TV the key to chocolate cravings

Date: Tue, 01 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

New research has led to the discovery of an innovative way for chocoholics to control their cravings - viewing fuzzy images.

Findings come from a research team in Australia who observed that people with cravings for chocolate could stare at an untuned television for a few seconds and the desire to eat something sweet would subside.

Dr Eva Kemps, in charge of the research team at Flinders University explained: "It is a tool people can use themselves, and not another one of those hard things people with cravings feel they have to do to deal with eating problems."

In a similar way, vivid mental images of chocolate sets off the desire to eat it.

It is hoped the findings could help people with obesity or binge eating problems to control their eating habits and later on could help control a number of addictions.

Participants were asked to visualise images of various chocolate products and then asked to look at either a black computer screen or one with flickering dots for around eight seconds.

(no futher information).

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TFA calls for food marketing rule revamp

Date: Tue, 01 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food organisations have been called on by the Tenant Farmers Association (TFA) to revamp the current marketing rules for UK food produce.

A report commissioned by the association has claimed there are a number of problems with the current system and money is not being used effectively for marketing.

Chief executive, George Dunn, told the BBC: "The major barriers we envisage farmers coming up against in terms of trying to reconnect themselves to consumers are the state aid rules.

"Farmers pay levies to groups like the Meat and Livestock Commission, the Milk Development Council, the Home-Grown Cereals Authority, and those levies are supposed to be for marketing of produce."

Mr Dunn explained that current rules stop these groups from actually marketing the British products to British people and that origin rules also need to be addressed.

A key issue is that many of the groups do good promotions but tend to advertise generic products rather than specific types so people go to supermarkets and just buy any product of that type.

In addition, according to the report other countries appear to have a better attitude towards food promotion rules than the UK has with regards to implementation. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Smoked salmon products promoted

Date: Tue, 01 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new booklet has been produced to help promote the smoked salmon industry in the UK.

A free copy of 'The little book of Smoked Salmon' is available in supermarkets and retailers that belong to the Scottish Quality Salmon (SQS) club.

The guide provides information on the salmon smoking process, storage, selection and preparation.

SQS chief executive Brian Simpson explained to Fish Update: "The little book of Smoked Salmon is a delightful reminder for consumers that the very best smoked salmon comes from Scottish Quality Salmon members.

"It will help shoppers make sure that the salmon they are buying really is Scottish as well as providing some useful guidance on how to use it."

A total of 30,000 copies of the booklet are now in circulation and are supported with instore posters.

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Wrigley reports record profits

Date: Tue, 01 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Confectioner Wm Wrigley Jr has announced record sales and profits for 2004.

The US gum maker reported 2004 sales of \$3.65 billion, a 19 per cent increase on the previous year, boosted by a 14 per cent rise in global volume sales and beneficial exchange rates.

The firm acquired Spain's Joyco last year, adding five per cent to its turnover, and witnessed strong sales in India and China. Wrigley also acquired the Altoids business of food giant Kraft in 2004, moving it firmly into the US sugar confectionery market.

New product development also played a major role in Wrigley's business in 2004. Building on the success of the 2002 launch of Eclipse Flash strips, the first non-chewing gum products to be launched under the Wrigley banner, the company began to move into other non-gum areas, in particular mints.

Sales of Wrigley products in North America were up nine per cent for the year, driven primarily by sales of Orbit and Eclipse gum brands and the new Eclipse mints product lines. In Europe, sales rose 23 per cent, helped by good performances in Russia, Ukraine, the UK and Spain. In Asia, sales were up 25 per cent, with especially strong contributions from China, Vietnam and Taiwan.

Full year net earnings were up 11 per cent to \$493 million, or \$2.19 per share, while operating profits for the year hit \$720 million, despite increased marketing expenditure and costs related to the Joyco acquisition. The January 2004 acquisition of Joyco gave Wrigley strong positions in the bubble gum, candies and lollipops sectors.

"Another year of record results is testimony to the strength of our long-term strategic plan, the talent of our global Wrigley team and the versatility of that team as we expand our products into new areas of confectionery," said company chairman, president and CEO Bill Wrigley Jr.

Further information: www.wrigley.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Researchers try to boost anti-cancer properties of milk

Date: Tue, 01 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Researchers in the United States are trying to boost the level of a fatty acid in milk shown to prevent or limit cancer.

A team from Cornell University hope to improve the health benefits of milk and give struggling farmers a new market.

The study will formulate a diet for dairy cows that will increase a type of conjugated linoleic acid, or CLA, in the milk they produce. Studies in cell lines and animal models have shown CLA to be effective at preventing the formation of tumours by blocking angiogenesis, the process by which a tumour creates new blood vessels.

Research has also suggested that CLA can destroy cancerous cells, though no studies have yet examined CLA's effect on human cancer and another study has shown it to be effective in blocking skin cancer.

About 80 of the dairy 1,500 cows at Spruce Haven Farm in Union Springs will be given the special diet over the next few months, the Associated Press reports.

Dairy farmers in the US have struggled over the past few years to recoup their costs and New York dairy production in December fell 1.3 per cent from a year earlier, as dairy farmers continue to exit the business.

Scientists have cautioned that further research into the effects of CLA on cancer tumours is needed before health claims are made.

(no further information)

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Phytobase Nutritionals increases health benefits of dark chocolate

Date: Tue, 01 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food technology company Phytobase Nutritionals has added an appetite suppressant found in the African Kalahari desert to dark chocolate.

Hoodia Gordonii helps to stave off hunger while attacking obesity and the San Bushmen, one of the world's oldest tribes, have been eating it for thousands of years to block feelings of hunger and give them energy while hunting or on long trips across the desert.

In a CBS "60 Minutes" special on the plant, Lesley Stahl described it as "a little cucumbery in texture, but not bad" and said she experienced no after effects, wasn't hungry all day and had no desire to eat or drink.

Phytobase has developed the first combination of sugar-free, low-carbohydrate dark chocolate and Hoodia Gordonii available on the market, called Chocoleans.

Sam Gur, CEO of Phytobase Nutritionals, said, "Chocoleans are a dieter's dream come true and a truly unique concept. In addition to the benefits of dark chocolate and Hoodia Gordonii, Chocoleans also contain an extract of wolfberries, highly regarded for their anti-aging properties. Besides lowering your blood pressure and blood sugar levels, the wolfberry also improves your body's immune functions."

A Harvard study found that eating dark chocolate three times a month could prolong a person's life by one year, while a recent study by Dundee University found that volunteers who ate dark chocolate cut the risk of developing blood clots by as much as 75 per cent. Dark chocolate has also been known to lower blood pressure in elderly hypertensive patients.

Both studies suggest that flavonoids found in cocoa, chemicals derived from antioxidant-rich plants that have a wide variety of nutritional benefits, could be responsible for the health benefits. Flavonoids can keep blood platelets from massing together, meaning a reduced risk of blood clots.

Further information: www.phytobase.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovative food packaging receives award

Date: Wed, 02 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A food-packaging firm, which created designs for a top chef and food brand, has received an award for its work.

Sphere Design, based in Liverpool, won best packaging award at the Food Marketing and Manufacturing Awards 2005 for its innovative packaging using polypropylene.

The company produced product packaging for UK celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay and the Grampian Country Food Group, working with them for over a year.

Account director Nik Davis told ic Liverpool: "This has been a challenging project and everyone in the team at Sphere has worked extremely hard to develop our original concept to meet Gordon's exacting standards."

The awards were attended by leading figures from the food industry and were hosted by TV chef Brian Turner.

Packaging designed by Sphere can also be seen on supermarket shelves for customers including John West, Morrisons, Patak and Spam.

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Obesity funding may create product opportunities

Date: Wed, 02 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The EU is to invest more than €14 million in its fight against obesity, a move that could create new product opportunities for the food industry.

Through various reports and studies in the EU DiOGenes project, dietary components that can help to stop weight gain will be investigated.

"Our investigations require a combination of skills and disciplines seldom found in industry and science," researchers told Food Navigator.

Food technology studies will take up a big part of the project, with researchers looking to develop foods that are favourable to consumers but also limit intake through "enhanced satiety signals".

In addition, glycaemic index will become a key issue of study along with high dietary protein content, to help enhance the feeling of 'fullness'.

Latest figures from Datamonitor show that one third of people in the EU are overweight and now more than one in ten are obese.

The project is funded under the EU's food quality and safety drive in the EU sixth framework programme.

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New PowerBar Triple Threat launched

Date: Wed, 02 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

PowerBar has unveiled a new line of four new energy snack bars, PowerBar Triple Threat.

Offered in both crispy and chocolate-caramel-layered textures, PowerBar Triple Threat bars "fuel like a PowerBar and taste like a candy bar".

PowerBar Triple Threat bars will be available across the US in spring 2005. The 55-gram bars are fortified with sixteen vitamins and minerals and a balance of carbohydrates, protein and fibre.

The new snacks bars provide 100 per cent daily value of vitamins C and E, ten grams of protein, four grams of fibre and 30 to 32 grams of carbohydrates.

The PowerBar Triple Threat line consists of two crispy and two layered offerings; Caramel Peanut Fusion and Chocolate Caramel Fusion PowerBar Triple Threat combine a tasty core with peanuts and caramel and a chocolaty coating, while the Chocolate DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

Peanut Butter Crisp and Caramel Peanut Crisp flavours offer a lightly crunchy rice crisp taste that is bottom-dipped in a chocolaty coating.

PowerBar's product line includes a full spectrum of food and beverage options developed to meet the nutrition and energy needs of everyone from athletes to individuals seeking healthy food choices.

Further information: www.powerbar.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Pubs advised to be innovative with desserts

Date: Wed, 02 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

British pubs are being urged to be more experimental with their dessert menus.

Many pubs which make a feature of home-made dishes feel safer with bought-in desserts from a foodservice specialist rather than producing their own high-quality puddings.

Predicting demand for desserts, particularly post-Christmas, is notoriously difficult, but innovative and home-made puddings can often boost a pub's profits.

Magnesia Bank in North Shields, winner of the Dessert Pub of the Year title in the The Publican's Pub Food Awards 2004 makes all its own desserts. The pub uses seasonal produce extensively and desserts also feature prominently in its regular national food theme nights.

Many Dessert Pub of the Year finalists use special promotions to encourage customers to finish off their meals with a sweet, The Publican reports.

Pub Food Awards veteran, Paul Morgan of the Hampshire Arms, recently showed a selection of special creations using Movenpick All Natural ice cream range at a special trade event organised by Scholler Ice Cream.

A recent survey for Alveston Kitchens, part of Heinz Foodservice, found that consumers might reject desserts because they are too full, the portion sizes aren't right, a favourite isn't on the menu or social pressure is bought to bear. Factors such as time and dietary issues are also important.

(no further information)

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Food technologists develop new rice starch extraction method

Date: Wed, 02 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food scientist Harmeet Guraya, based at a US government laboratory, has designed a method to extract rice starch, which he claims will cut costs for producers.

The food technologist says the new process rivals the existing sodium hydroxide method, replacing it with a more "efficient and environmentally-friendly way" to separate starch and protein in rice.

The new method relies on very high pressure, supplied by a homogeniser, known as a microfluidiser, to physically split apart the starch-protein agglomerates in rice grains.

Mr Guraya, who works at the Agricultural Research Service in New Orleans, said: "A single pass through this piece of equipment yields many small, individual particles of starch and protein homogeneously dispersed in a watery matrix. The starch and protein components can then be separated by traditional density-based separation processes."

The food technologist is currently working with US rice-based foods firm Sage V Foods, to scale up the new technology to a complete production line.

Rice starch, a soft, white powder, is used by the food industry for its gel strength, gelling temperature and starch granule rigidity. The soft starch is often used in baby food, extruded products, soups, dressings and meat preparations.

One if the fastest growing markets for rice starch is the rapidly growing functional foods sector. Rice starches are currently far more expensive than their corn and wheat alternatives and a cheaper separation process would provide a real bonus for food makers.

(no further information)
(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Nestle prepares to relaunch Baci

Date: Thu, 03 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food firm Nestle is in the process of developing a strong marketing campaign for the relaunch of its Baci brand, an innovative chocolate that comes wrapped in a love poem.

The relaunch was originally due to take place in 2004, but was postponed as a result of production problems.

However, the extra time has given Nestle the chance to focus more on what was originally being described as the "biggest confectionery launch of 2004".

The success of the brand is the key to overcoming competition from other brands such as Ferrero Rocher and if successful will help promote the product's indulgence image.

Baci chocolates are imported from Italy and seen as the chocolate of romance, with Baci meaning kiss in Italian.

Each chocolate has a creamy dark chocolate and hazelnut centre. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Mutton relaunched in the UK

Date: Thu, 03 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Innovative mutton products could be launched in the near future, as the National Sheep Association (NSA) is stepping up its bid to promote mutton in the UK.

Since the launch of the Mutton Renaissance campaign in November, the group has decided structured supply chains and appropriate standards need to be developed.

NSA chief executive, John Thorley, told the Journal: "What we are about is creating more market options for the sheep industry and at the same time reintroducing mutton to the majority of the UK population who have not had the opportunity to experience the fantastic flavours that quality mutton has to offer.

"With over two million sheep entering the food chain each year as mutton we strongly believe that it is time mutton re-established itself as a red meat of choice with a larger percentage of the population."

Continued promotion of the product has been taking place with funding recently secured from Defra for a mutton recipe book.

In addition, a marketing campaign is also being considered to ensure mutton dishes are easily available to consumers and can be created in a way to meet the demand for convenience.

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Sainsbury's takes healthy approach

Date: Thu, 03 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Sainsbury's is using innovative ideas to help boost the image of food retailers, with a new promotion that encourages people to get active and eat healthily.

Trying to address the current issue of obesity and children's health, the food firm has launched the 'active kids' campaign, where for every £10 spent on fresh fruit and vegetables consumers receive a voucher.

Vouchers will then entitle participating schools to buy sports equipment or arrange sporting activities.

Justin King, chief executive of Sainsbury, told FT.com: "It is not just about price. Health is an area which supermarkets will be increasingly talking about."

The supermarket has £3 million worth of sports kits and activities for schools and will run the scheme for three months, with more items available if more schools join.

Other recent moves by food retailers to promote healthy eating have been sponsorship by Tesco of a Sunday Times GI supplement and the implementation of the GI logo on Marks and Spencer products.

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New low GI sweetener from Wild

Date: Thu, 03 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

German ingredients firm Wild has unveiled a new type of natural fruit sweetener for the confectionery industry.

Fruit Up is based on fruit concentrate and has the added benefits of a low glycemic index and a high brix value.

Wild claims that its natural fruit sweetener is well suited for application in all confectionery categories, including gum and jelly products, soft and hard caramels, ice cream, bakery, cereals and muesli bars.

Christina Heinbockel at Wild told Food Ingredients First that the launch of a low GI positioned product is in line with the current obesity discussion and increasing trend for low GI products.

As complex sugar, Fruit Up guarantees a low glycemic index value and makes an ideal alternative to saccharose and other sugars.

Ms Heinbockel also pointed out that natural ingredients from fruits are in demand and Fruit Up is the only natural fruit sweetener reaching a brix value between 78 and 80, making it especially well suited for confectionery.

Fruit Up is clear and does not affect the colour of the final product. As far as storage and shipping are concerned, the sweetener can outlast many other types of sugar because of its high brix value.

Further information: www.wild.de (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Pizza dips prove a big hit

Date: Thu, 03 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A whopping 67 per cent of pizza eaters are dippers, according to a new survey for restaurant chain Pizza Hut.

Conducted by market research firm i.think, the survey found that the majority of consumers like to dip their pizza into a sauce while eating it.

The i.think survey was conducted in conjunction with the introduction of the new Pizza Hut Dippin' Strips pizza. The new rectangle-shaped pizza is sliced into 16, 1-inch by 4-inch slices are much easier than traditional triangle slices to dip. Dippin' Strips also comes with three dipping sauces: marinara, garlic and ranch.

Tom James, Pizza Hut chief marketing officer commented: "Once we confirmed the dipping trend included pizza, we introduced this new dipponomically-designed Dippin' Strips pizza. And, the survey results show we do, indeed, have the answer for the entire family - easy to dip strips and three different sauces."

Pizza Hut is conducting a second survey via its website www.pizzahut.com, to gain more information on the trend for dipping.

Women were slightly more inclined toward dipping into extra sauce, with 71.7 per cent saying they were dippers, compared to 67.3 per cent of men. Among those polled who

said they did not dip their pizza, 52.4 percent said the new Dippin' Strips pizza sounds like something they want to try.

The Dippin' Strips pizza is offered nationally at participating Pizza Hut restaurants for dine-in, carryout or delivery where available.

Further information: www.pizzahut.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Tropical Beverages launches new value-added drinks range

Date: Thu, 03 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Drinks company Tropical Beverage has unveiled a new line of beverages, Pure Gutz.

The new range of value-added water-based drinks is packaged in a proprietary flask ad includes three grouped offerings; an oxygenated water that has a suggested retail price of \$0.99, a line of flavoured sports drinks based upon the NEW technology that the company recently acquired, and an energy drink line called Energy Push.

The new beverages have multiple flavours and are scheduled to be released in the coming months.

"The excitement is in the air," said Chris Lotito, COO for Tropical. "We have been refining this product over the past few months and distributors are lined up and ready to receive it.

"Our initial projections are for over \$30 million in sales in the first year, and this is only the first of 4 products that we have planned to release. Our plans are to build up our distribution and bring the other products into the fold steadily over the next few months.

"The company is poised to make a major move in the market and we feel confident that Pure GUTZ will have a dramatic impact for us."

The California-based company manufactures and distributes a complete line of value-added beverages, including pure spring waters, flavoured waters, vapour-distilled waters, ultra-pure purified waters, micro-clustered waters and waters with additives (including oxygen, caffeine, electrolytes and other enhanced minerals and vitamins). Tropical Beverage specialises in private-labelled water and have products placed in stores around the world.

Further information: www.tropicalbev.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New and improved Twizzlers launched

Date: Fri, 04 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK food firm Bernard Matthews has reduced the fat content in one of its products by two thirds, after Scottish schools banned it from their menus.

Twizzlers turkey burgers, nuggets and sausages were banned, after some products were DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

found to contain 21 per cent fat.

Now with a new recipe Twizzlers contain less salt and only seven per cent fat.

Norfolk County Council and community dietician Lyn Goodsell, told EDP24: "They should be commended. The school meal services find it difficult to try and steer a path between what is priced reasonably, what is nutritious and what kids will eat.

"Any company that chooses to review the content of their food, particularly if they are on offer to children, is to be welcomed."

However the food industry highlighted that it was important people do not view all foods with high fat content as 'bad' since some contain important nutrients such as tuna and salmon.

Bernard Matthews' managing director, David Joll, expressed the views of the food industry, explaining: "Health and diet is a food industry issue.

"In support of the many healthy eating initiatives, we are working hard to develop products which meet and exceed the current specifications for sodium and fat content." (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovation key to local food success

Date: Fri, 04 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

IGD has told the food industry that the future for local foods looks positive and now is the perfect time for producers to aim for growth.

Latest research from the thinktank shows that consumers are receptive to local foods and 96 per cent deem the availability of a wide range of English food to be important.

In addition, 47 per cent of participants claim they buy local food at least one a month.

Speaking at The Regional Food Group for Yorkshire and Humber seminar, Joanne Denney-Finch, chief executive of IGD, said: "Customers want local foods and local food matters to all the supermarkets.

"So now is the time for local producers to go for growth because I think the potential market is barely tapped yet. There's still huge scope for growth."

Ms Denney-Finch believes local food firms will also be successful because retailers need local foods and because there is a lot of talent and enthusiasm in small and new food businesses.

She also claimed that the UK has always been very innovative with its food and drink industry and so growth should be easily achievable.

Key advice given to local food producers was to be innovative, have a unique selling point, make use of regional food groups and ensure pricing matches consumers' expectations.

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Innovative technology boosts cracker quality **Date:** Fri, 04 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new technology has been created by a UK flavourings firm, which it claims helps to cut costs for biscuit and cracker producers.

According to TasteTech, its new controlled release technology helps flavour retention and means flavours are not distilled or 'baked off', a problem that can occur with the products since they are baked at high temperatures.

Roger Sinton, managing director of TasteTech, told Food Navigator: "Our encapsulation process basically solves the problem of flavour retention and makes it really easy for manufacturers to bake-in any combination of flavour."

With the new technology a hardened vegetable oil microfilm is built on the product to protect the flavour and then ensures it is not released during the baking process until temperatures reach around 60 to 65.

The flavoured cracker market is growing in the UK, with estimated growth at around five per cent per year.

(no further information)

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IGD announces new presidents

Date: Fri, 04 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food and grocery thinktank IGD, which reports on the latest trends and innovations in the food industry, has appointed a new vice president and president today.

The UK group has chosen Tesco chairman David Reid as president and Alastair Sykes, chairman and CEO of Nestle UK as vice president.

Mr Reid told Just Food: "I have been involved with IGD as a member of the Policy Issues Council for 12 years, working with chairmen and CEOs from across the industry, identifying where we can make significant improvements to benefit shoppers."

Mr Reid will chair the Policy Issues Council, with support from Mr Sykes, an industry leaders' forum looking at the long-term challenges facing the industry.

Work by the council has so far focused on "nutrition, crisis management, supporting British agriculture and improving supply chain efficiency" and Mr Reid is keen to help direct this work in the new future and new issues.

"Given my overseas experience with Tesco, I also hope to help IGD broaden its international perspective," he added.

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Cold Stone Creamery plans new flavour a month

Date: Fri, 04 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Cold Stone Creamery is introducing Red Pan, an innovative programme that will see the company launch a new ice cream flavour each month.

The new monthly flavour will be displayed in a unique red pan in stores across the United States.

Cold Stone, which manufactures ice cream, frozen yoghurt and sorbet, has kicked off the Red Pan programme with Red Hot ice cream, a vibrant new flavour for Valentine's Day.

The new flavour is made with real Red Hot candy infused into Cold Stone Creamery's smooth and creamy ice cream.

Cold Stone Creamery delivers its ice cream through a community of franchisees. The secret recipe for smooth and creamy ice cream is handcrafted fresh daily in each store, and customised by combining a variety of mix-ins on a frozen granite stone.

Cold Stone has more than 900 stores and currently operates in 47 states including Alaska, Hawaii, the Caribbean and Guam. The company is an independently owned franchise system, headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Further information: www.campina.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Tropicana awarded Weight Watchers points

Date: Fri, 04 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

New Light 'n Healthy With Pulp from Tropicana has become the first item on the US chilled aisle with Weight Watchers Value Points.

The product is promoted as delivering great taste, important nutrients and a Weight Watchers points Value of 1 per 8 oz glass.

According to Tropicana Products, the two-thirds of Americans who are limiting their calorie and sugar intake may also be missing out on the health benefits of the vitamins and minerals in orange juice.

Tropicana became the first national brand in the US last year to introduce a reduced calorie and sugar orange juice beverage with Light 'n Healthy.

Diet company Weight Watchers has now selected Tropicana Light 'n Healthy as the first juice beverage to list its proprietary Points values on the packaging, so that dieters can still receive excellent nutrition.

"When people eliminate a naturally healthy beverage like orange juice from their eating plans, they're also cutting a convenient source of essential nutrients, such as potassium and vitamin C," said Susan Learner Barr, Weight Watchers director of program development. "Adding Points value information to Tropicana Light 'n Healthy provides

Weight Watchers members with information that they can use to integrate healthy beverages into their lifestyle."

Further information: www.tropicana.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New meat alternative from Campina

Date: Fri, 04 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food manufacturer Campina has unveiled a new meat alternative from dairy.

Valess is promoted as being Campina's response to the many meat eaters in the Netherlands who want to eat less meat and stay healthy and will be available in Dutch supermarkets from February 7th.

The new product is made from fresh dairy produce and fibre and contains less fat and relatively more polyunsaturated fatty acids than meat.

Valess is prepared from low-fat milk and, through the addition of natural fibre, has a surprisingly firm structure, similar to that of meat or chicken.

Piet Hilarides, Campina's group director, said: "Valess is a good example of this: a healthy, delicious and easy alternative to meat. A product that fits in with the trend towards a healthy and sensible diet. And, ultimately, Valess is a product with which we really do add value to milk. For consumers, for customers, for ourselves and for our member-farmers."

Further information: www.campina.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New technology launched to help supply chain Date: Mon, 07 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new product has been created by package coding specialist Alpha Dot to help food firms achieve total supply chain accountability.

The firm has set up a bar code validation unit which checks the readability of each bar code, this then allows the item to be scanned easily throughout the chain and also checks print quality level.

Gary Girling of Alpha Dot, told Food Production Daily: "Unreadable or inaccurate bar codes can be very costly in terms of product recall, lost production and the resulting heavy retailer fines.

"Our bar code validation unit ensures the accuracy of each code to maximise the benefits of the multi system printers."

Safety in the supply chain and traceability is becoming an increasingly important issue for the food industry, with the introduction of new regulations that came into force from January 1st this year.

According to Alpha Dot, the new system also allows companies to trace products to their source quickly.

Visit alpha-dot.co.uk for more information (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovative research to boost cheese production

Date: Mon, 07 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Researchers have discovered key findings about milk protein genes that could revolutionise the future of cheese production.

Ng-Kwai-Hang and his team at McGill University have identified the role that specific milk protein genes play in cheese yield, quality and composition.

In addition, if small changes or mutations occur in the DNA of certain genes then huge changes occur in the cheese.

According to findings, a mutation in kappa-case helps cheese yield and produces cheese of "better quality", whilst 50 other gene variants can occur to help cause diverse effects on dairy products.

The group claim their investigations could help lead to better cheese production and quality and help boost efficiency.

Ng-Kwai-Hang told Food Production Daily: "Because the genetic variants are inherited according to simple Mendelian rules, it is possible to breed for specific variants.

"We are seeing this already where breeding programs are in place to increase the frequency of the B type of kappa-casein in cow populations in order to improve the milk quality and its cheese making characteristics."

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Sweet craving study could boost new products

Date: Mon, 07 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new US study has identified reasons why adult and child food preferences may differ.

It is hoped the findings could help fruit and vegetable firms come up with new and innovative ways to market products to children sensitive to particular tastes.

According to researchers at the Monell Chemical Senses Centre in Philadelphia, children who are naturally attracted to sugary foods could actually lose their "sweet tooth" when they become adults.

Study author Julie Mennella, told Reuters: "These findings help to explain some obstacles that parents face when negotiating with children about food choices."

Scientists already knew that common differences in a certain gene can increase the DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

likelihood of a child craving sweets and being more sensitive to bitter tastes.

However, the new study showed that experience and cultural influences can override various food preferences over time.

