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Organic foods now commonplace

Date: Thu, 31 Aug 06

Story Text

One in three consumers will buy organic food during the next month, according to a survey.

A study by YouGov, on behalf of Sainsbury's, has found that one in ten people are likely to purchase organic fast food, such as pizzas and ready meals, proving that consumers are keen to combine convenience with healthfulness.

A further 14 per cent planned to buy organic peanut butter, while 11 per cent are likely to fill their shopping baskets with organic chocolate and biscuits.

"Britain is approaching a new era in organic consumption with organic food habits now spanning the entire weekly shop," said Alison Austin, a spokeswoman for Sainsbury's.

"In the last three years, we've seen a mind set change in people's attitudes towards food," she told icScotland.

The survey found that organic products are no longer confined to the baskets of the wealthy, with 31 per cent of lower income households claiming to buy organic food.

Ms Austin added: "A greater interest in food sourcing, health awareness, lower prices and a rapidly increasing product range have made organics an increasingly popular food choice."

Further information

New MSC range promotes sustainable fishing

Date: Thu, 31 Aug 06

Story Text

Seafood manufacturer Deutsche See has announced the launch of a new Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) range of fish products next month.

A total of 19 new products will be unveiled, all bearing the MSC eco-label which guarantees sourcing from sustainable fisheries.

The range will include products based on hoki, wild salmon, Alaska Pollock and herring and the company plans to add saithe and pike-perch over the coming months.

"As market leader, Deutsche See is a trusted company, but this brings with it a huge responsibility," said Dr Peter Gill and Egbert Miebach, managing directors of Deutsche See.

"By supporting the principles of the MSC and launching our own range with the MSC eco-label we are stressing our commitment to sustainable fishing and to protecting the environment," they said.

The company, which is known for sourcing high-quality fish from around the world, prides itself on its customer-focussed production and superior quality.

Nearly 400 products worldwide can be identified by the blue fish-tick MSC label, which rewards companies for operating in an eco-sensitive manner.

Chris Ninnes, director of operations at the MSC, added: "We are very pleased about the commitment of Deutsche See."

Enzyme could increase safety of baked goods

Date: Thu, 31 Aug 06

Story Text

Scientists are currently researching an enzyme which reduces the amount of acrylamide in foods by up to 80 per cent.

Acrylamide, a compound which is a probable carcinogen, was discovered in fried and baked goods in 2002 and is produced by the Maillard reaction, which transforms carbohydrates under heat.

According to the World Health Organisation, acrylamide is "probably carcinogenic to humans", reports Nature magazine, so chemists have since been working to try and remove the compound from foods.

Speaking at the European Chemistry Congress in Budapest, Hungary this week, food chemist Thomas Amrein, of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, said that a bacterial enzyme called asparaginase could provide an answer.

"This is probably the only approach that solves, rather than fights, the problem," he reportedly claimed.

The enzyme can be added to dough prior to baking and prevents a chemical called asparagine from forming acrylamide.

Mr Amrein revealed that the enzyme cuts acrylamide by 80 per cent without affecting the taste of the food, although it requires the presence of water and would therefore not be of use in dry goods.

The enzyme is currently used as an anticancer treatment, although it has not been approved as a food additive at this stage.

[Further information](http://www.nature.com/news/2006/060828/full/060828-2.html)

Industry 'giving organic wine more focus'

Date: Thu, 31 Aug 06

Story Text

It seems that the organic trend is permeating every sector of the food and drink industry, with retailers reporting strong sales figures for organically produced wine.

Wine merchants such as Threshers are extending their organic ranges and supermarkets are seeing products flying off the shelves, including Sainsbury's, whose So organic range has enjoyed a 492 per cent sales increase during the last 12 months.

A spokeswoman for the supermarket told the Independent: "The growth has been driven both by customers demanding organic wine but also and perhaps more importantly, by wineries giving organic wine more focus than before.

"Due to this increased attention, it is now possible to get a high quality organic wine for under Â£5, from countries as widely spread as Chile, France and South Africa."

