co-founder Greg Hobbs set up the brewery in Hackney five years ago, they wanted to give something back to the local community. “We wanted to build a brewery nestled cheek by jowl to the community.” As well as producing great beer, its mission has seen Five Points become the first brewery in the UK to be an Accredited Living Wage employer. They

“The rewards of running these organisations is so much richer if you believe in trying to make the world a little bit better than you found it”

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“I'm delighted to be a judge because I love food and I love start-ups - The New Producer Awards combines them both. I'm always excited to discover more brands that are shaping tomorrow's industry”

Renée Elliott, founder of Planet Organic

BREAD & JAM

“I am delighted to be judging the New Producer Awards this year and discovering innovative new products made by passionate people. It has never been a more exciting time to be an emerging brand in food and drink”

Tara Sundramoorthi, co-founder of Bread & Jam

COTSWOLD FAYRE*

-EST 1999-

“Judging at last year's New Producer Awards showed me how in tune emerging businesses are with today's environmental and social issues. I'm looking forward to meeting more entrepreneurs who share my passion for making a difference”

Paul Hargreaves, chief executive of Cotswold Fayre

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“The commercial and the social are completely integrated in terms of their objectives – if we sell more products we make more impact”

also source electricity from 100% renewable sources and set up an apprenticeship scheme for aspiring brewers at Hackney Community College. “We wanted to establish a successful business, a profitable business, but felt it was possible to run a private company that was in the heart of the local community and had a demonstrable commitment to the wider community. But at the same time we wanted to brew amazing beer.”

“Social entrepreneurship is the future”



It's coffee, not beer, that is the product of choice for Change Please, a social enterprise

staffed by the homeless to help the homeless. Ask founder Cemal Ezel whether mission-driven businesses are important and he's in no doubt. “With things like austerity and cuts, changes to the economy and Brexit, it falls on the shoulders of businesses and social businesses to try and make a difference. To get the same incredible taste and still make a difference to people at exactly the same price is a win-win,” he says. “So we are able to make a difference to people off the streets and that isn't costing the consumer anything extra.”

Ezel says he is seeing a growth in awareness of the value of mission-driven producers, from big corporations and their millennial employees who prize purpose-built organisations to students. “I am seeing more and more students say that the only jobs they would consider in the future are in social

entrepreneurship,” says Ezel. “I think that's really interesting because they are the future.” Combine the growing interest with an increase in the number of social businesses in the UK and Ezel says it's the “zeitgeist of social business”. He's not alone. “At the end of the day customers want to feel something, and they are going to feel something if that brand has a purpose,” says Gibb.

“Competitive advantage”

But is having a mission at the heart of your business a help or a hindrance when it comes to making it work? “I'm very much of the view that having a purpose or mission as part of your business is a competitive advantage,” says Hunt. For him, the mission is something that can win over buyers and investors who are as human as the people behind these social businesses. “Most human beings who have an opportunity to make a positive contribution through their work will take that option. They're going to choose it not only for charitable reasons, they're going to choose it as well for commercial reasons because they know customers are also looking for that. And particularly with food – the link between food and ethics and sustainability are so strong that if you're not ethical, not sustainable, you're actually at risk. I think we, purpose-driven businesses, are a little bit ahead of the curve and the bigger players are trying to invent purposes to retrofit into their businesses.”

“They [mission-driven businesses] have got many advantages over everyone else because when you're doing something you love and are passionate about and feel driven by you're going to put more into

it,” agrees Gibb. And thanks to social media, these small businesses can communicate their mission to the consumer with even the smallest of budget. “The internet has opened up the ability to connect and tell your story to the consumer like nothing else. And big businesses aren't able to fake this.” Mason agrees that cost pressures make it hard to operate at a small level without the economies of scale available to large nationals or multi-nationals, but the positive side is that: “You're able to take on the big multinationals on your own terms and provide a genuine point of difference.”

“Adding value”

But the lofty aim will only win over consumers if it comes alongside a great product, says Gibb. “The mission-driven businesses who really succeed for me are the ones that are a great quality product. It's not that they are vegan or surplus food or a social enterprise, it's a great product then you scratch the surface and there's a mission beneath it. You can put people off by being too worthy, you have to make the number one point that it's a great product. The opportunity is where you can buy a product that's as great as other things out there but has that added mission, it's adding value.”

Ezel agrees. For him, producing coffee that's the same quality as his competitors is vital to success, especially when it's often assumed that a social business may sacrifice quality in favour of its mission. “The biggest issue is perception of quality,” he says. “People automatically think just because you're doing social impact the quality or taste of the product will be diminished in some way. We overcompensate to prove that just because we're doing social good, the quality isn't going to be lower. That perception of quality in every facet of social business is an issue. It's a misnomer we need to overcome.”

Focusing on quality and competing on a 'like-for-like' basis is his advice to anyone planning their own mission-driven food or drink business. He's tested this by raising the price of Change Please's coffee or lowering the quality and it showed that the mission itself isn't enough to keep customers coming back. “If you're more expensive and your

product doesn't taste as good there's only a small distance your social impact will go.”

Equally, the business model has to be viable, says Aduna's Andrew Hunt. It also helps if the social and the commercial work alongside one another. “For us the commercial and the social are completely integrated in terms of their objectives so that means if we sell more products we make more impact,” he says. “That means that our objective is to sell more products. You need your purpose to be integrated completely centrally into your business model. Otherwise what happens is the commercial will take over and you will say, ‘we'll do that later when we're making money, or we haven't got time or resources to do that’.”

“Rich rewards”

“The main challenge for mission-driven businesses,” says Sophie Hobson, “is that, because they're doing things in a more ethical way, they tend to have a higher cost base. If you're a start-up restaurant that trains adults with learning difficulties to be waiting staff, your costs are going to be higher than the next-door high-street superbrand that can select the best professionally-trained staff available on the market and realise economies of scale through its franchise network. Or if you commit to buying Fairtrade and organic products to make your food item, your cost base is higher than a non-ethical alternative. But the rewards of running these organisations is so much richer.”



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beeb4all.co.uk

FREE MIXED SAMPLE BOX

6 KOOVEYS

Our brand was borne out of a desire to bring something new into the snack space, when everyone seems to be fighting over the same category. Kooveys has Sri Lankan heritage, where vegan pulse-based snacks are part of the staple diet, but being vegan doesn't mean compromising on taste and quality. Launching with three innovative products emphasising on the current trends of 'spice' and 'crunch'. All are packed with protein and health-boosting herbs and spices. Our 'on-the-go' packs are perfect for point of sale, with larger packs ideal for sharing.
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THE DISCOVERY ZONE

Trend-led innovation and artisan production are the hallmarks of Speciality & Fine Food Fair's Discovery Zone

Curated to showcase the best of new, speciality brands, the Discovery Zone is an essential stop-off for retailers, distributors and hospitality operators searching for trend and ingredient-led inspiration. Now in its second year, the Zone will feature some 200 new food and drink producers, spanning product categories ranging from cold brew coffee to nut butters and flavoured spirits.

Explains event director, Soraya Gadelrab: "Last year we made a conscious decision to shrink the size of the show to ensure it maintained the 'special' in Speciality and at the same time introduced the new Discovery Zone to showcase the most innovative products launching into the UK market. Diversity is what makes the speciality food market stand out, so we want to protect and nurture that aspect to ensure our industry visitors are truly inspired. It's genuinely a place for discovery, the limit of 36 months is strictly enforced to ensure we have space for up-and-coming, new brands and products."

Unrivalled opportunity

For the brands exhibiting in the Discovery Zone, there's not only an unrivalled opportunity to get their products in front of an engaged audience of retail, wholesale and hospitality

buyers, but also a suite of benefits included to ensure real show ROI.

Adds Soraya: "We understand the importance of cost for small producers, so the Discovery Zone comes at a 'starter pack' rate, making it ideal for companies considering their first professional show. As part of this we offer each producer access to the education and tools needed to make the most of the three days, plus there's PR support, free product photography and more!"

The best products under one roof

Certainly, show visitors believe the Speciality & Fine Food Fair is the perfect location to see the best of UK artisan products under one roof. Says Mark Spry, shop manager, Dart Farms: "We come to Speciality & Fine Food Fair every year. We find it an invaluable way to find new artisan products and producers."

And Jennie Allen, founder of Bayley & Sage, a six-strong chain of London speciality outlets adds: "As the owner of a small business that I have built from scratch, the greatest thrill is to watch people and other companies develop and grow. Finding new products is the most fun part of running a food business. I am excited by the Discovery Zone to find new food and drink that will excite our customers, and new businesses that can grow as we grow."

Launchpad for successful brands

Now in its 19th year, the Speciality & Fine Food Fair has a recognised track record as a launch pad for the successful brands of the future. Last year's show saw a major focus on health and wellness, particularly when it came to boasting their free-from credentials, whether that was free-from added sugar, gluten or artificial flavours and colours. Brands such as Fravocado – now available nationwide through As Nature Intended, Wild Planet Foods and The Veggie Plot, all made their mark.