A total of 143 children and their mothers were studied for the research, with 68 per cent of the children having at least one of the two gene variations that lead to sugar preference.

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Researcher develops virtual food components

Date: Mon, 07 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A New Zealand researcher has developed a new labelling scheme that evaluates the real physiological effects of food.

Dr John Monro explained his virtual food components (VFCs) in the Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture.

VFCs are nutrient-like values that allow food data to say not only what a food is, but also what it does, and how well it does it. VFCs are presented as weights and provide information about the functional efficiency of a food, by comparing the effect of that food with a suitable reference material of known activity.

The expert claims that, despite their virtual nature, VFCs could show up the real performers amongst the hundreds of so-called functional foods on supermarket shelves.

For example, Mr Monro's first VFC - glycaemic glucose equivalent (GGE) - is a measure of the glucose-raising potential of a food, compared to glucose. The activity of the test food is deduced as a percentage of the activity of an equal amount of the reference food. Thus a food with a GGE of 15 would impose the same blood glucose level as 15g of glucose.

The blood glucose-raising potential of a food has been linked to obesity, heart disease and cancer, and in individuals with impaired glucose tolerance, e.g. those with diabetes, to blindness and kidney failure.

"In a world flooded by functional foods, there is a real need for values that can represent food effects that can't be shown in traditional panels", Mr Monro, of the New Zealand Institute for Crop and Food Research in Palmerston North, explained. "Important though nutrient values are, they can be hopelessly inadequate for communicating the benefits of foods."

"We now intend to build up the data so they can be used across a wider range of foods", he added.

Further information: www.soci.org/SCI/publications/jsfa.jsp (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Bread industry fights back

Date: Mon, 07 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

The bread industry is changing its marketing strategy in order to recover sales hit by the craze for low-carb diets.

Industry officials have launched a new campaign highlighting the health benefits of bread, especially whole-grain bread, after new US government guidelines called on consumers to eat three one-ounce servings of whole grains a day.

The \$3.5 million Grains for Life campaign will be launched in New York and Washington this week with billboards, posters and people dancing in bread costumes.

Bread industry leaders have reportedly been surprised by how quickly low-carbohydrate diets have fallen out of favour.

A survey by NPD Group found the number of American adults on any low-carb diet peaked at 9.1 per cent last February and dropped to 3.6 per cent by mid-November, The Associated Press reports.

America has seen bread sales slowly decline in recent years, even before the low-carb trend took hold.

Meanwhile, in Britain, bread is bought by 99 per cent of households, and nearly nine million large loaves are sold each day. Speciality breads, such as focaccia, ciabatta, naan and corn breads are one of the industry's fastest growing sectors, increasing by 36 per cent between 1997 and 2002.

White bread accounts for 69 per cent of bread sold in the UK and braed sells for around £61p per kilo in London, compared with £2.56 in New York, in Paris £2.54, in Rome £1.96 and in Berlin £1.56.

(no further information)

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Oishi planning new products

Date: Mon, 07 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Oishi Group, the manufacturer of Oishi green tea, has unveiled a new range of ready-toeat chilled-food menus.

Launched at the end of last month, the new line goes through a quick chilling process in which the temperature of freshly cooked food is lowered quickly to about 4.4 degrees Celsius or less to prevent food-borne diseases.

Oishi is also planning to introduce sports drinks and yoghurt beverages in the next few years and is discussing the possibility of collaborating with international firms in other Asian countries such as Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan in producing yoghurt beverages and sports drinks for the Thai market.

Tan Passakornnatee, Oishi president and CEO, said: "We want to do something else

besides green tea." Mr Tan told the Bangkok Post that the Oishi brand had already gained strong recognition among Thai consumers and it was now easier to sell other items.

He claimed Oishi was the first company to target ready-to-eat chilled food at Thai consumers and explained that chilled food is fresher than frozen and easier to launch in Thailand, which already has a crowded frozen food sector.

Oishi's 11 chilled Japanese food items, mostly bento and ramen, are now available at 65 branches of 7-Eleven convenience stores in Bangkok.

Further information: www.oishirestaurant.com/ (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Food hygiene rules could prevent new products

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Peter Mandelson has raised concerns that current EU food hygiene laws could be preventing new products and technologies from developing country companies, because they are so tight.

According to the trade commissioner, the EU needs to ensure "proper protection" of EU citizens does not block developing countries' products and he has called on the EU to make changes.

However, Mr Mandelson did explain that he had "no evidence" that such a problem was currently occurring and that protection of citizens was extremely important.

"They could perhaps operate in a fairer and more just way without any undue or unreasonable harm or risk being posed to the European citizen," he told the BBC.

"I know some make that argument. I have heard that argument and I think it is an argument the European Union should join," he added.

This is the first occasion since becoming EU trade commissioner that Mr Mandelson has faced MPs.

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Coca-Cola to launch new product

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK sugar firm Tate & Lyle has revealed that its SPLENDA Sucralose product will be used in the latest offering from Coca-Cola.

According to the company, Diet Coke sweetened with SPLENDA brand sweetener will be launched in the second quarter of 2005 and will feature the brand's logo on the label and packaging.

The company claims the new deal highlights the longer-term market potential of its sweetener.

However, it will have no impact on Tate & Lyle's short-term earnings.

Tate & Lyle makes renewable food and industrial ingredients, using innovative technology, for the food and beverage industry.

The company, with headquarters in London, is best known for its cereal sweeteners, sugar refining and starch products.

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Innovative packaging solution trialled

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new trial in the UK has suggested that radio waves could be a key way to rapidly seal materials in food packaging and help with recycling and biodegradable alternatives.

The initiative between radio frequency (RF) applications group Stanelco and UK supermarket Asda, found that fresh food products packaged using the technology had excellent results for appearance, odour and taste.

Ian Balchin, Stanelco chief executive, told Food Production Daily: "This is an important step on the road to commercialisation.

"It demonstrates that laminated materials can be replaced with more economic, recyclable materials sealed using Stanelco's revolutionary energy-efficient technology and paves the way for in-store retailing trials and on to full commercialisation."

The firm conducted tests to see whether RF could be used to help create packaging solutions that help preserve foods for longer.

At present the company is developing a number of ideas including sealing of low-cost conventional plastics for food packaging, edible sachets and foamed starch trays. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Tetra Pak launches innovative packaging

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Tetra Pak has unveiled the world's first microwavable aseptic package.

The company claims the new packaging is "the ideal solution for today's time-pressed consumers looking for increasingly high quality, quickly made meals."

Aimed at the growing market in prepared sauces for both retail distribution and food services, The Tetra Wedge Aseptic (TWA) microwavable 200 S, is reportedly the most robust and easy-to-handle packaging solution for sweet and savoury sauces.

Compared to stand-up plastic pouches (SUP), a common packaging for ready-made sauces, independent consumer research found that the distinctive shape and packaging material made the TWA packaging easier to handle and pour and more robust and secure.

"Other favourable benefits over plastic included better flavour and taste and the even heating thanks to its shape. This avoids overheating and a hot-to-handle package," a spokesman for Tetra Pak said.

The innovative packaging material uses polyethylene terephtalic silicon oxide (PET SiOx) as oxygen barrier, ensuring product safety and integrity as well as original flavour, colour and texture for six months, without the need for refrigeration or preservatives. The TWA mw 200 S can also be used for smooth soups and broths.

The TWA mw 200 S was manufactured on the TBA/19 filling machine from Tetra Pak, which has been specially designed with ultrasonic transversal sealing for the innovative packaging material used in the product. Used exclusively for the TWA mw 200 S, it had a capacity of 6,000 packages an hour.

Further information: www.tetrapak.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Del Monte celebrates canned food month

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Fruit company Del Monte Foods is celebrating National Canned Food Month this February.

The company claims it is the perfect time to celebrate the nutrition, convenience and great taste that canned food provides for today's busy consumers.

Recently updated Dietary Guidelines almost doubled the recommendation to 4 1/2 cups of fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables daily, Food Ingredients First reports.

A nutrition study conducted by the University of Illinois showed that canned fruits and vegetables generally provide as much dietary fibre and nutrients as cooked fresh and frozen produce, while a three-part nutrition study conducted by the University of Massachusetts found that when prepared in a recipe, dishes made with canned ingredients provide comparable nutritional value and flavour appeal.

In addition, the canning process can bring out certain nutrients in food, such as cancer-fighting lycopene in tomatoes and lutein, a naturally occurring type of phytochemical that may help to fight disease and preserve eyesight.

Nearly 90 per cent of Del Monte's fruits and vegetable products are all natural and the company harvests most of its fruit and vegetable products immediately at the peak of ripeness to retain nutrients and flavour. The products are then cooked naturally without preservatives or other additives.

Del Monte Foods is one of the largest and most well known producers, distributors and marketers of premium quality, branded and private label food and pet products for the US retail market, generating over \$3 billion in pro forma net sales last year.

Further information: www.delmonte.com

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovative meat technology launched

Date: Tue, 08 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Researchers at the US government-backed Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) have discovered that the enzyme -calpaina and the variation of the protein calpastatin both affect meat tenderness.

Calpastatin determines how much calpain is active and how tender the steak will be, while -calpain breaks down muscle proteins, making meat tender.

The research team wanted to examine makes some meat tough and some tender and used protein chemistry and electron microscopy to investigate biochemical mechanisms. Driven by continuing pressure from consumers to deliver quality meat ingredients, the food technologists developed a way of injecting calcium into meat to help the tenderisation process along.

Lead researcher Mohammad Koohmaraie said: "The most significant part of this project was learning that it's calpastatin-not calpain-which controls tenderness."

"This marination technique could be used to produce meat that has both improved tenderness and juiciness," he added.

Mr Koohmaraie's collaborators at MARC, chemist Timothy PL Smith and geneticist Eduardo Casas, have taken a complementary genetic approach to studying the -calpain system.

The US agricultural research service (ARS) reports that the scientists used a large population of crossbred cattle to identify genes influencing tenderness and found that variation in the gene that produces -calpain appears to affect tenderisation.

Further information: www.marc.usda.gov (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Bagur swings in for Somerfield

Date: Wed, 09 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Somerfield has received a formal takeover bid from Icelandic venture capital group Baugur, offering £1 billion for a complete buyout of the Bristol-based supermarket chain.

The offer signals continued effort from Baugur to extend its presence in the UK retail market. The group agreed to buy Iceland supermarket owner Big Food Group in December last year, and has already secured a five per cent stake in Somerfield in the past.

Somerfield is reported to be considering the new offer, under the terms of which current management would continue at the company's helm.

It is thought that the Baugur offer could potentially lead to a bidding-war for Somerfield, though many believe the prospect of Baugur raising its initial bid to be "slim".

Two years ago Somerfield, which operates 700 Somerfield branded stores and 500 Kwik Save outlets nationwide, rejected a buyout approach from John Lovering and Bob Mackenzie. If successful in its new bid, Baugur would become fifth largest food retailer in the UK.

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Fibre-rich diet proves effective in tackling cholesterol

Date: Wed, 09 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A diet based on fibre is reportedly equally effective as certain types of medical treatment in combating cholesterol, according to new research.

Scientists from the University of Toronto conducted research into the efficacy of diets rich in fibre, soy and vegetables, and found that the food was extremely effective.

Ineed, even in comparison with a statin drug, the effect on cholesterol was strong.

Toronto's David Jenkins explained: "Dietary combinations may not differ in potency from first-generation statins in achieving current lipid goals for primary prevention."

The findings were explored in the latest issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

As part of the process some volunteers were given fibre rich foods while others followed a low-fat diet or just a standard diet, with those on the fibre-rich "portfolio diet" reporting a reduction in low-density lipoprotein by nearly 30 per cent.

Further information: http://www.ajcn.org/ (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Dietary supplements found to slow PSA

Date: Wed, 09 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A study has found that a mixture of dietary supplements can slow the rise of prostate specific antigen levels (PSA).

PSA is produced by the prostate gland and rising levels in the blood can signal cancer or cancer progression, reports Reuters.

The study of 37 men by the Ersmus Medical Center Rotterdam found that using supplements which included antioxidants and plant-based estrogens, the level of male sex hormones was reduced and the rising levels of PSA was reduced in some men.

The study was not able to determine whether the reduction in PSA levels is actually translated into reduced tumour growth. Recently, a study found that obese men had reduced PSA levels, however the high level of obesity was found only to be masking the real diagnosis of the disease.

Lead study author Dr Ries Kranse said that the study, however, does highlight that diet changes can help lower the risk of developing prostate cancer. It indicates that, if the reduced PSA levels translate to reduced tumour size, dietary intervention could be used instead of hormone suppressing drugs.

In the study, Kranse and his colleagues gave their subjects a powder based drink that contained green tea extract, a soy extract containing phytoestrogens and antioxidants. The men used in the study had prostate cancer and had rising PSA levels.

Men taking the supplements showed a dip in PSA levels as compared to those taking the placebo.

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Health trend fails to damage PepsiCo profits

Date: Wed, 09 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

PepsiCo has announced that its savoury snacks business has recorded a solid increase in earnings last year, despite growing interest in healthier eating.

PepsiCo's product range, strongly based around fizzy drinks and savoury snacks, saw sales rise by eight per cent to \$29 billion during 2004, with North American savoury snack subsidiary Frito-Lay contributing to almost half the total operating profit.

Recent studies have shown that 99 per cent of US households still buy savoury snacks and the average American eating more than nine kilograms of snacks a year. The country is still the world's biggest snacks market, worth more than \$37 billion annually, according to Food and Drink Europe.

Analysts are likely to watch PepsiCo and Frito-Lay's profits closely, in order to identify the possible damage healthy eating trends will have on international snack giants.

PepsiCo's non-carbonated drinks range, including the Tropicana fruit juice brand, saw sales soar by 14 per cent to \$9.8 billion, Frito-Lay, which produces a range of popular brands, such as Lay's, Cheetos and Tostitos, increased its sales by around five per cent.

PepsiCo removed trans fats, which clog arteries, from Doritos, Tostitos and Cheetos in 2003. The company's Lay's, Ruffles, Fritos and Rold Gold Pretzels brands are all non trans-fat snacks. The company also pledged that 50 per cent of new products will use "essentially healthy ingredients or offer improved health benefits."

Producers are keen to show they are committed to promoting healthier eating after whispers about the possibility of an 'obesity tax' started to circulate in US government last year.

Further information: www.pepsico.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Packaging firm promises major improvements

Date: Wed, 09 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Technology group Stanelco has announced that a packaging trial with supermarket chain Asda has produced 'exceptional' results

Supermarket food will look, smell and taste better and the packaging will be less likely to leak, Stanelco claims.

The company uses radio frequency to seal plastics packaging hermetically and says its technology removes the need for laminate (attach the lid to the base of the packet). According to Stanelco, the new packaging is 20 per cent cheaper in terms of material and uses 70 per cent less electricity to make the seal.

The packaging could be on the shelves within a few weeks, after passing the "final hurdle" in product tests with Asda.

Ian Balchin, chief executive, said: "Five years ago a supermarket would sell red meat in a polystyrene tray with a clingfilm wrap over the top. Any juices tended to gather in the clingfilm and cause a mess on the shelf or in the kitchen."

Mr Balchin said the company is working with most supermarkets but tests with Asda and its suppliers are most advanced.

Stanelco is also working on edible sachets that could allow a packet of soup powder to be placed in a cup of boiling water so the sachet would dissolve and could be eaten.

Further information: www.stanelco.co.uk (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New meat alternative developed from milk and seaweed

Date: Wed, 09 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

Dutch dairy giant Campina has announced that it has developed a new meat alternative from low-fat milk and seaweed extract.

The Valess product has been launched on the Dutch market has fibres "compared to a small chicken", contains four per cent fat (nine per cent for crumbed varieties) and is formulated with three per cent food fibre (seaweed extract) and 15 to 16 per cent milk protein.

The meat substitute will target the growing market for meat substitutes, currently dominated by soy products. Campina aims to attract the many meat eaters in the Netherlands who want to eat less meat and stay healthy.

Valess can be cooked in exactly the same way as meat. All varieties are quickly and easily prepared in a frying pan, oven or microwave.

Piet Hilarides, Campina's group director, said: "Innovation is one of the spearheads in Campina's growth strategy, and something we continually put into practice. We develop and market distinctive products, thus adding sustainable value to milk."

Campina aims to further expand the Valess range in the future by introducing new varieties and flavours and tapping into other countries' markets.

Further information: www.campina.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Restaurateur plans innovative revamp of Indian restaurants

Date: Thu, 10 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

The traditional British image of a brightly coloured curry to soak up numerous pints of lager is soon to change if a Bollywood singer and an Indian restaurateur are successful with their plans.

Singer Asha Bhosle and restaurateur Russell Scott have decided to help relaunch the image of the Indian restaurant in England.

The pair believe that what Brits believe to be a curry is not really the traditional cuisine and is instead a mix of British and Indian flavours, with many customers having consumed numerous pints and wanting to beat each other on spice ratings.

Now the duo want to create the first British chain of upmarket Indian restaurants, offering authentic Bombay cuisine in stylish surroundings across the country.

"There are a lot of pasta chains out there but we don't have an Indian restaurant chain," Mr Scott told Reuters.

"The UK market is ready to move on from the traditional fare. These restaurants are not aimed at people who want a cheap curry and beer," he added.

Hoping to launch a series of restaurants over a period of five years, the pair are currently looking for their first venue.

It is hoped the singer's name, decoration, rich menu and music will all help to change UK consumers' opinions of Indian restaurants.

According to figures from the Food Standards Agency (FSA), around 2.5 million consumers eat an Indian every week in the UK. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovative products increase to combat fake foods

Date: Thu, 10 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

The number of innovative products being released is increasing as the number of counterfeit food seizures rise, according to Food Production Daily.

Latest European Commission figures show that seizures of food products entering the EU increased by 77 per cent from 2002 to 2003, with items including waffles, sweets and apples.

Food and packaging firms are now taking action to prevent the counterfeit foods and a DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

number of innovative products have been launched including hologram identification, finger printing, security labels and labels that blend into products or packaging design.

EU taxation and customs commissioner Laszlo Kovacs explained: "Counterfeiting and piracy increasingly involve children's toys, medicines and food products and this constitutes a real danger to consumers.

"The customs authorities of the Member States are already working hard to combat this problem but we must take many more very concrete actions if we are to protect ourselves and the world from this threat to our safety and to our economy."

According to the commission the trend has moved towards smuggling more everyday products rather than luxury items and nearly 100 million articles were seized in 2003.

Although the 2004 statistics have not yet been compiled, there is strong evidence to suggest that customs have been very active across EU member states and there is a strong demand for anti-counterfeit products.

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Innovative packaging to be displayed at Interpack

Date: Thu, 10 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

European packaging firm RPC is to display its latest innovations in rigid plastics packaging for food, at the upcoming Interpack 2005.

The firm also plans to showcase a new product it has developed, which is an alternative to the tin can for food applications.

RPC Bepo UK Corby has helped to create the new tin can alternative, which involves a developed innovative multi-layer polypropylene pack.

Innovative plastics are now a key area of development for the food packaging sector.

The new Conserves Pratiques range of vegetables now has an ambient shelf life of up to two years, according to the company.

"Conserves Pratiques represents a real breakthrough in providing a vegetable concept that meets the convenience requirement of today's consumer," Luc Fevrier, Carrefour's preserved products category manager explained.

New packaging and innovative ways to keep items safe and fresh is a key issue in the food sector, with new regulations meaning food products need to not only ensure good quality, but also that the contents are safe and free from contamination.

Another product to be showcased is the T-Disc brewing device for Kraft Foods, which offers the latest in foodservice jars for high temperature food processing and offers the best brewing process.

Interpack is to be held in Dusseldorf and will take place from April 21st until April 27th. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Unilever sells oils and fats business to Princes

Date: Thu, 10 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Anglo-Dutch conglomerate Unilever has announced plans to sell its seed oils and cooking fats business to canned fish and meat firm Princes.

The move comes as Unilever looks to concentrate on fewer brands and comes days before the firm is expected to announce a boardroom restructuring.

The sale of the Crisp 'n Dry and Cookeen businesses, which includes Mazola and Spry Crisp 'n'Dry, does not involve margarines but solely the oil and cooking fat businesses.

The brands will join sunflower oil brand Flora and blended vegetable/olive oil brand Olivio, which Liverpool-based Princes already licences.

Tim Jolly, chief executive of Princes Manufacturing, said: "We believe that with our investment we can take these brands forward alongside the rest of our expanding product ranges and deliver unrivalled category expertise and sector management to retailers stocking these products.

"This acquisition brings six leading brands into the Princes portfolio and establishes the company in the UK seed oil and cooking fats sector."

The sale price has not been disclosed, but Unilever insists that jobs at its factory at Purfleet in Essex will not be affected.

The UK oils market is split into olive oils worth about £70 million, and specialty oils at £7 million. Health concerns are increasingly pushing the market for healthier oils, such as soybean oil.

Further information: www.unilever.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Basell develops new film resin for food packaging

Date: Thu, 10 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Basell has developed a new-generation polypropylene random copolymer

The new Clyrell RC 1314 resin is based on the company's Spherizone process technology and is designed to address growing demand for high-performance transparent blown film.

The resin achieves a combination of optical properties, high stiffness, low gel and odour levels, and good sealing performance for laminated film and transparent food packaging film applications. High clarity thin film is used in packaging baked goods, biscuits and vegetables.

The resin was demonstrated at last year's K show on a Hosokawa-Alpine 30-micron three-layer blown film line, producing 390kg/hr throughput with true polypropylene-like

clarity.

Clyrell RC 1314 has a high thermal resistance and allows for the introduction of a thermal sealing gradient.

Nicolas Kokel, film innovation and value manager for Basell Polyolefins Europe said: "The addition of Clyrell RC 1314 resin to our product portfolio demonstrates Basell's continuous leadership in the development of polypropylene-based blown film resins."

Basell is the world's largest producer of polypropylene and advanced polyolefin products, a leading supplier of polyethylene and catalysts, and a global leader in the development and licensing of polypropylene and polyethylene processes.

Further information: www.basell.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Degussa appoints Ferco as Grap'Active distributor

Date: Thu, 10 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Degussa Food Ingredients has been appointed by Ferco Nutraceutique as the exclusive distributor for its Grap'Active range.

Grap'Active is a range of grape seed and grape skin extracts for the functional food and health supplement market and Degussa will distribute the extracts in Asia and North America under the distribution deal with French firm Ferco.

German-based Degussa claims that Ferco's Grap'Active range will expand its portfolio and complement its current antioxidant product, Alipure alpha-lipoic acid.

Polyphenols are believed to fight oxidative stress and protect against cardiovascular problems by avoiding the formation of blood clots or the oxidation of low-density blood lipoproteins.

"Numerous studies have shown that polyphenols have antioxidant effects and this specific product also has a published study supporting its effect on free radical scavenging," Dr Karl-Heinz Zirzow, marketing director of health and nutrition at Degussa Food Ingredients told NutraIngredients.com.

Ferco's nutraceutical division extracts polyphenol and proanthocyanidin-rich fractions of quality grapes using a patented process based on water and without any organic solvent. The range is ideal for beverages, dairy products and various water-based foods.

Further information: www.degussa.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New food packs launched for MoD troops

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is attempting to be innovative with food ration packs for troops again, by offering more "variety" packs, in a bid to make food more enjoyable DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 98H

and varied.

Six new packs have been developed, following the change in operation ration packs last summer by the Defence Catering Group, in order to be more diverse and healthier.

Brigadier Jeff Little, head of the Defence Catering Group, told Caterer Online: "Instead of sending out large boxes containing identical ration packs and relying on the hard-pressed teams in theatre to sort them into different types, we are going to do this for them back in the UK.

"The new variety boxes will contain up to six different menus, which means that soldiers can expect to eat something different for every meal, and they can swap meals among themselves if they receive anything they are not keen on."

Previously ration backs had to be transported quickly and so variety was not possible.

It is hoped the new packs will help target health conditions including heart disease and obesity and help to boost performance levels.

Trials of the packs are currently being conducted and if successful the food will be extended across a host of groups.

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Availability of onions improving in UK

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Onions have been voted the best product for on-shelf availability in the UK, in a new survey by Efficient Consumer Response (ECR) UK.

When researchers tested the availability of the onion it was found that the product was available in three out of four quarters.

A total of 200 products were surveyed for the study with results proving mainly positive.

Figures showed 25 out of the 200 products achieved 99 per cent availability, 122 achieved between 95 and 99 per cent and ten achieved below 90 per cent.

Chris Tyas, supply chain director of Nestle and co-chair of the ECR UK Availability Workgroup, told Just Food: "At the end of the first year of the survey the overall trend is that we are getting better at on-shelf availability as an industry.

"We have seen a consistent performance in standard product availability and the gap between best and worst has narrowed. We hope that this picture will continue through 2005 and that we can address the seasonal issues."

Figures indicate that Saturday is the worst day of the week for availability and that total availability for the quarter stood at 96.3 per cent, above the average for the year.

ECR is an initiative created by directors of leading retailers and manufacturers and is managed by grocery thinktank IGD.

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Catch limit increased for sole

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food firms that produce or use fish for their items are set to benefit from an upcoming increase in the catch limit for sole.

According to Defra, inshore fisherman will be offered a substantial rise in their monthly catch limits for sole.

UK fisheries minister, Ben Bradshaw, said: "This increase in catch limits shows that the government is listening to fishermen's concerns about the management of fisheries around our shores.

"Sole is an important stock and these increases will help to meet the needs of inshore fishermen."

The changes will see catch limits for vessels under ten metres and fishing for sole in the western English channel to increase from 200 to 500kg each month.

In addition, in the North Sea the limit will grow from one tonne to two tonnes per month for April and May.

After May, the level of the limit will be reviewed. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Steep growth forecast for US flavoured water market

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The US flavoured bottled water market will expand rapidly over the next few years, experts claim.

Analysts estimate that the market could be worth \$800 million by 2009. In 2004, flavoured water accounted for only about three per cent of single-serve water wholesale revenues, but the market has grown steadily since then.

A report by Beverage Marketing suggests that, although bottled water with a hint of flavour is currently a small sub-segment of the single-serve bottled water market, its share could grow significantly, just-drinks.com reports.

"With its relative youth, it is difficult to accurately predict the size of the flavoured water market in the next five years," the report said.

A number of key soft drinks giants have joined the burgeoning flavoured bottled water market in recent months.

However, the study also suggests that the market could spike in a couple of years and decline.

(no further information)

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New product labelling scheme from Nestle

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Nestle has unveiled plans to completely overhaul the packaging on its products in the UK.

The food giant, which owns major brands such as KitKat, Shredded Wheat and Fitnesse, claims the new system will help guide consumers in their understanding of nutritional content and provide them with more, easy to understand information on associated product benefits.

