

FDIN news : October 2004

**Heinz to promote benefits of lycopene**

**Date:** Fri, 01 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

Food giant HJ Heinz Company, has announced that it will host a discussion on new research findings at the 2004 American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo (ADA FNCE) in Anaheim, California.

The discussion, led by the industry leader in lycopene education and information, will reportedly focus on the positive impact that the antioxidant lycopene has on the overall health of men.

Recent studies have show that increased levels of lycopene can impact prostate cancer and infertility and the antioxidant has also been shown to increase the quality of sperm in infertile men.

Lycopene is a natural antioxidant found abundantly in tomato products and research has indicated that the heat processing of tomatoes makes lycopene even more available for absorption by the body.

During the ADA, which runs from October 2nd to October 5th, Heinz will also host two cooking demonstrations and distribute its 2005 Lycopene and Living Well calendar, featuring illustrations by pop artist Burton Morris, the official artist of the 2004 Academy Awards.

HJ Heinz Company is one of the world`s leading producers and marketers of branded foods in ketchup, condiments, sauces, meals, soups, seafood, snacks and infant foods.

Further information: [www.heinz.com](http://www.heinz.com)

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**Australian firm develops innovative antimicrobial**

**Date:** Fri, 01 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

Australian antimicrobial firm Chemeq has unveiled a new product, which it claims improves production without having to pump chickens and pigs full of antibiotics.

The polymeric antimicrobial can be put in chicken feed or water and kills bacteria without entering the bloodstream of the chicken, making it safe for human consumption, [foodproductiondaily.com](http://foodproductiondaily.com) reports.

The European Union has legislated to ban the use of antibiotics as growth promotants from 2006. Extensive antibiotic use can lead to the establishment of a pool of antibiotic resistance genes in the environment.

Commercial producers of poultry and pigs, operating at very low margins, need to protect their livestock from disease-causing bacteria, while regulatory authorities are rapidly legislating to prevent the use of some antibiotics for animal purposes.

Chemeq claims to have extensively tested its polymeric antimicrobial against disease causing bacteria, including antibiotic resistant 'superbugs'. In vitro results proved that even after more than 100 successive exposures to Chemeq's polymeric antimicrobial, E.coli bacteria did not become resistant.

The company has been granted patents in more than 80 countries with more than 175 patents pending. The company claims it is not aware of any comparable competing technologies and has reportedly just built a factory south of Perth to manufacture the product.

Chemeq's first sale of the antimicrobial was made in a \$1.5 million deal last month with a South African agent for poultry producers, according to [www.industrysearch.com.au](http://www.industrysearch.com.au).

Further information: [www.chemeq.com.au](http://www.chemeq.com.au)

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### **AA Seafood Restaurant of the Year winners announced**

**Date:** Fri, 01 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The AA and the Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish) have announced the winners of the AA Seafood Restaurant of the Year 2004 - 2005.

The winning restaurants, selected by the AA from 1800 restaurants listed in the new AA Restaurant Guide 2005, received their awards at a ceremony on September 29th.

Howard Thomas, a trade development executive for Seafish said: "It's wonderful to see an award recognising the quality of seafood throughout the United Kingdom. The winning restaurants typify the diversity of delicious and healthy seafood that is available in restaurants throughout the UK."

The overall competition winners are: England: The Crab at Chieveley, Chieveley; Scotland: Eeusk, Oban; Wales: Hansons, Swansea; Northern Ireland: Shanks, Bangor.

The AA judges praised the winning restaurant, saying: "The Crab at Chieveley is an exciting, newly developed inn and restaurant hidden in the west Berkshire countryside. Fish and shellfish is clearly the focus of this menu with deliveries from Brixham every three days. This restaurant offers high quality food at very good value - with both a la Carte and a very reasonable set lunch menu."

In addition to the four country winners, over 250 restaurants have been awarded 'Best Use of Seafood'. These appear in the new AA Restaurant Guide 2005, published on September 30th.

(no further information)

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### **New infrared scanner for bakers unveiled**

**Date:** Fri, 01 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The UK's largest independent food and drink research group has developed a new  
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infrared scanner capable of telling bakers exactly when their dough will be perfect for making bread, cakes and other baked goods.

Campden and Chorleywood Food Research Association (CCFRA) claims that the scanner can tell manufacturers when the dough had been mixed to give the optimum texture or product, providing they know the characteristics required.

The scanner has been designed to fit inside dough mixers and can monitor detailed changes and characteristics in the dough, such as moisture content, down to the number of hydrogen bonds formed, and protein content, Confectionary News reports.

CCFRA business manager Dr Paul Catterall said the scanner, which has been in development for the last few years, should improve quality and consistency in baked goods, reducing wastage and increasing potential output. The group has yet to test the scanner commercially but is currently seeking collaborators and expects it to be on the market in the near future.

"There is a need for uniform products on the market and so understanding what is happening inside bakery products as they are made is always important," he commented.

CCFRA has also developed a computer tomography scanner, like those used in hospitals for x-rays, which is designed to have a baking chamber fitted inside it to allow researchers to monitor the progress of baked goods as they cook.

Further information: [www.campden.co.uk](http://www.campden.co.uk)

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### **Burns Philp acquisition completed by ABF**

**Date:** Fri, 01 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Associated British Foods has announced it has completed its purchase of Burns Philp.

The international food ingredients and retail group has acquired the international yeast, bakery ingredients and yeast extract firm, after first announcing the deal in July.

It is hoped the deal will expand ABF's position in the food sector.

The group is one the largest food companies in Europe and has annual sales of £4.9 billion and more than 35,000 employees.

ABF already has key businesses in Europe, US and Australasia, and with Burns Philp based in Australia, it will help add to the company's presence further.

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### **Brits' food shopping habits highlighted in new study**

**Date:** Fri, 01 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

New research has revealed that Brits are addicted to their weekly food shop, with 52 per cent completing a major shop as much as once a week.

According to Mintel, shoppers are stuck in the tradition of doing the family supermarket shop, rather than one in ten who shop around two to three times a month.

Ellen Shiels, consumer analyst at Mintel said: "This obsession with a major weekly shop seems almost peculiar, considering around four in ten view this experience as a bore and many could well avoid this chore by simply topping-up on fresh produce.

"What is more, supermarkets offer shoppers numerous ways to reduce the number of main grocery shopping trips. Indeed, supermarket shelves are packed with 'bulk buy' offers which allow people to cheaply stock up on groceries, so delaying the need for a grocery refill."

However, the findings reveal interesting results for food firms and food retailers, since it appears British shoppers appear to look for variety, rather than being tied down to large amounts of one product.

Ms Shiels is concerned that the way UK consumers shop leads to a lot of waste, claiming that "impulsive shopping leaves people open to over spend and to waste food".

She claims that food firms could also use this to their advantage by responding to shopping patterns and reaping the benefits of buy one get one free offers, which many Brits appear easily swayed by.

In addition, further evidence of a considerable demand for convenience food products was highlighted with shoppers claiming convenience was key, in terms of products and food retailer locations.

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### **Organic farming criticism driven by "ignorance"**

**Date:** Mon, 04 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Organic farming procedures in Australia have received official backing following allegations that it is less sustainable than other farming methods.

The Australian organic industry dismissed recent claims by Dr Holger Kirchmann of the Swedish University of Agriculture that organic farming was potentially less sustainable and driven by "nature philosophy" rather than science, Just Food reports.

Dr Andrew Monk, CEO of the Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA), said: "These views possibly arise from reaction to the anti GMO stance of organic consumers, as well as ignorance in large segments of the research community as to the potential and nature of scientifically based organic principles."

Dr Monk also hit out at a perceived lack of support for scientific research, which he claims would help dissociate myth from reality, as well as assist producers to continue to ensure resilient agricultural practices, via supportive policies and regulatory arrangements.

"Australia has need of water conservation, of protecting organic carbon in the soil, and promoting soil life," he said.

"Organic production is inherently about this."

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### **Food industry offered new means of safety testing**

**Date:** Mon, 04 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new portable mini lab, developed by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), is being considered for use in the food sector.

The new lab can offer on-the-spot testing and was originally designed to detect biological warfare on the battlefield, according to BBC News Online.

However, it could now be used for a host of reasons, including while-you-wait testing for food contamination and animal disease detection.

Quick discovery of illnesses in animals is now of key importance, especially since the outbreak of Foot and Mouth in 2001.

The new system uses a process called Polymerase Chain Reaction, which works by heating and cooling samples, using an enzyme that generates multiple copies of DNA and allows better analysis.

According to the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, the research brand of the MoD, the mini lab could be useful for food manufacturers in looking for GM in food or salmonella, E.coli and listeria contamination.

The machine will not come cheaply though, with a machine costing around £40,000 at present.

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### **Restaurant guide rises from the ashes**

**Date:** Mon, 04 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The renowned Egon Ronay's restaurant guide is set for a return to the shelves following a seven-year sabbatical.

Ronay will retain control of the guide and publish it himself, although it is being sponsored by the Royal Automobile Association, which will give funding, promotional support and its name to the project.

Ronay's team of inspectors who worked with him 20 years ago will return to the fold for the new project.

"The significance of the guide is that it reverses the trend of giving emphasis to matters other than food in restaurants," claimed Ronay.

The guide was a massive hit when first published in 1957, selling millions of copies, including a host of spin-off publications such as pub and accommodation guides.

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### **Consumers warned over fat content in UK sandwiches**

**Date:** Mon, 04 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Concerns are being raised that consumers in the UK may be putting themselves at risk by consuming sandwiches containing excess amounts of fat, often unaware just how much fat they are eating when they buy "healthy-looking" sandwiches at lunchtime.

It is estimated that out of the 2.4 billion sandwiches bought in Britain every year, almost one-in-five are bought in the workplace and a large percentage of the rest are consumed during working hours.

Research undertaken by DailyDietTracker.co.uk found some popular brand sandwiches to contain as much as 41.9 grams of fat per pack of two.

For workers who regularly eat these meals, there are significant dietary concerns, according to Jacqueline Hewitt, dietician at DailyDietTracker.co.uk

In the past, workplace vending machines have been linked to obesity, vending unhealthy junk foods, and employers have been urged to provide healthier options to help address the problem.

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### **McDonalds goes veggy**

**Date:** Mon, 04 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

McDonalds is set for an unlikely partnership with the British Vegetarian Society.

As part of the surprise link-up, the fast-food giant will exhibit the Vegetarian Society's familiar seedling logo alongside McDonald's predominantly meat-oriented menu.

The Vegetarian endorsement will be a boost for McDonalds after a year of negative publicity which has seen the burger chain blamed for soaring obesity levels amongst children in Britain.

However, the deal is expected to come at a price for McDonalds.

Plans call for the addition of Quorn burgers, yoghurts, bagels and fruit toast to McDonald's menus, the Guardian newspaper reports.

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### **Deer burgers to feature in healthy eating scheme**

**Date:** Mon, 04 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Venison burgers - made from culled red deer - are to set to be offered to hundreds of Scottish school children as part of a healthy eating scheme that could be repeated across the country,

The meat will be dished up as burgers or in casseroles in the Highland region's 29 secondary schools, in a trial starting next week, the Scotsman reports.

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Nutritionists say venison is a healthier, home-grown alternative to other red meats on the school menu, and will help in the battle against childhood obesity.

Bruce Robertson, the council's director of education, culture and sport, said there is scope for the scheme to be extended to primary schools if successful.

"The council wants us to use local produce in school meals as much as possible, whether that be vegetables or meat. There is a plentiful supply of high-quality protein out there in the form of venison. It's straight off the hill, nutritious and organic," he said.

The meat will be supplied by a dealer who trades with Scottish estates who kill deer for either sporting or environmental reasons

The initiative was welcomed by the Association of Deer Management Groups - the body that represents the managers of deer-stalking estates.

Stephen Gibbs, the ADMG chairman, who runs the Dougarie estate on Arran, said: "It would be great if venison is put on school menus.

"School is where children start out in life, and if kids get used to eating venison then there is a good chance they will become consumers for life."

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### **First Milk confirms Robert Wiseman deal**

**Date:** Mon, 04 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Robert Wiseman Dairies has announced it is in talks for a new deal with farming co-operative First Milk.

One of the largest in Britain, the company is hoping to purchase a 15 per cent share in the firm, which it supplies with a considerable amount of its milk.

Chairman Alan Wiseman commented: "We believe that this deal would strengthen the relationship that exists between the two organisations.

"There will be no change in the management of the Company, with the respective roles of myself and Robert (managing director) remaining the same."

However, it is unsure whether the Wiseman brothers would be selling part of their combined 55 per cent share as part of the deal.

Robert Wiseman Dairies runs about 13 distribution depots in the UK and five dairies, whilst First Milk has over 4,000 farmers and produces around 2.5 billion litres of milk a year.

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### **Jacob's launches new luxury biscuit range**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

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Biscuit firm Jacob's has revealed a new luxury sweet biscuit assortment 'Temptations', following its sale to United Biscuits.

The new selection includes thick chocolate-coated biscuits in a host of varieties, such as shortcake and oatmeal.

In addition, items come in either premium dark, milk or white chocolate.

Jacob's sweet biscuits brand manager, Sophie Hobbs, told Just Food: "The launch of Temptations is a new direction for Jacob's, as it extends our sweet biscuits portfolio to include an indulgent, luxurious assortment.

"With premium products representing significant a growth opportunity for biscuits, we have created a sophisticated brand to meet this demand."

According to the UK brand, the range is hoped to be seen as contemporary and indulgent.

The range will be launched in the run up to Christmas and offered as a gift or a product for formal sharing, targeted at women aged 25 to 44.

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### **Rise in salmonella cases investigated**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Following a host of food poisoning cases reported in the UK recently, an investigation has taken place by the NHS, local authorities and the Health Protection Agency (HPA).

The groups found that over twice as many people as normal have fallen ill, caused by a rare strain of bacteria known as Salmonella Newport.

According to BBC News Online, now more than 350 cases have been reported involving the bacteria, when normally around 150 cases are seen in a year.

Dr Bob Adak from the HPA said: "When these separate outbreaks were reported to us we knew something was happening. Our Salmonella Reference Laboratory carried out additional testing and has found that the strains of the bacteria are identical."

The agency has tried to ascertain any common foods surrounding the cases and in many local studies people had consumed lettuce from catering, takeaway and fast food premises beforehand.

"The HPA have been working closely with the Food Standards Agency to look at the supply chain of these salad products and to see if we can identify where they became contaminated," Dr Adak added.

The FSA recommends that consumers can cut their chance of getting food poisoning with good food hygiene practices.

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### **Cooked meats sector report released by BPEX**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The British Pig Executive has claimed that sliced cooked meats are now bought by 95 per cent of homes and are part of a £1.5 billion market.

According to BPEX, ham is the most popular sliced meat and makes up over 50 per cent of the sector.

The report by the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC), conducted on behalf of BPEX, looked at four main issues for cooked meats - quick meals, food on the move, salads and freedom meals.

Pig meat marketing manager Chris Lukehurst said: "Food on the move - mainly sandwiches - and quick meals use meat from the fridge where convenience, long shelf life and lower price outweigh perceptions that the product is processed.

"In fact when consumers do want to improve the quality of a sandwich they are more likely to do so by improving the bread or adding more fillings or dressings rather than by improving the quality of the ham."

Additional findings show that for salads and freedom meals, meat is usually bought specially since the quality is more important.

The report also provides important findings for product development and communication in the food sector. 'Taste Signatures' help to show how different emotions influence food choice.

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### **AMI announces new seafood deal**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Worldwide seafood trading firm Andrew Marr International (AMI) has announced it has required a controlling interest in the Fastnet Fish Group.

It is hoped the new purchase will boost the group's current trading activities, with Fastnet's key business covering white fish fillet sale and distribution and the shrimp and langoustine trade.

Roger Johnson, AMI's managing director, told Fish Update: "Fastnet's activities are a natural fit, complementing AMI's current trade whilst also providing real long term growth opportunities."