Organic wine is produced from grapes which are grown without the use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and fungicides, although copper sulphate is allowed to control mildew and certain other strictly-controlled additives, such as sulphur, are allowed.

Guy Woodward, acting editor of Decanter wine magazine, agreed that the wine trade has been more willing to try organic wine.

"Not all organic wine producers are making good wine but there certainly are more good organic wines being made," he told the Independent.

"But I'm not sure there will be a lot of difference for the average customer," he added.

[Further information](http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/this_britain/article1222841.ece)

Recycling plastic into food-grade packaging 'commercially feasible'

Date: Thu, 31 Aug 06

Story Text

A feasibility study into the recycling of plastic milk bottles into food-grade packaging has found that the process could be profitable.

However, it would probably need to be integrated into an existing PET plastic bottle recycling operation to enhance profitability, letsrecycle.com reports.

The project, which was carried out by consultants at Nextek on behalf of the Waste and Resources Action Programme (Wrap), found that recycled HDPE plastic can compete with virgin plastic on a cost basis, even if the material is recycled to high food-grade specifications.

Bottles made from a 30 per cent recycled HDPE and virgin blend performed as well as 100 per cent virgin bottles, the researchers said, and a plant would cost around Â£3 million to set up.

According to the report, companies looking to recycle HDPE plastic should consider combining the process with an existing PET reprocessing facility, as this would offer significant cost benefits in terms of staff, rent and equipment.

"A major advantage would arise from the ability to accept large quantities of mixed plastics bottles as in-feed and extract the maximum value from both the PET and HDPE components of food grade resin," the report said.

[Further information](http://www.letsrecycle.com/materials/plastics/news.jsp?story=5985)

Innovative firm launches Fairtrade chocs

Date: Thu, 31 Aug 06

Story Text

A Welsh company is launching a new line of chocolates at the Speciality and Fine Food Fair at Olympia over the coming days.

Tipyn Bach Chocolate Company, run by Alison Lindsay, is one of 13 Welsh food and drink firms hoping to drum up some new business at the event.

The company makes luxury, handmade chocolates, according to the Daily Post, including favours for weddings, hotels and holiday accommodation.

The latest products, which will be launched at the show, are a range of handmade Fairtrade chocolates, aimed at consumers with a conscience.

There are currently over 1,500 Fairtrade products available in the UK, with more and more producers jumping on the ethical bandwagon.

Products displaying the Fairtrade mark help to guarantee a better deal for disadvantaged producers in the developing world, with producer organisations receiving a minimum price to cover the cost of sustainable production, as well as an extra premium to invest in social or economic development projects.

[Further information](http://icnorthwales.icnetwork.co.uk/business/businessnews/tm_objectid=17647584&method=full&siteid=50142&headline=entrepreneur-launches-a-new-line-in-indulgent-luxury--name_page.html)

Walkers dumps 'lites' for 'lights'

Date: Wed, 30 Aug 06

Story Text

PepsiCo has decided to revamp its popular low-fat Walkers crisp range, adding new flavours and unveiling a new name for the brand.

Walkers Lites have now become Walkers Lights, the Publican reports, and the range will now concentrate on 'lighter' flavours such as sour cream and chive.

The range, which contains 33 per cent less fat and fewer calories than regular Walkers crisps, will also feature new packaging, bringing it in line with the flagship brand and featuring guideline daily amount (GDA) labelling.

"Our new range responds to consumer research that showed Lights consumers preferred

flavours such as Salted and Sour Cream & Chive to stronger ones such as Salt & Vinegar," Cara Beeby, PepsiCo's trade marketing manager, told the Publican.

Walkers is Britain's most popular crisp brand, with an estimated 11 million people thought to consume one of its products every single day.

Further information

Study finds organic milk better for health

Date: Wed, 30 Aug 06

Story Text

Organic milk provides more health benefits than standard milk, according to a group of scientists.

The comments, made in a letter to the chairman of the Food Standards Agency (FSA), Dame Deirdre Hutton, could provide a welcome boost for organic dairies in the UK, even though the food watchdog believes organic products to be no more safe or nutritious than conventionally-produced foods.

