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OPINION

RICHARD CLOTHIER, WYKE FARMS: **BOOSTING SUSTAINABILITY** P. 34



INTERVIEW

PERI EAGLETON, SEGGIANO: **DOING THINGS RIGHT** P. 20



STAFFING

KIRSTY BASHFORTH, QUAYFIVE: **CHANGING CULTURE** P. 56



In this issue

OPINION

4 John Shepherd,
MD of Partridges

6 Charles Campion,
food writer and critic

8 Sue Nelson,
The FoodTalk Show

34 Wilma Finlay,
The Ethical Dairy

34 Richard Clothier,
Wyke Farms

62 Mark Hartstone,
La Fosse

REGULARS

14 Food Matters:
The Future of the
Food Industry

20 The Interview:
Peri Eagleton, Seggiano

36 Cheese Uncut

39 Counter Point:
Staff Training

44 Trend Watch:
Speciality Vinegars

62 Last Words

23 Top Drawer 2019
Show Preview

24 Expand Your
Horizons

25 lunch! 2019 Show
Preview

26 And the Winner Is...

28 How to Win the
Honesty Arms Race

30 Bread & Jam 2019
Show Preview

32 The Rise of Anti-
seasonal Food & Drink

35 Meet the
Cheesemaker:
Truer Kaas

38 A Taste of
Switzerland

40 The World of Cheese

42 The Art of the
Christmas Cheeseboard

45 Festive
Accompaniments

48 Speciality & Fine Food
Fair 2019 Show Preview

54 8 Ways to Fix Your
Workplace Culture

56 Selling Festive
Tipples

60 The 5: Christmas
Cakes & Puddings

FEATURES

16 Spanish Spotlight:
Cheese

22 Brexit: Implications
for UK Employment Law



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EDITOR'S LETTER



Welcome to the September edition of *Speciality Food*. We've been extra busy this month, putting together a bumper issue of the magazine to accompany you during show season. Check out our official previews of Top Drawer on page 23, lunch! on page 25, Bread & Jam on page 30 and Speciality & Fine Food Fair on page 48.

Speaking of Bread & Jam, the clock is counting down to the final of the Future Food Awards, which is being held at the show. The team has been sifting through hundreds of entries to find the most innovative new brands, and we just know you're going to be as impressed as we are by them.

Also in this issue you'll find the viewpoint of Peri Eagleton, co-founder of Seggiano and community champion (p. 20), advice on staffing post-Brexit (p. 22) – deal or no-deal – a whole host of cheese know-how from page 34-43, and some seasonal stocking suggestions covering chutneys and pickles (p. 45), drinks (p. 56) and Christmas cakes and puddings (p. 60).

Holly

holly.shackleton@aceville.co.uk



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Organic foods have been around for a long time, but have certainly become headline news in the last few years. With sustainability and environmental concerns hitting the press recently, as well as a growing consumer awareness of where food and drink products come from and how they are produced, the topic of organic has become more of a talking point than ever. Choosing products with an organic label means selecting food and drink that is grown or produced with higher levels of animal welfare, lower levels of pesticides and no artificial fertilisers, instead concentrating on natural processes. According to figures from the Soil Association, if all UK farming was converted to organic, at least 1.3 million tonnes of carbon would be taken up by the soil each year – said to be the equivalent of taking nearly one million cars off the road.

Their recent *Organic Market Report* stated that the organic market is on target to be worth £2.5bn by 2020. Kiren Fernandes, Organic September campaign manager at Soil Association Certification, says that indie retailers are at the forefront: "Independent retailers continue to lead the way for organic sales, seeing sales increasing by 6.2%, buoyed by healthy and hyper-local shopping habits and wider organic ranges from wholesalers. More and more shoppers are looking for sustainable, environmentally-friendly options,

"We're in a climate emergency"

With consumers becoming more concerned with sustainability and environmental issues surrounding food production, the spotlight has now been turned onto organic

and organic offers this. We're in a climate emergency, but by making small changes like switching to organic, people are able to make a huge positive difference. As more people see the benefits of organic, it is only going to increase demand."

Consumers are increasingly taking into account ethics and environmental issues when it comes to food and drink choices. All over the world, people are cutting back on meat and dairy products, and the numbers of vegans, vegetarians and flexitarians is continually rising. According to Mintel, (November 2018) environmental benefits is one positive of not eating meat for 25% of Brits. With this increasing awareness of the impact that the products we purchase have on the environment

comes an opportunity for brands, producers, manufacturers and retailers to work together to create a more sustainable food supply chain, from farm to fork.

Growing organically does take change and investment, at a cost that can be too high for some. However across the food and drink industry there are businesses shouting about the value of this investment for them. Organic is part of The Real Olive Company's business ethos, and it works with small-scale, independent organic and artisan farmers to offer consumers the most transparent products possible. Co-founder Karin Andersson explains, "The perfect olive is not only delicious; it is also sustainable. And so our quest to find the perfect olive has taken us

around the sun-drenched landscape of Greece and Italy, seeking out farms where olives are grown using organic methods. In these groves the farmer works in harmony with nature, promoting the health of both the groves themselves and the surrounding country so that insects, birds and wildflowers flourish and the land remains rich and bountiful. Our organic olives are allowed to ferment through the winter until the end of March, meaning they tend to maintain a darker, richer and more natural colour, remaining crisp and firm long into the year."

"During September we will be helping to raise the profile and awareness of organic through our mailers and social media. Whilst helping to increase awareness of

organic through Organic September, we believe that everyone should be able to enjoy the aromatic flavours and succulent texture of the finest olives, marinated with fragrant herbs and spices in natural cold-pressed oils, so we keep our prices as low as we can without ever compromising on quality."

In order to continue to promote the positive impact that farming and eating organically can have on the planet, The Soil Association launched its Organic September Campaign. The month-long campaign encourages retailers, businesses and members of the public to get on with a whole raft of activities including talks, demonstrations and offers in-store. It's important for retailers to get involved because, "Independent retailers are the experts when it comes to organic, and many shoppers visit because they want to hear about new and exciting products first hand," says Kiren. "Organic September is when interest in organic is at its highest, so we'd encourage independents to get involved wherever they can. Organic September Saturday is the highlight of the month for many indies, giving a chance to run events and promotions to maximise footfall. Soil Association Certification are providing free point of sale packs, digital assets and an online hub that will act as the central campaign point for events, recipes, blogs and competitions."

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JOHN SHEPHERD OF PARTRIDGES



“The multi-sensory deli”

Ever since I started working in food shops – some 16,790 moons ago – it has always been impressed upon me that the three most important aspects of a successful enterprise are location, location, location.

To a greater or lesser extent this is undoubtedly true despite the fact that many other factors play a significant part. However, I was wondering to what extent location in terms of atmosphere plays a part in our assessment of food quality. Do the pleasant memories attached to particular occasions affect our judgements? Location surely cannot just be about footfall and shop fronts but the creation of internal atmospheres and environments. Get that right and a higher perception of food quality will follow.

The thought was prompted by my recent, and extremely enjoyable, experience as a judge on the Great Taste Awards. This iconic and highly regarded event features a large number of high quality foods that are sampled and discussed in an attempt to find the Supreme Champion in terms of Great Taste. The awards themselves are brilliantly organised, superbly curated and meticulously detailed. The whole atmosphere generates a feeling of good will in a delightful environment reinforced by the notion that it is all based on a simple but hugely important fact – the importance of taste.

However, assessing one's own definition of taste in terms of values and judgements is a challenging experience. Individual preferences need to be balanced with a sense of perspective. I personally have a distinct inclination towards meat and ice cream at tasting events, to be brutally frank. There is an instant gratification factor (IGF) in freshly grilled bacon or a creamy pistachio ice cream on a summer's day that is hard to ignore. Cheese also

provides the same effect for me and many of my colleagues. However, other products fail to overcome this apparent lack of IGF. For example, teas, mustards, olive oils or Himalayan Salt – however exquisite – may always struggle to win acclaims for taste outside the field of the cognoscenti.

Fortunately I am not alone in my vague musings and ramblings on this subject. In an excellent book called *Gastrophysics* by Charles Spence, musings and ramblings are replaced by a touch of scientific application in a chapter called the Atmospheric Meal. In this chapter Professor Spence poses the question: “Does the same food actually taste different when the atmosphere, or environment, in which it is served changes?” He concludes that the answer is very often yes.

Food shops need to offer positive multisensory experiences which in their basic forms can range from a welcoming smile to a functioning air conditioning system to an in-store tasting to appropriate music in the background. A leaking fridge, an untidy shop floor, a grumpy member of staff or inappropriate music will all detract from the speciality experience. I appreciate this is blindingly obvious but it is so often overlooked – not least by ourselves.

On 20th July this year, myself and two friends fired up the old forno in our garden in Campania at sunset assisted by my grandson of two and a half years. The Pizza Margarita emerged crisply toasted and dripping with local cheese and tomatoes, aided by a dash of anchovies. The cost of it all was negligible. Surrounded by family, twilight birdsong, crickets and music drifting up from the piazza and copious amounts of Aglianico it was a multi-sensory experience and a half. In fact, I concluded it was the best pizza I have ever had – to coin a phrase!

Bellavita Expo returns for sixth edition

This year will see the return of the Bellavita Expo, which will be taking place at the Business Design Centre in London between 7th-8th November 2019. It's said to be the biggest trade show promoting Mediterranean food and drink in the UK, and is now in its sixth edition of the show.

It's a must-visit event for professionals in the industry, and this edition will see over 350 exhibitors with over 10,000 products – 1,200 of which have never seen before in the UK – as well as buyer areas dedicated to private label products, organic wines, craft beer and product innovation. There is also a brand new format being presented which will target the entire Mediterranean area, with a selection of Spanish, Croatian, Slovenian and even more specialties, which will give an extra plus to the already exceptional array



of Italian products. Buyers will have the opportunity to browse through a range of products including volcanic wines, craft beers, gluten-free pasta, fresh dairy products, extra-virgin olive oil and original options for vegans and

vegetarians, and to meet the producers.

Bellavita Expo also has eight other shows around the world in Amsterdam, Warsaw, Hamburg, Chicago, Toronto, Mexico City, Bangkok and China.

Farm Shop & Deli Awards is now open for entries for 2020



2019 RETAILER OF THE YEAR WINNERS CANNON HALL FARM SHOP COLLECTING THEIR AWARD FROM NIGEL BARDEN AND EDGE & SONS

Entries are now open for the Farm Shop & Deli Awards, which will take place next year. Free to enter, there are 12 category and nine regional awards, plus overall Retailer of the Year. The categories up for entry are Baker, Butcher, Cheesemonger,

Delicatessen, Farm Shop (Large Retailer), Farm Shop (Small Retailer), Fishmonger, Food Hall, Greengrocer, Newcomer, Online business and Village Store/Local Shop.

The awards offer entrants

the opportunity to promote their business to industry experts, raise their profile and network with retailers, producers and industry experts.

Andreas Georghiou, owner of Andreas of Chelsea Green won Greengrocer of the Year 2019, and says of the awards, “The awards themselves are fantastic in respect of each individual store to put their case across and for their customers to be involved and vote for them. So it's a kind of joint award with customers and entrants. It's a true award and one of the best in the industry.”

The entry process will close on 20th September 2019, with the winners being announced live at the Farm Shop & Deli Show at the NEC Birmingham in March 2020.

To enter for free visit farmshopanddelishow.co.uk/awards



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A 'Tinder' for the taste-buds, a melting pot of gastronomic desire.

– Rupert Ponsonby,
SFFF19 Ambassador

We have some interesting new country pavilions this year – I'm keen to see what 'speciality' means to them and making sure I drop by all of them during the show.

– Andy Burman, SFFF19 International Sales Manager



This year's 20th Anniversary warrants its very own feature and I am super excited to see it come to fruition here at the show!

– Melissa Smith, SFFF19 Portfolio Marketing Manager

#SFFF19 @SPECIALITYFAIR | VISIT THE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO: SPECIALITYANDFINEFOODFAIRS.CO.UK

CHARLES CAMPION



“The Joy of Lists”

So how was your summer? Time to savour traditional seasonal attractions... Sunny Glastonbury...Cricket's World Cup. A Wimbledon spokesperson proudly announcing that for the first time the traditional strawberries and cream could be served with soya cream, making it a treat acceptable for vegan tennis fans. (During the Championship, Wimbledon fans snuffle their way through 61,700 pounds of strawberries with any surplus ending up in pots of strawberry jam that are Wimbledon-branded and sold to visitors). Seeing the 'vegan alternative' on any menu was once an optional eccentricity but now it's star billing.

The summer saw the Royal Society's Summer Science Exhibition joining the climate debate. The Scientists calculated that simply making those sizzled, garden-barbecued burgers out of chicken rather than red meat would reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of your barbie by two thirds. It was also the summer of paper bags, with retailers everywhere frantically trying to change from the turtles' plastic enemy to a paper carrier bag that you can use many times before it melts away with a biodegradable swan song.

It is always good to see that great organisational tool, The List making a comeback. When you set out on a shopping mission with a list it sharpens the mind markedly. We love lists even when they are just for light reading rather than buying purposes. Each summer,

and with suitable hullabaloo, a list of mighty restaurants is published under the banner of The World's 50 Best Restaurants. This list is backed by San Pellegrino and has been published annually for 17 years, a remarkable record considering the impossibilities of judging such a widespread selection of restaurants and cuisines. Hands up anyone has eaten at Azurmendi in Spain, or the Schloss Schauenstein in Switzerland, or Gaggan in Bangkok. Doubtless these are all places where you would eat well but how could you possibly give them a head to head comparative score? In 2002, El Bulli in Spain won the coveted '50 Best' top spot and went on to win a couple more times – how? In 2002 it was well-nigh impossible to get a booking at El Bulli unless you told the restaurant that you were coming which strategy probably meant that you would join a dining room that was wall to wall critics. This year the blurb said that the judges were a thousand or so “International restaurant industry experts” from 26 separate regions of the world, which still doesn't overcome the problems attached if you value comparing like with like. The success of 50 Best (and many other definitive lists) is down to our love of lists – you aren't going to eat at all these exotic restaurants, but you can read about them; and hard-working PRs will also be pleased to have something to say. There are a lot of lists out there and some are more useful than others... How about this gem from *Surrey Life* magazine: “Nine of the best restaurants in Reigate?”

FUTURE FOOD AWARDS

AWARDS

Brought to you by
Speciality Food and FoodTalk



Future Food Awards receive hundreds of entries from innovative businesses

The Future Food Awards, a partnership between Speciality Food, The FoodTalk Show and Bread & Jam, has been inundated with entries from innovators across the speciality food and drink industry.

Sue Nelson, founder of the FoodTalk Show and co-founder of the Future Food Awards, said, “We had the unenviable task (no, really!) of working our way

through hundreds of entries for the Future Food Awards. If the criteria involved taste, the bar was set very high, but that was a given and not the definitive judgement for a finalist. These awards are about people passionately overcoming difficult challenges with imagination and creativity and coming up with stunning results. We were surprised by the quality of the entries, which to be honest, was

way above even last year's high standards. How we are going to come up with the winner in each category I am not sure, just to get this far is a huge achievement.”

The finalists in each category will be announced in September, and will go on to pitch to the full panel of judges, which includes Ollie Lloyd, CEO of Great British Chefs and William Chase, the founder of Tyrrell's Crisps, Chase Distillery and Willy's ACV at the Bread & Jam festival on 3rd October 2019 at the Institute of Directors in London's Pall Mall to be in with the chance of being crowned the Supreme Champion.

More Brits than ever are choosing plant-based milks

New research from Mintel has revealed that 23% of Brits aused plant-based milk alternatives (in the three months up to February 2019), up from 19% in 2018. The use of cow's milk is falling in popularity with 16-24-year-olds, dipping from 79% in 2018 to 73% this year.

The report also stated that cow's milk did still account for the vast majority of white milk sales in 2018 (96%), but usage of this milk is skewed towards the older consumer, within the over 45's category, at 92%.

Health, as well as environmental and ethical concerns were listed as the top reasons for the changes to plant-based alternatives.

Emma Clifford, associate director of UK Food and Drink, said, “Plant-based milk alternatives continue to make further inroads into the mainstream, with high levels of innovation activity such as the entrance of Innocent Drinks to the market in 2018. Growth in this segment forms part of a much wider plant-based movement,

driven by concerns around health, ethics and the environment, as well as by consumers' love of variety in their diets.

“The shift towards the higher-priced plant-based alternatives will carry on, helping to add value to the market overall. Consumer interest in advice on how these alternatives suit different usage occasions signals marked potential to boost usage among current users and non-users alike.”

Scotland's Speciality Food Show

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FARM SHOP & DELI SHOW 2020

Be part of THE dedicated show for the farm shop and deli market

Farm Shop & Deli Show, taking place 30th March-1st April 2020 at the NEC Birmingham, is highly anticipated within the sector as the event for the industry's best brands to meet with owners, directors, managers and buyers from specialist retailers focusing on local.

The show is expanding, so you can too

As the show continues to develop, in addition to speciality food and drink, it will again be welcoming exhibitors representing other areas of the speciality market such as stationery, candles, furniture and home goods, as well as those offering equipment, labelling and packaging.

Plus, due to demand from show visitors interested in Healthy &

Natural products, it will also see the return of the Healthy & Natural area.

Farm Shop & Deli Show 2020 will run alongside Food & Drink Expo, National Convenience Show, The Ingredients Show & Foodex.

One badge gives you FREE access to all five shows. Visitors can benefit from the vast spectrum of exhibitors, products and live sessions, whilst exhibitors will have an invaluable opportunity to showcase their products and services to a wider, engaged audience.

Are you a speciality retailer looking for business-boosting insights?

Farm Shop & Deli Show is offering YOU an invaluable opportunity to

drive your businesses forward in 2020 and find speciality success. Come along and meet suppliers that span the full speciality

spectrum including exhibitors such as Cook, Dalstons Soda, Franklin & Sons, Maille, Mrs. Bridges, Pinkster Gin, Tudor Tea & Coffee and Willow Direct plus 100s more!

Visitors can also expect to...

- Source crowd-pleasing products and see what's new in the speciality market.
- Discover fresh thinking and practical tips and techniques to increase your profits.
- Get face-to-face with the people driving the market forward.

With a reputation for being the unmissable annual event for the speciality food and gifting sector, by taking just a few hours

out of your business, you can discover profitable products, ideas and insights to drive your specialist business forward.

Five reasons to exhibit at Farm Shop & Deli Show

- 1 Farm Shop & Deli Show 2020 is on-track to be the biggest show yet as it continues to grow from strength to strength.
- 2 2019 saw a record number of buyers attending, with over 6,100 visitors coming along.
- 3 Over 35% of the show's visitors ONLY attend Farm Shop & Deli Show.
- 4 £48k is the average business that the 2019 exhibitors expected to generate as a result of the show.
- 5 Plus, with the 2020 show running alongside four co-located shows – you'll have access to trade professionals across all five shows.

There are still spaces left for the 2020 show, but don't leave it too late as they are booking fast. Please contact mat.rose@wrbm.com if you're interested in being part of it next year.

IN DETAIL

WHERE: NEC, Birmingham
WHEN: 30th March-1st April 2020
WEB: farmshopanddelishow.co.uk
TWITTER: @FarmShop_Deli #FSD2020



“ Nothing touches on face to face. It's very good for us to see our existing customers. We've had really exciting prospects, and an absolutely great show off the back of it. From the MDs, the CEOs, down to store managers who we engage with all year round. This show covers everything ”

BEN SCOTT, FIELD TEAM MANAGER, COOK FOOD LTD

SUE NELSON



“British cheese please”

Cheeseboards used to be a byword for a spread of well-known French cheeses, but now a selection of award-winning innovative cheeses from around the British Isles is the default. At last!

All the supermarkets sell British cheese from some of our best producers, but I am always left disappointed. You can get Appleby's Farmhouse Cheddar, Blackstick's Blue, Colston Bassett Stilton and Kirkham's Lancashire in any town with a Tesco Superstore. But how they keep them so often ruins them and does not allow their unique qualities to come to the fore.

Independent retailers can beat the supermarkets every time even when they feasibly sell the same cheese from the same producer. The big boys might sell it cheaper, but they are incapable of keeping cheese in prime condition and so the same product can taste entirely different. Artisan cheese produced for supermarkets might have their usual branding and waxed paper on the outside, but underneath lurks cling film or a vacuum-pack which makes the cheese sweat and negatively affects the flavour. It is then chilled at very low temperatures in bright lights and in a dry environment 24/7, until a consumer puts it in their basket, keeps it incorrectly at home and then eats it straight from the fridge.

This is in huge contrast to the care taken by independent cheesemongers who can advise their customers, and where the contrast in taste is markedly different. Cheese is wrapped in waxed cheese paper only, which achieves the best possible balance between maintaining humidity around the cheese and allowing it to breathe. They can advise customers to keep cut pieces of cheese in the fridge to slow the growth of mould on their cut surfaces, but to keep it in its waxed paper inside a Tupperware box, (the

container provides a micro climate that helps to prevent the cheese from drying out and absorbing flavours from other foods in the fridge). Customers can be told how to serve their cheese. Straight from the fridge means it's too cold and this can make it taste bland, but an hour or two before eating brings out the flavour.

Then, there are the stories to tell: the Appleby family have been making Cheshire cheese in Shropshire since 1952. Appleby's Cheshire Hard is made with cow's milk and has a mineral taste and a citric tang. Out of the fridge for an hour before serving, you can fully appreciate its dry initial feel and then it's silky and succulent taste. This is the last raw-milk, clothbound Cheshire in England, matured for around four months.

Explaining these stories connects the customer to the producer and makes them really appreciate the value of the product, and why though it may look the same as the one sold in Waitrose, how the lack of care ruins the taste and texture.

My other recommendations for an English cheeseboard would be the smooth texture of Cerney goat's milk cheese made in Gloucestershire, a well-deserved Supreme Champion at the British Cheese Awards. Sprinkled with oak ash and sea salt on the outside giving it a distinctive look, it has a mild, citrusy flavour on the inside, but matured for two or three weeks and its flavour becomes even richer. Cropwell Bishop Stilton from Nottinghamshire with its grey, wrinkly crust, creamy yellow inside and an even spread of blue-green veins. And finally, Hafod Cheddar made by Rob Howard in Ceredigion, which is complex with a long finish and smoother and softer than many Cheddars, and takes your taste buds in all sorts of directions. These are the things our customers need to know!

Sue Nelson presents the FoodTalk Show with Holly Shackleton
foodtalk.co.uk

Major retailers protest against “outdated” business rates system

Business rates have been highlighted a contributing factor to the current tough retail landscape, and more than 50 high street retailers have united to demand action is taken to fix the business rates system. The letter to Chancellor Sajid Javid, co-ordinated by the BRC, asks the government to implement four fixes that would help the industry, including a freeze in the business rates multiplier and introducing an ‘Improvement Relief’ for ratepayers. It's been signed by the heads of major retailers including ASDA, Marks & Spencer and Iceland. It's said that the industry accounts for 5% of the UK economy, but is burdened with 10% of all business taxes, and 25% of business rates.

Helen Dickinson OBE, chief

executive of the BRC, said: “These four fixes would be an important step to reform the broken business rates system which holds back investment, threatens jobs and harms our high streets. The new Government has an opportunity to unlock the full potential of retail in the UK, and the Prime Minister's economic package provides a means to do so. The fact that over fifty retail CEOs have come together on this issue should send a powerful message to Government. Retail accounts for 5% of the economy yet pays 25% of all business rates – this disparity is damaging our high streets and harming the communities they support.”

Richard Walker, joint managing director, Iceland Foods, also commented on the issue, saying

that “Business rates are an outdated Victorian taxation system that have little relevance to our modern multi-channel retail economy. Fundamental reform of the system is the only way we will stem the decline of high street communities up and down the country.”

Shop vacancies in town centres are also reported to be at the highest levels in four years. The latest figures from the BRC-Springboard Footfall and Vacancies Monitor have shown that the national town centre vacancy rate was 10.3% in July, said to be a small increase on the previous quarters rate of 10.2% and the highest since January 2015.

It also states that in the four weeks between 30th June and 27th July this year footfall dipped by 1.9%, said to be the worst decline in July since 2012. In comparison to the same time last year, footfall declined by 0.9%.

Plastic bag sales in supermarkets down over 90%

New figures have revealed that sales of plastic bags have dropped by more than 90% in 2018/19 in the seven main supermarkets since the 5p charge was introduced back in 2015. The data from Defra also revealed that Asda, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, The Co-operative Group, Tesco and Waitrose sold 490 million fewer single-use plastic bags in 2018/19, which is a drop of almost half on the previous year.

Theresa Villiers, environment secretary said, “Our comprehensive action to slash plastic waste and leave our environment in a better state continues to deliver results, with our 5p charge reducing plastic bag sales by 90% in the big supermarkets. No one wants to see the devastating impact plastic waste is having on our precious wildlife. Today's figures are a powerful demonstration that we are collectively calling time on being a throwaway society.”

A SURVEY CONDUCTED BY **ONBUY.COM** REVEALED THAT **70% OF BRITISH CONSUMERS BELIEVE THAT POP-UP SHOPS CAN REVITALISE RETAIL**

Partridges marks 25 years of Royal Warrant

Partridges is celebrating 25 years of being granted the Royal Warrant as Grocers to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

John Shepherd, owner and managing director of Partridges said, “Today, firms that hold the Royal Warrant include grocers like Partridges, wine merchants, chemists, plumbers, mole catchers and dressmakers. The distinguishing feature, no matter the size of the company, is to provide the highest standards of service. Many of them are family businesses, like ours, going back several generations and who form the fabric of this trading nation. We feel honoured to have held a Royal Warrant for 25 years.”

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UK economy shrank by 0.2% in Q2

The latest GDP estimates from the Office for National Statistics show that the UK economy shrank by 0.2% in the second quarter of 2019, which is reported as being "weaker than market expectations."

Figures also show that the economy grew by 0.5% in the first quarter, with the ONS stating that there is evidence that stockpiling – a response to Brexit fears – provided a boost during this time.

The industry reacts to the new Prime Minister

The announcement of Boris Johnson being elected as leader of the Conservative Party has promoted plenty of reaction in the world of food and drink.

NFU President Minette Batters congratulated Boris Johnson and has urged that the departure from the EU is carried out in a smooth and orderly way.

Mrs Batters said, "Mr Johnson has an opportunity to develop a new agricultural policy that works for Britain by creating a sustainable, vibrant and competitive future for our farming sector. We need to see policies that allow farm businesses to innovate, that help farmers rise to the challenge of tackling climate change, that enable farms access to the workers that pick, pack and grade our fruit, veg and flowers, and crucially an Agriculture Bill that is fit for purpose for the rising challenges of food production. I look forward to working with the incoming Prime Minister and his Government to ensure we can achieve this and that British farming is recognised as strategically important for the nation."

Helen Dickinson, Chief Executive of the British Retail Consortium, said, "We congratulate Boris Johnson on becoming the new leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. There are many pressing

issues in retail and the wider economy, such as rising costs and weakening consumer demand, and we look forward to engaging with Mr Johnson and his team to promote constructive solutions to these issues.

"Retailers employ three million people across the UK, making the industry the UK's largest private sector employer, and the burden of business rates and other public policy costs put these jobs and our high streets at risk. With retail conditions the toughest they have been for a decade, the new Prime Minister must act to support the successful reinvention of retail locations and local communities. We hope the new Government will commit to a full review of the broken business rate system and to collaborate with the BRC on a strategy to bolster the retail industry during this time of rapid change."



Seedlip has majority stake acquired by Diageo

Beverage pioneer Seedlip has had a majority stake of the business acquired by Diageo, one of the world's largest producers of spirits and beers.

Founder Ben Branson launched the business back in 2015 and its three products; Spice 94, Garden 108 and Grove 42, are now stocked in over 7,500 bars, restaurants, hotels and retailers around the world.

In June 2016, Seedlip announced news of a minority investment from Distill Ventures, which receives funding from Diageo to support small drinks businesses. Seedlip is the first non-alcoholic brand to be acquired by Diageo through Distill Ventures. Founder Ben will remain active as a shareholder and director.

Ben said, "We want to change the way the world drinks and today's news is another big step forward to achieving this. Distill Ventures' and Diageo's shared belief in our vision has enabled us to build a business



that's ready for scale and I'm excited to continue working with Diageo to lead this movement."

John Kennedy, president Europe, Turkey and India at Diageo, added, "Seedlip is a game-changing brand in one of the most exciting

categories in our industry. Ben is an outstanding entrepreneur and has created a brand that has truly raised the bar for the category. We're thrilled to continue working with him to grow what we believe will be a global drinks giant of the future."

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Just Gourmet Foods launched in 2018 with a simple purpose: to bring quality clean, artisanal Italian food and drink products to the UK – and founder Gianfranco Perri is inviting buyers to sample its range at the upcoming Speciality & Fine Food Fair, taking place at London's Olympia 1st-3rd September 2019.