The labels, to be rolled out across the product portfolio in the UK, will feature on a range of products, including pasta, coffee, confectionery, yogurts and cereals. Packs with the new labelling will be on shelf in the UK as early as April of this year.

The new labels will include calories per serve, GDAs (guideline daily amounts) of calories and fat per serving, nutritional information per serving and per 100g, facts relating to specific ingredients and their nutritional benefits, and how a serving of the product can play its part in a balanced diet.

"Consumers have told us that they care about their health and that they want clearer, easy to understand information about the content and, where appropriate the nutritional benefits, of our products. The changes we are making will meet those needs," said Alastair Sykes, chairman and CEO of Nestle UK.

Nestle UK has also accelerated its product reformulation programme by extending its salt, sugar and fat reduction programmes across its product portfolio, as UK consumers become increasingly interested in healthy eating.

Further information: www.nestle.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New printhead technology from Markem

Date: Fri, 11 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Print firm Markem has developed small character ink jet coders, specifically designed for coding on flexible packaging films and foils, individual cartons, HDPE bottles and packages.

The company claims its new range can integrate easily into any packaging line and delivers high reliability, safe and clean operation.

Design characteristics include machine modularity for quick and easy cleaning, maintenance and repair, and TouchDry hot-melt solid inks, which allow for a clean and environmentally friendly coding process.

Features of the advanced printhead manufacturing technology include epoxy-bonded DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

flexible circuits to prevent misalignment and jet dropout and a primary filter housed in a machined and threaded aluminium block for stronger construction, Food Production Europe reports.

The filter relocation is also designed to deliver cleaner operation and longer life, while the recalibrated jet velocity provides greater code consistency over time and ink replenishment, legend creation and legend changes can be completed during production.

Markem has development and manufacturing facilities in the US, England and Belgium with subsidiary companies, distributors, and representatives in over 50 countries.

Further information: www.markem.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

McDonald's hooks up with MTV

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

McDonald's has announced plans to develop its youth-orientated marketing with the news that it is to sponsor a programme on music channel MTV.

The fast food giant will back the Advance Warning show, which it estimates will provide access to more than 400 million living rooms.

The move is likely to further intensify the debate over advertising within the food industry, which has seen a number of high profile firms criticised for their promotional policies in recent months.

Cadburys was lambasted for its Get Active! Scheme in 2003, when the firm got children to exchange chocolate wrappers for school sports equipment.

Analysis revealed that pupils would have to spend over £2,000 on chocolate in order to claim the top prize on offer - a set of volleyball net posts.

More recently Labour MP Debra Shipley introduced a private member's bill in an effort to ban fast food advertising from children's TV.

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Unilever chief set to go

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Unilever boss Anthony Burgmans is reportedly expected to be out of his job by the end of the year.

The Dutchman is due to become sole chairman of Unilever in May.

Unilever named Dutchman Mr Burgmans as non-executive chairman last week, but he agreed to accept the role only after a boardroom battle, according to the Financial Mail.

The consumer goods giant, whose products range from Persil to Flora, announced a shake-up of its top management last week. Unilever confirmed that it ending its 75-year-DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

old practice of having two people acting as joint chairmen and chief executives - one from the company's Dutch and UK arms.

Patrick Cescau is to become chief executive, with Mr Burgmans as non-executive chairman. The two men previously held the posts of joint chairman and chief executive.

Mr Burgmans reportedly fought to retain executive responsibilities and it now looks as though he will leave the company, possibly as early as this summer, after losing his bid. He is believed to have conceded that Mr Cescau should be sole chief executive, but wanted to retain a hands-on role as chairman, but was refused his request by the firm's independent directors.

Unilever unveiled its results for 2004 last week and announced the management changes, claiming that Mr Burgmans will retain his new role for two years. The company added that it expected the chairman's position to be filled "in the course of 2007 by an independent non-executive director".

Further information: www.unilever.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Stock market return for Pizza Express

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Restaurant chain Pizza Express is reported to be in line for a return to the stock market.

The popular group was taken private just two years ago by private equity owner TDR Capital.

TDR acquired the firm for £278 million in partnership with Capricorn Ventures, but is now believed to be looking to appoint bankers to advise on the strategic options for the business.

Three investment banks are believed to have been shortlisted to map out a strategy for the future of the business.

By acquiring the 180-strong chain of Ask restaurants as well, TDR and Capricorn have enhanced the group's purchasing power and stripped out costs. However, the Sunday Telegraph reports that the feeling among bankers is that TDR is considering a flotation of Pizza Express on its own.

TDR and Capricorn acquired the Ask Central chain last year for £213 million.

Pizza Express has more than 280 outlets in the UK and is reportedly delivering double-digit percentage increases in like-for-like sales.

Further information: www.pizzaexpress.co.uk (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Court to decide Yorkshire feta cheese fate

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A European court is reportedly deciding the fate of a brand of feta cheese produced in North Yorkshire.

Shepherd's Purse Cheeses, near Thirsk, has been banned from marketing its cheese as feta by a 2002 EU directive, according to the Northern Echo.

The Greek government persuaded the EU Commission to register feta as exclusively Greek by arguing that grasses on the country's mountains gave their cheese a distinct flavour.

The Danish and German governments are attempting to overturn the feta cheese directive in Luxembourg and, if they are successful, Shepherd's Purse will also see its ban lifted, bringing to an end a six-year battle with the EU.

Yorkshire MEP Edward McMillan-Scott is backing Shepherd's Purse, insisting that the company's cheese tastes identical to the Greek version and he has attacked the British government for refusing to provide a lawyer to represent the firm.

He told the newspaper: "It is extraordinary that the British Government, which spends billions on farm subsidies, will not spend a few hundred pounds on sending a lawyer to defend a small but important producer."

(no further information)

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Supermarkets could be named and shamed

Date: Mon, 14 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Supermarkets could reportedly be "named and shamed" when a new authority starts its work.

The Gangmasters Licensing Authority, which starts operating on April 1st, could name supermarkets whose cheap food policies involve illegal workers picking or packing produce for suppliers as part of measures to reduce the number of workers being exploited by unscrupulous bosses.

Speaking just days before the first anniversary of the tragedy at Morecambe Bay, Paul Whitehouse, the former Chief Constable of Sussex, told The Times newspaper that supermarkets could be prosecuted for aiding and abetting the use of illegal labour.

Mr Whitehouse, who will chair the new authority, explained that food companies that had been warned their supply chain was in breach of the law and failed to take action could be prosecuted under tough new legislation.

The new illegal labour chief said his job was to eliminate all exploitation of workers from agriculture and the shellfish industry and said he hoped he would never have to employ the sanctions against supermarkets, but was prepared to do so. "I'm a great believer in people I deal with knowing I have a big stick, but that I may not need to get it out," he said.

The Morecambe Bay disaster claimed the lives of 21 Chinese cockle pickers, who drowned while working illegally on the beach. An estimated 500,000 workers are illegally in the shellfish and agricultural industries and the Exchequer loses £5 million a year in VAT alone.

Under the new laws, any gangmaster unlawfully exploiting labour will face a maximum ten years in prison and any farmer who accepts labour from rogue operators will face up to a year in prison.

(no further information)

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

UK fish industry becoming more innovative

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The UK Sea Fish Industry Authority (Seafish) is working to assure customers that shellfish and various other fish is still safe to eat.

Advice follows warnings from a green group, the Marine Conservation Society (MCS), to avoid large numbers of commercial species such as cod and haddock, because of stock issues.

Seafish Chief Executive John Rutherford told Fish Update: "The key message for consumers is that they should keep eating fish.

"With over 70 per cent of seafood in the UK coming from worldwide sources, consumers can also continue to eat species like cod with a clear conscience. Any cod caught in the UK is done so under strict management regimes, and customers can be reassured that the cod they are eat is from a sustainable source."

The authority is also looking to encourage consumers to try different types of seafood and welcomed the fact the MCS' guide promoted seafood as part of a healthy and balanced diet.

Already fish and chip shops and fishmongers are responding to trends in consumer tastes with products on offer including ling, pollock and hoki.

In addition, a number of UK stocks were given a good report, including langoustine and herring.

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Eblex predicts 'excellent' opportunities for beef in 2005

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Excellent opportunities for English beef producers are to occur this year, according to latest forecasts from the English Beef and Lamb Executive (Eblex).

UK prime beef supplies are expected to reach 700,000 tonnes for the year overall and domestic consumption is set to remain strong during 2005 at one million tonnes.

In addition, according to Eblex, with beef supplies set to drop in Europe, UK supplies will be able to meet demand there.

Beef economics manager at the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC), Duncan Sinclair, told the Journal: "With an acute shortage of manufacturing beef, in particular, Europe is better placed than ever before to absorb the 180,000 tonne estimated annual increase in UK production resulting from the potential Over Thirty Month rule change.

"It would also provide good outlets for any imports displaced from the UK market by the change. Against the background of a shortage of forequarter beef in the UK, the early 2005 market has, thankfully, regained much of the strength enjoyed over the first seven months of 2004."

However, the group has warned the food industry to be aware of the price sensitivity of the retail market and its stability and to make sure it remains flexible.

Producers have been advised that stability will be favourable providing the UK's summer inspection by the EU is positive and that bone in beef exports continue to perform well. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Traidcraft unveils new products

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK fair trade firm, Traidcraft, has launched a collection of new products.

The company has unveiled two new energy bars and a new biscuit - GeoActive and FairBreak.

GeoActive carries the Fairtrade mark and is a 40-gram bar also suitable for vegetarians, coming in flavours including cashew, mango and pineapple.

In addition, FairBreak is a chocolate covered wafer biscuit, which will be available in Waitrose stores next month.

The products use ingredients from areas including Malawi, Burkina Faso, Uganda and Ghana.

Sales at the company are estimated at over £12 million a year. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New Jamie Oliver-style cafe for Kent

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A restaurant employing chefs with no previous experience of cooking is opening in Kent this week.

The new project, which resembles Jamie Oliver's Fifteen restaurant, is designed to help people from disadvantaged backgrounds find employment.

If The Impressions cafe-restaurant in Margate, one of the most deprived areas of Kent, is a success, the Focus to Work Trust plans to establish similar restaurants in the area, according to the BBC. The charity offers disadvantaged groups the chance to gain practical work experience.

Those chosen to work at the new venture will undergo weeks of training with an experienced head chef and the profits from the restaurant will go to help people in the town.

Steve Ralf, managing director of the Focus to Work Trust, said: "It is a fantastic social enterprise that will reap dividends for disadvantaged communities and the town centre."

Leader of Kent County Council, Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, added: "Not only does this initiative help people from disadvantaged groups to lift themselves out of benefit dependency through meaningful employment but it is also a boost for the regeneration of Margate."

Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver's Fifteen restaurant trained disadvantaged youngsters to work in catering.

(no further information)

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovative new bread 'builds immunity'

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Scientists in Cambridge have developed a new type of healthier bread.

The bread, grown from wheat grown in soil enriched with selenium, is reportedly healthier than the average loaf.

Selenium is thought to be effective in maintaining a strong immune system, helping regulate blood pressure and improve fertility. Traces of the element have been placed in fields near Papworth Everard, Cambs.

Mark Law, of research company Nutrilaw, said: "Selenium has been proven to reduce cancers and heart disease, and it improves immunity."

The bread is the result of an eight-year research project by the Cambridge company, Nutrilaw, the BBC reports. The firm has been working with farmers in the Papworth area to place selenium in the soil.

"We feel selenium is the one of the most important trace elements of all," Mr Law added. "You cannot get it from normal food. It has been depleted out of UK and European soils over the last fifty years."

The bread will be available in Waitrose supermarkets.

(no further information)

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Brewery unveils Womanizer beer for Valentine's

Date: Tue, 15 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Enville Ales brewery in the West Midlands has launched a new Valentine's beer.

The Stourbridge firm, which has been operating for 13 years, has produced 49-gallon barrels of the beer. Womanizer will be on sale in the company's flagship pubs.

The beer is the only ale in the country produced using damsons, according to Anville Ales. The 5.6 per cent Womanizer has a faint pink colour and also contains slow gin.

Brewery spokeswoman Debbie Blair told BBC News that the unique ale should appeal to both men and women.

"As far as we know nobody has ever used damsons before," she commented. "It is a very good, fruity ale for the occasion. It is based on Belgian beers, which have got a small percentage of fruit extract in them."

Further information: www.envilleales.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Report argues no need to ban junk food ads

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new report released today suggests there is no need for junk food adverts for children to be stopped, since recent childhood obesity figures are exaggerated.

According to researchers from the Social Issues Research Council (SIRC), the scale of obesity in UK children has been exaggerated, with figures suggesting the average weight of children has only increased slightly.

The council compared average weights in 1995 and 2003 and found that in fact obesity levels have begun to rise in older teenagers, but it is the middle-aged that are most at risk.

"We can conclude from these figures that there have been no significant changes in the average weights of children over nearly a decade," the report states.

"This can be taken as evidence that there has been no epidemic of weight gain, since an epidemic would certainly have affected average weights."

Dr Marsh, co-director at the SIRC, told the BBC that since school-age children were shown to be less affected, it also means that there is no need to ban junk food advertisements that target this age group.

In addition, the way childhood obesity is estimated in the UK is also wrong according to the council and the application of an international measure is better.

However, obesity experts, such as the National Obesity Forum have argued that it is still important to promote healthy eating habits from a young age.

The SIRC is funded by the government and food firms.

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Somerfield responds to convenience trends

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new convenience food product is being launched in Somerfield stores today, meeting demand for quick and easy food solutions for consumers.

The easy to cook Grampian Country Food Group chicken range is part of moves by the retailer to revamp the family whole-bird roast.

Ruth Griffiths, Grampian's meat marketing controller, told the Press and Journal: "The new Grampian brand primary plus range is targeting the sector between primary meat and raw added value.

"Our consumer research has identified a clear opportunity for fresh chicken, that consumers are looking for meal ideas that are not necessarily complete ready to cook meals, but fresh chicken that is accompanied by a simple stuffing or sauce, or that is preprepared to take the worry out of what to do with the chicken."

According to Somerfield, consumers are increasingly moving towards chicken and the Grampian brand now offers them the "best and freshest".

The range responds to research showing that consumers no longer have time to prepare meals from scratch due to their changing lifestyles.

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BPC promotes the chip

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Celebrity chef Brian Turner has helped to promote this week's National Chip Week, by offering his top tips for the perfect chip.

The event, organised by the British Potato Council (BPC), is aiming to promote the chip in the UK and highlight its nutritional content for a change, rather than its typical fat filled image.

According to the Scotsman, the BPC has commissioned considerable research into the food and revealed that a 175 gram portion of chips has five times more vitamin C than a 100 gram bunch of grapes and double the fibre of an apple.

In addition, a portion of fish and chips has less calories and one third less saturated fat than a cheese and tomato pizza.

Kathryn Race from the BPC explained: "Chips can be enjoyed as part of a healthy, balanced diet. National Chip Week is about celebrating the fun and taste of chips because they are one of the UK's favourite foods.

"There are lots of different types of chips depending on what you're looking for."

Brian Turner has published a five step plan for top chips on the BCP website, he recommends potatoes are soaked in water first to remove starch, the chips should be blanched and then drained on absorbent paper after frying.

National Chip Week runs until February 20th. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Kraft Macaroni & Cheese provides kids with calcium

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

Each one cup serving of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese is an excellent source of calcium, according to the food giant.

The 2005 USDA Dietary Guidelines highlight calcium as a "nutrient of concern" among children and adolescents. The USDA increased the recommended dairy servings to three per day (ages eight and up) to help build and maintain strong bones and Kraft has doubled the calcium in its popular Macaroni & Cheese.

Kraft Macaroni & Cheese is also an excellent source of protein, iron and five other important nutrients. When prepared according to the "Light Preparation" instructions using fat-free milk and margarine, each serving is 60 per cent lower in fat and 20 per cent lower in calories than the classic preparation.

Kraft claims that its Macaroni & Cheese with double the calcium is part of the company's commitment to "providing people with products that meet their taste and nutrition needs".

Joy Bauer, author of Cooking with Joy, said: "When you consider 90 percent of bone mass is formed by the age of 17, it's critical that kids begin building strong bones early on. Parents need new, kid-friendly food and fitness solutions to this chronic problem to ensure kids can build a solid foundation for their future."

The Surgeon General's first-ever Report on Bone Health and Osteoporosis estimates 10 million Americans have osteoporosis, and 34 million are at risk of the debilitating bone disease. The report predicts that the incidence of bone disease will reach its highest number in history if the current trend continues.

Kraft Foods is the largest branded food and beverage company headquartered in the United States and the second largest worldwide.

Further information: www.kraft.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

SoBe unveils plans for new flavours

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

US beverage company SoBe has announced that several new flavours are being added to its guilt-free diet SoBe Lean line.

The sugar-free, low-calorie beverage line-up will now feature Lean Energy and Lean Mango Melon, in addition to the existing Lean Green Tea, Lean Peach Tea and Lean Cranberry Grapefruit flavors.

The new flavors will launch nationally in February 2005, with the endorsement of the South Beach Diet and the help of author, TV personality and fitness expert Eric Harr.

"With health and wellness interest at an all-time high, there's no better time for great-tasting low-calorie, low-sugar beverages," said SoBe GM, Scott Moffitt. "We have no doubt these flavours will be top sellers for SoBe in 2005, and with the support of the South Beach Diet and Eric Harr, SoBe will be able to communicate timely, relevant news to calorie-conscious consumers nationwide."

All SoBe Lean flavours now boast a recognisable "South Beach Diet" logo on product packaging, and the logo will also be included on point of sale materials.

All the SoBe Lean flavors feature one carbohydrate or less and 5 calories or less per eight fl oz serving. They are sugar-free, sweetened with Splenda and Ace-K and contain 100 per cent of the daily recommended value of Vitamin C per serving. All SoBe Lean beverages are designed to support a weight-management program when combined with a healthy diet and regular exercise.

Further information: www.sobebev.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Monterey Gourmet Foods introduces new wholewheat pasta range

Date: Wed, 16 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Monterey Gourmet Foods has announced the introduction of their new fresh whole wheat pasta line.

The new range, part of the company's Monterey Pasta Company brand, has reportedly received a great deal of interest from both traditional supermarkets and warehouse club stores.

Jim Williams, Monterey Gourmet Foods' President and CEO, announced that four new wholewheat items are now shipping to stores, including three ravioli - Vegetable & Cheese, Tomato, Basil & Mozzarella, and Chicken & Sun Dried Tomato - as well as Classic Italian Cheese Tortellini.

Monteray said in a statement that, within the first six weeks of introduction, eleven retail chains representing over 2,500 stores, have committed to carry the wholewheat items, including Safeway, Dominick's, Ralphs, Jewel, Raleys, Hannaford Bros., Wegmans, Albertsons, Heinens, and Giant Carlisle.

Additional wholewheat products, such as fresh prepared entrees, are in the planning stages and the food company anticipates introducing them sometime this year.

Further information: www.montereypasta.com

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Popularity of celebrity chef products dropping

Date: Thu, 17 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new report out today reveals that celebrity chef product ranges are not as popular as expected.

According to findings from Mintel, 98 per cent of consumers feel that a well-known chef name was not a guarantee of quality, whilst one third feel that celebrities only back products for the money.

Claire Hatcher, senior market analyst at Mintel, said: "While several chefs such as Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay have become part of this celebrity set, this has done little to boost interest in their products.

"It is therefore unlikely that celebrity endorsement of food and drink products will expand."

However, those products that were popular with consumers included products by Lloyd Grossman, vegetarian items from Linda McCartney's range and Jamie Oliver's dishes came third.

It is thought the move away from celebrity chef products is due to a general lack of interest in celebrities and also the bad reputation some chefs have for being bad tempered.

The findings suggest that any innovation in the sector should try and steer away from celebrity products.

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UK prepares for world's biggest bag of chips

Date: Thu, 17 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The world's biggest bag of chips is to be created today, as part of celebrations for National Chip Week.

Fish and chip owner, Kevin Baines, from The Chip Stop in Plymouth, will fry 2,500 pounds of Maris Piper potatoes in 12 hours, according to the Scotsman.

A total of 176 pints of oil, 33 pounds of salt, 53 pints of vinegar and 4,000 trays are expected to be used.

In addition, 6,000 chip forks, 300 tubs of beans and mushy peas, 53 pints of sauce and 10 reams of wrapping paper will be used.

At present the world record stands at 812.4 pounds of chips, which was achieved at last year's event in Hereford.

Chips are a popular dish with UK consumers, with one in four of all British potatoes

cooked as a chip and over 40 per cent of meals eaten away from home including chips.

There are 8,500 fish and chip shops in the UK, with over 277 million portions served each year and Maris Pipers the favourite potato for chipping. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

UK consumers call for more than just soggy cereal

Date: Thu, 17 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Latest findings from food and grocery thinktank IGD have revealed that most consumers dislike their breakfast, creating the perfect opportunity for innovation in the sector.

Breakfast - The main meal of the day, found that although 81 per cent of people eat breakfast at home, only 18 per cent actually enjoy it.

Consumers are now looking for variety and convenience in their breakfast products and are open to new ideas and products.

"There is a huge opportunity to enhance the appeal of breakfast," IGD chief executive, Joanne Denney-Finch told Just Food.

"Breakfast is still perceived as the most important meal of the day, yet we all eat the same things and few people think creatively about what they could eat when they plan their shopping," she added.

New products will need to focus on speed and convenience and if possible be eaten on the go.

However, weekend breakfast is different, with the amount of people eating cooked breakfast quadrupling and consumers calling for more indulgent products.

The findings indicate there is a considerable amount of opportunities in the breakfast sector, with two separate areas also available for creation and the chance to be creative and truly innovative.

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Coffee linked to liver health

Date: Thu, 17 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Daily coffee consumption could reduce the risk of liver cancer, a new study claims.

Research published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that people who drank coffee on a daily or almost daily basis had about half the risk of developing hepatocellular carcinoma (a type of cancer) than those who never drank coffee.

Researchers at the National Cancer Center in Tokyo discovered that the rate of liver cancer among those who never drank coffee was 547.2 cases per 100,000 people over 10 years, while the risk among daily coffee drinkers was almost fifty per cent less, at about 214.6 cases per 100,000 people.

The scientists also found that the risk of HCC decreased with an increase in the amount of coffee consumed each day.

The study did not establish whether caffeine was responsible for the reduced cancer risk and the researchers added: "Further studies are warranted to assess whether the present results can be generalised or are representative of other populations."

However, another study found no link between coffee and tea consumption and colorectal cancer. Karin B Michels and colleagues at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston used data from two large prospective studies (the Nurses' Health Study (women) and the Health Professionals' Follow-up Study (men)) that totalled almost two million person years of follow-up.

Study participants who regularly drank two or more cups per day of decaffeinated coffee, had about half the incidence of rectal cancer compared with those who never drank decaffeinated coffee, but the authors stress that this could be linked to drinkers of decaffeinated coffee being more health conscious in their behaviour.

The team found no link between caffeine and colorectal cancer risk and recommended new studies to confirm the decaffeinated versus caffeine findings.

(no further information)

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

US baker unveils sugar free bread

Date: Thu, 17 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

US baker Oroweat has announced that it is launching a new completely sugar free bread in selected American states.

The company has aimed its product specifically at America's growing diabetic community and the a whole wheat, sugar free bread will be available in all states west of the Mississippi river, except Texas.

Oroweat, owned by US group Bimbo Bakeries, itself a subsidiary of the Mexican Grupo Bimbo, plans to make a donation to the Juveniles Diabetes Research Foundation for every sugar free loaf sold.

The company claims that its new bread has not sacrificed taste for health and it is not clear whether Orowheat uses sweetener in its sugar free loaf. Grupo Bimbo subsidiary, Mrs Baird's, which operates in Texas, already sells sugar free bread containing aspartame.

The sugar free bread could also prove popular with Americans become increasingly health conscious amid fears of a growing obesity crisis in the country.

Further information: www.oroweat.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Tesco to dominate convenience stores market

Date: Thu, 17 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

Supermarket giant Tesco will overtake its smaller rivals to become the UK's largest operator of convenience stores this year, according to new research.

The group, headed by chief executive Terry Leahy, will leapfrog the Co-op, Spar and the owner of the Budgens and Londis chains to become the market leader in neighbourhood retailing, a study by Verdict Research reveals.

Tesco already accounts for 29.1 per cent of all grocery sales in the UK and the company's acquisition of Adminstore, which runs the Europa, Harts and Cullens grocery outlets in the London area, last year will help it become the largest convenience store group in the country.

The convenience store market has traditionally been dominated by family-owned shops and the sector is becoming increasingly worried that the supermarkets will use their size and buying clout to push them out of the market.

Tesco accounted for five per cent of neighbourhood retailing last year - behind the Coop at 5.5 per cent, Spar at 5.4 per cent and Budgens owner Musgrave at 5.3 per cent, the Verdict report states.

Gavin Rothwell, senior retail analyst at Verdict, commented: "Given Tesco's recent track of growth, it is hard to envisage it not closing this gap in 2005."

Further information: www.tesco.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Smarties get innovative new packaging

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Popular children's treat Smarties is to be revamped to bring the sweets "into a new age".

Marketing chiefs at the firm believe the well-known, recognisable tube packaging is not exciting enough for today's children and are to relaunch the product in a six-sided "hexatube".

In addition, the simple plastic stopper will be replaced with a resealable flip-top lid, which displays quirky messages or a sticker, rather than just a letter.

Nestle marketing chief, Neil Ducray, told Guardian Unlimited: "We needed to take the packaging into a new age. The hexatube was the shape children and mums loved. This is how the tube will look for the imaginable future. It's not being trialled - it's here to stay."

Smarties were first launched 68 years ago as Chocolate Beans and this is the first time any changes have been made to the design of the tube by manufacturers Nestle Rowntree.

Analysts believe the food firm is taking a big gamble on the redesign, with current sales of the sweet worth £73 million a year, but Mr Ducray claims the company is "very confident in the hexatube's success".

The new packaging will be seen on shop shelves in the UK by the summer. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Nutrinnovator acquisition to increase innovation in functional foods

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Nutrinnovator has revealed it is now in advanced negotiations to acquire functional food firm Provexis, based in Liverpool.

The nutritional food and drinks maker had already participated in a joint venture with the company to commercialise heart health CardioFlow functional food technology.

"The Board of Nutrinnovator regards this opportunity as a very exciting development for the business," the company told Just Food.

"It will provide Nutrinnovator with the resources with which to commercialise the product pipeline established by both companies on a global basis, as well as combining the complementary skills of the respective management teams."

Nutrinnovator will need to raise up to £10 million for the enlarged group and it is thought the transaction and fundraising will be agreed and announced on or around March 24th.

It is believed the businesses will complement one another and will be able to create a substantial business to operate in global functional food markets.

