

Branston to move into beans

Premier Foods' Branston brand has launched a new variety of baked beans that is set to challenge the supremacy of Heinz in the market.

The British public consumes around £250 million worth of baked beans every year, seven out of 10 cans belonging to Heinz, according to the Daily Mirror.

However, Branston is claiming its new beans will provide worthy competition for the food giant, offering a more flavoursome sauce and beans that are more tender and textured.

Premier Foods' spokesman, Martin Hall, told the Mirror: "We're confident when people taste Branston against their normal brand, they won't believe the difference."

The firm expects its £10 million investment to yield results within two years.

Heinz also recently hit the headlines, when the UK's Office of Fair Trading (OFT) said it was concerned the company's £470 million takeover of HP Foods could have a severe impact on competition in the sauce market.

The matter has been taken to the Competition Commission, which is now to prepare a report.

The Branston brand is best known for its pickle, and sells 28 million jars every year in the UK, according to the Premier Foods website.

Further information: <A href="

[http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16316678&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=beans-do-battle--name\\_page.html](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16316678&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=beans-do-battle--name_page.html)">

[http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16316678&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=beans-do-battle--name\\_page.html](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16316678&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=beans-do-battle--name_page.html) </A>

Lincolnshire sausage bid launched

Campaigners are calling on the European Union to protect the status of the UK's Lincolnshire sausage, culminating the country's National Sausage Week.

An MP has tabled a motion in parliament calling for the sausages to be granted Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) status.

Along with the label of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status, the concept was devised and introduced by the EU in the 1990s to support regional food production.

Applicants for PGI status need to show that there is a historical geographical connection with a specific region in at least one of the stages of the food's production, processing or preparation, according to just-food.com.

If awarded, it would mean that sausages made outside the county of Lincolnshire could no longer refer to themselves as "Lincolnshire" on the packaging or in promotion.

PDO products, meanwhile, must prove that all three key stages of manufacturing occur in the specified region.

Examples of foods to have been awarded the status include Italy's Parma ham and the UK's Jersey Royal potatoes.

Only last week the European Court of Justice ruled that it should also apply to feta cheese, disappointing German and Danish manufacturers by agreeing that the grazing of specific livestock on Greek terrain was key to the cheese's manufacturing process and unique flavour.

It also argued that Greek cultural symbols were invariably used on the cheese's packaging, whether manufactured in Greece or elsewhere.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62281](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62281)"> [http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62281](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62281) </A>

#### Amcor probes PLA for biodegradable bottles

Packaging producer Amcor is investigating a possible line of biodegradable polymer bottles for the European market.

The new bottles would be produced from corn-based polylactic acid (PLA) from US firm NatureWorks. French retailer Auchan and Belgian retailer Delhaize are testing the product in food packaging.

Amcor PET Packaging said that trial production of preforms and bottles using PLA have been carried out with Canadian equipment manufacturer Husky Injection Molding Systems. They say the cost of the PLA system is little different to that of the PET system.

PLA can also be used for injection stretch blow moulding. It is suitable for non-carbonated beverages including water, juice, milk and edible oil products.

Frans Van Dooren, marketing communications manager at Amcor PET Packaging said: "The market for PLA bottles is attracting a lot of attention in Europe and consumers are starting to show an interest in packaging made from renewable resources."

Further information: <A href=" <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63610-amcor-natureworks-pla>"> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63610-amcor-natureworks-pla> </A>

#### Cheeky chocolate range launched

A new range of luxury, Fairtrade-certified chocolate bars has launched online in the UK, and will hope to capitalise on the familiar public perception of a link between chocolate and sex.

Using Fairtrade cocoa beans sourced from the Dominican Republic and Peru, the chief factor differentiating the Swiss-style "Orgasmic Chocolates" is a blend of apparently "witchcrafted" Chinese herbs.

These include Longan fruit, which claims to reduce stress levels; Radix Ginseng, offering a stamina boost; Sage root, which aids the circulation of the blood; and Cinnamon bark.

The four bars in the range include milk and dark varieties, as well as dark chocolate with orange, and milk chocolate flavoured with almond. They are guaranteed to include 74 per cent cocoa solids in the case of the dark bars, and 45 per cent in the milk options.

Cannily launched in the run up to Christmas, as well as coinciding with the start of the UK's annual chocolate festival, the bars are packaged in gift boxes of 50g and 100g, priced at £24.70 and £39.70 respectively.

Co-founder, Tehmina Zaman, said: "It was a challenging process to get the blend of herbs just right without compromising the great taste of the chocolate.

"By combining delicious Swiss chocolate with this particular blend of herbs, Orgasmic Chocolates help take the chocolate experience to another level and allow chocolate lovers to fall in love with chocolate all over again."

Further information: <http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/cgi/news/release?id=157233> </A>  
<http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/cgi/news/release?id=157233> </A>

Plastic tops the packaging table

The flexibility of plastic means that it is the preferred material among manufacturers of food packaging, according to a new report from Frost & Sullivan.

Glass packages are increasingly finding it hard to compete with PET bottles, which are thin and light, as well as being harder to break.

However, plastics themselves face the challenge of complying with ever more stringent regulations governing food safety and the protection of the environment.

"These regulations spur advancements in food packaging solutions, as manufacturers now have additional responsibilities for proving the suitability of their packaging solutions and meeting the required standards," said Frost & Sullivan analyst, Kasturi Nadkarny.

The report singles out the proposed European Commission "Super Regulation", which would see the creation of an exhaustive list of permissible substances for the manufacture of plastics.

Regulatory compliance joins increased convenience in terms of transportation and storage, and the extension of shelf life, as the main challenges facing the food packaging industry.

"The passing of regulations all over the world only reinforces the need for more innovative and intelligent packaging concepts, said Mr Nadkarny.

No further information.

### Swedish cider gets bottle revamp

A bottle designed in the UK has been adopted by Carlsberg Sweden for its Xider range of colourful, flavoured ciders.

Carlsberg decided to invest in a new profile for the bottle as they wanted the contents to be more visible on the supermarket shelves, increasing the chance of impulse purchases by differentiating their offering.

Prior to the revamp, the liquid was packaged in a standard long-necked bottle, with a sleeve for the brand's logo, as is often the case.

However, JDO's flint glass bottle makes use of significantly less labelling, and features an embossed X on the surface.

The bottle was made by Rexam Glass Holmegaard, and used a new labelling machine with an optical orientation function to apply the 360 degree PSL labels to the neck and body of the bottle.

With beer losing market share to wines and spirits, cider is proving increasingly popular as an alternative, and the current trend favours more exotic flavours, according to Thinkpackaging.com.

Using an apple and pear wine blend as a starting point, Xider comes in six flavours, including Mandarin/Chilli, Wasabi/Lemon, Pine/Citrus and Cactus/Lime.

Further information: <A href="http://www.thinkpackaging.com/view\_news.php?news\_id=1033">  
[http://www.thinkpackaging.com/view\\_news.php?news\\_id=1033](http://www.thinkpackaging.com/view_news.php?news_id=1033)</A>

### "Easy Open" bags used by UK bakery

Packaging firm Sealed Air has introduced a new resealable food package into the UK, which it claims is easier to operate than a similar device with a zip.

The "Easy Open Reseal" bags also use an innovative form of pressure-sensitive tape, which means that there are no tracks to be aligned in order to re-close the bags once opened for the first time.

Instead, the resealable tabs allow the opening to be simply pressed back together to keep produce fresh in spite of frequent use.

Sealed Air operations manager, Colin Lovering, said: "People prefer packages that are easy to open.

"And with continued heavy investment amongst food producers striving to meet consistently high consumer demand and increased expectations, Easy Open Reseal is the next logical development for packaging in this sector."

In a factory environment the technology is compatible with standard polypropylene film, and can be applied using one of the firm's own applicators on a horizontal or vertical flowpacking line.

Suitable for foods such as bread, cheese and confectionery, the bags have been used by Allied Bakeries in the UK, who have ordered five of the applicators for a range of their sweet goods.

Further information: <A href="http://www.packagingessentials.com/news.asp?id=2005-11-01-13.06.33.000000">  
<http://www.packagingessentials.com/news.asp?id=2005-11-01-13.06.33.000000> </A>

Coke further powers UK drinks market

Coca-Cola Great Britain has launched a new energy drink in the UK, targeting women who need to re-hydrate after intense periods of exercise.

Tapping into an increasing health consciousness among UK consumers, it therefore appeals to the gym-going generation, as well as responding to demand for healthier beverage choices.

The ingredients of Powerade Aqua+ include natural fruit flavourings, along with small quantities of sodium, fructose and glucose.

However, it is also free of any artificial sweeteners or preservatives, according to the website Beveragedaily.com.

Coca-Cola said that it had conducted in-depth market research prior to the launch, which confirmed a trend away from conventional carbonated beverages.

The formerly favoured "fizzy" drinks are now increasingly being replaced with fruit juices, bottled water, and more recently "functional" energy drinks.

The success of Powerade so far was noted when it transpired a 28 per cent rise in sales had contributed significantly to the group's third quarter results.

Doninique Reiniche, president of the firm's European division, said: "Not surprisingly our strategy clearly focuses on accelerating and the broadening of our non-carbonated

portfolio by expanding the reach of our global brands, like Powerade, Aquarius and Minute Maid."

Further information: <A href=" <http://www.beveragedaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63636-coca-cola-soft-drinks-energy-drinks>">  
<http://www.beveragedaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63636-coca-cola-soft-drinks-energy-drinks> </A>

Premier Foods gets taste for tofu

Premier Foods has bought Cauldron Foods for £27 million, increasing its portfolio of food products that will appeal to health-aware, and especially vegetarian, consumers.

In June this year the firm also bought Marlow Foods, manufacturer of the Quorn range of products, for £172 million.

Quorn is the UK's market leading meat substitute brand, and is used to make foods including sausages and burgers, as well as ready-meals such as lasagne.

The acquisition of Cauldron takes Premier Foods further in this direction, as it manufactures tofu and falafel, as well as lines of vegetarian sausages and burgers.

Premier's chief executive, Robert Schofield, explained: "Cauldron's strong position in tofu and vegetable based products will further enhance our position in the high-growth healthy eating market and will be highly complementary to our Quorn brand," according to Sharecast.

Earlier this week Premier Foods also announced that it would be launching a new variety of baked beans to rival the dominance of Heinz in the market.

The beans will fall under the firm's Branston brand, best known for the popular sandwich filling Branston Pickle.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.manchesteronline.co.uk/men/business/s/180/180167\\_premier\\_bites\\_into\\_veggie\\_meals\\_.html](http://www.manchesteronline.co.uk/men/business/s/180/180167_premier_bites_into_veggie_meals_.html)">  
[http://www.manchesteronline.co.uk/men/business/s/180/180167\\_premier\\_bites\\_into\\_veggie\\_meals\\_.html](http://www.manchesteronline.co.uk/men/business/s/180/180167_premier_bites_into_veggie_meals_.html) </A>

Self-adhesive labels are market leader

Labels produced for food products lead the self-adhesive label market in Europe, according to a new report.

They hold 23 per cent of a market that manufactured 900 million square metres of labels last year, according to the European self-adhesive label trade association FINAT.

Moreover, this market is set to continue growing at an annual rate of three per cent, with supermarket demand even greater, growing at around six per cent a year.