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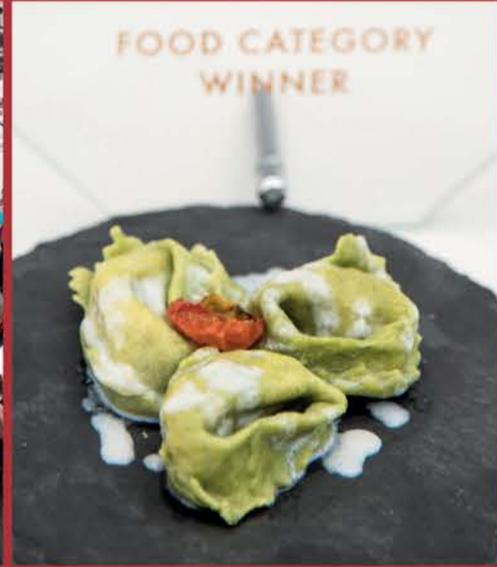
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Changes at Defra under new administration

MP George Eustice has been re-appointed as Minister of State for Defra. Eustice resigned in February this year and under pro-Brexit Prime Minister Boris Johnson has now returned to the post.

Under the new administration MP Michael Gove has been replaced as Secretary of State by Theresa Villiers and has been appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

THE **TOTAL** SINGLE-USE **CARRIER BAG** SALES **REPORTED** BY ALL LARGE **RETAILERS** IN **2018/2019** FELL **37%** TO **1.11 BILLION** COMPARED WITH THE **PREVIOUS** YEAR

SOURCE: DEFRA

NFU urges government to support home-grown foods

The President of the NFU has called on the government to support British farming, after figures revealed that the UK's self sufficiency is at 61%. Minette Batters said that Britain needs to be able to grow more home-grown food for a growing population, as had the country only eaten British-produced food since the 1st January 2019 supplies would have run out by 11th August.

Batters said, "When people buy British food they are buying into standards that protect and enhance our natural resources and iconic landscapes. They are buying into world-leading standards of animal

welfare, and they are buying into the role farmers play in combatting the climate change challenge which is facing us all. But there is a lot at stake. This autumn is critical to the future of British farming and with it our ability to feed ourselves.

"We need a clear pledge from government that it will not let our current self-sufficiency levels fall below today's 61%. Our self-sufficiency has declined over recent years and our political leaders need to take this seriously. While we will never be completely self-sufficient as a country it is vital that Britain takes its role as a food producer for its growing population seriously

and does not rely on the rest of the world – with wildly varying standards of production – to feed our population which is likely to grow to 73 million people in 20 years' time.

"British farming is the backbone of the country's largest manufacturing industry; food and drink. It contributes more than £120 billion to the UK economy and employs over four million people. In the next few weeks we will have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape our future. I hope today acts as a wake-up call for all those in power to look at what can be gained and also what is at stake."

First dip in supermarket sales since 2016

The tough retail landscape is not just affecting independent retailers, as recent figures published from Kantar Worldpanel reveal. The latest grocery market share figures have shown that year-on-year supermarket sales fell by 0.5% (in the 12 weeks to 14th July 2019). This is said to be the first overall decline in the supermarket sector since June 2016. The dip has been attributed to consumers making

less trips to the shops.

With the realm of online shopping making purchasing food and drink items convenient, retailers are having to compete.

The figures can link up with new research that has been conducted by Ubamarket into changes in consumer trends. The research found that 30% of Brits surveyed find travelling to the supermarket

to do a traditional weekly shop an inconvenience.

Will Broome, CEO and founder of Ubamarket explains, "There are many ways consumers can speed up their supermarket shop, however, if retailers want to remain profitable, retail technology is one of the ways forward. It can help improve in-store experiences, for example, by sending shoppers personalised and real-time offers, retailers and supermarkets could enhance brand loyalty and encourage spending in stores."

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Now joined by his sons Dilhan and Malik, from whose names he coined 'Dilmah', Merrill continues to fulfill the pledge he made over 3 decades ago. Dilmah Tea expresses the love of a Teamaker,

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The food industry is an exciting one, with trends coming and going and innovative products launching every day. There are definite shifts that can be seen in consumer buying behaviour and diets, leading to the interesting question of what the future of food will look like.

In the last few years the emphasis on health and wellbeing has had a huge impact on how people view food and drink. Previously convenience, on-the-go eating and the introduction of ready meals were factors that influenced what products consumers were buying and how they were cooking at home, especially as lives became busier. Now, life is still busy, but nutrition is a key consideration for many, with consumers becoming more concerned with sugar levels in foods and lots of brands now making clear where products are free from things like additives, colourings and preservatives.

Food industry expert Jane Milton foresees that in the future natural foods that have additional health benefits will become more popular, saying, "Refined foods, particularly refined sugar, will become less acceptable as will things like white rice and flour. We will see more natural and unrefined sugars from the likes of honey and dates added into food and more whole grains used. Functional foods will become more and more the norm as will foods which serve an additional benefit, for example, biscuits that contain protein, meals that contain several ingredients that are good for gut health, foods which help regulate blood sugars, blood pressure and so on. Many of the ingredients used for functionality will be natural and not processed, e.g. pea protein, inulin for gut health and sweetness, cinnamon for regulating blood sugars, etc."

The NFU's *The Future of Food 2040* report also predicts the importance of health in the next 20 years, stating, "Personalisation of food choices and the health agenda will grow, along with more diverse diets."

With a shift towards healthier



THE FUTURE OF THE FOOD INDUSTRY

Looking ahead to the next decade and beyond, what we will be eating more and less of?

eating and living, it's predicted that in the future we will be consuming less meat and fish and drinking less alcohol, with a bigger focus on plant-based foods. It's clear that this change is already starting to take place, with a plethora of vegan and vegetarian products coming to market, from dairy-free yogurts to vegan meats. The Brook, for example, is a brand that aims to make eating plant-based quick and easy to prepare with its range of ready-to-cook meals.

There's also a whole host of companies launching low and non-alcoholic drinks. The rise of events like Dry January have contributed to an overall interest

in people drinking less alcohol and also demanding more variety of alternatives for non-drinkers. This change has paved the way for innovation and brands like Seedlip have taken the industry by storm.

Jane anticipates that this trend will continue into the future, and says, "I think there will be less dependence on meat particularly; people have become used to getting a lot of their protein from animal sources and recently that has been considered to be less environmentally sustainable. In 10 years time people will eat more plant-based meals and get more protein from peas, pulses, etc. and less from meat, primarily

for sustainability reasons. People will be eating more fish that is sustainably fished, too, and it will be less acceptable to eat fish that is not sustainably caught. We will be drinking less alcohol and the range of alcohol-free drinks offered in bars, restaurants and in retailers will be far higher; it will have become much more acceptable not to drink and people will view drinking alcohol as they may currently do smoking, as something less acceptable."

Dr Morgaine Gaye, Food Futurologist, agrees, saying that people will be eating "Way less meat and dairy, and we will see the rise of an excellent variety of plant-

based options. We'll be eating less supermarket-bought food as small producers, growing collectives and deliveries become more common. We'll be drinking less alcohol, preferring to consume that in foodstuffs and water will become a much more valuable commodity."

Morgaine also goes on to predict that while there will be more emphasis on seasonal foods, technology and innovation will also be a key part of the future: "In contrast to all the home-grown and foraged seasonal foods, we'll also be experiencing some edibles which are 3D-printed and made from chemicals – digital tech food. These will take us further down the vitamins and functional food route, with things like powders, shakes, gels and forms. From human nutrition to pet food, we'll be consuming beautifully designed items made purely from chemicals."

Trends come and go, but over the next decade and beyond it's likely that these shifts in patterns towards health, plant-based foods and more flexible diets will continue to slowly become more ingrained into UK society.

FUTURE FOOD

Food industry expert Jane Milton predicts what else we will be eating more of in the future:

- More emphasis on eating seasonally and limiting food miles so we will see more UK-grown produce
- More British charcuterie and artisan cheeses and food that uses the nose-to-tail approach
- Frozen food – it can be more nutritious, convenient, has fewer added preservatives and reduces waste
- The bi-products of food production, eg. the fibre from vegetables and fruit used for juicing

“ In contrast to all the home-grown and foraged seasonal foods, we'll also be experiencing some edibles which are 3D-printed and made from chemicals – digital tech food ”



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Alimentaria20-23rd April 2020
Barcelona**THE ORIGINS OF TAPAS**

Despite being an iconic element of Spanish cuisine, the origins of tapas are shrouded in mystery. A couple of theories centre around the influence of kings from centuries ago. The most popular is that in the 13th Century, King Alfonso X of Castille was only able to eat small quantities of food while he recovered from an illness. He enjoyed this style of eating, and when he was fully recovered decreed that drinks should always be served with a snack. A second royal-inspired story goes that in the 19th Century, King Alfonso XIII was served a glass of wine with a slice of ham positioned on top to keep the sand out. He ordered another, and so a trend began. Another theory suggests that tapas started life at a farmer's bar in Seville, where bartenders topped full glasses with a saucer to keep flies out – then realised they could serve olives, cheese or ham on the saucer to keep customers coming back for more. This is a likely story; 'tapa' translates as 'lid' or 'cover' in Spanish, and as bars were often standing room-only, customers would position their plate of snacks on top of their glass.

punchy touch with a sundried tomato pesto-style sauce, pickled vegetables and olives.

HOT OPTIONS

Tapas is more than a Spanish cheeseboard – as well as the above, tapas lovers will want to serve miniature-sized hot dishes like bite-size chunks of chorizo in a smokey tomato sauce; extra virgin olive oil-slicked roasted red peppers; and Pimientos de Padrón, blistered small green peppers topped with a sprinkling of crunchy sea salt.



TAPAS

Flavour-packed and always popular, tapas is one of Spain's most famous exports

foodie inspirations home from their travels, it makes sense to stock some tapas-style products to make the most of the growing trend for entertaining at home.

No tapas offering would be complete without these delicious options:

CHEESE

Perhaps the most widely-recognised Spanish cheese is Manchego, which matches well with a number of Spanish wines and other tapas inclusions. Cabrales is another popular option, which when made the traditional way with sheep or goat's milk brings a punchy, spicy element to tapas. Complete the cheese offering with Mahon – a delicious combination of nutty, sweet, sharp and buttery notes.

CHARCUTERIE

Cured meats are a staple part of the tapas board, and there's a large range of options to choose from. Chorizo – ensure you stock a ready-to-eat option for this purpose – is an obvious choice, and iberico ham, cured pork tenderloin and Spanish salami will please tapas fans.

ACCOMPANIMENTS

Stock simple salted crisps for your customers to serve alongside their tapas; try Torres' Black Truffle Crisps, a popular Spanish snack for decades. A few slices of fruit and nut cake (a chunky paste of blended dried fruit and nuts) and membrillo, quince paste, will add fruity notes to the offering. Tinned sardines may be a left-field choice in the UK, but they're popular in Spain. To finish, add a

The act of serving a small morsel of food is popular the world over – think a crisp or two with a pint at the pub, or a crostini alongside your vino bianco at aperitivo time in Italy – but Spain has gone one step further and made

it an iconic part of its food and drink culture. Tapas-only bars are prevalent across the country, and most restaurants will serve food in tapas-sized portions if requested. As travel widens consumers' culinary horizons, and shoppers look to bring

“ As travel widens consumers' culinary horizons, and shoppers look to bring foodie inspirations home from their travels, it makes sense to stock some tapas-style products to make the most of the growing trend for entertaining at home ”

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Take stock with our new food and drink round-up

Popcorn start-up brand unveils vegan line

Gourmet popcorn start-up, Popcorn Shed, has launched what it says is the "first fully vegan popcorn line in the UK."

The innovative Mini Pop! range uses a white popcorn grain that pops to around half the size of regular popcorn, which makes the kernels small and tender and break up when popping. Available in five delicious low calorie flavours including Sweet & Salty, Toffee, Salted, Salt & Vinegar and gourmet White Truffle.

Laura Jackson, sales and marketing director said, "We are delighted to be the first to launch Mini popcorn in the UK and to offer our customers a healthy snack that not only tastes great but is kinder to teeth and tummies. Our customers kept asking for a healthy snacking option that was vegan, so we listened. Our new MiniPop! range is vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free, wholegrain, low in calories and most importantly, delicious!"
popcornshed.com



BumbleZest presents new CBD beverage

Battersea-based start-up BumbleZest has launched its latest beverage – CBD Tonic Water.

The natural tonic water has zesty lemon and warming cinnamon flavour sweetened with a drop of maple with 5mg of full spectrum EU-compliant CBD. An ideal drink for those looking for low sugar and low calorie alternatives, and can be enjoyed as a mixer or on its own.

Founder Dan Watson said, "We have gone back to roots and to how tonic used to traditionally be – an amber colour. It is our all-natural ingredients that give it its lovely golden amber colour."
bumblezest.co.uk



Tracklements introduces meaty Special Editions jam

Tracklements has released another Speciality Editions product – Bacon & Onion Jam – featuring crispy pan-fried bacon from supplier The Bath Pig mixed with sweet, gently caramelised onions. Enhanced with a pinch of chilli, a generous splash of balsamic vinegar and a squeeze of lemon juice, this mellow, meaty number is the perfect way accompaniment. With its concentrated flavour this sticky little jam is a real treat.

Guy Tullberg, MD at Tracklements said, "What's not to like about the combination of bacon with caramelised onions, it's the perfect topper for cheese on toast."
tracklements.co.uk



Cawston Press adds sparkling orange variant to can range

Cawston Press has launched its latest product offering, Sparkling Orange. Made with squeezed oranges, bitter orange extracts, Seville orange puree, sparkling water and enough pressed apple juice to make it 'just sweet enough'. This grown-up beverage also boasts that it contains no concentrates, added sugar, artificial sweeteners or shortcuts.

Steve Kearns, MD at Cawston Press said, "For many of us, the words 'fizzy orange' bring back happy childhood memories. But to our adult palates, most of them taste syrupy and cloying. By swapping out the added sugar and fake stuff, and balancing sweet against bitter, we've given fizzy orange a much-needed makeover."
cawstonpress.com



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TANGY APPLE & BALSAMIC CHUTNEY

British start-up creates chocolate nut butter snacks

Three new dark chocolate-coated nut butter snack bars are being launched by British start-up brand, Vive.

The indulgent bars are made using only natural ingredients and each contains 10g of plant protein, dates and nuts, creamy cacao butter and a delicate coating of dark chocolate. They're also naturally high in fibre and protein, to help keep people fuller for longer. Available in three options: Hazelnut, Peanut Butter and Salted Caramel.

Vive founder, Ishak Valimohamed said, "I was frustrated by the split in the health bar market. Half of the bars on offer were stuffed with artificial ingredients, junk and several sweeteners to mask a dense and chewy texture, leaving a bad taste in the mouth, both literally and metaphorically. At the other end of the market was an array of bars that were quite simple and free from everything, which unfortunately

included taste. So Vive was born: natural protein products without any artificial ingredients or cheap substitutes and a truly great taste." eatvive.com



Vegan sauce launch is a response to consumer demand

New from Gordon Rhodes is a vegetarian and vegan-friendly range called V and Easy. Featuring five gourmet vegan sauces mixes: Vive Le Veg Cassoulet, Chilli Non Carne, No Worry Veggie Curry, Too Good To Be Stew and Supreme Green Veggie Tagine. The new sauces sit alongside the existing seven Gourmet Sauce Mixes, three Jolly Fine Stuffings, award-winning bread sauce, three Saucy Meatball Meal Kits and three fiery Hot Rubs products.

Ian Rhodes, co-founder and senior director at Gordon Rhodes, said, "We are delighted with our new V and Easy range and have worked hard to ensure that the flavour is as tasty as our other 17 products already on the market under the Gordon Rhodes brand. The results are V delicious!"

"We decided a year ago to start the development of a vegan friendly range with the rise of consumer demand for vegan, vegetarian, flexitarian and meat-free alternatives but it was important to us to produce a range of products that are full of flavour, simple to use, family focused and something that our existing customers will enjoy as well as being able to open up new customer markets, and we feel with these five products we have done just that." gordonrhodes.co.uk

Biotiful Dairy presents Strawberry-flavoured kefir

Strawberry Kefir is the new flavour to be released from Biotiful Dairy in both 250ml and 500ml versions. It's made using British milk and real fruit, with no added sugar. Each bottle is packed with billions of diverse gut-friendly bacteria, is full of essential vitamins and minerals and free from any artificial colours, flavours or preservatives.

Natasha Bowes, founder of Biotiful Dairy, commented, "As the category leader in kefir, we know that consumers across the UK enjoy Biotiful's products for their great taste as well as the unmatched natural benefits they bring. Strawberries are traditionally associated with the summer months so this new SKU makes a timely debut, and provides consumers with another delicious way to enjoy all the goodness of kefir."

biotifuldairy.com



New look for soft drink company

British soft drinks brand, Gunna, has revamped the design of its cans to present a fresh new look. After launching just 16 months ago, the brand now has a bolder look for each of its four flavours – Ginger Rebel (ginger lemonade), Muscovite (lemonade and mint), Pink Punk (raspberry lemonade) and Steelworks (cola and ginger).

Founder and CEO Melvin Jay said, "We found 'old school' soft drinks lacked style and character, so we set out to 'battle the bland' and liven up this category. Now, craft soft drinks like Gunna are transforming the market, driven by the same consumer trends that have fuelled craft beers. To continue capitalising on our growth, this is the ideal time for a more distinctive craft brand image." gunnadinks.com

Fresh gin said to be "UK first"

Bimber Distillery has crafted what it describes as "the UK's first" – Da Hong Pao Tea Gin. Created by co-founder and master distiller Darius Plazewski, the gin uses rare, handpicked organic semi-fermented and heavily oxidized Oolong tea from the cliffs of Southern China's Wuyi Mountain. Applying traditional brewing and draining methods, the Da Hong Pao leaves are mixed with Bimber's award-winning gin recipe, which is expertly made with high quality and special selected botanicals.

Darius explained that the Da Hong Pao Oolong tea "yields a golden yellow liquid that produces a pleasant long lasting aftertaste. It's also renowned for its nourishing medicinal properties, just like gin. I infuse the gin and tea leaves for one week to ensure maximum flavour extraction, before being filtered and bottled at a high-strength of 51.8% ABV." bimberdistillery.co.uk



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Popular ice cream flavour can be enjoyed on-the-go



Organic ice cream producer Booja-Booja is launching one of its most popular dairy-free ice cream flavours in a single-serve mini pot version. The Chocolate Salted Caramel Dairy Free ice cream flavour is made with just five organic ingredients, and contains no refined sugar, additives or preservatives.

Louise Collins, marketing coordinator at Booja-Booja, says, "We're very excited about launching Chocolate Salted Caramel in a mini pot. Booja-Booja ice cream lovers have long clamoured for an 'eat now' size

in Chocolate Salted Caramel. Now all six deliciously creamy Booja-Booja dairy-free, gluten and soya-free ice creams can be bought in 110ml impulse buy pots. This deliciously rich, chocolate caramel ice cream, shwwoozled with salted caramel chocolate sauce, has proven immensely popular and we're delighted to be making it more widely available. We look forward to seeing the mini pots for sale in our existing independent stockists in time for Organic September. These little pots are also perfect for cafés, theatres and cinemas; anywhere people want to enjoy a delicious dairy-free and organic treat." boojabooja.com

Fruit lager inspired by overseas adventures

British start-up Jubel has introduced a new addition to its range of naturally infused fruit lagers. Brewed in Cornwall but inspired by an adventure abroad, Coast is a crisp lager blended with the zing of juicy grapefruit – a thirst-quenching citrus session cut with lager undertones for a balanced bitterness. It's vegan and gluten-free, and is 4% ABV.

Founder Jesse Wilson says of the inspiration behind the brand, "I discovered a dangerously refreshing and sessionable beer tradition in the Alps that didn't exist back home. When you want something refreshing, hop-forward beers can be too bitter and fruit ciders too sweet, so we set out on a mission to pioneer

a new style of craft beer that is a more inclusive alternative to make craft beer accessible to more people." jubelbeer.com



Cheese producer launches new chutney collection

The Snowdonia Cheese Company has added a four-strong range of chutneys to its award-winning food line-up. The exciting varieties consist of Balsamic Caramelised Onion (shown), Fig & Apple, Pear, Date & Cognac and Spiced Tomato & Vodka.

Snowdonia Cheese Company's commercial director, Richard Newton-Jones said, "We are committed to creating innovative new products and as such are very proud to be able to introduce our new cheese accompaniment range. We're confident that they will make a super addition to any cheeseboard, and across the range there is something to suit every palate and to compliment a wide range of cheeses including our own Snowdonia Cheese range. Our unique range has been handcrafted with care and expertise in traditional copper pans using only the finest ingredients. The range has taken time to perfect and we are confident that the vibrant chutneys will prove to be a huge success this Christmas." snowdoniacheese.co.uk



Condiments producer gets festive with gift boxes

The Bay Tree has unveiled gift sets for Christmas featuring a selection of its best-selling chutneys, pickles and jams in limited edition festive packaging. The five-strong range includes: My Marmalade Lovers Gift Box with award-winning Seville Orange Marmalade; My Chilli Lovers Gift Box with 100g of hot chilli; My Pickle Lovers Gift Box which is classic pickle recipe for lovers of cheese; Sweet Jar Gift set containing a selection of three mini jars – Really Raspberry Jam, So Strawberry Jam, and Seville Orange Marmalade – and the Savoury Gift Pack which includes Hot Chilli Chutney, award-winning Gloriously Garlic Pickle and Perfectly Punchy Piccalilli.

Founder Emma Macdonald said, "Christmas is a time for celebrating our love of food and drink. Retailers can capitalise on this key sales period by offering gift-ready packs of some of our favourite recipes and best-selling preserves." thebaytree.co.uk

Festive chocolates from family-run business

Guppys Chocolates has two new releases for the Christmas season.

The family-run and owned business has festive-themed Milk Chocolate Reindeer and Penguin bite-sized products join the popular Milk Chocolate Santas. The products are handmade and packaged on-site, using only natural ingredients and come complete with eye-catching packaging.

Fran Guppy, joint owner with husband Peter, says, "We're building on the success of our Chocolate Santas, which were introduced last year, with the launch of two new products making a range which will stand out on any shelf and appeal to a range of consumers who are looking for stocking fillers and Christmas gifts." guppyschocolateswholesale.co.uk



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Growing up, my family and I lived around the world and ate well – my mother used to cook pavlova in a tin on a Primus stove when we were in Bali – but I never thought of going into the food business. I always thought I would work in art and design (I trained in fine art), and to some extent I've brought that into what I do in food – my training has given me an ability to grasp and deal with strong visual messages and aesthetic feeling, sensibility to style, colour and texture – so I had a major influence on our packaging. There's also a parallel between the sensorial skills you utilise for visuals and those you apply to tasting things – you're identifying a flavour or a bad note in a symphony of flavours; you have to be able to detect defects. In terms of business, does an engagement with conceptual art give one good analytical skills? I think it might.

Seggiano was an unplanned venture; around 23 years ago I acquired a very rundown farmhouse in Italy, with 10 acres of olives, and some neighbours asked us to find an outlet for their fantastic local extra virgin olive oil. I worked up a label and my partner David travelled at high speed back and forth to London, leaving a case here and there on sale or return. They sold. We added honey from a local beekeeper and fresh prepared artichokes in extra virgin olive oil from a company up the road from the farm to the range and it grew from there. At that time the industry was an open playing field – there were very few people doing this kind of thing, and it was much easier than it is nowadays.

Community has always been at the core of what we do. We want to inspire depressed producer neighbours, and to stimulate younger members of the community to get behind production and local agriculture. The spirit of community is still within the brand in that we engage in very collaborative partnerships with our suppliers. Our key supplier relationships can go back many years, and we've worked through problems together and have shared principles and good friendships. There's been a sort of symbiosis with the smaller-scale producers who we've mentored into scaling up and shaping to legislative requirements. We forward them money when they have to invest in primary materials like artichokes, for instance, to help with cash flow, and put forward new ideas and recipes and school them on their standards and systems. In terms of community and partnership, our retailers have been an incredibly important aspect of that partnership chain, in that with their trust in our products and collaborative relationship with us, they've curated the product to the public and educated them. It's a shared passion that brings us all together – from supplier to retailer and consumer.

When we first started we had a very emotive approach to selling food we felt was genuine, from very small, non-industrial family producers. Mainstream industry has caught up with us on that over the past few years. These philosophies have been honed through experience and more technical knowledge; it's been a learning journey in which we've not only focused on provenance and minimal handling of products but become more aware of the elements which can affect the quality of the food. We've always promoted



VIEWPOINT: PERI EAGLETON

The co-founder of Seggiano is a passionate champion of truthfulness, community and transparency

accountability because we genuinely feel a responsibility to deliver a product which is entirely free from potentially toxic ingredients. In pursuit of 'clean' food, we've introduced more stringent checks into, say, citric acid and lactic acid which use a GM enzyme. We've also become more aware of the dangers of using poor quality oils, and learned how to distinguish which ones to use. For example, if

the shelf life needs to be extended on a baked product we won't be able to use extra virgin olive oil, but we will always use a cold pressed high oleic oil.

We've always been like this, it's who we are – we certainly haven't analysed market trends and adopted a veneer in our marketing. It's very hard to tell people some of the facts – there are some ugly ones – which influence

our decisions. There are lots of powers at play behind the scenes that people don't know about, and we've made it our business to check so we can be fair and accountable to our customers. They perhaps conceive our brand as being very expensive. It is, but the price reflects the true cost of the food – and I genuinely feel that we are offering good value for money.

Sustainability is a key story at the moment, and British consumers are realising that we have to change our habits or will have to face more extremes being forced upon us. Part of that is the realisation of the true environmental and economic cost of food – having whatever we want when we want it is going to have to change. The mainstream food industry needs to accelerate its relationship with science to find solutions. I know there are scientists in Dubai looking into farming algae to produce an oil similar to palm oil, and there's a couple of Scottish entrepreneurs who are looking at a methodology to extract palmitic acid from coffee grounds. We're always making difficult choices around sustainability. There are changes we want to make regarding the materials we use in our packaging, but doing so would add around 25-30p to our product and we can't do this until big-scale industry gets behind sustainable packaging – then we'll be able to afford to make this change, and will be one of the first businesses to do so. On this matter we have to follow rather than lead as we don't have the clout to influence the industry. As it stands we're using a lot of glass rather than plastics, and that's the best we can do for now.

The other main story is political. If our Government manages to engineer a no-deal Brexit, the pound will tank as even though we have fantastic British food start-ups a lot of ingredients are coming from the EU. Investors are not going to like a no deal Brexit and I think it's going to have a horrible effect on the cost of food. One positive which I hope comes from this outcome is that consumers may want to eat more locally-grown food, as we are all forced to find local solutions. Consumers are going to eat fewer winter green beans imported from Kenya, and pay more for delicious food sourced with a conscience.

TALKING POINTS

VEGETARIAN RANGE

I'm not a vegetarian but David became vegan about a year ago. I've had a lot of positive influences from Tibetan Buddhism, so decided from the get go that we wouldn't profit from dead beings. This isn't part of our message, but I accept that everyone has their own view and has to live the way they want to – who am I to judge?

INSPIRATION

I really admire passion, clarity and truthfulness, and people who have the articulacy and skill to see and truthfully express what is happening to themselves and the planet. I get very excited by scientists and people who are able to move beyond the limits of the mind and conditioned thinking – great physicists and cellular biologists who are opening up new frontiers.

“ It's a shared passion that brings us all together – from supplier to retailer and consumer ”

MAKING IT WORK

It was a natural choice for us to focus on independent retail in the UK because of the scale and organic way in which we grew the business, and it was definitely easier to develop partner relations with independents because they have a natural resonance with our ethos.

Plus, we have always wanted to support high street communities. Every weekend during the first 15 years of the business, David was doing tastings in independents, because when people taste something they understand – it's like a mini revelation. That's how it should be. Independent shop owners are wonderful curators, and we've benefited hugely from their recognition,

loyalty and trust over the years. I don't think we could succeed easily in the current context of dominant multiples as buyers are completely circumscribed by profitability metrics – to put it bluntly, they don't want to pay the price for real food, or to commit to running a genuine premium range. We've started rolling out the product in America – they don't have a high street market

as we do – and we've found that multiples recognise the growth potential of the premium and super premium food sector. They leave space on the shelves for products which move more slowly but have higher margins, the best of the best. It's interesting that American multiples are more evolved in that sense. British multiples are losing a trick in not supporting small brands.

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BREXIT: IMPLICATIONS FOR UK EMPLOYMENT LAW

Any changes to the workplace will depend on the shape of the UK's relationship with the EU, says Tina Maxell of Ellisons Solicitors

What changes will there be to employment law?

A significant amount of UK employment law comes from the EU, for example working time protection, paid holiday entitlement, parental leave rights, part-time worker rights and agency worker rights. As EU legislation has been transposed into UK legislation, these laws will continue to have statutory effect in the UK after exit day irrespective of whether the UK leaves with or without a deal.

Most EU-derived employment legislation will continue to remain in force for an indefinite period, unless and until altered by Parliament.

In some cases, the UK has deliberately provided protection for workers which exceeds the EU minimum; for example, the right to 5.6 weeks' holiday (rather than the EU four-week minimum) and 52 weeks' maternity leave (rather than the EU minimum of 14 weeks).

We also have many employment rights, including unfair dismissal, flexible working and the minimum wage which do not stem from the EU.