Soraya believes this is likely to be a continuing theme at this year's event, based on the fact that limiting sugar is the UK's No 1 concern, with 53% of people admitting to reducing their sugar intake. The same survey also found that 40% of people were looking to limit their intake of processed foods and 29% said they were seeking out healthy snacks.

However, she also underlines that the speciality food market still has an enormous appreciation for gourmet food. "Last year we saw an excellent representation of luxury snacking – nuts were particularly popular as was premium chocolate (organic bars without refined sugar) with brands such as Goodio Chocolate and Love Cocoa making their debut.



Quench your thirst

There's also a greater focus on speciality and luxury in the world of beer, wine and spirits, with small, specialist products rising in popularity as outlets look for drinks that offer a point of difference. Figures released by industry analyst CGA at the end of last year revealed that spirits account for 18.9% of total serves in the on-trade, an increase of nearly 4% against an average four-week period. Vodka, dark rum, blended whisky, gin, tequila

and non-cream liqueurs see the biggest trade-up.

Stresses Soraya: "The CGA research reveals that more than a third of people (36%) are willing to pay extra for a better-quality drink than they'd normally choose, influenced by wanting a treat (57%), friends (32%), and recommendations from bar staff (24%). The research underlines the enormous opportunity for both artisan brands and retail and hospitality outlets to curate their



PRODUCER SPOTLIGHT: Black Bee Honey

Speciality & Fine Food Fair has been the launchpad for a number of the UK's finest products and the 2017 edition was no different. One such brand was Black Bee Honey – named after the British honey bee, which after nearly dying out is slowly making a comeback. Black Bee Honey create a range of single-source, raw honey that's currently available in three flavours.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE ON THE FAIR TO LAUNCH BLACK BEE HONEY?

We felt Speciality & Fine Food Fair was the perfect event to launch our new brand. It was the first time we were in front of buyers talking about why Black Bee Honey exists and why our products are so good. It helped us to refine our message and gain great feedback.

The Discovery Zone was the ideal location for us and put us in front of many of the buyers we now count as valued customers – plus we were inspired by many of the other brands around us.

YOU MENTION THE BUYERS YOU MET; DID SHOWCASING AT THE FAIR HELP YOU TO GET LISTED WITH TARGET SUPPLIERS?

At the time of the show, we literally had no stockists. In the six months since then, we've been stocked in almost 50 stores. We met the buyer from Whole Foods Market who was really lovely and engaged with us and our brand – it must have gone well as we're now stocked there!

CAN YOU SUM UP YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE FAIR IN ONE SENTENCE?

"A must for any food brand or industry professional."



own, specially-selected range of products and the Discovery Zone is the perfect place to start their hunt."

Buyers can look out for a range of new drinks in the Discovery Zone. The Sweet Potato Spirit Company will showcase its Spiced Rum and Moonshine, including fun variations such as Pink Marshmallow Moonshine and Chocolate Moonshine with Chilli. Black Storm Brewery – the newest craft ale brewery in the North East will debut a four-strong range of ales available in 330ml bottles and 10g casks. For visitors looking to push the boundaries of drinks pairings, there's Noveltea: an alcoholic blend pairing two British favourites – tea and alcohol!

Staying with beverages, Soraya believes that the US love of cold-brew coffee is likely to make a bigger impact in the UK in the coming months. "We've already become a nation of coffee drinkers. According to figures released earlier this year by the Centre for Economic and Business Research (CEBR), we now drink 95 million cups per day, up from 70 million in 2008. AS competition intensifies on the high-street coffee shops are looking for new ways of serving coffee."

Cold-brew specialist, Wiltshire-based Far Side Coffee, which uses single origin beans that are steeped in cool filtered water for 18 hours (it packs a punchier caffeine kick than regular coffee) is just one of the brands for buyers to sample.

Of-the-moment trends

Finally, for Fair visitors wanting to make sure they don't miss out on the global phenomenon of plant-based protein and burgeoning vegan movement, the Discovery Zone is playing host to a raft of new brands offering plant-protein and/or vegan credentials.

Already checked in to exhibit is newcomer 9 Meals from Anarchy with three varieties of flavoursome stocks, all containing more than 75% sustainably-sourced and organic vegetables. They're also sugar and palm oil-free with a very low salt content.

Butter Nut of London has

luxurious vegan and organic nut butters, which are free-from palm oil, refined sugar and gluten, and as a bonus they come beautifully packaged in recyclable materials.

"The plant-protein and vegan trends are one that many of our visitors can't afford to miss. Over the past few months we've seen an explosion of products and outlets aimed at vegan shoppers and diners. Plant proteins are moving into the mainstream as consumers take steps to reduce

meat consumption for health, environmental and animal welfare reasons," says Soraya.

And her views are borne out by the fact that last year Mintel's Food & Drink Trends report, which looks at global food trends, pointed to the continued rise of "plant power", while the Mintel Global New Products Database (GNPD) records a 25% increase in vegetarian and a 257% increase in vegan claims in global food and drink launches between September

2010 and August 2011 and September 2015 and August 2016 respectively.

Event director Soraya concludes: "We're really excited by the selection of brands we have making their debut at the Speciality & Fine Food Fair this year. The sheer quality and diversity of the exhibitors means there's something for everyone, alongside a wealth of information and advice to help both exhibitors and visitors to grow their businesses."

“Diversity is what makes the speciality food market stand out, so we want to protect and nurture that aspect to ensure our industry visitors are truly inspired”

PRODUCER SPOTLIGHT: Popcorn Shed

Popcorn Shed began as two cousins in their family kitchen trying to perfect indulgent popcorn recipes (before being pushed out into the garden shed in an attempt to clean up the kernels from the family space – hence the name!) In 2016, the pair decided to launch the Popcorn Shed brand to the wholesale market at Speciality & Fine Food Fair.

"When we first exhibited and launched at the show we had 0 on our balance sheet and just three products. It is now just over a year on and we have seven different products and our turnover is in excess of £100,000 per year. Many of the key accounts that have

helped us get here were met at Speciality & Fine Food Fair!"

Laura and Sam returned for the 2017 edition of the Fair – taking a stand within the Discovery Zone – so we caught up with them to find out what's changed, who they met and what advice they have for next year!

SO, WHY THE FAIR?

There are a number of reasons:

- We had heard great things from other brands who strongly recommended the show
- Our gourmet popcorn is a handcrafted, artisanal product and so attending the show was a great fit for us
- The show was reasonably priced for start-up brands and had a dedicated area to showcase

up-and-coming food and drink brands

- Within two weeks of exhibiting we had orders that more than paid for the cost of the stand, so it was definitely great value for money!

AND WAS THAT THROUGH MEETING YOUR TARGET SUPPLIERS?

It was; however, the show also introduced us to buyers that weren't on our target list and should have been. As a result of the show we have exported to USA, Canada, Denmark and Germany which was completely unplanned but a great surprise.

We also gained our first nationwide listing with BP Simply Food petrol forecourts after meeting the buyer at the show – yay!

Our best piece of advice for brands exhibiting for the first time would be to talk to everyone. You never know who you could meet and where the opportunity could take you.

POPCORN SHED ARE RETURNING FOR 2018 – WHAT CAN WE EXPECT TO SEE FROM THE BRAND?

Being our third year at the show we will be leaving the small producer package to move to a larger stand, and we're looking forward to seeing what opportunities the move to a different area will bring. We'll still be making the best tasting Gourmet Popcorn in the World! Texture is our game – we have added indulgent Belgian chocolate and roasted pecan nuts for an extra flavour hit and enhanced mouth-feel.

NEED TO KNOW: SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS

Whether start-ups require reliable packaging for their food-to-go section or bespoke labelling for an own-brand product, we round up the best services available to the fine food industry



Axicon Labels

Axicon Labels has over 30 years' experience of producing labels, and with its operation based just outside Bicester at Weston on the Green, it is able to provide labels for all types of product. "We really enjoy working with some of our smaller customers, as they often don't realise how sensibly priced good labels can be, and how they can transform a product into something really special and attractive," stated Adam Carey, director at Axicon. "Our labels don't have to include barcodes, but if they do, we can guarantee that they will scan properly." **01869 350 442 labels@axicon.com axiconlabels.co.uk**



Cotswold Fayre

Cotswold Fayre is a speciality and fine food and drink wholesale distributor, supplying independent retailers with both ambient and chilled products. A certified b-corporation with exceptional environmental and social standards, that uses business as a force for good to benefit both people and planet. Cotswold Fayre offers a consolidation service that delivers a large range of quality products, from reputable producers, to independent retailers, offering a real point of difference from the supermarket giants.