The company already has huge worldwide fish trading through its subsidiaries J Marr Seafoods, Almarr Seafoods and Marr Continental.

Andrew Marr's headquarters are based in Hessle, near Hull, whilst Fastnet is based in Grimsby.

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### **Scientists find perfect sandwich fillings for every occasion**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Experts at Oxford University have been looking into the scientific side of sandwiches and their fillings.

According to a biochemist at Trinity College, Dr John Stanley, certain fillings can help create particular results in people - such as waking them up or helping them to exercise.

The work is part of October's British Bread Month by the Federation of British Bakers.

Among the top fillings recommended by Dr Stanley are chicken tikka and mango salsa to help wake you up, toasted chocolate and banana to help you get over a hangover and smoked turkey and cream cheese to allow a good night's sleep.

According to experts when people are in a rush and need something convenient, a sandwich can offer a good supply of minerals and vitamins.

Additional recommendations include apple and peanut butter before a workout and figs, honey, ricotta cheese and orange used as an aphrodisiac.

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### **PJ Smoothies announces new marketing manager**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

PJ Smoothies has revealed it has selected a new marketing manager.

Former Jacobs Bakery worker, Nathan King, will join the firm from November 1 and will be based at the company's head office and production facility.

Andrew King, CEO of PJ Smoothies said: "Nathan brings with him a wealth of successful consumer brand marketing experience, covering soft drinks, alcohol and biscuits."

According to Just Drinks, Mr King will be head of the marketing team and will help create and implement marketing activities at the firm.

The new manager has also worked for Amstel Beer and Britvic Soft Drinks.

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### **Innovative labelling boosts drink sales**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new award-winning labelling system using seven colours and a temperature indicator 'thermometer' has dramatically boosted sales of a new range of vodka-based flavoured alcoholic beverages.

The labels on Petrikov Red and Blue, produced by Dutch distiller Toorank, are printed in seven colours plus varnish on an ILMA 340 press using Scipa Aarberg inks.

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Two specialty inks, luminescent and thermochromic, are used on the striking red and blue bottles. Printed messages, including the slogan 'I'm cool! Drink me now!', only become visible when the bottle contents are chilled to the ideal vodka drinking temperature of seven to eight degrees C.

Printed by Kolibri Etikettenfabriek on Fasson High Gloss White Premium self-adhesive paper labelstock with S2000N permanent adhesive, the labels took the marketing/end use award for alcoholic beverage labelling in the 2004 FINAT International Labelling Competition and the judges praised the bright, bold colours and interesting shape of the labels.

"Toorank's request for outstandingly different labels could only be met by a premium self-adhesive substrate, the creative use of inks, and high print quality," Paul Holland, Kolibri marketing and sales director, told Food Production Daily.

The vodka range has proved so successful that the company is currently preparing to launch the product in Spain, Belgium, UK, Poland, and is considering a foray into the USA market.

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### **Collagen soup and banana mayonnaise named as foods of the future**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The consumer of the futures will be using curry flavoured toothpaste and snacking on collagen soup, banana mayonnaise or green tea cereal, according to a new survey.

New research from market analysts Mintel shows that there is a growing number of innovative new products being launched around the world

Nissin Cisco's Green Tea Cereal, a rice-based cereal containing green tea powder, green tea extract, and gyokuro tea, has now been launched in Japan, while a pack of toothpaste from Margaret Josefine in Japan offers 31 different flavours, including cafe au lait, Indian curry or pumpkin pudding.

The report by Mintel's Global New Products Database's Innovations Club also highlights Procter & Gamble's Pringle Prints, recently launched in the US, which have jokes and trivia questions printed directly on the crisps themselves and predicts that it could lead to a new range of products with information or messages printed on them.

In South Korea, Chungjungwon mayonnaise is banana-flavoured and aimed at children, packaged in a bottle with a cap shaped like a duck's head and beak.

Mintel reports that the bottled water market is currently enjoying strong growth in European and US markets and a new product in the US, Nutri/System Aquascents Bottles, comes with three different plastic caps, each of which is impregnated with FDA-approved aromas that trick users into think that the water is flavoured with lemon, peach, or berry.

Finally, the report also covers the latest trend in Asia for beauty foods, or cosmeceuticals. To date products have almost always been beverages, snacks, or yogurts, but beauty

foods are now extended to instant soups with Nissin Food Products' Biken Kenshoku collagen soup, which contains 1000mg of Collagen per serving, and is aimed at beauty and health-conscious consumers in their 20s to 40s.

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### **Association raises concerns over negative impact of salmonella outbreak**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Leafy Salads Association has raised concerns over the recent salmonella outbreak, claiming it is worried it will affect the lettuce industry.

Speaking to BBC Radio Four's Farming Today, Ian Gillot of the association claimed that the recent reports and investigations concerning salmonella have been blamed on lettuce and could therefore have a damaging effect.

"An incident like this can really damage the industry," he warned.

"One of the weaknesses in the chain it has to be said is the wholesale market, where people can supply the wholesale market without the same disciplines that they would for instance in supplying a major chain"

Mr Gillot claimed that it would be particularly negative if the industry was effected since over many years, the sector has spent a lot of money into putting measures in place to make sure products were safe for the public.

He also reassured consumers that they should not be concerned about prepared lettuce or lettuce bought in shops.

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### **UK consumers keen on healthy food info**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK consumers have shown they are interested in healthy eating, with traffic figures to the DailyDietTracker website up since its campaign on the fat content in sandwiches.

The site produced research which revealed the sandwiches with the highest fat content sold by British supermarkets and now the amount of people logging on to find out more has risen by 200 per cent, according to Brand Republic.

CJ Brough, PR manager for IPT, said: "Healthy living, diets and exercise are all hot topics at the moment, so DailyDietTracker is ideally placed...especially with our 40,000 user base from which we are able to gain a vast amount of information about the nation's eating and activity habits.

"Our sandwich report demonstrates our functionality of providing users with information on their food choices, so they can modify their diet or activity levels accordingly."

The site was set by digital marketing specialist IPT in the summer.

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### **Scientists claim food extract could help cancer drug**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Canadian scientists have claimed that a food extract could be used to help treat cancer.

A natural compound taken from fruit and vegetables has been found to work by stimulating tumour cells so that they produce more of one enzyme and help to reduce side effects of the mitomycin C (MMC) drug.

The MMC drug is activated by enzymes that naturally occur in the human body but high doses are not possible because of the severe side effects.

Dr Asher Begleiter and colleagues at the Manitoba Institute of Cell Biology, tested mice with tumours and fed them either a normal diet or one containing dimethyl fumarate (DMF) - the fruit and veg extract.

Possible ingredients that could be used in a similar way are extracts from broccoli or cauliflower.

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### **Walkers reveals healthy logo plans**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK crisp company Walkers is planning to introduce new changes to its packaging as part of measures to aid the current drive against obesity.

The firm has revealed it wants to include a healthy living icon on its crisp packaging to help educate consumers about nutrition.

Health advice is already displayed on the Walker's website with answers to nutritional questions on each of its products, including issues such as nutritional values and suitability for different eating habits such as Vegans.

Walkers produces crisps including Wotsits, Quavers, Walkers Lites, Monster Munch, Squares and Doritos.

The company is just one of many food firms that are constantly making an effort to help make consumer's diets healthier and working to cut down obesity.

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### **Better labelling called for on vegetarian food**

**Date:** Wed, 06 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The FDF has called for an improvement in properly labelled food products in response to comments by Lib Dem MP Norman Baker.

Martin Paterson, the deputy director general of the federation claimed that more has to be done concerning food labelling and especially when considering vegetarian products.

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His comments follow arguments by Norman Baker, who is a vegetarian, that better labelling is needed on those products which are assumed to be vegetarian but may be animal based during production, such as gelatine.

Talking to BBC Radio Four's 'Farming Today', Mr Paterson stated it was important that consumers were not misled.

He explained: "These are borderline areas where if somebody is not getting that information and they're not able therefore to make an appropriate and informed choice, whether that's a lifestyle choice or a religious choice, then that can't be right."

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) will now be investigating the issue and reviewing regulations.

To help address the problem Mr Paterson explained the FDF would be working with the FSA shortly and will be meeting to see how to work together to "ensure customers get the information to which they're entitled".

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### **Researchers make key enzyme discovery**

**Date:** Thu, 07 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A team of scientists at Leicester University have made an important discovery about the way enzymes work.

The discovery, which could have important ramifications for the food and drink industry, may explain why attempts to make artificial enzymes have often been disappointing.

The research demonstrates that the textbook explanation of how enzymes work at the atomic level is wrong for some enzymes.

Enzymes are biological molecules that accelerate chemical reactions and are central to the existence of life.

Professors Nigel Scrutton and Michael Sutcliffe, of the Department of Biochemistry, claim that chemical reactions can proceed through energy barriers, contrary to widespread beliefs on how enzyme reactions work.

Professor Scrutton said: "Based on current dogma, the vast majority of studies have concentrated on understanding how enzymes facilitate passage of a reaction over an energy barrier. However, our studies have revealed that passage through, rather than over, the barrier can occur - a process that relies on quantum mechanical effects such as tunnelling.

He added: "These new ideas are breaking all the rules of classical models of enzyme catalysis. The discovery has wide ranging implications in the use of enzymes in industry and biomedical research, as the new theory is likely to underpin the mode of action of all enzymes."

Further information: [www.le.ac.uk](http://www.le.ac.uk)

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### **SNP welcomes new EU Fisheries Commissioner**

**Date:** Thu, 07 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Scottish National Party has welcomed the new EU fisheries commissioner.

SNP spokesman on Environment and Rural Affairs, Mike Weir MP, welcomed comments made by commissioner Joe Borg about fishery reform.

The Maltese commissioner said that the new Regional Advisory Committees, being introduced by the EU, will enable fishermen to have more input into discussions before the annual round of quota negotiations.

Mr Weir welcomed the announcement as a step forward, but stated that he was concerned that the Regional Advisory Committees were still not enough to give local fishermen real input into the management of Scotland's fishing grounds, [fishupdate.com](http://fishupdate.com) reports.

The MP said: "I am extremely concerned that the Regional Advisory Committees advice is likely to be completely ignored if it does not fit in with the political manoeuvrings at the annual EU fisheries council.

"Far too often Scottish interests have been sold out by successive UK governments to obtain concessions in other areas of EU policy. Local fishermen need real power to decide on the management of Scotland's fishing grounds."

Mr Weir also noted that the appointment of Mr Borg showed the influence that small independent nations could have on European policy. He pointed out that Malta's population is smaller than Edinburgh, but the island nation has a representative on the EU Commission, while Scotland, with a population of five million, is unrepresented.

(no further information)

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### **Salmon campaign deemed a success**

**Date:** Thu, 07 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A campaign of salmon farming advertisements was seen by 64 per cent of medium-to-heavy fish consumers, according to Scottish Quality Salmon (SQS).

The press adverts, published in the Scottish and UK dailies and Sunday newspapers, were funded by The Crown Estate. SQS claims that the four week campaign reached an estimated 3,187,000 medium-to-heavy fish consumers.

Chief executive Brian Simpson commented: "It was our intention to set the record straight with our core target market, by telling them about working practices and standards that are required for members of Scottish Quality Salmon. We believe this has

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been achieved with medium-to-heavy fish consumers, who are those that spend over £3 per week on fresh fish."

SQS claims that the advertisements reached a total of 25,322,000 adults, 52 per cent of all adults in the UK, with each person seeing the ads on average 2.4 times.

"This was a high profile, high impact campaign, with the intention of correcting the messages communicated by those that have tried to discredit salmon farming, whilst reaffirming the advice from the Food Standards Agency that oil-rich fish, such as Scottish Quality Salmon, is a healthy choice," Mr Simpson added.

In addition to the media advertising campaign, education leaflets were distributed to consumers, 2,000 posters were issued and 5,000 postcards were distributed to members of the media and the fish trade.

Further information: [www.scottishsalmon.co.uk](http://www.scottishsalmon.co.uk)  
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### **New food tester unveiled**

**Date:** Thu, 07 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

NDC Infrared Engineering has launched an updated version of its at-line analyser Infralab 710.

The intuitive analyser enables single or multi-component measurements of critical parameters of moisture, fat and protein in a wide range of foods including cheese, coffee, dairy powders and snack foods.

NDC claims that the updated analyser is able to perform high-speed measurements in seconds, compared to the hours needed for off-line laboratory tests, which can also prove costly, Food Navigator reports.

"Infralab 710 is designed to meet the demanding requirements of the food industry," said James Millard, NDC infrared engineering marketing manager. "Strict food laws and regulations on labelling, food standards and traceability are shaping the decision-making processes for quality and productivity tools."

NDC insists that its new product provides better product consistency and is subject to fewer errors, such as sample handling, weighing and temperature inconsistencies, than traditional methods of analysis.

Processors are under increasing pressure to achieve tighter margins and increase their operational competitiveness and NDC believes that the updated Infralab 710 will prove popular in a range of food applications.

The analyser has no food traps and is sealed to IP65, allowing it to be cleaned to food hygiene standards easily. Controlled from a PC, Infralab 710 is user-friendly and easy-to-operate with intuitive software, for consistent data collection and analysis.

(No further information)

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### **Organic farming found more wildlife friendly**

**Date:** Thu, 07 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Further support for organic food and farming has been released today by English Nature and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

A review jointly carried out by both the groups has shown that methods used in organic farming are more beneficial to wildlife and can help reverse declines.

In fact, the organic farms proved more wildlife-friendly than normal farms, based on over 50 comparisons.

Alastair Rutherford, head of Agriculture at English Nature said: "Organic farming can make a genuine contribution to the wildlife of England's farmland.

"This study confirms that consumers can be confident that by demanding and buying produce from organic farms in England they will help reverse the declining fortunes of our farmland wildlife."

It is thought the main reasons the organic farms performed better were due to the fact they do not use synthetic fertilisers and pesticides and organic farms tend to be a mix of arable and livestock.

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### **Tesco plans fruit and toy drive**

**Date:** Thu, 07 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Tesco is planning a new way to help encourage young people to eat more fruit and vegetables.

According to Just Food, the UK supermarket chain is to hold a marketing scheme with toy maker Hasbro to boost sales of apples.

The deal will see Hasbro supply Action Man characters with its apples and will have 200,000 copies of Action Man DVD Robot Atak to give away with the bags.

This initiative is the latest in a line of moves by the food industry to encourage healthier eating and to use celebrities and characters to boost healthy products rather than just junk food.

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### **Concerns raised over trans fat content in food**

**Date:** Thu, 07 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The FDF has responded to a report out today by Which? which states that dangerous trans fat is present in very high levels in many processed foods and should be removed from products.

Trans fats occur naturally in small amounts in meat and dairy products, but can also be formed artificially when manufacturers hydrogenate oil or fat, although according to the FDF the level of trans fats in foods has actually dropped.

Commenting on the survey, the FDF said: "The food industry is fully committed to reducing the level of trans fats to as low as is technically possible and has been actively reducing these levels.

"In fact, the Government's latest national diet and nutrition survey (NDNS) shows how the consumption of trans fats has fallen from 2.1 per cent of total energy in 1985 to 1.2 per cent energy in 2000."

One reason trans fats are used is to extend food shelf life and Which? studied a selection of 30 popular foods that include them such as KFC meals, McDonalds and Burger King.

Those products claiming to be healthy also included trans fat such as Tesco wheat and gluten free products and convenience foods such as cheese and onion quiche from Lidl.

However, food manufacturers are aware of the problems surrounding trans fat and some have already cut levels.

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### **Research delivers better understanding of taste**

**Date:** Fri, 08 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Research by scientists at the Swiss food giant Nestle suggests that individual taste profiles could revolutionise food markets of the future.

The study into the diversity of bitter taste receptors in monkeys, chimpanzees and humans indicates that different species had 'specific gustatory adaptation' with regards to nutrition and food choice.