The government has said that it



remains committed to ensuring that workers' rights remain aligned with EU employment protection, even after withdrawal. We are therefore not going to see a wholesale change of employment legislation. Over time, and dependent on who is in power, there may be some unpicking of EU-derived law that has proved to be more unpopular with employers and business groups. For example:

- **Holiday** – There may be aspects that the government might want to amend. For example, it might want to limit the right to keep accruing holiday while on sick leave and exclude payments such as commission and overtime from holiday pay.

- **Working time** – We know that the UK government negotiated the opt-out to the maximum 48-hour working week, however the government may want to remove the cap altogether.

- **Collective redundancy consultation** – Collective consultation periods were reduced by the last government, so there might not be any appetite to make further changes. Although, it is possible that consultation obligations could be watered down further or done away with, particularly as employees arguably do not feel strongly about this right. However, Trade Unions would be likely to strongly oppose any changes.

- **Agency workers** – The right of agency workers to the same basic working conditions as equivalent permanent staff after 12 weeks was not popular with government at the time of introduction. Some commentators have identified this as a candidate for change. However, the government has not thus far indicated this to be the case. Indeed, under the government's Good Work Plan, following the recommendations of the Taylor review, it proposes to strengthen agency workers' rights.

- **Discrimination** – As is the case for unfair dismissal compensation, a cap may be placed on discrimination compensation. This is not currently permissible under EU law.

Free movement of workers

What might be of bigger concern to some employers is the position on freedom of movement of workers. There are currently large numbers of EU nationals living and working in the UK. Whilst Brexit negotiations are ongoing, employers can still employ EU nationals. What the position will be post-Brexit depends to some extent on whether we leave with an agreement in place.

If the UK leaves with a deal

If we leave with a deal, it has been agreed that:

- There will be an "implementation period" from the date of Brexit to 31 December 2020, so that new methods of working can be introduced on a gradual basis to minimise disruption. During this period, free movement will continue, albeit that EU nationals arriving during the implementation period and intending to stay longer than three months must register. Those EU citizens and their families already legally residing in the UK can continue to do so.

- **Settled Status** – EU citizens who have resided lawfully in the UK for five continuous years by 31 December 2020 will be able to apply for "settled status" to stay indefinitely under the EU Settlement Scheme. They will need to do this, even if they already have permanent residence documents; indefinite leave to remain will be automatically conferred to them. The EU Settlement Scheme opened on 30 March 2019.

Obtaining settled status will show employers that the EU citizen has ongoing rights to live and work in the UK, irrespective of any immigration controls introduced after Brexit.

- **Pre-settled status** – For those EU citizens who have resided lawfully in the UK for fewer than five years

by 31st December 2020, they will be entitled to apply for "pre-settled status" under the EU Settlement Scheme until they acquire the necessary five years' continuous residence to apply for settled status. This means they will be able to continue working until they have reached the five-year point.

As with settled status, pre-settled status will demonstrate to employers that the EU citizen has permission to continue and live in the UK legally.

The deadline for applying for both settled and pre-settled status is 30 June 2021. Failure to acquire settled status before this date will render people illegal immigrants.

Employing illegal workers is a serious issue for employers, with significant civil and criminal liabilities. Therefore, employment checks will be important.

If there is no-deal

Notwithstanding the no-deal situation, the EU Settlement Scheme still stands. However, there are some important modifications.

The government will seek to end free movement as soon as possible. Although, the government has agreed to protect the rights of EU nationals and their family members living in the UK by exit day.

As there would be no agreed implementation period, the EU Settlement Scheme would only be available to those EU nationals living in the UK by exit day, and they would only have until 31 December 2020 to apply for status.

The recruitment of EU citizens who are not resident by exit day, will be more complicated, with both a new system of European Temporary Leave to Remain and a skills-based immigration system which will come into play. EU nationals will be able to come to the UK for up to three months without applying for immigration status or a visa.

What does this mean?

In terms of employment law, even in the event of a no-deal Brexit, there are unlikely to be far-reaching changes, so employers will not have to adjust their practices, at least in the short and medium term. However, given the changes to the immigration rules post Brexit, employers will be required to undertake more rigorous checks on the right to work.

What do businesses need to be doing?

Employers should consider carrying out an audit of their workforce as soon as possible to identify which employees may be impacted by the post-Brexit immigration regimes. Employers who employ EU nationals might want to make them aware of the general changes and, where relevant, the possibility of applying for status under the EU Settlement Scheme prior to Brexit.

“ A significant amount of UK employment law comes from the EU, for example working time protection, paid holiday entitlement, parental leave rights, part-time worker rights and agency worker rights. As EU legislation has been transposed into UK legislation, these laws will continue to have statutory effect in the UK after exit day irrespective of whether the UK leaves with or without a deal ”



IN DETAIL

WHERE: Olympia London

WHEN: 8th-10th September 2019

WEB: topdrawer.co.uk

TWITTER: @TopDrawerLondon



SHOW PREVIEW: TOP DRAWER 2019

Top Drawer's Food Emporium returns this September, showcasing a mouth-watering edit of giftable food and drink

The Food Emporium at Top Drawer offers a unique opportunity for retailers of every type – from garden centres and food halls to independent cafes and department stores – to enhance their offering ahead of the busy Christmas period and the new year.

With an innovative and diverse selection, the Food Emporium will present products from the finest artisans and brands across Confectionery, Oils & Condiments, Beverages and Seasonal Products.

Look out for brands including Mindful Bites who will showcase an extensive range of vegan nut butters,

Love Cocoa, PLAYIn Choc, Burren Balsamics, Candyhouse, Motif with their highly-designed mint tins, Coco Chocolatier, Cult Vinegar, Dolce La Dolce, Letter Box Hamper who present mail-friendly gourmet food and drink hampers, Edinburgh Honey Co, Elia, Fudge Kitchen, Grown Up Marshmallows, Kin Toffee Vodka, Old Rectory Preserves, Popaball, and Popcorn Kitchen, to name just a few.

Top-notch tipples

Those seeking beverages need to look no further than Food Emporium's varied range of

drinks on display. Gin in a Tin revolutionises product presentation with their distinct tin decanters, whilst Gin Etc gives people that chance to channel their inner distiller with aromatic infusion kits. For those who favour whisky, the Really Good Whisky Company will be showcasing everything from

advent calendars to box sets, single bottles and even the chance to personalise labels entirely. Seedlip, manufacturers of the world's first non-alcoholic spirits, also joins the line-up with their impressive range.

Sweet treats

Cornwall-based Chocolarder will be making their Top Drawer debut with their hand-tempered premium bars, whilst Painted Peacock will showcase how they play with colour and food production to create their wares—including a new vegan range inspired by the flavours of the east. Inspired by the founder's Italian heritage, Lavolio is a one-stop-shop for hand-made, luxury confectionery.

Time for tea (and coffee)

Australian specialty-tea powerhouse T2 returns to showcase their extensive range alongside New English Teas, Britain's leading brand

for tea gift sets in classic, seasonal and trend-led tins. Those seeking a new take will enjoy the Real Coffee Bag Company's innovative 'coffee bags', whilst those who enjoy the more traditional won't want to miss Aromistico Coffee, who will present a variety of beans from around the world.

Held at Olympia London from 8th-10th September 2019, Top Drawer will also present a global edit of over 1,000 design-led brands across ten curated lifestyle sectors.

For more information and to register, visit topdrawer.co.uk

“ With an innovative and diverse selection, the Food Emporium will present products from the finest artisans and brands across Confectionery, Oils & Condiments, Beverages and Seasonal Products ”

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SHOW PREVIEW: lunch! 2019

The UK's favourite food-to-go trade show is back at London ExCeL on 19th-20th September, with a record 400 exhibitors and more new products than ever

Showing exciting new innovations from across the food-to-go sector continues to win lunch! a loyal following among thousands of retailers and buyers. The 7,000 attendees expected this year have a compelling line-up to enjoy, with two action-packed days of business and networking, product launches, demos and tastings, plus three Keynote theatres featuring some of the industry's biggest names.

For independent retailers, buyers, and caterers looking to expand their grab and go offering (the UK's fast-growing FTG market is set to be worth £23.4bn by 2024, according to IGD, with retail firmly leading the way),

there's a bonanza of NPD down every aisle to suit every taste and business need.

The future of food

"Whilst best-sellers will always be the best-sellers, consumers need to see variety and choice, and need to feel that the retailer/operator/brand/concept that they choose to spend their money with is providing them with relevant, exciting offers," explains lunch! regular Simon Stenning, founder of FutureFoodService.com.

"Consumers have a choice – make it at home or buy something Out of Home – as such they need to

be enticed for every purchase, and innovation is an important element of that purchasing decision," he says.

His speaker session this year will focus on the foodservice market in 2030 and aims to help FTG operators/retailers with their 'longer-term' strategic planning. NPD Group and Springboard, IGD, CGA, and Kantar Worldpanel are also back on the Keynote Theatre menu. Each will be offering their unique take on – and the latest stats from – the Eating Out Of Home market (focusing on food-to-go outlets, retailers and coffee shops).

lunch!'s 400 exhibitors meanwhile will be offering 'variety and choice' aplenty. Renowned for promoting emerging start-ups and speciality producers alongside some of the

industry's best-known brands, it's a vibrant showcase of what's new and next in the world of food-to-go.

For example: Radnor Hills is launching a new 330ml can format for its pure spring water (still and sparkling); Adam's Cold Pressed Chocolate is introducing a new raw chocolate vegan brownie traybake; The Food Doctor's new Super Snack mixes come in 120g resealable pouches and five flavour combos; The Dreamery's Zefir is a new vegetarian, gelatine-free, dairy-free, gluten-free, soy-free marshmallow snack; DBoost Drinks' new fat-free milk and natural juice drink contains 100% NRV of Vitamin D; Satisfied Snacks' Roughts is a new type of 'veg on the go' snack; Lord Sandwich's new Full-Wrap is a gluten-free, whole protein tortilla made from red lentils; Liteez by Matok V'kal is a plant-based, meringue kiss cookie/sweetener, which can dissolve in hot drinks or eaten as a sweet treat; The Savourists' savoury slice snacks are packed with bursts of Sundried Tomato, Basil & Rosemary or Black Olive & Nori Seaweed; Evolution Foods is showcasing its new Natural Selection range of on-the-go dipping trays with sweet and savoury options. And that's just from 10 companies.

There are over 70 (and rising) new exhibitors including: General Mills (Lärabar fruit and nut wellness bars), Rod & Ben's organic seasonal foods, T2 Tea, Naylor Farms, Red Bull, Jack Link's meat snacks, Just Live a Little, Plant Pops (popped lotus seed snacks), BumbleZest, K&L – Quinoa, Farro, Cauliflower Quick Meals, Copa (cold-pressed juices and purees), Clearly Drinks, Urban Rajah, Karma (ginger beer), St Michel Biscuits, nush (dairy free cheese spread), Fire Grain Freekeh, Chilled Maté yerba iced tea drinks, Precious Pea – Organic Houmous, Wholey Moly Cookies, Unrooted Fresh Energy, True Gum, Yummycomb, J&G Pecans, Joypots, Pri's Puddings, Polarbröd, Veg of Lund UK (with its My Foodie range of organic potato-based drinks), Celebration, Enviroware® and Silver Crane.

Returning brands include Hain Daniels UK, James White Drinks, Yorvale (Yorlife Kefir), Rebel Kitchen, Hippeas, Pan'Artisan, Impress

Sandwiches, MOJU Drinks, Pots & Co, Diablo Sugar Free, Around Noon, Aqua Carpatica, Salty Dog Brands, Teapigs, Chum Fruit Snacks, Follow Your Heart UK, Feel Good Company, No.1 Living Kombucha, Boundless, Simply Ice Cream, Tracklements Condiments, The White Rabbit Pizza Co., Galeta, Glebe Farm Foods, Tofurky, Tanpopo Japanese Food, Califia Farms, Land & Tide, Wessenan UK, It's a Wrap, BioPak UK and Ecoffee Cup.

That's just a small snapshot of lunch!'s eclectic exhibitor list. Head to the show's website to find out more and start planning your visit. To register for a free ticket to lunch! 2019, please visit lunchshow.co.uk and quote priority code LU60.

BIG NAME SPEAKERS

There are 30+ free sessions to enjoy, including exclusive Keynotes, interviews, research updates and lively panels. Highlights include:

- **Will Stratton-Morris**
UK CEO of Caffè Nero
- **Marta Pogroszewska**
MD of GAIL's Bakery
- **Hannah Squirrel**
Customer and marketing director at Greggs
- **Barny Clevely**
MD and co-founder of FCB Artisan Espresso Bars
- **Hannah McKay**
Head of food & beverages UK & Ireland at Caffè Nero
- **Scott Macdonald**
MD of Sourced Market
- **Aggie Morrell**
Head of food at pod food
- **Said Takhamt**
CEO of Cojean
- **Ollie Rosevear**
Head of environment at Costa Coffee
- **James Kidman**
Head of food at Cruss Fit Food & Juice Bars

IN DETAIL

WHERE: ExCeL London

WHEN: Thursday 19th and Friday 20th September
Opening times: 10am to 5pm both days (last entry 4pm)

WEB: lunchshow.co.uk

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EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS

Make the most of the opportunities overseas with help from the Department of International Trade

It's no secret that UK food and drink is globally renowned for its strong heritage, quality, safety and innovation. According to Barclays research, 61% of Chinese consumers are more inclined to buy a product if it is British. This demonstrates the high esteem in which the rest of the world holds UK produce and is exactly why companies in the fine food industry should be looking overseas for opportunities to grow.

Exporting is a great way to achieve growth, as expanding your customer base outside of the UK to include a more diverse range of consumers in different markets will make your business much more resilient.

Where are the opportunities?

UK food and drink products are popular with international retail buyers across the globe and, while there are barriers around food regulations, cultural differences and regional eating habits, these can be overcome with support from the Department for International

Trade (DIT) and there are still plenty of opportunities out there for UK businesses to explore.

For example, there is a rapidly growing opportunity for vegan and free-from products in Europe, with the UK recently overtaking Germany as the world leader in vegan innovation according to research undertaken by Mintel.

Also, the United States is the world's biggest market for organic

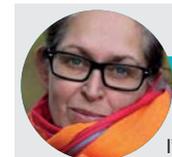
products as they are becoming more widely available across multiple channels with small independent companies driving most of the growth.

What does this mean for British retailers?

Exporting helps manufacturers grow and become more profitable which means the retailer has a stronger supply chain and can



THE GARLIC FARM



INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE...

Christina Gotzl, North Parade

I'm an importer and I've been importing predominantly from the UK for the last five years. The UK always seems to do something that nobody else is doing, either in the form of their packaging, the food they are producing or the drinks they're producing. It's slightly more anarchic in the UK kitchen as opposed to the standardised, everything-has-to-look-the-same-kind-of-branding that's out there in Europe or the rest of the world.

Everything that the small producers in the UK do is pretty damn good. They're very focused on quality, design and service. I work with small producers [with] a huge amount of heart and one-to-one. The relationships that you build [are important] – it's not just about the products you're selling.

I have a background in advertising, and we always used to use Sweden as a test market for launching new brands or new flavours. The Swedes are very

good at picking up early adopters and Sweden is set up very differently to the UK. In the UK you can pretty much do whatever you like and it doesn't affect the shop next door but we're a small market. There are nine million people in Sweden and chances are not everybody is going to be in the target group anyway. I always say to the new brands that I'm bringing in, 'don't expect miracles overnight'. It's organic growth. You have to build up trust. Patience, I think, is number one. And [to] stay true to your thing. Try not to adapt to fit in because that's what makes the British products that much more interesting.

“ My advice to anyone thinking about exporting is to just go for it. You've got nothing to lose ”

“ Exporting is a great way to achieve growth, as expanding your customer base outside of the UK to include a more diverse range of consumers in different markets will make your business much more resilient ”

work with several manufacturers across various markets. Also, as the manufacturer expands its product range the retailer has access to greater variety and product differentiation as well.

There are plenty of opportunities for independent retailers in this space as there are a wide range of UK food and drink businesses both big and small that are finding international success online.

For example, deli products such as chutneys, pickles and mustards typically have a long shelf life and are easier to ship, making them ideal for online sales. And according to Mintel, online grocery is still one of the fastest-growing channels of the grocery retail sector.

What support is out there?

The most important thing is finding the right market for your product – it's not just about looking for a country where your product is popular but considering the practical issues such as tariff and non-tariff barriers, shipping times, local tastes and prices when landed to name a few.

That is where DIT comes in. The department offers a range of support to help UK businesses find opportunities overseas and DIT's International Trade Advisors (ITAs) are based in the UK regions and offer a free service, helping to develop export strategies and connect with DIT's extensive international network.

The department also has a dedicated food and drink sector team and resources in selected posts around the world to help and support UK food and drink businesses to capitalise on international opportunities.

WHAT MAKES BRITISH FINE FOOD AND DRINK SO GREAT?

There are four main qualities that makes British food and drink so appealing to international buyers:

- **Quality:** The UK boasts a long history of quality, with accreditations such as the British Retail Consortium (BRC) stamp which is recognised internationally as a mark of high standards.
- **Competitiveness:** The UK is a highly competitive market so if a company can survive and flourish in the UK it is seen as another metric for potential success in other countries.
- **Heritage:** The UK has a long history of food and drink creation and, in many cases, it is the small and artisan companies that innovate and drive the industry forward, with many international buyers sourcing from the UK for this reason. The UK also provides buyers with new and unique products that differentiate them from competitor retailers.
- **Natural resources:** The natural resources in the UK allow companies to produce some of the most unique and high-quality products in the world. There are numerous UK products with Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status, as well as high quality seafood from around the coast and world class dairy products thanks to the climate and high waterfall.



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AND THE WINNER IS...

Time-consuming they may be, but awards schemes are worth their weight in gold, discovers Angela Youngman



From Royal Warrants to regional awards, the list of award schemes available to food retailers and producers is considerable. As well as participating in schemes, many companies also sponsor them. Wilkin & Sons Ltd, for example, are Royal Warrant holders as well as sponsoring the Tiptree World Bread Awards.

Involvement in such schemes requires a lot of commitment. It can be very time consuming with detailed forms to fill in, interviews with judges and often provision of samples. All claims have to be substantiated, with proof being

provided. The competition can be intense. The Great Taste Awards 2019 involved a record breaking 12,772 entries involving companies from 104 countries worldwide.

Choosing the best award is critical



Given the sheer amount of awards schemes available, choosing the right ones for your business is extremely important. Barn Farm's Jason Clench says, "We go for awards which cover the areas

that we want Barn Farm Drinks to be recognised in – the taste and quality of our products, as well as our sustainability and environmental credentials. We look at both food and drink and business schemes, too. It has enabled us to achieve a great deal in a short space of time. We've achieved almost 200 listings, and have launched two new flavours in addition to our core range, so we've been looking at Best Newcomer categories too and awards which celebrate new businesses."

For young entrepreneurial companies, taking part in awards can make a massive difference to future progress. It is a factor of which they are definitely aware. The newcomer and food innovation categories of the Future Food Awards, organised by *Speciality Food* and FoodTalk, have proved to be the most popular categories in the 2019 awards, with companies often personally delivering applications and samples to ensure safe receipt.

Take nothing for granted



When it comes to awards, nothing can be taken for granted – even the appointment of Royal Warrant holders. It is often thought that if you are supplying goods to HM The Queen or to the Prince of Wales royal households, you can automatically obtain a Royal Warrant for that product. Ros Windsor, managing director of Royal Warrant-holding cheese retailer Paxton & Whitfield, points out it is not a simple process.

She says, "To be a Royal Warrant holder you have to supply the palace for several years, providing consistent service and product quality before you can even apply for a warrant. It is not automatic. There is a rigorous process to go through to show you are a sustainable business, part of the community and demonstrate performance in many areas. You have to demonstrate you are supplying the palace, meeting all the criteria, not just writing



nice words. You have to show commitment. It is not just ticking boxes. The warrants have to be renewed every five years, and the whole process gone through again."

In addition to all the preparatory work, participants also have to be prepared to attend award ceremonies, which may involve travelling and overnight stays – and even then may not actually win. Many more companies fail to even be shortlisted. In the 2019 Great Taste Awards, out of 12,772 products only 3,409 were awarded 1-star; 1,326 awarded 2 stars and just 208 given 3 stars. Clearly, taking part in award schemes is not for the faint hearted! So why are thousands of companies taking part in award schemes of various kinds every year, devoting time to entering and participating, which might otherwise be put to use in running their companies?

What are the benefits?

Judging by the reactions from retailers and producers involved, the benefits are immeasurable. There are no regrets about putting in the time and effort involved. Apart from the kudos of potentially gaining an award, the application process provides immediate business advantages due to the need to constantly analyse and study all aspects of operations and activities.

Jason Clench, operations director at Big Farm Drinks has been shortlisted for a Great British

Food Award, and in three different categories for local food awards. He comments, "It is important not to underestimate how much time writing an award entry can take; it can be time consuming, but is worth it even just for a shortlisting. There's definitely not a 'once size fits all' approach to writing award entries – they all ask different questions and are looking for something different. It helps to reaffirm how far your business has come, or how much you do in a certain area."

"For example, here at Barn Farm Drinks we have introduced lots of different initiatives to help us be environmentally kind. We have an on-site solar farm, generate electricity from our fruit press waste, and harvest and re-use rainwater, and when you write it all down in an award entry you realise just how much you are doing."

Retailers notice participation

Participating in awards is undoubtedly a great way to help create brand awareness, as Jason Clench indicates. "We only launched the business less than two years ago, so for us getting involved in awards is really important for brand building and increasing our profile."

For entrepreneurs and companies promoting new products, awards can be a very valuable way of capturing the attention of potential stockists. Pritesh Mody, the founder of World Of

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JOHNNY CRICKMORE,
FEN FARM DAIRY



Zing won a New Producer Award in 2017. As a result the business more than doubled its turnover within a year. He says, "Awards are a great way of raising awareness of your company, particularly when you are in the early stages of the business's journey."

Other winners echoed Pritesh's comments. Damien Lee, founder of Mr Lee's Pure Foods received multiple enquiries from universities and corporations. He said, "Entering awards is a great way to highlight your brand to your customers but also to potential partner in your business niche."

Jane Steward of Eastgate Larder who won the Best of British category in the New Producer Awards 2017 found it enabled her to gain listings

for her medlar jelly and medlar cheese from judge John Shepherd, MD of Partridges, and ultimately by other cheese specialists such as Neal's Yard Dairy.

The halo effect

Winning an award in one sector can result in a halo effect as Yau Food discovered following the 2018 Future Food Awards. They won Gold in the Free-from category for their pumpkin-seed based Satay Sauce. The resulting attention led to greater awareness for other products within its oriental sauce business. Philip Yau said, "It allowed us to convey the integrity of our products to consumers. We thought we were on the right track, but this was confirmation. We have felt able to

more ambitious with products and have a master list of new products to finalise including Japanese, Korean and Malaysian options."

Royal Warrant cachet



Winning awards can be extremely beneficial when it comes to promoting a business, at home or overseas, in all forms of media.

Success in obtaining a Royal Warrant provides an impressive cachet when it comes to export markets.

"We are proud to be Royal Warrant Holders. We are privileged to be able to apply the Royal Warrant to each of our product labels," comments Walter Scott, chairman of Wilkin & Sons.

"We received our first Royal Warrant from George V in 1911, and each subsequent monarch has continued the tradition. At home and abroad, the Royal Warrant has always been seen as a distinctive marque of high quality goods. In more modern times, the Royal Warrant has increased to include areas such as sustainability and ethical policies, very much in line with our own approach to business. These are important characteristics for customers, and help to differentiate our Tiptree products in the market."

Ros at Paxton & Whitfield agrees. "We have had Royal Warrants since 1875. It demonstrates you are a quality establishment, and the Warrant is instantly recognizable. We are cheese supplies to the Queen, and can put the logo on our notepaper, letterheads etc. It makes a difference in export markets, especially in Japan and the US where they like the cachet the Royal Warrant gives us."

Company morale-boosting

Nor is it just the impact on sales and promotion that forms an important benefit to taking part in awards schemes. Equally important is the impact on company morale. Fen Farm Dairy stepped out into the unknown when it decided to focus its activities on selling raw, unpasteurised milk, together with setting up a totally new herd of Montbeliard cows so as to produce the only Brie-de-Meux style cheese in the UK, Baron Bigod. Their cheese has won countless awards. Fen Farm's Jonny Crickmore says, "You feel really good when the business wins awards. It is good for everyone who works on the farm because it shows appreciation of what we have achieved. We also mention the awards on our social media channels and it does make it easier to sell our products."

Some of the awards have been unexpected. Asked to attend a Suffolk Food Awards evening recently, they were astounded to find themselves being given a Local Hero

Food Award in recognition of all that they have done.

Taking the sponsorship route

Winning awards from respected organizations is good for a company and employees so much so that some decide to implement their own awards. The simplest ones are internal, but some companies sponsor awards for customers, suppliers and others. As well as rewarding good services and/or products, they act as a valuable advertising/marketing opportunity.



This is exactly what has happened at Wilkin & Sons, who began sponsoring the Tiptree World Bread

Awards in 2013. Scott Goodfellow, joint managing director of Wilkin & Sons Ltd explains, "The Awards are now in their seventh year. They were created to recognize the skill and talent of the growing British artisan baking scene. Bakers work hugely hard and for unforgivingly long hours, they need to have their moment of celebration and recognition."

For Wilkin & Son, it has proved an invaluable resource, especially in terms of promotion and industry knowledge. Scott Goodfellow says, "We are the main sponsors for the event, both in the UK and the USA, and we very much enjoy getting stuck into judging 800 or so loaves every autumn. We particularly enjoy the Tiptree Showstopper Category, which is for breads made with one (or in some cases several!) Tiptree products. We get to meet a wide range of very nice people from the baking community from large commercial ingredient suppliers to enthusiastic home bakers. It helps build a stronger community of bakers and encourages people to get baking bread. Bread and jam are natural partners so we hope that the Tiptree World Bread Awards reinforce that link."



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HOW TO WIN THE HONESTY ARMS RACE

With savvy brands using selective transparency as a selling tool, is it too late for consumers to spot the real deal?

Anna Blewett investigates

If there's one sane philosophy that unites our fractured nation, it's a healthy scepticism about proclamations of any kind. Indeed, refuting publicly main claims of all sorts has become a national pastime – just check Twitter. And yet this reluctance to accept things at face value has its problems for businesses, like yours, trying to communicate their truths.

"Scepticism has become a social habit as consumers scrutinise companies and discuss them with their peers," says Jack Duckett, associate director of consumer lifestyles at Mintel. "72% of adults agree that it's hard to know how ethical a company truly is. This consumer cynicism is partly being fuelled by press stories, with a number of businesses having become enshrouded in scandal due to unethical behaviour."

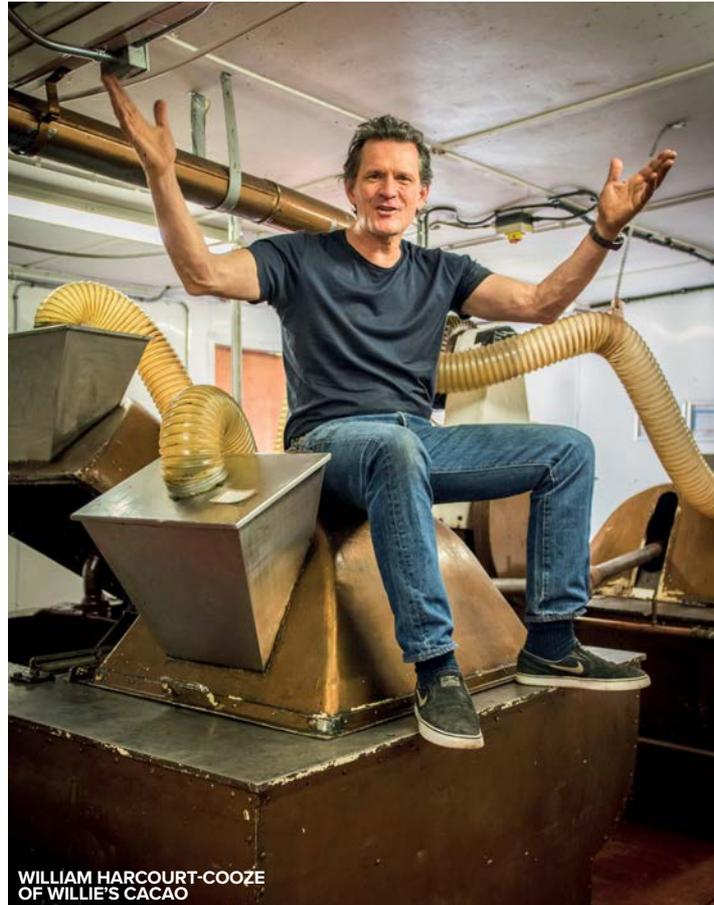
And there's been plenty of that: the horse meat scandal; Tesco's fictitious farms; broken sustainability pledges by John West Tuna; that labelling tragedy at Pret a Manger... the list goes on. "Beyond negative press headlines, the limited trust in corporate ethics could reflect how consumers ultimately still don't trust businesses not to put profits first," argues Jack.