**03452 606 060 sales@cotswold-fayre.co.uk
cotswold-fayre.co.uk**



Hydropac

Hydropac's latest product development, the 3D Reflective Air Bag, when combined with a double-strength corrugated outer carton, provides surprising test results when compared with its closest competitors, polystyrene and foam-based systems. Hydropac's General Manager Colin Rowland says, "The 3D Reflective Air System is designed and shaped to fit a conventional box. The system offers a no-nonsense, hassle-free assembly. No fiddly multiple pieces to find and assemble or bulky space consuming EPS boxes, further reducing the impact on customer's storage and labour, with a pallet-busting 1,500 bags per pallet potential from our stock sizes. The system works on thermal reflection of energy from both external temperatures as well as internal – this is due to its aluminium lining on both the inside and out, in itself a first to the UK market, and has taken the e-commerce market by storm. The classier, reflective, quality-looking design of the 3D Reflective Air System provides a unique, game-changing set of aesthetics to the current dull, aged old systems available, providing a more unique, upmarket experience for the end user. You just have to be bold enough to be different."

**01494 530 182 sales@hydropac.co.uk
hydropac.co.uk**



WK Thomas

WK Thomas has launched Topper-Pod, a new-concept takeaway pot to give food-to-go retailers greater flexibility and consumers a more personalised service. Topper-Pod has two compartments that dovetail together to form a stylish, ergonomic container boosting shelf presence for high-street delis and larger outlets selling salads, desserts and snacks with toppings such as dressing, croutons or jam. Crucial to the concept are the two compartments: these keep food and topping – hot or cold – separate. The main food container is topped with a lid that doubles as a smaller pot for sauces. Consumers flip off the lid, peel open the container and pour the sauce on to the main meal. By taking their order to a serving counter, consumers can choose a topping, making this a personalised grab-and-go experience. Topper-Pod is sustainable. Made from clear rPET or heat-resistant polypropylene, the material is recyclable and was designed by the WK Thomas' design studio - one of the few UK manufacturers with an in-house studio to hone product form and function.

**0208 391 2211 sales@wkthomas.com
wkthomas.com**

Tri-Star Packaging

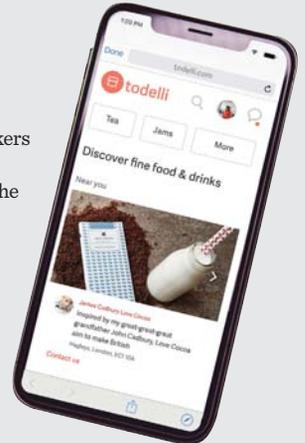
Tri-Star Packaging launches a brand new addition to its extensive, best-selling deli pot range and brings more innovation to the food-to-go sector. The KC Range of four round pots is made from premium high-clarity rPET that promotes optimum visibility on the shelf. The pots are perfect for pasta, salad, olives, fruit pieces, muesli and other wholefood options. A robust one-size-fits-all lid maximises convenience and enhances presentation. And made from rPET material (recycled plastic bottles), the range is a highly sustainable food-to-go option that meets the surging demand for eco-packaging from both consumers and foodservice operators. Kevin Curran, managing director says: "Our new KC Range is the newest, best example of responsible, environment-friendly food-to-go packaging to date."

0208 443 9100 enquiries@tri-star.co.uk tri-star.co.uk



Todelli.com

A new way for hotels and restaurants in Britain to showcase provenance and support local fine food makers is here. Todelli is a curated fine food marketplace for the hospitality sector in which chefs, restaurateurs, hotel managers or deli owners can find unique fine food products, meet their makers and buy directly from them. Available on the web at todelli.com, the Todelli platform only has verified, trustworthy artisan makers and facilitates not only the discovery of new products but also the direct instant communication with the maker in order to request samples or proceed to an order. Learn more by visiting todelli.com and sign up today to earn one of our founding members free account! **hello@todelli.com todelli.com**



LabelsPlus

Specialists supplier LabelsPlus spearheads 'green' labelling solutions for speciality food and artisan producers with new biodegradable labels which don't 'cost the earth'. The bespoke and off the shelf supplier is offering innovative alternatives to traditional wood-based labels via their new biodegradable material which can be used for a diverse range of labelling requirements, including direct food contact. Maxine Chuwen, managing director of LabelsPlus said, "Using their expertise and industry prominence, LabelsPlus has resolved the difficulties faced by some food and artisan producers being priced out of eco-labelling solutions through cost and minimum supply restrictions. LabelsPlus can now provide these 'next generation' labels in any quantities including smaller production runs."

**01663 736 250 maxine@labelsplus.co.uk
labelsplus.co.uk**



10 START-UPS TO WATCH

Tara Sundramoorthi, co-founder of Bread & Jam and founder of Hotcakes, highlights the new brands you need to know

Dreams are what start-ups are made of and they can hit you anywhere. Whether you're sat in a suit in an office, having a lie-in in student halls in Scotland, trying to persuade your wife to become the world's only "vegan salmon smoker" or meeting your boyfriend's Mum who is an incredible cook, it takes just a split second before you're hooked on a vision that just has to come true.

After launching Hotcakes, a distribution platform that helps retailers source hard to find, innovative products, I set out to find the most exciting brands of the moment. Quirky, tenacious and full of oomph, here are ten brands shaking up the shopping aisles with outstanding products that are flying off the shelves.



1 CUZENA

Shadia Al Hilli is the first to admit how ironic it is that she rebelled against her parent's desire to connect the family to her Arabic roots through their food and culture. Laughing now, she says, "Growing up I loved beans on toast and I used this to show them how equally important my British roots were to me". Yet in later years, friends were always asking her to make some of that delicious "Arabic stuff" and after wondering why they didn't just buy it, she realised that it was an untapped part of the dip market. Shadia's multi-cultural upbringing was the key to creating Cuzena – a British brand with a Middle Eastern identity.

Putting a modern twist on a 5,000-year-old recipe may seem daunting to many, but Shadia tackled it head on. "I'm planning to introduce lots of my favourite Middle Eastern dishes, but the first in the range had to be Madamous Fava Bean dips." As the spicy Moroccan cousin of



hummous, these dips are packed full of ancient Arabic flavours, while ticking the low fat, high protein, healthy wish list of the modern-day diet. In an effort to usurp hummous from its comfy go-to dip status, madamous hides a party trick which enables it to be served hot or cold depending on the dipping occasion.

Cuzena's future is as bright as its packaging – Shadia plans to be "the first recognised brand of Arabic products and a major

contributor in changing the way Britain currently buys dips." The classic fava bean recipe loaded with aromatic spices will suit most tastes, but for those people who love punchier flavours, fiery chilli and caramelised onion will really hit the spot. While flatbreads or slices of your favourite, freshly toasted bread are perfect to dip and scoop, you can heap it onto a jacket potato or mix into your scrambled egg for a simple meal in minutes.

2 MADE FOR DRINK

You know you're on to something good when Heston seems to think so. Dan Featherstone launched Made for Drink with a clear goal in mind: to create exceptional, never-seen-before snack products inspired by drinking cultures around the world. With Heston Blumenthal's pub in Bray as his first customer and Rick Stein, Fortnum & Mason and Tom Kerridge in tow, Dan's unique snacking range has gone from strength to strength, seeming to catch the eye of every celebrity chef he passes. It's hard to pick a favourite from his award-winning duo: chorizo thins made from Chorizo Picante using Duroc pork shoulder and belly, hot paprika de la Vera, salt and garlic, and duck fritons made from Creedy Carver free-range duck skin and natural sea salt.



Dan recalls how nervous he was about delivering his first order, stopping off at his neighbours' house for a thumbs up taste test before heading out to Heston's – a superstition that has continued with the subsequent launch of his products, as just two days later he received a repeat order because they had sold out.

Dan began writing down his ideas for the business in 2014 while working for PepsiCo and began working on the project in earnest in 2016, starting up production in a village hall in Waltham St Lawrence before he was joined by a business partner in 2017. Dan realises the importance of being part of a team and giving things a go, attributing the success of his brand to getting incredibly skilled people involved in sharing his vision and fulfilling it. Now a team of four with a 2,000sq ft purpose-built kitchen in Maidenhead, Made for Drink continues to innovate at speed with their latest additions: Mangalitzia Salami Chips and their first seasonal SKU – Patacones, Colombian beer snacks made from plantain.

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From a digital design background, founder Tudela is a firm advocate of applying the tech start-up approach to running a successful food business – by not doing any planning at all. “You should work on your product for a very short period of time and launch it quickly, get customer feedback, iterate, and make it better. That way you move fast and make real progress rather than locking yourself up doing research for months. The idea is that if you are not slightly embarrassed of the product you’re launching, you’ve already spent too much time working on it!”

Dona Rita’s hand-rolled, traditional Brazilian cheese puffs are certainly nothing to be embarrassed about, and Tudela’s experience in design shines through Dona Rita’s stand-out, clean packaging. Light and fluffy, crunchy on the outside and cloud-like on the inside, they are gluten-free, vegetarian and deliciously moreish. Each bag contains 15 balls that are baked from frozen. Made from cassava flour and fresh cheese, these authentic Pão de Queijo are a staple Brazilian snack or side that are baked instead of fried, and their travelling tropical Cheese Ball Bar is proving to be a hit for in-store tastings. Move over, garlic bread.