The researchers concluded that different people have different tastes the experiments support ongoing research in the rapidly emerging field of nutrigenomics, or nutritional genomics. Nutrigenomics, the study of how nutrients and genes interact and how genetic variations can cause people to respond differently to food nutrients.

Dr Johannes le Coutre, who headed the study at the Nestle Research Center in Lausanne, Switzerland, told FoodNavigator.com that taste receptors might not only convey taste into the body.

"This is pure speculation, but taste receptors might also sense the food and chemicals that pass into the body, an individualised tool that responds to flavours and food," he explained. "We believe that maybe there is a measurement of food passing by, that regulates the individual by means of a metabolic evaluation and physiological adjustment."

Nutrigenomics is forecast to double within five years in the UK alone from €1.2 billion to €2.47 billion, as consumers turn to products targeted at their profile.

The study, published in this week's edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, involved the analysis of 33 members of the bitter taste receptor gene family in bonobo monkeys, comparing their sequences to those of humans and chimpanzee.

Further information: [www.nestle.com](http://www.nestle.com)  
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### **Conran to open bars in Tokyo**

**Date:** Fri, 08 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Sir Terence Conran has reportedly agreed a deal with a Japanese tycoon to introduce Cuban cigar bars and modern British cuisine to Tokyo.

Sir Terence will work with Hiroyuki Hiramatsu to establish the Conran Group's first restaurant in Tokyo and a ten-strong network of establishments throughout Asia.

Sir Terence has been attempting to crack the Japanese market for many years, The Times reports.

"I've always been interested and am frequently asked to do projects in Tokyo, but we've found we just cannot run a restaurant there," he said. "We've needed somebody like Mr Hiramatsu to work with."

British food has struggled to win over the Japanese market and chain Pret a Manger pulled out of the Japanese capital earlier this year after a disastrous performance.

Sir Terence added: "Britain has the best ingredients of anywhere in the world; it's just that chefs make a wonderfully awful job of cooking them badly. You have to cook intelligently."

(No further information)  
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### **Ocado tops online groceries poll**

**Date:** Fri, 08 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Online shopping site Ocado, the delivery arm of supermarket chain Waitrose, has come out top in a poll of reviewers for Good Housekeeping magazine.

The panel of experts named the site the best of the five biggest internet grocers in the UK, praising it for unique one-hour delivery slots, a fast and simple ordering process and the high quality of the food provided.

In the survey by Good Housekeeping magazine, stores were asked to deliver a 'basket' of 26 items to three different parts of the country. All testers were new to the service and were given the same list of items to purchase.

Ocado scored 85 out of 100, Sainsbury's scored 81, Tesco, who charge between £3.99 and £5.99 for delivery, scored 79, Asda scored 72 and Iceland came in last place with 62 points.

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The average time taken to order 26 items from Ocado was 26 minutes, Sainsbury's figure was 39 minutes, Asda needed 34 minutes, 41 minutes for Tesco.com and Iceland took 61 minutes.

Iceland came bottom in the poll for the second year in a row and was heavily criticised for the average time it took to place an order.

Sainsbury's fared worst when it came to items substituted or not delivered, with a 14 per cent failure rate, while the basket of items delivered by Tesco.com included vegetables and fruit that were 'past their best' and partially defrosted ice-cream.

Online grocery shopping is now used by more than 1.3 million people in Britain.

(no further information)

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### **New pub-restaurant chain planned by Hanover chief**

**Date:** Fri, 08 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new pub restaurant group is being planned for opening by the former chief of hotel and conference centre group Hanover.

Peter Eyles has revealed that he is looking into seeking £3 million of government funding to acquire around five and 10 pubs and turn them into pub-restaurants.

Mr Eyles told Caterer Online: "They will serve freshly cooked food and each pub will be different and none of them will be themed or branded."

The new venture would be named Cross Oak Inns and Mr Eyles has already secured around £7 million of money via bank loans.

Each pub selected will need to be able to hold around 100 diners and will target the 25 plus age group.

The venture also involves the former operations director of the Brewsters pub-restaurant chain.

Mr Eyles explained that the aim was to create pub-restaurants "with good-quality food and drink and first-class service" but stressed he was not planning to open gastropubs serving "arty-type food".

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### **Kettleby ups ready meal production**

**Date:** Fri, 08 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK supplier Kettleby Foods has announced new measures to help meet increasing retailer and consumer demand for ready meals.

The firm has now installed two Proseal F45 tray sealers which work at speeds of 90 trays  
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per minute, meaning the company should be able to increase its productivity.

Kettleby Foods managing director, Ian Arnold, told Food Production Daily: "Success in the chilled foods market is all about service levels.

"Any problems on the line can mean missed deliveries. There is no opportunity to redeliver the next day. That means we need reliable equipment and the reassurance of 24-hour support and fast response."

Recent figures have shown that the UK convenience foods sector is a key area to target, increasing by 70 per cent over the last 10 years.

Over six years, Kettleby has managed to establish itself as a main player in the UK chilled ready meals market and has reported a 30 per cent year-on-year growth.

Each of the trays have been specially developed to meet the firm's exact requirements.  
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### **Christian Salvesen reveals new food contracts**

**Date:** Fri, 08 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

European logistics firm Christian Salvesen has released its closing period statement today and revealed a host of new contracts with food companies.

The group claims its core business has performed well in the first half of the new financial year and has secured contracts with the UK's Woodward Food Service, which is part of the Big Food Group.

In addition, the company has obtained contracts with Spar Retail and an ice cream and frozen foods subsidiary of Unilever.

However, the vegetable processing business has not performed as well as hoped due to the bad weather conditions experienced this summer.

A more conservative approach is now being adopted at the company with its food processing business, which it is hoped will see profits shifted from the first half to the second half.

Any benefits as a result of recent investment in food business growth is hoped to show through in the second half of the financial year.

Christian Salvesen specialises in managing outsourced supply chain operations for manufacturing and retail customers in the industrial, consumer and food sectors and operates in eight European countries including the UK.

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### **Schools encouraged to apply for EU milk subsidy**

**Date:** Mon, 11 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A spokesman for the Dairy Industry Association has claimed that primary schools should  
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apply for subsidised milk as part of the EU subsidy.

Edmund Proffitt explained that the association is keen to raise awareness of the EU scheme and information packs have been sent to primary schools across the country.

Mr Proffitt told BBC Radio Four's 'Farming Today': "Currently around 1.3 million children do benefit from this. But there are plainly many, many millions of children in schools up and down the country who don't benefit from it."

Although the initiative is not entirely free for parents, the spokesman explained that the cost would probably work out at just 12-14 pence a day and so would hopefully not be "a barrier to too many parents".

According to the spokesman, 80 to 90 per cent of primary school pupils are not getting school milk at present.

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### **Dairy Milk birthday plans revealed**

**Date:** Mon, 11 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Cadbury's has revealed a host of plans it has, to celebrate the 100th birthday of the Dairy Milk brand in 2005.

According to Grocer Online, the confectionery and soft drinks giant Cadbury Schweppes will launch a big marketing campaign, focusing on "100 years of happiness".

Marketing director Louise Cooke commented: "2005 is set to be the biggest 12 months in Dairy Milk's history and we are aiming to touch the lives of everyone in the country with our celebrations, from Dairy Milk fans of all ages to our retail customer partners."

A host of Cadbury brands were recently pulled together under the Dairy Milk name, including Caramel and Wispa.

Dairy Milk now achieves sales each year of around £320 million.

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### **Change in meat hygiene regulations causes concern**

**Date:** Mon, 11 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The UK's biggest meat hygiene inspector union has raised concerns over proposed changes to meat hygiene inspections.

UNISON claims that 'watered down' regulations will put consumer's health at risk and that recent surveys have revealed that inspectors want tougher rules not less.

Ben Priestley, UNISON's national officer for the Meat Hygiene Service, said: "UK consumers need stronger meat hygiene regulations, not some watered down version."

A consultation on the issue begins today by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), with the agency claiming that UK company inspectors only need to be qualified to the same level

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as government inspectors with regards to the specific tasks they carry out.

"UNISON will be telling Government, the meat industry and UK consumers that the FSA's version of the new regulations are more to do with protecting the profits of the UK poultry industry, than the health and safety of UK consumers," Mr Priestley added.

According to the union officer, HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) was set up to prove that the meat industry could be responsible for producing clean meat for consumers but the majority of members of the union argue "the opposite is true".

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### **Top food performance reported at Inventive**

**Date:** Mon, 11 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Bar chain Inventive Leisure has revealed it is planning to focus more on food in a bid to boost its profits.

After a "difficult" year and a fall in full-year pre-tax profits, the company is looking to food, since sales of food grew by a huge 20.3 per cent, double the growth rate of its drinks.

Turnover during the year to the end of June saw an 11 per cent increase to £41.7 million, but was helped by strong food sales rather than drinks, according to Caterer Online.

A new food brand has also been introduced by the firm Vodka Kitchen, which is hoped to boost food margins even further, according to chief executive Roy Ellis.

Food sales in the first 14 weeks of the new financial year also saw top performance, with a 65 per cent increase reported.

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### **Ethnic food dishes increasing in popularity**

**Date:** Mon, 11 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new publication by Leatherhead Food International has revealed that an increasing amount of ethnic food dishes are forming part of the European food market.

According to "The European Ethnic Foods Market 2004 (2nd edition)", the dishes are growing in popularity as consumers become more adventurous in their tastes.

Many countries are now seeing a growth in Indian, Mexican and Chinese food and the sector is expanding steadily.

The report produced with Research and Markets covered a number of key areas including established and emerging ethnic cuisines, comparison between retail and foodservice sectors and original research.

As well as the typical ethnic cuisines enjoyed in the UK, a number of other foods were identified including Japanese and Thai, Cajun, African, Middle Eastern and Creole.

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The key product areas identified by the report are ready meals, cooking sauces and accompaniments.

It is hoped the report will help companies understand the latest market trends, track the development of the various cuisines through Europe and get a better understanding of recent new product activity.

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### **Profit expectations unveiled at Sainsbury's**

**Date:** Mon, 11 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK food retailer Sainsbury's has released profit expectations today, reporting that underlying profits before tax are set to be between £125 to £135 million.

The company has issued the latest statement following recent press and analyst comment.

A statement was already issued in July by the firm stating that profit expectations were lower and would most likely affect the first half.

The predictions cover the half-year period from October 9 2004 and a thorough business review is currently taking place.

Review results and future expectations are set to be announced on October 19.

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### **Caffeine effects to be studied**

**Date:** Tue, 12 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new study begins this week looking into the effects of caffeine in consumer's diets.

Conducted by researchers at the University of Bristol, the research is one of the largest studies in the world looking into how caffeine may affect health, sleep patterns and well-being.

Peter Rogers, Professor of Biological Psychology and head of the Department of Experimental Psychology, said: "The consumption of tea is a national institution in the UK and coffee houses have sprung up all over our high streets.

"However, ask anyone how much caffeine they consume in their diets and they'll find it hard to answer. We need people's help to increase our understanding of caffeine and the effects on health, well-being and sleep."

"The Dietary Caffeine and Health Study' is particularly important since little is known about how much caffeine is consumed and what it can do to humans.

Researchers will look at findings from 16,000 men and women, who are picked at random and will be sent an information pack asking them if they wish to take part.

Among the issues to be covered are how much caffeine is consumed, how many caffeine

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free drinks are consumed, what people think about caffeine and if people have any adverse effects after consumption.

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### **Salt campaign complaint rejected**

**Date:** Tue, 12 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) has concluded that there is no case, after receiving a complaint by the Salt Manufacturers Association (SMA) over the FSA's salt awareness campaign.

According to the SMA, the main cause for concern was the Sid the Slug character, used to convey messages in adverts and on posters, since it was deemed inappropriate bearing in mind salt is known to kill slugs.

However, the complaint has been considered and the advert has been approved, since the agency feels it does not cause offence or give a misleading impression of the effects of salt on the heart and health.

Neil Martinson, Director of Communications for the Food Standards Agency, said: "We are pleased that the ASA has decided that our new advertising campaign is unlikely to upset or mislead the British public."

The FSA defended the initiative, explaining it was "based on up to date independent scientific advice from experts and supported by industry, consumer groups and public health charities".

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### **FoE raises concerns over GM labelling**

**Date:** Tue, 12 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Friends of the Earth (FoE) has raised concerns that GM labelling laws are not being properly controlled.

According to the organisation, companies that do not meet new tougher rules on labelling GM ingredients are unlikely to be caught, as local authorities do not have enough funding to carry out adequate monitoring.

Friends of the Earth's GM campaigner, Clare Oxborrow, said: "These new labelling rules were brought in to help consumers in Europe avoid GM food but people in the UK are being let down because the rules are not being properly policed.

"...The Government has failed to provide local authorities with sufficient funds to carry out proper monitoring. Unless this changes, these rules will be open to abuse."

FoE's concerns follow new penalties that have been put in place in England to stop companies breaching new regulations that were introduced in April.

New regulations state that companies must label any food or animal food containing GM ingredients or derivatives such as processed vegetable oils.

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Those firms which break this rule can face a fine of up to £5000 or three months in prison.

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### **Golden Arches to go at McDonald's**

**Date:** Tue, 12 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

McDonald's has revealed the latest step in its bid to boost its new healthy eating image - with a change in icon.

The fast food chain is to get rid of its well-known 'Golden Arches' icon from UK advertising for the first time and replace them with a golden question mark.

According to Brand Republic, the food firm is going to use national poster adverts with the line "McDonald's. But not as you know it".

Known as the 'Changing' campaign, it is hoped the changes will encourage consumers to realise the traditional view of McDonald's is no longer true and it offers more than just high-fat burgers and chips.

Around 17 million homes will receive mail drops showing information on how the retailer is changing and will offer incentives to visit outlets, with images including fresh salad, fruit pieces and phrases such as "free range".

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### **Icerefresh announces Prospero deal**

**Date:** Tue, 12 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

One of the leading frozen food sales and distribution companies in the UK has announced it has secured a new acquisition deal.

Icerefresh Foods, owned by the Axentis Group, has purchased gourmet dessert manufacturer Prospero.

The firm deals in the retail and manufacturing sectors and specialises in frozen desserts and ice cream, with the new deal helping to boost its business in the sectors further.

Axentis Group managing director Simon Spence commented: "Prospero has an enviable reputation for both quality and the ability to innovate and react quickly to market demands.

"The company's product portfolio plus our expertise in the UK frozen desserts market are a natural fit. We believe there is enormous potential for growth. This is a very exciting move for the group."

Prospero has a turnover of £2 million and produces luxury handmade frozen and chilled desserts for customers such as Harrods, Waitrose and specialist chefs and retailers.

Axentis now hopes to completely upgrade the Prospero factory with further investment.

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### **BSE inquiry results revealed**

**Date:** Tue, 12 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has released its report into the failure by the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) to test over 200 cattle for BSE.

A total of 261 cattle were not tested and the agency has revealed that an independent inquiry has shown that this was due to badly defined testing procedures.

Sir John Krebs, Chairman of the FSA, said: "When these failures were first reported the Food Standards Agency ordered the MHS to take immediate action to ensure that BSE testing of casualty cattle was being applied.

"While it is reassuring that the risks from these failings is very low, the Agency expects the proper implementation of all BSE controls and surveillance measures."

Other conclusions from the inquiry was that there was a lack of definition of the purpose of and the requirements for testing the animals, but it claimed the risk to human health from the incidents was very low.

The agency has stated it will consider the findings of the independent Steering Group "very carefully and commission an action plan that addresses these recommendations in a robust and thorough way".

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### **New research could boost tomato production**

**Date:** Wed, 13 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Dutch researcher Marco Kruijt has made a breakthrough in identifying the gene responsible for the natural defence mechanism in tomatoes.

The Dutch phytopathologist, working out of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, discovered two resistance genes that were probably present in an ancestral tomato species, prior to the evolution of modern tomato species.