Moreover, the formerly Communist countries of Eastern Europe, such as Poland and the Czech Republic, are a real growth area, where use of self-adhesive labels is currently growing at around 48 per cent a year.

FINAT managing director, Jules Lejeune, said of self-adhesive labels: "They are such a flexible solution...that the slightly extra cost of some styles and designs outweigh any arguments for using their rival forms.

"For a start, a food manufacturer can have a really appealing label that can be applied to the product at the last moment of production."

However, consumer and government demand for more nutritional information to be included on labels is another key driver, FINAT said.

In a survey of food companies, 40 per cent thought that self-adhesive labels would continue to outperform the rest of the market, although 25 per cent saw alternatives such as shrink sleeves becoming more competitive.

Further information: <A href="http://www.packagingessentials.com/news.asp?id=2005-11-02-13.57.00.000000">  
<http://www.packagingessentials.com/news.asp?id=2005-11-02-13.57.00.000000> </A>

#### New sweetener cuts calories

Ingredients supplier Cargill has launched a new sweetener that will help producers reduce the calories in dessert foods.

Cargill claims that its new SweetDesign Dairy Systems sweetener will enable food makers to lower calorie content without altering the overall taste of products such as ice cream and frozen cakes, reports FoodProductionDaily.

Sweetdesign is made up of a number of sweetening, stabilising and texturising ingredients, as well as Cargill's natural bulk sweetener erythritol.

Erythritol is almost 70 per cent as sweet as sucrose but has a caloric value of just 0.2 calories per gram.

Paul Vajda, marketing manager at Cargill Food Systems believes the new sweetener "can be easily customized to help food manufacturers satisfy consumer demand for convenient, calorie reduced frozen deserts which have taste and texture profiles that are similar to standard full-fat/full-sugar products".

The sweetener will also reduce foods' glycemic index, with sugars being released over a longer time period.

Further information: <A href="http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=63617-cargill-sweetener-erythritol">  
<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=63617-cargill-sweetener-erythritol>  
</A>

FSA focuses on kitchen hygiene

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has launched a series of consultations to help improve food hygiene standards in the UK.

It is hoped that the events held across the country will encourage awareness of food hygiene issues, not only in the home, but also in schools and the wider community.

The seven one-day consultations form part of the FSA's new "4Cs" campaign, which focuses on four basic principles in food preparation and storage with an end to cutting the total number of food poisoning cases by 20 per cent by 2006.

These are the need to keep things clean, cook food thoroughly, chill food adequately and avoiding any possible cross-contamination.

"The key questions for debate will include consideration of what are the most effective (and ineffective) ways to promote food hygiene," said Lucy Foster, head of foodborne disease strategy co-ordination at the FSA.

It is hoped that the 4Cs initiative will further build on the FSA's 2001 foodborne disease campaign, which has reduced the number of related outbreaks by more than 15 per cent.

No further information.

FSA updates public about BSE

The UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a new booklet explaining the facts surrounding a change in legislation governing the control of mad cow disease.

A smaller version of the guide, "BSE & Beef: New Controls Explained", will be supplied to retail outlets and butchers' associations to pass on to their customers.

The main focus is the new measures being put in place to replace the Over Thirty Months (OTM) Rule, which has prevented cattle aged thirty months or over from entering the food chain.

This has been enforced since 1996, but the government has now ruled that BSE is sufficiently under control for older cattle to be tested, and if approved to re-enter the food chain.

However, the booklet also highlights that the new regime will not extend to cattle born before the reinforced feed ban of August 1996.

Alan Harvey, head of the FSA's BSE division, said: "Throughout the whole process of reviewing and recommending the replacement of the Over Thirty Months Rule, the Agency has been committed to ensuring that all decision making has been open and transparent.

"These new leaflets are part of this continuing commitment to giving people the facts and information about BSE and the safety of British beef."

The new legislation takes effect on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

Further information: <A href="http://www.cattlenetwork.com/content.asp?contentid=12751">  
<http://www.cattlenetwork.com/content.asp?contentid=12751> </A>

### UK lagging in productivity growth

The UK's leading position in terms of productivity in the European food and drink sector may be under threat, according to a new government study.

While the UK's workforce is second only to Canada's in the manufacture of food, drinks and tobacco products, Finland, Austria and the Netherlands are all experiencing significant growth.

This is the conclusion drawn by the UK's Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA), which only ranked the UK seventh out of 16 countries in a study of growth in productivity, according to Confectionery News.

The study took a number of factors into account to calculate a picture of the underlying productivity, or total factor productivity (TFP), in a number of key industries worldwide.

These included areas such as education and training, management, and technical factors such as use of information technology (IT).

The UK performed particularly well in terms of advanced educational skills and on-the-job training, with the combined effect of managers and training providing the biggest boost.

The study examined productivity levels in 13 European countries, as well as the US, Canada and Japan.

Further information: <A href="http://www.confectionerynews.com/news/ng.asp?n=63642-skills-workforce-productivity">  
<http://www.confectionerynews.com/news/ng.asp?n=63642-skills-workforce-productivity> </A>

### Bottled water in battle with weather

The UK held on to its place among the top five Western European markets for bottled water in 2004, according to a new report from Research and Markets.

However, this was in spite of the fact that the overall market decreased by four per cent in 2004, underlining the impact of the weather on consumer demand.

Many countries in Europe experienced a disappointing summer weather-wise in 2004, particularly compared with the year before, when growth in bottled water sales practically doubled, jumping 10 per cent.

Only nine of the 16 European countries covered in the study experienced growth in 2004, while in 2003 six countries, including the UK, saw growth reach double figures.

However, the report finds that bottled water continues to outperform the overall soft drinks market, suggesting that other factors influencing consumers will offset the effect of seasonal fluctuations.

These include concern over tap water, demand for convenient "on the go" beverages, and the consumer trend towards adopting a healthier lifestyle in general.

Italy, Germany, France, Spain and the UK were the top European bottled water markets in 2004.

Further information: [http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news\\_view&newsId=20051102005049&newsLang=en](http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20051102005049&newsLang=en) >  
[http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news\\_view&newsId=20051102005049&newsLang=en](http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20051102005049&newsLang=en) </A>

#### McDonald's makes Fair Trade move

Fair trade campaigners have thrown their weight behind McDonald's' announcement that it has begun serving Fair Trade certified coffee at a number of its US outlets.

This week the fast food chain sold the first cups of its new Newman's Own Organics (NOO) blend, sourced by Green Mountain Coffee Roasters (GMCR).

The news was welcomed by both Oxfam America and TransFair USA, who expressed their hopes that the firm would roll the coffee out nationwide in the years to come.

However, initially it will only be available from restaurants in the Northeast states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont and Albany.

Paul Rice, TransFair USA CEO, commented: "This is a great moment for the Fair Trade movement - one that will have an immensely positive impact on Fair Trade farmers and serve as an example for other companies that are still considering whether to respond to consumer demand for Fair Trade products.

He added that the entry of McDonald's into the growing market "sends a powerful signal to the food industry that Fair Trade means quality".

The move follows recent attempts by McDonald's to tap into other growing food consumer trends, most notably towards healthier eating.

This culminated in the announcement last week that it would begin to include nutritional information on its packaging from next year.

Further information: <A href=" <http://www.csrwire.com/article.cgi/4622.html>">  
<http://www.csrwire.com/article.cgi/4622.html> </A>

"Social" beans hit the shelves

A 71-year-old scientist has developed what he calls "social beans" - a variety of bean that is being hailed as the world's first to be "gas-free".

Dr Colin Leakey has produced six tonnes of the new strain of the Chilean manteca and says they will not lead to any more flatulence than muesli or other grain products.

The beans, which Dr Leakey hopes to launch in the UK in spring, have undergone a number of tests and trials, the Daily Record reports.

The Cambridge agriculturalist even submitted the beans for testing by a device he developed in 1994 to measure flatulence. Following testing, he declared the beans to be "relatively wind-free".

French bean lovers are already able to pick the "social beans" up from their local supermarket, where they are on sale as Haricots non-flatulent, Sky News reports.

Earlier this week, Premier Foods also announced that it would be launching a new variety of bean under its Branston brand.

In a challenge to the hegemony of Heinz, it said that its beans would have a better tasting sauce and improved mouthfeel.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16324846&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=lo-fart-beans--name\\_page.html](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16324846&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=lo-fart-beans--name_page.html)">  
[http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16324846&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=lo-fart-beans--name\\_page.html](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16324846&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=lo-fart-beans--name_page.html) </A>

Which? attacks watery ham

The UK's ham producers have been blasted by consumer watchdog Which? for the amount of water their products routinely contain.

The group is calling for package labels to state precisely how much water slices contain after a study revealed that it could be as high as 37 per cent.

Which? tested 27 different brands of ham, with pork and salt being common constituents to all of them.

However, between them the samples were also found to contain 40 other ingredients

These help to assimilate the water that is injected to bulk up the slices and increase the weight of packs.

Which? stated that it wanted to stop manufacturers from exploiting a "legal loophole".

Under current law, although water must be listed as an ingredient if a cold-meat item contains more than five per cent, it is not necessary to state the exact percentage.

Which? editor, Malcolm Coles, explained: "We want food companies to spell out exactly how much water they have pumped into their ham on the front of packs, so people can easily see how much they are paying for meat, and how much for water and additives."

Further information: <A href=" <http://news.scotsman.com/uk.cfm?id=2186272005>">  
<http://news.scotsman.com/uk.cfm?id=2186272005> </A>

#### Vegetables losing valuable compounds

A survey carried out in The Netherlands has found that the health-boosting properties of key components in fruit and vegetables are being severely diminished by food processing.

In addition to vitamins, the team from Wageningen University identified that valuable amounts of cancer-fighting glucosinolates and phytochemicals were also being lost.

In an assessment spanning a number of years, a range of processed fruit and vegetables were examined, including pre-cut, frozen and ready-meal products, as well as juices and cans available from the supermarket.

Using the results of their experiments to produce mathematical equations, the scientists calculated that the risk of bowel cancer could be cut by as much as 45 per cent if the glucosinolate content of food products were to be increased threefold.

Only one method of preparation was actually found to increase the level of glucosinolates present, which was the chopping involved in the preparation of pre-cut products.

Researchers Matthijs Dekker and Ruud Verkerk are also calling for consumers to be made more aware of these healthy compounds.

They believe that highlighting the differences in glucosinolate content would spur demand, as health-awareness is clearly becoming more of an issue with consumers.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/medicine\\_health/report-51140.html](http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/medicine_health/report-51140.html)">

[http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/medicine\\_health/report-51140.html](http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/medicine_health/report-51140.html)  
</A>

Coca-Cola loses a carbonate

Coca-Cola has announced that it plans to remove Vanilla Coke in the UK, replacing it with a new flavour of Diet Coke, which is expected to launch in February next year.

The move comes as the UK's consumers are deserting carbonated drinks in increasing numbers, opting for healthier options instead.

The addition of the new cherry flavoured Diet Coke would bring the number in the flavoured range to three, joining Diet Coke with Lime and Diet Coke with Lemon.

Earlier this month Coca-Cola also announced that it was bringing a new energy drink, Powerade Aqua+, to the UK.

Targeting the burgeoning market for so-called "functional" drinks, this one targets health-conscious women with the promise that it will quickly re-hydrate them after completing exercise.

Powerade Aqua+ contains natural fruit flavourings, along with small quantities of sodium, fructose and glucose, but claims to be free of artificial sweeteners or preservatives.