3 DONA RITA

What do you do when you find out your Brazilian boyfriend’s Mum has spent 15 years mastering the art of hand-rolling cheesy puffs of perfection? Team up with her to launch a food business, of course. Dona Rita launched last year after Clara Tudela persuaded her boyfriend, Pedro, and his mother, Rita, to produce the most sought-after Brazilian snack in London. After sell-out success (in the form of 22,000 cheese balls) at market stalls, their newly-launched frozen bake-at-home packs for retail are storming through the capital.



4 J'MAKER

A grand debut at Selfridges in February this year, vibrant tropical packaging and an incredible knack for puns makes this Caribbean fusion brand hard to forget. After realising that there was a huge gap in the market for quality over-the-counter products with a Caribbean influence, aunt and niece team Melanie and Aunt Sonia decided to make their own. Winning Gold in The Food Talk Awards spurred the duo on and today J'Maker can be found in select independents and restaurants in London.

Authenticity plays an important role in product development at J'Maker, with months spent on perfecting recipes to give a “true taste of the Caribbean”. Hand-painted designs on their packaging ensured everything was in line with their motto “Life’s too short for ordinary food” and anecdotes about the islands on the inside sleeve help take their customers on an adventure, “fusing together Caribbean and European flavours in a way that everyone can enjoy”. Their range of pates include flavours like Jerk Chicken and SaltFish are as nutritious as they are tasty, and Melanie notes how important it is to keep the brand “different and cutting edge to meet the ever-changing demands of the public”. Soups soon followed the pates and J'Maker have launched a range of three – a warming Chicken & Vegetable, a creamy Three Bean and a spicy Pepper Pot.

5 LIL'POP

It all started in a student bedroom in Edinburgh. “This haggis eatin’, whisky sippin’, beer drinkin’ culture needs a wonder grain to change their lives” mused Sydney Chasin of Lil’ Pop, in her final year at university. Diagnosed with coeliac disease at seven and growing up in a US farming town of 150 people, Chasin felt determined to do something where she could “truly love a Monday morning”. After entering a student startup competition, Chasin went on to be selected from a pool of 400 would-be entrepreneurs to win funding and mentoring from Scottish Institute for Enterprise, and in 2018 her healthy snack food brand Lil’ Pop was born.

Lil’ Pop is the first product in Europe to be shaking up the snack aisle with popped sorghum: a gluten-free, 8,000 year old ancient grain snack with a low water footprint. Sorghum is drought-resilient and grows where other crops can’t, needing only sunshine and nature’s own sprinkler system – rainwater – to flourish. As global water-resources diminish, Chasin comments “it is important to innovate with ingredients that work with rather than against nature.” After smoking out her kitchen with the first test batch, Chasin spent months sourcing the ideal grain variety for the “perfect popping percentage” and creating a bulletproof supply chain before launching this year.

Chasin describes the snack as a “teeny-tiny, sustainably sourced alternative to popcorn that doesn’t get stuck in your teeth”. Way more than “tiny cuteness and health stats”, sorghum caters for the free-from aisle, is superbly crunchy and good for the planet, too. Her first variant – Pink Himalayan Salt – will soon be joined by a range of flavours which will be launched later this year.



6 CANTINA EATS

“There’s so much more to Latin American food than a fajita kit.” Meet Cantina Eats – an Argentinian-inspired brand from London that has spent six years perfecting their chimichurri: a herby, zesty sauce and marinade with a kick that brings food to life. The brainchild of Koosha and Miles, chimichurri is traditionally eaten with beef in Argentina, where the meaning of barbecue takes on a whole new level. After meeting in South America in 2010, Koosha and Miles decided to recreate the sauce that brought them together as friends and, in true British style, began throwing it on all manner of dishes from fish and salads to pizza and sandwiches. Standing ovations across the board from “friends, family and friends of friends” inspired them to take the plunge into the industry and Cantina Eats chimichurri sauce

was born.

With plenty of passion and no experience of commercial food manufacturing, Koosha and Miles put their heads together to create a food brand that set them apart. Koosha remembers the moment when they realised that a product is so much more than taste – “having received the seal of approval on the taste, hours of interrogation ensued about water activity and PH levels. Lab coats on, litmus paper out and suddenly we felt like real food manufacturers!” Bottled in a classic craft beer bottle, the brand’s bright colours are reminiscent of the founders’ time travelling through South America and their name – Cantina Eats – is inspired by local slang. Zingy, herbaceous and garlicky, their chimichurri is designed to lift existing flavours instead of drowning them out and, according to the founders, is a way of making even the simplest of meals feel like an occasion.



7 NUTKIN

Naturopath Kate Bronte-Stewart began her journey as a food entrepreneur by running a vegan café in Peckham Rye, where she experimented with fermentation methods and developing her range of artisan nut-based vegan cheeses. Inspired by her work as a naturopath and patients who couldn’t tolerate cheese, Kate wanted to find an alternative that was both delicious and aligned with the principles of naturopathic nutrition, without using synthetic ingredients.

After discovering the number of people moving towards a plant-based diet, Kate was convinced that sacrificing flavour or nutritional value just wasn’t an option. “Very few people will choose a healthy product if it doesn’t taste good, so that’s the magic formula for me,” she says.

On the cusp of launching the Nutkin range of cultured macadamia and cashew nut cheese for retail – both spreadable and air dried – Kate tells us what it was like finding the courage to take the plunge. “When I first started this business a lot of people thought I was crazy: my dad actually sent me an email urging me to be careful, saying something like ‘I really don’t think anyone will want to eat ‘cheese’ made from nuts’. We shall see about that...” Kate’s range has already caught the eye of local pizzarias and her air-dried Parmesan alternative, Almondsan, made from organic activated almonds, is proving to be a hit on pasta. With flavours like activated charcoal, rose harissa and reishi mushroom, Nutkin is a fast-moving vegan cheese brand that’s definitely one to watch.

8 HUNTER & GATHER

A mix of one coeliac girl, one experimenter boy, hard-earned savings and a passion for products made with real food ingredients saw Amy Moring and Jeff Webster bring the Hunter & Gather brand to life. Being diagnosed as coeliac at the tender age of 18 months old meant that once Amy and Jeff became a couple, they always cooked from scratch. With a wry smile, Jeff said, "I'd jokingly blame Amy that we could never just pick up something easy to eat like I used to, but the joke was on me as the more I ate this kind of food, the more I saw improvements in my health and well-being." This sparked his creative side and he wanted them to produce products that made people feel as good as he did. Or as he puts it, "I wanted to help them drop the hangry feeling I used to carry around when I was eating lots of ready-made foods."

They launched in September 2017 with a bang by winning the Innovative 'Better for You' Product of the Year award at Food Matters Live with their classic avocado oil mayonnaise, pitched to Holland & Barrett at the Enterprise Nation Wellness Exchange and are finalists in The Food Talk Awards in the Clean Eating category. Amy and Jeff's ambitions are high and they are the first to say that they're "on a mission to expand the Hunter & Gather range as soon as possible." Eight months in and with two new flavours just added to the range – Chilli & Lime and Garlic avocado oil mayonnaise – these creamy jars of goodness are guaranteed to tickle the tastebuds of our avocado-obsessed generation.

Tapping into the 'dieting out/healthy living in' culture, they bring to market the UK and Europe's first 100% avocado oil mayonnaise and the finest cold-pressed extra virgin avocado oil. Early adopters like the paleo and keto crowd are loving it, but their eye is on the prize of sharing it with anyone who loves to drizzle or dip as they eat.



9 BOTTLEBRUSH FERMENTS

Founded by two Australians on a mission to improve people's gut health, Bottlebrush Ferments produce a range of super nutritious fermented foods packed with beneficial bacteria. More than a year of product development, experimentation and planning went into the launch of the brand that certainly doesn't have anything to do with brushes or bottles – a common misconception heard from early customers at their Brixton Farmers' Market stall. Launched by personal trainer Ben Payne and chef Hesh Daud, the name actually pays homage to the founders' Aussie heritage and is a bright, flowering plant native to Australia, where it grew wildly in the front gardens of their childhood homes even though they were at opposite ends of the country, more than 4,000 miles apart.

After finding success at London markets, Bottlebrush Ferments launched their retail range of three fermented veggies – The Yellow One, bright and zingy with a white cabbage base, ginger and pineapple, The Purple One made with red cabbage, beetroot and caraway and The Red One – their own take on kimchi made with Chinese cabbage and mooli. Naturally vibrant and full of flavour, Bottlebrush Ferments' vision is "to bring humble and misunderstood fermented foods to the masses. It's not just something your hippy vegan uncle can eat, it is really good for you and bloody tasty." They describe their range as possibly one of the "healthiest foods on the planet".

Founders Ben and Hesh initially stalled at the pre-launch phase, keen to make sure everything was perfect, from the flavour to the branding and packaging. Ben says "to get started and have people a) taste it, b) like it and c) buy it was a massive relief and a great sense of achievement. At the end of the day, we had to have a celebratory drink!" and describes starting a food business as a "welcome and stimulating change" from his career as a personal trainer.