So far, so good for small retailers, which positively glow with virtue compared to the big boys. And yet, big brands are upping their game when it comes to transparency. From drink brand Oasis launching its #refreshingstuff poking fun at its business strategies, to Oatly wearing their marketing objectives on their sleeve and even KFC using ads to 'fess up to a supply chain balls-up. So how can you win over customers with your honesty when the big marketing bucks are helping lesser quality brands do just the same?

Be honest

Take sustainability, an area where mind-boggling environmental footprints are being covered with a fig leaf of slick marketing. "While it's true that the big corporates are making bold claims, it's also true that they're under a much brighter and less kind spotlight than SMEs when it comes to transparency," says branding and marketing expert Lou Ellerton (mash.uk.com). "Broadly speaking, the larger and more public an organisation is, the more exposed to risk it is. And while consumers are prepared to accept that most brands are moving towards sustainability, and that it's a journey that won't take place overnight, there's zero tolerance of a business that's found to be acting in ways that gives the lie to a message of greater accountability." Keeping the instinct to tell customers what they want to hear in check, and being humble in communications of what you hope to achieve, is a great insurance policy.

"When it comes to marketing strategies around comms and messaging, it's not just about transparency, brands have to be authentic too," adds Michael Scantlebury, director of creative agency Impero. "The food and drink category is tough, getting cut-through is difficult with so much noise, and what seems like big brands shouting the most. But smaller food brands can be powerful if they stick to playing to their strengths, which is their ability to tell their story. Building from the ground up, they can root authenticity in their narrative – this is what drives distinctiveness. Their lack of big brand 'corporateness' makes them very appealing to 'true believers' or early adopters."



WILLIAM HARCOURT-COOZE OF WILLIE'S CACAO

Be the change

Got a skeleton in your closet you're hoping customers won't pick up on? Maybe it's time to bring them in on your plans for change. "The key is to really be more bold and innovative than the major players would ever choose to be," says Rafael Rozenson, founder and CEO of protein water brand Vieve (whose website agrees

that protein additives generally taste terrible). "Go places where they would never dare to!" For Rafael that meant launching an ambitious tree-planting programme to offset one of his business's Achilles' heels: its reliance on plastic bottles. "For most of the bigger players a campaign like this is way too costly. For us it is an investment, but it is the right

“ The best way a small business can communicate transparency and integrity is through its people ”

OATLY'S CAMPAIGN



LOU ELLERTON

thing to do so we do it. A lot of big soft drinks companies like Coke and Danone have five-year pledges to find a more sustainable source of packaging. We wanted to start doing something now."

"I think that mission statements work really well," agrees Hannah Norris of food and drink marketing firm Nourish PR. "Whether that's Eat Natural delivering plastic neutrality or Iceland promising to be plastic-free by 2023. Having a business or product that 'does what it says on the tin' doesn't work any more. You need more than words on a packet. Consumers are a hell of a lot more savvy, knowledgeable and discerning than ever. So there's a real need for companies to be honest – on sustainability, sourcing, how staff are looked after... Whether you're buying a jar of peanut butter

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HANNAH NORRIS

or a cereal bar or a freezer, you want to know it's been put together in the most responsible way possible. What does the website have to say? What does the boss say? People don't want to see Philip Green on a yacht in Monaco; they really care about the impact of their purchase."

Be brave

Going transparent in an area where your potential consumers might expect you to struggle is a particular masterstroke. Your dairy farm attracts some negative attention from vocal campaigners? Stay present, answering questions and calmly serving up facts about the ethics of your suppliers. "Sometimes you have to have a proper chat," says Hannah. "If a baker selling sugary cakes answers every comment about reducing sugar intake with 'a little of what you fancy does you good' that can come across as a little bit glib. Actually the good old dog 'n' bone is a good way to communicate. Encourage customers to talk to you; screen-based communication can add to that feeling that your company is in an ivory tower."

Be specific

The purer the products you stock, the better this strategy will work for you. Sharing the nitty gritty detail of how the items on your shelves are made can be amazingly successful

“ You can tell the story of the humans behind your products or services in a way that big business rarely can – and while we're all often happy to believe the worst of corporations, we tend to give people the benefit of the doubt. After all, which would you be more likely to believe: someone talking to you openly, or an ad? ”

in building trust. What's more, in many cases the brands you stock are doing the hard work for you – simply using your social media platforms as a place to share their stories (and field questions that come back) makes your channels a mine of the detailed information some consumers crave. No wonder Happerley, a traceability audit scheme enabling shoppers to learn about the food chain of their purchase, is winning so much interest.

Transparency is a no-brainer, says marketing consultant Martina Mercer whose clients include Willie's Cacao. "At Willie's we have no secrets," she suggests. "Everything is laid bare as we want people to delve deeper to understand the commitment to quality, the purity of ingredients and the unique manufacturing process of our chocolate. For instance many industrial chocolate makers use vanilla to mask the taste of beans that haven't been fermented properly; we don't," says Martina. "We don't use soya lecithin to help the chocolate flow better through the machines, because we have a gentler processing that takes 100 times longer than industrial chocolate." Communicating this can be as simple as posting photographic evidence of the process: spent cacao bean

shells, plenty of factory shots and Willie himself grappling with molten chocolate.

Be visible

Leveraging a character or characters at the heart of your business – whether that's yourself, a core of regular suppliers, or staff at the front line of customer service – can be

very successful. "If you struggle to find funds or time to communicate around sustainability, take heart: the best way that a small business can communicate transparency and integrity is through its people," says Lou Ellerton. You can tell the story of the humans behind your products or services in a way that big business rarely can – and while we're all often happy to believe the worst of corporations, we tend to give people the benefit of the doubt. After all, which would you be more likely to believe: someone talking to you openly and directly, or an ad?"

"I find that SMEs can stand out from the bigger chains and brands by using personalisation," agrees Martina. "Many bigger brands can't offer transparency across the board, for example on their ingredients, behind the scenes, or on their manufacturing process. There's usually some things they don't

want the customer to know. SMEs have the advantage as they usually have a small to medium team," adds Martina. "Communication between all parties, from sales to marketing to social media is constant, while there's generally someone at the head, a founder who is a personal spokesperson for the company."

Keep it real

Okay, so you don't want shots of your bin area splashed across Snapchat, but allowing candid coverage of the best bits of your business will build trust with consumers. The magic of social media is that whilst the most successful accounts are carefully curated and stage managed, they create a sense of intimacy that allows viewers to feel they're up close and personal to the operation. Letting them in on your more noble business objectives can be just as helpful. "Authenticity in brand strategy means devising a set of values that are genuine and that consumers can buy into," says Michael. "For example, Innocent did this when it launched. There was something very real, something genuine, but being bought out by global giant Coca-Cola stripped it of the equity and legitimacy it had built up. It lost its innocence values.

"If a brand makes a statement about being 'sourced locally' or is a 'small batch' producer, then that must be true. Consumers are savvy, they search out authenticity and genuine experiences." On this we can all agree. Your customers are better informed and more proactive than ever; let them in on your operation and you could win a loyalty that big brands would sell their own grandmothers for.



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“ Smaller food brands can be powerful if they stick to their strengths, which is their ability to tell their story. Building from the ground up, they can root authenticity in their narrative – that's what drives distinctiveness ”

SHOW PREVIEW: BREAD & JAM 2019

Join us at the must-attend event of the year for emerging brands looking to scale fast, retailers looking for the next big thing in food and drink and investors on the hunt for their next success story

Many of us in the industry will tell you that to have a real shot at success in food and drink, entrepreneurs need to be well prepared, well informed and even more well connected. Competition is fierce for all concerned and the pressure to stand out as the number of start-ups increases has been greater than ever before. So, where does an emerging brand need to be to make sure it has the best chance of making it big? The legendary Bread & Jam Festival, now in its fourth year, takes place on 3rd-4th October 2019 at the Institute of Directors in London, bringing together more than 1,000 food and drink brands, national and independent retailers, 100 speakers and industry experts.

Attendees can access over 60 hours of talks, workshops and lively panel discussions covering every aspect of starting, building and scaling a food business from industry experts and seasoned entrepreneurs who have been there and done it. As well as these groundbreaking trade insights, food start-ups can also apply to pitch to top supermarket retailers and fine food halls, win £45,000 in mentoring and support, pitch for investment of £500,000 and above and get real, honest feedback from retailers about the potential for their brand in the market today.



BE INSPIRED BY THE INDUSTRY LUMINARIES OF THE MOMENT

100 remarkable entrepreneurs, industry experts and icons will gather over the course of the two-day festival, sharing insider tips, advice and visions for the future to inspire the challenger brands of tomorrow. Notable industry icons in attendance include Heather Mills, Paul McCartney's ex-wife and para-skiing world record holder, who will be talking about what it was like turning an ex-crisp factory into Britain's biggest vegan food production site and launching her global brand VBites. We'll also hear from Michael Brehme, founder of Clipper Tea and how at just 20 years old, £50 and two chests of Assam tea became the global success we

all know today as well as his latest brand, FruitBroo. Chris Dee takes centre stage on Thursday afternoon, where, as the new director of food and home at Harrods, he'll be sharing his take on luxury fine food retailing and how early stage brands can make the most of the opportunities ahead. Other luminary food founders sharing their remarkable stories include the founder of Hotel Chocolat, Ugly Brands, Brindisa, Pearlfisher and Tesco.

APPLY TO PITCH TO NATIONAL RETAILERS AND FINE FOOD HALLS

Bread & Jam is a unique opportunity to secure one to one meetings with coveted retailers that can transform the size of a food business overnight.



In the Pitching Room, budding food brands can meet with the likes of Whole Foods Market, Planet Organic, Ocado, Selfridges, Fenwick, Holland & Barrett and more, including first-time attendees from across the pond, Costco – the second largest retailer in the world. Dozens of brands successfully pitched last year, gracing the shelves of their dream retailer in just a matter of months. One of these brands who pitched in 2018 is Humble Warrior, who launched their range of punchy,

plant-based tonics into Selfridges and Planet Organic after successfully winning them over at the show. "It's always been a really awesome experience, giving us exposure to buyers it would otherwise take months or even years to engage with. We'll be coming back to Bread & Jam in 2019 because there really is no other event like it. We've consistently had the biggest ROI on this over and above any other trade show or event. It's fantastic," says cofounder Rosh Amarasekara. Other success stories

“The food and drink community is a fantastic supportive group where everyone roots for each other. I love being a part of this community, paying forward what we had paid forward to us when we started up, and learning from all of the fantastic people in the community. The Bread & Jam Festival is one of those fantastic events that gets all of these fantastic people in the same room. I can't wait”

HUGH THOMAS, UGLY BRANDS

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include Hunter & Gather, who lined the shelves of Whole Foods Market in just three months after pitching at the show.

WIN £45,000 OF MENTORING, A FREE TRADE SHOW STAND AND AN ALL ACCESS ANNUAL PASS TO BREAD & JAM

This year, Bread & Jam attendees can pitch to win a life-changing prize for their business. Presenting to a panel of legendary judges, including a Sainsbury's buyer and top food entrepreneurs, one brand will walk away with £15k of branding makeover, a meeting with the Sainsbury's category manager, £15k of sales support, £15k of legal support, a free stand at the Speciality & Fine Food Fair and free entry to all Bread & Jam events for 12 months.

THE FUTURE FOOD AWARDS

In partnership with *Speciality Food Magazine* and The FoodTalk Show,

Bread & Jam will also be hosting the finals of The Future Food Awards, where eight shortlisted brands will compete in a series of lightning style pitches to be crowned the overall winner at an evening drinks reception held at The Marketplace at the show. Designed to give revolutionary businesses a chance to shine, The Future Food Awards presents the industry's most innovative brands to a panel of revered industry experts, including William Chase, founder of Tyrrells' Crisps, Renee Elliot, founder of Planet Organic, John Stapleton, founder of Little Dish, Monika Linton, founder of Brindisa, Ollie Lloyd, founder of Great British Chefs, Ed Mehmed, director of ?What If! And Russ Shaw, founder of Tech London Advocates.

SECURE FUNDING FROM TOP INVESTORS

Food and drink start-ups will have the opportunity to pitch their

business to angel investors, investor clubs and VCs looking for the next big thing in food and drink. Ticket holders can apply in advance to a four-strong panel including Yeo Valley, Pembroke VCT and Bran Investments, who all typically invest around £500,000. If successful, businesses will be invited to take part in a round robin 10 minute face-to-face session with each investor in the Pitching Room.

ONE TO ONE CLINICS, FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT

After being inspired by the industry greats in the Leaders' Lectures room, attendees can put their ideas into action by booking one-to-one consultancy sessions focused on a particular area of their business such as barcodes, labelling and getting their financials in order, sessions that would normally cost hundreds of pounds and be out of reach for the early stand brand managing their venture on shoestring budgets. As if this wasn't exciting enough, attendees can also get feedback for their product from key supermarket retailers at the Tasting Panel, accessing the kind of insights that could potentially save them thousands of pounds in the long run. Covering issues such as packaging, price point and positioning, attendees can hear from three judges who work with hundreds of products every day to understand how their products would fare in the market and what they need to improve to be successful. Alongside the Tasting Panel, start-ups can also take part in the Point Of Difference POD, where three industry experts will speed brainstorm the potential for the start-up's range and how they can stand out in the increasingly competitive retail landscape.

MEET THE SUPPORT NETWORK TO SCALE FAST

No successful business is born without an outstanding network of people actively supporting it. Bread & Jam have expertly curated a cohort of over 45 service providers - from PR agencies, designers, food photographers, packaging experts,



barcode providers to business coaches - who will be congregating in The Marketplace over the two days, ready to share their insights and advice with budding entrepreneurs. Bread & Jam is also the meeting place for many entrepreneurs who have shared the highs and lows together on The Food Hub, a free to join Facebook group run by Jason Gibb, one of the co-founders of Bread & Jam that hosts the stories, tips and advice from over 6000 food and drink founders.

SAVING THE PLANET IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE EDEN REFORESTATION PROJECT

This year, Bread & Jam is a proud partner of the Eden Reforestation Project, which has planted 230 million trees in Haiti, Madagascar, Nepal and Indonesia. For every ticket sold, Bread & Jam will plant a tree to reduce the impact climate change is having on our planet.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Tickets are now available for Bread & Jam via the website – breadandjamfest.com. Applications to pitch for retail listings and investment are now open.

“Bread and Jam festival is the place to be if you want to grow your food business in the right direction and develop a rich network of lovely and knowledgeable foodies”

DEWI CORTIER-AGRAWAL, OH LILY SNACKS

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THE RISE OF ANTI-SEASONAL FOOD AND DRINK

Ice cream and barbecues in winter? Angela Youngman explores the trend for food and drink products bucking tradition

Once upon a time strawberries were only available during high summer and mincemeat during the run up to Christmas, while demand for ice cream was mainly during the summer. Nowadays, there is far less focus on seasonality, with many traditional seasonal foods available virtually all year round. A recent extension of this trend has been towards the creation of range extensions, whereby traditional seasonal food is being used in different ways so as to widen demand.

Mark Kacary, managing director of the Hunstanton-based Norfolk Deli, explains the reasoning behind this trend: "It's more expensive when in business to completely change the offering than to find a way to implement a few simple changes to allow the wheels of industry to keep going, whilst making something seasonal relevant to the new season. In some instances (such as in a small deli like ours) we use mincemeat in items such as our homemade treacle tarts, for example, to use up products which are no longer seasonal, but which we can create something new for customers to buy."

Yorkshire Pudding for dessert?

Yorkshire Puddings are a good example of this trend. A staple product of traditional Sunday lunches and roast dinners, they have now entered the dessert market. The Real Yorkshire Pudding Company has launched savoury filled Yorkshire puddings as well as crumble-inspired puddings such as Toffee Apple Crumble and Rhubarb & Ginger Crumble. Managing director

Charles Payne says, "This is a great way for us to put a modern twist on a British classic. We are focused on building innovation within the category and expanding the meal occasions in which Yorkshire Puddings are eaten."

Ice cream at Christmas

Ice cream is another product which is very much at the forefront of this trend. Nichola Hazel of Scottish ice cream specialists Jannetta says, "ice cream is increasingly popular no matter what the season. There is definitely a shift in the darker winter months towards more chocolatey, Christmassy, spicy and alcoholic flavours. Our gingerbread gelato is very popular, as is the mulled wine and Bailey Irish cream."

During cooler months Janettas encourages customers to use ice cream to accompany hot desserts such as sticky toffee pudding or apple pie.

Hadleys Dairy in Essex has taken a slightly different approach, creating an Ice Cream Bombe sold

in Christmas pudding basins. One of the most popular is the Chocolate & Cherry Bombe which comprises a chocolate layer filled with ice cream rippled with cherry compote, while another is a Christmas Ice Cream Bombe flavoured with Armagnac and mixed with seasonal fruits soaked in sloe gin or Somerset cider brandy. Jane Hadley says, "These sell reasonably well from our Ice Cream Parlour – but judging the quantities is a bit of a balancing act. Customers do need to see/taste to help make a purchase and a few years ago, one farm shop sold 60 Christmas ice creams in November – so if promoted in the right way, these can really help sales."

Cheese variations

James Rutter, operations director of Paxton & Whitfield, has noticed the trend appearing in certain types of cheese, resulting in a definite sales opportunity for retailers. He explains "on the continent, there has been a long tradition of using strips of Spruce bark as a wrap,

going round the outside of the cheese to help the cheese keep its shape as well as impart a gentle resinous flavour as the cheese matures. Although this technique is not native to Britain, several British cheesemakers are now using bark when making cheese. Available all year round, these cheeses have been directly inspired by the success and deliciousness of seasonal favourites from the continent such as Vacherin Mont d'Or."

He continued, "It is not hard for us to promote these products as they are delicious! In our shops we are able to talk to customers about them and let them taste the cheese before they decide to buy. Customers love to try new things and unlike Mont d'Or, they are available all year round."

As a result, such cheeses have now become very popular in their own right, creating a new market segment within the cheese industry. James Rutter says, "Although a new cheese, Rollright made with spruce bark is now a staple on all of our shop cheese counters and one of our best-sellers through our online shop. Charles Martell started making Stinking Bishop (Beech wood) in 1994 and today it has a big following here in the UK and has become one of the most famous British cheeses out there!"

The changing taste for game

Game is another product which is becoming less seasonal and is being used in increasingly different ways. The Mintel 2016 report into the game sector indicated that UK retail sales were expected to increase 73% to £145m by 2021. Much of this is due to the way farm shops, delis and butchers are using game to create game sausages, burgers, meat balls, pies, pâtes, and terrines which suit modern palates. Taste of Game has even produced award-winning crisps with flavours like Wild Boar & Apple, Grouse & Whinberry, Smoked Pheasant & Wild Mushroom.

Over at butchers Farmison & Co, customers are being encouraged to consider using the traditional dish, pigs in blankets, all year round, not just at Christmas time. To do this, they have offered not just traditional

“ Nowadays, there is far less focus on seasonality, with many traditional seasonal foods available virtually all year round ”

pigs in blankets but unusual variations such as Turkey & Leek Pigs wrapped in Pancetta and Wild Venison, Red Onion Marmalade & Juniper Pigs.

Customer demand leads the way

In some cases, the expansion of a food range has resulted directly from customer demand. Meringues have moved from being a dessert to a snack food, conveniently packed for impulse purchasing. Leanne Crowther of Flower & White explains, "The meringue is a well-trusted dessert but we always knew there was so much more you could do with it. Once we learned that our customers were not just using our meringues as an ingredient in Eton Mess or to decorate cakes and desserts, but were snacking on them too, we knew we were onto something. Having experimented with shapes, sizes, textures and colours, we now sell bars, drops and bites in a range of flavours and our customers love it."

"Using natural flavours and colours, British free-range eggs and Callebaut Belgian chocolate, our products are a permissible indulgence that can be enjoyed as a

light treat at under 100 calories per serving."

A similar transformation has been appearing within the drinks sector. Gin has become one of the most fashionable contemporary drinks in recent years, leading to the introduction of pre-mixed gin and tonics in cans. Cocktails too have seen a boom in popularity, but not everyone has the knowledge to mix them correctly. Inevitably this has led to the introduction of pre-mixed cocktails in cans. All consumers have to do is shake and use. Milkshakes have become the latest range extension, with Jude's Ice Cream introducing canned Salted Caramel, Chocolate and Flat White Coffee milkshakes.

Some limitations exist

While range extensions of this kind are generally welcomed throughout the speciality food sector, there is also a feeling that it is a trend that should not become universal involving every seasonal product range, especially when bearing in mind issues such as sustainability and air miles, and simply generating interest in food.

Not every attempt to extend the market for a seasonal product

has succeeded. Shoppers mocked attempts by supermarkets to make Christmas mince pies available as early as September, while attempts in the 1980s to create an all year round market for Cadbury's crème eggs led to a drop in sales, and they returned to seasonal availability.

"There some things which are seasonal and should remain seasonal, such as cheeses," comments Norfolk Deli's Mark Kacary. "The quality of an artisan product sometimes relies upon the seasonality of the product. Extending the season may detract from the quality and may result in serious over production. Foods like mussels and samphire, too as it gives you something to look forward to each season, and prevents a generalization of the food market."

Barbecues in winter?

Nor is this trend confined specifically to types of food. There are indications that the concept of extending seasonal produce is crossing into cooking styles with chefs and food writers considering the values of using barbecues outside the main summer season – an idea which is not as silly as it may sound. Although Britain's

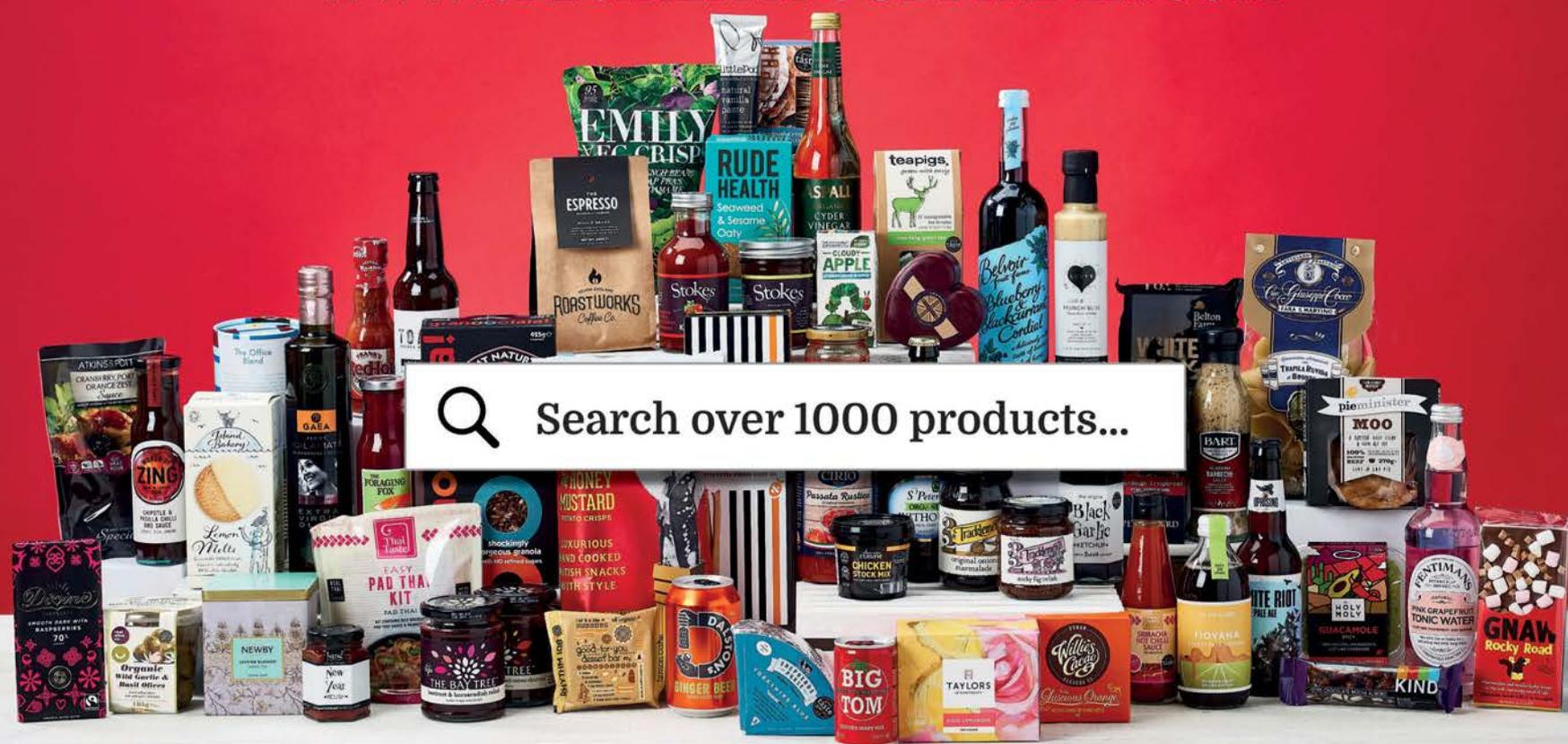
winter weather is not really conducive to relaxing in the garden with an outdoor barbecue, it is the taste and style of barbecue cooking which is attracting attention at other times in the year. This can be achieved through the use of indoor smokers and grills for which demand is increasing, fuelled by their appearance on cooking programmes. Such grills avoid the problems of timing when it comes to cooking meat on a barbecue, yet gives all the flavour and taste.

This inevitably provides retailers with an opportunity to sell barbecue sauces, chutneys and barbecue-related products for much longer. Butchers Farmison & Co are one of the many businesses which have begun to identify potential sales opportunities. Having introduced a 'low and slow' barbecue range which has proved popular with consumers, Farmison have decided to keep the seasonal Boston Butt available during the run up to Christmas and make it part of their Christmas range. As they point out, using winter barbecues clear space in the kitchen oven for other dishes and enables customers to enjoy the barbecue taste for a much longer period.

“ While range extensions are generally welcomed throughout the speciality food sector, there is also a feeling that it is a trend that should not become universal, especially when bearing in mind issues such as sustainability and air miles ”

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WILMA FINLAY THE ETHICAL DAIRY

“Empowered to understand”

A few months ago I wrote a blog for our website stating that, had my life taken a different path, I would now be vegan. Admittedly it's a strange statement for a dairy farmer to make, so the blog gathered a lot of attention on social media, but I stand by it.

Farming was something I married into. Over the past 25 years our family-sized dairy farm in south west Scotland has changed dramatically. We moved from conventional farming to organic, then simultaneously diversified into ice cream production and tourism with Cream o' Galloway. But it's been a more recent change to the way we farm that has attracted attention and controversy.

Opening our dairy farm to families every day had shown us how disconnected people have become from farming. “Why do you separate the calves from their mum?” was the most frequently asked question on our farm tours, which prompted us to

ask ourselves, what would happen if we didn't?

We did huge amounts of research and 10 years ago we built a new dairy, designed so that cows and calves could stay together. We had a disastrous pilot five years ago that nearly bankrupted us, but it taught us a great deal. Three years ago we gave it another go and became Europe's largest cow with calf dairy farm. Has it been easy? No. Has it been worth it? Absolutely.

On most dairy farms calves and cows are separated within a day or two of birth; on our farm calves stay with their mum to suckle naturally for five to six months. They're together 24 hours a day for the first eight weeks and are then gradually separated overnight where they can still see and call to each other but not suckle – almost like a separate bedroom.

In total the calf drinks around a third of the milk, but what we lose in milk volume we gain in

other benefits. Most noticeably the cows are calmer and healthier, the calves grow twice as fast and our less intensive, ecological approach to farming is delivering multiple environmental benefits.

Ultimately what we are trying to do is create a circular, regenerative farming system that has a positive environmental impact, delivers nutritious food, provides good quality jobs and works to the highest possible standards of animal welfare.

We launched our artisan cheese brand, The Ethical Dairy, last spring and we've been amazed at the strength of reaction. Many people have embraced what we are doing and we have been inundated with messages of support. Demand for our products was so high that we accelerated plans to build a bigger cheese dairy. This is now completed and two months ago we quadrupled production.

As well as vocal supporters, there have been some vocal critics. We always knew we'd get a backlash from those in the farming industry who favour a more intensive approach. Food production and farming are complex, highly politicised topics with huge vested interests – doing things differently will inevitably attract comments.

Coincidentally, we launched our cheese range at a time when interest in vegan diets is surging, and we have had several waves of attacks on social media from vegan activists. However, vegans have also been some of our strongest supporters. Around 20% of contributors to our crowdfunding campaign last year were vegan or near-vegan, and we have regular orders from vegans buying our cheese for partners or children.

People want to know they're making positive choices in the food they buy for themselves and for family members. The more that farmers and food producers speak directly with members of the public, the more we become empowered to understand and address the concerns people have with conventional methods of food production.

I will never criticise anyone for being vegan. With the information that's been in the media over the past couple of years, adopting a vegan lifestyle is a sign of concerned citizens wanting to make a difference. It is our duty as an industry to address those concerns and provide information and produce that people can feel good about.