Further information: <A href="http://www.just-drinks.com/news\_detail.asp?art=29080"> [http://www.just-drinks.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=29080](http://www.just-drinks.com/news_detail.asp?art=29080) </A>

Report reveals a taste for luxury

The UK's appetite for "luxury" snacks, such as premium crisps and smoothies, is set to soar by 22% by 2009, a new report predicts.

In terms of value this will be an increase from around £1 billion to £1.2 billion, and will interestingly be driven by increasing levels of dissatisfaction and stress.

As working hours increase and the pace of life gets faster, market analyst Datamonitor finds that consumers are offsetting their stress by investing in small touches of luxury.

As affluence is also increasing, this is something they can afford to be doing, with 60 per cent of those asked agreeing with the statement that they "enjoyed small indulgences to escape the pressures of daily life".

Half also agreed that "higher quality snacks are more emotionally satisfying than standard offerings", according to Food Business Review.

However, Datamonitor advises food manufacturers to capitalise on this growing "democratisation of luxury" by targeting their offerings at particular occasions or times of the day.

Many premium snacks are more likely to be eaten in the evening, for example, when unwinding after the stresses of the day.

Further information: <A href= " [http://www.food-business-review.com/article\\_feature.asp?guid=25D1F250-FBDE-4ADE-A6FD-4E7C2E11DAF5](http://www.food-business-review.com/article_feature.asp?guid=25D1F250-FBDE-4ADE-A6FD-4E7C2E11DAF5)"> [http://www.food-business-review.com/article\\_feature.asp?guid=25D1F250-FBDE-4ADE-A6FD-4E7C2E11DAF5](http://www.food-business-review.com/article_feature.asp?guid=25D1F250-FBDE-4ADE-A6FD-4E7C2E11DAF5)</A>

### Transatlantic food alliance gets royal seal of approval

The UK's Soil Association is launching a new international food campaign, which has won the backing of HRH The Prince of Wales.

On tour in the US, the Prince, a vocal supporter of organic production methods, said: "I believe it is a matter of urgency to create a network of individuals and organisations across the world who are committed to a better future for food and farming - one that is based on working in far greater harmony with nature."

As its Royal patron, he supported the Soil Association's emphasis on "producing local food for local markets based on small and family farms, moving away from the intensive, industrialised approach to agriculture".

Dubbed "Food for Life", the campaign will focus on strengthening links with similar organisations on the other side of the Atlantic.

Amongst its specific aims will be an attempt to improve the nutritional value of school meals served in the US.

This will follow the model of what was recently achieved in the UK, where the government was successfully petitioned to increase the funding for each child's lunchtime meal in both primary and secondary schools.

New policies recently announced by the education secretary, Ruth Kelly, also included using more fresh, local produce, investing in training for school caterers, and banning junk food from being served in vending machines.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62321](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62321)"> [http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62321](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62321)</A>

### Cutting carbon in the food chain

Leading researchers and food companies are joining forces to launch an £800,000 project focusing on how carbon emissions can be cut during food manufacture.

Bath, Bristol, Nottingham and Manchester universities will combine with companies such as Unilever, Northern Foods, Hygrade Foods, Baxi Technology and CompAir to investigate measures that could help to prevent climate change.

The research, which is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council, forms part of a larger £14 million "Carbon Vision" initiative.

In particular, it will look at how energy savings can be made while heating and freezing food to high and low temperatures.

Trigeneration, which combines refrigeration, heating and electricity generation, is one possible solution that would result in fewer carbon dioxide emissions, as it may be able to convert 90 per cent of fuel into useable energy.

Air cycle refrigeration could also improve energy efficiency, although it is yet to be routinely applied to industry.

The UK government is aiming to achieve a 60 per cent reduction in carbon use by 2050 and the research should help to bring it closer to its goal.

Further information: [http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/environment\\_sciences/report-51214.html](http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/environment_sciences/report-51214.html)  
[http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/environment\\_sciences/report-51214.html](http://www.innovations-report.com/html/reports/environment_sciences/report-51214.html)

### Coke has crack at recycled PET

Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE) and Boots are both embarking on trials of recycled PET (rPET) in their packaging.

CCE will test the use of 25 per cent recycled PET in different plastics - including flake and pellet - mainly in their 500 ml diet coke bottles.

The trial marks a first for CCE in testing mechanically recycled plastic in its bottles in the UK. Around 1,000 metric tons of recycled PET will be used during the trial.

Martin Rodgers, rPET project manager at CCE, said: "We are excited about this project and we anticipate that over 150 million 500ml bottles will be manufactured during the course of this trial.

"Support from WRAP has enabled CCE to evaluate the impact of different combinations of virgin and recycled PET and assess the viability of longer-term usage."

Boots is currently using 30 per cent rPET content in bottles for its 'Ingredients' range to test its viability in terms of efficient manufacturing, product quality and consumer response.

Steve Owen, polymers consultant for Boots, said: "Driving forward the use of recycled plastics in the UK is consistent with our approach to Corporate Social Responsibility.

"We are very positive about the trial and it could open up opportunities in more toiletry ranges and other packaging sectors in the future."

Further information: <A href="http://www.prw.com/main/newsdetails.asp?id=4770">  
<http://www.prw.com/main/newsdetails.asp?id=4770>>  
<http://www.prw.com/main/newsdetails.asp?id=4770> </A>

### Posters to give children food facts

The UK's British Heart Foundation (BHF) is launching a new poster advertising campaign amid ongoing concern over childhood obesity levels and school meal nutrition.

The posters will aim to show youngsters exactly what goes into the creation of some of their favourite fast foods, including cheeseburgers, chicken nuggets and hot dogs.

The BHF's "Food4Thought" campaign follows research that identified a worrying degree of ignorance among children aged between eight and 14.

Of the 1,000 children surveyed, approximately 10 per cent thought that chips were made from oil, with some suggesting eggs, flour, and in some cases apples.

Approximately 36 per cent were not aware that chips were actually made from potato, and more than a third (37 per cent) didn't realise milk was the main ingredient in cheese.

Peter Hoolins, BHF policy director, said: "It sends a shiver down my spine to discover that so many children don't even know what chips are made of.

"This campaign is about talking to children in their language and sparking their curiosity so that they think about what they eat and start demanding healthier options."

A host of celebrities have been enlisted to help drive the message home, while some 600,000 action packs, including the new "shock" posters, will be delivered to children and their teachers.

Further information: <A href="http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-1861027,00.html">  
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-1861027,00.html>>  
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-1861027,00.html> </A>

### Probiotics prove beneficial to factory workers

A new survey has shown that drinking daily "probiotic" yoghurt drinks can significantly reduce the amount of time taken off work due to minor complaints

It comes as manufacturers of "functional" food and drinks face increasing pressure to provide scientific evidence of the health or wellbeing benefits they purport to deliver.

The Swedish study examined 181 members of factory staff, and found that those who took a supplement of the probiotic bacteria *Lactobacillus (L.) reuteri* were two and a half times less likely to be off work owing to colds or stomach upsets.

The workforce was divided randomly, some given the "friendly bacteria"-containing drink, and others offered a placebo, for a period of 80 days.

The difference was most pronounced among shift workers, but in general workers also seemed to benefit from the drink.

In the placebo group, 23 of the 87 participants took some form of sick leave over the course of the study, compared with only 10 of the 94 who took the probiotic.

Carried out by the Swedish firms Tetra Pak Occupational Health and Safety AB, and BioGaia AB, the results of the investigation have been published in the open access journal, *Environmental Health*.

Further information: [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2005-11/bc-wod110105.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-11/bc-wod110105.php) [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2005-11/bc-wod110105.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-11/bc-wod110105.php)

### Coloured film wrap protects yeast

A cellophane film used to wrap yeast in the manufacturing of baked goods has been modified to improve its barrier properties and seal technology.

The coating formulation on the Cellophane LMSCi has been altered, as have the softeners in the base film, enabling an even more precise level of permeability, according to manufacturer Innovia Films.

The combination of seal and optimum permeability improves the shelf life of yeast, which is particularly problematic as it is a live product.

Continually producing carbon dioxide and water as it is stored and distributed, the LMSCi film meets yeast's identified optimum permeability to moisture ratio of 600 g/m<sup>2</sup>/day.

The film's seal is important to safeguard against contamination, and maintain the necessary twin conditions of high humidity but low temperature.

Innovia explains that too much heat could lead to the yeast being burned when it is packed, which would then damage the quality of the finished product and packaging.

Finally, the film has a blue hue to allow it to be easily identified and removed in case it becomes mixed in the yeast itself.

Market manager, Clare McKeown, explained: "Using coloured film in this type of application offers additional security benefits and helps companies to maintain strict quality assurance controls."

Further information: <A ref="http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63699-yeast-cellophane-barrier"> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63699-yeast-cellophane-barrier> </A>

Burgers found to bring on asthma

Doctors have linked junk food consumption to an increase in the number of children who develop asthma.

According to Dr Kristin Wickens, this is due to the high salt content.

"The high salt content in hamburgers may increase the risk of wheezy illness," she said, according to the Daily Mail.

Dr Wickens carried out a study on 1,300 school age pupils (between 10 and 12 years old) in New Zealand.

She found that those children who ate at least one burger per week had a 75 per cent higher risk of having asthma, and were almost guaranteed to have some breathing difficulties, such as wheezing.

The observation could also be extended to include other junk foods and fizzy drinks, the doctors concluded.

The findings will add weight to the drive to overhaul school meals in the UK, with a raft of proposals recently put forward by education secretary, Ruth Kelly, for the next school year in September 2006.

These include the possibility of limiting the number of times "junk food" can be bought at canteens each week, and banning chocolate, crisps and fizzy drinks from vending machines.

The results of the New Zealand study were published in the journal Allergy.

Further information: <A href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/dietfitness.html?in\_article\_id=367854&in\_page\_id=1798&in\_a\_source="> [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/dietfitness.html?in\\_article\\_id=367854&in\\_page\\_id=1798&in\\_a\\_source=](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/dietfitness.html?in_article_id=367854&in_page_id=1798&in_a_source=) </A>

Wine analysers work in seconds

A new set of wine analysers have been developed that use infrared technology to discern different wines by grape type, as well as identifying when wines do not meet the necessary quality criteria.

They are also equipped to monitor the colour of wine, and can be programmed depending on the precision requirements of the individual manufacturer.

Foss's WineScan Grape is used for grape must, while WineScan Flex is suitable for both wine and grape must, while WineScan Auto doesn't require an operator, according to FoodProductionDaily.

A total of 20 different wine characteristics can be evaluated within 30 seconds, while the quality of grapes takes approximately 90 seconds to assess.

All three of the instruments are robust enough to withstand variation in temperature and vibration, and they keep an automatic record of the observations as they are made.

WineScan Grape also includes a system for the quick filtering out of grape-must in the pressurised environment of the harvest season.

Headquartered in Denmark, Foss is an international firm, specialising in routine analysis equipment.

Its areas of business include beer, confectionery, flour, grain, meat, milk, sugar and wine.

Further information: <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63722-foss-wine-winescan>  
<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63722-foss-wine-winescan>

Sugar reform wins industry support

The food manufacturing industry is generally in favour of reform of the sugar industry, a new consultation by Defra reveals.

The department has published a paper which indicates there is strong support for reform though there are varying opinions as to how it should go forward.