10 THE PISHED FISH

As a keen amateur cook, James started his entrepreneurial journey with a dream of opening a café, but after unexpectedly mastering the art of smoking salmon at home and giving kilos of smoked salmon away to some very lucky family and friends, he decided that there might be another way to do something he was passionate about. He says "A wise man once told me to try and do something with your true passions in life, hence smoked salmon and booze"! The Pished Fish cure fillets of salmon with premium alcohol and botanicals, smoking them in small batches over wood and describe their products as "a mischievous, charming dinner guest who livens up any social occasion".

"Daydreaming for many years, trialling ideas for many months, brainstorming logos and images for many days and planning the market stall set-up for several minutes" was all James needed for sell out success at Peckham Farmers' Market, where he realised that he may have created a business that was going places. After leaving – as he describes it – his "grown-up's job", James found his smoking peers to be "all quite serious and everyone claimed to make the finest smoked salmon." He says "I decided to make ours a little more playful, having fun with flavours and taking ourselves a little less seriously."

With flavours like Dark & Stormy (rum, ginger, lime zest and agave nectar), Erik the Red (aquavit, juniper, star anise and beetroot) and the amusingly named Designated Driver – boozeless, just cherry and smoke, James endeavours to "get on the shelves of the prettiest of stores" and has already caught the eye of Selfridges, Whitstable Oyster Company and Burfords as well as many more independents in London. When asked what the future holds for James and The Pished Fish, he wryly replies "to carry on smoking salmon, come up with new ideas for flavours and have a full feature length animated film made of The Pished Fish on his boozy adventures."

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SQUIRREL SISTERS

DAMIAN LEE



THE SNACK PACK

Snacking is no longer a guilty secret, it's a marker of success. Speciality Food investigates the trend, and discovers how food retail can maximise this on-the-go opportunity

When Damian Lee was diagnosed with cancer and given just weeks to live, he did what many people do when given such a dark prognosis: he fought back. That fight took the form of switching to a diet of raw food, with no 'nasties' and embracing his chemo with a determined mind and spirit.

But, even with an extreme preoccupation with his health, he still craved snacks – namely, instant noodles. And, once receiving the all clear from the doctors, he launched a healthy noodle company (Mr Lee's) that's now stocked on train lines, airlines and even via vending machines.

A pretty extreme example, but even when people are undeniably becoming more and more invested in their health, snacking is one area of eating they're not only not willing to give up, it's one form of food that's seemingly bucking the trend for moderation-minded millennials, and growing in importance.

Cathy Mosely (one half of activated nut snack brand Boundless' team) agrees that the growth around snacking sales doesn't seem to be going anywhere soon. "Food trends are always evolving," she says. "But we know from the great research by Dr Morgaine Gaye (food futurologist at Living Source Ltd) that people tend to have five to seven grazing meals a day, and that meal times are elastic for many people. This

brand Squirrel Sisters. "And consumers are more aware of the importance of good food, so if eating right can be made a little bit easier via nutritious food that's convenient and accessible, then consumers respond to that. We felt so strongly about this, we decided to write a recipe book dedicated to on-the-go food."

Being too busy to sit down and enjoy a meal isn't just a side effect of our 24/7 lifestyles; for

“Snacking is bucking the trend for moderation-minded Millennials”

provides great opportunity for a company such as Boundless and other snack producers."

Status symbols

But why the rise of on-the-go food, versus the more formal three sit-down meals? "Time is precious," says Gracie Tyrrell, head of brand, NPD and co-founder of healthy snack bar

many it's a marker of success. The 'snackification' of how we eat demonstrates this, so says director of new products at Triangle Nutrition Limited, Robert Rona. Rona, the man behind new on-the-go launches Nutripot, Numai and Light Bites says this 'snackification' of meals is the next evolution for the snacking industry.

packaging is at the forefront of their decision making. "We know from experience that by making fruit and veg fun, children are more likely to eat them," he explains. "Our eye-catching packaging is very important. Kids really engage with our cheeky fruit and veg characters so they quickly become part of the child's play time. After all, good nutrition shouldn't be boring, it should be fun!"

Maximising sales

With an appetite for healthy high-end snacks crossing the gamut of age ranges, and with snacking becoming a symbol of a desirably busy lifestyle, it's clear there's a market for food retailers to exploit. But how can independents tap into this burgeoning market?

PREMIUM EXPERIENCES TAKE PRIORITY

At the Food & Drink Innovation Network's recent Food to Go: Exciting Innovations and Well Packaged Inspiration conference, head of Out of Home at Kantar Worldpanel Simon Quirk said that consumers are becoming increasingly selective about their snack choices and are "cutting out lower-priced items". He noted that shoppers are ready to spend more to make the most of consumption occasions, and while practicality remained paramount when it comes to on-the-go, consumers are more willing to spend a little more money to receive a premium experience. Surprisingly, Simon also mentioned the craving for high quality is of more importance than factors such as 'thirst-quenching', 'a portion of fruit/veg' or 'health benefits' are of less importance, when it comes to this area of food.

"Although the idea of eating little and often isn't new," he explains, "its popularity is becoming more dominant, again due to busy lifestyles in popular culture."

Technology plays its part too, agrees co-founder of Boundless nuts, Katie Wake. "People are far more informed about the nutritional content of the food they eat and the value it brings them in taste and health benefits," she says. "There are so many apps you can use to capture your daily nutritional intake that it's not difficult to stay on top of your goals if you choose to. Coupled with the fact that technology allows us to be 'on' 24/7, it creates a need for healthy food on-the-go."

Child's play

Busy lifestyles and health-conscious aims considered, it's little wonder that the market for on-the-go foods (especially the healthier end of this sector) does very well with the parents-of-young-children market. From The Fruit Factory's Healthy Fruit Strings to squeeze fruit puree pouches from Googly Fruit, more and more snack producers are finding success in discovering new (and often mess-free) ways of delivering fruit to children in brightly coloured packaging.

Patrick Limpus, managing director of Googly Fruit, says the reason parents are interested in healthy snacks is so they can create positive life-long habits for their children, while for children, engaging



“Being too busy to sit down and enjoy a meal isn't just a side-effect of our 24/7 lifestyles; for many, it's a marker of success”



Corin Birchall, managing director of specialist retail consultancy

Kerching Retail, believes so-called 'meal deals' needn't be the preserve of supermarkets; they could be a great option for the high end offerings available from independent retailers. "Meal deals help customers to budget a meal and have rocketed in popularity," Corin says. "They're also a great way to grow your average spend. Make it easy for your customers to make their purchase - keep meal deals simple by either putting all the products together or clearly labelling which are in the deal. If you see customers walking around from chiller to shelf and back with food

in their hands, your deal is too complicated."

There are also some clever tactics you can employ to steer your customer to a different, larger on-the-go purchases. "Having a premium food offer, with a higher price, can create the impression of other items in the range appearing better value for money," he explains. "Or you could make recommendations for what snacks might go well with which salads or sandwiches. Depending on the style of communication in-store, these could be handwritten recommendations. You can also highlight a 'product of the day' or 'week'. You can offer a financial incentive to try it. This can break habits and encourage shoppers to buy additional or more profitable lines from an on-the-go range."

WHAT'S SELLING NOW

Amelia Richards, marketing coordinator for Planet Organic, says plant-based and fermented are two pervading trends that are infiltrating the snack scene. "Vegan sourdough cookies are selling very well, as are dairy-free desserts, Kombucha (fermented tea) and protein snacks (balls and bars)," she explains. "We also have a couple of lines of vegan jerky that are selling incredibly well; they're designed to replace their meaty counterparts, like biltong."

4 TRENDS TO WATCH IN SNACKING



1 BEYOND THE POTATO CRISP

Coconut chips and popcorn have dominated the snack scene for the past few years and chickpea snack Hippeas are proving this trend has staying power. If it's a crisp-like snack not made from potatoes, you can expect consumers to gobble it up.



2 HIGH IN PROTEIN

As protein helps to fuel people for longer between meals and helps muscles to repair, it's little wonder that high-in-protein snacks are playing very well with the burgeoning fitness market. Roasted pea snack Brave proudly boasts its protein credentials on its packaging.



3 BARS AND BALLS

The grab-and-go nature of bars and ball snack formats play very well with the time-poor market. Place products like Deliciously Ella's new peanut butter Energy Balls near the till for an impulse purchase that are sure increase your day's takings.



4 HEALTHY SNACKS FOR KIDS

As more people treat trips to delis and farm shops as a day out, make sure you can cater for the entire family's on-the-go needs with some healthy children's snacks, such as Naturejelly.

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HIT REFRESH

From innovative formats to urban wineries, Britain's start-ups are quenching the consumer thirst for new tastes, stories and ideas

The drinks industry is changing. Thanks to evolving consumer taste plus factors like the Sugar Tax and the buying public's increased need for convenience, it's no longer enough to stock a few bottles of something alcoholic and something not then rest on your laurels. Today's discerning consumer ticked before they buy: health benefits are becoming more of a necessity than a bonus, the ingredients list should be short and pronounceable, and, at the base of it all, the price has to be right without compromising on quality.