“ These are complex topics with vested interests – doing things differently will inevitably attract comments ”



RICHARD CLOTHIER WYKE FARMS

“Being 100% green”

My grandparents, Ivy and Tom used to say, “If you look after nature then nature will look after you”. For us this applies to everything we do when making our cheese and running our business. After all, the Somerset countryside provides our food, our income and our home. For my grandparents this was a simple code of living which meant managing resources without wasting anything, and also nurturing the countryside and animals. Today my family have formalized that way of working into our ‘100% Green’ strategy.

‘100% Green’ is about trying to create a net-positive impact in all that we do, so that the environment and the community are better for having the Wyke Farms business there than it would be without it. It's also about taking responsibility for addressing climate change. To this end we were the first UK food company to generate all of our own green energy, both electricity and gas, and also recycle our water.

I would encourage any business, regardless of size, to look at a degree of energy independence as I believe that lower carbon equals lower cost. The great thing about renewables, (unlike nuclear power) is that they are very scalable. Just a few solar panels or a small biomass boiler can save a huge amount of cost, whilst helping address CO2 emissions.

It takes 10 litres of milk to make one kilo of our Vintage Cheddar, so the quality or the milk and diet of the cows is very important, as is our regional weather. The best milk comes from cows that graze the lush pastures. Our Ivy's Vintage Cheddar is named after my grandmother, Ivy, who was the best cheesemaker in the family and also the first person to write the recipe down. This is why this cheese drives so much passion for us; it's my grandmother's cheese, and if you criticize it it is worse than criticizing my children as the cheese never deserves it! I think this passion for quality is the reason why our Ivy's Vintage Cheddar is

sold in 160 countries around the world – not bad for a lady who never left Somerset let alone travelled on a plane!

My grandparents fostered the belief in us that if you can grow your own food, generate your own heat/energy and look after your water supply then you wouldn't want for anything. That way of living was vital for them living in a poor area of Somerset in the early 1900s. We hope that in a hundred years' time people will still be growing grass and making fine Cheddar to our recipe in the rolling hills of Somerset, but in order for that to happen we need to make sure that we leave an environment that is suitable for them. It's for this reason that I am passionate about sustainable farming and doing all that we can to reduce our CO2 emissions.

In a time that the UN has announced that we must all eat less meat to improve the environment, it's more important to all of us as farmers and food producers to counter this by doing all that we can to produce food in the most environmentally responsible way. I still believe that the future of energy generation lies on the roof tops of farm buildings and in AD plants, processing farm and food waste, rather than in fracked gas or giant nuclear power plants.

People have asked me ‘what if we are wrong about man-made global warming?’ I always reply that we will have created a cleaner, fairer, lower cost world whilst making our family Cheddar in Somerset – how can that possibly be a bad thing?

“ We hope that in a hundred years' time people will still be growing grass and making fine Cheddar to our recipe in the rolling hills of Somerset, but in order for that to happen we need to make sure that we leave an environment that is suitable for them ”

Talk Cheese

New retail perspectives from industry experts

MEET THE CHEESEMAKER

Dutch family-owned company Treur Kaas, is dedicated to sourcing and storing award-winning premium Dutch Gouda cheeses

Founded in 1955 by Evert Treur, Dutch family business Treur Kaas is now run by his sons Daan and René Treur. A true passion for Dutch Gouda cheeses has led to the business becoming specialists in the area of sourcing and ageing, supplying the best of Dutch cheese to wholesalers and retailers worldwide.

The founders of the business have committed to storing the premium cheeses in the best possible conditions, leading to them being matured in a natural way.

Willem-Jan, international account manager at Treur Kaas, explains, "With passion and consistently high commitment, the family has built up their own warehouse, knowledge from maturing Gouda's and a big network at the top of the Gouda cheese world. The warehouse is located in Woerden, right in the heart of the Dutch cheesemaking area and can store over one million kilograms of cheese on more than 34km of wooden shelves. With a constant temperature, humidity and air circulation our cheeses are naturally matured and they develop a unique taste, with time being one of the most important ingredients."

The commitment to quality doesn't stop there, with Willem-Jan adding, "Treur Kaas as a company contributes to sustainability, with a special basement where we store and mature around 200 tonnes of cheese. This basement is located deeper in the ground, which means the temperature is more constant." This means that they need to cool less in summer. The business has also invested in an automatic robot that takes care of the cheese and the more physical heavy lifting.

For Treur Kaas quality is key, and the company has picked up many different awards for its cheeses. Willem-Jan explains, "We work together with artisanal cheesemakers and farmers who have the knowledge and passion to make the finest Gouda cheeses to serve the high-end customer. Organic or non-organic, with herbs or plain, made of cow's,



goat's or sheep's milk, we have it all."

At the recent International Cheese Awards, Treur Kaas cheeses scooped up a whole multitude of awards. Willem-Jan talks through these winning cheeses:

Weydeland Rijck

"This is a unique Dutch Gouda cheese. It's made at CONO Kaasmakers according to our own family recipe in a Co2-neutral way. Cheesemaker CONO pays the farmers an honest price for this milk, so the farmers are able to earn a good living. The farmers also receive a premium for keeping their herd outdoors, which means the cows are able to roam and graze in the fresh air from spring until autumn. Grazing outdoors in grassy meadows improves the composition of the fats and proteins in the milk. After preparation, the maturing process takes place in the Warehouse

of Treur Kaas, and the cheeses get a special treatment, creating that taste that makes the cheese irresistibly tasty, showing nice ripening crystals and a bit of crumble and has a taste that is full of aroma and character."

Jerseyhoeve Schorren

"One of our specialties is the Jerseyhoeve Schorren, which is an organic cheese made of 100% Jersey milk. On the Island Goeree-Overflakkee the herd is grazing along dikes, over salt-marshes, mud flats and shoals. This is the best natural environment, unique in its kind, which is why this organic milk that cannot be found anywhere else. It is with this milk that we make our Jersey Cheeses in a socially responsible way. At the Mèkkerstee farm in Ouddorp the cheese is made by traditional methods and according to a special recipe, only using natural

organic ingredients. The cheese is matured for a year on wooden shelves, resulting in a unique cheese with nice ripening crystals and a great taste."

Bio Truffo

"An organic creamy cheese with real Italian black truffle, made by the Mèkkerstee. The organic cow's milk used for the cheese comes from an organic agrifarm in the Hoeksche Waard in The Netherlands and guided by three farmers: Ard van Gaalen, Arian de Jong and Pieter Hugo Visser. To ensure that their land will not be exhausted, they exchange vegetables like onions, celery, peas and potatoes with calm crops such as grasses and clovers, alfalfa, rye, barley and oats. The cows are grazing on the land of the fresh grasses and their manure is used as fertilizer for the crops, making the circle complete. The milk of these cows is very creamy and full of nutrients, and you can taste it in the delicious cheese."

Beppie Pikant

"Another organic speciality for Treur Kaas is the Beppie Pikant. Beppie is an organic cheese made of 100% sheep's milk which comes from a small cooperation of organic Dutch farmers. These farmers are unique, since there are few farmers in The Netherlands working with organic sheep. The milk is then transported to the farm De Mèkkerstee. According to an old, and secret recipe, the cheese is made by the best cheesemakers made using only the best organic ingredients.

INTERNATIONAL CHEESE AWARDS 2019 AWARD WINS:



WEYDELAND RIJCK - GOLD AND BEST DUTCH CHEESE AWARD



BEPIE PIKANT - GOLD AWARD



BIO TRUFFO - BRONZE AWARD



JERSEYHOEVE SCHORREN - HIGHLY COMMENDED

After the cheesemaking process, they are matured on wooden shelves in rooms where there is a constant temperature and humidity, resulting in the best climate for the cheese to develop its unique taste. It takes patience, the cheese is at its best after seven months. The Jury of the International Cheese Awards described this cheese as "Fantastically rich and full of flavour with a great finish and texture," which blew us away!"

Premium Dutch Quality Cheese

INTERNATIONAL CHEESE & DAIRY AWARDS NANTWICH 2019 EST. 1897 GOLD AWARD

INTERNATIONAL CHEESE & DAIRY AWARDS NANTWICH 2019 EST. 1897 BEST DUTCH CHEESE

Matured with family expertise
Treur Kaas was established in 1955 with the aim to become the specialist in aging Dutch speciality cheese. Surprising the world with excellent cheese is our passion. We provide luxury cheese brands like the Villa range of herbed farmers cheeses, Jerseyhoeve, Supreme Champion of the International Cheese Awards 2016, Geitenstee, excellent goat cheese and Weydeland Rijck, unique old cheese and awarded Best Dutch Cheese.

NEW! Beppie Pikant
Organic Sheep Cheese matured for 7 months.

INTERNATIONAL CHEESE & DAIRY AWARDS NANTWICH 2019 EST. 1897 GOLD AWARD

TREUR KAAS
The Dutch Cheese Experience

PARTNER CONTENT



A CHAMPION OF BRITISH TERRITORIAL CHEESEMAKING

Belton Farm celebrates success in this category, with a flurry of recent award wins

Family-run Belton Farm is one of the biggest names in British territorial cheesemaking. The company supplies cheese into independent wholesalers and UK supermarkets, and also exports worldwide. All of the milk for Belton cheese production is collected daily and comes from 80 local farms within a 25-mile radius of the dairy.



The company is celebrating once again after another outstanding performance at this year's International Cheese and Dairy Awards held in Nantwich, Cheshire. Although the agricultural show had to be cancelled due to the weather, their cheese shone through and collected a whole host of awards. Having accrued the most points in show Belton were awarded the National Westminster Trophy for the ninth consecutive year for their points coup, an unprecedented achievement. Belton also received an incredible 13 trophies and scooped a fantastic 18 Gold, 12 Silver and 24 Bronze awards.

Speaking after the awards, Justin Beckett, managing director at Belton, said, "We are absolutely delighted with our achievements. The International Cheese and Dairy Awards are a highlight in the awards season for the industry and it is a great honour to have our cheese celebrated in front of customers, both from the UK and overseas. For Belton, our milk suppliers and all of the people we work with, it's important to put on a great performance at the show by gaining recognition for our consistent quality, and what better way than by being the highest points producer in the show."

The future of territorial cheese

The territorial cheese category is continuing to grow, seeing a 4.4% volume growth in the last 12 months. Belton Farm has shared in this success with their Red Fox cheese continuing to bring new shoppers into the category. By offering something new and different it encourages both existing and new shoppers to enter the category and to be more adventurous, while at the same time encouraging them to add to their repertoire and not just switch between products. The brand acts as a signpost to territorial cheese and as such helps to drive own label sales too.

Cheese is a destination category and consumers continue to look for inspiration in products that can excite and offer something different. Belton are passionate about cheese and continue to promote territorial cheese while educating consumers about their great taste, provenance and versatility.

beltonfarm.co.uk

“For Belton, our milk suppliers and all of the people we work with, it's important to put on a great performance at the show by gaining recognition for our consistent quality, and what better way than by being the highest points producer in the show”

CHEESE UNCUT

New retail perspectives from industry experts

The Bath Soft Cheese Company named Supreme Champion

The Bath Soft Cheese Company's Wyfe of Bath cheese scooped the Supreme Champion accolade at the International Cheese Awards. The dairy industry came together at Nantwich on Tuesday 30th July for the awards event, which celebrates the best cheeses and producers in the UK and beyond. The judges cast their votes on over 5,000 different cheeses, resulting in The Bath Soft Cheese Company taking the crown.

Hugh Padfield, managing director at The Bath Soft Cheese Company said of the win, "We are absolutely thrilled. To win Supreme Champion at the International Cheese Awards is an achievement that every cheesemaker dreams of, and for a small rural business like ours it's incredible. Nantwich International Cheese awards is the biggest cheese show in the world, so this is the equivalent of winning the World Cup. We have a fantastic team who make all the cheese by hand, and we could not hope for better recognition for the hard work we put in; from milking our cows to making the cheese.

"Our Wyfe of Bath won Supreme Champion ahead of over 5,000 cheeses entered from around the world. It is creamy and nutty with hints of caramel, and a semi-hard cheese. We are so pleased that this award will encourage people from all over the world to try some. We also won best washed rind cheese and best speciality cheese with our Merry Wyfe, and best English Cheese with our Bath Soft Cheese – a clean sweep! We want to share our success; come and see us in Kelston to see what all the fuss is about!"

Other winners on the day included Cellars at Jasper Hill as Reserve Supreme Champion, Dewlay Cheesemakers as Reserve UK winners, and Friesland Campina won Reserve Overseas.

For the full list of winners across all categories, visit the website: internationalcheeseawards.co.uk.



IMAGES: THE BATH SOFT CHEESE COMPANY



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FROM THE RETAILER...



Svetlana Kukharchuk, founder of The Cheese Lady, on stocking Spanish cheeses:

“We generally stock five to seven Spanish cheeses (out of 55+). I love all our Spanish cheeses and think they all offer something different. But I do have a soft spot for one of them in particular – Grazalema. Our wheels are over nine months old and pack a lot of flavour – there are sweet, nutty, caramelly notes to begin but it also has an unusual briney tang at the end, which comes from Grazalema’s outside coat of lard and wheat germ – one of Spanish cheese’s preservation techniques”

For a full article on international cheese trends, head to page 40.

Cheese 2019 event celebrates British dairy industry

Cheese 2019, an event dedicated to farmhouse cheese, is set to take place this September from 20th-23rd in the Italian city of Bra. In 2017 the international event saw over 300,000 visitors and exhibitors from over 30 countries. This year will see a range of workshops dedicated to the British dairy scene, including God Save the Cheese, which will be a guided tasting of several cheeses, British Cheese and Barolo Wine and Among the Greats, which will explore the various nuances of British cheese production with a tasting of five British cheeses paired with wines from France, Italy and Germany.

British companies set to exhibit at the event include Cornish Cheese Co., White Lake Cheese and The Fine Cheese Co.

CHEESE FACT FILE...

COMTÉ

- **Country of origin:** France
- **Milk:** Cow
- **Type:** Semi-hard
- **Tasting notes:** Fruity and nutty in flavour, with a sweet finish



Godminster expands its Cheddar offering



Organic Black Truffle Cheddar is the latest addition to Godminster’s range of gourmet Cheddars. The indulgent cheese is matured for up to 12 months following the company’s 90-year-old recipe, and is soft and creamy with a rich moreish flavour, featuring European Black Truffles that have been authentically sourced. The end result is a smooth Cheddar with flecks of truffle throughout that would make an elegant addition to any cheeseboard.

JUSTIN TUNSTALL RETAIL CONSULTANT



“Don’t disrespect the Cheddar!”

Recently an old friend, now resident in France, forwarded a local newspaper piece to me (thankfully in English), that told the sorry tale of a Michelin-starred chef who had asked to be removed from the *Michelin Guide* because they’d accused him of putting Cheddar in his soufflé.

My initial reaction was of outrage that he could disrespect that most British of cheeses, and furthermore, that as he could still boast a two-star rating, he was overreacting somewhat. I believe Cheddar to be one of our most under-recognised cheeses, as even in this country most people’s experience is of indistinctive mild block Cheddar, with none of the complexities of a cloth-wrapped trad. At its peak, such Cheddar can hold its head high in the company of any of the wonderful cheeses from around the world.

Another friend had briefly worked with the chef, Marc Veyrat at his La Maison des Bois in the Alps (near Annecy), and commented that he had always been volatile, but an outstanding chef. My initial disgruntlement over, I looked more deeply at Veyrat’s statement. He said that he’d suffered a six-month long depression as a result of the judge’s comments; his region had been insulted and his employees were furious. His soufflé was made using classic local cheeses: Reblochon, Beaufort and Tomme. My attitude began to shift – I’d made a name for my shop by championing local cheeses, and had a reviewer claimed that my

Dorset Blue Vinny actually came from North Korea, well, I’d be livid! I visit a fair number of restaurants and pubs each year as a judge for an awards scheme, and always note and respond positively to local sourcing. Of course, it has to be of the finest quality, but even in large cities, that need not pose a problem, and a growing number of diners are prepared to pay a premium for the use of such ingredients. Many food connoisseurs are provenance geeks; excessive food miles are frowned upon and with import tariffs possibly waiting in the wings, not to mention uncertain exchange rates, great local produce makes ever more sense.

Fine dining establishments in this country now recognise the great quality and variety of British cheeses that they can offer their guests. I love travelling and seeing what small artisan producers get up to in other regions. The British cheese world is constantly changing – new entrants experimenting with different recipes on the milks from their particular geography to create new and exciting tastes. Consequently, I’m disappointed if I see a predominantly French cheeseboard at a ‘modern British’ restaurant.

So, I think I’ll cut Marc Veyrat some slack and respect his desire to be recognised as using ingredients that celebrate his terroir. Get well soon, Marc – I’d love to taste your local cheese soufflé. I’d also be fascinated to see what you could do with Cheddar.

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MATURE WELSH CHEDDAR
CAWS CYMRIG AEDDED

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VINTAGE CHEDDAR & LEEK
CAWS CLASUROL IEGEWINN

Dragon

80% REDUCED FAT WELSH CHEDDAR
CAWS CYMRIG 80% LEAF O FFRAGYD

Dragon

WELSH CAERPHILLY
CAERPHILLY FFRAGYD

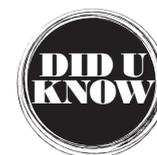
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In family-run village dairies located in the picturesque western cantons of Switzerland, the internationally-renowned cheese Le Gruyère AOP is made by expert hands using skills passed down the generations for centuries.

Loved for generations

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

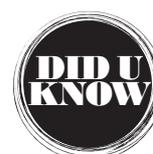
The 170 dairies which produce Le Gruyère AOP are expected to uphold the rigid specifications set by the accreditation at every stage of the production process, from the cows producing the milk to the ageing of the cheese – keeping the high quality and unique, delicious flavour of Le Gruyère AOP consistent.

How to serve Le Gruyère AOP

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

HOW TO CUT LE GRUYÈRE AOP

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



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

TASTING NOTES

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

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

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

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PETER'S YARD



TRAINING STAFF

Engaged staff lead to satisfied customers, but don't stint on the technical know-how

Consumers are far more knowledgeable and informed than ever before, thanks mostly to the variety of social channels and the increased trend in the media to focus on food, and specifically cheese, and therefore the importance of having informed, yet approachable staff is vital," says Matthew Bunch of The Camden Grocer and Taste Distribution. It's worth remembering that, compared with the rest of your shop, information on cheese labels can be pretty slim. "As opposed to the wine world, where labels indicate the grape and region, labels on cheese provide little clue about what a cheese will be like," says Noemie Richard of Savencia Cheese & Dairy. "Being knowledgeable and able to offer recommendations means that customers are more likely to return to your shop.

"In all honesty, it's difficult to talk about the importance of having

skilled and knowledgeable staff without sounding a little clichéd," continues Matthew. "I often hear food business owners paying lip service to providing 'training' for their staff, but delivering an effective and engaging program of product training requires careful balance." Ultimately, for Noemie, it comes down to just a handful of elements: "There are three main pillars of knowledge that can be communicated: variety, sensorial analysis and cheese preparation," she says. "These can all be taught on the counter; all that is required from the learner is a passion for cheese and an ability to talk to customers."

"Selling cheese requires specialist skills, not only on the product specifics, but also in the technical ability of cutting, wrapping and maintaining quality product," agrees Matthew. "I can't help myself in judging other food retailers by how they maintain their cheese counters,

and simple things like knowing how to properly cling film a piece of cheese to look like it wasn't even wrapped makes a huge difference to the overall appearance of the counter. Likewise, how you present a piece of cheese for the customer to take home will make a lasting impression, and hopefully encourage them to return." Regardless of the size of your cheese offering, it's well worth investing time in this area of your business. "Despite only having a modest cheese counter," he says, "I have personally spent a great deal of time at The Camden Grocer demonstrating to our own team how to properly wrap, label and cut cheese, because I see this being equally as important as learning about the production."

When it comes to the basics, Noemie explains, "Firstly, a cheesemonger is an expert in educating the customer on the varieties of cheese. Secondly, by

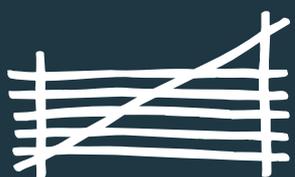
giving the customer an opportunity to use their senses; by guiding them through the appearance, taste, flavour and texture of the cheese, the cheesemonger can offer an exciting multisensorial experience. Recognising tastes such as savoury, bitter or flavours as earthy and lactic is an important part of early cheese training." Cheese preparation and storage are a key part of the cheesemonger's arsenal, Noemie says, allowing them to answer customer questions such as: "How do you assemble the perfect cheeseboard? How do you ensure a perfectly ripe Brie on the day of your party? What knife do you use to cut a Roquefort? These are the questions which a cheesemonger will learn through practical experience."

It's important to make all customers feel welcome to taste and learn about cheese in your establishment, as it's easy for the opposite to be the case. "When it comes to cheese, much like the wine world, there is always the potential of encouraging a retail environment full of elitist, self-satisfied cheese snobs who only serve to alienate customers who would otherwise seek to broaden their own knowledge and perhaps experience a new product," explains Matthew. "I find selling cheese and engaging with a captivated customer base a personally

rewarding experience, and having been fortunate enough to work for a number of years for one of London's most prominent cheesemongers, and also since setting up The Camden Grocer, I have gained a huge amount of first-hand experience in how effective staff training can impact on your business."

First and foremost, "forget about the impact of staff training on revenue," he advises. "Training your staff isn't about up-selling or trying to increase transaction value; customers are more mindful of superficial attempts at selling to them than you would think. Whilst it is important for staff to be aware of appropriate sales opportunities, in my opinion you'll see a far more organic increase in value from your staff engaging in human conversations, and sharing their passion and enthusiasm, than trying to push' products on to customers." This passion and enthusiasm comes from direct contact and personal experience of the products they're selling: "Share in the story, history, relationships and uniqueness of each cheese, and they should feel confident and excited to share this with your customers," Matthew continues. "Obviously this only works if your staff are engaged in the first place, but clearly you wouldn't employ anyone that wasn't!

"The specialist cheese shops of the world should be in a fortunate position of being able to invest time in ensuring that each customer receives the best possible experience in-store, one of the factors that influences a customer to visit a specialist in the first place, and this comes largely from the staff displaying expert, friendly and accessible advice," he concludes. "Make time for your staff to taste, ask questions and become motivated by the food they are selling."



PETER'S YARD

The natural choice for cheese

THE WORLD OF CHEESE

International produce is a must-have for any well-rounded cheesemonger – so what are the essential classics and the new trends from overseas worth stocking?

For most cheese shops, having a good quality Continental cheese offering is essential. The British cheesemaking scene hasn't always had the influx and variety of quality produce that it does today, so consumers turned their attention to Europe where the cheesemaking prowess of countries such as France only increased desire for the same produce to be available in the UK. The likes of Brie, Roquefort and Comté have remained classics and an absolute staple in many local cheesemongers.

It's worth noting that the UK's long-lasting love for cheeses from abroad has gone on to encourage British international-style products to emerge. Halloumi, for example, is a cheese originating from Cyprus that has taken the market by storm in the last couple of years, with consumer demand leading to British-made versions appearing alongside the traditional Halloumi on the shelves. High Weald Dairy in West Sussex makes two varieties – one 100%

sheep milk Halloumi and a blended Halloumi using cow and sheep milk. Another example is Gringa Dairy, a London-based business that creates Mexican cheeses, including Queso Fresco and Queso Oaxaca, using milk from Middlesex.

While there are many quality international-style cheeses out there on the market, the originals will continue to remain popular with consumers.

Continental best-sellers

With travel to Europe more easily accessible to a larger number of people, the opportunity to try the original produce and the desire to be able to enjoy it back at home as well has also increased – for many people there is no replacement for the real deal. For Svetlana Kukharchuk, founder of The Cheese Lady, the classic products from France continuously top the best-seller list at her shop, with the biggest sellers by far being Brie de Meaux and Comté.



Tim Collings, area sales manager at fine food distributor Rowcliffe, says that Swiss cheese is always popular. "Le Cret Gruyère from Switzerland is a big seller and an absolute stunning cheese. It's fairly unique in being a single estate Gruyère which has won the top award at The Swiss Gruyère awards countless times. The milk is sourced from just eight local farms in Fribourg and results in a full complex flavour full of floral notes and a rich nutty, caramel finish. It has to be tasted to be believed!" he says.

Expanding your offering

While it's key for retailers to keep a good selection of classic cheeses, now is also the ideal opportunity to start introducing some previously lesser-known produce from other areas of Europe, and even further afield, in order to whet the appetite of consumers that are looking for something new and exciting.

While certain Italian cheeses have become staples in many British households, there are many authentic products from the region that have not yet had their time in the spotlight. Tim goes on to say that are still plenty of Italian cheeses that are, "Not so much under appreciated but more under explored. Scratch beneath the surface of Parmesan, Mozzarella and Taleggio and you will

find a myriad of wonderful, diverse cheese waiting to be discovered. From the trendy, summery, cream-enriched balls of Burrata and Torta Gorgonzola with layers of Mascapone to Blu di Capra blue goats and the washed rind Madame, there is a whole other world to explore!"

Cheeses from Spain are also often highlighted less frequently than those from France, Italy and Switzerland. While produce from the country may be less well-known to customers in the UK, by no means does this translate to a lack of premium artisan cheeses, as some are made using traditional methods that go back centuries. Svetlana stocks a small but quality selection at The Cheese Lady. "We generally stock five to seven Spanish

“ Scratch beneath the surface of Parmesan, Mozzarella and Taleggio and you will find a myriad of wonderful, diverse cheese waiting to be discovered ”

From the heart of Brittany

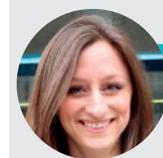
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FROM THE RETAILER...

Lucy Wright, operations manager at Buchanans Cheesemonger, on what international cheese are proving popular:

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHICH INTERNATIONAL CHEESES TO STOCK AT BUCHANANS CHEESEMONGER?

We currently stock Continental cheeses from France, Italy, Switzerland and Spain. We try to strike a balance between finding excellent examples of classic cheeses and some more unusual regional items. Either way, we strive to find exceptional cheeses and with some it feels necessary to try and distinguish ourselves from our competitors, for example we recently went to Italy in search of the best Parmesan we could find.

WHAT CHEESES ARE YOUR TOP SELLERS AT THE MOMENT?

In terms of provenance there's a real mixture at the top of our best-sellers list currently. It's nice to see

some brilliant British cheeses being served at top restaurants in London – Baron Bigod and Sinodun Hill do really well. In terms of international cheeses, we sell a lot of Burrata, especially in the summer when chefs like to use it on salads and sharing plates. Classic French cheeses like our aged Comté and Ossau Iraty rarely move from the top spots. Our customers also love Bleu des Basques, a ewes' milk blue from the French Basque Country that benefits from some time ageing in our maturing rooms before we sell it.

WHAT HAVE YOU NOTICED CHANGES IN CHEESE TRENDS WITH CUSTOMERS IN RECENT YEARS?

Our shop customers quite often ask for our recommendations and to be honest, I can't help but feel that they look a little disappointed

if, for example, we happen to think our Roquefort is tasting great that day – they want something new they haven't heard of. We want to encourage our customers to ask what's tasting great rather than what's new! A couple of crowd-pleasing cheeses that have ticked both boxes for us recently on the shop counter are our Swiss Etivaz and a mixed-milk Robiola from Piedmont. Both are reliably delicious and are considered a bit more unusual.

FROM WHAT COUNTRIES OR REGIONS ARE YOU STARTING TO SEE MORE EXCITING CHEESES COMING THROUGH?

There are lots of interesting cheeses being made in the USA, and the World Cheese Awards have shone a light on some great Norwegian cheeses in the last couple of years. We also tried and enjoyed some Swedish cheeses recently. It would be great to reach critical mass to be able to import directly from these places in the future.



cheese (out of 55+). I love all our Spanish cheeses and think they all offer something different. But I do have a soft spot for one of them in particular – Grazalema. Our wheels are over nine months old and pack a lot of flavour – there are sweet, nutty, caramelly notes to begin but it also has an unusual briney tang at the end, which comes from Grazalema's outside coat of lard and wheat germ – one of Spain's cheese preservation techniques," she explains.

Going international

These days there is an influx of exciting products coming through from the U.S. While it doesn't have the long-standing traditional cheesemaking history of the

Europeans – The American Cheese Society started in 1983 – and it may not be a part of the world that immediately spring to mind when it comes to cheese, there are a plethora of artisan makers producing premium local products coming through. At the recent International Cheese & Dairy Awards in Nantwich this July, Vermont-based Cellars at Jasper Hill Farm won The Champion Overseas award, emphasising that produce from the U.S. is making a name for itself and becoming recognised in the UK.

Svetlana also recognises U.S. cheeses, and produce from Jasper Hill Farm, as being ones to watch, saying, "I'm very excited by the American farmhouse and artisan cheeses! Americans are very passionate and love doing things 'just so'. Jasper Hill Farm in Vermont produces a number of outstanding and award-winning cheeses (including Harbison, Winnimere, and Cabot Clothbound) and Uplands Cheese Company in Wisconsin makes the incredible Pleasant Ridge Reserve. What makes them really stand out for me is the ethos that both companies have – they aim to produce cheeses that have "a taste of place" (also known as terroir, in the wine lexicon)."