Written by Dr Kathryn Ellis, Dr Monika Mihm and Dr Giles Innocent of the University of Glasgow, the letter cites research in which the scientists found higher levels of vital fatty acids in organic milk.

According to their findings, the ratio of omega-3 to omega-6 fatty acids in organic milk is better for health than the ratio found in conventional milk, as many products contain too much omega-6 in relation to omega-3.

"In our opinion, previous statements by the Food Standards Agency regarding the lack of difference in composition between organic and non-organic milk would now appear to warrant revision in relation to milk produced in the UK," the scientists stated.

A spokesperson from the FSA told the Herald that the agency would look into the research and seek independent advice if necessary.

Further information

Firm seeks approval for phytosterol ingredient

Date: Wed, 30 Aug 06

Story Text

French company DRT has asked the Food Standards Agency to consider its phytosterol ingredient for approval, arguing that it is 'substantially equivalent' to an ingredient already on the market.

The ingredient is derived from tall oil pitch, which is distilled from pine resin and is used in products such as yellow fat spreads, milk-based fruit drinks, soya drinks and fermented milk products.

According to DRT, a product using this phytosterol was authorised in 2005 and the ingredient should therefore be fast-tracked through the approvals procedure for novel foods.

Nutraceuticals such as phytosterols have been growing in popularity in recent years, due to their ability to promote health.

Consumers are increasingly choosing to lower their blood cholesterol through a dietary approach "something which phytosterols can help to do.

According to Frost & Sullivan, the European phytosterols market was worth \$184.6 million in 2005 and is expected to soar to \$395.2 million by 2012.

[Further information](http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/drtapplication.pdf)

Cherry product repairs muscle damage

Date: Wed, 30 Aug 06

Story Text

A new cherry juice could help repair muscle damage, according to its creators.

CherryPharm said on Wednesday that its new non-concentrate cherry juice can help provide "proven" recovery from muscle damage or post-exercise pain.

It was developed by company founder John Davey, working with experts from the academic world.

The juice will be aimed at trainers and athletes, as well as professional and college sports teams.

"Cherries have long been described as 'the healing fruit' but finding a juice that maximises their effectiveness is practically impossible because the majority of cherry drinks are made from concentrate which offers far less potency," said Mr Davey, CherryPharm's president.

"CherryPharm is unlike anything available today and provides the best tasting and most convenient way to enjoy pure cherry juice and the full benefits it contains."

The product is made from 100 per cent natural fruit juice and contains no additives or preservatives. Each serving includes the juice of 50 cherries.

[Further information](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=11926&fSite=AO545&next=2)

New packaging concept for 'on the go' meal

Date: Wed, 30 Aug 06

Story Text

Europe's leading manufacturer of rigid plastic packaging has created a new packaging format for Brand Partnership's new Ainsley Harriott meals.

RPC Bebo UK Corby has announced its new portable pot format for the Ainsley Harriott Meal

in 5! range, which is a high-quality pasta meal that can be prepared in minutes.

The packaging enables consumers to eat the meal either at work or on the move. It boasts handles to prevent the handler from burning their hands, thereby allowing boiling water to simply be added to the meal while still in the original packaging.

The product itself is available in creamy vegetable, spicy tomato and macaroni cheese flavours and contains less than three per cent fat.

"Ainsley Harriott Meal in 5! is a distinctive entry into the 'on the go' meal sector, and the pot from RPC Bebo Corby provides significant style and convenience to enhance the healthy eating experience," said Rosie Guenzel, a spokeswoman for Brand Partnership.

Further information

New pate lines contain Scottish ingredients

Date: Tue, 29 Aug 06

Story Text

Five new pate lines are being introduced into Tesco stores in Scotland, courtesy of Kirkcudbright-based Castle MacLellan.

The supermarket's deli counters will be selling Brussels, Ardennes, Duck Parfait with Champagne, Farmhouse Style Pate with Bacon, and Venison Pate with Rowanberry, all in 1kg pots, the Scottish Food and Drink website reveals.