Health is at the forefront of a lot of consumer – and producer – minds at the moment, and it's easy to see why. Alex Wright, co-founder of Dash Water (sparkling British spring water infused with 'wonky' fruit and vegetables and containing no sugar, calories or sweeteners), explains what led him to produce a totally sugar-free beverage: "With one out of every four adults in the UK being overweight, and 20% of their daily sugar intake arriving from soft drinks, we wanted to create a transparent beverage which didn't contain any of the bad stuff," he says. "There is no concrete evidence showing sweeteners are harmful. However, we believe it's about ensuring people eradicate sweet

products from their diet – if you're drinking sweet(ened) beverages you're more likely to eat more sugary products through habit."

Convenience is king, too, as Edwin Caws, sales director at Batch Organic attests. "We are drinking more smoothies than ever before but consumers are increasingly turning their back on high sugar, heat pasteurised products, wrapped in plastic, in search of healthy cold-pressed and raw alternatives," he says. As a result, the brand "Set out to create a product that would unlock the UK's underused blenders and satisfy the growing appetite for healthy convenient food. We launched Batch Organics, delivering superfood smoothie kits directly to our customers doors. Our unique cup design allows our customers to blend their own smoothies, with no waste, no preparation, in under 30 seconds, with the option to consume on the go."

This combination of health and convenience has certainly fuelled the brand's growth: "we now deliver 30,000 smoothies every month," says Edwin. "After hitting this milestone and receiving requests from some customers who wanted to buy our products with their weekly supermarket shop we launched our 'take home' range in April, and are currently working with cafés and food service providers to eliminate food waste with our

'blend on-site' range which we launched in May."

"The importance of new producers entering the market with a truly innovative concept



MEET THE: URBAN WINERY

Speciality Food catches up with Warwick Smith, co-founder of Renegade

London Wine

TELL ME WHAT YOU DO – HOW DOES RENEGADE DIFFER FROM TRADITIONAL WINERIES?

Renegade is an Urban Winery. Essentially a winery situated in a city environment. In our case Bethnal Green, East London, next to the tube, one stop from Liverpool Street and under a railway line. We do everything a traditional winery situated adjacent to the vineyard would

do, except we don't grow the grapes ourselves. Instead we work very closely with family owned vineyards around the UK and Europe; we decide when to harvest, always by hand, then race the grapes back to London in refrigerated lorries for processing. An obvious question is, why bother? In a nutshell, by being away from the wine growing region and being in a multi-cultural opened minded

is their power to disrupt and drive market change," say Lukas Passia and Vincent Efferoth, founders of Noveltea – a bottled blend of tea and gin (they also have a rum variant). They believe that the brands demonstrating true innovation are responsible for broadening the market offering and giving consumers more option than ever before. "Millennials are the most receptive to innovation; they are known to value and respond to disruption more so than any other generation before, which can be seen as a real driver of change in a market," they continue.

Andrew Walker, founder of Tearex, lists the market-changing brands to know:

"The current drinks market is full of a whole host of new brand launches with innovation as a key selling point. However, when you look a little closer, beyond the label, genuine innovation is few and far between. The brands that really stand apart combine both new product thinking and great brand delivery – here are a couple of examples:



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city like London we can innovate and create new wine styles, away from French appellation or Italian DOCG rules. An example would be that we have been experimenting with multi-country blends, using French grapes with yeast strains used in New Zealand, as well as trialling ageing wines in chestnut and cherry as well as traditional French oak. We adopt a minimum intervention approach to winemaking and try not to use unnecessary filtration or fining processes. All of our wines are vegan and vegetarian. We make differentiated wines that are very different from the wines that would traditionally be made in the region the grapes came from. We have just released a new English

“TAPPED birch water harvests nutrient rich water by literally tapping trees for 15 minutes per bottle. This is a new process in the market, but what makes this the complete product, is their unique round drinks bottle to emulate a birch trunk. Simple and obvious, yet highly effective.

“Another category owning brand just by virtue of their clever name, is PHIZZ with their effervescent rehydration tablets. Previously you have had to hold your nose while you drank these dissolved tablets, but no more. PHIZZ tastes good, but also look tasteful. They

Bacchus wine using grapes grown in Herefordshire and naturally fermented in Qvevri (a big concrete egg made in Georgia) as well as a rosé made from English, Italian and Spanish grapes. The sum of the parts are often greater than the individual components.

ARE THERE URBAN WINERIES AROUND THE WORLD?

The USA has been at the forefront of the movement but there are urban wineries in Paris, Gothenburg, Cape Town, Sydney and some other major global cities. With so many high quality vineyards around the UK and loads near to us on the continent, it makes sense to bring this concept to London.

are a lifestyle product, not just a lifesaver. This innovative positioning opens up whole new market for consumers looking for healthy hydration on the go.

“There are a lot of options to get your coffee fix out there in a cold format. Jimmy’s Ice Coffee really kicked this off bringing a great tasting beverage to the masses. Since then the market has been flooded by products which have a factional difference, but the new coffee sodas from guys at Sandows really stand out. Fizzy, cold, spiced (or citrus) coffee in a can? Wacky yes, but a totally original taste wrapped in an

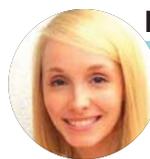
IS THE BRITISH DRINKS MARKET MOVING TOWARDS YOUR KIND OF BUSINESS MODEL?

By nature of the small scale and inefficiencies of the model, it means the end product is not cheap. Good value, yes, but cheap, no. The government could make life easier for small wineries like ours from a tax perspective. Small cider and beer producers get alcohol duty waived if they are small (up to 7,500 litres). In wine, we need to pay 2.86 per litre alcohol tax (not to mention additional 20% VAT) even if we only produce 5,000 bottles. It’s a real killer and means the end product gets to the consumer at a higher price.

stubby beer tin – surprisingly refreshing all round.

“In the fruit tea market consumers have accepted that a fruity cuppa smells great but tastes of dishwater, because when you dehydrate ingredients you lose flavour... think of powdered egg or milk. The solution is simple – go fresh. To go against the beige bag status quo we have invented a new format and delivery method to bring this to market. But, as with the brands above, it is only when you combine innovation with a brand which intrigues and engages consumers will it be a real category game changer.”

LIFE AS A START-UP



Katherine Jenner, founder of Burning Barn Rum

WHAT ISSUES DID YOU FACE IN TERMS OF GETTING INTO THE DRINKS INDUSTRY AS A START-UP?

I would say the main issue is the red tape that exists with regards to spirits production. HMRC have come a long way towards making it easier for smaller brands, however there is still a lengthy process involved in getting the approvals and licences you need to begin producing and trading. The drinks industry is also largely dominated by big, multinational brands who have enormous budgets to spend, which can be extremely daunting as a small brand. I try to see this as a big and exciting challenge instead, why not give it a go and see how far we can get?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT TAKES TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF A NEW DRINKS BUSINESS?

Innovation is key in the current market. Alongside hard work and determination, of course! But tastes, trends and consumer appetites are constantly changing and evolving so, as a brand, you have to do the same. We’re still early on in our journey, but although we started with innovative products, we are acutely aware that we need to continue innovating and developing to stay current.

IS THERE A GAP IN THE MARKET FOR RUM RIGHT NOW, AND HOW DOES THIS HELP YOU AS A START-UP?

Absolutely, there is a gap in the market for more premium rums and there is the opportunity for the sector to diversify in a similar way as gin has over the past five years. In fact, rum has almost the same market share in the UK as gin. Yet consumers have far fewer brands to choose from. We’ve been massively inspired by the craft beer industry’s use of innovative techniques and authentic flavours, providing a progression from mass produced products. We feel there is the same opportunity in rum, where there is a large population of people who grew up drinking spiced or flavoured rums and are now looking for something more challenging and authentic.

ALUNA COCONUT

Looking to offer an on-trend, delicious alternative to gin this summer? Aluna Coconut – winner of ‘Best Flavoured Rum’ at this year’s World Rum Awards – is a sublime blend of premium rums from Guatemala and the Caribbean with all-natural toasted coconut flavours, containing a fraction of the sugar found in competitor brands. Delicious sipped neat over ice or with ginger ale, in a mojito, a raspberry fizz or as a skinny colada served with pineapple juice and coconut water, Aluna Coconut is a versatile and grown up choice. It is perfect for retailers looking to tap into the surge in consumer demand for coconut, lower sugar, rum, and more mindful drinking. The gorgeous bottle design also makes Aluna Coconut an extremely popular gift in all seasons. Available through Diverse Fine Foods or larger orders through Mangrove UK. alunacoconut.com



CHASTITY GIN

All the taste sensation of a small batch gin but with none of the alcohol. It’s a revelation, it’s the first step in a brave new world, but it’s best served with tonic and a slice. Produced in part by the same methods used to make high end small batch gin, the world’s first No-Sin Gin is a process of distillation, maceration, fermentation, steam extraction and inventive alchemy. Final taste notes are added by steeping Chastity in carefully selected botanicals to achieve the perfect nose and mouth feel. nosgingin.co.uk



STRAIGHT UP REFRESHING

NO ADDED SUGAR
They're below the sugar tax threshold

CAL
LOW CALORIE
All flavours are under 20cals per 100ml

TASTE DIRECT
★ NEW PRODUCER ★

NIX AND KIX

PEACH VANILLA
A LITTLE CAYENNE FOR A HAPPY PICK ME UP!