Items will be based on scientifically proven functional food products, innovation and intellectual positions.

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More innovation needed in children's food

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new study by UK food firm Leatherhead Food International has called on food manufacturers across the UK and Europe not to "overlook" the children's food and drink market.

The firm claims that opportunities are still present in the sector, with a host of possible food products, according to Food Navigator.

Children aged between five to 14 represent 13 per cent of the total population in western Europe and the market value of children's products provides around €14-15 billion of the €700 billion food and drink market.

Leatherhead claims that cheese, frozen foods and biscuits are all currently experiencing growth, but hold strong potential for producers and offer "an interesting challenge for food and drink manufacturers".

However, in the UK food firms are making the most effort in these sectors.

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According to the study the biggest cross-border brand is Unilever's Captain, known in the UK as Captain Birds Eye. In addition Ferrero's Happy Hippo brand has been one of the most important launches in the UK children's biscuit sector.

As parents claim they view fruit and vegetable consumption as extremely important, the report also calls on food firms to develop more health foods for children. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Leading nutritionist assesses "superfoods"

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Nutritionist Angela Dowden has analysed the health benefits and alternatives to a raft of "functional foods" appearing on Britain's supermarket shelves.

In response to the launch of a new loaf of "superbread", packed full of the mineral selenium, which is thought to combat cancer, Ms Dowden tested a range of foods that claim to tackle health problems from heart disease to insomnia and the menopause.

The new loaf is on sale at supermarket Waitrose is part of a new fad for so-called "functional foods" that attempt to tap into the UK's increasing concerns about health.

Ms Dowling claims that consumers would need to eat three or four slices of the Waitrose Selenium-enriched bread to cover the recommended daily intake of the mineral. She pointed out that the loaf is a white bread and so less healthy than wholemeal and eating eight brazil nuts would provide the same benefit for a lower price.

The nutritionist also looked at Night Time Semi-skimmed Milk, which contains the hormone Melatonin, said to aid sleep. She suggested that, as there has been no research to show the milk works, normal milk may be just as effective and is significantly cheaper.

Writing in The Mirror, Ms Dowden described a Low Glycaemic Brownie from the Good Carb Food Company as "Good for dieters with a chocolate craving". Tropicana Fibre, fruit juice with added fibre, was awarded 5/10, with the warning "A glass a day is OK but don't assume you can go without fibre in the rest of your diet".

The nutritionist gave 9/10 to Flora Pro-activ probiotic yoghurt drink, noting that evidence was very strong that probiotic (friendly stomach bacteria) drinks can help lower cholesterol.

(no further information)

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New healthier cooking oil from Source Food Technology

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

US cooking oils firm Source Food Technology has developed a new cooking oil designed to help prevent the absorption of cholesterol present in fried meats.

Nextra Gold, a nutritionally-advanced cooking oil, has been developed using technology DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

licensed from Brandeis University. It has no trans fats, lasts longer than conventional oils, and employs a modest level of an ingredient from plants, phytosterols, which help tackle cholesterol, according to the American Heart Association.

"Rather than asking Americans to change their eating habits, we believe that food products should be made healthier," Hank Cardello, chairman and CEO of Source Food Technology, said.

"Nextra Gold allows people to continue eating the foods they love, like French fries and chicken fingers, without suffering from the dangers of added trans fats from frying oils or the cholesterol present in fried meat products. Nextra Gold is truly a breakthrough for the US food industry, and it will help to improve the Standard American Diet."

"Though we've known about the benefits of phytosterols for some time, the challenge has been to incorporate them into cooking oils, where they can assist with stabilising the oil during heating," KC Hayes, Brandeis University biology professor, explained.. "The amount of phytosterols in Nextra Gold has been designed to neutralize the cholesterol present in fried foods."

Source Food's first product, Nextra, a tallow-based cooking oil with similar benefits, was awarded the Master Chef's Seal of Excellence in 2004 at the National Restaurant Association's annual trade show.

(no further information)

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Savi launches 'tag-and-ship' RFID concept

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

US firm Savi Technology has unveiled a new "tag and ship" offering.

The leading provider of RFID-based supply chain solutions announced that the new concept is enhanced with components from Symbol Technologies, the Enterprise Mobility Company and Zebra Technologies.

The new RFID system enables suppliers to quickly and cost-effectively meet new EPC-compliant, passive Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) shipment requirements from the US Department of Defense (DoD).

Called Savi RFID-ACT (Assured Compliance Today), the company claims that its multipackage offering builds on the real-world expertise of the three companies to produce a "tag and ship" solution for passive RFID that's simple, quick and reliable to implement.

Savi RFID-ACT with Symbol and Zebra components can be implemented and integrated into the customer's information system within a matter of hours and value-added components can be integrated to help suppliers go beyond compliance and realise investment returns within their own supply chains.

The RFID-ACT solution is flexible and modular in architecture, and comes in four different solution packages, depending on the level of software and hardware

functionality desired. The solutions include services for implementation, testing and training.

"The seamless integration of Symbol's, Zebra's and Savi's proven products into this plugand-play solution justifies the statement that, 'the sum of the parts is greater than the whole," said David Stephens, Savi's senior vice president - public sector.

The DoD's new RFID policy requires about 40,000 suppliers to fit EPC-compliant passive RFID labels to all outbound shipments at the pallet and carton levels.

Further information: www.savi.com (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Scientist criticises vegan diet

Date: Mon, 21 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A US scientist has called on parents not to put their children on a strict vegan diet.

According to Lindsay Allen from the US Agricultural Research Service, such a diet is "unethical" and can harm development.

Ms Allen promoted the consumption of meat, claiming that animal source foods have some nutrients that cannot be found elsewhere, according to the BBC.

However the Vegan Society has criticised the claims, arguing research shows vegans are often healthier than meat eaters.

Ms Allen also criticised parents who stopped their children eating cheese, milk and butter, claiming it can start damaging children before they are even born. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Advertising key to new product success

Date: Mon, 21 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new study by thinktank IGD has found advertising is the best way to get shoppers to try new products.

The food and drink group's report on promotional activity found that a fifth of shoppers will buy something they haven't bought before after seeing it on television, whilst 19 per cent are attracted by buy one get one free offers.

In addition, 12 per cent try a new food product because its price has been cut and 11 per cent are tempted to try with the influence of three for two offers, according to Just Food.

"Shoppers see promotional techniques like these, which provide a price saving, as less risky ways of trying something new. If they haven't paid the full price they are less concerned about whether they like them," the report states.

However advertising alone is not enough with most consumers showing that they expect promotional tools in store to also help tempt shoppers.

Other figures show that people like to try before they buy, with five per cent wanting to try new foods in store and seven per cent happy to taste test new items through magazine samples.

Smaller trial packets are also favoured since if they are disliked people have less waste. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovative scheme boosts fruit and veg consumption

Date: Mon, 21 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Psychologists at the University of Wales have created new superheroes in a bid to encourage children to eat more fruit and vegetables.

The Food Dudes are special characters constantly struggling to fight off a gang of baddies who are trying to take away the world's energy by depriving it of fruit and vegetables.

Displayed in a number of video adventures, the food characters also offer small rewards and help to encourage young children to taste fruit and vegetables continuously and therefore develop a liking for them.

Pilot schools have been taking part in trialling the system, including schools in London and Manchester.

One teacher involved in the Food Dudes programme, told the Western Mail: "Several children who had previously not tried certain fruit and vegetables were tempted to have a go when the rewards were offered and discovered that they did in fact like the food and went on to eat it the next time around."

So far the scheme has proved successful with an increase of between 43 per cent and 154 per cent seen in fruit consumption by children at lunch and a 50 per cent to 300 per cent increase in vegetables eaten at lunchtime.

The project helps children start to see themselves as fruit and vegetable eaters, as they obtain small rewards throughout the programme, such as pencils, stickers and notebooks.

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Tate & Lyle to support innovation with new venture

Date: Mon, 21 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Tate & Lyle is to invest up to £25 million in a new wholly-owned venture fund.

The UK firm, best known for its sugar products, is going to set up Tate & Lyle Ventures, with f25 million of funds over a five year period.

Through the new venture investment in start ups and expansion stage businesses will be made, helping to support Tate & Lyle's growth focus on next generation food and industrial ingredients.

Mark Robinson, group planning and business development director, Tate & Lyle, commented: "Tate & Lyle Ventures is a natural next step for Tate & Lyle.

"We are currently enjoying exciting success with SPLENDA Sucralose and have innovative products nearing commercialisation such as Aquasta Astaxanthin and our biopolymer ingredient Bio-3G."

It is believed the new venture will help investment in innovation, help support internal research and boost global business knowledge.

In addition, good investment returns and offering more choice to customers will also be achieved as a result of the venture.

Specialists will be sourced from the private equity or venture capital industry. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

FSA adds another 100 items to Sudan list

Date: Mon, 21 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Following further research, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has revealed that the number of products contaminated with the Sudan I dye has increased.

Already 350 products have been named as potentially contaminated, after a batch of chilli powder at Premier Foods containing the dye was used to make Worcester sauce, which was in turn used to create a host of other products.

And now around 100 more products have been added to that list and will be removed from the shelves of supermarkets and other stockists.

The latest list includes popular brands such as McDonalds, Pot Noodle and Chicago Town Pizza and the full list can be seen on the FSA's website.

Over the weekend stores across the UK removed products from the agency's warning list and some packets of Walkers crisps were also removed.

An FSA spokesperson said: "There is no risk of immediate ill health but it is sensible to avoid eating any more.

"We will continue to take action to remove these and minimise the risk to consumers.

"If people have any of these foods at home they are advised not to eat them and to contact the store they bought them from for a refund."
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Industry awaits magazine food award results

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Results of the first ever Good Housekeeping Food Awards will be revealed today, with food companies, chefs and restaurants all eager to find out who has won.

The awards are based on reader's views on restaurants, chefs and food, and include nominees such as celebrity chefs Rick Stein and Jamie Oliver and food firms such as Rachel's Organic.

The magazine has been studying kitchen and cooking habits for over a century and owning one of the awards will offer a positive new promotion tool for recipients.

Karen Barnes, head of the Good Housekeeping Institute, told the Western Mail: "It's important to recognise quality ingredients and the improvement in Britain's culinary reputation.

"There has been a backlash against processed food and the organic products championed by Good Housekeeping readers in our food awards show the importance people are placing on nutritious, tasty, low-fat food."

Rachel's Organic has been nominated for the Best Organic Product Available in a Supermarket category, up against Green & Black chocolate, Seeds of Change pasta sauce and Yeo Valley Yoghurt.

Neil Burchell, managing director of Rachel's Organic, said last night, "We are very pleased to hear we have been nominated. Good Housekeeping is a prestigious publication."

The dairy firm has recently launched a new range for children, Little Rachel's Organic and achieved second place in the best organic product category in the Observer Food Monthly Awards.

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More products added to Sudan list

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The number of food products on the Sudan I contaminated list is set to rise again, as the Food Standards Agency (FSA) admits that the scale of the issue is still unknown.

Food items which contain the illegal dye have now risen to over 400 and the agency hopes that all affected products should be off the shelves by Thursday at the latest.

However, the agency is still keen to reassure consumers that there is no immediate risk to health and the overall danger from the products was small.

It is hoped a more definitive list will be available from Thursday, but admittedly this list could grow further still.

FSA chief executive, Dr John Bell, told the Scotsman: "I think there is a very strong chance that we will be having to make further announcements. The information is still coming in.

"More than 300 manufacturers and retailers have been involved in this problem so obviously the extent of the products is very large indeed."

The agency has also been forced to defend itself, after criticism that it has taken too long for food products to be withdrawn from sale.

Defending the agency, a spokesman explained: "Any criticism of the FSA is unjustified because we have been dependent on others to provide us with the full list of products. As soon as we got the list of products, we put them on our website."

It is thought the recall is one of the biggest of its kind in British retail history. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Nestle plans new and improved Aero

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Nestle is to invest £6 million in revamping its Aero brand, drawing on the update of its KitKat products.

The food firm is looking to introduce a bite-sized product, change the chocolate bar's recipe and revamp packaging.

It is hoped the relaunch will help boost consumers interest in the brand and help to increase profits through the creation of new snack opportunities.

Nestle hopes the makeover will bring over £28 million in sales over the next 12 months, according to the Grocer.

New products are likely to include a revamped block chocolate offering, bite sized peppermint chocolate balls called Aero Bubbles and impulse packs and sharing resealable pouches.

Some of the new items are expected on UK shelves by April.

Although some have claimed the changes could overstretch the brand, Nestle has referred to its KitKat relaunch and claimed it led to a substantial improvement in sales. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Profits up at Thorntons

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK chocolate retailer Thorntons has reported a 9.5 per cent rise in turnover, as it released its interim results today.

Results, covering the 28 weeks ending January 28th 2005, saw profit before tax increase by 10.4 per cent to £13.3 million and own shop like for like sales up by 0.8 per cent.

Christopher Burnett, executive chairman said: "The results represent further good progress despite the difficult Christmas trading period.

"Most of the sales growth came from the sale of Thorntons branded products through other retailers where we have been establishing a presence in the past two years."

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Additional figures showed commercial sales reached £13.4 million and net debt was down by 30.9 per cent.

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Innovative taste preference findings revealed

Date: Tue, 22 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A revolutionary insight into taste preferences has been revealed today in new work by US scientists.

Researchers from the Monell Chemical Senses Center have seen that each person has their own distinctive set of taste receptors to give them an individual perception of how foods taste.

However, now new findings have shown that one single gene actually controls how individuals perceive these tastes.

Taste is a key factor for the food industry, which is now globally worth €3.2 trillion.

The findings could help to create strong market advantages and offer new product opportunities.

Co-study author, Paul Breslin, explained to Food Navigator: "Our paper shows that a single gene codes for multiple forms of a taste receptor, with each form having a differing sensitivity to taste compounds."

The scientists believe their findings have provided "an improved understanding" of why people have different abilities when it comes to tasting some bitter compounds.

Findings will now be used to trigger further research into why people are sensitive to other tastes such as sweet or meaty flavours.

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Sudan list expands to catering sector

Date: Wed, 23 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Latest developments in the Sudan I contaminated foods situation have revealed that some meals in schools, hospitals and restaurants could contain the illegal dye.

In addition, ten more items have been added to the list of products that are thought to contain the dye.

Two major catering companies, Brakes and 3663, have admitted some of the products supplied to schools and hospitals were among those named on the list and both have now recalled a number of potentially contaminated items from pubs and restaurants.

However, the likelihood that the affected foods had reached dinner plates in hospitals and schools was "very low", according to 3663.

Brakes similarly reassured consumers and the industry that the number of products that have been affected is "very small".

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has now called for 420 foods to be taken off shelves, although some confusion has been caused since some products that were contaminated have now been replaced with new fresh items on the shelves.

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Cadbury to focus on innovation

Date: Wed, 23 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food and drink firm Cadbury Schweppes is celebrating its 100th year of Cadbury Dairy Milk with a 14 per cent rise in profits, as it releases its annual results today.

The company saw profits increase to £642 million last year and reported strong results for its fizzy drinks businesses.

Todd Stitzer, CEO at the company, commented: "2004 was a good year for Cadbury Schweppes with excellent progress in key markets.

"In 2005, we will build on progress made in 2004 by increasing investment in marketing, innovation and science and technology."

The Cadbury Schweppes range of products now includes chocolate, Bassetts Liquorice Allsorts, Trebor Mints and drinks including Seven Up and Dr Pepper.

Responding to recent criticisms of the type of products they offer, Mr Stitzer told the BBC, that it was simply offering a "little bit of a treat" for consumers. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Good Housekeeping reveals food award winners

Date: Wed, 23 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A host of famous faces in food have been rewarded for their efforts in the Good Housekeeping awards.

Naked Chef Jamie Oliver was named the UK's favourite celebrity chef, beating off competition from cooks including Delia Smith and Rick Stein.

In addition, Delia Smith was voted the person who has made the most impact on food and Ready Steady Cook was seen as the best TV food programme.

Lindsay Nicholson, editor-in-chief of Good Housekeeping, told UTV: "We are absolutely delighted to be launching the inaugural Good Housekeeping Food Awards.

"The event commends excellent ingredients, people and places doing great things to advance the reputation - and, more importantly, the taste - of food in Britain today. The quality of the winners and runners up is heartening and certainly shows that Britain is no longer the culinary poor man of Europe."

Waitrose was also given an award, deemed to be the favourite supermarket amongst consumers.

The awards will be presented at a ceremony in London tonight and are based on a survey of 1,000 readers.

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New centre for EPEX and Eblex

Date: Wed, 23 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The English Beef and Lamb Executive (Eblex) and the British Pig Executive (EPEX) are to receive help with their regional work.

It is hoped that a new regional centre due to open will help the groups to improve and increase their regional work, according to the Journal.

A new regional manager will now need to be appointed and the new regions will coincide with Regional Development Agency (RDA) areas.

Nick Allen, senior regional manager, said: "The change in regional areas will make us more accessible to livestock farmers, will help us deliver regional policies along with the RDAs and advance our work with Defra's Sustainable Food and Farming teams in the regions.

"It will also mean there is one extra regional manager for Eblex and BPEX to help us roll out programmes which can better focus on the needs of each individual area."

The new regions will come into affect from April and will include north east, western, eastern, south east and south west.

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CCL launches innovative new packaging

Date: Wed, 23 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new type of product packaging has been developed for the food industry, which manufacturer CCL Container claims is virtually impossible to replicate.

The groundbreaking container will not only help allay fears about food tampering, but also prevent impostor brands muscling in on the market shares of established brands.

Ed Martin, vice president of sales and marketing at CCL Container, told Food Production Daily: "Counterfeiting is a very real threat in a number of market sectors.

"A counterfeiter generally presents its lesser quality knock-off in similar packaging to confuse consumers, steal attention, and drive purchases in their direction. By making the packaging impossible to replicate, you can maintain product distinction and earned market share."

CCL is currently working to produce the tamper-free packaging for US-based nutritional supplement manufacturer, Trimpsa.

The new container is a seamless aluminium bottle, which the company claims is 100 per cent recyclable.

In addition, the design offers tamper-evidence functions, the same durability as plastic packaging, and significant brand recognition in a market dominated by glass and plastic containers.

The company will stop imitation brands with the use of a logo on the container and including a monochrome screened photo image in the design.
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FSA awaits Sudan deadline

Date: Thu, 24 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Products contaminated with the Sudan I dye need to be removed by this morning, as part of a deadline set by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

The agency wants all 428 products to be removed from shop shelves, school menus and hospital food by this morning and those who do not meet the deadline could face prosecution.

However, the agency claimed that the decision to prosecute would be up to local authorities.

Food firms have been working hard to meet the deadline and have been frantically trying to remove items from the system.

The deadline also includes food businesses informing the agency of affected products they have discovered and local council officials will be undertaking inspections to ensure items have been removed.

It is hoped the agency will be aware of all products contaminated with the dye by the end of Thursday morning.

Although the FSA has set the deadline, the Institute of Environmental Health advised that there could not be any guarantee that all affected foods would definitely be taken off the shelves by today.

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Dietary needs offer new market for restaurants

Date: Thu, 24 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Mintel has called on UK restaurants to cater better for dieters and food allergy sufferers.

New research from the group claims that whilst vegetarian diners are well catered for, those with other dietary requirements are forgotten.

Linda Haden, Catering Analyst at Mintel, said: 'When eating out, consumers desire choice, a choice not only of dishes to fit their dietary needs, but also a choice of exactly DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

what goes into their dishes.

"A large number of customers also want to know where their food comes from in order to make informed decisions. It seems that people today are looking to tailor their meals when at a restaurant, something that has been commonplace in the US for quite some time."

Figures revealed that 16 per cent of adults want restaurants to offer low fat and low calorie meals, eight per cent want low carb options and 15 per cent would be interested in seeing where their ingredients come from.

Research shows that around 12 million British consumers now suffer from a food intolerance or allergy and 8.3 million are on a diet.

As a result one in ten people would like to have ingredients and nutritional content displayed on restaurant menus.

Mintel believes the diet and special dietary needs market is a key area for opportunity and growth for the restaurant trade.

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Asda changes fish supplier

Date: Thu, 24 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK food retailer Asda has taken white fish off its shelves following concerns about a supplier.

The removal of cod and haddock is set to cost the firm hundreds of thousands of pounds and was in response to results from an Asda inspector visit to a supply firm.

Inspectors had visited the supplier and felt the catch was not being defrosted according to company rules, with water being used instead of a low temperature oven.

However, the method poses no health risk to customers and white fish is now back on sale at the store, but from a different supplier.

"We have taken white fish off sale at all stores because the supplier who gave us that fish wasn't defrosting it to our specifications," a spokeswoman told the Mirror online.

"We ask that the fish is defrosted in a low-temperature oven which allows it to come up to the right chill temperature. It takes the frost off it quickly and safely and it is then packed up and sent off to stores."

Asda is keen to reassure customers there are no health risks from the fish and that the inspectors were viewing a defrosting process being used for another retailer. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Valio releases low blood pressure products

Date: Thu, 24 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Dairy products designed to lower elevated blood pressure have been launched in Spain and Portugal, in a licensing deal with Finnish dairy group Valio.

In Spain, the company's Evolus products will be made locally and marketed as Kaiku Vita, whilst for the Portuguese market they will be imported from Switzerland and sold as Emmi Evolus.

The invention targets an expanding market, with US researchers warning last month that by 2025 around one in three adults over the age 20 will suffer from high blood pressure.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) claims raised blood pressure is responsible for approximately two thirds of strokes and half the incidence of heart disease.

Evolus products derive their blood-pressure lowering mechanism from bioactive peptides and a beneficial mineral composition. Their beneficial effects have been verified in three experimental and four clinical studies, and Valio has patented its production method.

The company's expansion into the Iberian market will introduce the brand to 50 million new consumers - a significant increase on its five million market in Finland. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Compulsory clarity for food labels

Date: Thu, 24 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Health secretary John Reid has promised to make simpler labelling on food products compulsory, in a bid to inform busy consumers about the nutritional value of their shopping baskets.

Dr Reid told the Evening Standard the government would work with Brussels to make transparent labels showing the amount of fat, sugar and salt in products mandatory throughout the EU.

"We must make sure that busy shoppers have a simple system of labelling to make it easier for people to see at a glance how individual foods contribute to a healthy balanced diet," he said.

Dr Reid also warned that the changes would take place with or without the backing of the food industry.

The new legislation would override last year's white paper, which asked the Food Standards Agency (FSA) for a voluntary, simple code to simplify labels. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Organic sector still growing

Date: Thu, 24 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Sales in organic food throughout Europe have doubled since 1998, a new report from the Institute of Food and Technology has revealed.

According to figures from analysts Mintel, consumers in Italy, Spain, Germany, the UK and France spent a total of £4 billion on organic foods over the period.

The report - which replaces the institute's information statement of July 2003 - also clarified the position of organic produce under European law.

According to Brussels legislation, the production of any food sold as organic must be inspected by an independent, approved control body.

The institute said: "The production of organic food requires the same involvement of professional food scientists and technologists and is subject to the same requirements of good manufacturing practice and food safety as the rest of the food industry."

It is also subject to specific additional legal requirements regarding cultivation, composition and labelling, the UK body says.

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Strong profits at Rexam

Date: Fri, 25 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Packaging firm Rexam has reported strong profit growth today, as it released its full year results.

The number one beverage can maker achieved a four per cent increase in sales from ongoing operations during the year to December 31st 2004, and underlying profit before tax was up by 26 per cent.

Strong growth was also seen in the company's beverage packaging business, with underlying profits up 12.4 per cent to £318 million.

Chairman Rolf Borjesson, commented: "Rexam made further strong progress in 2004, with creditable increases in sales, profits and margins.

"We continue to see excellent prospects for further organic growth and acquisitions, both of which will reinforce our leadership positions and create value for shareholders. I am confident that we are well positioned for further progress in 2005."

Rexam is one of the world's top five consumer packaging groups and the world's leading beverage can maker. It focuses on beverage packaging in metal, glass and plastic, as well as plastic packaging solutions for food industries around the world.

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Takeover rejected by Somerfield

Date: Fri, 25 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The supermarket chain Somerfield has rejected a £1 billion takeover bid by the Icelandic group Baugur.

This is despite the recent competition Somerfield has faced as it has lost business to market leaders Tesco and Asda.

Baugur's approach contained a number of pre-conditions and as such Somerfield said yesterday it "would not be in the interests of shareholders to give further consideration to the offer".

The Icelandic company already owns a five per cent stake in the Somerfield group, as well as owning the holder of the Iceland chain, Big Food Group.

Somerfield is currently hoping to strengthen its position in the market with the proposed purchase of 140 forecourt convenience stores at Texaco service stations.

It recently announced a decline in like-for-like sales.

The group, which owns 700 Somerfield stores and around 500 Kwik Save shops, has been approached in the past with a takeover offer.

In 2003, it rejected an approach from retail entrepreneurs John Lovering and Bob Mackenzie.

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PG Tips reveals world's most expensive teabag

Date: Fri, 25 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK tea brand PG Tips has commissioned a diamond and gold teabag to celebrate its 75th birthday.

The innovative item brings a different meaning to having expensive tastes, with the teabag said to be the most expensive in the world, according to Liverpool Daily Post.

Jewellers Boodle and Dunthorne have created the item, which is the standard pyramid shape, filled with 100 2.25-carat diamonds and fine, limited edition tea leaves.

The rest of the bag includes a 100 diamond covering and a white gold chain in place of the standard teabag string, which is also adorned with a further 80 diamonds.

Costing £7,500 to produce, the teabag costs slightly more than the brand's typical production budget of 2.5p for each mass-produced tea bag.

"When PG Tips first asked us to make the tea bag we were a little taken aback," Maria Webster, who designed the item, admitted.

"Initially it was going to have a mesh of gold and make it a replica, but the decision was made to take a tea bag, which only costs 2.5p, and add diamonds to it. We do get some unusual requests...but this was certainly one of the strangest."

The teabag will now go on a nationwide tour to promote the brand and it will then be used as part of a prize draw to raise money for Manchester Children's Hospital.

PG Tips spokesman Pete Harbour said: "As it's our 75th birthday, we wanted to do something special to remind people just how much they love the great British cup of

tea."

Over 150 million cups of tea are consumed in the UK each day and 35 million of these are PG Tips.

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New radio tagging proposals for food animals

Date: Fri, 25 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

AIM Global has proposed new standards of radio tagging for food animals amid growing concerns over bio-terrorism and recent international outbreaks of BSE and foot-and-mouth disease.

New Brussels legislation requires complete traceability of the food chain within the EU, following products from processing to transport, storage and distribution.

AIM Global, recognised as the worldwide authority on automatic identification and mobility, today submitted the proposal to provide two standards-based approaches to animal identification.