The scientist claims that the genes, which provide resistance against the *Cladosporium fulvum* fungal disease, are found in several wild tomato species.

Tomatoes resistant to the fungus *Cladosporium fulvum* possess the so-called Cf resistance genes. Kruijt believes that the fungus *C. fulvum* was already a pathogen of this ancestral tomato species, and therefore the resistance genes Cf-4 and Cf-9 have been retained in the various modern wild tomato species.

The researcher also discovered that wild plants on which the Peruvian or berry tomatoes grow contain not one but three resistance genes, all of which recognise the same fungal factor. These three genes are the result of a series of changes that have led to complete pieces of DNA being duplicated.

An estimated 8.5 million tonnes of tomatoes are cultivated annually in Europe, 1.5 million tonnes of which are sold directly to the consumer, while seven million are used in the manufacture of products such as ketchup and sauces.

If the natural defence mechanism of the tomato can be identified then it could lead to vast savings for producers and processors.

The research was funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research.

Further information: [www.nwo.nl](http://www.nwo.nl)  
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### **US scientists identify bacteria that can decaffeinate coffee**

**Date:** Wed, 13 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A group of chemists in the United States claim they may have discovered a way of creating naturally decaffeinated coffee and tea plants.

Researchers at Emory University have been examining ways of harnessing the ability of bacteria to make new molecules.

The study by Emory chemist Justin Gallivan and graduate student Shawn Desai could also lead to the production of theophylline, a product used in treating asthma.

"We know that there is an enzyme that breaks caffeine down into theophylline, but we don't know much about it. What we do know is that it works very slowly. Ideally, we would like to speed it up a bit so that we could create coffee plants that are low in caffeine. That's where the bacteria come in. They now need the breakdown product of the enzyme (theophylline) for survival, but they can't do much with caffeine," Professor Gallivan said.

The chemist explained that the research team is now hopeful of utilising this discovery to speed up the break down caffeine faster and introduce decaffeinated coffee.

However, he warned that the development of good-tasting, naturally decaffeinated coffee could take some years, adding: "We're still at the earliest stages of this work. There are many hurdles to overcome. As a scientist, I'm excited about the future. As a caffeinated coffee addict, part of me is not in a hurry to solve this one."

The research appears in the Journal of the American Chemical Society later this month.

(no further information)  
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### **New enzyme reduces artery-clogging fats**

**Date:** Wed, 13 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Danish enzyme leader Novozymes has designed a new competitively priced technology aimed at reducing artery-clogging trans fats in food products.

The company has successfully reduced the cost of producing its revolutionary new enzyme Lipozyme TL IM, an immobilised lipase, now used by agri-giant ADM at the first commercial enzyme interesterification facility in North America.

Hans Christian Holm, global marketing manager for fats and oils at Novozymes, told FoodNavigator.com: "Alternative products for food makers must be at equal costs, we needed lab breakthroughs to make the enzyme cost effective for food manufacturers."

Mounting evidence linking TFAs to increases in LDL (bad) cholesterol levels, causing the arteries to become more rigid and clogged has led companies to develop new ways of cutting trans fatty acids out of food. An increase in LDL cholesterol levels can lead to heart disease.

Trans fatty acids (TFAs) are formed when liquid vegetable oils go through hydrogenation. ADM, the first large company to work our Lipozyme TL IM into the commercial process, is reportedly using it to make the NovaLipid line of zero/low trans fat oils and margarines.

Incoming rules in the US mean that by January 1st 2006 all trans fats in food products will have to be labelled on the nutritional panel. Europe has yet to introduce legislation governing labelling of trans fats in food products, but consumer organisations are pressing for greater transparency in food labelling.

Further information: [www.novozymes.com](http://www.novozymes.com)  
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### **Food packaging recycling hindered by government targets**

**Date:** Wed, 13 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new study conducted for food packaging firm Tetra Pak has claimed that efforts to improve recycling in the UK is undermined by government policy.

Although targets encourage the recycling of heavy materials, lighter materials, such as those used in food packaging are neglected, according to Forum for the Future who carried out the research.

Mike Ansell, managing director of Tetra Pak UK told BBC News Online: "Our cartons are made from a renewable resource - paper from well managed forests - and are extremely efficient as a form of packaging.

"We want them to be as easy to recycle in the UK as they are in many parts of Europe. But the rules are making this incredibly difficult to achieve."

The 'Wasted Opportunities' report argued that targets should be set based on which materials provide the most benefits for recycling.

Tetra Pak set up the study, as it wanted to ascertain why the recycling of plastic bottles, cartons and cans was low in the UK.

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**Regional food and drink firms offered new guide**

**Date:** Wed, 13 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

A regional food and drink advice guide has been launched today by market development consultancy firm Food from Britain.

Produced by IGD and funded by Food from Britain and Defra, the product distribution guide is free and is to help regional producers find innovative and cost effective new routes to market.

Jane Wakeling, Regional Food and Drink manager, Food from Britain explained: "We know from regional food and drink producers that distribution and supply chain challenges continue to be one of their main barriers to growth."

"In the UK we have many excellent regional food and drink products which are not enjoying their full potential because the producers don't have the know-how or resources to distribute them most efficiently or to a wider market," IGD chief executive Joanne Denney-Finch, added.

The guide was produced in response to producer feedback and offers a step-by-step guide, with more than 6,000 copies being sent out.

It is hoped by offering some help, small producers will be given "the know-how and confidence to succeed on a larger scale".

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**Woodward Foodservice sales on the up**

**Date:** Wed, 13 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

The Big Food Group has released its second quarter trading statement today, with positive results reported despite difficult conditions.

Although like-for-like sales dropped in Booker Catering and Iceland supermarket businesses, the group saw a 29.6 per cent increase in like-for-like sales during the 26 week period in its Woodward Foodservice business.

Bill Grimsey, chief executive, commented: "Trading has remained tough in the food sector in recent months for both retailers and suppliers.

"We now look to the important third quarter where our plans for the Christmas period will be implemented with determination to provide our customers with a bigger and better Christmas value package this year whilst exploring the approach from Baugur."

The firm claimed that consolidation in the food retail sector has continued to cause problems and bad weather conditions had also made business tough.

However, despite this the group claims that good progress has been made on its Iceland refit programme, expansion within Booker has gone well and Woodward has continued to grow in its sector.

Results covered the 13 and 26 weeks to October 1, 2004.

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### **NPD expert calls for change**

**Date:** Thu, 14 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

An NPD consultant has urged the food industry to adopt major changes to the way it approaches new product development for multiple retailers.

Jonathan Smith of food industry specialist Axis Management Consulting described the industry's current approach to new product development as 'madness', just-food.com reports. He pointed out that food suppliers' margins were being squeezed increasingly tightly, while millions of pounds were being wasted on failed new product launches each year.

Speaking at a food industry seminar, the food expert said: "So much of this waste is avoidable. People talk about eight out of ten new product launches failing as if this is something inevitable, like a law of nature. It is nothing of the sort.

"Too few projects are rigorously evaluated and screened before they get under way. Numerous new products are launched having never seen a consumer before the day they hit the shelves. At times, NPD is done willy nilly, almost for its own sake. And many businesses do not go about learning lessons in a systematic way.

"It's no wonder that failure rates are so high. This has to change. The food industry can no longer afford to squander resources in this way. It's a great opportunity for businesses that get to grips with running NPD in a controlled, focused way."

(no further information)

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### **Potato packer installs innovative new weigher**

**Date:** Thu, 14 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Irish potato packer, Meade Potato, has reportedly installed an Ishida multihead weigher.

The packer, which supplies potatoes and a variety of other products to major retailers, aims to increase speeds from its current 27 packs per minute to around 50, due to increasing demand.

The Ishida CCW-M-214/50-SS-GS has been specifically designed to handle potatoes and other fruit and vegetables that require gentle and controlled handling.

The machine features a low angle reinforced dispersion table with concealed fixings, semi-flat radial feeder troughs with waterfall end and safe edges, and double opening hoppers with cushioned, easy down inserts ensure that the product moves quickly through the weigher without the risk of damage, foodproductiondaily reports.

At Meade, the weigher operates in conjunction with a Sandiacre Bagmaker weighing potatoes into 1, 1.5, 2 and 2.5 kg bags and the company is also using the machine to pack

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onions.

"The Ishida weigher is ideal for our purposes," said Meade factory manager Rodney Kingston. "As well as increased speed, it has also proved superior to our current equipment in many other respects. Features such as the special linings and reduced angles combine effective control with the gentlest of handling for the potatoes while maintaining high speeds. Weighing accuracy is also very impressive."

The Irish potato industry is worth an estimated €96 million to over 800 growers who produce around 500,000 tonnes annually.

(no further information)

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### **Omega 3s for health-conscious Europeans**

**Date:** Thu, 14 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Food companies around Europe are reportedly adding omega-3 fatty acids to traditional products.

Increasing health-consciousness in consumers is leading to greater demands for healthy food and a report by Mintel reveals that adding omega-3 ingredients continues to be a source of innovation for bakery, dairy and meat companies.

Mintel's Global New Products Database shows that Spanish firm Adipan has launched a ready-to-bake bread that comes in both omega-3 and calcium varieties (Calcio Bone, claimed to help strengthen bones) while in France, Fleury Michon now offers Plaisir et Equilibre Jambon Superieur Ham, which is rich in omega 3 and has a reduced salt level.

According to foodproductiondaily.com Spain's Grupo Siro launched its new Galleta Omega 3 biscuits under the Hacendado brand last month. The company claims the omega-3 and calcium-enriched biscuits are ideal for a health-conscious consumer's breakfast. In Ireland Corby Rock eggs introduced free range eggs with omega-3 and selenium.

Omega-3 PUFAs have been subjected to numerous medical and clinical trials by ingredient suppliers as well as independent organisations and are believed to strengthen the body's defences against heart disease and cancer.

If a draft regulation on health claims issued by the European Commission last year remains as it is then food companies using Omega-3s may be able to make generic claims for their products.

The European market for fortified foods has helped foster is now worth more than €161 million for omega-3 PUFAs, accounting for 28 per cent of the global market volume, according to Frost & Sullivan.

Further information: [www.mintel.com](http://www.mintel.com)

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### **Branding the main factor in drink preference**

**Date:** Thu, 14 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Latest tests have revealed that knowing the brand of a soft drink can in fact influence a consumer's idea of what it tastes like.

Scientists from the US Baylor College of Medicine used volunteers to take a Pepsi versus Diet Coke challenge and found that when a volunteer knew the brand, certain parts of the brain containing memories were activated.

The findings are interesting for the beverage industry in particular as it shows how branding can affect behavioural choice, according to BBC News Online.

Although it is widely known that taste or smell perception of a food can be influenced by sounds, textures or images, Dr John O'Doherty from University College London explained: "What this study shows is how this preference is modulated by contextual information in the brain, which is a novel finding."

A total of 67 volunteers were used for the study and there was no preference given by any until they were aware of the brand they were drinking.

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### **NHS advised to set up in-house kitchens**

**Date:** Thu, 14 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A top chef and food writer has claimed that the NHS should set up in-house kitchens to deliver better quality food in hospitals.

According to Michelin-starred chef Shaun Hill, contract caterers will never provide as good a service as a well-resourced in-house NHS kitchen.

According to Caterer Online, Mr Hill said: "Contract caterers are better than a bad hospital kitchen, but not as good as a well-run one."

"The problem is that because of the NHS's size it tends to get centralised and moved further from the control of local cooks."

The former adviser for the government's Better Hospital Food scheme was addressing delegates at a Bupa Chef's Best programme.

Mr Hill said the problem is that food is placed far down the list of priorities as the NHS keeps focusing on standardisation and with an in-house kitchen lower spending would be achievable too.

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### **Report reveals true amount spent on comfort eating**

**Date:** Thu, 14 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new report has shown that British consumers spend £920 million on comfort foods and premium treats per year.

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Findings from Datamonitor have shown that comfort eating and indulgence are becoming more important to the public, with results based on 2003.

Consumer markets analyst at Datamonitor and author of the report, Lawrence Gould, said: "As the pace of life increases, the role for self-indulgence and treating in consumers' everyday lives is becoming more important, and self-indulgence is a common way of combating the effects of stress."

The analyst also believes that consumer spending in this sector is set to increase by 27 per cent to £1.2 billion in 2008.

Moreover, it feels the number of treats eaten by each person will rise from 50 (based on 2003) to 63 in 2008.

Other findings indicated that chocolate is the most popular treat and people are still more interested in satisfying their tastebuds and treating themselves, despite current healthy eating messages and concerns.

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#### **Solbar plans to invest in sugar analysis**

**Date:** Fri, 15 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Soy products firm Solbar Industries has announced plans to establish a new company specialising in sugar analysis.

Solbar claims the licensed technology fits well with its current activities in the food and food supplements area.

The new company, called NutriCognia, will market its technology for use by manufacturers of dairy products, protein-rich foods and probiotic product and it is expected to boost the firm's global position as an ingredients supplier.

The new firm will be backed by a loan of up to \$4 million from the Israeli group, giving it control of 80 per cent of the venture, while the rest will be held by the founders of Procognia, the UK company that developed the innovative technology. Solbar plans to first introduce the venture in Europe at HiE next month.

The proprietary technology can analyse sugars, including glycoproteins (sugar-protein molecules) and glycolipids (sugar-fat molecules) in complex solutions. NutriCognia will initially market the systems for sugar analysis to manufacturers of baby food, dairy products, beverages, protein-rich health foods and probiotic products.

Gary Brenner, marketing director for Solbar, who will lead the global marketing campaign of the new product, said: "Potential applications for NutriCognia's glycoanalysis system include food safety and quality control, process control, competitor product analysis and reverse engineering and design of new products."

Further information: [www.solbar.com](http://www.solbar.com)

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### **Starbucks unveils future plans**

**Date:** Fri, 15 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Coffee chain Starbucks' leadership team has outlined the company's latest innovation updates, including new store concepts, coffee, beverages, food and services.

The firm announced that, during the 2004 fiscal year, more than one-third of new stores opened in the US included drive-thru access, while new menu boards, drive-thru lane improvements, and speed of service enhancements had also been carried out.

The coffee company claims that food and beverage innovation is at an all time high and is well positioned to continue, with the current product pipeline filled with more than 100 food and beverage products that will take the chain into fiscal 2007.

"Starbucks has become an enduring, global brand by continually raising the bar and finding ways to innovate throughout all areas of the business," said Jim Donald, Starbucks CEO designate. "We will always stay true to our coffee heritage while offering complementary products and services to support our ever-growing diverse customer base."

Starbucks said its reloadable stored-value Starbucks Card was due to hit the \$1 billion mark this month for total balances loaded since its launch nearly three years ago and more than 35 million cards have been activated to date.

Starbucks has worked hard to increase the capacity and the productivity of space in each store and current design initiatives are focused on enhancing inventory storage as well as food and beverage preparation areas.

The company's latest innovations include Chantico drinking chocolate, which will launch in January 2005 and is inspired by the tradition of the European chocolate house. The coffee chain claims it is the "most luxurious and indulgent product ever introduced by Starbucks". Other recent product introductions are Pumpkin Spice Latte, Peppermint Mocha and Strawberries & Creme Frappuccino.

Starbucks is also increasing its food offerings, with high-quality lunch sandwiches and salads now available in more than 2,000 stores in 10 markets.

Further information: [www.starbucks.com](http://www.starbucks.com)

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### **Scientists develop caffeine-eating bacteria**

**Date:** Fri, 15 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Scientists in the US have reportedly developed a way of reducing or removing caffeine in coffee plants.

Justin Gallivan, a chemist at Emory University in Atlanta, said development of caffeine-free coffee plants is probably years away, but the research could result in a rich, new, naturally decaffeinated coffee strain.

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The scientist, along with graduate student Shawn Desai, is attempting to teach bacteria how to devour and destroy the caffeine contained in a coffee plant.