ADVICE ON DISPLAY

Tim Collings, area sales manager at Rowcliffe, on how to display international cheeses:

"There is definitely a trend for feature cheeses within delis. Often seasonal, selling large cuts or whole cheeses is becoming increasingly popular with retailers looking to add a wow factor for their customers. From whole wheels of Gruyère d'Alpage and Parmigiano Reggiano to the much loved Vacherin Mont d'Or, customers love to see their cheese cut from a whole. One of our biggest selling cheeses is the eye-catching Scooping Gorgonzola which is served by scooping the cheese into deli pots. At 6kg it dominates the counter and it's a great way of being interactive with the customers and changing perceptions of how cheese is traditionally served."

“ Le Cret Gruyère from Switzerland is a big seller and an absolute stunning cheese. It's fairly unique in being a single estate Gruyère which has won the top award at The Swiss Gruyère awards countless times ”

A TASTE OF ITALIAN HISTORY.



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LIFE IS THERE TO BE SAVOURED.

THE ART OF THE CHRISTMAS CHEESEBOARD

Providing a carefully curated selection of cheeses at the counter with artisan accompaniments is a sure-fire way to make your store a one-stop-shop

When it comes to Christmas, the cheeseboard is more than just a gathering of different cheeses on a platter. It can be an event all on its own and a reason to gather family and friends together. A foodie's dream, it's an opportunity to purchase special cheeses that don't come out at any other time of year and also to sample some new and exciting produce. For retailers, in the lead up to the festivities it's important to ensure that you have a strong and varied offering that will appeal to a wide range of people.

The quality is key, as people visit speciality food and drink retailers in order to not only pick up premium produce, but also to be advised on what is good and why. It's worth presenting a curated range of international cheeses, as French produce in particular such as Brie, Camembert and Roquefort will always be popular. It is also however an ideal opportunity to incorporate some great local cheeses to support suppliers in the area.

While there are no hard and fast rules about what the 'perfect' cheeseboard should include, it is wise to cover the main bases, so recommending a great Cheddar, blue and soft makes for a solid starting point. Creating a balance between strong and mild flavours, as well as different textures, allows a cheeseboard to cater to people with a range of palates and preferences. This rings true for Vickie Rogerson, co-founder of *Homage2Fromage*, a cheese events company which runs fun, informal and informative cheese nights around the country. She says, "The wonderful thing about cheese is that it's entirely personal, so if you love Blues or can't get enough of Cheddars, don't be afraid to have more than one on your cheeseboard. The diversity and uniqueness of cheese from different regions and countries mean that each cheese will have its own personality."

Christmas is also the time of year when you will get customers come into your shop that will be selecting specialist cheeses for the first time, and this is where education and communication is key. Ensure that staff on the cheese

counter are up-to-date on all of the cheeses you will be offering during the festive season and are confident giving recommendations on how to pair them with each other, for a complementary cheeseboard, as well as with other accompaniments.

Vickie says that there are certain festive cheeses that she recommends make their way onto a Christmas cheeseboard, "We all remember the garish green sage Derby cheese from Christmases gone by, but hunt down an Original Sage Derby made by Fowlers. It's made the traditional way, so no garish green, and is a joy on any cheeseboard. I love the theatre of a Gorgonzola Dolce which is a goey, buttery, Italian blue that oozes over your cheeseboard. My current favourite Cheddar (it changes by the day) is Godminster Organic Cheddar, which is matured for 12 months, producing a soft and creamy cheese with a lovely bite. If you want to create a talking point then try the Yorkshire Charcoal Cheddar which is the first and original all-black Cheddar (there are lots of imitations). It's a creamy mature

Cheddar which tastes surprisingly good for something the colour of the night!"

Don't forget the accompaniments

An array of beautiful, high quality cheeses is boosted to another level by premium accompaniments, so be sure to advise shoppers on what accompaniments work



with different types of cheeses. Things like nuts, grapes and figs not only go with a range of cheeses due to their mild flavours, they're also useful when it comes to a pleasing presentation. Chutneys, pickles, relishes and piccaililis are classic pairings, so take the opportunity to recommend your favourites. Hawkshead Relish, for example, offers a dedicated

fruity Cheeseboard Chutney which contains figs, cranberries and apples and is finished with Pinot Noir, for a flavour that aims to complement a variety of cheeseboards. Honey is also a versatile match, and its sticky sweetness works well with sharper and stronger cheeses – try with a punchy goats cheese or a blue. The accompaniments are there to do just that and should not overpower the cheeses in terms of flavour or quantity.

Vickie also advises to, "Go steady on the chilli jam! It's delicious but can overpower some milder cheeses. I have a soft spot for Shaw's of Huddersfield Caramelised Onion Chutney. Also, drizzle a spot

“ The diversity and uniqueness of cheese from different regions and countries mean that each cheese will have its own personality ”



ALL THE FESTIVE TRIMMINGS

Stock a variety of cheeseboards – locally-sourced if possible – to complete your offering

While shoppers like to treat themselves, friends and family to the very best at Christmas, and you welcome a greater number of customers into your establishment, they're often tight on time and looking for a one-stop-shop. Offer everything they need for their festive cheeseboard – from cheeses and accompaniments to the board itself.

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RETAILER PERSPECTIVE...

Retail manager Amy Palomino talks about Christmas cheeses at Neal's Yard Dairy

HOW DOES RETAILING CHEESE DIFFER IN THE RUN UP TO CHRISTMAS COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE YEAR?

Christmas is a special time of year when selling cheese. We are thinking about Christmas in the summer, pulling all our plans together and building momentum into the autumn. Some of our customers make a yearly pilgrimage to Neal's Yard Dairy to get their Christmas cheeseboard. They might queue for 10 minutes, eat a bit of cheese whilst they are waiting and then spend some time with a cheesemonger on the slate, selecting their cheeseboard, ideally by tasting with their cheesemonger who will recommend the best of the

selection that day. The batches of cheese on the slate change rapidly in the week running up to Christmas as we sell through vast volumes. The atmosphere in the shops is wonderfully festive, it's an exciting time of year.

WHAT CHEESES WOULD YOU RECOMMEND FOR A CHRISTMAS CHEESEBOARD?

The nice thing about buying cheese in a shop, is that you can choose your cheeseboard based on what is tasting good that day. A classic selection is always a popular choice and would comprise of a Stilton style, Montgomery's Cheddar, a soft bloomy rinded cheese, such as Tunworth or Baron Bigod and perhaps a chunk of Kirkham's

Lancashire. It is a good idea to try and strike a balance across strength, texture and style. A good flavoured cheddar, the light buttery crumble of a Lancashire and an unctuous Blue will generally please a crowd. Lancashire goes particularly well with fruit cake as well. Our advice at Christmas is usually to select a few larger pieces of cheese rather than lots of smaller bits, as they tend to keep better and can be brought out for multiple occasions throughout the festive period. Our e-commerce team have chosen a traditional Christmas selection this year, which includes Colston Bassett Stilton, a Tunworth, Lincolnshire Poacher, a Dorstone, Rosebud Red Onion Marmalade, Thick and Thin Orkney Oatcakes. It's just right for a family of four to eat over a few days.

WHAT ABOUT ACCESSORIES?

We have recently released some cheeseboards, knives and tea-towels which we created to mark our 40th

birthday. The boards were made from old stilton shelves from the Colston Bassett Dairy and the knives were specially made for us in collaboration with Blenheim Forge.

DO YOU PUT TOGETHER GIFT SETS OR HAMPERS FOR CHRISTMAS? WHAT SORTS OF ACCOMPANIMENTS WORK WELL?

For a festive get-together, our online selection this year, the 'Christmas Feast', will include Hafod, Appleby's Cheshire, Colston Bassett Stilton, Baron Bigod, a Biscuit Selection and Rosebud Spiced Plum Chutney. It amounts to approximately 2.5kgs of cheese. We have a wide range of chutneys to choose from and fruit pastes made by England Preserves, a company based near us in Bermondsey, who make delicious preserves. These pair nicely with most cheese as the sweetness cuts through the cheese and acts as a good palate cleanser.

of honey on Blue cheese, it's delicious."

Last but not least, providing an interesting array of artisan crackers and breads is essential, ensuring that customers can purchase the full cheeseboard from you. Peter's Yard is a brand that offers sourdough flatbreads in a range of combinations, including Smoked Chilli. Stag Bakeries provides quality cheese straws, water biscuits and oatcakes, all of which are ideal cheeseboard companions.

Provide quality produce and expert service to ensure that your customers have everything they need to create their perfect cheeseboard this Christmas.



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Pioneers of the pantry since 1970

Sharp, tangy tastes are having a moment. At the Cook House restaurant, Newcastle, you'll find house pickles, beet top kimchi and pickled fennel salad on the menu. At Caravan bar in London's Bankside, there are homemade kombuchas and drinking vinegars. It's not just hipsters in the cities who're puckering up. At the Picnic Fayre deli, in Cley-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, fancy vinegars on tap are selling well. Their range includes blood orange balsamic, fig and date balsamic, raspberry vinegar, and orange, lemon and ginger. While balsamic vinegar is still a top seller, accounting for 55% of Waitrose's vinegar sales, speciality vinegars sales are up over 10% and cider vinegar 15.9% (Kantar Worldpanel).

WHY IS VINEGAR TRENDY NOW?

We're acquiring a taste for 'sour', fuelled by our continuing appetite for Levantine cuisine. There's also been a return to traditional crafts such as pickling, fermenting and sourdough bread-making. Fermented foods and vinegar are associated with improved digestion and gut health. Food writers are penning inspirational guides including Angela Clutton's *The Vinegar Cupboard* and Harry Rosenblum's *Vinegar Revival*. Finally, with the low- and no-alcohol trend, teetotalers are seeking drinks with complexity, health benefits and less sweetness. Enter the shrub – a fruit syrup preserved with vinegar and mixed with water, soda or alcohol to make a tangy cocktail.

I'VE HEARD OF VINEGARS MADE FROM PRIMROSES AND RHUBARB. WHO BUYS THIS WEIRD STUFF?

The main market is adventurous foodies including restaurant chefs. There are fun infusions to play with: from Burren Balsamics' Beetroot & Cocoa Nib to Yarty



SPECIALITY VINEGARS

Sales are sweet for the versatile condiment says Sally-Jayne Wright. Never mind Sarson's, give us wild garlic, walnut, and thyme flower-flavoured

Black Garlic Vinegar. Sales of black garlic went up 500% in the nine months to June 2019 based on chefs' word of mouth alone.

SO SHOULD I SPLASH BLOOD ORANGE BALSAMIC ON MY CHIPS?

Maybe not, but you can drizzle it over Ricotta or prosciutto-wrapped peaches; use it in orange and fennel salad or over fruit salad; sprinkle on spinach and pasta; use it to marinate fish and poultry, or enjoy on vanilla ice cream, chocolate pudding or citrus sorbet. The trick with unusual vinegars is to give customers ideas. The distributor Anthony Rowcliffe, who supplies Picnic Fayre with vinegar, can provide point-of-sale recipes.

TELL ME ABOUT SHRUBS OR DRINKING VINEGARS

Nonsuch have a range of juices and herbs ready-mixed with fizzy

water and apple cider vinegar, also neat fruit syrups you dilute yourself. We couldn't get enough of their intriguing Apple and Cardamom recipe. Shrb (sic) Drinks of Walthamstow have stylishly packaged 'prohibition sodas' with handy ring-pull openings. While not everyone will enjoy shrubs with food, non-drinkers are now spoilt for choice and we've come a long way since J20 and Britvic orange.

MY CLEAN-EATING CUSTOMERS ASK FOR APPLE CIDER VINEGARS "WITH THE MOTHER". WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

The mother is a jelly-like cluster of cellulose left in the bottle; it's where the ascetic bacteria that make vinegar thrive. It's believed to have probiotic qualities and benefit gut health. The words 'raw', 'unfiltered' and 'with the mother' suggest a well-made vinegar

and Willy's unpasteurised Herefordshire Apple Cider Vinegar (ACV) is a good example.

HOW CAN WE MAKE THE MOST OF THE SPECIALITY VINEGAR TREND?

We predict this year's Christmas gift for foodies will be artisan vinegar, so be sure to have enticing displays of bottles alongside vinegar-themed cookbooks. Train staff so everyone knows what to do with obscure variants and keep a crib sheet behind the counter. In summer, cooks use premium vinegars for marinades and salads; extend the season by offering suggestions for winter salads and pickles.

ANY OTHER HOT TIPS?

Have a vinegar of the month with tasters, recipes and made-up dishes. How about chocolate brownies made with Burren's raspberry balsamic? Offer refills at a small discount. "But

don't allow customers to tap their own or you'll be paying for wastage," warns Ashley Woodhouse, manager at Picnic Fayre.

WHOSE VINEGARS SHOULD I STOCK?

If you're in Kent, how about Mighty Fine Things, who have a triple fruit vinegar gift set including Damson, Raspberry and Apple Spiced. We also like Burren Balsamics' pack of three infused balsamic vinegars: Blackberry & Thyme, Armagh Bramley Apple and Strawberry & Mint. Outstanding raspberry vinegars include Womersley's which won three Great Taste Award stars, Yarty and Ballyhoura.

You don't have to buy British. Andy Harris of the Vinegar Shed specialises in small batch wine and cider vinegars, importing many from France including a thyme flower-infused vinegar made by Cistercian nuns. Trend Watch would love a bottle of his award-winning sushi ginger vinegar.

WILL THE TREND LAST?

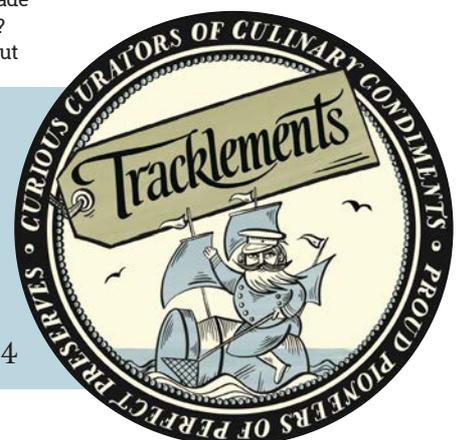
Definitely. Vinegar is versatile, healthy and has a long shelf life. Confession. 20 years ago, Trend Watch would not have known what to do with raspberry vinegar. Now we are drizzling it over beetroot, berries, Greek yoghurt, ice cream and experimenting with drinks. It took 15 years for balsamic vinegar to appear on Jo Public's dinner table, but look at it now.

Good cooks have always known that if a dish isn't coming together, acidity – not just salt – is what is lacking. Vinegar will brighten sales, too.

“ Good cooks have always known that if a dish isn't coming together, acidity – not just salt – is what is lacking. Vinegar will brighten sales, too ”

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FESTIVE ACCOMPANIMENTS

Chutneys and pickles are stocking essentials during the Christmas period. Here's how to preserve profits this festive season

When Christmas time starts rolling around, chutneys, pickles, relishes and piccalillis are a retailer's dream. While jars of chutneys and pickles are always going to be popular throughout the year, the festive season is when this category comes into its own. As products that have a long shelf life, they're great for early Christmas prepping and there is a plethora of different options

to choose from these days, with interesting combinations of fruit and vegetables coming to market all the time. Having the classics on offer as well is essential, so be sure to stock up on trusty products such as a flavourful red onion chutney to go with creamy goats cheeses as well as a zesty pickle for cold meats.

One producer known for its British-made artisan condiments is Tricklements, and Christmas is

the time of year when sales soar. Becky Vale, marketing director, says, "Christmas is such a great time to be part of the specialist food scene as it's when everyone tends to trade up, spoil themselves and treat friends and family to the very best versions of the foods we love. Tricklements always enjoys particularly strong sales as a result of this, after all, the best food deserves the best condiments.

“ We're bringing back our assorted nine mini jar gift pack which is full of tester pots of best-sellers and award-winners. It's a great till-side upsell pack which makes it the ideal 'thank you' present or stocking filler ”

In particular, we see sales of our classics soar – Fresh Chilli Jam, Particularly British Piccalilli and Original Onion Marmalade but other, more specialist products also see great sales – our Fruit Cheeses for example. Christmas is when consumers are more likely to experiment and try products they haven't tried before. For example, it's when someone might try our Sticky Fig Relish to go on their Christmas cheese

board and become a lifelong fan and purchaser.”

Christmas is also when customers that may not usually pick up an artisan chutney, pickle or relish, may be doing so for the first time or be choosing one as a gift. This is a great opportunity to sell with other items, so this is where knowledge of the products and how they can work well with certain cheeses, crackers and meats is paramount. It's not only wise to concentrate on the classic pairings, but to also let customers know about any more unusual offerings. After all, when it comes to gift purchasing it's often the opportunity to purchase something different to try. Why not entice potential customers with something boozy to get into the festive spirit. For example, brand Cartwright & Butler offers its Real Ale chutney,

FROM THE PRODUCER...



Founder Kylee Newton on what Newton & Pott has to offer:

WHAT FLAVOURS OF CHUTNEY ARE MOST POPULAR AT CHRISTMAS?

- For a cheeseboard – Newton & Pott's Beetroot & Orange chutney is the best cheeseboard accompaniment. The orange takes off the earthy aftertaste of the beetroot, with pops of coriander and mustard seed. It's perfect with all cheeses, hard, soft, blue and stinky.
- With cold meats – Our Posh Piccalilli. We hand-chop everything

so it isn't all mushed and you can taste every single vegetable that it's packed with. Piccalilli is actually a pickle, but the brine is thick due to adding cornflour to it.

WHAT'S THE USP OF NEWTON & POTT?

Newton & Pott are all handmade in small batches, so they aren't made in massive vats where you lose a certain quality control. We make ours in batches of 20-30 maximum, so it's just like you've made them at home.



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which is a traditional chunky recipe that uses real ale. Newton & Pott also offers its Gin Pickled Cucumber. Offering samples at the counter is a great way to introduce shoppers to a product and opens up the lines of communication, and if it's a local producer, it's the perfect time to be promoting provenance.

Getting on board with hampers

Once the countdown to Christmas is on and your shop is filled with customers wanting to purchase gifts, it's time to promote those pickles and chutneys. Whether you create your own gift hampers in-store or stock already prepared gift sets, ensure that a quality chutney or pickle is included.



PERFECT PAIRINGS

Becky Vale, marketing director at Tricklements, gives this advice:

We have a cheese pairing guide to help retailers recommend which Tricklements go with which cheeses – Tricklements Cranberry, Port & Orange sauce, for example, not only makes the perfect foil for turkey but is also unbeatable with a good gooey Brie. Lactic territorial, with their beautiful acidity and cool texture, can be brilliantly enhanced with a sweet, fruity chutney. There's something incomparably wonderful about pairing Tricklements Apricot & Ginger Chutney, defined by its sweet apricots and warm ginger flavour with a cool, crumbly Cheshire or buttery Lancashire cheese. Caramelised Red Onion relish offsets the gentle acidity of an artisan-made Wensleydale. We call it cheese and chutney alchemy.

Tricklements offers a mini gift pack that does exceptionally well over the festive season. Becky explains, "It was so popular last year that we're bringing back our assorted nine mini jar gift pack which is full of tester pots of best-sellers and award-winners. It's a great till-side upsell pack which makes it the ideal 'thank you' present or stocking filler. We also have our ever-popular Le Parfait gift jars which look great on festive tables – Cranberry, Port & Orange for Christmas and Christmas Spice Chutney and Particularly British Piccalilli for the Boxing Day cold cuts."

Hampers are also a big part of the festive season at the Suffolk Food Hall, with a quality pickle or chutney an essential inclusion. Nick Punter, marketing and design coordinator says, "We have a tasty range throughout the year but especially in the build up to Christmas as during the Christmas period our hamper service is a busy one, and most of them feature either a chutney or pickle product, so you can see the importance of them. I think it's good to have a diverse range because it offers something for everyone, we have a wide range of customers and we try to cater for them all."



“It's good to have a diverse range because it offers something for everyone”

"I think chutneys are far superior in their popularity within hampers because pickles are much more of an acquired taste, perhaps some might say 'the marmite' factor with pickles, you either love them or hate them. Chutneys however are very



popular in hampers, in a few of our bigger hampers we have one or two chutneys and they are definitely a popular item in our bespoke service. There will more than likely be a Christmas speciality chutney in our Christmas specific hampers which

will be released later in the year." For Nick there are certain brands and products that regularly top the bestsellers list. "Stokes and Scarlett & Mustard are brands that do well here at the Food Hall. Throughout the year we have a range of their chutneys and pickles, for example Scarlett & Mustard's Ploughman's pickle and Stokes' Real Ale chutney, as well as many fruit chutneys to add to the collection. For the festive period we will be stocking Scarlett & Mustard's Christmas range which will include their Boxing Day Pickle and Cracking Christmas Chutney. Also we will have in the Stokes Christmas range which includes a Spiced Winter Chutney, and both ranges will have special gift packs available, perfect for a present." For some customers, Christmas is the time to try something a bit different and this is where stocking luxury products with an unusual twist can often be a good move. Why not take a chance on a couple of

PRODUCER PERSPECTIVE...



Andre Dang, managing director of Manfood, on international inspirations

WHAT'S THE USP OF MANFOOD CHUTNEYS AND PICKLES?

We try and produce products that have eye-catching shelf appeal, but are also packed with flavour and great texture – we try to avoid bland, wet mush! All our recipes started life in my own kitchen at home. Since I'm half Malaysian and half Vietnamese, a lot of my flavours are inspired by

Asia and my travels. As such, we're quite good gap fillers for retailers, since we try and offer something they might not necessarily already have.

WHAT WOULD YOU RECOMMEND FOR CHRISTMAS?

For Christmas, we have an excellent Chipotle Honey Mustard which is great for ham, and our version

of cranberry sauce has paired star anise and chilli, which gives something a little different to liven up that turkey.

HOW DO INTERNATIONAL FLAVOURS INSPIRE YOUR PRODUCTS?

I'm lucky that being of mixed parentage, and also having travelled a fair amount, I've been exposed to lots of different cuisines. My childhood was always a blend of flavours, for example taking Asian spices and applying them to a more typical European-style dish. As such, I've used those inspirations in the range we offer.

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FROM THE RETAILER...

Finn Dunlop, general manager at Macknade Fine Foods, on what to stock and how to promote pickles and chutneys this festive season

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHAT TO STOCK FOR CHRISTMAS?

We will welcome samples to be sent in, but we also get out to trade shows such as Speciality & Fine Food Fair when we can to find other new products. Obviously the distributors are really important channels but we also cherish direct relationships with the producer. We pride ourselves on our wide range of chutneys and pickles, but over the past couple of years we have become more selective. Rather than having five different red onion marmalades, we are sticking to a maximum of three brands and curate the range from each producer carefully. If a product doesn't make it to the shelf, we will give feedback to the supplier about why not – whether that's taste, packaging or price point.

HOW DOES MACKNADE PROMOTE CHUTNEYS AND PICKLES IN THE RUN UP TO CHRISTMAS?

We love to host producers for tastings, so they can come face-to-face with our customers. Customers are then able to experience a product they may not otherwise

try and producers can also learn a lot about their product from that personal feedback. We create hotspot tables for featured products and ask our café team to introduce the chutney or pickle to a platter or sandwich that week. We also put on our own internal tastings and promotions on a regular basis where the deli team will put together complementary pairings of a chutney together with cheese, charcuterie, crackers and other products. Recently, we put on a supper club with a whole menu designed around the incredible mostarda 'chutneys' from our good friends at Le Tamerici in Italy.

WHAT PRODUCTS OR BRANDS ARE BEST-SELLERS?

We love our chutneys from around the world, as well as those from closer to home. Le Tamerici from Italy and Mrs Balls Chutney (a South African icon) are both favourites of our customers. On a more traditional note, our own label Ploughman's Chutney, made by Wooden Spoon, is our best-seller, but Bay Tree, Whitstable Pickle and Stokes are all very popular brands for us.

products with unique ingredients that can be a good talking point. Nick continues, "There are going to be interesting products turning up here this Christmas, with a couple really sticking out as being different; a cranberry fairy jelly with an edible silver leaf (essentially cranberry jelly with silver leaves in, which will look amazing with roast dinners this Christmas!) and an elderflower jelly with edible gold leaf."

“ We have a tasty range throughout the year but especially in the build up to Christmas, as during the Christmas period our hamper service is a busy one, and most of them feature either a chutney or pickle product ”



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SHOW PREVIEW: SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD FAIR 2019

Celebrating two decades of exceptional food
and drink – Speciality & Fine Food Fair
turns 20 this September

This September, over 10,000 food and drink professionals will be making the annual pilgrimage to Olympia, London to join this year's 20th anniversary celebrations of Speciality & Fine Food Fair. Over the past two decades the Fair has developed into an unmissable showcase for British and international talent.

Over three days, there's an opportunity to discover the latest ground-breaking products and inspiring brand launches from 700 exhibitors and participate in a diverse programme of talks and features covering the industry's most pressing topics and trends. Mix with respected industry experts whilst maximising the unparalleled networking opportunities with key decision makers. Over the next few pages we look at what you can expect to see and the evolution of the speciality sector.

At-show features

Situated on the ground floor, there will be an interactive picture board where visitors will be invited to take a polaroid and suggest who they think is set to be the biggest disruptor in the market. By the end of the Fair, the wall will offer a taste of the shape of the market to come, as suggested by the Speciality audience. Finally, visitors and exhibitors are invited to raise a glass to 20 years of Speciality & Fine Food Fair in the last hour of the Fair, Sunday to Tuesday, with a dedicated Happy Hour showcasing a selection of wines.

Destination food and drink

In the 20 years since its inception, the Fair has reflected the changing face of the industry; consistently highlighting emerging trends and providing a launch pad for many, now familiar brands and faces.

In July, *Speciality Food Magazine* collaborated with the Fair's new partner, English Heritage to honour 20 of the most inspiring icons in the fine food and drink industry. During the event at Wellington Arch, we asked Paul Hargreaves, Cotswold Fayre CEO and one of our Speciality Icons, how the show has changed since he first exhibited at the inaugural event in 1999: "In a word, 'massively!' At the first Fair there were so few exhibitors that we were able to drive in our van and park next to the stand at Olympia. Now vans are queuing around the block to get in! The growth of the Fair has exactly mirrored the growth of the



sector. There are far more retailers stocking quality food products and many more brands available to choose from."

This ongoing growth is best experienced in the vibrant Discovery Zone, which remains the show's go-to destination for visitors looking to source innovative suppliers. Providing an unparalleled platform for over 200 fledgling brands, there is always a real buzz in the aisles, as delegates sample the newest products to market.

Portfolio director, Soraya Gadelrab reflects on how the Fair's offering has developed: "The Discovery Zone remains an integral element of the exhibition's ongoing success. Over the years, it's become much more diverse and much more polished. There's a far broader product offering which caters to many different niche audiences and incorporates influences from around the globe. It personally makes me really proud that the show remains at the forefront of innovation. This is one of the reasons why we attract so many different types of visitors. Originally our audience was very focused on the independent retail sector but today we appeal to all areas – from the multiples to specialist shops; hospitality in all its guises; manufacturing; wholesalers; importers and exporters – there's

such a diverse and international mix of visitors. However, there are also elements that have stayed reassuringly the same, such as the passion and enthusiasm that each and every one of our producers brings to the event. They come to us year after year with their incredible stories and products, and that's what makes Speciality & Fine Food Fair so truly inspiring and special."

Twenty-twenty vision

It's not just the SFFF team who are celebrating their 20th birthday in 2019 – Cotswold Fayre, Divine Chocolate and Hawkshead Relish have also been industry pioneers over the past two decades. In 1999, Divine were ahead of the curve in terms of their ethical stance, and are the only chocolate company in the world that is Fairtrade and farmer-owned. As a social enterprise their farmers receive 44% of profits, whilst 2% of sales is invested in supporting farmers. At the Fair, Divine will be launching a special edition Lemon & Juniper Berry chocolate bar – a nod to consumers love of all things gin-related.

Hawkshead Relish will be hosting a commemorative book signing on Stand 1900 at 2pm on Monday with Radio 2's Nigel Barden, who has written the foreword to the cookbook. This

@specialityfood



covers their store cupboard essentials and what to do with them. Additionally, Hawkshead will be presenting their new creations – Roast Vegetable Relish and a Sour Cherry & Prosecco Jam.

Cotswold Fayre, alongside other leading wholesalers such as Diverse Fine Food and Hider, will be bringing their carefully curated ranges to the Fair. They each deliver an effective solution to many visitors looking to source their ranges directly from well-established specialist businesses that know the industry inside-out.

Identify the latest trends – what’s making the industry tick...

Each year there are a handful of trends that really stand out. Adrian Boswell from Selfridges and SFFF Ambassador highlights some of the key developments that can be identified at the Fair: “Natural, organic, sustainably-

sourced and healthy products are all playing a significant role in the brands we’re seeing emerging. As consumer knowledge increases about how food production affects the planet, this will continue to drive awareness and create demand for products that fulfil these environmental requirements, and which also promote an overall healthy lifestyle.”

Sustainability driving the sector

It’s a movement that isn’t going to go away any time soon. This year the hot topic of sustainability makes several appearances within the show’s content programme.

On Sunday’s Food For Thought stage, City Harvest will be hosting an informative session on The Fight To Reduce Food Waste. With the equivalent of 1.3 billion tons of food wasted every year, its vital that producers, food service providers and retailers all play a role in

tackling this issue. Whilst over on Savour The Flavour on Sunday, there’s also a session on ‘Decreasing Food Waste – How to CompleAT’.