The subcommittee's chair, Bill Hoffman, told Food Quality: "The document includes the existing LF coding standards and focuses on providing additional capability through the use of ISO/IEC standards-based UHF RFID tags."

RFID technology is regarded as the best means of ensuring animal traceability. It links miniature antennae to microscopic computer chips so that items can be tracked at a distance.

The system would enable manufacturers to comply with EU legislation, which demands that the name and address of the producer, the nature of the product and the date of transaction are systematically registered within each operator's traceability system.

The information must be kept for five years and made immediately available to competent authorities if so requested.
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Michelin restaurant guide turns transatlantic

Date: Fri, 25 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

New York's finest restaurants will soon join the clamour for Michelin stars, as the Michelin Group publishes its first ever guide to establishments across the pond.

The 2006 Michelin Guide to New York City will be launched in November this year, and will rate 500 restaurants and 50 hotels across the Big Apple.

The move comes in response to what group president, Edouard Michelin, described as "strong demand from its readers", according to Caterer Online.

Gourmet judges have spent the last few months dining anonymously at 1,200 food establishments throughout the city. Their secret visits will be followed by formal kitchen DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 98H

inspections this month, to help critics decide which establishments merit a listing in the guide.

But the news New York's competitive culinary community is really waiting for is which restaurants have earned Michelin's prestigious star awards.

Florence Fabricant, the New York Times' Food Critic hailed Michelin's transatlantic leap as "a grand event which recognises the quality and the variety of New York restaurants".

"At least one restaurant should receive three stars," she said.

All New York boroughs will be included in the guide, with Manhattan sub-divided into neighbourhoods.

The Michelin guide is currently published in 12 editions covering Western Europe. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New website to advise coeliac diners

Date: Fri, 25 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new website is being created to help people with coeliac disease to eat out more easily.

The illness is caused by an inability to digest gluten and can cause problems such as bowel symptoms, weight loss and a lack of certain vitamins leading to anaemia or osteoporosis.

A number of restaurants will be named on the website to help show establishments that offer gluten-free dining, according to This is Bolton.

It is hoped the site will help promote these restaurants and once up and running can be found at gluten-free-onthego.com.

The site has been created by Coeliac UK, one of the largest donation-funded charities of its kind in the UK.

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ABF update reveals results in line with expectations

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Associated British Foods (ABF) has reported business is progressing in line with expectations, as it released its pre-close trading update today.

The group achieved operating profit of £185 million during the 24 weeks ending February 28th 2005.

Among the key areas of growth were Allied Bakeries, benefiting from Kingsmill sales and improved operational efficiencies in its frozen bakery operation Speedibake.

In addition, Twinings and Ovaltine sales were up and British Sugar is expected to up production.

The main deals and purchases made in the last financial year included the acquisition of the Billington's sugar business in the UK and the yeast, bakery, ingredients and herbs and spices businesses from Burns Philp.

Results were issued as an update before the company's interim results, due for release on April 19th.

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Coffee sales help boost Fairtrade sector

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The popularity of Fairtrade products in Britain continues to rise, with sales in the sector increasing by 51 per cent during 2004 to £140 million.

According to figures, the key factor behind the increase in profits is coffee, deemed to be the most popular product for Fairtrade consumers.

Retail sales jumped by 44 per cent to £49.3 million for the product, which along with other Fairtrade products bears a label guaranteeing a better price for farmers in developing countries.

An increasing number of retailers now stock the items, including Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's, which both expanded their Fairtrade business last year.

The demand for the products is also thought to be the result of a rising consumer demand for more information on the sourcing of food and drink.

Particular foods that sold well last year were Fairtrade bananas, hot beverages and chocolate.

With the sector performing so well, the organisation is now looking to expand the range further.

The results come in perfect time for the Fairtrade organisation, which is launching Fairtrade Fortnight this Tuesday until March 13th, to boost awareness of the labelling scheme.

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Health benefits of green tea revealed

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Green tea could help protect against the damage caused by heart attacks and strokes, a new study has found.

Experts from the UK's Institute of Child Health say one of the tea's major chemical components - epigallocatechin-3-gallate - has been shown to reduce the amount of cell death that follows such a trauma.

A heart attack restricts the amount of oxygen and nutrients reaching the brain and heart, DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

which leads to cell death and causes irreversible damage. Cell death leads to tissue death and even organ failure.

The biologist who led the research, Dr Anastasis Stephanou, told the BBC that "hopefully we will one day be able to tell patients who are susceptible to heart disease that they can drink green tea for its therapeutic benefits" - but that more research will need to be carried out first.

Green tea has been drunk for over 4,000 years and was traditionally administered to sufferers of infectious diseases.

Belinda Linden, head of medical information at the British Heart Foundation, told the BBC: "Green tea has, in the past, been associated with a reduced risk of coronary artery disease, with claims that its high antioxidant properties may cut the amount of cholesterol in the artery wall.

"The results suggest that there may be other ways that green tea could protect the heart, but larger controlled studies would be needed to confirm this benefit."
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Innovative tracking system to benefit food industry

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new system that provides real-time, intelligent, end-to-end tracking for globally transported goods has been developed with help from a €2.5 million EU grant.

ParcelCall allows suppliers to track goods on all modes of transport, regardless of where they are or who is carrying them. It also offers a "Thinking Tags" feature that would allow carriers of perishable goods to monitor their environmental conditions.

The system - developed by a consortium of leading European industrial and academic partners - employs RFID technology and a Mobile Logistic Server (MLS) with Global Positioning System (GPS).

Although many goods transport companies have used tracking and tracing systems for some time, these were limited to the individual carrier.

Professor Robin Williams, who led ParcelCall's socio-economic research, told Food Production Daily: "With supply chains becoming more and more complex - often involving more than one carrier and multiple transport modes - there is a much higher demand for an across the board system.

"ParcelCall focuses on interoperability, open interfaces, and standardisation in order to allow seamless tracking and tracing across the entire logistics and transportation chain."

The system's Thinking Tags will be of particular interest to perishable goods producers. The compact devices are capable of active, two way radio communication and can be used to monitor environmental conditions - such as temperature, humidity or shock - as well as for recording a history of status information, including location and measurement data.

The tags will no doubt prove invaluable in the case of theft or loss, and help in settling liability issues if damage or mishandling has occurred.

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Kraft halts Roadkill production

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Innovative sweets made by Kraft have been put on hold after concerns were raised they may encourage cruelty to animals.

The US food giant called a halt to production of its Trolli Roadkill Gummi sweets - shaped like animals run over by cars - after animal rights activists said they were sending the wrong messages to children and encouraged acts of cruelty.

Kraft has agreed to stop production and sell off its remaining inventory, saying it wanted to be sensitive to consumer concerns.

"We understand how this product could be misinterpreted, and we respect that point of view," Trolli brand manager, Jim Low, said in a statement.

The move comes after New Jersey's Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NJSPCA) said it would organise petitions, boycotts and letter campaigns to stop the product.

Launched last summer, the fruit-flavoured Trolli Roadkill Gummi sweets were shaped like flattened animals with tyre tracks running across their bodies.

The Trolli brand - which is renowned for its quirky products - is in the process of being sold to chewing gum manufacturer, Wrigley Jr, along with Altoids and Life Savers as part of a \$1.48bn deal.

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Curved-carton relaunch for Milko products

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Swedish dairy Milko is poised to re-launch its low-fat yoghurt drinks in innovative, curved cartons.

The company, which says the newly packaged goods will hit shelves in early March, will be piloting the new Diamond Pure-Pak Curve from packaging manufacturers Elopak.

According to Food Production Daily, the company opted for the new design to give their yoghurt products a stronger premium profile.

Elopak claims it has combined the technical and ergonomic design features of their award winning Mini Diamond and Pure-Pak Curve cartons to create a totally original shaped carton.

It has also improved the grip of the carton's cap and increased the diameter of the DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

pouring spout by 38 per cent.

Milko marketing manager Jonas Welander said: "We were impressed by the striking and elegant style of the carton which with the fifth panel provides new graphic possibilities and a prominent space for branding or slogans."

Milko will re-launch a range of six fruit yoghurts in a one-litre standard Diamond Pure-Pak Curve carton.

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Bi-jet technology helps traceability

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Prepared Foods Australia - a company that makes 8,000 tonnes of ready meals a year - is using bi-jet printing technology from Imaje to help meet traceability requirements.

The firm, which was previously known as Eurest Prepared Foods, produces 45,000 preprepared dishes to 400 different recipes daily and uses the bi-jet system to record mandatory information on the packaging of its various products.

Approximately ten per cent of the company's products are exported to Japan, Taiwan, New Zealand and the UK.

General manager Shane Bracken told Food Production Daily: "Thanks to their reliability and performance, Imaje inkjet printers have proven to be the perfect answer for our very diverse applications.

"Eleven different fonts are used. The messages can often take up four lines and are printed at speeds of up to one million a second," he said.

Imaje says it is the only producers of bi-jet printers. The technology is applicable on many different packaging types including microwaveable plastic trays and dishes, plastic pouches or sachets for sauces and cartons made of polypropylene-coated card.

Mr Bracken also hailed the printer' flexibility. "They can be moved around and used wherever they are needed," he stated.

"In addition to the humidity, both the machines and the inks must be able to withstand low temperatures and meet the requirements for marking applications on very cold media, since some products are stored for 12 to 24 months at- 20 C."

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New quality scheme launched for English beef and lamb

Date: Tue, 01 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new logo to help shoppers identify high-grade English beef and lamb has been launched.

Meat carrying the Quality Standard Mark will have to meet certain criteria to ensure that it is tender.

The rules exclude beef and lamb from old animals or breeding stock - which is considered tough - and insist that animals are born, raised and slaughtered in England.

Meat must also be hung for a minimum of 14 days before sale in order that it can mature properly.

Jane Ritchie-Smith, spokesperson for promotional body, the English Beef and Lamb Executive (Eblex), which is behind the scheme, said: "The measures we've put in place to ensure the eating quality of Quality Standard beef and lamb are, we believe, unparalleled within the UK industry schemes and should make for even greater consumer satisfaction as they enjoy great quality beef and lamb."

The logo - a patchwork combination of green fields and the George cross - will be launched with a £4.5m advertising campaign featuring animated versions of England cricketing personalities, Ian Botham and Allan Lamb.

A similar logo featuring the Union Jack will be launched for Scottish and Welsh meat that fulfils the same criteria for quality.

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Greggs appoints new non executive director

Date: Tue, 01 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The UK's biggest bakery group, Greggs, this morning announced the appointment of an additional non-executive director to its board.

Julie Baddeley will join the company - which has over 1,200 outlets trading under both the Greggs and Bakers Oven brands - with immediate effect.

Derek Netherton, Greggs chairman said: "We are delighted to welcome Julie to our board, where her extensive HR and IT experience will complement our existing strengths and skills, and enable her to make a valuable contribution to our discussions."

Ms Baddeley, 53, has held senior executive and non-executive roles across a number of banks and management consultancies. Her most recent executive position was at the Woolwich where she was responsible for IT and human resources.

Greggs is the UK's leading retailer specialising in sandwiches, savouries and other bakery products, and particularly focuses on takeaway food and catering.
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Organic food industry inspired by Oliver

Date: Tue, 01 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The organic food industry is using Jamie Oliver's televised campaign to improve school dinners to try and pitch for a bigger slice of the f1 billion market.

London's celebrity chef showed in an experiment at a school in Greenwich that he could drastically improve the quality of food served in schools - whilst sticking to the measly per-meal budget of 37p.

Oliver showed how schools could go it alone and source healthier, higher quality ingredients direct from local producers.

The experiment has convinced consumers for the first time that organic and high quality school meals can be produced at a reasonable price.

A handful of schools have followed Oliver's example and rejected the traditional slop in favour of locally sourced, organic meals.

However, the general consensus remains that the 84 per cent of schools that contract big companies or local authority caterers to supply school dinners will continue to do so.

Carl Morris, head of marketing at Sodexho's UK education services unit, told the FT online he had not noticed a "stampede" away from the big suppliers yet.

"It's all right if you are in rural areas with a local network of farms but if you are in the middle of Birmingham it is a rather different proposition," he claimed.
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More opportunities for steel food packaging

Date: Tue, 01 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A new study that shows the economic benefits of including metal cans in kerbside collection schemes should help secure the future of steel cans in the food industry.

Research funded by the Department of Trade and Industry and conducted by Eco Alternatives concluded that those recycling schemes that include steel and aluminium tins and foil in their kerbside collections enjoy economic benefits.

The report gives clear guidance to local authorities to include metals in their collection schemes - whether they are already in place or yet to be established.

If steel is widely recycled, food producers would be able to continue to package their products in steel, the use of metal food packaging would be boosted and the opportunity for new designs would be created.

The steel packaging industry had looked set for a decline in the light of limited steel recycling opportunities and an EU directive which demands that 50 per cent of all metals are recycled by 2008.

The legislation attaches financial incentives for companies that meet their targets. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Domino's pizza profits up

Date: Tue, 01 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Pizza delivery chain Domino's has reported record profits, but said it nonetheless fell short of its annual store-opening target.

The company, which runs 357 franchise outlets throughout Britain and Ireland, reported pre-tax profits that had risen by more than a third to £8.8 million in the 53 weeks before January 2nd.

Domino's said its strategy to open more stores to boost turnover was responsible for the leap, with total sales for 2004 up £31 million to £174.3 million after the launch of 40 new outlets.

But a shortage of new franchisees in the company's target regions has limited its plan to launch a total of 50 stores.

Chief executive Stephen Hemsley told Manchester Online that the company had since managed to find the right people to open most of the extra ten sites needed to hit the target, adding that like-for-like sales in the first six weeks of this year have risen by 6.6 percent.

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Pepsi makes pledge to stop targeting children

Date: Tue, 01 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Pepsi has made a voluntary commitment to stop targeting young children with some of its leading products.

The company has said it will no longer advertise its flagship cola brand to children under the age of 12, or its Cheeto chips to those under eight.

The move comes in response to concerns about the high and rising incidence of child obesity, and follows Kraft's high profile announcement in January that it will stop targeting kids for core products like Oreos.

In the US, Pepsi had previously replaced its fried Cheetos with a baked, lower-fat version, and limited snack serving sizes for all brands to 150 calories, rising to 300 calories in middle schools.

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Fairtrade boosted by children

Date: Wed, 02 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food producers who use and sell Fairtrade items have new opportunities before them in the shape of youth markets.

A recent study of UK consumers showed young people are most aware of fair trade, and according to the executive director of the Fairtrade Foundation, Harriet Lamb, their enthusiasm will result in industry growth.

Speaking on BBC One's Breakfast, Ms Lamb said fair-trade inspires young children, and added: "The kids are actually the educators here.

"They are going into the staffroom and saying to their teachers: Well why don't you have fair trade tea and coffee in your breaks? And they are saying the canteen: Can we have DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

some fair trade products and can we have some vending machines with fair trade products in them?"

Fairtrade Foundation predicts a knock-on effect from the interest young people are showing.

"As young people grow up and do more and more of the shopping actually this is just going to explode and more and more companies are going to really do fair trade right throughout all their product range," said Ms Lamb.

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Fairtrade receives more funding

Date: Wed, 02 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A huge £750,000 has been given to the Fairtrade Foundation, following increased consumer demand for products.

According to Reuters, the funding, from the Department for International Development (DfID), is to be used over the next three years to help the products, which guarantee a better price for Third World farmers.

This means the department has now given over f,1 million to the sector over six years.

Paul Boateng, chief secretary to the Treasury, said: "The UK's joint presidency of the EU and the G8 presents us as a country with a unique opportunity to make a difference and we owe it to a wider world that suffers from unfair trade."

Retailers including Tesco and Sainsbury's can now use the Fairtrade label to show they paid a premium aimed at protecting farmers when buying their food and drink.

In addition, Harriet Lamb, the foundation's executive director told Reuters that the organisation hopes to increase UK sales by 40 to 50 per cent again this year.

New products set to be added to the scheme include rice and seafood. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Water bottles get compostable

Date: Wed, 02 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The first compostable bottle has been developed, in a joint venture between Biota Brands of America, Cargill Dow, SIG Coroplast and production equipment provider, Husky.

The groundbreaking new bottle is made out from NatureWorks corn-based resin - a product made from carbon harvested by the plant during photosynthesis and stored in its natural sugars.

Biota plans to launch the bottle with their new line of Colorado spring water and it is compatible with all municipal and industrial composting facilities, according to Cargill Dow.

Mike Urquhart, Husky PET vice president told Food Production Daily: "One of our core values is proactive environmental responsibility, which is why we're thrilled to be involved in such a project. This is a great example of how it's possible to combine commercial success with environmental sustainability."

The environmental benefits of the new resin seem all the more achievable after research suggests an infrared machine can easily separate the NatureWorks bottles from standard PET alternatives.

Biota Brands of America CEO David Zutler said: "Biota is changing the face of the beverage industry with its compostable bottle. Consumers ultimately want a planet-friendly option."

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Profits up at Premier, despite Sudan impact

Date: Wed, 02 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Premier Foods has revealed that the recent Sudan I crisis has not had a negative impact on its finances.

The food group, at the centre of the recent food recall, which was said to be the largest ever in Britain, reported a 25.5 per cent increase in underlying annual profit.

Chief executive Robert Schofield, told Reuters: "The Sudan I issue has been an upheaval for the business in terms of time and effort.

"However, in financial terms, based upon our assessment of claims and our insurance position, we believe the company does not have a material financial exposure."

Additional results included an 8.8 per cent increase in turnover and operating profit of £107.4 million.

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Liquorice offers hope for 'herpes cancer' cure

Date: Wed, 02 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A compound found in liquorice may help prevent herpes sufferers from developing cancer, a new report suggests.

A team of scientists at New York University claim that the compound - glycyrrhizic acid - could stop herpes infections from triggering a form of cancer known as kaposi sarcoma.

Liquorice is derived from the root of the glycyrrhiza glabra plant and has been used in cooking for over 4,000 years.

Today it is widely used by food, drinks and tobacco manufacturers for flavouring their products.

According to the BBC, the virus is common among people with low immune systems and can lead to the development of tumours below the skin and in internal organs.

Active herpes infections are easily treatable, but there is still little medicine available to combat latent infections.

Liquorice is also used as an alternative medicine for the treatment of gastric and duodenal ulcers, sore throat, bronchitis, cough, arthritis, adrenal insufficiency, and allergic diseases.

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Solbar develops full range of soy protein concentrates

Date: Wed, 02 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Soy protein manufacturer Solbar has completed its range of functional soy protein concentrates.

Using new technologies, the company has added to its flagship S-110 and S-200 products to form a full range of products known as the Solcon S family. The concentrates can be used across meat, poultry, fish and vegetarian dishes.

The company's marketing director Gary Brenner said: "Each of the Solcon S functional soy proteins are suited for specific manufacturer requirements, from strong emulsions and gels to high-speed injection.

"Solbar's goal is to find the exact ratio of functionality and price to answer our customer needs."

The new Solcon concentrates are S-220, S-117, S-118, S-121 and S-300.

Solbar recently opened its first specialty proteins factory outside Israel. A production facility in Ningbo, China, produces Solcon S for China and Asia/Pacific markets. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovation taking over BBQ foods sector

Date: Wed, 02 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

This year's National BBQ campaign will focus on the increasing diversity of food cooked on British barbecues.

Traditional barbecue foods like sausages and chicken drumsticks are being pushed off the grill in favour of more unusual alternatives like turkey, prawns or swordfish steak.

Brian George, chairman of the National BBQ Association, says the trend towards innovative barbecue foods is driving outdoor cooking upmarket.

"People have become more adventurous in terms of barbecuing, which has led to an overall trend towards market premiumisation," he told the Publican.

National BBQ 2005 - which runs from early May to the end of August - will be DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

sponsored by the British Turkey Sector Group and wine brand, Sutter Home. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Food producers come under fire for inaccurate labels

Date: Thu, 03 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

The food industry came under new attack today after a Which? survey concluded its labels are "wildly inaccurate".

The consumer magazine found that levels of salt, fat, calories or carbohydrates in 93 per cent of products tested did not match figures on the packaging, after its scientists ran tests for 570 nutrients listed in 70 processed foods.

The Food Standards Agency responded in a statement, in which it stressed the onus was on manufacturers and retailers to ensure that the products they sell do not mislead.

But the Food and Drink Federation defended the industry. A spokesperson said: "Any suggestion that food manufacturers set out to confuse or hoodwink consumers is just not true."

There is currently no law that dictates how accurate food labels should be, but the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (Lacors) - the body which advises trading standards officers about enforcing food laws - accepts an error margin of 20 per cent.

Some 17 per cent of labels fell outside the Lacors margin of error, whilst just seven per cent of labels proved totally accurate.

The FDF explained it was impossible for labels to be 100 per cent accurate all of the time, because ingredients varied: "Nutrients such as fat and sugars come from a number of ingredients within a product, and their levels will vary for a number of reasons, including the variety of ingredient used or the season in which it was grown.

"Because of this, the law allows manufacturers to use average figures to give consumers a good indication of what the 'typical' nutrient content is for each product."

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Local food could save billions

Date: Thu, 03 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Research released yesterday could bode well for local producers and suppliers, as experts make an appeal to shops to stop overspending on "food miles".

The report, published in Food policy journal, reveals that distributing produce hundreds of miles is costing an unnecessary £4 billion every year.

Professors Jules Pretty of Essex University and Tim Lang of London's City University conducted the study, to assess the added expense of bringing food to supermarket shelves from around the UK and the rest of the world.

Food now travels 65 per cent further by road than it did two decades ago due to centralised storage, and 28 per cent of all freight on British roads is agricultural produce.

The scientists looked at foodstuffs, farming methods and transport policies and concluded that if everything we ate came from within a 20km radius of our homes, £2.1 billion could be saved every year from environmental costs alone.

"Food miles by road are far more important than we had thought. In environmental cost terms, buying local is even more important than buying green -- although we would like people to do both," Professor Pretty said.

Their report suggests if farmers grow organically, farming subsidies are abolished and consumers shop for local produce - leaving their cars at home - millions of miles and billions of pounds could be saved.

At the same time, Britain would probably eat healthier and local industries would see huge benefits.

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ASA demands scientific proof for organic claims

Date: Thu, 03 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

The Soil Association has been forced to withdraw claims that organic food is "healthy" and "more humane to animals", after the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) upheld two complaints that there was no scientific proof to back them.

The UK body is responsible for certifying foods and farmers as organic and published a leaflet last year in which would-be members were told: "Organic farming produces healthy food with a more environmentally friendly approach that is more humane to animals."

Although the ASA has ruled the blurb must be changed, the association has since told the BBC it still thinks organic feed is better for you, and that no other system of farming has higher standards of animal welfare.

It says it recently submitted new evidence to the ASA, which will substantiate claims that organic produce has higher amounts of beneficial minerals and vitamins than any other food.

The organic food industry has grown tenfold over the last decade, thought to be due to concern over animal welfare and the perceived health benefits of organic produce.

A recent study on rats supports consumer perception: those fed on organic fruit and vegetables were slimmer, slept better and had stronger immune systems.

In addition, another report suggests organic milk could boost the immune system, with higher levels of antioxidants as well as vitamin E, omega 3 essential fatty acids. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

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In addition, another report suggests organic milk could boost the immune system, with higher levels of antioxidants as well as vitamin E, omega 3 essential fatty acids. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Innovation boosts artificial sweeteners industry

Date: Thu, 03 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

British consumers are giving up sugar in favour of artificial sweeteners, a new survey has revealed.

Research by Mintel shows that by-volume sugar sales dropped by as much as ten per cent over the last six years, from 431,000 tonnes in 1999 to 390,000 tonnes in 2004.

Meanwhile artificial sweeteners appear to have mopped up some of sugar's losses, volume sales grew by a healthy 12 per cent between 2000 and 2004, and almost a quarter of consumers currently use the sugar alternatives.

David Bird, senior market analyst at Mintel, attributed the shift to a change of dietary fads and concerns among Britons: "Rising concern about health and levels of obesity... are clearly encouraging consumers to cut back on their sugar intake.

"What is more, recent diets such as Atkins and GI have also had a negative impact on sugar consumption, as sugar is a real no-go for anyone following these diets."

He added: "The artificial sweetener market continues to gain acceptance with consumers.

Manufacturers have dynamised this sector with a raft of new product developments, while investing heavily in improving the taste of their product."

The biggest drops in sugar use were in deserts and home baking - although UK consumers are as happy as ever to add sugar to their tea and coffee.

All the same, the sugar industry has enjoyed a boost in by-value sales since 1999.

Consumers are heading for higher-end and speciality sugars like Demerara and Muscavado - helping sales figures for 2004 reach £262 million - a 12 per cent rise on 1999.

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Fyffes reports record results

Date: Thu, 03 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Irish fresh fruit and vegetable supplier, Fyffes, today reported a 32 per cent per cent rise in profits in 2004.

According to Just Food, the company made £65.1 million pounds in the year ending January 1st 2005, up nearly a third from £49.2 million in 2003.

Fyffes chairman, Carl McCann, attributed the record results to "strong performances in continental Europe, together with first time contributions from acquisitions."

The company also reported "satisfactory" trading in the first two months of 2005 - with the strongest performance once again from the Europe mainland.

Outlining plans for 2005, Mr McCann said: "The group continues to pursue the price increases necessary to compensate for the significant increases that have occurred in shipping, transport and fuel costs.

"Fyffes continues to seek opportunities to apply its substantial resources to further develop the group through acquisitions and alliances."

Company turnover for 2004 stood at £1.476 billion compared to £1.324 billion in the previous year.

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Parmalat to return to stock market

Date: Thu, 03 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Italian dairy company Parmalat is reportedly planning to return to the Italian stock exchange in July.

The firm gained protection from creditors in 2003 after revealing debts of €14 billion (£9.6 billion), eight times higher than initially stated, following an accounting scandal. An Italian judge later ruled that Parmalat had to accept around €20 billion in credit claims, rather than the €14 billion that administrators had sought.

In a statement issued on Wednesday night, Parmalat Finanziaria detailed administrators' latest plans for re-listing the group.

Under the plans, creditors' debts are expected to be converted into shares and creditors will be asked to vote on two rights issues, totalling more than two billion euros, later this year.

The plan is likely to give creditors of Parmalat Finanziaria shares worth about 5.7 per cent of the debts they are owed, far lower than the 11.3 per cent they had initially hoped to receive. The debt-to-equity swap rate for credit backed by Parmalat SpA, the main operating company, was shaved to 6.9 per cent from 7.3 per cent.

Several former top executives from Parmalat are among those under investigation over the fraud scandal.

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New opportunities for healthy fast food

Date: Fri, 04 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The healthy fast food sector offers big opportunities that remain untapped, research by Datamonitor revealed today.