According to its consultation paper of the 37 written responses, the majority believed voluntary restructuring was preferable to quota cuts and there was also strong support for decoupled grower compensation.

Agriculture minister, Lord Bach, commented: "The existing EU sugar regime is nearly forty years old and is now unsustainable, particularly in the light of other CAP reforms and the EU's international trade obligations.

"The consultation has shown that there is widespread interest in how these necessary reforms are managed."

No further information.

Coffee's popularity continues to climb

London now has 220 branches of the Starbucks coffee chain, according to the Drinks Business Review.

Citing a report published in the Evening Standard, it says that this compares with 190 outlets across Manhattan Island in New York.

The coffee shop culture is booming in the UK, and by 2015 Starbucks could replace the fast food chain McDonald's as the UK's leading import chain serving the "on the go" market.

Starbucks made an operating profit for the first time in 2004, and the chain now generates annual sales worth over £200 million.

McDonald's makes around £1 billion in UK sales, but appears to have reached a plateau.

Traditional fast food outlets must also contend with the British public's increasing health-consciousness, which may be more likely to favour the Starbucks range of paninis and smoothies, rather than the burgers and milkshakes of McDonald's.

Competing coffee chains are also faring well, as coffee looks increasingly likely to replace tea as the nation's favourite drink.

Tea sales are reported to have fallen by around 12 per cent in five years.

Further information: [http://www.food-business-review.com/article\\_news.asp?guid=DACB04C5-3883-4DE9-AA73-4E65955A2EE9](http://www.food-business-review.com/article_news.asp?guid=DACB04C5-3883-4DE9-AA73-4E65955A2EE9) [http://www.food-business-review.com/article\\_news.asp?guid=DACB04C5-3883-4DE9-AA73-4E65955A2EE9](http://www.food-business-review.com/article_news.asp?guid=DACB04C5-3883-4DE9-AA73-4E65955A2EE9)

European calls for new risk assessment

The scientific committee of the European Food Safety Authority has called for greater flexibility in the EU's policy of assessing levels of potentially genotoxic and carcinogenic substances in food.

In particular, the panel points to the restrictions inherent in using the ALARA principle, whereby food manufacturers are ordered to ensure that exposure is "as low as reasonably achievable".

"A disadvantage of this approach is that it cannot be used to compare risks posed by different substances," the panel explained, according to FoodProductionDaily.

Nor does it take into account the positive impact of certain substances in food production and what is sometimes a very small risk of contamination, they said.

The alternative put forward by the European Food Safety Authority is to use "margin of exposure" (MOE) to assess comparative risk.

The responsibility of a risk manager to determine, this approach would take into account the differing strengths of substances, as well as the amount of contact with consumers.

"The MOE approach could be applied for instance to environmental contaminants, substances occurring naturally in foods and those resulting from food preparation or manufacturing processes – acrylamide would be a case in point," the committee said.

Further information: <A href="

<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63718-efsa-acrylamide-food-safety>"> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63718-efsa-acrylamide-food-safety> </A>

FSA publishes safety inspection notes

The UK's Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published a set of notes for food safety inspectors, offering informal guidance for when the EU's single hygiene policy comes into effect next year.

The legislation covers all stage of food production and distribution, and the responsibility for monitoring compliance is divided between the central and local authorities.

The central authorities include the FSA itself, the department of the environment, food and rural affairs (Defra), and the agencies of agriculture departments, including the Meat Hygiene Service and the Pesticides Safety Directorate.

A key measure that will be introduced is spot checks for foods and feed of animal origin, says FoodProductionDaily.

The FSA advises that factors to consider when deciding the frequency of these checks should include associated risks, any importer guarantees, and track record of compliance.

Additional rules will also come into force to cover food and feed of non-animal origin but that is considered to be "high risk".

Importers will be obliged to provide prior warning of the arrival of these products, but the European Commission has not yet revealed what they might include. THE FSA says it has asked the Commission to draw up a list.

Further information: <A href="

<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63737-john-tudor-food-safety-hygiene-law>"> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63737-john-tudor-food-safety-hygiene-law> </A>

Tetra Pak returns to a classic

Sweden-based packaging firm Tetra Pak has returned to its roots with the launch of a new aseptic filling machine that produces its flagship tetrahedron-shaped package for milk.

The Tetra Pak A1 filling machine is the first new model to have been produced since the four-cornered "Tetra Classic" packaging began to fall in popularity.

First developed as an economic model for a milk package, the new machine has been undergoing a testing regime in a number of South American and Asian countries for the past two years.

On its first outing, the Tetra Classic was conceived as a way of using a minimum of material in milk cartons.

However, the revival in its interest seems to stem from its distinctive shape, which makes it stand out on store shelves.

The filling machine produces the Tetra Classic in sizes from 65ml to 200ml, and is suitable for the aseptic packaging of fruit juice as well as dairy drinks. It can manufacture as many as 13,000 cartons an hour, according to Tetra-Pak.

Aseptic packaging ensures hygiene and prolongs shelf life without a need for preservatives. It involves rapid heating, followed by force cooling to room temperature.

Spokesperson Lena Heden told FoodProductionDaily: "This is a revival of the Tetra Classic.

"This unique packaging system uses minimum material for maximum packaged content, so it's economical as well as distinctive."

Further information: <http://www.nutraingredients.com/news/ng.asp?n=63763-tetra-pak-aseptic-filling>  
<http://www.nutraingredients.com/news/ng.asp?n=63763-tetra-pak-aseptic-filling>

Sunjuice streamlines its production

Juice producer The Serious Food Company is streamlining production at its Sunjuice drinks division by introducing a new computer-aided forecasting system.

The company admits its previous system was "very much a back of the envelope approach", meaning any movement in demand created a lot of waste and product shortages very quickly.

However, the new iRenaissance supply chain programme from Ross Systems has been brought in to boost efficiency at the company's two production facilities in Llantrisant, south Wales.

The new system plots weekly profiles, historical data, customer specific data and promotional activity - essential for the seasonal drinks industry in which demand can be quite volatile.

"Basically, we didn't have a proper forecasting system at all before, we'd just base planning on the previous week's orders and using spreadsheets," said Mark Way, Sunjuice's planning manager.

Mr Way said the new system means the sales team can "see what they are working with", so the company can avoid the situation where they are making promises to customers that production cannot deliver.

"When you get to this size, planning and production has to be underpinned by proper forecasting systems," he added.

Further information: <A href="http://www.freshinfo.com/index.php?s=n&ss=nd&sid=37612">  
<http://www.freshinfo.com/index.php?s=n&ss=nd&sid=37612></A>

### Innovative flavours favoured

Producers are increasingly using innovative flavourings to differentiate their products, a leading market analyst has announced.

For example, Datamonitor draws attention to the Nippon fish sausage, which has been flavoured with strawberries to appeal to children.

The youth market is an increasingly lucrative one and producers are keen to attract the fickle young audience to their products. Datamonitor states this means giving them what they want, and youngsters want sweet flavoured savoury foods.

However the study also revealed that while children may have greater autonomous spending power their parents are more determined to feed their children healthy foods.

These aims are not incompatible as manufacturers are increasingly offering goods that sound decadent but are comparatively healthy.

For example Food Science Innovations has launched a low in fat and sugar ice cream with distinctly unhealthy sounding names such as cookie dough and chocolate and caramel.

Further information: <A href="http://www.foodnavigator.com/news/ng.asp?n=63736-flavour-datamonitor-luxury">  
<http://www.foodnavigator.com/news/ng.asp?n=63736-flavour-datamonitor-luxury></A>

## Pens launched to prevent contamination

A UK company has unveiled a new set of anti-microbial pens for use by workers in the food industry.

The issue of food safety has once again been brought to the fore in recent months, with the new threat of a bird flu pandemic adding to the general consumer concern for possible contamination along the food chain.

Pocklington-based E-Components & Chains' pens make use of an additive that prevents the accumulation of bacteria in a busy plant environment.

In particular it aims to limit cross-contamination between food items as the plant's workers go about their daily tasks.

The additive is also sufficiently powerful to reform when the pen undergoes cleaning.

The two models of pen, retractable and non-retractable, are made from robust polypropylene, and come in a range of colours.

Further information: <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63767-anti-microbial-food-safety> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63767-anti-microbial-food-safety>

## Alcopop sales see severe slump

The young are losing their taste for alcopops, according to new research that shows sales of the beverages have fallen significantly in the last three years.

Once considered fashionable, they are now losing market share to arguably more "sophisticated" spirit-based cocktails.

Market analyst Mintel polled a representative sample of 18 to 34-year olds, and found that around a third (34 per cent) thought alcopops didn't represent good value for money. Approximately 25 per cent of over-25s agreed.

Mintel's research also shows that a trend of rising sales has been reversed, decreasing 22 per cent since 2002. The associated value of the market has declined from £1.6 billion to £1.2 billion over the same period.

Prior to this sales were strong, increasing by 70 per cent between 2000 and 2002, but predictions are now that sales will continue their decline, possibly by a further 18 per cent by 2010.

Analyst James McCoy commented: "Manufacturers have just not been quick enough to keep ahead of the decline, believing that simply tweaking flavour, alcohol levels and packaging would be enough to keep market share."

Alcopops appeared on the retail scene in the 1990s, when they were criticised in some quarters, seen as encouraging younger drinkers with their sweet flavours and bright colours.

Further information: <A href=" <http://news.scotsman.com/uk.cfm?id=2214682005>">  
<http://news.scotsman.com/uk.cfm?id=2214682005> </A>

Nestle files patents for foaming coffee

It has emerged that Nestle is planning to develop a fruity, caffeine-based beverage that resembles a beer, and can even have a foamy head.

The concept follows on the heels of caffeinated beers, such as Anheuser Busch's B-to-the-E (BE), which launched in the US this year.

The market for so-called "functional" beverages such as energy drinks is booming in the UK, and the marriage of coffee and beer is thought to be a winning combination with consumers.

However, the fermented coffee would only have the appearance of beer, and would actually contain no alcohol, so could perhaps find its niche among drivers.

Nestle's innovations division, Nestec, has filed patents across the world for the drink.

Although the drinks will be fermented, strict control of the temperature in the process will ensure that no ethyl alcohol is produced.

The coffee beans would be roasted as usual, and the chemicals responsible for the aroma would be collected.

This is transformed into a coffee oil, while the remainder of the roasted coffee would be mixed with yeast and sucrose and fermented for four hours at approximately 22 degrees C.

Nestle said that some more sugar could be added to enhance the coffee aroma. Adding nitrogen would produce the foaming head associated with a beer.

Further information: <A href=" <http://www.beveragedaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63770-nestle-coffee-beer>">  
<http://www.beveragedaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63770-nestle-coffee-beer> </A>

Most new drinks claim "high vitamins"

More new drinks declare they are "high in vitamins" than any other claim at their launch, according to ProductScan Online.

In general, claims were found to focus on the health issues that are increasingly driving the UK's food industry, particularly in the market for "functional" products.

From June to August this year, over 17 per cent of new drink launches featured the phrase "high vitamins", a rise of one per cent from last year.

However, despite appearing on one in ten newly launched products, "natural" and "single serving" - the second and third placed phrases - seem to be losing their appeal with manufacturers.

Compared to the same timeframe in 2004, these claims were down by almost three per cent.

Other claims, such as "low sugar" and "no preservatives", were also up in the same period from last year.

The lowest-placed claim on new products was "no sugar", although this was also up almost one per cent compared with 2004, suggesting manufacturers are concentrating on promoting the actual content of their products rather than a concept, such as "natural".