"We know that there is an enzyme that breaks caffeine down into theophylline, but we don't know much about it," Professor Gallivan said. "We would like to develop bacteria that can break down caffeine quickly. To do this, we wanted to make the bacteria depend on the breakdown product of caffeine for their survival."

The researchers have used a way to encourage the bacteria to synthesize molecules that they would otherwise not make on their own to couple the life of a bacterium to the presence of theophylline, a compound that is used to treat asthma, and is produced by the breakdown of caffeine in both coffee and tea plants.

However, Professor Gallivan has stressed that consumers should not expect good-tasting, naturally decaffeinated coffee anytime soon. "We're still at the earliest stages of this work. There are many hurdles to overcome," he explained. "As a scientist, I'm excited about the future. As a caffeinated coffee addict, part of me is not in a hurry to solve this one."

The research is scheduled to appear in the October 27th edition of the Journal of the American Chemical Society.

Further information: [www.emory.edu](http://www.emory.edu)  
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### **Danone reports strong quarterly results**

**Date:** Fri, 15 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

French food group Danone has posted third quarter sales of 3.566 billion euros (£2.5 billion), up from 3.487 billion euros during the same period last year and ahead of analysts' expectations.

The firm said like-for-like sales growth was up 5.5 per cent in the three months to September, taking like-for-like sales growth to 7.7 per cent for the first nine months of 2004.

Danone attributed the sales rise to an increase in demand for its Carb Control and Actimel products in the US.

The dairy division led the third-quarter increase, posting a revenue gain of 9.5 per cent, excluding the impact of currencies. The biscuit business posted a 3.3 per cent increase in sales, while beverage sales struggled at just 1.3 per cent.

However, the company, which makes Danone brand dairy products, LU cookies and Evian bottled water, reduced its forecast for 2004 operating margin growth.

Danone said it had also lowered its estimate for operating margin growth in the full year to "at least" 20 basis points from the 20-40 expected previously. The company said sales had been affected by stagnant demand for branded foods in Europe and poor weather

affecting beverage sales.

The change in margin expectations did not affect the company's estimate for earnings per share, which was still forecast to grow 10 per cent this year. Danone also said it was targeting full-year sales growth of around seven per cent.

Further information: [www.danone.com](http://www.danone.com)  
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### **Free pedometers for Walkers' customers**

**Date:** Fri, 15 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Walkers has revealed it is to help improve consumer health and add to current measures to address obesity with a new offer through its crisps.

The UK subsidiary of PepsiCo is spending up to £3 million on pedometers for its crisp lovers.

One million of the footstep measuring devices are being given away for free.

Named walk-o-meters, the gadgets can be ordered via the company's website

The site also offers health questions and answers, walking tips and terms and conditions.  
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### **British council argues for Spanish egg ban**

**Date:** Fri, 15 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Following joint investigations into salmonella by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Health Protection Agency (HPA), the British Egg Industry Council has called for all imported Spanish eggs to be banned.

The council has called for the imports to stop because of the high risk of salmonella infection, since a considerable amount of the 6,000 cases in England and Wales since 2002 have been linked to the eggs.

Andrew Parker, of the British Egg Industry Council told BBC News Online: "It is ridiculous that two years after the problem with Spanish eggs first became apparent no action has been taken.

"It is now time for the government to ban Spanish eggs."

However, the FSA has claimed that a ban could only be enforced by Europe and not by the British government.

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### **UK chefs compete for German food prize**

**Date:** Mon, 18 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

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Chefs from the UK are heading to the medieval city of Erfurt in Germany to take part in the prestigious Culinary Olympics.

Erfurt, the 1,260 year old state capital of Thuringia, will play host to senior and junior teams from all over the world.

A team of Welsh chefs will be competing as a nation for the first time at the competition, having competed twice as a region of Britain.

The three-day event starts on Monday. Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded in both the hot and cold kitchen competitions and the combined points decide where the team finishes overall. Next year's World Championships will be held in Switzerland.

Welsh vice-captain Nick Davies, from Powys, told BBC News Online: "The boys are pretty confident they can improve on the two golds and a number of silvers picked up in 2000 at the Culinary Olympics.

"We've had three months of intense training and we're looking to win gold in the hot kitchen, which will see the team prepare 110 meals to a set menu."

Traditional Thuringian cuisine includes the famous Thuringian potato dumplings, Thuringia sausage and tasty local beer.

(no further information)

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### **New report released on food ingredients and flavouring innovation**

**Date:** Mon, 18 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Provenance is seen as a key trend in the flavour and ingredients market and looks set to grow in importance over the next few years in relation to consumer confidence and demand, a new report claims.

The document, 'New Profit Opportunities in Ingredients and Flavours: Future outlook for product innovation and consumer influencers to 2005', has been specifically written to assist food and drink manufacturers and ingredients companies in making the right choices for the new and existing products they will be producing, developing and re-inventing over the next two years.

With increasing demand for authenticity and trace ability of ingredients, Research and Markets, the company that carried out the study, claims that provenance is increasingly leading the global flavour and ingredients.

The report by the Dublin-based firm analyses the factors influencing current developments within the food and drinks industry, and examines the key trends and issues for flavours and ingredients.

The report also reviews new products designed to capitalise on innovations in flavours and ingredients, as well as changes in eating trends and food preferences.

Research and markets surveyed 5000 senior level executives in ingredients and flavour companies, food and drink retailers, manufacturers and suppliers from the UK, Europe, Scandinavia, Asia Pacific and US for the report.

Further information: [www.researchandmarkets.com](http://www.researchandmarkets.com)  
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### **FSA reveals latest board developments**

**Date:** Mon, 18 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Food Standards Agency has published details of its open Board meeting on October 14th in Belfast.

Two main Board papers were discussed at the meeting: 'Sustainable development and the Food Standards Agency's policies' and the 'Food Standards Agency Strategic Plan 2005-10: putting consumers first', and there was also discussion on the report of the 'Inquiry into the failure to comply with the requirements to test all relevant 24-30 month old casualty animals for BSE'.

The paper on sustainable development proposed that the overarching position on sustainable development should be: "The Agency will ensure, so far as possible, that its policies, decisions and advice take into account sustainable development. The priority for the Agency will be to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food, both now and in the future."

The Board agreed the characterisation of sustainable development as it relates to the Agency and approved the proposed framework mechanism by which sustainable development will be embedded into the Agency's work.

The Board considered the results of the public consultation on the draft Strategic Plan and discussed proposed changes in the light of responses to consultation, including the need to look at the educational aspects of the plan and reflect European legislation and the Agency's role in pursuing this. The Board also reached an agreement that the Plan should be published by the end of 2004.

The FSA Board also agreed at the meeting to give further consideration to an implementation action plan on BSE legislation at its next meeting in December.

The meeting also included discussions on a forthcoming review of the Agency's performance in its first five years, the use of category 3 animal by-products, salmonella poisoning and problems with imported Spanish eggs and updates on the issue of folic acid.

Further information: [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)  
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### **Beer firms get health conscious**

**Date:** Mon, 18 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The UK's biggest brewer has unveiled plans to put health warnings on its beer cans and  
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bottles.

Scottish & Newcastle, which makes Newcastle Brown Ale and Fosters, announced that it will list the units of alcohol in drinks from next month and will add a message urging drinkers not to exceed "three to four units a day for men, two to three for women".

Scottish & Newcastle said that it was a responsible company behaving in a responsible way.

The decision follows attempts by the government to target binge and underage drinking.

A report in the Sunday Telegraph suggested that, although not required by law, other brewers are expected to follow suit in labelling their products.

Coors, which produces Grolsch and Carling, said it has launched a similar scheme and will have the warnings, or "responsibility strap lines", on cans within a few weeks.

The UK has one of the highest rates of underage drinking in the world and alcohol misuse costs the country an estimated £20 billion a year.

Further information: [www.scottish-newcastle.com](http://www.scottish-newcastle.com)  
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### **European market for British beef explored**

**Date:** Mon, 18 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Following the announcement of promotion of beef by the food and farming minister, a UK meat firm has claimed there is a key market for English beef in Europe.

Southern Counties Fresh Food has just become the only meat plant in England to be granted an export licence, along with its sister business Romford Wholesale Meats.

The firm will join others in a bid to recruit buyers in a special exhibition in Paris this week.

Managing director, Richard Phelps, told BBC Radio Four: "I'm absolutely convinced that there will be a market for English beef in Europe. We had such a good market place before.

"I genuinely think that people want our product over there, it's just getting through the next stage of convincing them we've improved the systems and the quality is far improved through consistency, through the fact we've got cattle of a younger age which gives more tender, more juicy, better quality products."

Southern Counties has already put a lot of money into promotion material to help prove to reluctant consumers that they have made huge efforts to improve the meat sector.

It is hoped that animals released from the over thirty-month scheme would be used for export, if the current ban is lifted.

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### **New ingredients manager chosen at DFB**

**Date:** Mon, 18 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Dairy Farmers of Britain (DFB) has announced it has chosen a new manager for its ingredients division.

Gerry Smith has been appointed as managing director of the sector, following his position at the Greencore Group, where he was chief executive of the Ambient and Frozen Foods businesses.

Chief executive of DFB, Malcolm Smith, said: "With the acquisition of ACC we are now the leading dairy ingredients business in the UK.

"Gerry's considerable experience in the food industry will help us to build on our market leading position and grow the business alongside our other dairy business divisions. Ingredients are an important part of Dairy Farmers of Britain's future as we look to grow our position in milk processing."

Prior to Mr Smith's responsibility for the grocery, cakes, mineral water and frozen savoury operations, he also worked for Campbells Soups and Rowats Foods.

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### **Technique developed to identify Campylobacter**

**Date:** Tue, 19 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A food technician in the US has reportedly found a new method of identifying colonies of the food poisoning bacterium Campylobacter.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) food technologist J Eric Line discovered that while exposing Campylobacter to low levels of the chemical triphenyltetrazolium chloride does not harm growth, it stains the colonies deep red to magenta.

Previous tests for the bacterium had involved 'direct plating' to isolate and count microscopic organisms. However, scientists often find it difficult to differentiate between campylobacter and other micro organisms.

New agars used for Campylobacter growth are translucent, resulting in a contrast of dark colonies on the translucent background, which makes it possible to count them on light boxes or by electronic means.

Mr Line explained that contamination by other organisms can still happen, but even if contaminant colonies show up as red, most of them are easily distinguished from Campylobacter by differences in shape and structure.

Campylobacter is a food-borne pathogen found in numerous raw or mishandled foods, including poultry. This illness is characterised by symptoms such as diarrhoea, cramping, abdominal pain and fever.

The new testing technique, available for licensing, can be used in laboratories to conduct

diagnostic testing.

The research is published in the October 2004 issue of Agricultural Research magazine.

Further information: [www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov)  
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### **Vitamin C 'offers protection against stomach cancer'**

**Date:** Tue, 19 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Vitamin C intake and fruit consumption may be linked to reduced risk of stomach cancer, a new study claims.

Researchers from the US National Cancer Institute and National Public Health Institute of Finland also found that lycopene, an antioxidant found in tomatoes, could have a protective effect against the cancer.

The team assessed the association between fruit and vegetable consumption and the risk of stomach cancer in approximately 29,000 male smokers, aged 50-69.

Speaking at this year's Frontiers in Cancer Prevention Research conference, the US and Finnish scientists said they had found fruit and vitamin C intake, but not vegetable consumption, reduced risk of non-cardia cancer by approximately 45 per cent. The results also suggested that lycopene was associated with 34 per cent reduction in risk of non-cardia cancer.

"Since our findings are similar to the results found in several other studies, fruit and vitamin C intake are likely to be useful for the prevention of stomach cancer. The effect of lycopene on gastric cancer, however, needs further studies," said Farin Kamangar of the Cancer Prevention Studies Branch at the National Cancer Institute.

The Alpha-Tocopherol, Beta-Carotene Cancer Prevention (ATBC) Study was initiated to test the effect of vitamin supplementation on the prevention of lung and other cancers. The trial ended in 1993, but ongoing follow-up of the participants continues, offering new insights into the causes and prevention of multiple diseases, including cancer.

Recent research has indicated that lycopene may reduce risk of cancer by activating special cancer preventive enzymes, rather than through its antioxidant effect.

Further information: [www.nci.nih.gov](http://www.nci.nih.gov)  
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### **Coke and Pepsi unveil labelling plans**

**Date:** Tue, 19 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Cola giants Coke and Pepsi have announced plans to label soft drinks with nutritional facts.

The new labels will give nutritional information, including calories, fat, sodium, carbohydrate, sugar and protein levels on all package sizes.

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According to reports, Coca-Cola and Pepsico International "will begin the rollout of enhanced nutrition labelling on a number of package sizes from '05".

The two companies also plan to state on the label whether the caffeine content in the soft drink is above recommended limits.

Currently, in accordance with US FDA regulations, labels carry nutrition information for an eight-ounce serving and indicate the total number of servings per package.

"The information has always been on the bottle," said Coke spokeswoman Susan McDermott. "This is just a way for people to make it easier."

Kraft Foods recently announced plans to include detailed nutritional information on all its products following growing concerns about soaring levels of obesity in the developed world.

The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 64 per cent of Americans are overweight and 30 per cent are obese.

(no further information)

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### **Plastic poultry conveyor launched**

**Date:** Tue, 19 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A plastic spiral belt designed specifically for the conveying of small poultry products has been unveiled by manufacturer Intralox.

The company claims its Series 2700 machine, which features smaller surface openings, is perfect for products such as fajita meat, nuggets, or popcorn-style chicken.

The new machine is the latest addition to the company's Spiral belt range and its modular design makes repairs and changeovers simple and easier for manufacturers to maximise their production time.

In addition, the belts operate at very low tension, which prevents premature belt wear and greatly reduces belt replacement costs, FoodProductionDaily.com reports.

Spiral systems are designed to bring significant advantages to demanding production environments and the technique is used in food production to cool or freeze a product in a small amount of floor space, or to quickly move products from one floor level to another.

"When you process frozen products you often get this clinging effect on metal," Intralox European spiral team leader Stephen Hubbard told the website. "Our belts eliminate the black specks, or metal wear debris, and the product sticking that eventually results in product waste."

Intralox also claims that its belts are easier and faster to clean than metal and other

plastic spiral belts and the plastic surfaces allow easy product release, which prevents marking.

Further information: [www.intralox.com](http://www.intralox.com)  
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### **Possible cancer cure found in apples**

**Date:** Tue, 19 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Scientists in France have claimed that apples could help prevent colon cancer.

Chemicals called procyanidins, found in the fruit, were shown to significantly cut the amount of precancerous lesions in lab animals when tested.

The team from the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research claim it could lead to new cancer treatments.

Lead researcher Dr Francis Raul said: "These studies not only offer insights into the mechanisms of the chemopreventive properties of these polyphenols, they also offer proof of their potential to prevent colon cancer."

It is thought the chemicals work by changing the signal pathways that control the cell process when tumours are formed.

Suggesting an increase in demand for the fruit, Dr Raul added: "For now, our work suggests that eating the whole apple, including the skin, might offer some anti-cancer benefits."

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### **UK cider group undergoes a revamp**

**Date:** Tue, 19 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Drinks firm Constellation Europe has announced it has created a new name for its cider operations in the UK.

The Gaymer Cider Company has been set up to help drive forward and revamp the cider market in the UK and worldwide, according to the firm.

Christopher Carson, Constellation's CEO told Just Food: "Cider is a category in need of leadership. (The Gaymer Cider Company) is a fundamental part of the Constellation business we are building.

"This identity has tradition and heritage, key elements of the unique appeal of cider."

Mr Carson claimed that what is vital with the new name is that the firm demonstrates its intent to take a new approach to the beverage and create new opportunities for the products.

A number of products are currently in development and will be revealed next year, with Orchard Reserve the first one to be unveiled.