The independent market research firm concluded in a study of the UK's fast food market, that consumer demands for healthy food "on the go" are not yet being met.

An average British consumer ate on the move a total of 372 times last year, but less than half of these - just 119 - were healthy meals.

The figure came a surprise in the light of recent healthy eating trends, and a survey conducted by Datamonitor last year, which revealed 83 per cent of UK residents agree that it is "important to improve health through diet".

Author of the report, Daniel Bone, said that fast food consumers were inhibited from eating healthily by a lack of conveniently placed outlets, as well as the perceived expense of healthier options.

The gap in the market will provide new growth opportunities for food firms - part of a burgeoning market: the total number of on-the-go consumption occasions in the UK looks set to rise to 401 by 2009.

According to the report, the UK has a lower percentage of healthy options in the fast food sector than any other European country.

Datamonitor also predicts that the trend of fad dieting will gradually give way to more permanent healthy eating habits. Mr Bone said there will be "a further move from 'nutritionally curious' to 'nutritionally active' consumers whereby fad dieting and misinformed dietary habits will give way to more nutritionally aware and sustained healthy eating habits."

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UK firm launches authentic US products

Date: Fri, 04 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Britain is to get a taste of authentic US food, with the set up of a new UK company producing Wild West-style, barbecue-smoked meat.

Husband and wife team, Brian and Linda Bradley have branched out from their existing business in Kansas, America to bring a range of cuts - including smoked brisket, loin of pork, turkey and venison - to British shores.

Instead of a conventional barbecue, the company will prepare its produce on a smoker designed to cook meat slowly in a wood-fired, metal-lined oven.

Mr Bradley said: "The great thing about this slow way of cooking is that the meat becomes moist and tender and the smoking acts as a natural preservative."

The couple has also developed ranch-style beans in a tangy sauce, as well as pate dishes to complete the range.

Although the firm will be based in Bedlington in the North East of England, Mr Bradley plans to adopt a nomadic approach to business, visiting food shows with his "chuck wagon" and branding himself Mr BBQ.

The meat will be available in vacuum packs and the couple, who are part of regional food and drinks group the Northumbria Larder, are currently recruiting stockists.

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Chilling system promises freeze on costs for food firms

Date: Fri, 04 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

New refrigeration technology that promises to halve carbon emissions and slash energy costs by a third could help food producers meet tough regulations and stop costs spiralling.

The combined heat, power and refrigeration system (CHRP) would allow manufacturers to harness waste heat from generators in an "absorption chiller" - which could provide the necessary temperatures for chilled or frozen produce.

With the system - which runs on small gas turbines - companies would also be able to generate heat and electricity for other uses in house.

The innovation promises to drive down costs in the face of stringent environmental regulations.

Researchers at Brunel University said initial feasibility tests were "very encouraging", and expect the project to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in energy usage within two years.

The system also has the potential to compete on price with carbon, and its environmental sustainability should make it exempt from the 2001 Climate Change Levy on UK-based companies' coal, electricity and gas bills. The charge alone pushed energy

costs up by ten per cent in 2003.

Food processors and retailers currently consume 15 per cent of the national energy supply in Britain and, in the wake of the Kyoto treaty on climate change, face stern governmental and international pressure to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Food firms call for acrylamide analysis

Date: Fri, 04 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food company stakeholders have called for a risk/benefits analysis of acrylamide - a harmful chemical recently identified in certain carbohydrate-rich foods.

Europe's food industry leaders said at a Brussels conference, hosted by the EC to discuss reduction of use of the chemical, that measures to minimise acrylamide levels could have negative effects on the nutritional quality of food.

Instead they backed the ongoing analysis of the ingredient, using a "toolbox" of parameters put forward by the Confederation of Food and Drink Industries.

Under the plan, manufacturers would keep close tabs on controlling agronomic factors, product composition and process controls, and constantly reassess levels of the chemical accordingly.

Acrylamide came to the attention of the food industry in 2002, after Swedish scientists reported unexpectedly high amounts in fried, baked, grilled, toasted or microwaved carbohydrate-rich foods, notably chips, roast potatoes, crisps and bread.

Since then more than 200 projects have been launched to investigate what effects acrylamide may have.

Results have confirmed that the chemical causes neurotoxicity in humans who are exposed to it at length during plastic production, and animal studies show that the chemical can lead to reproductive problems and cancer.

Scientists believe acrylamide occurs naturally when high-carbohydrate foods are exposed to temperatures above 100 C.

Among the Brussels conference attendees were representatives from the European Food Safety Authority(EFSA) and European research project Heatox. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

UK supermarkets give local sourcing commitment

Date: Fri, 04 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Britain's biggest supermarkets have publicly declared their commitment to sourcing local foods

Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrisons took a united stand against a report by Food Policy published yesterday, which said that the environmental damage caused by DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

transporting food long distances means it is greener to buy produce made locally.

The big four told the BBC they have policies in place to encourage and increase their supplies of local produce.

A spokesman for Tesco said the company was "committed to trying to source locally whenever possible, the seasons allow and there is customer demand". The supermarket claims it stocks around 7,000 locally produced products, and has two dedicated local buyers in Scotland and Wales.

Asda claimed it is supermarket policy for all stores to stock more goods from the region they serve. A spokesman said: "Across the UK we have 200 local suppliers, many of which are very small indeed, employing less than 20 people. We try and make it as easy as possible for small firms to supply to us."

Sainsbury's said it is aware of the consumer demand for local produce - for which reason they run a local sourcing program, with a dedicated team to search for regional producers.

A spokeswoman for Morrisons said it was a "keen supporter of small, local and regional producers and have a number of local producers supplying our stores".

The report's authors - Professor Jules Petty and Tim Lang from City University - say that people should try to buy food from within a 12-mile radius. If all foods were sourced like this, they calculated, environmental congestion costs would shrink from £2.3 billion to just £230 million.

Meanwhile Waitrose is running an awards scheme for small producers, as well as trials at selected branches in Kent and Gloucestershire to give customers the chance to purchase locally farmed fruit and vegetables.

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Experts unsure of new diet pill

Date: Mon, 07 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

Experts have expressed doubts about a new pill which claims to enable sufferers of diabetes and coeliac disease to eat foods normally "off-limits" to them.

Diabetics need to watch their intake of foods with high sugar levels, whilst people with coeliac disease should avoid wheat if they are to manage their conditions.

Scientists at Baltimore University say their pill gives these patients the freedom to eat whatever they want by making the gut more watertight: the controversial AT-1001 acts by blocking the production of zonulin - a natural protein which regulates the permeability of the intestine.

Lead investigator Dr Alessio Fazano said: "If everything goes to plan, we could have a product on the market by the end of 2006."

But experts have since questioned the conclusions drawn from early studies of the pill,

which were carried out on rats, according to the BBC. They argue that the best way to manage food intolerance is to cut out problem foods, maintain a healthy diet and take regular exercise.

The pill developers found that diabetes and coeliac disease patients tend to produce too much zonulin making their guts are too permeable, but the rat experiments of AT-1001 show it can restore that permeability to normal levels.

Dr Angela Wilson, director of research at Diabetes UK, said: "The development of this pill is a long way off. The focus should be on a combination of a healthy diet and regular physical activity. This will help to control diabetes in those who have the condition and will reduce the risk in others who may go on to develop Type 2 diabetes."

However, Professor Peter Howdle of Coeliac UK's medical advisory council said: "The research findings are encouraging and Coeliac UK will be following developments closely."

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Farmers could help public sector food

Date: Mon, 07 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Farmers could help schools, hospitals and prisons supply healthier food, a Westminster conference will hear today.

Food and farming minister, Larry Whitty, will meet food farmers, wholesalers and manufacturers to highlight ways they can bid to supply the public sector and cash in on a £2 billion-a-year market.

The move comes as part of a Defra initiative to improve the quality of food served by public institutions.

Mr Whitty has told public sector buyers they need to be more "innovative" in the way they buy food and help local producers become part of the supply chain.

He highlighted the current School Fruit and Vegetable scheme that has already boosted demand for local farm produce, but added: "We want to support more uptake of fresh produce, which should increase the opportunities for local farmers and growers.

"It should not just be an issue of buying the cheapest food available. Better quality food need not cost the earth. Seasonal produce is generally cheaper, and tastier food is likely to mean less waste from leftovers.

"Cutting food and catering budgets is counterproductive if less healthy and nutritious food costs the NHS millions treating obesity and diet-related illnesses."

The organised move towards healthier institution food comes in the wake of TV chef Jamie Oliver's high profile crusade to transform the dinners served in a Greenwich school.

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Apples could hold breast cancer fighting benefits

Date: Mon, 07 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Eating apples can cut the risk of developing breast cancer, according to American food scientists.

Researchers at Cornell University who fed the fruit to rats injected with a known mammary carcinogen, found that tumour incidence fell dramatically the more apple the animals ate.

Rui Hai Liu, author of the study, published in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, said that the complex health-giving properties of fresh fruit "cannot simply be mimicked" by dietary supplements.

Rats that were fed the human equivalent of one apple a day were 17 per cent less likely to develop cancer, rising to 39 per cent for those that ate an equivalent of three apples, and 44 per cent for rats on six.

The study also found that the number of tumours was reduced by 25 per cent for one or three apples and and by 61 per cent in rats fed the equivalent of six apples a day.

Professor Hai Lui said: "Our findings suggest that consumers may gain more significant health benefits by eating more fruits and vegetables and whole grain foods than in consuming expensive dietary supplements, which do not contain the same array of balanced, complex components.

"Studies increasingly provide evidence that it is the additive and synergistic effects of the phytochemicals present in fruits and vegetables that are responsible for their potent antioxidant and anticancer activities."

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Worcestershire sauce in special status bid

Date: Mon, 07 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Worcester MP Michael Foster is backing a campaign to secure protected geographical status to protect its Worcestershire sauce.

The move comes amid fears that traditional brand Lea & Perrins has suffered because of bad press for Premier Foods' Worcester sauce - the condiment at the centre of the Sudan I scandal.

Lea & Perrins plans to lobby the European Commission for the special status - in a bid to prevent imitation sauces from cashing in on or undermining the reputation of their traditional brand again.

If their application is successful, food producers outside Worcestershire would no longer be allowed to sell their sauce under the Worcester or Worcestershire names.

Mr Foster said he would be writing to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and will today call on the government to back the petition.

"If the French can protect their champagne, we should be able to protect our sauce," he said. "This is an important step to keep it safe from unfair competition and to give consumers confidence in the quality of what they buy."

The application for protected geographical status - which will take six months to process - follows the success of food producers in Lancashire to protect their Melton Mowbray pies last week.

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Dairies show colour coding system red light

Date: Mon, 07 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The dairy industry has warned that proposals to colour code foods according to the levels of certain nutrients could backfire.

Dairy UK urged the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to rethink its "traffic light" system amid fears that certain nutritional foods with high levels of fat would be stigmatised, according to Farming Life.

Under the proposed system, foods would be graded green, amber or red depending on the levels of a range of nutrients.

Sir Don Curry, chairman of Dairy UK: "There is widespread acceptance that cheese is an important source of protein, calcium and other nutrients and can constitute an excellent nutritious snack. How can that merit a red light as it would under the proposed system?"

Mr Curry said that stigmatising foods like cheese would "compromise the nation's health rather than improve it."

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Solar cooking breakthrough

Date: Mon, 07 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A German inventor has come up with a new solar cooking device that experts hope will transform cooking in the developing world.

The technology, featured on BBC news, uses a dish to track the sun by clockwork and focus a concentrated beam onto the bottom of a cooking pot.

Using the technology, a 1.5 metre square solar dish could produce a power output of 600 watts, similar to a large gas ring.

Inventor Wolfgang Scheffler says he has designed the dish so it can be made from steel and mirrors in any village metalworks.

He is currently collaborating with Atmosfair, a German NGO which is working to promote the technology.

The scheme has been applauded by Defra, which plans to use money from new DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

government payments to offset air emissions to fund the scheme in India.

"This is obviously a great idea if we can help people in developing countries live a healthier and more economically productive life while also minimising pollution," said a Defra official.

The solar dishes emit no pollution, a major health risk with wood fires, and can also be used for water purification and air conditioning.

"They are a fantastic development tool. A woman can take a loan to buy one then soon pay it off with the extra money she makes from the free heat throughout the day by selling clean water or doing extra baking," said Deepak Gadhia, an Indian environmentalist who manufactures some of the dishes.

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Icelandic turn for Geest

Date: Tue, 08 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK fresh convenience foods supplier, Geest, has been bought out by an Icelandic food firm for £485 million.

Bakkover Group reported this morning that it will pay 655 pence a share for Geest - some 1.4 per cent over the salad giant's share price at close of market yesterday - and also give share holders a special dividend of seven pence a share as part of the deal.

Bakkover aims to increase its share of the UK convenience food market, as competition among food retailers forces prices down.

Geest, which has a solid grip on the fresh prepared foods market with contracts to supply both Tesco and Asda, said today that annual profit fell 2.9 percent as its retail customers negotiated lower prices.

The company's chief executive, Gareth Voyle, said in a statement: "The food-retailing market has changed dramatically in the last two years and, whilst Geest is well-positioned, there is no doubt that price competition will continue to dominate the day-to-day grocery trade."

Bakkover executive chairman, Agust Gudmundsson, said: "Together we believe we have the strength to open up new opportunities in existing and new markets both in the UK and overseas."

The Reykjavik-based company currently runs four factories and employs around 2,500 people in the UK.

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Profits rise for Geest

Date: Tue, 08 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK fresh produce and convenience food supplier, Geest, this morning reported a 22 per cent rise in total profits for 2004 to £36.4 million - up from £29.6 million in 2003.

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Sales fell however, with figures for the year ending January 1st standing at £830.6 million - down 2.9 per cent on the previous year's figure of £867.5 million.

Chairman, Sir John Banham, said Geest was pleased with the figures - especially when accounting for loss of sales incurred by a fire at the company's Tilbrook production plant and the negotiation of lower prices by some of its biggest retail customers.

"These results are a good achievement in a difficult year in which there was an unprecedented level of competition between food retailers," he said. "In response, we accelerated our improvement programme and made savings of £24m, which helped to maintain our margins and improve our cash flow."

He added: "Geest remains in good shape to continue to manage market pressures in the food retail environment, which is expected to remain challenging, and to fulfil strong consumer demand for fresh prepared foods in the UK and on the continent."

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Napier Brown in buyout talks

Date: Tue, 08 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK sugar firm Napier Brown has confirmed it is in talks with a potential bidder, after its share price hit a record high yesterday.

The company said in a statement this morning: "The board of Napier Brown has noted the recent price movement in its shares and today's press speculation. It confirms that Napier Brown is in discussions with a third party, which may or may not lead to an offer being made for the share capital of the company."

The company - which produces a range of sugars including fair-trade brands - is set to become the UK's leading sugar manufacturer provided competition authorities approve its recent purchase of James Budgett Sugars.

Napier boasts a turnover in excess of £200 million and employs over 250 people at its production sites in Normanton and Runcorn. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Technology breakthrough for pig-water problem

Date: Tue, 08 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Scientists have developed a new method for treating swine-production wastewater, which could help pork processors meet environmental targets.

The system is capable of turning brown wastewater from manufacturing plants into clean, blue, aerated water, its developers the Agricultural Research Service told Food Production Daily.

Swine-producers are set to welcome the move since they face tough government legislation to minimise the impact of livestock waste.

Soil scientist, Matias Vanotti, said: "The innovation can soften the effect of the new demands regarding modern swine production and environmental sustainability."

The system removes more than 97 per cent of total suspended solids from wastewater, as well as 95 per cent of phosphorus, 99 per cent of ammonia and more than 97 per cent of "odour-causing components".

Soil scientists who conducted a year long study of the technology say they were impressed with the system, which comprises staging areas laid out over 200 feet, and a patent is now pending.

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New solutions for production line analysis

Date: Tue, 08 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Food analysis firm Foss has launched four new evaluation solutions aimed at providing more accurate information on processing techniques.

The new technology will make food process monitoring more cost-effective by targeting calibration transferability and making it easier to use, the company claims.

It hopes the new systems will help make product analysis routine, making products more consistent and reducing the risk of having to rework them in production.

According to Food Production Daily, Foss' new systems will harness its existing near infrared (NIR) based technology.

They will be able to automatically select the appropriate calibrations, as well as trace samples using a programmable sample ID chip in the sample cup. Foss claims the technology is also IP-65 certified for use in harsh production environments, and results can also be transferred to LIMS software in real time.

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Egg replacement brings cost and health benefits

Date: Tue, 08 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A high-protein, low-fat, no-cholesterol egg alternative has been launched, bringing relief to food manufacturers worried about the threat of salmonella or looking to develop healthier products.

Scientists at Unilever, who developed Alleggra with joint backing from Tate & Lyle, have described the product as a "fully functional replacer of egg" and claim it has 75 per cent less saturated fat than an egg, with ten per cent extra protein.

The innovative ingredient is made from soy and whey proteins, as well as vegetable oil (usually sunflower) and egg white.

"Alleggra has clear advantages in terms of cost and health," chief executive Gavin Hays told Food Navigator.

The product was originally devised as an anti-cholesterol egg replacer to be used in Unilever products, and as such actively lowers cholesterol.

Aleggra also promises more stable finances to food producers impacted by the volatile egg market. The price of eggs has fluctuated wildly over the last 18 months following the loss of millions of hens due to avian flue.

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Healthy deal for Happy Meal

Date: Wed, 09 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Fast food giant McDonald's has unveiled radical plans for its children's "happy meals" in a bid to shake off their unhealthy image and entice diet-concerned parents back to the hamburger chain.

McDonalds chiefs say the number of meal combinations will double from 54 to 108, nearly three-quarters of which would include at least one fruit or vegetable option.

The shake-up, which will set the restaurant back £7.4 million, constitutes the biggest change to Happy Meals since they were launched in the UK 21 years ago.

Instead of fat-laden fries, parents will be able to order carrot sticks for their children, according to a report on the Mail Online, a healthy addition to the bags of grapes and sliced apple already served by the chain.

McDonalds also plans to boost customer awareness of the nutritional value of its foods, with new leaflets listing the fat, sugar, salt and calorie content of each meal combination. In addition, the restaurant will give away 1.2 million step-o-meters with children's meals in May.

Health campaigners have welcomed the changes, but nevertheless expressed concern that parents may opt for the unhealthy options. Some of the meal combinations still contain more sugar and salt than young children should eat in an entire day.

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School meals provide boost for Compass shareholders

Date: Wed, 09 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Shares in Compass Group, the world's largest contract caterer worth £5.4 billion, have risen four pence to 254 pence, as dealers speculate the government may boost the budget for school meals from 37 pence per child to 57 pence.

A healthy 25.6 million Compass shares were traded yesterday after a speech by chief executive Mike Bailey in which he said the catering industry would lobby parliament for an extra 20 pence per child school dinner budget.

School dinner spending is a hot topic in Westminster at the moment, following celebrity chef Jamie Oliver's televised crusade against the poor quality of food served to pupils.

Compass Group caters for an impressive portfolio of blue chip clients, including DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

Microsoft, Boeing and IBM.

The jump in share price will help renew investor confidence after the company's shock profits warning in September last year.

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Eat vegetables for healthy bones

Date: Wed, 09 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Green vegetables and tofu are the best ways of protecting children's bones, a new report has claimed.

US scientists who reviewed 37 studies examining the impact of calcium bone health in children over seven, said there was no real evidence to support the claim that milk is the best source of calcium - and that regular exercise and other calcium sources like green vegetables and tofu were more effective in protecting against osteoporosis.

The findings contradict government recommendations that children should eat more dairy products to help protect against osteoporosis, and undermines current legislation which allows food manufacturers to include make bone health claims on dairy packaging.

Author of the report, Dr Amy Lanou, said: "A clear majority of the studies we examined for this review found no relationship between dairy or dietary calcium intake and measures of bone health. In the remaining reports, the evidence was sketchy."

Dr Lanou added that some results were confounded by vitamin D intake from artificially fortified milk.

However, the study was carried out by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, a group known to advocate vegetarianism.

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Coffee set to smell even better

Date: Wed, 09 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A breakthrough by Swiss scientists promises to help drinks manufacturers make coffee smell even better.

Researchers at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich have developed technology that can gravimetrically measure the way carbon dioxide changes in different roast processes.

It is hoped the new technology will shed some light on the complex process we associate with delicious coffee smells, according to Food Navigator.

The smell of brewing coffee has a significant positive effect on sales of products made with its beans, and drinks manufacturers stand to gain even more if they are able to identify and refine the best possible ways of producing the coffee scent.

The world coffee industry is valued at £37 billion, with Nestle dominating the market. DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

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Children perform better on healthy school dinners

Date: Wed, 09 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Schools pupils who are given healthy school dinners perform better in national tests, government-backed research has revealed.

Commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the study showed that children at primary schools belonging to the healthy schools programme have outperformed those at other primaries in national English, maths and science tests.

The news brings a further boost to celebrity chef Jamie Oliver's campaign to get the government to raise spending on school dinners from 37 pence to at least 50 pence a meal.

The healthy schools programme provides children with a healthy regime, including good quality, nutritious meals and high levels of exercise.

Early indications from the project have suggested that there is a link between healthy living and educational achievement.

Although the achievement was relatively small, with results just 1.5 per cent above the previous year's figures across all three subjects, it is the fact that the improvement was universal to all of the 496 schools involved in the research and have achieved healthy status.

The results will increase the pressure on the government to improve the quality of school meals and raise the funding available to schools to produce high-quality dinners for pupils.

"These results clearly demonstrate that investment in the healthy schools programme brings educational benefits as well as health-oriented ones," claimed acting head of the national healthy schools programme Colin Noble.

Government targets require half of all schools to achieve the healthy schools status by December 2006, and so far around 7,300 have achieved this. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

EC untangles traceability laws

Date: Thu, 10 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Brussels has stepped in to help the food industry understand new traceability guidelines.

A group of scientists from the European Commission has issued a document to help food industry professionals find their way through the labyrinthine traceability laws introduced last January.

The new legislation requires that food and feed products are traceable, that operators take responsibility, and that unsafe food or feed is withdrawn from the market with due DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

notification to the correct authorities.

But the laws are causing confusion in the food industry.

"Their implementation has given rise to numerous questions in particular from EU food chain operators and third country trading partners," a spokesperson for the Commission said.

Traceability has become a key concern for the food industry, since the Sudan I scandal prompted the Food Standards Agency to recall nearly 600 affected products.

The document will address the following key areas: responsibilities, traceability, withdrawal, recall and notification for food and feed in relation to food and feed safety requirements, imports and exports.

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Costco squeezes competition with planning loophole

Date: Thu, 10 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

American "warehouse club" Costco is enjoying rapid growth in the UK thanks to a legal loophole.

The wholesale supermarket, which charges a £25 annual joining fee for the privilege of bulk shopping at knockdown prices, has been able to open new stores very easily because UK planning legislation has no category for "warehouse club" outlets that also open their doors to individuals.

But Costco's competitors are held back as town planners curtail large-scale supermarket developments to preserve smaller city centre shops.

London-based planning consultant Tony Bowhill told Bloomberg: "Costco's had an easy ride because it's found a loophole in the UK planning system. It's amazing it calls itself a wholesaler rather than a retailer, because around 30 percent of its sales come from individual customers rather than businesses."

Costco has 15 120,000-square-foot stores throughout Britain at the moment and plans to build a further 25 over the next five years.

The expansion is little surprise: the company reported an 83 per cent rise in net UK sales between 2000 and 2003, whilst British business accounted for 80 per cent of the £1.6 billion in sales generated by the company outside the US and Canada last year. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Scientists point to 'healthy junk' future

Date: Thu, 10 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Scientists have predicted they will one day be able to create healthy versions of junk food.

They will be able to produce grease-laden foods like pies, chips and burgers that taste like DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

normal but are low in fat and sugar, they say.

Dr Gary Frost, head of nutrition at Hammersmith hospital, told the BBC he believes the development of 'healthy' processed foods is the only route to properly tackling obesity in the UK.

He said it was impossible to turn back the clock to a time when processed foods were not available and people prepared everything they ate from raw ingredients, but that new technologies could help develop a new generation of healthy processed foods.

Dr Frost also rejected government efforts to change the nation's eating habits, saying fruit and vegetable drives were doomed to failure.

The government outlined plans last November to educate the public to cut down on fatty, sugary and salty foods and take more exercise.

According to the Health Development Agency, there are nearly three times as many obese Britons as there were 20 years ago.

If current trends continue, at least one third of adults and one fifth of boys and a third of girls will be obese by 2020, it estimates.

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Pomegranate juice is next big thing

Date: Thu, 10 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

American juice producer POM Wonderful is poised to launch a pomegranate juice drink in British supermarkets next week.

The move will help raise the profile of pomegranate juice which is already billed as "the new cranberry" and set to become the last word in supermarket chic.

But the launch spells competition for the Pomegreat brand, produced by smaller concern RJA Food, which currently holds a virtual monopoly on the UK market.

Pomegreat shifts more than 180,000 litres of juice each month, through contracts with Waitrose, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Boots and health food chain Holland & Barrett.

It was short-listed in the World Juice Innovation Awards last October, according to a Daily Telegraph report.

But RJA's founder, Adam Pritchard, believes his smaller-scale juice business will hold out against competition. Although it will not be able to offer POM Wonderful's discounts or the clout, he believes the quality of his brand will secure a significant market share. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Pig boom boosts pork production

Date: Thu, 10 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK pig farmers are expecting a five per cent increase in animal numbers in 2005, after DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

favourable weather conditions last summer boosted fertility rates.

The Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) said they expected the total pig count this year to come close to 9.86 million, because good weather in 2004 restored fertility rates after a dip in the previous two years.

The increase in pig supplies will lead to higher slaughter rates, which should in turn boost up pork production by four per cent to 614,000 tonnes.

According to a report by Farming Life, the average sow productivity estimate for 2005 is 18.5, compared to 17.4 last year.

Experts say pork production will also benefit from projected lower feed costs for 2005, after a bumper cereal and soya crop last year.

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School caterers will reject below-55p contracts

Date: Fri, 11 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The two largest catering firms in the UK have both announced they will stop bidding for school dinner contracts worth less than 55 pence a meal.

Scolarest and Sodexho made separate moves to set the same lower limit levels for future contracts.

The news follows celebrity chef Jamie Oliver's high profile campaign to increase school dinner spending - a crusade which has sparked furious government debate in the lead up to elections.

Mike Bailey, chief executive of Scolarest parent company Compass, told Caterer Online: "Setting the limit is not the end of the debate but it's a bloody good start. You've got to aim high - if you don't ask, you don't get."

A spokesperson for the group added: "More money buys fresher produce and pays staff to stay in the kitchen longer and spend more time cooking."