The nationwide supplier has spent the last three months perfecting its new recipes and believes that the products continue its provision of "good, honest food".

Elaine McConnell, general manager of Castle MacLellan, told Scottish Food and Drink that the company was "absolutely thrilled" to have gained the new listings.

"We pride ourselves on the provenance of our ingredients, our creativity and innovation and our ability to offer choice to the discerning shopper," she said.

The new products contain Scottish ingredients wherever possible, including rowanberry jelly from Moniak, apple jelly and wholegrain mustard from Galloway Lodge Preserves, and Scottish venison.

Ms McConnell added that producing the pates in small batch sizes allows control over texture, flavour and, above all, quality.

Further information

Scots butchers back on top

Date: Tue, 29 Aug 06

Story Text

Although sales in local butchers' shops have been falling across much of Britain in recent years, it appears that shops north of the border have been enjoying a successful period.

New research from market research organisation TNS has revealed that sales in Scottish butchers have risen by 8.6 per cent on a sales volume increase of 4.1 per cent, according to Quality Meat Scotland.

In contrast, sales across the rest of Britain fell by 4.7 per cent, with many consumers preferring the convenience of supermarket shopping.

Scottish consumers seem to be more interested in specialist and higher value cuts, according to the research, with over 26 per cent sales growth in local lamb contributing to an extra Â£3.5 million being spent in local butchers.

"This is great news for Scottish butchers and confirmation that more and more consumers are looking to pay a premium for Scottish meat products backed up by expert service and advice," said Laurent Vernet, head of marketing at Quality Meat Scotland.

"We're particularly pleased with the increased lamb sales, but still see great opportunities for this sector to grow," Mr Vernet added.

[Further information](http://www.qmscotland.co.uk/news/news-story.php?id=582)

Nanotechnology pioneer wins excellence award

Date: Tue, 29 Aug 06

Story Text

Aquanova, a leading supplier of innovative liquid solutions (solubilisates), has been awarded the 2006 Excellence in Technology Award from Frost & Sullivan for its pioneering technology.

The company's new solubilisation technology is designed for use with functional foods and dietary supplements and is based on nanoscaled encapsulation of nutrients and ingredients.

Fat-soluble nutrients have to be converted into tiny micelles before they can be absorbed by the body.

The new technology enables the formation of 30 nanometre micelles in which active functional food and supplement ingredients can be encapsulated, vastly enhancing the body's ability to absorb them.

"With this technology, nutrients are delivered in the micelle form in accordance with nature's 'nano architecture'," explained Kasturi Nadkarny, a research analyst at Frost & Sullivan.

"In doing so, the solubilisation technology enables cutting down on the amount of the active ingredients, which would have otherwise been lost in the conversion process," she continued.

In this manner, enhanced absorption of vitamins, phytoextracts and fatty acids can be achieved, and the technology also enables fat soluble nutrients to be added to beverages.

"Novasol solubilisates are crystal-clear, even in water and offer excellent antioxidant capacity," Ms Nadkarny said.

"It also offers advantages of processing without the utilisation of additives, uses patent-protected formulas (more than 30 patents are already issued) and the process leaves substances chemically unmodified, providing thermal, mechanical and pH stability," she added.

[Further information](http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/cgi/news/release?id=177739)

Ice-cream causing a stir in NI

Date: Tue, 29 Aug 06

Story Text

New ice-cream brand Tickety-Moo has got off to a flying start, with sales reported to be soaring.

The Northern Irish brand, which is produced by a family-run farm in County Fermanagh, is a luxury ice-cream made from the milk of Jersey cows.

According to the dairy, the milk itself is naturally high in calcium and butterfat protein and produces an ice-cream that is creamier than other types.

Farmer Steve Giles told the BBC: "We take the milk straight from the cow, pasteurise it, we add a few stabilisers, then we flavour it and make it into a fantastic Jersey ice-cream."

The ice-cream is currently sold from the farm itself and at local events and the dairy is hoping to widen its customer base by selling its products in more shops and restaurants.