MANGO GINGER
A LITTLE CAYENNE FOR A HAPPY PICK ME UP!

CUCUMBER MINT
A LITTLE CAYENNE FOR A HAPPY PICK ME UP!

BLOOD ORANGE TURMERIC
A LITTLE CAYENNE FOR A HAPPY PICK ME UP!

NIX AND KIX

LIGHTLY SPARKLING SODAS WITH A HINT OF CAYENNE FOR A NATURAL PICK-ME-UP

Vegan



SIX TRENDS DRIVING THE HEALTH FOOD MARKET

The food and drink startup scene is positively buzzing with plant-based, gluten-free and nutrition-boosting products. We take a look at a sector in rude health

1 PEOPLE WANT PLANT-BASED

While veganism's influence can be felt in almost all food and drink categories, it's mostly synonymous with the health sector. Of course, the prime reason for many adopting a meat-free diet is for ethical reasons, but nutritional and health factors come in to play as well. The rise of veganism has been so enduring that retailers across the

nation have rolled out vegan ranges and extended shelf space accordingly, with Planet Organic going as far as to open an online vegan-only shop.

Peter Marsh, CEO at Planet Organic said, "For over 20 years we have continually expanded our free-from ranges and if we haven't been able to find the perfect product or range then we've created it ourselves. We now have over 3,700 vegan products for our

customers to choose from and the next logical step was to make it even easier for people to shop our entire vegan range, and our new vegan shop can serve as a simple 'one-stop shop' for vegans."

2 VIVA VINEGAR

Vinegars are currently enjoying a renaissance – with Andy Harris, ex-Jamie magazine editor and owner of The Vinegar Shed, telling

us that "there's currently a vinegar revolution taking place" – and while premium balsamic and fruit vinegars are coveted, apple cider vinegar appears to be all the rage.

So much so that Waitrose has seen sales of their apple cider vinegar products rise by over 60% in the last year, with Aspal Apple Cyder Vinegar and Willy's Apple Cider Vinegar leading the charge. The upmarket supermarket pinpoints the increased interest in the rise of fermented foods and A-list celebrities like Katy Perry and Victoria Beckham publicly expounding its health benefits as key drivers behind the trend. "In the last 18 months Waitrose shoppers have embraced the popularity of apple cider vinegar with our sales reflecting this," says Oliver Chadwyck-Healey, buyer at Waitrose. "Once the preserve of dressings and sauces, we know that some like to take a tablespoon, sip it diluted with water or mix it with hot water and a teaspoon of honey."

3 INTERNATIONAL INGREDIENTS

Demand for the jujube fruit, aka the Red Date, looks set to be on the rise. Hailing from the Far East, it's been consumed for its health and wellbeing benefits for thousands of years, and contains 18 of the 24 amino acids – its ability to help tissue recover makes it popular for a post-workout snack. The little caramel-flavour fruits are also extremely high in vitamin C and are referred to as an 'adaptogen', which is said to help the body cope with stress.



London-based healthy food start-up Abakus Foods' founder Helen Wang has sang the praises

of the jujube fruit for years, going as far as to make a range of snacks using it. "I formed the company in 2016, as I was working long hours in finance and was pretty stressed, so my mum started sending me parcels containing jujube from China," she says. "It's not easy to find something that tastes good and is good for you, too. I thought they're pretty remarkable and should be made available over here. It's not all about the health benefits, either. The jujube tree is very water-efficient and can survive periods of drought. Because of this, they're planted in arid areas to help fight against desertification. It's very sustainable and a real gift of nature!"

4 GOING NUTS FOR BUTTER

Peanut butter is undergoing a massive boost in popularity as gourmet versions targeted at healthy eaters and fitness fans are propelling sales in the category. Pip & Nut, which was founded four years ago by Pippa Murray, is spearheading the movement, with the company selling a range of nut butters that are free from additives and palm oil. What started from a government startup loan of £10,000 to rent a commercial kitchen in north London has since grown exponentially. In fact, Pip & Nut's retail sales topped £9m last year, with the brand targeting £25m by 2020. According to Kantar Worldpanel, the spread market is worth around £512m a year, with peanut butter predicted to supersede jams and honeys as the number one spread for UK consumers in the not-too-distant future.

5 PUMP UP THE PROTEIN

The 'high in protein' claim

*A Gift of Wellbeing...
Deliciously handcrafted with Love.*

Vegan
Gluten free
No added sugar



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seems to have usurped the 'gluten-free' logo in the fight for consumers' attentions with high protein snacks becoming sought-after among healthy consumers. What started with nut and seed-packed protein balls has evolved into vegan flapjacks and flavoured jerky and biltong. Such is the demand for protein, that even big brands have got in on the act. Associated British Foods-owned snack brand Ryvita has just pumped £1.9m into an advertising campaign for its new Ryvita Protein lines. The products primarily comprise of pea protein, with additional ingredients including red quinoa and sesame and linseed and nigella seeds.

6 GUT HEALTH

Health-minded consumers are increasingly opting to go with their gut, with studies published in the mainstream press claiming that a healthy digestive system is key to leading a fit and healthy lifestyle. Fermented foods like kimchi and sauerkraut are becoming staples of supermarket shelves and restaurant menus, but analysts are keen to point out that the drinks sector is where probiotic-fuelled products are really captivating shoppers.

"The European market is witnessing a rise of fermented

WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT IN HEALTH FOOD



● **Purple foods:** In a recent report published by Whole Foods Market, the retailer noted that richly coloured purple foods like purple cauliflower, asparagus, sweet potatoes, acai and black rice are all growing in popularity. "The power of purple goes beyond the vibrant colour and often indicates nutrient density and antioxidants," say their trend-spotters

● **Jackfruit:** This fruit hailing from Southeast Asia soaks up flavours and marinades well, and its fibrous texture has meat-free eaters coveting it as an alternative to pulled pork. Upton's Originals makes some fantastic gourmet flavoured jackfruit products, including Smoky Barbecue and Thai Curry varieties

● **Coconut oil:** The health blogger-spearheaded trend for using coconut oil in cooking and baking appears to have waned, with claims about its effect on blood cholesterol raising alarm bells



● **Spiralised veg:** Consumer appetite for courgetti and other spaghetti-shaped vegetables seems to have plateaued, with 'steaks' made from cauliflower and other dense vegetables gathering attention



beverage new product launches," said Julia Buech, food and drink analyst at Mintel. "Kombucha

is the current rising star among fermented soft drinks, although it has been consumed for thousands of years in Asia. Known locally as an 'immortal health elixir', the fermented, probiotic tea drink is becoming

increasingly popular in the West, where it is marketed as a healthy alternative to artificial soft drinks. Sparkling water kefir is now emerging in the market. Similar to its more well-known dairy kefir counterpart, the water version is fermented and teeming with beneficial probiotic bacteria. It is made by adding water kefir grains to liquids including water, coconut water or fruit infusions."



RIISE APPLE PII

An on-the-go breakfast drink containing the same amount of oats as a bowl of porridge, 10g of plant protein and no added sugar. riise-breakfast.com



BOKA CHOCO MALLOW CEREAL BAR

A low-in-sugar cereal bar clocking in at just 96 calories and comes with chocolate vegetarian-friendly marshmallow. bokafood.com



BUDDHA TEAS MATCHA NOW

Twist the bottle cap and ceremonial-grade fresh matcha is released into purified water. buddhateas.co.uk



BOUNDLESS ACTIVATED NUTS

Activated nuts that come in a variety of flavours – they're high in protein and fibre, vegan-friendly and gluten and soya-free. weareboundless.co.uk



BRAVE GARLIC & CHIVE ROASTED PEAS

Chive balances out the punchy garlic which flavours British-grown roasted peas. bravefoods.co.uk



JARR KOMBUCHA GINGER

Freshly-juiced ginger root is added to gut-health boosting fermented tea for a zesty and fiery taste. jarrkombucha.com



THE CURATORS SWEET SRIRACHA BEEF JERKY

A Thai barbecue sauce made using fresh chillies is added to prime cuts of grass-fed beef that are slowly marinated – a pack contains 11g of protein and 88 calories. thecuratorsjerky.com



LIGHT BITES SOYA AND CHICKPEA POPPED CHIPS

Popped chips that are gluten-free, packed with fibre and protein, vegetarian-friendly, artificial colours, preservatives, flavours and low in saturated fat. lightbites.com

A free sample to the first 50 responses

The Bone Broth

AN ESSENTIAL DAILY INGREDIENT



Q Gracie and Sophie Tyrrell, co-founder of Squirrel Sisters:



"Why do we have to add VAT to our 100% natural snack bars, but donuts have no VAT?"