Other claims included "upscale", "low calories", "high minerals" and "fresh".

Further information: [http://www.drinks-business-review.com/article\\_researchwire.asp?guid=65CA37BE-E1B6-458B-B854-639B10099DF1](http://www.drinks-business-review.com/article_researchwire.asp?guid=65CA37BE-E1B6-458B-B854-639B10099DF1) </A>

### Study uncovers secret of sweetness

A new sweetener that tastes like sugar, but without any bitter aftertaste, is a step closer after discoveries from a transatlantic team from Manchester and Maryland.

The researchers have made a major advance in understanding how we experience a sweet taste.

Dr Graeme Conn, of the University of Manchester, said: "Our study has for the first time measured how sugar and some synthetic sweeteners interact with two types of taste receptors on the tongue.

"Some synthetic sweeteners only interact with one receptor. We found that sugar interacts with both."

He explained that by knowing what molecular mechanisms are involved the team have a greater understanding of what makes sugar taste sweet and should help them design better sweeteners.

The findings, published in the journal *Current Biology*, will be especially useful for people who have to limit their sugar intake, such as diabetics.

It will also help the public as a whole as a recent study by food firm GoLower showed that the average adult in Britain consumes 33 teaspoons of sugar a day, more than three times the recommended amount.

Dr Steven Munger, of the University of Maryland, said: "We hope that food scientists can use our research to create sugar alternatives with the most natural taste, offering more choice to consumers who rely on low-calorie products to help control diseases like diabetes and obesity."

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2005-11/uom-sts110405.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-11/uom-sts110405.php)"> [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2005-11/uom-sts110405.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-11/uom-sts110405.php) </A>

### New ovens improve efficiency

Denmark-based DFE (Danish Food Equipment) Meincke has developed a new type of convection oven, which the company claims benefits from increased air circulation, and therefore efficiency.

Having launched the very first indirectly heated convection oven in 1975, the firm is now building on a continuous programme of research and development by launching its new model destined for bakeries.

All the modules used are 2m in length, and include two different heating modules, integrated to generate independent heating zones.

The power of the various modules ranges from 150kW to 350kW.

The convection oven is also complemented by a direct gas-fired (DGF) model that uses the same modules, and which can be combined with the convection oven if desired.

The oven's control system has a colour display screen for ease of reading, and is recipe-controlled.

In addition to the new ovens, the firm has also introduced a new rotary moulder, which can be used for doughs of varying degrees of density.

It can be used in conjunction with a range of die rollers, which can themselves be replaced with the hopper in tact.

Further information: <AS href=" <http://www.packagingessentials.com/eqnews.asp?id=2005-11-08-19.35.28.000000>"> <http://www.packagingessentials.com/eqnews.asp?id=2005-11-08-19.35.28.000000> </A>

### Consumers going for convenience

British consumers are spending at least twice as much on snacks and ready-meals as their European counterparts, new research shows.

The current market for food "on the go", covering everything from traditional fast food to sandwiches and crisps, totals £7.2 billion a year, or an average £120 per person.

This is almost four times as much as people spend in Spain, and represents twice as high an expenditure as in Germany.

The market analyst, Datamonitor, compiler of the report, concludes that longer UK working hours, and more family and social commitments, are driving the market, with more and more people also missing breakfast and trimming down the traditional lunch "hour".

Analyst Matthew Adams explained that consumers "feel forced to adapt their eating habits to fit in with work and other commitments".

The report predicts that the "on the go" food and drink market will hit £8.3 billion by 2009.

Further information: <A href="http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm\_objectid=16357398&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=brits-are-snack-slobs-of-europe--name\_page.html">  
[http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16357398&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=brits-are-snack-slobs-of-europe--name\\_page.html](http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16357398&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=brits-are-snack-slobs-of-europe--name_page.html)  
[http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16357398&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=brits-are-snack-slobs-of-europe--name\\_page.html](http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16357398&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=brits-are-snack-slobs-of-europe--name_page.html) </A>

#### Tetley's Original destined for on-trade

The UK branch of the Danish brewer Carlsberg is planning to tap into the UK's growing taste for ale with the launch of a new product under the Tetley brand.

Tetley's Original will be a carbon dioxide-dispensed ale, with an ABV of 3.6 per cent, and will now be served in the pub on-trade as well as in the shops.

Doug Clydesdale, managing director for brands and sales, told just-drinks.com: "Tetley's Original was originally intended as an opportunity for the Tetley's heartland of Yorkshire, but high interest levels in the rest of the country have resulted in the national launch of the product.

"Tetley's Original is a successful brand in the off-trade with a high recognition amongst ale drinkers and we are confident that by launching the brand in on-trade we can grow sales in the ale category."

The Tetley's brand as a whole is set to benefit from a £13 million investment in marketing over the coming year, including TV and newspaper ads.

The market for ale now accounts for approximately a third of all pints served in the UK's pubs.

Further information: <A href="http://www.just-drinks.com/news\_detail.asp?art=29117">  
[http://www.just-drinks.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=29117](http://www.just-drinks.com/news_detail.asp?art=29117)  
[http://www.just-drinks.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=29117](http://www.just-drinks.com/news_detail.asp?art=29117) </A>

Large portions prove too tempting

Portion size influences food intake just as much as taste, a study has demonstrated.

It would seem that consumers will generally eat more if it is given to them, even if they don't find it appealing.

Researchers at Cornell University in the US gave a set of 158 cinemagoers different sizes of popcorn bucket, large (8.4 ounces) and medium-sized (4.2 ounces), and recorded how much popcorn they consumed.

However, some of the study participants were given fresh popcorn, while others found their buckets contained the same amount but that it was stale (at least 14 days old).

Those who had the large portions ate 34 per cent more stale popcorn and 45 per cent more if it was fresh, suggesting that while the fresh produce proved more popular, quality was ultimately no barrier to consumption.

Many of the people in the study even complained about how bad the popcorn tasted.

Brian Wansink, professor of marketing and applied economics, explained that the size of a food portion offered by a manufacturer implicitly suggested an "appropriate" amount to be eaten.

"This suggests that portion and package size may insidiously influence people at a basic level of which they are not aware or do not monitor," he said.

On the other hand, he said the same knowledge could also be used to increase consumer consumption of healthy food.

"While a small bowl of raw carrots might make for a good afternoon snack, a large bowl might be even better," he suggested.

Further information: <A href="

[http://www.foodconsumer.org/777/8/Big\\_portions\\_influence\\_overeating\\_as\\_much\\_as\\_taste.shtml](http://www.foodconsumer.org/777/8/Big_portions_influence_overeating_as_much_as_taste.shtml)">

[http://www.foodconsumer.org/777/8/Big\\_portions\\_influence\\_overeating\\_as\\_much\\_as\\_taste.shtml](http://www.foodconsumer.org/777/8/Big_portions_influence_overeating_as_much_as_taste.shtml) </A>

Nut allergies not necessarily for life

Nut allergies may not last for a sufferer's lifetime, a new study has revealed.

The study by John Hopkins Children's Centre found that nine per cent of children outgrow tree nut allergies, including some acute sufferers.

"Our research shows that for some children lifelong avoidance of these nuts, found in countless food products, may not be necessary," said Robert Wood, who conducted the study.

His research, which is published in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, found that children who had been allergic to both peanuts and tree nuts, but had outgrown their peanut allergy, were more likely to outgrow the tree nut allergy.

However, children who are allergic to more than one type of tree nut were not likely to outgrow their allergy.

In the region of four per cent of adults and eight per cent of children in the EU suffer from food allergies and the continent is currently preparing to enforce tougher rules on allergen testing.

Further information: <A href="http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=33312">  
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=33312></A>  
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=33312> </A>

### Tea producers target soft drinks market

Indian tea producers are hoping to crack into the lucrative soft drinks industry by launching a tea-based soft drink "to rival Coca-Cola and Pepsi".

The Tea Research Association (TRA) is due to discuss the new product at its annual meeting at the end of November, as well as assessing the state of the tea industry.

Assam tea, one of the biggest producers in the world, has seen its market share decrease globally under pressure from other beverages.

Stiff competition from the soft drinks and coffee industries in particular, has caused the TRA to consider how tea manufacturers can once again compete in the global drinks industry.

Based at the Tocklai experimental station - a 93-year-old research institute - the TRA hopes to set up new standards for tea, developing black tea attributes and introducing tea-based soft drinks.

The drinks will be aimed directly at the carbonated drinks market, competing with the likes of Coca-Cola and Pepsi.

Quality control is also a substantial part of the Indian tea industry's attempted revival, increasing studies on integrated nutrient management and long-term nutritional trials.

Further information: <A href="http://news.webindia123.com/news/showdetails.asp?id=157571&cat=Business">  
<http://news.webindia123.com/news/showdetails.asp?id=157571&cat=Business></A>  
<http://news.webindia123.com/news/showdetails.asp?id=157571&cat=Business> </A>

## Organic food sees surge in sales

Sales of organic food in the UK increased by 11 per cent to £1.2 billion in 2004, according to the Soil Association's annual audit.

The growth is attributed to an increase in concern over the amount of pesticide used in conventional food production, as well as recent campaigns highlighting the nutritional content of highly processed food, and concern for food safety in general.

Moreover, although supermarkets continue to dominate the sector with combined annual sales of around £913 million, the report shows they have lost organic market share to independent retailers.

The supermarkets' share fell from 81 to 75 per cent, while independent shops' sales increased by around 43 per cent.

There has also been an increase of around a third in the amount of organic food being bought directly from the producers themselves, either by box or from a farm shop or market.

Concerned parents are proving a particularly key contributing group, with sales of organic baby food increasing six per cent in 2004 compared with 2003.

Patrick Holden, the Soil Association's director, told the Independent: "This report shows that the popularity of organic food is growing steadily.

"Increasing numbers of people are eager to buy local, to obtain the freshest organic food possible and to cut down on environmental pollution."

Further information: <A href="

[http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/food\\_and\\_drink/news/article326885.ece](http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/food_and_drink/news/article326885.ece)>

[http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/food\\_and\\_drink/news/article326885.ece](http://enjoyment.independent.co.uk/food_and_drink/news/article326885.ece) </A>

## Selective media method seeks to speed up pathogen detection

US-based Strategic Diagnostics (SDI) has filed a patent in a number of countries for a new selective enrichment media technology to be used in food pathogen assays.

Spurred by increasing consumer concern for food safety, the technology will aim to isolate a specific harmful bacteria, encouraging it to grow so that it can be easily identified against a backdrop of billions of other species.

These other bacteria are also themselves suppressed by the technology, thereby reducing incidences of cross-reactivity or false positives and negatives.

Matthew Knight, SDI's chief executive officer, said: "This technology will reduce the time required to obtain test results while maintaining or improving the accuracy of any test method.

"The new SDI test method will have great benefit in the hands of our customers offering enhanced speed to an accurate result, a much simpler methodology, and easy interpretation."

The first application of the method is slated for the first half of 2006, along with a new assay for the foodborne disease Salmonella.

SDI states that the development of enrichment media commands a significant slice of the global market for food testing, estimated at \$1.6 billion.

Further information: <A href="http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63640-pathogen-salmonella-microbiology"> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63640-pathogen-salmonella-microbiology>> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63640-pathogen-salmonella-microbiology> </A>

Wine to come in small cartons

A new type of compact carton wine packaging is destined for the UK, claiming to be cheaper to manufacture, and therefore better value for consumers.