While many other local dairies have suffered in recent months, business is booming at Tully Meadows, thanks to the Tickety-Moo brand.

Gareth Grey, a spokesman for the farm, told the BBC: "We're taking a bit of a diversification, but to keep the dairy farm going, it's what we had to do."

[Further information](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/5287788.stm)

New sweetener for beer mix drinks

Date: Tue, 29 Aug 06

Story Text

Natural flavour ingredients manufacturer Wild has developed a new sweetening system for reduced calorie beer-based drinks.

Fructsweet is being marketed as the ideal sweetener for beverage manufacturers, as it provides both production and cost benefits.

The new product combines a multi-fruit concentrate with a sweetener, resulting in an improved taste profile and mouth feel, according to the company.

Because the liquid fruit concentrate is already contained in the basic ingredient, Fructsweet immediately has benefits over existing products.

In addition, it provides a 40 per cent reduction in calorie content compared to conventional beer mix drinks, while tasting the same as sugar-sweetened varieties.

In terms of cost benefits, Fructsweet requires lower doses than sugar and also requires a lower beer tax payment, as beer mix drinks sweetened with the product have a lower gravity and are therefore taxed less.

[Further information](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?fSite=AR283&nw=hd&size=ld&sno=1&main_page=1&id=566)

Coors launch aims to 'catch mid-strength mood'

Date: Fri, 25 Aug 06

Story Text

A new beer from Coors Brewing Company is aiming to create a "mid-strength" lager market, according to marketing personnel speaking to Checkout magazine.

The firm has denied suggestions that Carling C2, which contains only two per cent alcohol, was created out of a desire to be seen to be promoting responsible drinking.

Coors will sell the beer at the same price as standard Carling. It has already been on trial in 500 pubs for almost a year, and will be available in off-licences in 500ml four packs from October on-wards.

"There is some change in consumer attitudes towards drinking," claimed marketing director Simon Davies, "and this is a product and a brand we feel has an opportunity to catch that mood."

The product will be backed by a Â£1.2 million poster campaign in October, with launch packs including a money-back offer for consumers.

A recent survey for the firm suggested that it could capture consumers who usually turn to soft-drinks to moderate their alcohol intake. Over 40 per cent told researchers that Carling C2 was a "refreshing alternative" to coffee, tea and other soft drinks.

[Further information](http://www.checkoutmagazine.co.uk/product_news/product_news_story.ehtml?o=2198)

Sound of food "as important as taste"

Date: Fri, 25 Aug 06

Story Text

The sound of food can be as important as its taste, according to new research.

Malcolm Povey, professor of food physics at the University of Leeds, analysed which foods produced the most ultrasound, arguing that crispiness could be a major factor in what foods we prefer.

His team discovered that Jazz apples produced far more ultrasound than biscuits or thick-cut

crisps, providing the best "enjoyment of biting" of any food tested.

"When it comes to the pleasure of eating, sound is as important as colour and taste but how our brain interprets this information is not yet understood," said Professor Povey.

"When you munch a Jazz apple you are in fact creating massive peaks of ultrasound in your head that we experience as a vibration sensation.

"Ultrasound is sound that is beyond the range of normal human hearing. Intriguingly, our brains automatically cut out the ultrasound when munching so as not to make ourselves deaf."

The study was commissioned by Worldwide Fruit, and conducted at the Food Centre of Industrial Collaboration, funded by Yorkshire Forward.

Further information

China latches onto cheese industry "with yaks

Date: Fri, 25 Aug 06

Story Text

China is taking advantage of improved infrastructure to help build a thriving yak cheese industry.

The BBC reported that the economic gap between inland communities and the coast in China has come to the attention of officials in recent years.

New initiatives such the "Go West" policy have been launched to boost investment in the isolated west of the country.

Langdu in western China is one of the villages which is feeling the impact of the new policy. Made up of a community of yak herders, new infrastructure such as electricity, mobile phone towers and new roads have kick-started activity.

Now, yak herders are delivering pails of milk to the village cheese factory, where villagers are being trained in the process of making cheese.