A Julie Park, managing director of The VAT Consultancy:



This illogical outcome is due to the fact that VAT law has not kept up with innovation in snacking product development, where there is a move to develop offerings using natural ingredients. In simple terms, cakes such as donuts are seen as basic foodstuff which are zero rated. Sweet and savoury snacking products, however, fall into a more difficult area, and in some cases are subject to VAT and in other cases not. One of the factors determining the VAT rate is whether the product is seen as confectionery, and whether it is sweet to taste and has 'other sweetening matter' in it.

An old VAT court case decided that the sweetness from fruits and other natural ingredients would be caught by this definition, making the item VATable. HMRC are beginning to realise the existing guidance is not fit for purpose and have been issuing zero rated rulings to suppliers/manufacturers of some of the products where no additional artificial sweetness is added and the sweetness comes instead from the natural ingredients. They haven't changed their published guidance however, so this leaves businesses in a difficult position – it is risky to switch to not charging VAT without a written ruling from HMRC.

Can't get in touch with buyers? Problems with NPD? Fret not, we put your questions to the start-up experts

Q Adam Hodgkinson, co-founder of NutreeLife:



"How can a new brand with very little exposure get its products in front of relevant retail buyers?"

A Jason Gibb, founder of Bread & Jam festival and Food Hub:



There's no two ways about it, before you approach a buyer you should build a profile and prime the pumps. Whether this is proving consumer interest in your product at your local market or building up your

Instagram following, you've got to realise that one of the first things a buyer will do is Google your brand.

Then you need to find the name and address of the relevant buyer. This is no mean feat, but LinkedIn is our best friend here. Next, you should drop samples off at the back office – not the shop front – with a killer cover letter. And make sure you have enough samples for the buyer to share around the office (they'll rarely make a decision on their own). Follow this up with regular

emails. Don't spam them daily, but update them every 10 days with your news, information about the product or relevant news articles.

The other time-proven way to get in front of buyers is at the numerous trade shows – many do cheap 'new producer' stands that you should take advantage of. And think about attending Bread & Jam! We have a Pitching Zone with all of the major and speciality retailers – this has been the first successful step for many a new brand.

“ Before you approach a buyer you should build a profile and prime the pumps ”

Q Jacob and Sam James, founders of Tigg's:



"What makes a brand stand out from the competition?"

A Claire Brumby, founder of The Food Guide:



This is a great question, and one most food business founders I imagine would ask and like to master. The

powerful ways in my opinion to make a brand stand out from the competition is: have a purpose and/or a strong founder's story.

When a brand has a purpose or a mission over and above a product USP or solving a consumer problem is when they have a deeper underpin which the consumer can buy in to or relate to. This in turn takes the consumer on the journey with the brand, creating a sense of almost belonging to the product and brand themselves with the feeling that they are helping to

be part of the solution. They become ambassadors for the brands, and when a brand can achieve converting consumers to ambassadors, that's when they've cracked it.

That purpose and mission could be using food which would otherwise have gone to waste, as in the case of the brand Snact, or it could be the founder's story of creating a food brand from a personal challenging place, such as the brand Deliciously Ella. Both draw the consumer into the brand, mission, story and cause.

“ When a brand can achieve converting consumers to ambassadors, that's when they've cracked it ”

Q Anna Boletta and Natasha Dowse, founders of Minioti:



"How can small brands compete against the bigger players who are pumping lots of money into their marketing?"

A Vhari Russell, founder of The Food Marketing Expert:



Competing against the big brands is always hard but it gives you the opportunity to be more creative, reactive and fun! Big brands do have bigger budgets, but you are creating a brand from the heart and it gives you a wonderful opportunity to get creative with bespoke activity to your brand. You could run a competition to create a new flavour of ice cream or find out where the best place to enjoy ice cream is – this would also give you great content from your fans to share.

You can also build strong and lasting relationships with your consumers and customers across all your social media platforms. It's vital to share and engage with them and ensure your consumers know who stocks your products and support those stockists with regular shout-outs. Consistency is key to growing and building your brand. Keep your newsletter consistent and send it each month – one to consumers and one to customers to share ideas and support them with serving suggestions and offers. Social media is a vital element of brand-building – ensure you are posting a minimum of three tweets per day and ideally one Instagram post per day to stay front and fore in your customer's mind.

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When food became a key fixture on our TV sets around a decade or so ago – thus pushing the popular property programmes of the time to the periphery – it was widely proclaimed that that celebrity chefs were the new rock stars. While this analogy would mean that the likes of Jamie Oliver and James Martin are on a similar pedestal to Mick Jagger and Axel Rose, it got me thinking: what is the public perception of food and drink start-ups?

Well, if I had to draw another musical comparison, I'd say burgeoning business owners are the equivalent to food's punk rockers. Their trailblazing, defiant and do-it-yourself sensibilities

are certainly akin to that musical movement. While the celebrity chefs have the formidable, influential platforms of network TV channels and recipe book deals, food and drink producers are usually involved in the less glamorous side of running a business: sourcing equipment, bookkeeping and standing in the blistering cold and rain during winter food markets.

But with the consistent graft involved with the running of a food and drink start-up, also comes unbelievable

highs, such as connecting with fans through one-on-one experiences with customers, shops stocking the range or a product featuring in the press. Just like with music circles there's a real sense of community amongst peers and

consumers alike. That buzz and feeling of unity play a powerful role in running a start-up company, or so I'm told by the smorgasbord of food and drink founders I speak with for each issue of the magazine.

This inclusive and vibrant community-focused ethos has meant that the stigma of asking for professional help with running a business seems to have faded, too – we spoke

to Lizzy from The Sweet Beet on p.11 about just this. By highlighting the pivotal challenges, movements and successes surrounding running a start-up business in this issue – and with our New Producer Awards – we hope to throw our weight behind an industry which is positively bursting with enthusiasm and energy, and we couldn't have selected a better bunch to collaborate with and share their stories.

What start-up food and drink company has bowled you over lately? Let me know by emailing james.fell@aceville.co.uk

“With the consistent graft involved with the running of a food and drink startup also comes unbelievable highs”

5 MINUTES WITH... JOHN McMANUS

Marketing manager of KIND Snacks

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

It's likely I'd be a fireman

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

I worked in a Chinese takeaway for three months while at school. Still one of the hardest jobs I've ever had but my boss taught me about taking pride in your work

WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

Food and drink stories! I love hearing about brands building up from nothing and becoming household names

WHAT'S THE WORST JOB YOU'VE DONE?

My paper round was the worst – not only did I hate it, but it was a free community paper that nobody even read!

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF YOUR JOB?

Being part of a hungry team means everything

AND YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE?

I can't say I'm a huge fan of finance reporting and Excel spreadsheets

TEA OF COFFEE?

Coffee

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

We talk a lot about the way sugar is presented and reported on within food and drink – this



should be more regulated. We believe that brands and retailers have a responsibility to be honest to their consumers through clearer labelling

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR LAST SUPPER?

A fresh seafood platter will do me just fine!

WHAT'S YOUR MOTTO?

I'm acutely aware of how lucky we are to do what we love, so: "life is good"

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

I don't know exactly what I ate but I definitely consumed some suspect things in the Sahara Desert in January

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?

I'm a huge podcast fan, so that takes up my reading time, but one I'd recommend is How Google Works, which outlines building an amazing company culture

SWEET OR SAVOURY?

Savoury – give me crisps with dip and I'm content

DIARY DATES

June

5th – 6th FOOD & GIFT SHOW

Cranmore Park
foodandgiftshow.co.uk

14th – 17th BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW

NEC, Birmingham
bbgoodfoodshow.com

17th – 19th BELLAVITA

Business Design Centre, London
bellavita.com

21st – 24th ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW

Edinburgh
royalhighlandshow.org

30th – 2nd SUMMER FANCY FOOD SHOW

New York
specialtyfood.com

July

6th COTSWOLD FAYRE CHARITY BALL

cotswold-fayre.co.uk

6th – 8th ALLERGY & FREE FROM SHOW

Olympia, London
allergyshow.co.uk

JUST TV SHOW

Olympia, London
justtvshow.co.uk

LOVE NATURAL LOVE YOU

Olympia, London
lnlo.co.uk

THE EAT SMART SHOW

Olympia, London
eatsmartshow.co.uk

10th – 12th GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOW

Harrogate
greatyorkshireshow.co.uk

17th – 19th SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD ASIA

Suntec, Singapore
speciality-asia.com

24th – 25th INTERNATIONAL CHEESE AWARDS

Nantwich
internationalcheeseawards.co.uk

27th – 29th THE GAME FAIR

Hatfield House, Hatfield
thegamefair.org

TWITTER POLL

How do you typically find out about exciting new producers?



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