The Tetra Pak cartons should also appeal to the environmentally conscious, as they are easy to recycle, according to the French wine manufacturer Boisset.

The firm said its French Rabbit line of wines were successfully launched in Canada earlier in the year, and will now be available in the UK from January.

Its merlot, cabernet sauvignon and chardonnay, all from France's Languedoc Rousillon region, will be joined by a pinot noir for the UK launch.

Boisset maintains that the screwtops it uses for its cartons keep the wine fresher for longer than conventional bottles.

They also claim to cut down on packaging by 90 per cent, and reduce storage requirements by around a third, as well as offering 100 per cent protection from UV light.

Company president, Jean-Charles Boisset, said: "I think consumers are ready for something new and eco-friendly, because most of us buy wine and then drink it in the next few days," according to the Scotsman.

Wine consumption has soared in the UK in recent years, building up a reputation as a "healthier" alcoholic option, particularly in the case of antioxidant-rich red wine.

As such, it has succeeded in stealing away market share from the beer market, which figures reveal to be in decline.

Further information: <A href="http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm\_objectid=16367378&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=wine-in-a-carton--name\_page.html"> [http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16367378&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=wine-in-a-carton--name\\_page.html](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16367378&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=wine-in-a-carton--name_page.html)>

[http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16367378&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=wine-in-a-carton--name\\_page.html](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16367378&method=full&siteid=66633&headline=wine-in-a-carton--name_page.html) </A>

## Process enables edible dairy packaging

The US-based Agricultural Research Service (ARS) has developed a new, edible method of wrapping dairy products.

The innovation hinges on a milk protein called casein, which is one of the main ingredients in cheese.

Also used in the manufacture of some non-food items, the researcher Peggy Tomasula found that if casein is separated from milk using high-pressure carbon dioxide, and then mixed with water and glycerol before drying, a film-like substance is produced.

This film is water-resistant, acts as a barrier to possible bacteria, and can generally protect against damage during transportation and storage.

It could either be used as a laminate in the packaging of dairy products such as yoghurt and cottage cheese, or could be applied to cheese as a stand-alone coating.

Moreover, adding vitamins and minerals to the initial mix could effectively tap into the booming market for health and "functional" foods.

ARS already has a patent on Ms Tomasula's method, and is now seeking to complement this with a plant process devised by Michael Kozempel.

Mr Kozempel developed a process allowing the coating solution to be spread and dried, forming a film that can be easily removed from the conveyor belt.

Further information: <A href="

<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63847-ars-dairy>>

<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63847-ars-dairy> </A>

## Shoppers show ignorance of labels

The majority of shoppers don't understand food labelling or nutritional guidelines, a new report has revealed.

A survey of shoppers carried out by Oxfordshire County Council's trading standards officers found that 65 per cent could not work out what the main ingredient was by looking at the packaging for a beef lasagne, and only two per cent could distinguish between the name of the food and the brand (for example separating baked beans from Heinz).

Additionally, respondents were mostly unable to answer questions about storage temperatures, and many were unsure as to what and how much should be eaten to satisfy the suggested quota of five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

Nigel Strick, head of service at Trading Standards, said the results were particularly disturbing as most of the fat, sugar, and salt we eat is hidden in processed foods.

"If customers cannot understand the label they will not be able to limit their intake of these foods. Eating too much salt can raise your blood pressure, which triples your risk of developing heart disease, whatever your age."

Similar surveys are to be carried out across the southeast as part of a campaign to lobby the government for clearer labelling.

No further information.

Pea protein proves cost effective

There is a growing demand for alternative proteins as concerns over health and costs increase.

Belgium-based company Cosucra is planning to take advantage of this trend by developing pea protein that offers a healthy and cheap alternative, reports FoodProductionDaily.

It is planning to use the forthcoming Food Ingredients Europe (FIE) exhibition in France to promote the benefits of the protein product.

"There is increasing demand for alternative protein sources and pea protein is non-genetically modified, gluten-free and has no labelling issue," said Kristof Werbrouck, Cosucra marketing manager.

"The demand for alternative sources is influencing common food. There is a definite shift away from dietetic foods towards the mainstream," he added.

The alternative source of protein could prove useful in products that aim to offer consumers a low glycaemic index (GI) and high protein intake choice as well, as helping more food processors to reduce their costs.

Further information: <http://www.nutraingredients.com/news/ng.asp?n=63831-cosucra-protein-soy>  
<http://www.nutraingredients.com/news/ng.asp?n=63831-cosucra-protein-soy>

Bad diets drain £6 billion

Researchers from Oxford University have calculated that the UK's eating habits cost the NHS more than the effects of smoking.

Mike Rayner and Peter Scarborough estimated that the annual burden could be as much as £6 billion, compared with £1.5 billion for smoking.

They based their estimate on a calculation of the number of "disability adjusted life years" (DALYs) that could be attributed to the effects of food, whether through food poisoning, or a raft of issues relating to ill health.

A DALY is a measure of the amount of time a patient suffers from a particular condition, and also takes into account premature death as a factor.

The team estimated that 37 per cent of all DALYs were attributable to food, but only 0.2 per cent of this figure involved cases of food poisoning.

The rest all concerned serious diseases such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular problems, and accounted for approximately £18 billion worth of NHS spending.

Poor diet was calculated to be a factor in a third of these cases, hence the arrival at a figure of £6 billion.

Although the authors of the study conceded their figures were only approximations, they considered it should be a wake up call for the British government, claiming that current food trends could even see a reduction in the average citizen's life expectancy.

Dr Rayner said that the government "could look at tax increases on unhealthy food and banning advertising on junk food".

Further information: [http://www.lse.co.uk/ShowStory.asp?story=XV1419657P&news\\_headline=poor\\_diet\\_costs\\_uk\\_%C2%A36\\_billion\\_a\\_year](http://www.lse.co.uk/ShowStory.asp?story=XV1419657P&news_headline=poor_diet_costs_uk_%C2%A36_billion_a_year)  
[http://www.lse.co.uk/ShowStory.asp?story=XV1419657P&news\\_headline=poor\\_diet\\_costs\\_uk\\_%C2%A36\\_billion\\_a\\_year](http://www.lse.co.uk/ShowStory.asp?story=XV1419657P&news_headline=poor_diet_costs_uk_%C2%A36_billion_a_year)

### Atkins diet linked to loss of energy

The controversial Atkins diet has been dealt another blow with the emergence of research suggesting it reduces the heart's ability to store energy.

The diet soared in popularity over the last decade on the back of a host of celebrity endorsements, and permitted people to eat as much fat as they liked, while simultaneously eliminating carbohydrates as much as possible.

Many of the diet's followers consume large quantities of meat, eggs and dairy products.

However, the British Heart Foundation's (BHF) cardiac metabolism group at Oxford University has now told the American Heart Association that the diet can cut the heart's capacity for storing energy by as much as 16 per cent.

The team tracked the progress of 19 people over two weeks on the diet, and reported that some of them had a third less energy, with one incapable of taking part in his habitual daily run.

However, lead researcher, Kieran Clarke, stressed that the study was "a small and short-term piece of work", and further research was needed.

"The body is remarkably adaptive and what we don't know is whether our hearts would have gradually returned to normal had we stuck to the diet long-term," he continued.

Professor Peter Weissberg, the BHF's medical director, added: "Diet devotees can be reassured that this research in no way suggests that the high fat, low carb regime is going to give them heart failure.

"However, they should be aware that such unbalanced diets are a major insult on their bodies' metabolism and, as this study shows, may be having direct effects on their hearts."

Further information: <A href="

[http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16370928&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=official--atkins-diet-can-give-you-heart-failure--name\\_page.html](http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16370928&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=official--atkins-diet-can-give-you-heart-failure--name_page.html)">

[http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm\\_objectid=16370928&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=official--atkins-diet-can-give-you-heart-failure--name\\_page.html](http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/tm_objectid=16370928&method=full&siteid=94762&headline=official--atkins-diet-can-give-you-heart-failure--name_page.html) </A>

### New yeast range increases flavour possibilities

UK-based Synergy has launched a new range of yeast extracts to meet the increased European demand for processed convenience foods.

The company also claims its Saporesse range reduce the amount of salt necessary, providing a cost-effective means of improving the taste of a range of products, including soups, baked goods and ready-meals.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) recently launched a television advertising campaign, highlighting the amount of salt that could be "hidden" in processed foods.

It urged consumers to check labels, and limit their intake to the recommended guideline of no more than 6g a day.

The Saporesse range includes brewer's yeast and lactic yeast, with the latter being particularly useful for dairy products or cheese sauces owing to its milder flavour and neutral colour.

Andrew O'Mahony, the firm's marketing manager, told Foodnavigator.com: "Creating the ideal taste in a food is always challenging, but even more so when the product's flavour is very delicate or when trying to minimise the use of synthetic ingredients."

Demand for yeast extracts is also being driven by fears that the alternative flavour enhancers, acid-hydrolysed vegetable proteins (HVPs), could be carcinogenic.

Synergy is the flavours and savoury ingredients unit of Carberry, and has facilities in the US and Europe.

Further information: <A href="

<http://www.foodnavigator.com/news/ng.asp?n=63871-synergy-yeast-lactic>">

<http://www.foodnavigator.com/news/ng.asp?n=63871-synergy-yeast-lactic> </A>

## Chains slash champagne prices

The UK's consumers are to benefit from even cheaper champagne this Christmas, as retailers embark on a price war.

Research carried out by the Grocer magazine finds that the supermarket chain Waitrose has instigated a two-for-one deal on its Piper & Charles Heidsieck own label bottle, offering a pair for £19.98 instead of the usual £14.99 each.

Similarly, the Booths chain has reduced the price of its Moet and Veuve Clicquot by £4 each, down to £19.99 and £20.99 respectively until January 1st 2006.

The Grocer explained that off-trade prices were growing more competitive, with a flurry of discounts in spite of producers "battling to protect the market...as production reaches capacity".

It added that consumers were also increasingly prepared to pay a higher price, with vintage and rose varieties growing more popular.

An increasingly affluent British public, time poor but cash rich, and more prepared to indulge themselves, has seen the market for luxury products expand dramatically in recent years.

This "premiumisation" of food and drink products has also seen the market for champagne imports increase by 11 per cent in the past half year alone.

Francoise Peretti, of the Champagne Information Bureau, told the Scotsman: "Not all Britons like the French, but they certainly all like champagne. British consumers are buying more champagne than ever before."

Further information: <http://business.scotsman.com/retail.cfm?id=2242422005>  
<http://business.scotsman.com/retail.cfm?id=2242422005>

## Famous faces could be banned from food ads

Famous celebrities and cartoon characters could soon be banned from advertising junk food and drink, in line with new plans to tackle rising obesity levels.

A new Department of Health proposal outlines plans to curb the use of children's role models to promote products high in fat, salt or sugar.

The move could see multi-million pound advertising deals with famous celebrities - such as Gary Lineker, who advertises Walkers crisps, or David Beckham who gets £1 million a year as the face of Pepsi - come to an end.

Using famous cartoon characters like Spiderman or The Incredibles to advertise 'unhealthy' food and drink products would also be banned under the new proposals.

However, health campaigners want a total ban on advertising junk food and unhealthy drinks to children, claiming some products could still be classed as 'healthy' under Food Standard Agency (FSA) guidelines - such as white bread and chicken tikka masala - allowing celebrities to continue advertising them.