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### **Coke plans to launch new energy drink**

**Date:** Wed, 20 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Coca-Cola Co has announced plans to launch its new energy drink, Full Throttle, in January.

The company reported in a statement that the 16-ounce lightly carbonated drink is citrus flavoured and contains ginseng extract, guarana extract, caffeine and B-vitamins.

The new beverage will cost roughly the same as similar-sized energy drinks, about \$1.90 to \$2.

Full Throttle is aimed at young men aged between 20 and 30 and Coke hopes it will perform better than its 8.4 ounce energy drink KMX, which has been sold in the United States since 2000, but has performed disappointingly.

The world's largest beverage maker plans to sell Full Throttle primarily in convenience retail stores, with additional availability in other retail locations.

Coke rival PepsiCo Inc has several energy drinks, Mountain Dew AMP and SoBe Adrenaline Rush, while Coca-Cola has struggled to make its mark in the profitable energy-drink market.

The US energy drinks market is worth over \$1 billion a year and the combined sports and energy drinks market far outpaced soft drinks in general last year with a seven per cent increase, according to beverage industry analysts Canadean.

Further information: [www.coca-cola.com](http://www.coca-cola.com)

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### **Tate & Lyle hosts value added seminar**

**Date:** Wed, 20 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Sugar giant Tate & Lyle Plc is holding a seminar to discuss value added products.

The meeting in London starts on Wednesday at 10:00 GMT and will be hosted by company chief executive Iain Ferguson and other senior managers. The seminar will be attended by institutional investors and stockbrokers' analysts.

Mr Ferguson will provide an overview of our business and value added products and Simon Gifford, Tate & Lyle group finance director, will explain the contribution that value added products make to overall profitability and the applications for such products.

Greg Morency, new global vice president of marketing, will set out the food firm's approach to customers.

After a break to visit product displays, John Roginski, vice president of sales and marketing, industrial products, for Tate & Lyle in the US, will give an update on bio-  
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products.

Finally, Austin Maguire, president of Tate & Lyle Sucralose, will provide an overview on what is happening in this business. The company expect sales for the six months to September 2004 to exceed US\$100 million and profit before tax to exceed the proforma US\$33 million achieved in the 2003 calendar year.

Further information: [www.tateandlyle.com](http://www.tateandlyle.com).

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### **Cargill promotes new heart healthy ingredients**

**Date:** Wed, 20 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Cargill Health & Food Technologies has announced that it will promote its heart healthy line of functional ingredients at the Health Ingredients Europe (HiE) 2004 Conference this year.

The conference, which takes place in Amsterdam between November 16th and 18th,

Cargill markets health-promoting ingredients targeting a number of health platforms, including heart health, bone/joint health, low-carbs, and weight management.

Cargill Health & Food Technologies is a leading developer, processor and marketer of science-based, healthy ingredients for food and dietary supplements worldwide.

Cargill products on show at this year's HiE 2004 Conference will include CoroWise plant sterols, clinically proven to reduce LDL cholesterol and a US Food and Drug Administration heart health claim is available for use on a wide variety of foods, beverages and dietary supplement applications.

The company will also be promoting its Prolisse soy protein isolate, which is an exceptionally neutral tasting soy protein product (90 per cent protein) resulting from innovative, patented processing technology, and Prolisse Soy Crunch soy protein crisp, available in a range of protein levels (60-80 per cent), sizes and ingredient variations and ideal for nutrition bars, snack and bakery applications.

Minneapolis-based Cargill's H&FT business is part of a larger Cargill initiative called Food System Design. As part of Food System Design, Cargill Health & Food Technologies works in concert with customers to produce ingredients, ingredient systems and food system breakthroughs that result in appetizing, nutritious and convenient consumer products.

Further information: [www.cargill.com](http://www.cargill.com)

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### **Sales above expectations at Greggs**

**Date:** Wed, 20 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK bakery products firm Greggs has released its latest trading statement, with performance and future outlook remaining positive.

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The leading retailer specialising in sandwiches, savouries and other bakery products in the UK, has reported a 6.2 per cent increase in group like-for-like sales during the 18 weeks to October 16, just ahead of expectations.

Group managing director, Sir Michael Darrington, commented: "I am pleased to announce a good performance in the second half to date.

"We believe that this upward trend is likely to continue... and we continue to look forward to reporting satisfactory progress over the year as a whole."

Additional figures show that total sales increased by 9.8 per cent and a total of 24 new shops have been added in the year to date.

Greggs has a particular focus on takeaway food and catering and has 1,200 outlets throughout the UK, trading as Greggs or Bakers Oven.

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### **Winners of IGD food awards revealed**

**Date:** Wed, 20 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

IGD has announced the results of the 2004 Food Industry Awards, which took place last night.

More than 600 well-known guests from the grocery and food industry attended the event, with winners including Unilever, Walkers Snack Foods, Budgens and Nisa Today.

IGD chief executive, Joanne Denney-Finch, said: "One very clear theme has emerged across all categories, and that is collaboration.

"We've seen everything from joint projects to enhance the efficiency of the supply chain and on-shelf availability, to working with suppliers on training initiatives, to partnering on new product development."

Awards were given for achievements such as on-shelf availability, health and safety initiatives, learning and development and supply chain excellence.

In addition, packaging, consumer insight and helping IGD best achieve its aims and objectives, were all awarded.

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### **Food import campaign launched by Defra**

**Date:** Wed, 20 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new campaign is to be launched by Defra next week on the risks and rules for personal food imports.

It is hoped the scheme will raise awareness of the rules among people who are likely to travel back to the UK from countries outside the EU.

The food and farming minister Lord Whitty is going to officially launch the campaign on October 25.

During the launch, he will reveal publicity material for the programme, including posters, a public information film and new look leaflets.

The government has stated it is committed to reducing the risks of disease entering the food chain through illegally imported food products.

Since controls on food imports are vital to protect consumer's health, the moves to boost awareness are being backed by £25 million of funding from 2003-2006.

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### **Ciba unveils new plastic packaging innovations**

**Date:** Thu, 21 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Ciba has reportedly launched a number of innovative products for the plastics industry.

New products from the chemicals firm include environmentally friendly additives designed to increase the lifespan of plastic and innovative colourants that increase transparency.

Ciba's latest developments in packaging will be on display at K 2004 in Düsseldorf, Germany, from October 20th-27th, FoodProductionDaily.com reports.

New products include: Ciba's Shelfplus UV 4100, a UV filter designed especially for plastic packaging; Irgamod RA 20, a novel chain extender for PET; Cromophthal Red PD3092, a highly transparent, non-warping yellowish red pigment; Ciba Cromophthal Blue PD 4167, a high value blue pigment that combines low-warping with extreme colour strength; and Tinuvin XT 833, a new UV light stabiliser system designed to extend the lifetime of flexible PVC for as much as 20 years.

"Ciba Specialty Chemicals is a well-established leader in the plastic additives industry," said Brendan Cummins, head of Ciba's plastic additives segment. "At K 2004 we are showing that we do not just lead in doing business in more traditional product areas. Today industry is driven by end-user demand for increasingly sophisticated effects in the products they buy."

Ciba Specialty Chemicals is active in more than 120 countries around the world. In 2003, the company generated sales of 6.6 billion Swiss francs and invested 281 million in R&D.

Further information: [www.cibasc.com](http://www.cibasc.com)

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### **IFA establishes potato harvest panel**

**Date:** Thu, 21 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Irish Farmers' Association is reportedly in the process of establishing a Barometer Panel to provide information on potato returns, lifting progress, etc.

According to an IFA spokesman, the potato trade is continuing to improve and lifting is progressing well in the south and south east of the country, where the weather has, in general, been favourable.

"The supply is increasing as lifting increases," he said. "Prices, while still poor, have stabilised."

"There is an increase in product going in to store with quality reported to be good," the spokesman added. "Progress in the north east and north west is reported to be slower as growers are waiting for crops to mature."

Farming Life reports that, in Great Britain, lifting is still going well, despite further interruptions by showers last week

A British Potato Council spokesman explained: "The main priority has been getting crops under cover; processors stores are estimated to be well over 50 per cent full and some packers are looking for extra storage space."

Total potato harvest in Great Britain is estimated at 110,000 hectares (84 per cent of total) compared with 111,500 hectares (91 per cent) last year.

The spokesman said that, in Scotland, good harvest progress had been made with conditions relatively dry. Around 85 per cent of the crop is now reportedly cleared in Scotland.

Further information: [www.ifa.ie](http://www.ifa.ie)

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### **Nestle reports organic growth of 4.5 per cent**

**Date:** Thu, 21 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Food giant Nestle has reported a 4.5 per cent increase in organic growth during the first nine months of the year, in line with analysts' expectations.

The company attributed an increase in real internal growth of 2.9 per cent to dynamic growth in the Americas and Asia. Consolidated sales for the first three quarters of the year were 64.6 billion Swiss francs (£29 billion).

Nestle said in a statement that Zone Americas delivered organic growth of 8.3 per cent, while European underlying sales fell 0.3 per cent over the first nine months of 2004.

Top performing product categories included pet care, which showed organic growth of 6.9 per cent and milk products, nutrition and ice cream, delivering 4.9 per cent. Weakest was beverages, with organic growth at just 2.5 per cent.

The world's largest food company says described its full-year earnings guidance as "still good" and announced it would extend a far-reaching cost cutting programme to 2007, delivering 7.2 billion Swiss francs (£3.2 billion) in savings.

Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, Nestle CEO, commented: "Achieving 4.5 per cent organic

growth in spite of the competitive situation in Europe in the first nine months demonstrates the unmatched defensive qualities of Nestle.

"These are due to a unique combination of geographic spread and leadership positions in faster growth food categories. For the full year I expect an improved constant currency EBITA margin."

Further information: [www.nestle.com](http://www.nestle.com)  
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### **New extract launched at Synergy**

**Date:** Thu, 21 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Synergy Flavours, part of the Carbery Group, has revealed it has launched a new organic vanilla extract - made from beans sourced in Madagascar.

The extract has been approved by the Soil Association and will be sold by well known organic food producers and brands in the UK.

Crispin Gell of Synergy commented: "A significant issue in developing this product has been sourcing the organic vanilla beans.

"One of our objectives is to be able to get vanilla beans from known farmers, so that the provenance of the extract becomes even deeper."

Synergy has claimed that the extract took several months of research to develop and joins the other flavourings including organic peppermint and lemon extracts.

The firm has recently opened a new facility, worth £5 million, in High Wycombe in the UK.

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### **New factory to improve output for UK bread firm**

**Date:** Thu, 21 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Specialist bread supplier Jackson's Bakery is to create a new bread factory in a bid to expand its service to the foodservice industry.

The UK based company, part of William Jackson & Sons, is hoping the factory will be open by next summer and will increase output by 50 per cent, according to Food Navigator.

Managing director, Stephen Greenfield, commented: "We are not the biggest bakery in the world but we are of a significant size to satisfy what is a quite demanding industry."

A considerable amount of equipment is being supplied by APV Baker and the factory has been designed to specifically suit the needs of the firm for supplying sandwich and bread products to the fast food industry.

The development fits in with expansion and profit plans at the company, and Jackson's  
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hopes to double exports in the next few years.

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### **Concerns raised over organic chicken**

**Date:** Thu, 21 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is investigating batches of fresh organic free range chicken after some have been found to contain traces of a banned veterinary medicine - nitrofurantoin.

Certain batches of the poultry should not be eaten, including the brand names Moy Park, Waitrose, Tesco and Morrisons.

According to the company, up to 23 tonnes of the affected meat has been sent across the UK, in whole birds and chicken pieces.

Although the products are no longer on sale in supermarkets and would be past their use by date by now, people are recommended to throw away the product if they have frozen it.

The drugs have been banned since 1995, so the agency is taking action, claiming the use of the drug is "not acceptable".

However, the health risk of consuming the meat is low, since concerns are based on long-term exposure to the drugs.

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### **Innovative fruit labelling**

**Date:** Fri, 22 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new label has been launched that tells consumers when fruit is ready to eat.

The 'intelligent sensor' is ready to hit supermarket shelves

The labels, designed by a New Zealand firm, are designed to measure the fruit's aroma and change colour when the produce is ripe.

Sainsbury's will be using the new Ripe Sense label on packaged pears that are due to go on sale next month as part of a trial.

If the labels prove a hit with shoppers they are expected to be used on other fruit such as avocados, kiwis and mangoes.

Sainsbury's claims it is the first store in the UK to use the labels, which show red when fruit is unripe, orange when it is firm but slightly sweeter and yellow when it is fully ripe and ready to eat.

The pears with sensors are due to go into 100 stores across the UK in packs of two, priced £1.19. The fruit being used comes from Italy. A four-pack of the same variety of pears in ordinary packaging costs £1.99.

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Emma Sharp, product technologist at Sainsbury's, said: "The new intelligent sensor label is the solution millions of people have been waiting for. It will enable our customers to buy pears with exactly the right degree of ripeness to suit their taste time after time after time."

Further information: [www.sainsbury.co.uk](http://www.sainsbury.co.uk)  
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### **Food retailers battle it out for market share**

**Date:** Fri, 22 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK supermarket group Tesco is continuing to expand its market share in the UK, according to new figures.

Data from TNS Superpanel shows that Tesco's market share for the 12 weeks to October 10th was 28.1 per cent, up from 26.6 per cent the previous year. Asda also saw its market share increase from 16.6 per cent in 2003 to 16.8 per cent this year.

Sainsbury's appears to have staved off its market share decline over the quarter to October 10th, with its share of the UK grocery market at 15.4 per cent this month, up slightly from 15.3 per cent last month, though down from 15.8 per cent a year earlier.

"Yesterday, (Sainsbury's CEO) Justin King set out his plans that included rectifying availability problems, more competitive pricing, and strengthening in-store staffing and service levels. This should go some way to correcting basket size weakness which is behind the current poor share performance," said Edward Garner, communications director of TNS Superpanel.

"Now that the conversion of Safeway stores to the Morrisons fascia is well underway, the Safeway decline has accelerated with a share falling to 6.3 per cent for 12 weeks ending October 10th 2004 from 8.8 per cent a year ago," he continued.

"This fall is not yet being matched by a corresponding rise in the Morrisons share, which has risen from 5.9 per cent to 7.1 per cent over the same period. The net effect is that the combined fascias have declined from 14.7 per cent to 13.4 per cent. The key question is when will this decline halt and the proven merits of the Morrisons strategy bear fruit."

Further information: [www.tnsinfo.com/superpanel](http://www.tnsinfo.com/superpanel)  
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### **Prince Charles supports British food abroad**

**Date:** Fri, 22 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Prince of Wales is due to travel to Italy to promote British cuisine abroad.

The Prince's first port of call on a tour of food lovers' festivities in the country will be the industrial city of Turin in north-west Italy.

Charles will be attending Turin's famous Salone del Gusto, believed to be the largest food festival in the world. The six-day market is expected to attract more than 150,000 visitors and is organised by which campaigns for environmentally friendly and pleasurable gastronomy.

"We had wanted him for some time. Prince Charles is known for his attention towards environmental subjects and food. We're happy that he finally accepted to be our guest at the Gourmet Fair, and concluding, as he asked, Terra Madre, the first work meeting on the food community," the Slow Food Movement said in a statement.

Prince Charles is expected in Turin on Friday afternoon, when a reception organised by government and industry-funded body Food From Britain will be held. The Gourmet Fair will host around fifty exhibitors from England, Scotland, and Wales.

On Saturday morning, the Prince will visit the Gourmet Fair accompanied by regional governor Enzo Ghigo, and Slow Food's Carlo Petrini. IN the afternoon he will attend Terra Madre-World Meeting of Food Communities, which will unite around 5000 operators among farmers and food representatives from 132 countries.

Prince Charles will be in Pollenzo on Sunday morning, visiting the Gastronomic University and will also visit two farms of the region, one specialised in breeding Piedmont cows and one that produces quality wines.