Stephen Thorns, director of Sodexho's education division, said: "We realised that there was a gap between expectations and the cost of ingredients. Contract extensions won't necessarily be included in that 55p figure - they will be judged on their individual merits."

But the Local Authority Caterers Association, which represents public-sector caterers, believes the industry needs more than a minimum-spend pledge.

Chairman Neil Porter said that there needed to be a broader rethink about contract specifications. "There needs to be a greater understanding of the issues involved, such as increased staff hours, higher wages, training and kitchen improvements," he said. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New look for Irn Bru

Date: Fri, 11 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The manufacturers of Irn-Bru have announced makeover plans in a bid to increase its share in today's health conscious market.

Drinks firm AG Barr will spend £2.5 million on revamping and relaunching the diet version of its core brand.

Diet Irn-Bru will be repackaged in a silver can targeted at consumers who want the taste but not the sugar.

This will be the third makeover for slimline Irn-Bru. The Glasgow-based company launched Low Calorie Irn-Bru in 1980, and repackaged it as Diet Irn-Bru in 1991.

AG Barr hopes the relaunch will help build on the product's recent surge in sales. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

'Healthy' foods described as same as 'junk'

Date: Fri, 11 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Foods marketed as healthy options are often more jam-packed with calories than junk rivals, a new survey has revealed.

Nutritionists from the British Dietetic Association, which analysed a range of products for Good Housekeeping magazine, found that many foods are not as healthy as they first appear.

The survey slammed upmarket sandwich chain Pret a Manger, after it found that one of its cheese sandwiches contains more calories and higher fat levels than a Big Mac.

The More Than Mozarella sandwich has 508.4 calories, 29.5g of fat and 4.2g of fibre, compared with the Big Mac's 493 calories, 22.9g of fat and 5.9g of beneficial fibre.

Other unhealthy findings included Ribena blackcurrant juice which has more calories and sugar than a can of Coca-Cola, and McVitie's Go Ahead! Cranberry and Orange Cookies which contain more salt, fat and calories than the company's Jaffa Cake brand.

"The food people perceive as 'healthy' isn't always what it seems," said the magazine's consumer editor, Judith Gubbay.

Pret-a-Manger said to defend itself: "All cheese sandwiches are fattening but our range of food offers lighter options such as salads."
(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Northern Irish schools cook a better dinner Date: Fri, 11 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Northern Irish school caterers have defended themselves from criticism by Jamie Oliver over the standard of food served to British pupils.

The TV chef received the sharp end of tongues as Northern Irish school cooks insisted DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

the food produced by kitchens in his Channel Four programme does not reflect the dtandard of their own school dinners.

Jamie's School Dinners follows the chef replacing the processed 'rubbish' served at London schools with freshly cooked meals - but the Northern Ireland School Caterers Association (NISCA) says this kind of option is already available in schools in the province.

Janet McAllister, chair of NISCA, told BBC News that the association's staff were experts in providing a well-balanced meal.

"We would be somewhat concerned that parents in Northern Ireland would think we would have the same dependency on convenience foods that Mr Oliver has seen in his schools so far," Ms McAllister said.

She admitted that some 'convenience foods' like fish fingers and burgers may be on the menu in schools, but they are complemented by freshly-cooked stews, curries and soups.

NISCA has invited Mr Oliver to come and see for himself in Northern Irish schools. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Aeroplane food poisoning is thing of the past

Date: Fri, 11 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The days of food poisoning from aeroplane dinners may well be behind us, new research has revealed.

The report by US scientists Dr Mark Gendreau and Dr Alexandra Mangili identified 41 in-flight food poisoning outbreaks over the last 58 years - but not one of these occurred after 1999.

Experts attribute the improvement in airline food to the increased use of pre-packaged frozen foods, as well as better food handling and inspection.

Secretary-general for the British Air Transport Association said: "Airlines do take all the regulations in this area very seriously and are continually monitoring their processes with their catering providers and improving their standards. So it is perhaps nice to hear that this has been recognised by this research."

Dr Gendreau and Dr Mangili said: "Good hand hygiene has been proven to reduce the risk of disease transmission, and air travellers should make it part of their normal travel routine."

The study revealed that salmonella accounting for most food poisoning outbreaks. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Asda chief steps down

Date: Fri, 11 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The chief executive of Britain's second biggest supermarket, Asda, has resigned.

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The Wal-mart-owned food retailer today announced that CEO Tony DeNunzio would leave after 12 years with the chain, in which he oversaw considerable growth and market share expansion.

Mr DeNunzio will take up a position as chairman of the executive board at Dutch retailer Vendex KBB.

A spokesperson for Asda told Reuters that the supermarket is still deciding who will step into the 44-year-old's shoes, and that an announcement will be made shortly.

In the past five years, Asda has overtaken Sainsbury's and become the UK's largest food retailer after Tesco. The growth - thanks in part to its "every day low price" policy and its George clothing brand - expanded its workforce from 100,000 to 140,000 during the same period.

John Menzer, president and chief executive of Wal-Mart's international division, said the company was "greatly appreciative" of Mr DeNunzio for his contribution to the company.

"ASDA is an extremely strong company and has a superb management team with the depth and expertise to continue our growth into the future," he said.

Vendex is the largest non-food retailer in the Netherlands. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Greggs toasts strong results

Date: Mon, 14 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK bakery chain Greggs announced record returns today, with pre-tax profits for 2004 up over 15 per cent on the previous year.

The company, which sells bakery goods and sandwiches in 1,250 Greggs and Bakers Oven stores, made £46.7 million in the year ending January 1st, compared with £40.5 million the year before.

Turnover for the same period rose to £504 million, up from £457m in 2003.

The strong performance follows a year of reshuffle and expansion for Greggs, which opened 56 new shops in 2004 - a net addition of 32 following re-sites and closures. Two new stores in Belgium doubled the bakery chain's portfolio in that country and helped consolidate its European presence.

"Our good progress during 2004 reflects the benefits of increasing core volumes through our established shops, the addition of a net 32 new units, and our continued focus on controlling costs," managing director, Sir Michael Darrington, told Just Food.

"A good consumer response to our marketing campaigns and generally favourable weather helped us to achieve better than expected like-for-like sales growth in the final quarter, despite the widely reported weakness of high street retailing over the christmas

period."

Chairman Derek Netherton announced plans to expand the chain further. "During 2005 we plan to accelerate both the opening of new shops and the refurbishment of established outlets," he said.

"We will be supporting this retail development with substantial investment in our manufacturing facilities, including the construction of a new savouries plant in Newcastle upon Tyne."

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Sainsbury's names new financial chief

Date: Mon, 14 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Britain's third largest supermarket chain, Sainsbury's, today announced it has appointed Darren Shapland as its chief financial officer.

Mr Shapland, 38, replaces Roger Matthews, who resigned in October last year to pursue interests in both the private and public sectors. Mr Mathews will leave the supermarket after preliminary results in May, although the effective date of Mr Shapland's appointment has not yet been settled.

Chief executive, Justin King, told Just Food: "I'm delighted that Darren will be joining Sainsbury's. He has excellent experience in the retail sector and has undertaken a number of hands-on and broad financial roles. He will be a great asset to Sainsbury's and the company's management team as we continue to implement the plans outlined last October."

"I believe the Sainsbury's brand has great potential and look forward to being able to play a key role in the company's future plans," Mr Shapland said.

Philip Hampton, chairman of Sainsbury's, said he was looking forward to working with Mr Shapland and thanked Mr Matthews for his "significant contribution" to the company.

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Creamy super-potato is consumer hit

Date: Mon, 14 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Sainsbury's is struggling to keep up with demand for an exclusive "built-in-butter" baking potato.

The supermarket claims its specially bred Vivaldi potato is so creamy in texture, most people feel they do not need butter with it.

A new-potato-sized version of the designer vegetable has been on shelves since 2002, but Sainsbury's introduced Vivaldis that are big enough for baking on an exclusive basis last month.

The potato appeals to low-fat diet trends and Sainsbury's has been struggling to keep up DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

with consumer demand.

John Maylam, Sainsbury's senior buyer, told the Mail Online: "The potato industry has been trying to develop this potato for years and we've finally got it."

"A variety like Vivaldi only ever appears once in a blue moon. It's the perfect dish for everyone on a low-fat diet and tastes so good that adding anything to it isn't necessary."

The Vivaldi is the results of breeding between two existing potato varieties, both known for their creamy characteristics.

Sainsbury's charges £2.49 for a 2.5kg bag of the baking-sized version. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Shrinkwrap gets easier

Date: Mon, 14 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Stretch-wrapping developer, Lantech, has launched a shrink-wrapping machine that can deliver perfect lap seals without the need for adjustment.

A new self-threading head on the SW-5000 machine perfectly centres the lap seal every time, without any adjustments being made to the set up, Lantech claims.

"This machine breaks new ground in shrink packaging by eliminating operator intervention in setup of the lap-seal," Jean-Louis Limousin, Lantech's shrink packaging design leader told Food Production Daily.

The news will be of particular interest to the meat industry, which packs its products with oxygen-permeable film so meat retains its desired red look.

The SW-5000 offers 75 packages per minute and has been designed as a zero-maintenance machine.

It also promises to cut costs for food manufacturers, by using flat film that costs between eight and 13 per cent less than centre-folded film.

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Sweet new bid for European sugar-alternatives market

Date: Mon, 14 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The European sweetener market is set to face new competition, as Arla Food Ingredients bids for EU approval of its low-calorie sugar alternative, tagatose.

The milk-derived sugar alternative already has clearance for US, Australian, New Zealand and Korean markets, where it is popular with manufacturers of a diverse range of foods and drinks.

The Denmark-based company has not yet had tagatose approved for the Europoean market, but has applied to the UK's Food Standards Agency for clearance which Arla expects to come "within this year".

Tagatose - which was originally developed in the US - is designed for use with other high intensity sweeteners like aspartame, acesulfame-K or sucralose and costs approximately three times as much as ordinary sugar.

It joins a new generation of sweeteners which allow food producers to cash in on the burgeoning market for healthier foods.

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Scientists unlock green tea's anti-cancer secret

Date: Tue, 15 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A chemical found in green tea could provide the basis of a new family of anti-cancer drugs, scientists have claimed.

Tests by UK and Spanish researchers have shown that polyphenol EGCG taken from green tea leaves inhibits cancer cell growth.

The effect was evident even at low concentrations equivalent to drinking two or three cups of green tea a day.

The naturally occurring chemical binds to the same enzyme targeted by chemotherapy drugs - dihydrofolate reductase (DHFR) - and stops it promoting synthesis in tumour cells.

Previous studies have suggested that green tea drinkers are less likely to suffer certain forms of cancer, but this is the first time scientists have been able to establish the reason why.

Researcher Professor Roger Thorneley said: "This is a very exciting discovery...we may be able to develop new anti-cancer drugs based on the structure of the EGCG molecule."

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Sweet permission for Napier Brown

Date: Tue, 15 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Sugar giant Napier Brown Foods has been cleared to add James Budgett Sugars to its portfolio.

The UK's Competition Commission announced this morning that it is happy for Napier to fully integrate James Budgett into its group, after it formally acquired the company in a £17.5 million deal.

With James Budgett on board, Napier stands as the leading manufacturer of sugar in the UK. The company boasts a turnover in excess of £200 million and employs over 250 people at its production sites in Normanton and Runcorn.

"This is a very satisfactory outcome which we believe is good for our suppliers, customers, the industry as a whole and our shareholders," Napier chairman Pat Ridgwell DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 98H

told Just Food.

James Budgett imports and distributes refined and raw cane sugars from members of the European Union as well as African, Caribbean and Pacific 'sugar protocol' countries. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Farmers urge Brown for budget allowances

Date: Tue, 15 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

With the budget just a day away, the National Farmers' Union (NFU) believes more needs to be done to support the farming community.

The NFU wants to see more incentives rather than additional taxes and regulatory burdens.

There are signs that things are improving for farmers, but action is still needed to give them a sustainable future.

Farmers' incomes have improved in recent years, but last years' s rises were mainly due to the favourable exchange rate and the weather, neither of which form the basis for a sustainable recovery.

The NFU are therefore calling for production costs to be carefully managed, while the various forms of existing taxation relief are maintained.

Among the changes the NFU wishes to see is the development of the UK biofuel industry and it believes taxes on agricultural pesticides are adding to production costs too.

Therefore, the NFU believe that a voluntary supportive approach involving training, advice, education and positive action is the way forward.

First Year Capital Allowances on new pesticides items such as sprayers, specialist nozzles, and biobeds should be increased to 100 per cent to encourage business in their pursuit of environmental improvement, it claims.

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Cerestar expands soy product range

Date: Tue, 15 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Cerestar Food & Pharma Specialities Europe has launched a new range of functional soy flours for the bakery market.

The new soy products include C*Protall, whole bean soy flour (full fat soy flour), soy grits and the toasted and enzyme active soy flour, C*Prolia, defatted soy flour and C*Prosant, textured soy flour.

Cerestar hopes the new products will help expand the soy market, a burgeoning trend which saw European consumption of soy and dairy beverages rise by 20 per cent in 2002.

"In bakery products, healthy foods and many other food applications, soy flour offers proven advantages over animal proteins, including lower cost, increased functionality and greater shelf life," Cerestar marketing director, Mark Wastijn, told Food Ingredients First.

The soy flours are principally targeted for use in breads, muffins, doughnuts, whole-grain products, cereals and nutritional bars.

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Bioriginal prepares to unveil new nutritional supplements

Date: Tue, 15 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

A leading producer of dietary supplements is set to unveil a new range of products with applications for health and functional foods.

Bioriginal Food & Science will launch a powdered Essential Fatty Acids (EFA) matrix as well as three new product concepts at a California trade show later this month.

The launches will present new opportunities to food manufacturers looking to develop healthier or value-added products.

The first new concept is Daily Kids DHA - a flavoured drink mix containing powdered Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) which helps boost brain development. The mix can be added to milk or water to enhance flavour and nutritional value.

Bioriginal will also launch a flavoured emulsion containing fish oil marketed as DHA Focus for Kids.

The third product to be unveiled is Omega Flavoured EFA Oils which, Bioriginal claims, have improved taste, smell and texture, and are available in flax, fish, borage and omega-3-6-9 formulas.

As well as producing its own capsules, the company supplies nutritional supplements to producers of sports nutrition bar, drinks and functional foods manufacturers. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Common food additive could cut diabetes risk

Date: Wed, 16 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

A common food additive could cut the risk of diabetes that comes with a high-fat diet, scientists have claimed.

The US Department of Agriculture has discovered that HPMC, a form of soluble cellulose already used to provide texture in many foods and drugs, slows down the rate at which the body absorbs fat.

Animal tests showed the slower rate of absorption cuts the risk of insulin resistance - a condition which often leads to type 2 diabetes.

The US chemists believe HPMC could help manufacturers develop junk foods without DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

some of the health risks usually associated with them.

Just five grams of the tasteless, odourless compound would have a positive impact on health, they claim.

Researcher, Dr Wallace Yokoyama, said: "Obviously, the less fat you eat, the better off you are. But if you're going to eat high-fat foods, then adding HPMC to it might help limit the damage."

Amanda Vezey, from Diabetes UK, said: "Although this research is interesting it has only been tested so far on animals and much more work would need to be done before we could draw any conclusions about its effect on humans."

The news comes less than a week after comments by prominent nutritionist Dr Gary Frost that the development of 'healthy' processed foods was the only real solution to Britain's burgeoning obesity problem.

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UK farmers want GM

Date: Wed, 16 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The president of the US firm Monsanto has claimed that the majority of UK farmers want to cultivate GM (genetically modified) crops, the BBC reports.

Hugh Grant, president of the biotechnology firm that pioneered GM, expressed his frustration with the pace of change in European countries on BBC Radio 4's Farming Today programme.

He claimed that contrary to a survey last year which revealed 90 per cent of Britons were against the development of GM in Britain, GM crops will appear on UK farmland within five to ten years, as most UK farmers wish to pursue GM cultivation.

The UK government currently allows the cultivation of one GM plant - herbicide-tolerant maize - but plans to grow the crop commercially have been abandoned by the German firm behind the project.

In 2008, a number of other companies including Monsanto will bid to grow other varieties of GM crops despite Monsanto's decision two years ago to end its European seed cereal business in the UK.

The Monsanto boss believes GM technology could help develop plants with specific health benefits in the future and he stressed the benefits a number of other countries are already reaping from GM cultivation.

However, a number of critics in the UK and Europe insist more research is required before the farming sector can switch to large-scale commercial GM cultivation. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Acrylamide does not pose cancer risk

Date: Wed, 16 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Scientists have dismissed fears that acrylamide, a naturally occurring chemical in baked and fried foods, increases the risk of developing breast cancer.

Harvard School of Public Health and the Swedish Karolinska Institute jointly surveyed 43,000 women, but found that those who ate more acrylamide-rich foods were at no higher risk.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said soon after the chemical was first discovered in 2002 lab tests on animals suggested it was carcinogenic.

Acrylamide occurs in foods like chips, crisps and coffee as a result of a reaction between specific amino acids and sugars that occurs at high temperatures.

The research first assessed the diets of women from the Swedish Women's Lifestyle and Health Cohort in 1991, and then again in 2002 when it was found that 667 (1.6 per cent) had developed breast cancer.

There was no correlation between those that developed the cancer and those that consumed higher amounts of acrylamide. The average acrylamide intake was 25.9 micrograms per day.

Harvard researcher Loreli Mucci told the BBC: "It's reassuring to see that the study suggests that the amount of acrylamide consumed in the Swedish diet is not associated with an excess risk of breast cancer.

"Given the widespread public health implications of acrylamide, however, it is important to examine the risk associated with other cancers as well as neurological conditions"

Henry Scowcroft, science information officer at Cancer Research UK, said: "We welcome the results of this study, which suggest that acrylamide in food has no effect on human breast cancer rates."

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Marmite adverts 'terrify' youngsters

Date: Wed, 16 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Adverts featuring a huge blob of Marmite have been pulled from children's viewing slots after the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) received complaints that it was terrifying youngsters.

The commercials show crowds either running away or diving into a building-high dollop of Marmite, in a pastiche of 1950s science fiction classic, The Blob.

They end with the yeast extract spread's longstanding slogan: "You either love it or hate it".

But Marmite manufacturers Unilver Bestfoods have had to push the ads back to a later slot after six viewers told the ASA that they had distressed their children when they were shown around programmes aimed at youth.

"All the viewers said that their children had been terrified by the advertisements," said a spokesperson for the ASA. "Four said their children refused to watch television after seeing it and a further two said their children had nightmares as a result."

Unilever Bestfoods criticised the ASA for being "unnecessarily prescriptive", arguing that only very young children were affected by the advertisements.

The organisation responsible for vetting ads before they are released, the Broadcast Advertising Clearance Centre, also backed the commercial series. They represent "very mild horror that was clearly over the top and comical", it said.

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Cheese packagers break new ground at Interpak

Date: Wed, 16 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

This year's Interpack show in Dusseldorf has kicked off with some important innovations for cheese producers.

Packaging firm Ilapack is revealing new machinery developments, as well as an extensive range of resealable packaging solutions.

The company's seal sachet machines are used by multi-national cheese producers in the UK, the US, and across Europe.

The stainless steel Delta 3000 HSR is an electronic horizontal flow-wrapper for high-speed modified atmosphere packaging, and uses a single jaw, long-dwell sealing system to ensure high production speed and integrity sealing.

It can produce high quality MAP packs at speeds of up to 160 per minute on products weighing between 150g and 1.5kg, and is marketed for producers of delicate, sticky or irregular-shaped cheeses in various formats.

Ilapack is also debuting the Strip-It system, an integrated resealable pack applicator designed to apply recloseable fastenings to hermetically sealed packs, and the Astra PC Alfa, a range of multi-head weighers offering fast and accurate weighing for processed cheeses.

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Fish, chips and peace of mind

Date: Wed, 16 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

A contract caterer that supplies canteen meals to 120 of the UK's biggest businesses has made moves to protect endangered fish stocks with the withdrawal of cod from all its menus.

Reading-based Charlton House believes the change will save around nine million portions of Britain's favourite fish every year and is hoping other contract caterers will follow its lead.

The action follows conservation reports which say Atlantic cod stocks have fallen "outside safe biological limits".

The move to pull cod from the menu was backed by all of Charlton House's clients, including corporate names like BUPA, Sony, Lovells and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Workers will still be able to get their fix of fish and chips, but instead of battered cod, hake, haddock and pollock will be served.

Figures from the Word Wildlife Fund says that numbers of mature cod in the North Sea have halved since the early 1960s.

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UK women not hitting five-a-day target

Date: Thu, 17 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Only a third of British women eat the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables, a new study has revealed.

Cancer Research UK found that just 33 per cent of 2,300 women polled hit the government's five-a-day target, even though the overwhelming majority knew that doing so has an impact on health.

Diet is linked to around a third of all cancers.

The poll also found almost half of women (49 per cent) think they are overweight or obese - another factor that can contribute to cancer.

Dr Lesley Walker, director of cancer information at Cancer Research UK, told the Mail Online: "We are very concerned by the results of this survey which show that, in many areas, women are making lifestyle choices that are likely to increase their risk of cancer."

She added: "At least half of all cancers are preventable. We can reduce our own risk of cancer and we can do this throughout our lives."

Another Cancer Research study published earlier this week found that the British population is giving up its traditional fried breakfast in favour of healthier options like fruit and porridge.

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Tomatoes could help combat cancer

Date: Thu, 17 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The American Society for Clinical Nutrition has announced that including tomatoes as part of a balanced diet could play a significant role in preventing prostate cancer.

Lycopene, a cartenoid found in a small set of plant foods, is thought to reduce prostate cancer risk due to its high antioxidant activity. Research by the society has found that tomatoes have a significantly higher proportion of this component than other vegetables. DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

It found that lycopene was present in higher amounts in cooked tomatoes and thickened forms of the vegetable such as sauces and tomato paste.

Unlike other vegetables, which lose their vitamin potential during cooking, lycopene in tomatoes increases during cooking.

Suggested uses of tomatoes to promote reduced prostate cancer risk include combining tomatoes with garlic and onions in sauces, and reducing the amount of fats and oils used in preparing tomatoes to maximise the absorption of lycopene. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New methods to combat unwanted allergen leaks

Date: Thu, 17 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

A UK laboratory has developed new allergen tests that will make it easier for food manufacturers to adhere to tough labelling laws.

Reading Scientific Services claims to be the first UK lab to offer commercial testing for ingredients like pistachio, pecan, celery and mustard.

The service would help slash the risk of potentially harmful allergens entering food manufacturers' product ranges - as well as the brand-destroying product recalls and costly lawsuits that could ensue.

Tougher European rules on allergen labelling and due diligence were introduced in November 2004, and are due for total enforcement by 25 November this year. They require food makers to provide a comprehensive ingredients listing on the label of potential food allergens.

According to Food Navigator, the test developed by Reading Scientific Services employs polymerase chain reaction techniques to amplify and detect specific morsels of DNA that relate to particular allergens.

Barbara Hirst, technical manager of the molecular biology department at RSSL, said: "The test is extremely sensitive to each allergen, but we do have a stated detection limit".

About four per cent of adults and eight per cent of children in the EU suffer from food allergies, according to the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations.

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BSE worry warning

Date: Thu, 17 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Worry over mad cow disease has dropped by almost a quarter since 2000, a new survey has revealed.

The poll, carried out by MORI on behalf of the Food Standards Agency (FSA), showed that British shoppers are more concerned by the levels of salt and fat in their baskets DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

than they are about BSE-infected meat.

Concerns about the brain-wasting affliction had fallen from 66 per cent in 2000 to 44 per cent in 2004.

The survey also reveals that the number of people who claim to eat the recommended five fruit and vegetable portions a day has grown from just over a quarter (26 per cent) in 2000 to half of all consumers (51 per cent) in 2004.

This result - which accounts for 3,329 people - is surprising in the light of Cancer Research UK findings that two thirds of women say they fall short of the five-a-day target. Cancer Research polled 2,300 women.

"Over the last five years, the trend among consumers has been towards healthier eating. People are more worried about levels of salt, fat and sugar in food and the accuracy of food labels and less concerned about issues like BSE," the FSA said in a statement. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Gordon tucks into Big Apple

Date: Thu, 17 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Hell's Kitchen's angry man Gordon Ramsay is set to take on America.

The celebrity gastronome will open his first US restaurant at New York's Marriott Righa Royal Hotel next year, and also has plans for a venture in Miami.

Mr Ramsay told Catering magazine: "It's the burning ambition of every top chef in the world to succeed in New York.

"To be there amongst the best in the world is so exciting. I thrive on competition and New York has restaurants from all the top chefs in the world, from Thomas Keller to Jean-George Vongerichten."

The New York restaurant will split food-lovers between a 100-seat fine-dining restaurant and a less formal dining area, but both will serve food that Mr Ramsay's spokeswoman said would be "Gordon Ramsay through and through".

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Tooth enamel protector presents ingredient breakthrough

Date: Thu, 17 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

A Dutch whey ingredients producer has won a prize for a novel additive that helps protect tooth enamel from erosion by acidic drinks.

Borculo Domo, which has kept tight-lipped about the ingredient whilst it awaits a patent, claims its new whey isolate is the first product of its kind and presents the multi-billion-pound drinks industry with major opportunities.

The ingredient coats the enamel with a protective layer that fends off erosion caused by acidic fruit and carbonated drinks.

Its inventor, Borculo Dolo, joins a growing number of ingredients manufacturers looking to cash in on problems caused by erosion by developing new food additives that promote oral health.

"Traditionally the problem has been tooth decay because of the sugar in drinks but increasingly we are seeing erosion from the acid," head of research at the University of Birmingham's school of dentistry, Professor Tony Smith, told Nutra Ingredients Europe.

Whereas dental decay is localised, erosion by acidic drinks attacks the whole surface area of the tooth and is much harder to repair.

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Consumers ditch waif ideal

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The never-ending quest to be thin could soon become a thing of the past, new research has claimed.

The diet-related food industry raked in US\$86.8 billion in 2003 from sales in the US and Europe - and is expected to hit the \$100 billion mark by 2008 - but according to market analyst Datamoniter, the type of diet products consumers want is about to change.

More and more people aspire to a toned, muscular physique over a waifish figure, according to the report.

As a result, they are ditching low-carb eating regimes like the Atkins plan, and coupling more moderate, easy-to-follow diets with visits to the gym.

"This shift in perspective provides new opportunities for the food and beverage industry to provide consumers with more than simply meals - but with a lifestyle that they can buy into for years to come," said Datamonitor consumer analyst, Lawrence Gould.

The move away from fad diets follows deepening consumer disillusionment: Some 70 per cent of people who embark on a weight-loss eating plan give up within the first three months, and almost 90 per cent of dieters gain the weight back within a year. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Robertson's relaunch

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK food producer RHM is gearing up to re-launch its traditional jam brand.