On the show floor, more and more producers are seeking to minimise their environmental impact, with many placing sustainability right at the heart of their business ethos. Shore, the Scottish Seaweed Company (Stand 4542), is launching a puffed snack made with 100% sustainable seaweed. The harvesting of this nutritionally rich crop is not only good for the coastal environment, it’s also beneficial to the economy of local rural communities. More generally, sea-veg is very on trend as a plant-based source of protein with many additional health benefits. You can see this showcased on the Savour The Flavour stage on Sunday – find out how seaweed can be incorporated into your dishes. Chloë Stewart, the founder of Nibs

“Natural, organic, sustainably sourced and healthy products are all playing a significant role in the brands we’re seeing emerging. As consumer knowledge increases about how food production affects the planet, this will continue to drive awareness and create demand for products that fulfil these environmental requirements, and which also promote an overall healthy lifestyle”

ADRIAN BOSWELL, SELFRIDGES AND SFFF AMBASSADOR



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etc. (Stand 4726) is 'on a mission to redefine the concept of waste' by making nourishing, sustainable snacks from ingredients that would normally be thrown away. A key ingredient in her granola is fruit and vegetable pulp, collected from juice manufacturing partners in London. A regular at Borough Market, this is Nibs Etc's first appearance at the Fair.

For those who could never bear to give up cheese, The Ethical Dairy (Stand 2010b) has created a business model based around treating its animals, the land, environment and the people who work there with respect and kindness. The founders strive to demonstrate that 'cow with calf' dairy farming is both viable and sustainable at scale. It's a compelling case study.

In the war on plastic, many

producers and buyers are keenly focused not just on what's in a product ingredient-wise, but also how it's packaged. The Food For Thought stage addresses this issue in Monday's session, People vs. Plastic: What's Retail's Role?

There are many exhibitors tackling the problem such as Two Farmers (Stand 4610). Hailing from rural Herefordshire, this new crisp producer aims to protect the countryside by introducing a 100% compostable bag derived from sustainable eucalyptus pulp, plant-based foil and biodegradable ink. The crisps are made using potatoes grown, harvested, stored, cooked and packed using renewable energy generated on their farm – it's a holistic and forward-looking model for how food producers should operate.

Free-from and better for you

Unless you've been experiencing a news blackout, you can't have missed the rise in prominence of plant-based alternatives.

Steve Walpole, chef consultant and host of the Savour The Flavour demonstration kitchen explains this seismic shift: "It's a cycle of food trends with a plant-based diet once again making its way round to influence Millennials. That said, there is stronger, scientific-based evidence today in terms of environmental impact and health benefits to support a meat-free lifestyle than in the 60s and 70s. This along with a more competitive market which allows for more alternatives to be made readily available to the public. This change makes it much easier to sustain a



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EXHIBITOR NEWS

A Taste of Hungary

Monkia Gyenes, founder of Best of Hungary comments, "Hungarian food in the UK at the moment is firmly one of untapped potential. It is a country with a thousand years of gastronomic traditions, expertise and know-how, a rich soil and the ideal climate for growing produce full of flavour – we also have an excellent track record at the Great Taste Award in recent years, proof that the country has a lot to offer to British customers, yet it is neglected in supermarkets and independent's alike. This is in stark contrast to less 'premium' products from more well-known European nations. This is what Best of Hungary is on a mission to change.

When it comes to wine, Hungarian still and sparkling wines from a surprising number of producers are garnering the highest recognitions at international wine competitions. There is a renewed interest

amongst customers who are either rediscovering these wines from their youthful years, or the current younger generations who are looking to try wines from new and exclusive wineries from less well-known countries. This is proof that if positioned correctly, Hungarian wines have the potential to appeal to the large, medium priced segment of the market with a varied offering of dry white and red wines, from both indigenous Hungarian as well as well-recognised international varieties, providing a fresh take on old favourites as well as new and exciting flavours while being excellent value for money. It is our aim to achieve this by working closely with over 15 award-winning winemakers and presenting a hand-picked selection from the length and breadth of Hungarian wine making, to ensure that both everyday consumers, exacting professionals and true connoisseurs have an indelible smile on their face when tasting a glass of Hungarian wine."

plant-based lifestyle, so both retail and hospitality businesses are responding accordingly."

OGGS (Stand 4536) create egg and dairy-free alternative cakes made with aquafaba, an all-plant liquid egg substitute made from chickpea water. Grecious' (Stand 4527) product range includes Organic Wholegrain Tahini which benefits from being high in good fats, antioxidants, fibre and proteins.

Another producer promoting nutritious seeds and ancient grains is Fire Grain Freekeh (Stand 4531). From seed to fork, the family-owned business, plants, harvests and produces freekeh the authentic way, by burning green wheat and rubbing it clean. The result is a grain that has amazing health benefits and delicious smoky flavor. Elsewhere, Zepice (Stand 5023) offer Mauritian-

inspired spice blends to be used for authentic marinades or curries.

Positive Kitchen (Stand 5012) is a plant-based food innovation company that 'thinks about food differently'. Their ethos centres around creating food charged with goodness and maximum taste using minimal ingredients. Additionally, The Brook's (Stand 4518) mission is use their restaurant experience and translate it into making plant-based dining simple, accessible and tasty. Using the finest ingredients, they create premium quality frozen food such as Persian Khoresh and Jackfruit Rendang for retail and foodservice operators.

Speciality & Fine Food Fair Ambassador, Paul Hargreaves comments on the rise of plant-based: "Within the next five years Generations X and Y will tip over

into 50% of consumer spending. A higher percentage of these younger generations are either meat-reducing or complete vegans. What has changed recently is the reason for consumer's decisions to reduce meat or become vegan. Years ago, this was more to do with animal wellbeing, which is still a factor, but more people now are choosing to be vegan due to the high carbon impact of farming animals. Methane is up to 30 times more damaging than CO2."

Celebrating local and embracing international

As part of the sustainability agenda, there is a real move towards reducing food miles, ensuring transparency and supporting our local economies through the sourcing and supply of local

products. Restaurant menus have been trumpeting their locally sourced ingredients for years and this is becoming a much wider movement. On Monday's Food For Thought stage discover Local Heroes – Your New Source of Revenue and how retailers can

capitalise on the food and drink on their doorstep.

However, 'loving local' doesn't mean we're turning our back on our international neighbours – far from it. There is an ongoing enthusiasm from ever more adventurous consumers for new

“Speciality & Fine Food Fair continues to be an unrivalled destination, condensing a year's worth of product sourcing, trend spotting and networking into three fantastic days. This year's 20th anniversary Fair promises to put on a fitting celebration and we look forward to welcoming 10,000 hungry visitors!”

SORAYA GADELRAH, EVENT DIRECTOR

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Seggiano is proud to announce two new products which distil the quintessence of Sicily: Cherry Tomato Salsa 330ml and Tomato Passata 500g.

Within the Salsa, natural sugars and full spectrum tomato flavours are maintained via a unique vacuum cooking process, preserving maximum flavours and nutrients. Meticulous temperature control conserves antioxidants and high lycopene content.

The Passata, like the salsa, is made with high summer August field-grown tomatoes and contains twice the flavour of any other passatas we have tried. It's intense thick rich red colour attests to the high concentration of lycopene antioxidant. As with the salsa, the tomatoes are picked during the day and processed the same evening, ensuring that most polyphenols and other nutrients are conserved.



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Stand
2036

and intriguing global cuisines. In response to visitor demand, Speciality & Fine Food Fair is expanding its international offering, welcoming Belgium (Flanders and Wallonia), Mexico in partnership with MexGrocer and Gveongnam Trading, showcasing speciality food from South Korea. They'll appear alongside long-standing contributors such as France, Brazil, Italy, Spain and many more. Our love affair with food from around the world will be highlighted with the Ready, Steady, Speciality! An International Affair session on Sunday's Savour The Flavour demo stage.

Ready for a snack attack

Snacking is another growth area, as consumers continue to take a much more convenient approach to eating. To keep up our stamina up is Kate Percy's Go Bites (Stand 4602), a range of vegan and gluten-free, all-natural bite-sized energy balls. There's always enthusiasm for better for you treats. The Irish brand, supernature (Stand 4914) hit the mark with their healthy chocolate snacks that are organic, gluten, dairy and refined sugar-free and vegan friendly.

Snacks created to accompany drinks are another emerging category as seen with the arrival of The Drinks Bakery (Stand 4544). Their Scottish baked biscuits match the flavour profile of different drinks, from craft beers to small-batch gins, malt whiskies and fine wines. Similarly, Made For Drink's (Stand 4570) range of products is inspired by drinking cultures from around the world and includes duck fritons best served with an IPA, and patacone chips which are perfect partners alongside an ice cold cerveza or golden rum.

Raising a glass to booming beverages

The Drinks Cabinet returns for the second year. Visitors can capitalise on the continuing success of the booming drinks market by meeting



SAVOUR THE FLAVOUR: LIVE KITCHEN

TIME	SUNDAY 1 SEPTEMBER	MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER	TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER
11:00 - 11:45	Trends Demo: Seagreens John Lawson By John Lawson Limited	Unveiling Great Taste Awards' Supreme Champion John Farrand Guild of Fine Food	The Importance of Quality Ingredients Daniel Britton
12:00 - 12:25	Decreasing Food Waste - How to ComplEAT	Interactive Cooking Experience	Vegan Sushi Making / Vietnamese Summer Rolls
12:45 - 13:10	Trends Demo: The Versatility of Meat Alternatives Frank Lewis The Meatless Farm Co.	Guild of Fine Food Presents: The Academy of Cheese Jilly Stich Guild of Fine Food	Cooking with the Great Taste Awards Steve Walpole Steve Walpole Ltd
13:45 - 14:10	How to Taste Chocolate like a Pro Hazel Lee Devoted to Fine Chocolate	Cooking with the Great Taste Awards' Supreme Champion Steve Walpole Steve Walpole Ltd	Guild of Fine Food Workshop Jilly Stich Guild of Fine Food
14:45 - 15:10	Ready Steady Speciality! An International Affair Steve Walpole Steve Walpole Ltd	Ready Steady Speciality! A Plant Based Special Steve Walpole Steve Walpole Ltd	Ready Steady Speciality! A Spotlight on Gut Health Jay Marjaria, Dynasty Dining Club Steve Walpole, Steve Walpole Ltd
16:00 - 16:15	Speciality Presents: Top Artisan Picks from Around the Fair Steve Walpole Steve Walpole Ltd	Speciality Presents: Top Artisan Picks from Around the Fair Steve Walpole Steve Walpole Ltd	Speciality Presents: Top Artisan Picks from Around the Fair Steve Walpole Steve Walpole Ltd

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

TIME	SUNDAY 1 SEPTEMBER	MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER	TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER
11:00 - 11:40	Bio-hacking: the Self-Health Uprising Hosted by: Yasemen Kanar-White, Carosela Panellists: Michael Fitzgerald, Body and Mind Botanicals; Sophie Medlin BSc Hons RD, City Dietitians	In Conversation with... Rob Woodall - A Meat-Free movement Interviewer: Holly Shackleton, Speciality Food Magazine Interviewee: Rob Woodall, The Meatless Farm Co.	The Search for Product Innovation Presented by: Andrew Allen Food Entrepreneur
12:00 - 12:40	The Fight to Reduce Food Waste in Partnership with City Harvest London Hosted by: Nikki Tadema, City Harvest London Panellists: Alice Gilsenan, Tiny Leaf; Paul Hargreaves, Cotswold Fayre; Aisling Hayes, The Sustainable Restaurant Association	Local Heroes - your new source of revenue Hosted by: Claire Brumby, Claire Brumby Panellists: James Golding, The Pig Hotels; Rupert Ponsonby, R&R Teamwork and Co; Thain Coventry, Milk & More	Driving On and Offline sales through social media Presented by: Mike Davis, Brilliant Agency; Jake Newbould, Brilliant Agency
13:00 - 13:40	BYOB - Bring Your Own Bacteria Hosted by: Alana MacFarlane, The Gut Stuff Panellists: Lisa MacFarlane, The Gut Stuff; Nicola Stransky, The Urban Fermentary	People vs. Plastic: What's Retail's Role? Hosted by: Sián Sutherland, A Plastic Planet; Panellists: Laura Boyes, Hetu; Andrew Thornton, Thornton's Budgets	Improving sales from the 'Low & No' movement Hosted by: Claire Brumby, Claire Brumby
14:00 - 14:40	The 'Why' behind Food Trends Charles Banks, The Food People	Getting Personal - Is customisation the way to please the fussy modern consumer? Kamila Sitwell, Bespoke	Pitch Live! Hosted by: Adrian Boswell, Selfridges & Co Judges: Jayne Noblet, The Seed Fund Karen Green, The Food Mentor Scott Winston, Scott Winston Fine Food Consulting
15:00 - 15:40	Pitch Live! Hosted by: Jayne Noblet, The Seed Fund Judges: Karen Green, The Food Mentor; Scott Winston, Scott Winston Fine Food Consulting Guest Judge: Jeremy Bowen, JB Food Solutions	Pitch Live! Hosted by: Jayne Noblet, The Seed Fund Judges: Sophie Davies, Planet Organic Karen Green, The Food Mentor Scott Winston, Scott Winston Fine Food Consulting	Pitch Live! The Final Hosted by: Jayne Noblet, The Seed Fund Judges: Nicholas Moorley, Sainsbury's Future Brands; Karen Green, The Food Mentor; Scott Winston, Scott Winston Fine Food Consulting; Guest Judge: Jeremy Bowen, JB Food Solutions
16:00 - 16:40	Fresh Discovery Award Presentation Soraya Gadelrab, Speciality & Fine Food Fair		



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course, the all-important Great Taste Supreme Champion. The overall winner will be unveiled at the show on Monday following the prestigious Golden Forks Awards dinner on Sunday evening.

For those just starting out on their journey, the Speciality & Fine Food Fair team will also be announcing their very own winners in this year's Fresh Discover Awards – and don't forget to vote for your Visitor's Choice favourite whilst you're there! Additionally, make time to see the PITCH! Live finalists take to the stage for a Dragons' Den-style session pitching to leading retailers and buyers and the Speciality audience. There will be three finalists over the three days of the Fair and the overall winner will be announced on Tuesday 3rd September at 3:00pm on the Food For Thought Stage.

Plan your visit

As well as tickling the tastebuds, the Fair always aims to stimulate the old grey matter with an engaging range of presentations and panel discussion on the Food For Thought and Savour The Flavour stages. See timetables opposite.



with mixologists, source new products and uncover the latest trends, including the emergence of exciting 'low and no' options.

Find spirit enthusiasts Bright Spirits' (stand 3304) range of naturally distilled gins, and a convenient cocktail solution for busy bar operators, Pinkster Gin Jam Cocktail Mix (stand 3409) made from a by-product of its signature raspberry-infused gin.

Premium mixer sales reached £323.1m in the year to April 2019. Capitalise on this trend with innovative brands including Lixir Tonics (stand 4702) all-natural flavoured tonics. Jeffrey's Tonic (stand 4945) will showcase its new concept in tonic, syrups made with natural ingredients, developed as the ideal mix for sparkling water, gin, cocktails and mocktails.

The steady rumble of rum continues with the number of brands increasing fourfold since 2016 from 50 to nearly 200, accounting for £1bn worth of sales. Discover Sisserou (stand 4961) blended Rum & Coconut Cream Liqueur. New brand Redvulette (stand 4636) will sample its lower ABV concept – Redvulette Rum Punch – authentic white rum blended with fresh topical juices.

Free-from is well established on the menu and drink is no exception. Pioneering this trend is premium Belgium-based craft brewery Sulzbacher (stand 930e) specialising in gluten-free beers including its flagship Ginger Tipple based on fresh ginger and hops.

Exhibitors pioneering the 'low and no' category, driven by 33% of consumers who are reducing their alcohol consumption, include Go Kombucha (stand 3513) with its Great Taste award-winning 'heritage kombucha' – sweet and sour with an alcohol-like kick and champagne-like effervescence.

First-time exhibitors

Reflecting the continuing growth of the popularity of Japanese food in the restaurant sector, first-time exhibitor NoJo London (Stand 5034) will be showcasing its range of natural, vegan, refined sugar and gluten-free Japanese inspired sauces that transform your everyday meal. These include Teriyaki, White Miso and Sesame.

New Zealand-made Tahi Honey (Stand 3228) will be exclusively launching Beelicious Honey for kids, 100% natural and sustainably-produced honey, made to the highest ethical standards and underpinned by a sincere environmental philosophy. Also sample Tahi's original Manuka Honey range and the recently added Pohutukawa and Kanuka Honeys.

The winning formula

Speciality & Fine Food Fair continues its long-standing partnership with the Guild of Fine Food. For a comprehensive overview of newest additions to the Great Taste hall of fame, visitors can head to the Great Taste Deli which reveals all of 2019's three star products, Top 50 and of



JUST GOURMET FOODS

Just Gourmet Foods launched in 2018 with a simple purpose: to bring quality clean, artisanal Italian food and drink products to the UK – and founder Gianfranco Perri is inviting buyers to sample its range at the upcoming Speciality & Fine Food Fair, taking place at London's Olympia 1st-3rd September 2019. From the finest Italian olive oil to speciality ambient items and sweet and savoury delicacies, Just Gourmet Foods is dedicated to supplying the best of Italian food and drink. Just Gourmet Foods will be on stand 1810 at Speciality & Fine Food Fair.



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Stand
1810

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“Culture is what happens when the CEO isn't in the room.” So says tech entrepreneur John Collison in *Culture Shift* (£20, Bloomsbury), a new book by Kirsty Bashford – consultant to FTSE 100 firms – that explores how any business can grow faster and stronger by addressing its inherent nature. So, how much thought do you give to the culture of your organisation? From the moment your key turns in the front door of your store, the actions of you and your staff create an unspoken ethos that will be as obvious to your accountant as it will to your customers. Your staff might nod along as you explain a new way to calculate wastage or the reason behind an extra step when ringing up sales, but do they carry out your wishes when you're not on the shop floor? Could they communicate your principles to a new customer, and are they as committed to making the small changes that you know will make a difference to your bottom line? If not, your organisation's culture could be overdue a rethink. Here's how...

1 Don't underestimate your culture

Whatever principles you *think* guide operations in your outlet, here's a wake-up call. It is the workplace culture you create (or allow to flourish) that calls the shots. “Culture is the sum total of the way we think, interact and behave in an organisation,” says Kirsty. “It is the pervasive character of the business, through everyone's perceptions, language and actions. Its core should include a clear sense of purpose and shared values that guide decision-making across the company. Culture is hard to pin down: when it runs smoothly, you know it; when it works against you, that becomes evident too. Nonetheless, it remains difficult to define. You can see culture in the moments when no one has to issue instructions, because people just know how to accomplish a goal, or when people make decisions under stress, or when customers and clients summarise their experience with a firm and its employees.”

“It is the workplace culture you create (or allow to flourish) that calls the shots”

2 Get to know your business better

It may be more accurate to think of your business as having ‘cultures’. For example your Saturday shift might be defined by local students who have a loose grip on the difference between your two Pecorinos but give you zero grief about the shelving in the bank of chillers. Tuesdays might be ruled by very-part-time Mandy who greets every customer with a speech

8 WAYS TO FIX YOUR WORKPLACE CULTURE

Whether productivity has slumped, profit slipped or morale gone off a cliff, when businesses lose their mojo it takes a culture change to get the magic back...

“If you're filled with dread at the idea of implementing a culture change in your business, it's worth remembering that the process will be a marathon, not a sprint”

about your shop's fine ethics but is noticeably lax on hand washing. Having staff – and management – drift in and out through out the working week can create a lack of cohesion that seriously undermines the goals of your business. “How often does the top team take time to reflect on the culture, deep dive into weak areas, analyse sustainability, and check for emerging risks?” asks Kirsty. “It's not unusual to have an annual strategy review, so why do we not have an annual cultural review too?” Speak to staff and quietly get a feel for what's really happening on the shop floor, noticing the subtle ways they work.

3 Understand change is a process, not a destination

A Tesco Extra opens on the fringes of your territory and you decide an overhaul of customer service is necessary to keep regulars loyal. You deliver a barnstorming call to arms to your staff who agree to go the extra mile to woo customers, but... “If you don't follow it up with the principles of system change and the way you need to carry out your role as the air-traffic controller of it all, then it will have been simply a great moment of engagement to energise the organisation around an aspirational identity that either fades from the memory or worse, becomes a focal point for scepticism and derision about ‘yet another initiative’,” says Kirsty. “Old, or simply current, habits will win through and nothing much will have changed, other than probably entrenching a bit more resistance to change in the future.”

4 Pace things right

If you're filled with dread at the idea of implementing a culture change in your business – over and above the thousands of other tasks that keep you awake at night – it's worth remembering that

the process will be a marathon, not a sprint. Maybe your business has to abandon its flagship sourcing policy to grow parts of your range beyond a niche set of suppliers. “There are some general principles and practical considerations for leaders in terms of communicating, implementing and sustaining change,” says leadership consultant Anni Townend. First, elements that you need to do fast. “Comprehensively articulate with absolute conviction the reason for the change, painting a very clear picture of the future.” Next, the part that you can implement lowly over a period of time. “Break the change down into smaller steps: the execution and implementation, trialling a few product items and generating data to inform and help with longer term implementation plan. This is a reduced risk approach and therefore less likely to generate concern and anxiety.”

“Encouraging people to be curious about each other and asking a few questions to facilitate this helps build a cohesive team”

5 Challenge your top-down thinking

You don't have to be a Silicon Valley hotshot to mine the smartest ideas from your workforce that will take your business forward. Take the example of a zero-waste refit, where the culture of your business shifts dramatically towards self service. “The leader and their team need to think through those areas that will

be difficult and easy for customers bringing their own jars and bags, and the risks they can see not only for the store and stock,” suggests Anni, who helped set up a refill store in Sheffield more than 30 years ago. “Inviting staff members to share their success stories of where they may already have had experience of refill schemes is really helpful. Engaging staff in sharing ideas about what might work and what is possible will generate excitement. The leader needs to encourage staff to see this as a big opportunity to learn from each other, and from their customers. To help their customers learn that what might initially seem difficult becomes easier. Customers themselves are engaged in sustaining the change, and making suggestions for how it can be improved.”

6 Work smarter, not harder

Running a business is utterly exhausting, but just how many of those ‘do or die’ tasks on your to-do list could reasonably be delegated to another member of the team? If the answer is ‘none’ you could be creating a culture of individual responsibility that's as demotivating for your team as it is draining for you. “The best performing businesses in which people are achieving extraordinary things are the businesses where people's behaviour and ways of working are aligned and unified behind a stated purpose, a direction and way of doing things,” says Kirsty. “Less time is needed for micro-management because employees are clear on how things should be done, and what the priorities are. Vital time can then be funnelled into strategy and innovation, resulting in higher engagement and productivity, with the benefits filtering their way through to customer experience. Employees don't require so many instructions, instead working off core principles that really matter.” Sounds good? Investing time in fixing your shop's culture – workers' sense of autonomy and responsibility to act – can seriously free you up for more strategic thinking.

“Running a business is utterly exhausting, but just how many of those ‘do or die’ tasks on your to-do list could reasonably be delegated to another member of the team?”

7 Take staff with you...

Ever faced a wall of stoney faces when attempting to subtly shift the direction of your business? “It's useful for any leader to remember that change, whether welcomed or not, is often accompanied by some fear and trepidation – often of the unknown,” says Anni. “Being aware of this can hugely help a leader pay attention to the importance of creating psychological safety in the team. Getting to know each other through working together is one way, as well as taking time out to focus on building relationships between the old guard and the newcomers. Building a little time into your regular routines to foster respect and trust between your team members will make for a workforce more resilient to change.”

“Bringing in new expertise is a surefire way to freshen your outlook, but will also raise some hackles”

8 Especially those who hold things back

Every team has its long-serving stalwarts who have both feet firmly planted in the culture you're keen to change. Bringing in new expertise – particularly by changing recruitment habits to look beyond a close-knit circle of extended family and friends – is a surefire way to freshen your outlook, but will also raise some hackles. “It's about being aware that for the ‘old guard’ change may be experienced largely as being about ‘endings’ with all the sadness, anxiety and resistance that this can bring. Identify the ‘opinion leaders’ in the old guard who are held in high regard. Work with them to better understand the concerns of others – helping them see the rationale behind the change can hugely help in building a cohesive team. It's they who will be able to engage others in the old guard and promote an openness that will encourage them to get to know and work with the new people.”

“You don't have to be a Silicon Valley hotshot to mine the smartest ideas from your workforce that will take your business forward”



STOCKING UP FOR CHRISTMAS



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SELLING FESTIVE TIPPLES

Clear signage, clever marketing tools and a varied product range are essential when it comes to promoting your Christmas drinks

The drinks industry is going through a real creative boom right now, with new launches taking to the shelves all the time, and with the lead up to Christmas it's important to be fully stocked up with interesting products for your customers. Times are changing, and one of the biggest shifts in the world of drinks has been the rise of low and non-alcoholic beverages. According to Mintel's *British Lifestyles Report*, 47% of alcohol buyers/drivers stated that they've cut back or limited the amount of alcohol they've consumed in the last 12 months (to November 2018). There are of course several factors that come into play with a cultural shift like this, with one of them being health reasons. Consumers are becoming more aware of eating and drinking more healthily, as well as being aware of quality ingredients, and campaigns such as Dry January have shone the spotlight on drinking habits and reducing alcohol intake.

This has opened up the opportunity for soft drinks manufacturers to innovate and cater to the growing number of consumers who are reducing the amount of alcohol that they drink or are teetotal. In fact, according to the same report by Mintel, the non-



Enhance your Christmas spirit with Folkington's. The perfect mixer...

Folkington's authentic juices and mixers

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“At Christmas, gifting continues to be key and year-on-year the UK consumer is spending more at Christmas. The current trends will continue with growth in flavoured gins, rum and Vermouth, all of which pair well with our tonics and mixers available in handy take-home fridgepacks”

JAMES WILLIAMS, UK SALES AND MARKETING DIRECTOR AT FOLKINGTON'S

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alcoholic drinks retail market grew by 15.4% between 2013-18, with 'adult soft drinks' among the fastest growing soft drinks segments. The soft drinks industry as a whole was estimated to be at £11.3 billion in 2018.

So when it comes to Christmas this year, it's key to have a good selection of quality low and non-alcoholic options, amongst the alcoholic offerings, that cater for shoppers that will be wanting to pick up a selection for themselves and their guests during the festivities. While spicier ingredients like cinnamon and ginger scream Christmas, why not delve into the fresher flavours as well as botanical and fruit flavourings are all the rage at the moment. Be sure to feature drinks that not only taste good on their own, but that could also pair well with alcohol as a mixer if desired.

Folkington's is a brand which offers premium tonics and mixers, and as a business is preparing for consumer demand for non-alcoholic options to continue. James Williams, UK sales and marketing director at Folkington's says, "We have seen significant growth across our juices and presses as consumers are looking for a refreshing and great tasting alternative and there is greater acceptance socially that opting not to drink is good. 65% of consumers in the on-trade are seeking to lead a healthier lifestyle and this presents a great opportunity for coffee shops and delis to provide a space for consumers to meet and socialise.

"We are also seeing growth ahead of the market for our premium tonics and mixers, where consumer feedback has shown that they are being consumed on their own or as part of a spritz. 61% of consumers in the on-trade would like to see a greater range of soft drinks in



FROM THE DISTRIBUTOR...

Nikki Castley, buyer at Cress Co., on the tipples at the top of bestseller list...

ARE YOU EXPECTING LOW AND NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS TO BE EXTRA POPULAR THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON?

Generally we need the sun to be shining to see the volumes increase within our soft drinks category, however the festive season is a great trading period and soft drinks, especially mixers, are always in demand at this time of year. The popularity of flavoured tonics continues and with the emergence of some very interesting flavour combinations these are delicious drinks in their own right. Low-alcohol or quality alcohol substitutes have improved dramatically and although will never match their full strength equivalents are certainly giving them a good run for their money.

ANY BRANDS OR FLAVOURS PROVIDING PARTICULARLY POPULAR?

Good quality mixers are a must for the festive period, whether pairing with favourite spirits or enjoying on their own with ice, producers are continually innovating within this category. Tonic certainly seems to be at the forefront of the innovation race with new flavour profiles being introduced to the market, with Oriental Yuzu, Pink Rhubarb, Valencian Orange and even a festive Clementine Tonic Water with Cinnamon, there appears to be a flavour or indeed

colour to suit all tastes. Although it would seem that gin has taken the lion's share of the spirits market, whisky still accounts for the biggest piece of that pie. The potential is certainly there for the same level of innovation we have seen with tonics for dark spirit mixers so it's great to see the emergence of brands such as Long Tail Mixers that are looking beyond gin.

WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES?

No doubt gin will still be a popular tippie this Christmas but we have looked beyond the jolly juniper and have listed some interesting alternatives: Barti Spiced Rum infused with Pembrokeshire laver seaweed, Kin Vodka – a delicious blend of vodka, vanilla and toffee, Aelder Elixir Liqueur – a blend of whisky and wild elderberries, and for those festive ale drinkers, Santa's Sledgehammer, sure to pack a jovial punch!