(no further information)

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### **Uniq rejects takeover offers**

**Date:** Fri, 22 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK-based convenience foods group Uniq has announced that it has recently received unconnected approaches from two parties.

The food firm said it believes that the potential takeover proposals made "undervalue the business and prospects of Uniq".

"Accordingly, the proposals have been rejected," the group said in a statement.

Uniq said it was making the statement in response to recent press speculation.

The company has rejected both proposals, claiming they were subject to substantial uncertainties and significant due diligence.

Uniq, which makes salads, ready meals and other convenience foods for supermarkets, has eight sites in the UK. The food group is the largest supplier of sandwiches to Marks & Spencer and has a range of contracts with Asda.

In September, it reported £20 million of business wins and said a new management team had given its UK business more focus. However, the company's total sales still fell by three per cent in the five months to the end of August.

Further information: [www.uniqplc.com](http://www.uniqplc.com)  
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### **MLC wants beef to return to public sector**

**Date:** Fri, 22 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) has called for beef to be brought back to the public sector.

Speaking on BBC Radio Four's Farming Today, spokesman for the MLC, Tony Goodyear, claimed that British beef should be included in school and public sector menus.

Although there was concern over beef following the BSE crisis, the occurrence of the disease has declined considerably over the last two years.

Mr Goodyear highlighted the safety of British beef and welcomed the public's rising confidence in the product, however he said the same enthusiasm has not been reflected in the public sector.

He explained: "Some local authorities though have left it to individual schools to decide if they wish to serve beef. Surprisingly some schools have kept it off their menu."

According to the spokesman, the public sector catering industry would welcome including beef and feel it offers menu choice, with schools who return to using it seeing an increase in meal demand.

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### **Finance director resigns at Northern Foods**

**Date:** Fri, 22 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Northern Foods has revealed its group finance director has today resigned from the company and the board by mutual consent.

Sean Christie has worked at the firm for 25 years and the search for a replacement has already begun.

Chairman, Peter Blackburn, commented: "We would like to thank Sean for his valuable contribution to Northern Foods over the past 25 years, including the last 8 years as Finance Director, a period where there has been significant development and change to the Group."

Until a new finance director is appointed, the company's current group finance executive, Ian Ellis, is to take on the role.

The company is due to announce its business review and interim results on November 16.

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### **Dixy Chicken plans Indian expansion**

**Date:** Mon, 25 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK-based fast food company Dixy Chicken is currently finalising plans to establish outlets in India.

The firm is planning to invest a considerable amount over two years in setting up 50 outlets across India, beginning with two in Delhi and Mumbai within the next six months, Sify.com reports.

Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) failed to establish a foothold in the country and Dixy Chicken has decided to study in detail all objections raised by environmentalists and animal rights activists against KFC's entry into India in order to ensure its expansion plan is a success.

"We will try and address the concerns that people in India may have on how we slaughter chicken. For example, in Britain, the 'halal' method of slaughter has worked well because it involves no cruelty to chicken and this system could well be used in India," Dixy Chicken managing director Abid Mahmood said.

The fast food firm's MD also said the chain would lay down specifications about product quality, procurement and procedures to ensure uniformity across the country. He added that Dixy Chicken would cater to the Indian palate by offering products spiced according to local preferences and a segregated vegetarian section.

Dixy Chicken has already established six stores in Pakistan and plans to have 30 outlets in the country within the next two years.

The company has over 110 outlets in the UK, one in Paris and six in Asia and aims to increase its presence to approximately 190 outlets in the UK, 50 in Europe, 20 in West Asia and 60 in Asia by the end of 2006.

(no further information)

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### **Price-cutting lures UK shoppers**

**Date:** Mon, 25 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Sales volumes in the UK jumped by one per cent last month boosted by aggressive price cutting.

September saw the sharpest rise in sales volumes this year, to stand 6.9 per cent up from the same time last year.

Goods prices fell by an estimated 1.5 per cent last month from a year earlier, following a similar drop in August.

The price war between Britain's supermarkets has hotted up in recent months following the acquisition of the Safeway chain by Morrisons and a sales slump at supermarket giant Sainsbury's.

Analysts are now speculating that the increased strength of consumer demand could prompt the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to put up interest rates by a quarter point next month.

However, sales volumes in the third quarter rose by 1.1 per cent against a more robust figure of 1.8 per cent in the previous three months. After allowing for price cuts, the value of sales at the tills was just 0.7 per cent higher in the third quarter.

(no further information)

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### **Scottish produce promoted in Amsterdam**

**Date:** Mon, 25 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Scottish produce was the order of the day at an event in the Netherlands last week showcasing Scottish quality.

The event at the Berlage Stock Exchange in Amsterdam saw guests dining on Scottish food and listening to entertainment from award winning violinist Nicola Benedetti and contemporary folk group the Peatbog Faeries.

Organised by 'Food from Britain', Scottish chefs prepared a dinner of quality produce from Scottish companies, including Scottish fish and seafood, lamb, fruit, vegetables, cheeses and drinks from Scotland, fishupdate.com reports.

Rural Affairs Minister Ross Finnie said of the event, an "Evening of Scottish Culture": "Quality is our core strength, whether in food, fashion or music. In food and farming we are working closely with producers to raise standards and our profile on the world stage.

"Since 2001 the Scottish Executive has awarded grant funding totalling over £45 million to food businesses through the Processing and Marketing Grants scheme and the Marketing Development Scheme.

"The Scotland in the Netherlands programme demonstrates our commitment to raising our international profile and awareness of Scotland's many strengths."

The grants schemes encourage Scotland's primary producers and food processors to develop further innovative products, add value, co-operate to exploit new markets and shorten the food supply chain by linking producers with processors.

(no further information)

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### **Defra pushes ahead with food import scheme**

**Date:** Mon, 25 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The latest developments in Defra's food import campaign have seen the food and farming minister Lord Whitty telling consumers "If in doubt, leave it out".

The department hopes the campaign will leave people in the UK with no doubt about the risks and controls on bringing certain food products into the UK.

Lord Whitty commented: "People may not see any harm in bringing food back to the UK when they return from a holiday or a business trip, but some foods may contain pests and diseases that threaten the health of our agricultural crops and livestock, as well as public health."

He added that it is important people check rules before they leave the UK.

Under the campaign, there will be public information film, radio and print advertising and posters and leaflets will be made available in a range of languages.

In addition, a fully-equipped and staffed mobile unit will be set up to explain the campaign's main messages around the UK.

At present it is illegal to bring milk-based and meat products for personal use back into the UK from outside the EU and other items such as eggs, honey and fish are also prevented.

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### **Brand awareness boost for Birds Eye in new campaign**

**Date:** Mon, 25 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK food brand Birds Eye is to work with the Daily Mail in a bid to provide information about frozen food and raise awareness of the brand.

A new campaign will see the firm boost awareness through its website and also through activity with the Daily Mail's online and offline media until December.

Nikki French, who handles brand communications for Birds Eye, told Brand Republic: "We are partnering with the Daily Mail Online because the site attracts the right target audience for Birds Eye and has a strong readership of males and females between the ages of 25 and 54.

"We were also impressed with the Daily Mail's online media proposal and the fact that it would be running pre- and post-branding analysis, which will help us evaluate the effectiveness of online."

Under the campaign, Birds Eye will sponsor the Health and Femail sites and website newsletters, through an advert on the pages, information on the brand, competition links and new products will be displayed.

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### **Small Safeway stores to be sold by Morrisons**

**Date:** Mon, 25 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Food retailer William Morrison is to sell 114 of its smaller Safeway stores and a distribution centre in a deal worth £260.2 million.

Rival chain Somerfield is expected to acquire 63 of the outlets for a total of £115 million pounds, whilst the remaining 51 stores and the distribution centre are being purchased by North Wharf Investments, a company co-owned by Barclays Bank and an investment vehicle of Iranian property entrepreneur Robert Tchenguiz.

Morrison's hope the decision to sell the mainly leasehold stores will help the company save nearly £10.2 million in annual rent.

A statement from Morrison's joint managing director Bob Stott said: "This disposal will allow us to concentrate on our area of expertise of running larger stores and will help us to speed up the conversion process."

He added: "The sale of these 114 compact stores means that we will be able to re-engineer our supporting infrastructure and achieve a much greater level of efficiency across our entire supply chain."

Morrison's bought the Safeway network of stores for £3 billion at the start of the year, making it the fourth largest supermarket chain in the UK.

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### **Del Monte to use innovative new packaging**

**Date:** Tue, 26 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

US fruit and vegetable producer Del Monte is introducing new containers made from corn-based plastic for its fresh produce.

The innovative packaging, by NatureWorks PL, replaces the previous PET plastic tubs and Del Monte will offer fresh-cut convenience produce in NatureWorks PLA to food retailers across North America.

Developed and supplied by Cargill Dow, the new material is a plastic packaging alternative produced entirely from annually renewable resources, such as maize.

Del Monte will use NatureWorks PLA packaging across its extensive fresh-cut produce product line that includes Del Monte Gold extra sweet pineapple, melons, fruit and vegetable medleys.

The new packaging competes on a performance basis with ordinary plastic material and illustrates how food companies are attempting to present fresh produce as a processed offering, according to [foodproductiondaily.com](http://foodproductiondaily.com).

"Del Monte prides itself on being in touch with the way families eat today, and consumers are becoming increasingly savvy about the food they eat, as well as how it is packaged," said John Loughridge, Del Monte Fresh vice president of marketing in North America. "Innovative packaging like NatureWorks PLA is important for taking our fresh cut products to the next level of consumer value."

Del Monte also reported lower third-quarter earnings, hit by high commodity costs, adverse weather and plant disease.

The company posted net income of US\$13.7 million for the third quarter to September 24th, compared with \$34.3 million the previous year.

Further information: [www.delmonte.com](http://www.delmonte.com)  
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### **UK's ten best fish and chip shops named**

**Date:** Tue, 26 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Seafish Industry Authority has announced the list of ten fish and chip shops from around the UK who have been named the best shop in their area.

The shops, awarded the regional titles as part of the National Fish & Chip Shop of the Year Competition 2004, will now compete in the final leg of the annual competition. A judging panel will convene in January to score the shops on their quality of product, customer service, cleanliness and innovation.

Andy Gray, project manager for the competition said: "This has been one the toughest years yet and we've seen some excellent shops. These ten shops have all shown excellent standards and we were delighted to crown them best in their areas."

Hundreds of fish and chip shops across the country entered the competition to become the best fish and chip shop in their area.

The UK supreme champion will be announced at an awards ceremony on January 26th 2005 at the Tower Thistle Hotel in London, hosted by celebrity chef James Martin.

Fish and chips are Britain's number one take-away with more than 283 million meals sold per year.

The Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish) has also published a new wall map providing a comprehensive picture of the UK seafood industry. The new map covers a variety of sectors including processing, catching and aquaculture, as well as details of port-based auction markets, inland wholesale markets and research and development centres.

(no further information)

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### **British Sausage Week promises to be a smash**

**Date:** Tue, 26 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

British Sausage Week is underway, running from October 25th to 31st this year.

A new book, Sausage & Mash, published on November 1st outlines an array of recipes for the staple British meal.

Its author, Fiona Beckett, told Manchester Online: "What's wonderful is that plain old porkers have transformed over the last five years - and for the better.

"You can buy almost any sausage under the sun now from authentic French, Italian or  
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Spanish sausages, to totally inauthentic but delicious Thai or Indian spiced sausages."

The book contains delicious recipes for traditional favourites like Toad in the Hole and Hot Dogs, as well as her own new recipes and those from top chefs like Gordon Ramsay and Rick Stein.

Ms Beckett has also featured dishes such as Toulouse Sausages with Puy Lentils, Italian Sausage, Tomato and Basil Risotto and Sausage, Onion & Apple Pie and there are tips on creating a great range of sauces, salsas and sausage accompaniments.

The organisers of British Sausage Week are calling for nominations for the Banger awards for services to British sausages.

(no further information)

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### **Popular cup of tea may help Alzheimer's**

**Date:** Tue, 26 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The popular English cup of tea, often seen as the answer to all problems, could in fact help to boost memory and help treat Alzheimer's Disease.

According to a team from Newcastle University, green and black tea can have the same effect of specific drugs designed to help stop Alzheimer's.

Lead researcher Dr Ed Okello said: "Although there is no cure for Alzheimer's, tea could potentially be another weapon in the armoury which is used to treat this disease and slow down its development.

"Our findings are particularly exciting as tea is already a very popular drink, it is inexpensive, and there do not seem to be any adverse side effects when it is consumed."

In Alzheimer's, patients have a reduced level of the chemical acetylcholine in the brain, but by consuming the tea the enzyme acetylcholinesterase (AChE), which further breaks down the chemical can be inhibited.

Both tea types differ, with black tea's effects lasting for a day and green tea working for a week to inhibit the negative enzymes.

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### **FSA revises food safety code**

**Date:** Tue, 26 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The FSA has announced that the 1990 Food Safety Act Code of Practice has been revised.

Created for local authorities, the code applies to England only and has now been updated, with 20 previous separate codes of practice replaced.

A further review of the code will take place following the new EU food hygiene

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regulations and food and feed control regulations in January 2006.

Although it has now been changed, the code will be kept under continuous review and the agency would welcome any feedback from authorities on the new version.

The revised code is available on the agency's website.

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### **Defra told to improve risk management**

**Date:** Tue, 26 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A report into Defra's performance in stopping plant pests and diseases has been released by the Commons Public Accounts Select Committee.

The report looks at how the department has stopped diseases entering the country and managed outbreaks when they occur to stop them spreading.

Chairman of the Committee, Edward Leigh commented: "Plant and pest diseases can be a serious threat, potentially putting farmers and growers' livelihoods at stake, damaging our national economy and our environment."

Mr Leigh explained that the primary responsibility for protecting crops such as cereals, vegetables and fruit lies with farmers and growers and that the biggest effects of the diseases are economic.

The department did play a key role as well though with £87 million spent each year on fungicides and research.

However, the committee argued it was disappointed that inspections are not aimed at the areas of greatest risk and that many inspections didn't detect a number of diseases.

Mr Leigh claimed Defra should sharpen its risk management and improve "quality control over its inspections".

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### **Spain hosts international olive oil conference**

**Date:** Wed, 27 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The first international conference on olive oil and health is taking place in Spain this week.

The conference is being held in Jaen, southern Spain, the centre of the country's olive oil production.

Delegates are reportedly aiming to persuade governments to invest more money in olive oil research. More than 300 scientists from around the globe are expected to attend the event.

Olive oil is believed to be responsible for the longevity of southern European populations and their low rates of heart disease. Spaniards are three times less likely than

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northern Europeans to contract heart disease.

Recent studies have also indicated that olive oil promotes strong bone development and also helps prevent colon and breast cancer, Alzheimer's and other aging diseases.

Olives have a high content of antioxidant polyphenols and the conference organisers claim that barely 10 per cent of olive oil's health properties are widely known.

Spain produces 50 per cent of the world's olive oil, ahead of other key producers Italy and Greece.

(no further information)

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### **New fishing arrangements to be announced**

**Date:** Wed, 27 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Guidance on arrangements for additional days at sea will be issued to the fishing industry this week.

A leading industry spokesman has described the delay in releasing this information as "totally unsatisfactory".

George MacRae, secretary of the Scottish White Fish Producers' Association, said that the industry had known for some time about the award of two additional days, but no one in government had contacted them to spell out the details.

He continued: "This is totally unsatisfactory. It is poor from the position of the European Commission and even worse from a Scottish Executive standpoint.

"With the regular links the Executive is supposed to have with the Commission they should have been aware when the additional days would be approved and they also should have been involved in negotiating the best conditions relating to these additional days."

A Scottish Executive spokesman told Fishupdate.com that there would be a release of information this week on the days and he confirmed they would be backdated.

He said: "The Executive has consistently pressed the case for additional days at sea since the start of the year. Guidance on arrangements for additional days at sea will be issued later this week. The arrangements will be retrospective and the details of the retrospective aspects will be announced in mid November."