The company plans to revitalise its Robertson's preserves with new recipes, packaging and the slogan, "fruitier than ever".

The range includes recipes with higher fruit contents across seven-core jams, as well as two new flavours: strawberry and vanilla, and berries and cherries.

The jars will also be revamped, with a new, striped, twist-off cap and more modern DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

labels.

"Our new products have been designed to give consumers their most loved jam flavours with an exciting twist," Robertson's head of marketing, Patrick Finlay, told Just Food.

"Robertson's is such an important consumer sign-post in the sector that, by investing in the brand, we can refresh the category and keep consumers excited about jam,"

The new Robertson's jars will hit stores at the end of this month, and in May the company will promote the jam with in-store promotions and TV sponsorship. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Geographically protected status contravenes WTO rules

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

The geographically protected status that stops producers making foods like champagne or Melton Mowbray pies outside their region of origin has come under fire from World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The WTO disputes panel has told the European Union (EU) to open the system to traditionally made foodstuffs from non-EU countries.

The panel said that by excluding non-EU products like Alberta beef or Florida oranges from geographical protection, the EU is breaking WTO rules.

The system currently protects EU products made by traditional methods in specific regions from being imitated and potentially undermined by non-regional competitors.

The case was brought before the WTO by Australia and the United States.

Geographically protected status has been awarded to products like Parma ham, Cornish clotted cream and Brie cheese - although its Cheddar counterpart was denied the status after it was ruled too generic.

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Sizzling new ads for Danish bacon

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

The Danish Bacon and Meat Council is to spend £1 million on a new UK advertising campaign.

A new series of ads will feature larger-than-life bacon rashers - in a sandwich, on the plate, and sizzling in the pan. All the posters will bear the slogan, "For more bacon taste, look for the Danish sizzle on your supermarket's own packs".

"We're continuing the theme of our previous campaign - focusing consumers' attention on the Danish sizzle - but with a totally different creative approach," the council's marketing director, John Howard, told Meat News.

The bacon body will also post ads in London Underground stations for the first time, as DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

part of a marketing strategy to target a different audience.

"It's designed to appeal to food-lovers - twenty- to forty-something consumers who love high quality bacon," Mr Howard said.

The Danish Bacon and Meat Council will launch the campaign in food magazines after Easter, and tube posters will appear at the middle of next month at 475 central London sites.

They will also release a series of humorous radio adverts featuring Green Wing comedy star Mark Heap and the slogan, "The big taste of Danisssshhhhhhhhh".

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IBS cookbook taps new trend

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

A chef is tapping into the market for food that does helps soothe Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).

Sophie Braimbridge has published a cookery book, Healthy Eating for IBS, which offers sufferers of the chronic illness recipes they can tuck into without aggravating their symptoms.

The recipes are a range of low, medium and high fibre dishes, designed with advice from dietician Erica Jankovich to cater for the differing requirements of IBS patients.

About a fifth of people in the UK, mostly women, have suffered with the syndrome at some point in their lives. Symptoms include diarrhoea, constipation and bloating, as well as tiredness, backache and headaches.

The innovative cookery book is part of a growing trend of concern for the effects of specific foods upon the body, and signals a wealth of opportunities for food manufacturers to produce specialist IBS products.

Ms Braimbridge has written several healthy-eating recipe books and runs cookery classes in Wimbledon. She originally trained with the Roux brothers and has cooked at La Gavroche and the River Cafe.

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Andy Bond to head up Asda

Date: Fri, 18 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Wal-Mart has named Andy Bond as the new chief executive for its UK supermarket subsidiary, Asda.

Mr Bond has been promoted from his position as Asda's chief operating officer, to succeed Tony DeNunzio who announced his resignation on March 11th.

He will helm the company as it looks to boost earnings and close the gap on UK industry leader, Tesco.

Asda's share of the £105 billion food retail sector grew to 16.9 per cent in the 12 weeks to February 27th, up 16.7 per cent on the previous year.

"It is clear to us that Andy is the right person to lead the next phase of Asda's success," John Menzer, president and chief executive of parent company Wal-Mart, said in the statement.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to appoint someone from inside the business."

Mr Bond joined the supermarket 11 years ago, in which time he has held various marketing positions as well as the COO role he began six months ago. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Opportunities for foods that take the stress out of allergies

Date: Mon, 21 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

New research has highlighted manufacturing opportunities for allergen free food products.

Dr Rebecca Knibb of the University of Derby found that parents who are told their children suffer from food allergies suffer greater stress levels than people who learn they have cancer.

Over one third (36 per cent) of a sample of 120 parents at allergy centres showed clinical levels of anxiety.

"These figures reflect the anguish that parents go through when they discover their child has a food allergy," Dr Knibb told the Scotsman Online. "They suffer great anxiety at what this might entail for their child's health and welfare."

Food manufacturers could capitalise on the findings and ease anxiety by developing more allergen-free versions of those foods and drinks that traditionally contain problem ingredients.

Nuts and dairy products are among the foods most likely to produce an allergic reaction, with nut allergies sometimes causing potentially fatal anaphylactic shock. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

PM backs Jamie's School Dinners

Date: Mon, 21 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Tony Blair has pledged he will improve the quality of Britain's school dinners, following mounting pressure from celebrity chef Jamie Oliver.

Jamie's School Dinners programme, which has been running on Channel Four, has shown Mr Oliver trying to provide children with a healthy alternative at affordable prices in the school canteen, and now his efforts are to become the basis for a nationwide project.

Prime Minister Tony Blair has suggested that schools being given funding to refurbish their buildings could use the money to create better-equipped canteens and, writing in the Observer, said dinner ladies will be given better training to enable them to provide youngsters with more healthy options.

Instead of simply providing children with processed meals, food will be prepared from scratch, just like the TV chef has been doing as part of his scheme to promote healthy eating in London's schools.

Mr Blair promised to set up a new School Food Trust to "draw on the remarkable work of Jamie Oliver in schools, of the Soil Association in encouraging the use of organic and local produce in school meals, and on the best advice on nutrition and eliminating processed foods".

"It may take a little time to change children's tastes," he added, "but it will be worth the effort if we can get them enjoying healthy and good quality food at school."
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Hefty price tag for Quorn firm sale

Date: Mon, 21 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Europe's largest producer of the vegetarian Quorn brand is to be sold for around £250 million.

UK-based manufacturer Marlow Foods will be put to auction following an approach from a trade buyer.

The news comes two years after owner Montagu Private Equity backed a management buyout of the company from owner AstraZeneca for just £,70m.

Marlow Foods has enjoyed steady growth since it launched its flagship meat substitute, Quorn, in 1985 - but profits have soared since the buyout in early 2003.

The firm's annual Quorn sales at the time of the deal stood at £100 million a year.

But since then, the company has grown at an average of 50 per cent per year, while profits for the year ending in December 2003 stood at £26 million, compared to £1.5 million in 2002.

The anticipated £250 million price tag has been regarded as something of a coup.

For more information visit:

http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/news/article.html?in_article_id=399068&in_page_id=2 (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Scientists confirm oysters' aphrodisiac powers

Date: Mon, 21 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Oysters have long been associated with romance, and now scientists have confirmed they boost levels of sex hormones.

American and Italian researchers found that bivalve molluscs - the group of shellfish that includes oysters - contain high levels of rare amino acids that trigger the hormone increases associated with sexual arousal.

Dr George Fisher, who led the study at Barry University, Miami, said: "I'm amazed. For centuries, old wives' tales have said that eating raw molluscs - oysters in particular - would stimulate the libido but there has really been no scientific evidence as to why and if this occurs."

Previous speculation about the aphrodisiac effect of oysters has concentrated on their zinc content - a mineral found in high levels in human sperm.

The legendary 18th century lover Casanova is rumoured to have breakfasted on 50 oysters a day.

For more information visit:

http://news.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?view=DETAILS&xml=/news/2005/03/20/noys20.xml

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No Popeye effect for eight-day-old spinach

Date: Mon, 21 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Fresh spinach needs to be eaten shortly after harvest if consumers are to benefit from its nutritional value, new research has revealed.

Scientists in the US have found that refrigerated spinach loses much of its folate and carotenoid content after just eight days - and un-refrigerated leaves lose them even faster.

Dr Luke LaBorde and Srilatha Pandrangi of Penn State University studied the nutritional content of spinach stored at four, ten and 20 degrees Celsius.

"This has implications in the shipping process," Dr LaBorde told the Journal of Food Science.

Spinach that is transported across the country often spends extended periods in unrefrigerated shipping trucks and loses much of its nutrient content by the time it reaches the consumer.

The findings mean that frozen and canned spinach are often higher in nutritional value than the fresh leaves often bought by more health conscious consumers.

For more information visit: http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/news-ng.asp?n=58855-spinach-study-outlines (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

New regulation laws: fewer inspections but tougher fines

Date: Mon, 21 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

The government has announced a pan-industry regulation overhaul that promises food sector firms fewer inspections, more incentives for good track records and tougher penalties for the rule-breakers.

Under the new legislation, 31 of the 63 national regulators currently governing UK industry will be absorbed into seven umbrella organisations, including the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The new system will come into force within the next two to four years.

The Cabinet Office will also establish a new Better Regulation Executive to oversee regulator performance.

Food company inspections will drop by a third, but those firms found in breach of food safety and quality laws will be subjected to heftier, risk-based fines which the government claims will benefit the industry.

"The benefits of a risk-based approach are that it focuses regulators' resources in those areas where the risks to society are greatest, ensuring inspections of riskier businesses that may not otherwise take place and substantially reducing the costs incurred by the majority of low-risk businesses," a government spokesperson said.

The proposals adhere to recommendations made by Sainsbury's chairman, Philip Hampton in a report published last Friday, in which he advised government to increase fines so that they act as a real deterrent.

For more information visit: http://www.foodnavigator.com/news/news-ng.asp?n=58868-fines-uk-clamp (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Fast food giants use new way to woo customers

Date: Tue, 22 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

A number of global fast food chains have responded to an increasing interest in healthy eating with salad ranges.

As concern grows about soaring levels of obesity, burger giant McDonald's and rival Burger King have both introduced ranges of salads, fruits and vegetables. McDonald's has launched a worldwide campaign to promote healthy eating to children, while Burger King is yet to unveil its marketing strategy.

The government is expected to announce a crackdown on junk food marketing, particularly to children, and fast food groups have embraced the current change in public opinion towards healthier foods.

However some have claimed the companies are still unhealthy and are using healthier advertising simply to woo customers

McDonald's executive vice-president and global chief marketing officer, Larry Light, heavily promoted the company's new healthier ranges at the annual Incorporated Society of British Advertisers conference this month.

"We're reinventing marketing to children... it can't be about blame, it must be about changing the game," Media Week quoted him as saying.

Mr Light said one of the big challenges was how to make vegetables "cool", adding that the answer is in "compelling packaging and entertaining marketing". He stated that McDonald's is now a global leader in salad sales and said the firm was now serving up "healthy eating" dishes at its restaurants across the globe.

Dominic Stead, joint managing director at Media Planning Group, said that McDonald's new strategy is a necessity in the current climate of health awareness. "If you were McDonald's, this is a good reaction to that situation," he commented. "It's getting on the front foot, isn't it? I imagine others will follow in their wake."

Jeremy Preston, director of the Food Advertising Unit of the Advertising Association, said that McDonald's should be commended for responding to challenges from the government and the public.

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Further concerns raised about GM crops

Date: Tue, 22 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

GM trials for Britain's biggest crop show that wildlife and the environment would suffer if it was grown in the UK.

Bayer CropScience, the company that owns the patent on the GM oil seed rape being tested, has announced that it is not going ahead with its application to grow the crop in Europe.

The British government has been pushing to introduce GM crops but the results of the trial, published by the Royal Society, has scuppered plans to licence crops in the UK.

The crop of genetically modified winter oil seed rape formed part of the world's most comprehensive crop study. The extensive trial was launched ahead of the last election in an effort to calm public fears about the potential health and environmental dangers of GM food.

The trial tested the effects of GM and non-GM crops on bees, butterflies, beetles, weeds and other farmland wildlife in two farming regimes. Experts expected the GM crops, which use fewer applications of herbicide than conventional crops, to benefit wildlife, but for three out of the four crops tested the reverse was the case.

Mark Avery, of the RSPB, said: "Six years ago, before the farm-scale trials, we were told that GM crops were good for wildlife and good for farmers' profits. Now, against all expectations, we are told they are bad for both. It is bad news for the biotech industry."

Conservative environment spokesman, Tim Yeo, said that the party would not allow GM crops to be grown in Britain unless it could be proved they were safe for people and the environment.

Elliot Morley, the environment minister, said the trials demonstrated the government's "precautionary approach on GM crops".

No further information.

(C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Changes to turkey product help boost sales

Date: Tue, 22 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Bernard Matthews Turkey Twizzlers have seen a steep rise in sales in spite of a televised attack by celebrity chef Jamie Oliver.

Mr Oliver, 29, is currently running a nationwide campaign to improve school meals and criticised the turkey twists on his Channel 4 show Jamie's School Dinners.

Twizzlers have now been banned from many schools, but the Norfolk-based company has leapt to the defence of its product and claims sales have gone up, partly due to increased publicity. The sales increase is believed to be around a third.

Managing director, David Joll, said: "A Twizzler has much less fat than a sausage... yet we don't hear Jamie Oliver telling people not to eat sausages."

Mr Joll said the company had no plans to withdraw its product and insisted that the Turkey Twizzlers recipe was changed last year. The product now has seven per cent fat per 100g cooked, well within the ten per cent allowed in schools.

Firm Scholarest, which supplies more than 2000 schools with meals, has removed Twizzlers from all its menus.

The government this week unveiled a new mini manifesto on better school meals for children. Education secretary Ruth Kelly announced that a School Meals Trust would be set up and more money provided for the school meals service.

No further information.

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Research confirms love powers of oysters

Date: Tue, 22 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Oysters are a powerful aphrodisiac, a new survey claims.

A team of US and Italian chemists found that bivalve molluscs, the group of shellfish that includes oysters, contain compounds that have been shown to be effective in releasing sexual hormones such as testosterone and oestrogen.

Presenting the team's findings at the annual meeting of the American Chemical Society, George Fisher, a professor of chemistry at Barry University in Miami, said: "The supposition for centuries was that oysters, clams and mussels have been thought to have aphrodisiac properties, and they were eaten raw for that purpose.

"We found there might be a scientific basis for the aphrodisiac properties of these molluscs. We think that this could be the first scientific evidence of some substance."

The researchers claim that compounds such as D-aspartic acid and NMDA (N-methyl-D-aspartate) in shellfish stimulate the secretion of testosterone and oestrogen in humans.

Visit http://www.chemistry.org/portal/a/c/s/1/home.html for more information. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Natural yoghurt combats bad breath

Date: Tue, 22 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Sugarless yoghurt could help beat bad breath, tooth decay and gum disease, a new study has revealed.

Research by Japanese scientists found eating yoghurt reduced levels of hydrogen sulphide, a major cause of bad breath, in 80 per cent of volunteers.

Active bacteria in the yoghurt, specifically Lactobacillus bulgaricus and Streptococcus thermophilus, are key to tackling bad breath, according to the researchers.

Presenting the findings at a meeting of the International Association for Dental Research, the team said 24 volunteers took part in the study and spent two weeks avoiding yoghurts and similar foods, like cheese. They were given strict instructions on oral hygiene, diet and medication intake.

The volunteers then ate 90 grams of yoghurt a day for six weeks and the study showed that hydrogen sulphide levels decreased in 80 per cent of participants. Levels of plaque and the gum disease gingivitis were also significantly lower among those eating yoghurt.

Dr Nigel Carter, chief executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, said: "Although this research is still in the early stages there is no doubt that sugar-free yoghurts provide a much healthier alternative to sweets and chocolate, and we would encourage snackers to incorporate them into their diet."

No further information.

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New ALA combination from Labochim

Date: Tue, 22 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Italian firm Labochim has introduced a new alpha-lipoic acid (ALA)chemically combined with the vitamin-like substance L-carnitine.

The company, which primarily manufactures active ingredients for the pharmaceutical industry, claims that the patented ALA combination both increases the antioxidant's solubility and improves the properties of L-carnitine.

ALA plays an important role in the body in maintaining healthy antioxidant levels and is believed to offer advantages over other antioxidants as it increases the level of DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

glutathione, an antioxidant produced by the body, and can also regenerate other antioxidants such as vitamin C and E.

Formulating the ingredient in food and drinks has been severely limited by the product's low solubility and stability, which significantly declines under processing conditions like heat and powder blending, Food Navigator reports.

"We think we've succeeded in improving the solubility of ALA and reducing the highly hygroscopic nature of L-carnitine," said Annibale Salvi, vice president of Labochim.

Labochim claims that its new combination will be more cost effective than regular ALA as L-carnitine is a less expensive ingredient. Standard ALA costs between €180-200 per kg, but the combination raises the efficacy of the antioxidant making it a cost-effective option.

The firm has not investigated the health benefits of its new compound, although it is thought that adding an antioxidant to carnitine is beneficial, as it aids metabolism without causing a corresponding increase in the production of free radicals.

For more information visit http://www.labochim.com. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Fresh fruit shortfall in prison food

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK jail inmates are not being given enough fresh fruit or vegetables, according to prison inspectors.

Convicts at Shotts prison in Lanarkshire, Scotland, eat just two portions of fresh fruit a week - a figure that has not risen for eight years according to Scotland's chief inspector of prisons, Dr Andrew McLellan.

According to the report, "catering staff said they found it impossible to increase the number of pieces of fresh fruit a week from two to three per week and still remain within the budget of £1.57 per day."

The finding follows public and parliamentary concern over the low quality and cost of school dinners - a debate in which the slightly higher per-meal spend for prisoners became a central issue.

Two of the UK's biggest contract caterers, Scolarest and Sodexho, subsequently resolved to reject new school-dinner contracts with a budget of less than 55 pence per meal.

Inspectors at Shotts had advised in an earlier report that more fruit be given to inmates, but found that their recommendations had not been met.

For more information visit: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/4372635.stm (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Coca-cola to launch zero calorie brand in the US

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

American cola lovers will be able to guzzle their favourite drink without piling on the pounds come June, when Coca-Cola launches the no-calorie version of its flagship brand.

Coca-Cola Zero will be sweetened with a mix of aspartame and acesulfame potassium and offers consumers the taste of the original drink without a single calorie, the company claims.

It follows the launch of rival PepsiCo's Pepsi One, a one-calorie cola formulated with the low-calorie sweetener known as sucralose or Splenda.

Pepsi One is expected to have full distribution throughout the US by the end of next month, and will be swiftly followed in May by the launch of Coca-Cola's own Splenda-sweetened drink and then Coca-Cola Zero in June.

Coca-Cola spokesman Scott Williamson told Dow Jones the company expects Diet Coke Sweetened with Splenda and Coca-Cola Zero to target different audiences than its traditional low-calorie cola, Diet Coke.

"Young people today do not want to compromise on flavour or calories and we think Coca-Cola Zero's taste and personality will appeal to them," said Dan Dillon, vice president of Coca Cola's diet portfolio in the US.

In America, non-diet soft drinks still account for 70 per cent of the industry's sales but with figures in decline, diet brands represent the real growth sector.

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Indian scientists develop 'tea pill'

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Indian scientists have come up with a solution for those moments when you crave a cup of tea but need to dash out of the door.

Researchers at the Tocklai tea research centre in Assam have invented a "tea pill" that they claim mimics the taste and refreshing feel of real tea without the need to brew a cuppa.

"The tea tablet is something that you will be able to drink normally or put on your tongue as you go into work and it will freshen you up for the day ahead just like a real cup does," said the centre's director Dr Mridul Hazarika.

"You can suck it, chew it or dissolve it in water the way you like to have it and still feel the taste of a real cup of tea."

The small brown tablet weighs 0.3 grams and contains 80 per cent real tea and 20 percent other flavours.

Dr Hazarika confirmed the centre has applied for a patent and expects a more finely

tuned version of the pill to hit the market in six months. (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Morrisons chases Safeway potential with big board revamp

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK supermarket group, Morrisons, has announced a major shake up to its executive board in a bid to release the full potential value of the company's Safeway acquisition.

Joint managing director Bob Stott is promoted to chief executive and Marie Melnyk has assumed responsibility for trading and marketing in her role as managing director.

Meanwhile, finance director Martin Ackroyd will step down from the board at the annual meeting in May, although he will continue to oversee financial function at the company until a successor is appointed.

Next chairman David Jones has been appointed non-executive deputy chairman, and will work with chairman Sir Kenneth Morrison and Mr Stott "to ensure that succession plans are in place for all board positions and that additional non-executive directors are appointed".

Sir Morrison said: "The appointment of Bob Stott and Marie Melnyk to their new roles and the appointment of David Jones as deputy chairman are significant steps in the development of Morrisons. Together with my continuing commitment and the addition of a new finance director and suitable non executive directors, I believe that we will have the right team to deliver the full benefits from the Safeway acquisition to shareholders and customers alike."

He also thanked Mr Ackroyed for his loyalty and hard work during 31-years with the supermarket group saying, "I respect his decision to seek a less public life".

Morrisons' big board revamp follows pressure from City shareholders after the company received two profit warnings this year.

For more details visit:

http://www.theretailbulletin.com/index.php?page=5&id=6184&cat=news (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Yoghurt may help beat obesity

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item

Analysis

Yoghurt may help obese people slim down better than just limiting calorie intake, new research suggests.

The US-led study, published in the International Journal of Obesity, found that obese dieters who included three servings of yoghurt a day in a calorie-restricted regime shed more fat from their waists than those that consumed little to no dairy produce and low amounts of calcium.

Scientists at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville studied 34 obese men and women DeHavilland Global Knowledge Distribution plc, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH

on calorie-reduced diets over a period of 12 weeks.

Dr Michael Zemel who led the research speculated that the high levels of calcium in yoghurt help regulate the breakdown of fat cells, while a high concentration of specific bioactive compounds may promote fat loss while preserving muscle.

The findings help support dairy health claims that could help manufacturers better market products like milk, yoghurt and cheese.

Previous research has shown that children and teenagers who consume the recommended amounts of dairy products tend to be slimmer than peers who avoid them

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Food habits fixed in infancy

Date: Wed, 23 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Children's tastes in food are formed in infancy, a new study has revealed.

Psychologists at the University of Birmingham claims that very young children establish a "visual prototype" of favoured foods after they found that babies weaned on rusks were more likely to prefer beige foods like crisps and chips in later life.

Infants who are exposed to a more diverse range of foods including fresh fruit and vegetables before the age of one are more likely to enjoy a varied, healthy diet later on.

According to the BBC, the study also found that children who reject dishes without tasting them probably do so because the foods do not look like the visual prototype they have already formed of the things they like to eat.

Dr Gillian Harris, a clinical psychologist at the university, said: "There is uncertainty and a lack of education about how children should be fed and this can lead to children's preferences being set at a very early age."

She expressed concern for parents who lacked the confidence to give babies food not manufactured specifically for babies and recommended that they try to introduce children to new colours, textures and shapes, with lots of fruits and vegetables, to help establish healthy eating habits for life.

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Prospects improve for Sainsbury's

Date: Thu, 24 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

UK supermarket Sainsbury's today announced its end-of-quarter results show an "improving trend", marking what may be a turnaround in the supermarket's ailing fortunes.

Sales for the fourth quarter ending March 26th are up 7.2 per cent on the same period last year, whilst sales for the year as a whole have experienced a solid five per cent growth.

Sainsbury's chief executive Justin King said: "We are pleased with the quarter four sales numbers reported today which continue to show an improving trend.

"The competitive environment continues to be fierce but we are committed to ensuring that our customer offer is not compromised while we continue with our plans."

Sainsbury's market share has fallen dramatically over recent years, pushing the one-time market leader into third position behind Wal-Mart-owned Asda and Tesco, which holds first place by some way.

Mr King attributed the improvement in sales to price cuts throughout the supermarket and an increase in warehouse space which enables staff to stock shelves sooner.

"Overall we are pleased with our progress during the quarter. However we are still only six months into implementing the plans we outlined last October," he said.

"The outlook remains competitive but we are confident that by continuing to do a better job for our customers every day we will reach our objective of market levels of sales growth by the end of 2005/06."

The results include actual figures for the 11 weeks to March 19th and an forecast for the final week to 26 March. Sainsbury's will publish its official results for the period on May 18th.

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Couture chocolate marks new cocoa high

Date: Thu, 24 Mar 05 Type: DirectNews Item

Analysis

Consumers may have started ditching Cadbury's for Green & Blacks some time ago, but the trend for upmarket cocoa products has reached new highs.

Couture chocolate marks a new niche in the luxury foods industry, and the top designers are beginning to attract the same sort of furore as their catwalk counterparts.

Chantal Coady, Gerard Coleman and Bertrand Espouy are among a burgeoning crop of highly skilled chocolate artisans whose progressive, designer bon bons are painted miniatures infused with Szechuan pepper, saffron and star anise.

Chocolate couturiers even have a cocoa-driven version of New York Fashion Week, with the Big Apple's Next Generation Chocolatiers Competition where designers can showcase their most intricate and innovative designs.

All elite chocolate couturiers produce exquisitely hand-painted sweets like miniature works of art, but the craft is more than just decorative. Cocoa artisans are employing new, unexpected flavours like salt, chilli pepper and even tobacco harvested from the highest quality of ingredients.

US chocolatier Christopher Elbow, who has won five prizes at the Next Generation competition, told the Scotsman: "The visual is obviously what attracts people's interest,

but the quality of the ingredients has to keep it." (C) DeHavilland Information Services plc, 1998-2003.

Cornish pasty name too generic for proteted status, objectors claim

Date: Thu, 24 Mar 05 **Type:** DirectNews Item **Analysis**

A Cornish bid to secure Protected Geographical Status for the region's famous pasties has come under fire from competitors who fear their businesses may suffer.

If the EU accepts the submission put forward by St Ives MP Andrew George, pasty makers outside Cornwall will not be able to sell their produce under the Cornish pasty flag.

But food minister Lord Whitty said objections had been raised that "Cornish" is a "general term for pasties" and would have to be considered before any ruling was made.

The Protected Geographical Status initiative is designed to protect traditional, locally produced foods from being imitated and potentially undermined by non-regional manufacturers.

Mr George claims the need to "establish a distinctive Cornish brand image is very important to the Cornish economy" and has urged local residents to back him in his campaign to stop the name being "stolen".

According to the BBC, Cornwall's fast food industry earns Britain more than £150 every year.

Famous regional brands safeguarded by Protected Geographical Status include Melton Mowbray, Newcastle Brown Ale and Stilton cheese - although Cheddar has judged to be too generic.

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