Andrew Brown, director-general of the Advertising Association, told the Times: "Obesity is a big problem and the advertising industry wants to be part of the solution."

He added that food and drink companies should not exploit the "credulity" or "inexperience" of children.

However, the new legislation would not cover 'brand-generated' characters, such as cereal Frosties' Tony the Tiger.

Further information: <A href=" <http://www.freelanceuk.com/1446.shtml>">  
<http://www.freelanceuk.com/1446.shtml> </A>

### Haagen-Dazs launches limited edition flavour

Ice cream brand Haagen-Dazs will this month launch the first of a new range of limited edition flavours in the UK, capitalising on the country's growing tendency to indulge in premium treats.

The new flavours are also being marketed as "seasonal", using fresh fruit and natural ingredients that are perhaps designed to tap into consumers' increasingly discerning health-consciousness.

Nevertheless, calorie-counting is unlikely to be a major issue, as the flavours will all draw on traditional desserts, beginning with Chocolate Cherry Brownie, which will hit the shelves this month.

Blending together chocolate ice cream, pieces of brownie and a sauce made from black cherry, the ice cream will be available for a limited period of six months.

After this it will be switched with another flavour that draws on a new season's offerings.

Mark Elderkin, senior marketing manager, told just-food.com: "We firmly believe the new limited editions will complement our existing range by providing consumers with more Haagen-Dazs flavours to choose from."

The launch will be backed by a £150,000 press advertising campaign.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62400](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62400)">  
[http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62400](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62400) </A>

## Diageo sales hit by storms

The spirits giant Diageo has warned that previous predictions of an increase in sales and profits may not be met owing to the impact of the US hurricane season and the declining popularity of its Guinness brand in Europe.

The firm had forecast a seven per cent rise in profits and four per cent increase in sales for the year to June 2006, but has now said that its first half results are likely to be lower than expected.

It said that hurricanes Katrina, Wilma and Rita had severely dented its business in the south-eastern states of the US, and that it was hard to determine whether the knock-on effects would stretch into the second half.

Nick Rose, chief financial officer, said it was "too early to tell whether this will impact full-year performance or whether the impact will be limited to the first half and we will benefit in the second half from restocking".

He added that the resultant rise in oil prices would add around £20 million to its annual cost base.

The company also reported "continued weakness" for Guinness in Europe, as well as a slump in demand for so-called 'ready-to-drink' products.

These include the 'alcopops' Archers Aqua and Smirnoff Ice, confirming a recent Mintel report that sales of such beverages had decreased 22 per cent in the last three years in the UK.

Drinkers are apparently opting for spirits-based cocktails instead, which could be good news for the firm's main brands such as Smirnoff, Captain Morgan and Johnnie Walker, all of which experienced strong growth.

Further information: <A href"

<http://www.businessworld.ie/livenews.htm?a=1299158;s=rollingnews.htm>><http://www.businessworld.ie/livenews.htm?a=1299158;s=rollingnews.htm> </A>

## Northern Foods innovations paying off

The chief executive of manufacturer Northern Foods has said that its "transformation" is "well underway", after reporting a first-half underlying profit rise of 5.8 per cent, up to £25.7 million.

Pat O'Driscoll said that the firm was now aiming to satisfy consumer demands for health, indulgence and convenience, with recent innovations including a lower fat range of its flagship product Fox's biscuits.

The company has also launched individual single servings of its popular Goodfella's pizzas, capitalising on the growing number of young people living alone and wanting smaller portions in line with growing health awareness.

Prepared vegetables for accompanying main meals were identified as another key growth area.

The increasingly fast pace of modern life apparently means that shoppers are having less and less time for chores such as peeling.

The firm reported it had increased its general market share with key brands such as Goodfella's and Fox's, and saw sales of baked goods and frozen foods rise by 6.9 per cent and 3.8 per cent respectively.

The only disappointing area was in sales of chilled foods such as sandwiches and ready-meals, which stayed flat at around £369 million.

Ms O'Driscoll said that this level of profitability was "not acceptable".

Further information: <A href="http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article327362.ece">  
<http://news.independent.co.uk/business/news/article327362.ece> </A>

Moulder retrofit reduces dough stress

UK-based APV Baker has developed a means of attaching the head of its Multitex4 dough moulder onto a plant's existing dough moulding machinery, which it claims will result in an improvement in bread quality.

The improvement lies in the reduction of pressure on the dough, with more steps in the process of reducing its thickness, the manufacturer says.

The moulding head has four pairs of rollers, which increases the number of dough rolls produced from sheets.

Keith Graham, APV marketing manager, told BakeryAndSnacks.com: "What we have essentially done is reduced the damage that occurs in processing in order to allow bread to develop to its full potential."

The company estimates that the shelf life of a loaf can be extended by a day as a result of the improvement, meeting consumer demand for fresher products.

Quality and colour would also be better, with a 10 per cent increase in volume and 18 per cent more crumb softness.

Further information: <A href="http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63852-apv-dough-moulder-multitex">  
<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63852-apv-dough-moulder-multitex> </A>

Britvic to build on flotation with healthy range

UK soft drinks giant Britvic has announced it is to launch several new healthy drinks after its flotation on the stock market in December.

Almost a third of the company's sales revenue comes from the 11 new brands it has launched since 1997.

Now the firm wishes to flex its innovative muscle in the burgeoning healthy drinks sector, aiming to launch new products and more no-added-sugar versions of existing drinks.

Britvic plans to launch two new water brands in the new year, deepening its footprint in the UK's growing bottled water sector following the takeover of Pennine Spring.

Recent figures show the bottled water industry has rocketed over the last five years, with the proportion of British adult consumers increasing from 35 per cent in 2000 to 54 per cent in 2004.

Britvic will also be launching PepsiCo's Gatorade in the UK, aiming to use the US's best selling sports drink to conquer Britain's booming isotonic drinks sector.

Further information: <http://www.beveragedaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63882-britvic-pepsico-bottled-water> <http://www.beveragedaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63882-britvic-pepsico-bottled-water>

EU explores animal welfare attitudes

An EU-wide Internet survey is asking consumers for their views on the importance of animal welfare as a factor in food products.

Amongst the questions being asked are whether food producers provide sufficient information about welfare conditions on product packaging, and whether food sourced under better welfare conditions actually tastes better.

The ethical survey is a precursor to the introduction of more stringent EU legislation on this area in years to come.

Another survey carried out in June this year found the EU population divided down the middle over whether welfare conditions were a consideration in the purchase of meat products, with 52 per cent saying they weren't.

It led to the European Commission declaring it would prepare a proposal for a directive obliging farmers to improve the treatment of broiler chicken, including in terms of the amount of space allocated.

FoodProductionDaily says that the new survey builds upon the former one, probing attitudes further, and widening the scope to encompass more countries, including Bulgaria, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

Further information: <A href=" <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63940-animal-welfare-ethics-eurobarometer>"> <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=63940-animal-welfare-ethics-eurobarometer> </A>

FSA outlines "traffic light" labelling

The Food Standards Agency is seeking views on its proposal for at-a-glance information on whether a food is high, medium or low in total fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt.

The agency is currently in consultation over its new multiple traffic light (MTL) scheme, in which fat, sugar and salt content are displayed on the front of the packaging using a colour-coded system based on the colours of a traffic light.

Agency chair Deirdre Hutton explained: "Consumers have told us that they would like to make healthier choices but find the current information confusing.

"After carrying out rigorous and comprehensive research, we now have the makings of a system that will make it quicker and easier for people to do so."

Commenting on the launch of the scheme consultation, Food and Drink Federation (FDF) deputy director general, Martin Paterson, said he was pleased that a single traffic light scheme had been discarded as it could scare consumers rather than allowing them to make an educated choice.

He added: "UK food and drink manufacturers are committed to improved nutritional information for consumers: FDF's recent survey showed that £33 billion worth of products will have full nutritional information on pack by 2006."

He also highlighted the industry's ongoing support for the government in the development of an information and education programme on diet and lifestyle.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.politics.co.uk/press-releases/ncc-traffic-light-food-labelling-plans-major-step-forward-\\$15091922.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/press-releases/ncc-traffic-light-food-labelling-plans-major-step-forward-$15091922.htm)"> [http://www.politics.co.uk/press-releases/ncc-traffic-light-food-labelling-plans-major-step-forward-\\$15091922.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/press-releases/ncc-traffic-light-food-labelling-plans-major-step-forward-$15091922.htm) </A>

Wine website inviting bidders

An online auction site has launched in the UK, specialising in unusual wines from around the world.

Hoping to replicate the phenomenal success enjoyed by the eBay site, Cellar21 has identified a niche for itself, as the famous leading auction site does not permit alcohol to be bought and sold by its visitors.

The majority of products covered by the new website will be provided by smaller independent producers, and will include a number of varieties imported from France and Italy.

In general the website is targeting the more discerning end of the consumer spectrum, offering wines that are unlikely to find themselves on the shelves of the UK's main supermarket chains.

In so doing, it hopes to capitalise on a consumer trend towards being more adventurous in food and drink choices, with many increasingly looking abroad for new taste sensations.

Cellar21.com was introduced at the London Wine Show in Islington at the end of October.

Further information: <A href="http://www.abcmoney.co.uk/news/1620051351.htm">  
<http://www.abcmoney.co.uk/news/1620051351.htm> </A>

Chef suggests sauerkraut options

With the revelation that the German favourite sauerkraut may prove a natural remedy for Bird Flu, the German marketing board for food and drink has teamed up with a leading UK chef to encourage the use of the pickled cabbage in a range of recipes.

Trish Hilferty, founder of the Fox, named gastro pub of the year in 2005 by the Evening Standard, has compiled a list that includes a duck, sauerkraut and walnut salad, sauerkraut coleslaw, and tuna with sauerkraut salsa.

Joachim Oertel, director of CMA UK, commented: "Sauerkraut is really tasty with a variety of different foods and flavours. It goes well with meats such as bacon, beef and pork.

"It also complements fruits such as apples or pineapple and matches vegetables such as mushrooms, potatoes or tomatoes."

Earlier this week, research carried out at Seoul University in South Korea found that a local dish similar to the fermented cabbage prompted 11 out of 13 birds to show signs of recovering from the bird flu strain currently causing such concern.

The researchers considered that it was the presence of the lactic acid bacteria, lactobacillus, in the food that might fight the disease.

Sales of sauerkraut, also rich in key vitamins and thought to have cancer-fighting properties, have since increased in both the US and UK.

Further information: <A href=" <http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/cgi/news/release?id=158603>">  
<http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/cgi/news/release?id=158603> </A>

## UK driving non-dairy dessert demand in Europe

The UK is one of Europe's biggest markets for non-dairy desserts, according to a new report.

Between them, France and the UK now account for around 60 per cent of European demand for this expanding market, driven by consumer health and ethical concerns, as well as the most common reason of food intolerances.

As the market becomes more mainstream, so it is also widening its product offerings, with more and more yoghurts and desserts joining the non-dairy drinks such as soya milk.

The fastest growing of these emerging areas is non-dairy ice cream, usually soya-based, but also using oats or rice as other options.

Organic Monitor found that sales of non-dairy ice cream in Europe are now growing at a rate of more than 30 per cent a year, according to just-food.com.

In terms of countries, future growth in demand for non-dairy desserts is predicted to be highest in Germany and Spain.