(no further information)

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### **Community food award scheme seeks bids**

**Date:** Wed, 27 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A scheme established to reward community food projects has started to receive

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application, the Food Standards Agency has announced.

The award scheme was set up to commemorate consumer champion Sheila McKechnie and the two award-winning initiatives will each get £15,000 a year over three years (£5000 a year). The deadline for entries for this year is December 17th.

Dame Sheila McKechnie lobbied Government to establish the Food Standards Agency, having previously been director of homelessness charity Shelter and later the Consumers' Association, now called Which?

Dame Sheila was awarded an OBE in 1995 for services to housing and the homeless, and made a dame in 2001 for services to consumers. She died, aged 55, on January 2nd 2004, following a long battle with cancer.

The community food projects award scheme is still seeking applications. A community food project could be something set up in areas where people on low incomes can get hold of quality food at affordable prices.

All applications will be considered by Food Standards Agency staff and all short-listed entries will be visited.

A judging panel, chaired by Channel 4 broadcaster Jon Snow, a personal friend of Sheila's, will meet for a day to discuss the merits of each short-listed application and choose two initiatives to receive the funding.

Further information: [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)  
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### **Joint ready meals deal unveiled at Geest**

**Date:** Wed, 27 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

UK food firm Geest has announced a new joint venture today where it will work with a specialist added value chicken supplier to offer fresh ready meals.

Geest RFG Fresh Cook will be run by both Geest and Rannoch Food in a 50:50 deal, with both firms hoping to reap the benefits of the ever growing area of fresh ready meals.

Gareth Voyle, chief executive officer of Geest, said: "The ready to cook meals sector is growing at around 25 per cent, over three times the rate of the fresh ready meals market.

"The Fresh Cook venture allows Geest to develop its revenue stream in this fast growing market sector at a low capital cost, by combining two specialists in their own fields: quality chicken sourcing and processing from Rannocho's together with Geest's fresh prepared foods manufacturing and new product development expertise."

The meals will be made using raw ingredients and is expected to generate sales of around £20 million its first full year of trading in 2005.

Business will be based at Geest's Holbeach site in Lincolnshire and is set to create more

than 100 new jobs.

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### **Third quarter results highlight profit increase at Unilever**

**Date:** Wed, 27 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Unilever has released its third quarter results today, reporting a two per cent rise in pre-tax profits and a six per cent increase in net profit.

In addition, the company which produces food and drink brands such as Flora and Magnum, has also managed to reduce its net debt by €2.5 billion.

Antony Burgmans and Patrick Cescau, Unilever chairmen, commented: "We remain fully committed to driving long-term total shareholder return through increasing free cash flow and return on invested capital."

Within the UK and Europe, the Knorr and Hellmann's brands performed well and saw growth, thought to be mainly due to range expansion.

However, the chairmen did admit they were not entirely satisfied with company performance and are undertaking action to improve the market competitiveness of products.

Unilever produces foods including ice cream, slimming foods, frozen food, tea and cooking sauces.

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### **British takeaway set up**

**Date:** Wed, 27 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A company has been set up in Cardiff, thought to be one of the first British food takeaways to open.

Ring-a-Roast is offering consumers the chance to sample typical British dishes without the preparation and washing up, with dishes including roast dinner with all the trimmings.

Rachel Morgan, who runs the business with her mother Sue Jones, told BBC News Online: "We offer dinners like granny used to cook and the response has been excellent."

The unique menu has proved popular and offers a chance for the family to rest, rather than spend hours cooking and could be the start of a new market in the food industry with increasing numbers opting for convenience foods.

Sunday at the moment appears to be the busiest day for the firm, with over 100 meals delivered.

Each meal arrives in a specially designed food tray with knives and forks provided.

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**Guide advises consumers on which wine to buy**

**Date:** Thu, 28 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

Which? has published its 'Which? Wine Guide 2005'.

The guide recommends that bargain hunters try own-label and family-grown champagnes, which can offer great value at far lower prices when compared with the big brands.

The guide criticises supermarkets who ask growers to slash their prices in order to sell £5 'wallet-pleaser' wines and advises consumers to go for wines from Portugal and Southern Italy, especially when made from native grapes with unusual names.

Which? also highlights the quality of 2002 wines from Burgundy and red wines from Spain's smaller regions, such as Toro and Cigales.

Which? Wine Guide 2005 editor, Susan Keevil, warned that supermarkets risk serving up something that is not worth drinking by forcing prices down.

She explained: "Wine priced below £5 encourages a grower to accept yet another batch of sub-standard fruit, which in turn leads supermarkets to stifle yet another quality check or stamp a quirky grape blend out of existence."

Given the cost of the bottle, the cork, the label, UK tax and in some cases advertising and marketing there's not much change out of £5 that goes on the wine itself, the guide claims.

Further information: [www.which.net](http://www.which.net)

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**Visitors flock to Paris food fair**

**Date:** Thu, 28 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

An estimated 135,000 visitors attended Europe's major food fair SIAL 2004 in Paris last week, according to organisers.

The event, held every two years, featured more than 460 product innovations from 40 countries and 5259 exhibitors attended this year's fair.

SIAL organisers claim the 'pleasure syndrome' took the largest slice of innovations in Europe for 2004, with an estimated 46.6 per cent of total launches, followed by convenience with 24.2 per cent and health with 16.2 per cent, Food Navigator reports.

"Health is the axis that progressed the most on a world level, especially in Asia Pacific, even if pleasure innovation remained very dominant," the organisers revealed.

Dairy products and soft drinks proved the most dynamic markets, with one innovation in five launched onto the world market in 2003. In Europe 12.4 per cent of innovations were dairy products, up from 11.6 per cent in 2002.

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In Europe cheeses and ready made meal innovation launches fell slightly, frozen products were stable, while soft drinks stayed in fifth place, up from 5.5 per cent in 2002 to 6 per cent in 2003.

A handful of innovative products were rewarded with a 'coup de coeur' or 'favourite' label by the SIAL judges. The judges had previously selected some 469 products from 40 countries and 1,850 items submitted by exhibitors.

Further information: [www.sial.fr](http://www.sial.fr)  
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### **First sustainable chocolate launched**

**Date:** Thu, 28 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

A new chocolate bar which claims to be the first in the world made from sustainable cocoa plantations has been unveiled in New York.

The new chocolate, Rainforest Alliance Certified Plantations Arriba Chocolate, has been launched by the Rainforest Alliance, an international conservation organisation that certifies tropical agricultural and other products for environmental and social responsibility.

The Alliance said that it was widely accepted that the best chocolate was produced from cocoa that grows in the shade and is tended by farmers who use small-scale, low-impact techniques, such as those employed by the Plantations Arriba producers.

Plantations Arriba Chocolate is distributed in the US by Vintage Chocolates and is said to provide "exotic, jungle accents and aromas, a notable lack of acidity and bitterness, a higher concentration of cocoa than sugar and a longer lasting flavour than ordinary bulk chocolate".

The Rainforest Alliance's Sarah W O'Braitis, said: "Though the product is made with high quality ingredients, and the farmers have had to invest in changes on the ground, not to mention the added value afforded by the Rainforest Alliance Certified seal of approval, the costs are kept down because Vintage Chocolates (the makers of Plantations) buys the cocoa beans directly from the farmer so there is little that is absorbed between the producer and end-consumer."

The Rainforest Alliance and its Ecuadorian conservation partner Conservacion y Desarrollo (C&D) have worked to restore Ecuador's native cocoa heritage since 1997, providing technical assistance for farmers and offering training for producers and processors.

The environment and sustainability are becoming increasingly important to consumers.

Further information: [www.rainforest-alliance.org](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org)  
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### **Survey reveals what's best for breakfast**

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**Date:** Thu, 28 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

A new survey on nutrition has revealed the best foods to consume at breakfast to ensure the best levels of energy.

The Optimum Nutrition UK survey by Mynutrition.co.uk found that those people who consumed the typical tea and toast breakfast tended to feel more bloated, tired and stressed.

However, people who ate more fresh fruit, nuts and water tended to feel much better and had higher health scores, according to the Scotsman.

Over 30,000 adults were studied to examine how diet can affect how people feel and gave people a health score based on the food they ate and the feelings they experienced.

According to Lorraine Perretta, a senior nutritionist at MyNutrition, the overall findings suggested that general wellbeing decreased the more the 'negative' food consumption increased.

However the group was keen to point out the foods should not be completely cut out of diets, since a balance is the key to a healthy diet.

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**More government action needed on school food**

**Date:** Thu, 28 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

**Analysis**

The Soil Association has released a report today calling for healthier meals in schools.

Conducting a study on five typical primary school meals, the group claims that by eating such dishes school children would have 40 per cent more salt, 28 per cent more saturated fat and 20 per cent more sugar than recommended.

However the association called on the government to do more about the dinners, although the department of education has already begun a monitoring exercise to check meal quality.

Additional findings also suggested that a typical meal did not include enough iron or zinc, with only 80 per cent and 70 per cent of the nutrients provided accordingly.

The education secretary Charles Clarke has announced he will review the meals served in secondary schools but the policy director of the Soil Association, Peter Melchett, argues he needs to address primary schools too.

"If children are encouraged to eat healthily in primary school, they are likely to demand good quality food as they get older," he told BBC News Online.

The department for education and skills has now revealed work has begun to improve the meals and encourage young people to eat and live healthily.

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### **Restaurant groups go Irish**

**Date:** Thu, 28 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Conran and Langan restaurant groups have announced expansion plans today, which will see the companies open venues in Dublin, Ireland.

It is hoped that by moving to Dublin the restaurants will help shake up local trade, according to Caterer Online.

Conran will open a restaurant in the city's docklands area and will be one of the largest of its kind in the city.

Meanwhile, Langan is to open a city centre outlet in a slightly smaller premises.

Both groups have obtained help from local authorities to set up the businesses with Langan receiving tax breaks through an urban renewal incentive scheme and Conran achieving concessions from the Dublin Docklands Development Authority.

The move comes at a time when restaurants in Ireland are facing criticism for overcharging.

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### **Clapham House expands Bombay Bicycle chain**

**Date:** Fri, 29 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Restaurant company Clapham House Group has announced that it has purchased a site for its third Bombay Bicycle Club restaurant.

Clapham House, set up last year by two former PizzaExpress directors, has just exchanged contracts on a property at 128 Holland Park Avenue in London's Holland Park. The property was trading as Nimmo and was part of the Ask/ TDR group, Caterer-online reports.

Clapham House Group bought the Bombay Bicycle Club for an estimated £2.42 million in April and now operates a flagship restaurant in Clapham, along with five delivery outlets.

The group will open its second restaurant in Hampstead by the end of the year and has also acquired a site in Islington that will serve as a delivery outlet for the Hampstead restaurant.

Further information: [www.claphamhousegroup.com](http://www.claphamhousegroup.com)

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### **Greens launch 'Food Revolution' campaign**

**Date:** Fri, 29 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Green MSPs are calling on Scots to radically change the way food is produced and bought.

The party's new national 'Food Revolution' campaign urges the Executive to take immediate action to tackle the explosion in the number of supermarket planning applications, which threaten green space and local jobs and businesses.

Launching the campaign with food writer Joanna Blythman at the Greens' conference in Dundee this weekend, Mark Ruskell MSP will highlight the need to balance supermarkets' power with safeguards for farmers, a right of appeal for those objecting to planning applications, and real choice for consumers.

Mr Ruskell, Green speaker on the Environment, said "The food we eat and how it is produced affects everyone. In recent years we have had one food scandal after another - BSE, foot and mouth, pesticides and toxins building up in the food chain, and an alarming rise in childhood obesity.

"Our system of producing and buying food isn't working for people or the environment, and it's in everyone's interest that it changes."

Journalist Joanna Blythman, author of *Shopped: The Shocking Power of British Supermarkets*, added: "The rise of the supermarkets and the demise of smaller retailers is destroying our health and our communities. Food is now an urgent social justice issue - this is about poverty and equality of opportunity.

"From opposing GM crops and taking junk food out of schools to promoting local shops and helping farmers earn a decent wage, this campaign will aim to make sure every person in Scotland can eat good food."

(no further information)

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### **Research highlights antioxidant properties of chocolate**

**Date:** Fri, 29 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

Evidence backing the health promoting benefits of chocolate continues to mount after researchers in Spain discovered that chemicals found in cocoa extract combat oxidative stress.

Polyphenols found in cocoa extract influence human cellular responses to oxidative stress, according to the new study.

Polyphenols are flavonoid compounds with antioxidant activity, which may help the body's cells resist damage by free radicals. Free radicals are believed to play a role in various chronic illnesses afflicting world populations such as heart disease and cancer.

Veronique Noe and colleagues at the University of Barcelona in Spain studied the impact of epicatechin and other polyphenols in cocoa extract on the human colon.

"Treatment with epicatechin decreased the expression of 21 genes and upregulated 24 genes. Upon incubation with the cocoa polyphenolic extract, 24 genes were underexpressed and 28 were overexpressed," the researchers stated in the October issue of the *Journal of Nutrition*.

Evidence of the possible health benefits of chocolate could help to boost chocolate sales, hit by growing consumer concerns over health and weight concerns.

Britain is far ahead of its continental rivals when it comes to chocolate consumption, accounting for 32 per cent of the total market by value in 2003.

(no further information)

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### **Vegetarian Society rewards ethical food products**

**Date:** Fri, 29 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The Vegetarian Society has honoured Britain's meat-free foods at an annual awards ceremony in London.

The award for best vegetarian wine and beer retailer went to Marks and Spencer, Cafe Maitreya, in Bristol, picked up the award for best gourmet vegetarian restaurant, while the award for best vegetarian baby food went to the Baby Organix range.

Other prize winners included V1, in Nottingham, for vegetarian fast food outlet and the award for the best meat or fish substitute was given to Quorn mince.

The Manchester Evening News reports that vegetarians across the UK named Brighton as the best place to live or visit if you are a vegetarian, beating Edinburgh, Glastonbury and Manchester as the best destination for non-meat eaters.

However, the awards also highlighted the use of animal-derived products in popular food.

Smarties, made by food giant Nestle, was named the winner of the society's Imperfect World Award. The chocolate snack contains the colorant cochineal, also known as carmine or E120, a red dye processed from the dried body of the female cochineal insect.

Guinness, which uses isinglass, a form of gelatine made from fish bladders, and Bassett's Liquorice Allsorts, which contains gelatine made from animal bones, were also nominated in the category.

Further information: [www.vegsoc.org](http://www.vegsoc.org)

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### **Healthy new use for grapes and peanuts**

**Date:** Fri, 29 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

New findings from researchers at Imperial College London and the Royal Brompton Hospital have suggested that grapes could be more beneficial than simply fruit consumed as part of the five-a-day recommendations.

According to the researchers, a substance in the skin of red fruits such as grapes and plums, could help to treat asthma sufferers and may even help some people with arthritis.

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Dr Louise Donnelly, from Imperial College London and the Royal Brompton Hospital, commented: "This research could be very good news for asthma and COPD sufferers, as resveratrol could prove more effective than current steroid treatments.

"In particular, resveratrol seems not to have any of the side effects of steroids which may make it safer for long term use."

The ingredient resveratrol is also found in peanuts and peanut butter and helps reduce the inflammation in the lungs, which causes asthma.

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### **Latest BSE results revealed by FSA**

**Date:** Fri, 29 Oct 04 **Type:** DirectNews Item

#### **Analysis**

The FSA has revealed its latest progress in its BSE investigations on 'Specified Risk Material and other BSE Control breaches'.

For the month of September 2004, the group identified 138 SRM import control breaches by EU member states.

SRM is the section of the animal that is most likely to contain BSE infectivity and controls should remove more than 99 per cent of the infectivity.

Under EU law the SRM should be removed as soon as possible after slaughter and should be disposed of safely.

The agency offers updates each month on any breaches it discovers.

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