WHAT TRENDS WOULD YOU RECOMMEND RETAILERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON?

Don't forget to pimp those drinks; wood-smoked fruit slices to enhance dark spirits, botanical infusion bags for gin, wild hibiscus flowers for bubbly or a bit of sparkle for those Christmas cocktails – the Cress Christmas catalogue is packed with pimp!

“We have seen significant growth across our juices and presses as consumers are looking for a refreshing and great tasting alternative, and there is greater acceptance socially that opting not to drink is good”

outlets, and Folkington's is gaining new business as outlets seek to meet this demand as our ranges offer customers and consumers a great looking, great tasting alternative to the mainstream.

"The low and no alcohol spirits category is set to grow by over 80% over the next three years, and so we are well placed with our unique premium tonics and mixers such as Earl Grey and English Garden and our presses to help customers and consumers to experience a great tasting drink."

The demand for low and non-alcoholic drinks has also impacted stocking choices for retailers and deli owners. Sue Johns, owner of Johns of Instow, has continued to stock more alternatives to alcohol, saying, "We introduced an extended range last year and will continue to offer it this year. Seasonal cordials proved to be the most popular and our local tonic waters as it offers something a little different to the well-known brands."

Making the most of displays

Alcohol is still a popular beverage choice for many people, however, so ensure that your shop also provides exciting new products to try. When it comes to stocking and displaying drinks for the Christmas season, going the extra mile to ensure that seasonal offerings are clearly signposted can make a noticeable difference in interest and sales. Sue continues: "This is a key retail time so strong visual displays to highlight your best, seasonal offerings in prime locations are essential. Gift purchases will be high so presentation packs are a must and any extra helpful info that you can give to customers on your signage that may guide them to purchase is always a must, e.g. what's special about that product, food pairings etc. Gin, rum, local wines, ales and ciders will all feature along with flavourful options for the non-drinkers too."

An effective marketing and selling tool to communicate to

PARTNER CONTENT



HOW TO MAKE YOUR FESTIVE DRINKS PACKAGING STAND OUT

Leading packaging manufacturer Saxon Packaging offers tips to attract customers this Christmas

The need for brands to stand out, appeal to and communicate with their consumers is paramount. Packaging has become one of the key marketing tools for drinks manufacturers and other businesses to achieve this. The opportunity to take advantage of the positive environment of the Christmas period by combining it with standout drinks packaging should not be missed. We offer high quality packaging solutions for the beer, wine, spirits and food industries, which include luxury gift packaging, shelf-ready packaging (SRP), subscription and mail-order packaging as well as other standard FEFCO packaging designs.

In line with the growing consumer concerns regarding the environment and a global drive toward using sustainable packaging, our experienced in-house design team are able to offer businesses the opportunity to create environmentally friendly packaging solutions for their products for both new and existing non-corrugated designs.

WHY GO FESTIVE WITH DRINKS PACKAGING?

Adding a festive touch to your products during the lead up to Christmas has great benefits for businesses. It gives businesses the opportunity to temporarily refresh their brand image without the major overhaul that rebranding can often present. Redesigning your packaging design for the festive season should be done in a tasteful way that fits in with the usual look of your brand – a total revamp of colours/patterns etc could damage the brand image you have already established. It's a good idea to design your own personal branded Christmas packaging.

HOW TO PLAN

Start the process early enough to ensure that your product packaging meets expectations, and that it arrives with plenty of time to enable you to package your goods and for them to be delivered to your customers in time for the festive season. Make a start on trying different festive designs with your branding and discover early which artwork works the best to suit your brand's image and more importantly its values and ethos. Get in contact with your packaging manufacturer earlier in the year and explain to them what your plans are for their festive season.

STANDING OUT ON THE SHELVES

Most drinks bottles are of a standard size therefore creative structural design can be tricky, but with access to a large range of printing options and print finishing there is so much a brand can do to make their product stand out. At Saxon Packaging we have seen an increase in the use of lithographic printed packaging to give products a crisp and high quality photographic print finish. There's also a range of laminate finishes such as soft touch, matt and gloss which can help create those memorable experiences and influence repeat purchasing.

CREATE GIFT PACKS

Looking for more ways to market your products? Consider premiumising your products further by presenting a bottle or two together with a glass to create a gift presentation box. In our 33 years of manufacturing drinks packaging we have seen and designed a wide range of packaging, from a single bottle to a 24 beer bottle advent calendar. 01502513112@saxonpackaging.co.uk



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stpetersbrewery.co.uk



EDINBURGH GIN RHUBARB & GINGER GIN

The signature Edinburgh Gin Classic is post-infused with rhubarb and ginger to create this full-strength expression.
edinburghgin.com



BARENTSZ MANDARIN & JASMINE GIN

Delicately infused with natural mandarin peel and exotic jasmine flowers for a distinctively smooth and fresh taste.
barentszgin.com



THE NORFOLK REDCURRANT WHISKY LIQUEUR

Rich and fruity, made from the finest redcurrants, mixed with The English Whisky Co's own single malt.
englishwhisky.co.uk



WILLY'S KOMBUCHA BEER

Made by the small team at Willy's farm in Herefordshire, this refreshing twist on traditional beers is brewed in small batches using local ingredients.
willysacv.com



LUSCOMBE WILD ELDERFLOWER BUBBLY

Devon elderflowers are hand-picked to infuse into this classic drink, and the gentle sparkle lifts the floral notes for an elegant taste.
luscombe.co.uk



SPIRITED UNION DISTILLERY LEMON & LEAF BOTANICAL RUM

Agricole-style rum with zesty lemons united kina bark, Sarawak pepper and Sarsaparilla root.
drinksology.com



FENTIMANS SPARKLING RASPBERRY

Bold and elegant, this is a drink bursting with tart fresh raspberry flavours and a delicately light and crisp finish.
fentimans.com



RAITHORPE MANOR SLOE PORT

This Sloe Port is smooth and fruity, ideal as an after-dinner drink. A great companion to a cheeseboard or simply on its own as a winter warmer.
raithorpemanor.com

shoppers is advertising what drinks pair well with which foods. For example, a customer wanting to put together a Christmas cheeseboard for guests will likely need some wine pairings, so it's worth displaying those ideal pairings together to encourage cross-selling. Marketing drinks with food pairing partners is

something that Sue highly recommends, and highlights cheese and chocolate as key areas for this, "Christmas is a pressurised time for nearly everyone so helping customers with ideas for their festive entertaining or to create a gift or hamper is hugely valued by them. Merchandising cross-sellers together is important year-round,

and at Christmas our cheese counter is incredibly popular so drink pairings feature heavily here. This year we're merchandising chocolate in with wines too, and we will be running festive food and drink events again in-store to allow customers to taste as well as enjoy a social gathering with the community and local producers."

“ Merchandising cross-sellers together is important year-round, and at Christmas our cheese counter is incredibly popular so drink pairings feature heavily here ”

PRODUCER PERSPECTIVE...

Paul Sullivan, head of sales and marketing at Lyme Bay, on what alcoholic brands and products will be popular this Christmas

WILL GIN BE AS POPULAR THIS CHRISTMAS AS LAST?

Gin continues to be popular, but it is beginning to polarise with botanicals and flavours seeming to go off in different directions. We remain true to a "juniper forward" style of gin with gentle botanicals that are enhanced by the garnish rather than the tonic. We believe in keeping it simple and subtle. Our Winter Gin has more warming and earthy notes that work perfectly for the time of year when crisp floral notes are not always in demand. Gin will remain an excellent gift this Christmas.

IS MEAD COMING BACK INTO POPULARITY?

At the moment we cannot produce mead fast enough. This is in part

down to the recent discovery of this product and the versatility that it has as a straight drink or the base for interesting mixers. It may also have something to do with mentions in *Game of Thrones*. For those who like honey flavours, mead is perfect as it does not carry the intense sweetness of honey itself. Versatile and flavoursome, and supporting the beekeeping and honey industry and diversifying agriculture – perfect.

WHAT PRODUCTS ARE BEST-SELLERS AT CHRISTMAS?

We have some Christmas classics: Cream Liqueurs – Mocha, Double Chocolate and Butterscotch, perfect over ice cream or Christmas Pudding. Gift packs – Gin, mead or fruit wine, perfect for those who are hard to

shop for and like to try something new. Luger Rum – our gold medal-winning rum with all the aromas of Christmas in a bottle, hearty and warming. Alongside that we have a Christmas Pudding Wine, Christmas Mead and Mulled Wine and Cider – everything you need to, literally, spice up Christmas and keep it exciting and fresh.

WHAT MAKES LYME BAY STAND OUT?

At Lyme Bay we understand flavour. We produce a number of different products from cider, English wine, fruit wine, mead, Luger rum and a selection of gins, to mention a few. This broad portfolio means that we have to ensure that both quality and flavours are right every time. We understand the palates of a number of different drinkers and know what the discerning drinker is looking for. It's our ability to blend flavours at a consistent high quality for different drinks and different drinkers that sets us apart – a real focus on the consumer.

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FESTIVE BAKES

Puddings and fruit cakes are Christmas staples, so here's how to achieve successful sales in December and beyond

Christmas is a time when iconic food and drink come to the fore – turkey, cranberry sauce and of course, Christmas puddings and fruit cakes. These desserts have all the ingredients that are instantly festive, with plenty of fruits, spices and booze. As such, they don't necessarily appeal to all, so while it's worth stocking up on the traditional desserts there's also the opportunity to provide your customers with a lighter version, or an offering that can cater to a wider audience. When it comes to keeping

a few different versions can help them to appeal to a wider audience. "There will always be those who do not like Christmas pud – our aim is to convert the 'dislikers' with our lighter, fruitier version of our traditional Christmas dessert. Our Christmas puds are lighter and scrumptiously fruitier than most. The puddings contain less added sugar than commercially produced puddings and have a fruit content of over 50% and no mixed peel. By reducing the cheap fillers such as sugar, flour and mixed peel and then steaming the puds for less

the Brentwood Brewing Company, Gluten Free Chockwork Orange. Gluten-free and latterly our Vegan/ Gluten Free puds are extremely popular and represent 20% of our sales. Our customers are delighted to be able to offer the same premium pudding to all their diners and guests rather than the necessity to have more than one pud for those with special dietary needs."

While puddings and fruit cakes are rightfully thought of as Christmas staples, there can be pressure there to carefully calculate the right amount of stock when planning for fear of being left with product to push in January. Tipple Tails has found a way to make fruit cakes sell throughout the year and has created them with a modern twist, with cakes being packaged individually in tins. Founder Jane Stammers says that by staying away from traditional Christmas packaging, the fruit cakes have appeal all year round: "The fruit cakes are a contemporary twist on a traditional product and are beautifully packaged so they make great gifts or treats and are a lovely addition to a Christmas hamper."

"Christmas is most definitely the busiest time of the year, but the products are deliberately not packaged in Christmas-specific packaging so they make great all year-round gifts. I sell lots across the year for birthdays, as a thank you, congratulations presents for



new babies and new homes, hostess gifts or to cheer someone up. I do also see a peak in sales for Mother's and Father's Day and at Easter."

There are other ways to incorporate festive bakes into your range throughout the year. Blacker Hall Farm Shop offers a fruit cake and rich fruit cake that are on sale all year-round, as well as at Christmas. Karen Close, head of buying and value says, "We ramp up the stock from October onwards which come in all shapes and sizes. The sales do drop in January and February but we have been looking into selling them in smaller portions as an energy boost for health kicks after Christmas for cyclists, runners etc."

"We aim to sell the fruit cake with our cheeses as we have such a large variety and they pair so well together. We do focus on them quite a lot around Easter and Mother's day. They work really well on

an afternoon tea and we often include them in ours which is served in the Barn Café. Over Easter we made Simnel Bites which included the rich fruit cake, marzipan in the centre and coated in dark chocolate."

Alternatively, why not look further afield for stocking inspiration? There is German stollen or Italian panettone, which are both bakes that can offer something a bit different for customers. Take Wimbledon-based Italian bakery La Bottega del Pane which produces a renowned panettone which is freshly-made at the bakery rather than in Italy, and as such contains no preservatives. Every year company director Rocco Tanzarella and his team creates a different panettone recipe, with last year's variation, Mandorlato, showcasing Sicilian almonds sourced from the coastal town of Avola.

“ We aim to sell the fruit cake with our cheeses as we have such a large variety and they pair so well together ”

your shop stocked up for the festive season there is no need to stop at Christmas puddings and fruit cakes. Perhaps look to incorporate the likes of gingerbread or Yule Logs that always sell well and are often popular with families. Look for produce to stock that supports suppliers in the area, as this will fare well with those customers that are keen to shop local.

How to keep classic offerings appealing in today's marketplace? Alison Lilly, founder of LillyPuds, says that Christmas puddings are still proving popular and offering

time, we have created a dessert that is easier on the palate after a heavy and indulgent Christmas lunch."

Catering for customers that have other dietary requirements is also something to be aware of when stocking up for the festive season. LillyPuds offers a gluten-free option, and Alison says, "The gluten free puds were part of our original offering, all that was needed was a small tweak to our premium recipe. Aside from the gluten-free flour and suet, the ingredients are fundamentally the same – we are even able to use the same beer from

1 STAG BAKERIES Pistachio Fruit Cake

Stag Bakeries has a brand new addition to the bakery's gifting range. Adding a festive twist to their light fruit cake recipe, the 300g Pistachio Fruit Cake is packed with pistachios, cranberries and topped with a marsala and chestnut glaze.

Presented in a luxury tin featuring the landscape of Stag's location in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, it's an ideal gifting option. Charlie Macdonald, owner of Stag Bakeries says, "The Pistachio Fruit Cake is a very welcome addition to our festive cake range and we can't wait for our customers to get the chance to try it over the winter months!"

stagbakeries.co.uk



2 COLE'S PUDDINGS Classic Christmas Pudding

A rich pudding with a distinctive depth of flavour, yet with a light texture, creating with premium ale and plenty of fruit, and suitable for vegetarians. Simon Hatcher, director of Cole's says, "Classic Christmas pudding is the recipe that started the business. Made with breadcrumbs produced in our bakery, and with a premium ale. This pudding is light in texture and rich but not too sweet. We have a large range of different recipes, however this is the recipe we recommend to customers who want the traditional style Christmas pudding."

colespuddings.com



3 BURTREE PUDDINGS Christmas Pudding

Using only the finest and most local ingredients, all the Christmas Puddings are made by hand and steamed for hours in the traditional way, and hand-wrapped in muslin with tags. There are three Christmas Puddings on offer: Deluxe Christmas Pudding with Rum, Barley Wine & Stout, Traditional Christmas Pudding with Brandy & Brown Ale and Gluten Free Christmas Pudding with Brandy & Cider.

Lea Darling, partner at Burtree says, "Our Gluten Free Christmas Pudding was voted the 'Best Gluten Free Christmas Pudding' by *The Guardian* a few years ago. We strive to be the best in the 'pudding' category and so to do this we need to continually expand and develop our product offering, attention to details and ingredients are our watchwords."

burtreepuddings.co.uk

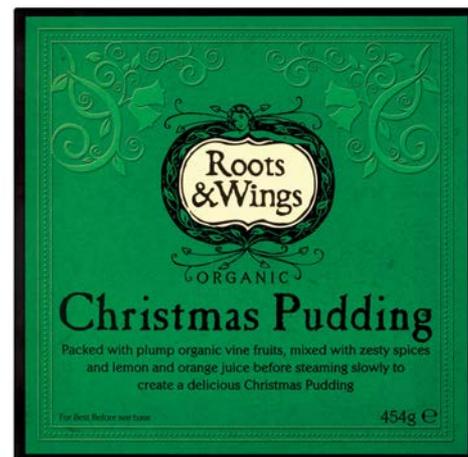


4 ROOTS & WINGS Organic Christmas Pudding

This pudding from Roots & Wings is rich, delicious and traditional, and the perfect ending to Christmas Day lunch. The brand soaks organic raisins, currants and sultanas in Cognac and ale before mixing them with Caribbean cane sugar, fresh organic eggs, grated organic carrots and apples, the juice of lemons and oranges and zesty spices. Each

pudding is steamed gently then cooled and wrapped carefully. Paul Furniss, owner at Roots & Wings says, "The selection of puddings ensures there is a size to suit any occasion. From the single-serve puddings to family-sized puddings and puddings in ceramic bowls. There's also the option for puddings with no gluten-containing ingredients."

rootsandwingsorganic.com

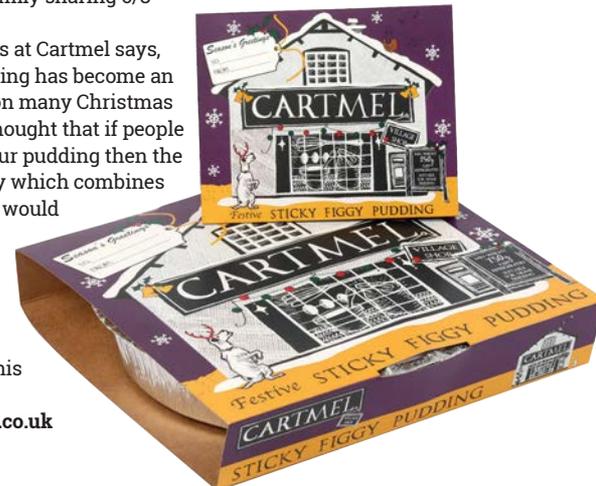


5 CARTMEL Festive Sticky Figgy Pudding

Festive Sticky Figgy Pudding from Cartmel is back for its sixth year and is proving a popular choice on festive food tables in homes and restaurants across the country. If you love the taste and texture of the award-winning Sticky Toffee Pudding, then the Figgy pudding is a must. It's packed with moist figs and gooey deliciousness, hints of Christmas spices, cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger along with citrus and chocolate. Available from mid-October for foodservice as a single portion and for the retail sector as a 250g serving or a 730g family sharing 6/8 servings.

Jo Fell, head of sales at Cartmel says, "Sticky Toffee Pudding has become an alternative choice on many Christmas dinner tables. We thought that if people like the texture of our pudding then the Festive Sticky Figgy which combines tastes of Christmas would also be a popular choice. That decision proved popular as we are now into our sixth year of producing this pudding."

cartmelvillageshop.co.uk



Stag
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Proudly presenting our Cakes for Gifting range. Taking our traditional fruit cake recipe and adding a modern twist, these light and refreshing cakes are packed with fruit and come in the following three flavours: Raspberry & Gin, Orange & Whisky and Blackcurrant & Rum. Presented in luxury tins featuring landscapes of the Hebrides for an extra special touch, this cake trio is perfectly suited for the festive season.



To find out more please get in touch:

Tel: 01851 702733 sales@stagbakeries.co.uk

www.stagbakeries.co.uk

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Look for our puddings in the chiller cabinet of farm shops, deli's, butchers, Waitrose & Booths Stores.

cartmelvillageshop.co.uk



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THE INDEPENDENT SHOPPER

Mark Hartstone, chef & proprietor of La Fosse



Purchasing for La Fosse at Cranborne Restaurant and Rooms is not easy. Requiring top quality and ethically sourced ingredients means a very short supply chain, more often than not directly from the producer. We aim to eliminate the need for high transport costs, which mean our suppliers are on our doorstep.

With just half a dozen tables we cannot order large volumes as freshness is key. For example, we work with Orchard Bay Bakery in Cranborne village to order a couple of loaves at a time. Working with the local baker and being flexible results in us receiving fresh loaves every

day. It is a standing order that rarely changes in number and our daily menu means that the bread gets used whilst it is in prime condition.

Knowing and understanding how ingredients work is vital. Even a basic ingredient such as bread needs juggling with how it is used, plus different types of bread vary. As a basic rule of thumb, bread that is initially hard to slice thinly when still warm has too high a moisture content for the first day to be used for toast easily, it's 36 hours for perfect toast, 48 for croutons or puddings and older

for breadcrumbs or panzanella.

Our cheesemaker The Book and Bucket is also in the village, so our orders can be dropped off before or after turning or brining the cheese. Having a cheeseboard with 10 cheeses on it requires careful managing, but having just one chef, rather than a brigade, means this is possible. With so many cheeses on our cheeseboard we only require retail-size cheeses which have a shorter shelf life. However, where there are exceptions such as aged cheese we buy locally again, for example an aged Gouda from Lyburn Farm in the New Forest is aged for up to two years and a whole wheel can

be ordered as it lasts.

We use Meggy Moos next to Hambledon Hill for our lightly pasteurized unhomogenized milk. This is 30 minutes away but having deliveries the same day as the village shop, Cranborne Stores, means we piggyback on its delivery. Going a bit further afield means a better quality and ethically-produced product. We have it delivered in a reusable tank that for us has eliminated the need for 1,000 single-use plastic bottles a year! We have glass milk bottles that we refill from the reusable tank for our breakfast buffet.

The local gamekeeper stocks us with pigeon, rabbit, quails eggs and trout, and by being flexible these symbiotic relationships works. We understand that sometimes the trout just do not want to bite the fly, or that pigeons can one day be eating the farmer's crop and the next day have moved on. Having the skill and versatility to use things when there is a glut is key, and traditional skills of smoking, brining and fermenting help with these supply issues. New Barn Farm is a local smallholding just three minutes down the road that has Boer Goat meat, which is a fantastic healthy alternative to lamb.

Last Words

The final word on fine food

TWITTER POLL

How often do you use social media for your business?

DAILY
83%

WEEKLY
17%

FORT-NIGHTLY
0%

SPECIALITY FOOD MAGAZINE

The next issue of **Speciality Food** includes:

- Preparing for Christmas
- British Cheese
- Party Foods
- Soups & Ready Meals
- Christmas Gifting

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TALKING SHOP

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 specialityfoodmagazine

When it comes to the food and drink industry, cheese is a topic that ignites plenty of passion. I had the pleasure of attending the International Cheese Awards in Nantwich recently – it's quite something seeing so many different varieties of cheeses in one space! Wandering around the show, it provided a chance to say hello to some familiar faces and to also be introduced to some new ones. The show and awards are a fantastic opportunity for local and UK-produced cheeses to get their time in the spotlight, but it was also interesting to see more international cheeses making their way over, and to see how the show is recognised on a more global scale. During my time meandering around the various stalls I met with people that had also travelled from afar to be there, from the Netherlands and even from Australia. What a wonderful opportunity for all these passionate makers, retailers, distributors

and experts to come together to celebrate the industry of cheese.

Of course, the other great part of the show was getting to taste a whole range of amazing cheeses. While it was a brilliant experience for someone like myself who is involved in the fine food and drink industry on a professional level, it also got me thinking about how important events like this are for members of the public too. They are the ones that will be buying the products that are produced, so ultimately getting them excited and passionate about the cheeses is key.

It's something to keep in mind when it comes to the retail experience, too. Visitors to specialist retailers are there because they are

looking for more than what they can get at the supermarkets, not just in terms of the produce, but also when it comes to the overall experience. In what can often be a tough industry, making customers feel well looked after and like you are going above and beyond for them is a really powerful thing.

When it comes to the cheese counter, knowledge of the products on offer is essential in order to give shoppers that background information and story, which can be

the difference to clinching that sale.

Offering samples is another good way to engage shoppers with produce. It's a great way to encourage not only returning customers but new ones as well. For those regular customers that often come in and buy speciality cheeses, perhaps when you are offering a new product offer out a sample to pique their interest. It's also a useful tool when helping first-time customers, as it allows you to gauge what flavours they like and

can help to guide you both in the right direction, hopefully towards a purchase. Speaking as a customer myself, I know first-hand how much more of an experience shopping can be when good service is received. It makes you want to want to shout about that establishment, whether it be a farm shop, retailer or even a café. Personal recommendations to friends and family can then take the visit from one single shopper into potentially more, as long as your offerings also make the cut!

Do you want to shout about your cheese counter services? Keen to talk about the great customer experience you and your staff offer in-store? We would love to hear from you, just send us an email at lucy.macdonald@aceville.co.uk.

“ Making customers feel well looked after and like you are going above and beyond for them is a powerful thing ”

5 MINUTES WITH... WILL LITTLE, CO-FOUNDER AT LITTLE'S

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

I'd probably be doing what I did before I got into coffee, and that's graphic design – that, or a professional hand model.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

I spent a summer slinging parcels for a second-rate parcel delivery company. They rode the coattails of the mail order catalogue revolution. I worked with some of the most racist, bigoted, homophobic, nasty people I've ever met. It taught me two things: how to get on with horrible people, and what I definitely don't want to do as a job.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

Lots of things inspire me creatively, but in terms of life inspiration – I hate to be corny – I'd say my family. I've just recently become a dad and that's blown my mind so entirely. It's changed my outlook on practically everything. I recommend parenthood.

WHAT'S THE WORST JOB YOU'VE DONE?

My first job was probably the worst. I've never had a job that's really terrible, but I've definitely had jobs that suck.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF THE JOB?

Seeing the brand grow and evolve. It's really great to see more people recognise the brand and it gives me enormous satisfaction when we win new accounts because the product and brand proposition is working.

AND YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE?

Aged debt. I'm not a bank, so it grinds my gears when customers don't pay on time.

HOW ABOUT THE FOOD INDUSTRY?

It's a great time to be in speciality food. There's so much exciting stuff



happening all across the industry and there are real opportunities for small businesses. Least favourite is that we're still years behind in terms of food additives. There are still some really nasty things going into our food, and it's not okay.

TEA OR COFFEE?

Erm, I think that one's obvious.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR LAST SUPPER?

The seafood season menu at Noma (with wine pairing). It would blow my mind so completely that I'd probably die anyway.

WHAT'S YOUR MOTTO?

Life is too short for bad coffee. Oh, and always be nice.

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

I had raw abalone when I was in Korea. It had the texture of gristle and tasted of nothing but salt water. Oh, and I had fermented chilli soft shell crab as well, which was pretty gross. It tasted like gone off fish and had a texture like slime. That was a challenging eat.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas by Hunter S. Thompson.

SWEET OR SAVOURY?

Savoury, every time.

DIARY DATES

September

1st-3rd SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD FAIR
Olympia London
specialityandfinefoodfairs.co.uk

8th-10th TOP DRAWER
Olympia London
topdrawer.co.uk

10th-12th GLEE
NEC Birmingham
gleebirmingham.com

14th FROME AGRICULTURAL & CHEESE SHOW
West Woodlands Showground, Frome
fromecheeseshow.co.uk

19th-20th LUNCH!
ExCel, London
lunchshow.co.uk

30th-2nd October THE RESTAURANT SHOW
Olympia London
therestaurantshow.co.uk

October

5th-9th ANUGA
Cologne, Germany
anuga.com

November

7th-8th BELLAVITA EXPO
Business Design Centre, London
web.bellavita.com

19th-20th FOOD MATTERS LIVE
ExCel, London
foodmatterslive.com

TRIED & TESTED



HOLLY, EDITOR

CLEARSPRING KING COCO

Lovers of coconut water will enjoy the King Coco naturally sweet version from Clearspring. Created using mature orange-coloured King Coconuts which are native to Sri Lanka, the drink has a clean taste that is slightly sweet for a tasty beverage that can be enjoyed at any time of day. I kept this on my desk and sipped it over the course of a morning, and really enjoyed having a healthy, refreshing alternative to water from the tap for a bit of a change.
clearspring.co.uk



MERMAID PINK GIN

Standing out in a sea of gins is hard to do, so I was excited to try this new pink gin, and it didn't disappoint. Distilled using strawberries that give the gin a light pink hue, the taste was fresh and flavoursome at the same time and when paired with a tonic made for a delightful drink to enjoy during a barbecue. Not only that the bottle is also beautiful – and 100% plastic-free – so would make a lovely gift for a gin enthusiast.
mermaidspirit.uk

COMBAT2COFFEE RECOVERY BLEND

There's not much in life that I appreciate more than a great food or drink product with a mission at its core. So I was delighted to discover Combat2Coffee, a venture whereby coffee is "roasted, toasted and poured" by veterans through its retail range, coffee hubs and on-the-go vehicles. Founder Nigel Seaman is passionate about supporting veterans of the armed forces, giving them valuable skills and employment opportunities, all while promoting the work of charities such as Combat Stress. The coffee's pretty great, too – boasting direct trade credentials and a delicious, well-rounded flavour.
combat2coffee.co.uk



PUMP STREET CHOCOLATE JAMAICA 75% CARAMELISED HAZELNUTS

As far as sweet indulgences go, Pump Street is onto a winner here. A great after-dinner treat with coffee, these nuts – hailing from the home of fine hazelnuts, Piedmont in Italy – have been coated in caramel before being carefully enrobed in 75% dark chocolate sourced from a plantation in Jamaica. My plan is to buy them in bulk in advance of the festive season, so (as long as I haven't scoffed them all myself) they can be enjoyed by guests and any friends and family members lucky enough to receive them in their stocking.
pumpstreetchocolate.com



new



INTRODUCING

OUR **new range** of premium cheese accompaniments

Our chutney's hail from the same area of outstanding beauty as our cheeses, North Wales, where they are handcrafted in traditional copper pans using only the finest ingredients which we have sourced and selected for their quality and taste.

The UK's 'Most Loved Speciality Cheese Brand'*



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*As voted in Fine Food Digest survey