Further information: <A href=" [http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62418](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62418)"> [http://www.just-food.com/news\\_detail.asp?art=62418](http://www.just-food.com/news_detail.asp?art=62418) </A>

## Russian vodka brand brought to UK

A new brand of vodka is on its way to the UK from Russia this winter, billed as a way to keep warm throughout the expected freeze.

Dovgan Admiral will be served at a range of high-end bars in London, and is made with mineral water that is sourced from the natural well located under the 'Buturlinovskiy' distillery where the product is made.

The distillery Buturlinovskiy is Russia's oldest, and Dovgan Admiral, dating back to 1885, is the only one in the country made in just one distillery.

It is being imported into the UK by Blue Planet Spirits in exactly the same form as it is drunk in its native Russia, and is described by the firm as having "a hint of sweet vanilla and a distinctively peppery finish".

The flavour is attributed to the unique sand column purification process undertaken in the production of the privately owned refined spirit base.

Matthew Barnett, managing director of Blue Planet Spirits, said: "For the UK market, Blue Planet Spirits has insisted that the recipe for Dovgan Admiral remains exactly the same and that the label be almost untouched.

"So yes, a lot of the copy on the bottle is still in Russian and the bottle has a traditional styling."

Further information: <A href="http://www.prweb.com/releases/2005/11/prweb311710.htm">  
<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2005/11/prweb311710.htm> </A>

### Cereal gene key to increased yield

Research into the genetic structure of corn could provide farmers with higher yields of better quality ingredients.

At the moment, the University of Arizona's plant sciences department is working to identify genetic traits. The initial step of unpicking the corn genome will have application across a whole range of cereals.

It is thought that the work will ultimately yield results ranging from enhanced drought resistance to optimising the properties of cereals used for specific products.

"A lot of applications will result from this project," Brian Larkins, from the department of plant sciences, told Food Navigator. "The cereals are very closely related to each other, so we can transfer a lot of what we learn about gene function in maize to other crops."

Corn and rice account for around 70 per cent of worldwide food production.

Further information: <A href="http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/discoveries/2005-11-16-corn-dna-sequence\_x.htm">  
[http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/discoveries/2005-11-16-corn-dna-sequence\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/discoveries/2005-11-16-corn-dna-sequence_x.htm) </A>

### Pig salmonella testing to speed up

The programme to reduce the prevalence of salmonella in pigs is to be stepped up a gear.

The ZAP Salmonella programme has made progress but BPEX states it will be intensified over the coming months.

On the advice of the programme steering committee, there will be a change in the basis on which holdings are allocated to ZAP groupings.

Level three will cover holdings in which 75 per cent of meat juices tested positive, level two will cover between 50 and 75 per cent and level one will cover holdings in which less than 50 per cent of samples tested are positive.

The two higher risk groupings, which covers holdings in which 50 per cent or more meat juice samples tested salmonella positive will now have to develop and implement an action plan within six months.

Farms will continue to receive free testing from the Veterinary Laboratories Agency with funding from Defra.

BPEX reports that Scotland has now achieved the target of a 25 per cent reduction in positive samples. England is currently yielding four times as many positive samples as holdings north of the border.

Further information: <A href="http://www.stackyard.com/news/2005/11/BPEX/02\_zap\_salmonella.html">  
[http://www.stackyard.com/news/2005/11/BPEX/02\\_zap\\_salmonella.html](http://www.stackyard.com/news/2005/11/BPEX/02_zap_salmonella.html)>  
[http://www.stackyard.com/news/2005/11/BPEX/02\\_zap\\_salmonella.html](http://www.stackyard.com/news/2005/11/BPEX/02_zap_salmonella.html) </A>

Borough Market to feature food "excellence" centre

The popular Borough Market in London is to boast a new "food school" that will seek to make the UK's schoolchildren better informed about food and help them to make healthier choices.

The move comes at a time when school nutrition is high on the political agenda, with Ruth Kelly, the education secretary, recently announcing a number of bold measures to come into effect at the start of the next school year.

These include the banning of junk food and fizzy drinks from vending machines, the possibility of preventing children from leaving school premises at lunchtime, and limiting unhealthier options to a certain number of portion each week.

School groups visiting the new centre will learn about how the food on their plates is produced, and may also be provided with information about career opportunities in the food industry.

Locals will also be taught how to feed a family healthily on a budget, and the market's well-known traders will participate in the teaching with specialist lectures in their own areas of expertise.

The Borough Market Trust is hoping to raise around £250,000 for the centre's construction.

The market has been located on its current site since 1756.

Further information: <A href="http://www.london-se1.co.uk/news/view.php?ArtID=1857">  
<http://www.london-se1.co.uk/news/view.php?ArtID=1857>>  
<http://www.london-se1.co.uk/news/view.php?ArtID=1857> </A>

Tesco takes out additives

The leading UK supermarket chain, Tesco, has announced a new "kitchen cupboard" policy, which will see it cut out a range of artificial ingredients from its own-brand ready-meal range.

The move comes as the UK's consumers are becoming more discerning, increasingly opting for healthier and more "natural" products, such as organic varieties.

The retailer's pledge is that all ingredients in its food will now be items that might be found in the cupboard at home, rather than in a laboratory or processing plant.

This means that all emulsifiers, stabilisers, and hydrogenated fats, which add to the bulk of processed food, will be removed.

Food buying director, Carolyn Bradley, said the guarantee would provide its customers a simpler, less troublesome shopping experience.

"Tesco has always worked hard to minimise the use of artificial ingredients but with our new guarantee we've taken this on to the next level," she said.

Supermarkets' processed foods recently also came under the spotlight for the amount of salt they contained.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) launched a TV campaign to encourage consumers to keep to the limit of 6g a day, checking food labels if necessary.

Further information: <A href="

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/thehealthnews.html?in\\_article\\_id=369002&in\\_page\\_id=1797](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/thehealthnews.html?in_article_id=369002&in_page_id=1797)">

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/thehealthnews.html?in\\_article\\_id=369002&in\\_page\\_id=1797](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/health/thehealthnews.html?in_article_id=369002&in_page_id=1797) </A>

Wild launches low GI fruit drink

The flavours company Wild has launched a new drink that draws on the concept of the GI (glycemic index) diet to attract health-conscious consumers.

"Low GI Near Water" provides 24 calories in each 100ml serving, and has been officially tested and found to have a GI score of 40.

It also contains the natural fruit sweetener, Fruit Up, and natural fruit carbohydrates offer both the low GI factor and a fibre that is water-soluble.

The glycemic index rates foods in terms of their effect on blood sugar levels.

Foods with a low GI score keep the body's blood sugar levels relatively steady throughout the day, regulating appetite and reducing the tendency to "snack", often blamed for mounting obesity in the developed world.

However, high GI foods, such as chocolate, often provide a quick sugar fix, but the effect is short-lived.

Wild's new drink was scientifically assessed in September this year in a collaboration with the Neuss-based Institute for Medical Research.

It is being marketed as "the ideal thirst quencher for the health-conscious consumer".

Wild said that it realised the GI concept had mainly been applied to foods, but could also be extended to include drinks.

Further information: <A href="

[http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker\\_article.asp?idNewsMaker=9600&fSite=AO545&next=1](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=9600&fSite=AO545&next=1)">

[http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker\\_article.asp?idNewsMaker=9600&fSite=AO545&next=1](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=9600&fSite=AO545&next=1) </A>

### The priciest pie in the world

A Lancashire chef has cooked up what he says is the most expensive pie in the world, coming in at £1,000 per slice.

Spencer Burge, head chef at the Fence Gate Inn in Burnley, Lancashire, decided to replace the more traditional ingredients of steak and kidney pie with £500 of beef, truffles and £2,000 worth of Chinese mushrooms.

The sauce is also made from the finest ingredients, its subtle flavour created with a 1982 Chateau Mouton Rothschild wine costing £4,000.

Topping the pie is a gold leaf, bringing the total cost of the luxurious pastry to £8,195, reports the BBC.

Kevin Berkins, owner of the Fence Gate Inn, explained how the pie started as a bit of silliness that quickly spiralled out of control.

"Not everyone's going to order it but it's good for a special occasion if someone wants to be part of a real eating experience," he said.

"It's a very sophisticated pie. It's like anything else, if you drive a Rolls-Royce, you know you are driving something prestigious."

Further information: <A href="

[http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm\\_1615971.html](http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_1615971.html)">

[http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm\\_1615971.html](http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_1615971.html) </A>

### Allergy labelling deemed inadequate

New food labelling is still not clear enough for allergy sufferers, according to the British Medical Journal (BMJ).

While new European laws will increase safety for people with food allergies by compelling manufacturers to label their food more accurately, they do not offer full protection, says an editorial in this week's BMJ.

The European Union directive on food labelling forces manufacturers of packaged food to detail clearly if certain allergens are present in food, such as nuts, milk, eggs and fish.

The authors say this is welcome and shows that the threat of allergic reactions is now being taken seriously, but the general public needs to be aware that food manufactured and packaged before November 25th may still be in old style packaging.

Also, freshly prepared foods are exempt from the rules, something the authors are particularly concerned about, as they say most severe anaphylactic reactions to food happen when people are eating out in restaurants and cafes.

One of the authors Aziz Sheikh, professor of primary care research and development at the University of Edinburgh, said: "Policy makers, legislators and food suppliers need to appreciate that neither underplaying or overplaying the risks of exposure to allergenic foods is helpful for those living with what is often a highly debilitating life-long condition."

The EU should follow the approach adopted in Australasia, they argue, where all food suppliers have to give consumers detailed information on food either on packaging, on a display alongside food being served, or to the purchaser on request.

Further information: [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2005-11/bmj-nlo111705.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-11/bmj-nlo111705.php) [http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2005-11/bmj-nlo111705.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2005-11/bmj-nlo111705.php)

## British beef braced for comeback

British beef may be back in European supermarkets early next year, as the European Union (EU) prepares to end its ten-year export ban imposed following the BSE outbreak in 1996.

The UK is due to present its latest report to the EU next week, detailing the targets it has met to improve the safety of its beef.

Britain has already fulfilled the first precondition set by Brussels, with only 200 cattle per one million affected with the disease.

EU veterinary experts will now decide next week whether the ban can be lifted for good.

Although most EU states are not expected to oppose the lifting of the ban, should Brussels approve, several countries may abstain from the decision.

"I don't think [Germany] would want to cause any particular problems for the UK. And unless France decides to do some heavy lobbying, it should go through," an industry insider told Reuters.

British beef has not been sold abroad for a full year since 1995, when around 274,000 tonnes of beef was exported around the world.

Further information: <A href="

[http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=topNews&storyID=2005-11-17T154417Z\\_01\\_MAR756364\\_RTRUKOC\\_0\\_UK-MADCOW-EU-BRITAIN.xml&archived=False](http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=topNews&storyID=2005-11-17T154417Z_01_MAR756364_RTRUKOC_0_UK-MADCOW-EU-BRITAIN.xml&archived=False)>

[http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=topNews&storyID=2005-11-17T154417Z\\_01\\_MAR756364\\_RTRUKOC\\_0\\_UK-MADCOW-EU-BRITAIN.xml&archived=False](http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=topNews&storyID=2005-11-17T154417Z_01_MAR756364_RTRUKOC_0_UK-MADCOW-EU-BRITAIN.xml&archived=False) </A>