The resulting product is a milky, semi-soft cheese which can be eaten in stir-fries or just on its own.

Sang Ji Zhuo Ma, community leader, told the BBC: "In the past, the road conditions were so bad that it was hard to transport products. The market economy hasn't arrived in Langdu."

He added: "Yak milk is the world's best milk. We have beautiful pastures and a history of yak herding, so it makes sense to make cheese here."

Further information

Additional extra-cold beer for UK

Date: Fri, 25 Aug 06

Story Text

A new, extra-cold version of Hofbrau beer is due to be launched in response to increased consumer demand for the format over the recent summer months.

Hall & Woodhouse, which brews the German brand under licence in Dorset, has already trialled Hofbrau Extra Cold in around 50 pubs and, during the two-month trial period, enjoyed a 5.2 per cent sales boost.

The four per cent abv beer is served at between three and five degrees Celsius and will now be rolled out on a wider scale, with Hall & Woodhouse hoping that it will appeal to fans of the extra-cold format.

Rick Payne, Hall & Woodhouse brands marketing manager, told the Morning Advertiser: "Hofbrau is a world-famous brand and our top-selling beer.

"It is clear that there is a real demand among a significant portion of consumers for an extra-cold choice and it makes sense to capitalise on this opportunity through the development of Hofbrau Extra Cold."

[Further information](http://www.morningadvertiser.co.uk/news_detail.aspx?articleid=18518)

Sour taste detector discovered

Date: Thu, 24 Aug 06

Story Text

A team of researchers has discovered the cells and individual protein which enable us to detect sour tastes.

Biologists at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), have dispelled the notion that sour and salty tastes are detected in a different way to sweet, bitter and umami, all of which are detected by receptors in separate cells.

Charles Zuker, professor of biology at UCSD, told YubaNet.com: "Our results show that each of the five basic taste qualities is exquisitely segregated into different taste cells.

"Taken together, our work has also shown that all taste qualities are found in all areas of the tongue, in contrast with the popular view that different tastes map to different areas of the tongue," he added.

The researchers have also suggested that the sour protein, PKD2L1, is responsible for sensing acidity in the cerebrospinal fluid as they found it to be present along the entire length of the spinal cord.

"There have been many claims for pH detectors that monitor the health of different body fluids, but the nature of the circuit and the receptors has been unknown," the professor continued.

"Therefore it is significant to discover that the same protein that detects sour tastes also functions as a sentinel of pH in the central nervous system."

[Further information](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2006-08/hhmi-rit082106.php)

information

Consumers and experts involved in nanotech dialogue

Date: Thu, 24 Aug 06

Story Text

The BfR, Germany's Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, is carrying out a study into the use and potential risks of nanomaterials in foods and other products.

The study, entitled Risks of Nanotechnological Applications in Foods, Cosmetics and Consumer Goods, is now underway and will receive input from some 100 experts.

Specialists from research groups, industry, public agencies, consumer associations and non-governmental organisations will be asked to feed into the process, providing specialist knowledge and their professional opinions on the future use of nanotechnology and its potential risks.

In addition, the BfR is conducting a second study into the people's perceptions of nanotechnology and their hopes and concerns for the technology.

"Both projects will help to identify scientifically determined and emotionally perceived risks early on and to carry them over to the communication process," said BfR President, Professor Andreas Hensel.

After involving both experts and consumers in dialogue, the BfR plans to deliver a detailed report to politicians, public agencies, scientists and industry in order for its findings to be integrated into the risk communication process.

Further information

New Waitrose products get traffic light labels

Date: Thu, 24 Aug 06

Story Text

Waitrose has launched a new range of healthy ready meals for consumers who are keen to watch their nutritional intake, but have little time to worry about it.

The new range is free from artificial colours, additives and preservatives and the products are also free from hydrogenated fats.

Seafood products in the range include Spicy Tiger Prawn Penne and a Fish and Coconut Curry, website Fish Update reports.

The packaging benefits from the recently-introduced 'traffic light' labelling, which aims to inform consumers about a product's positioning within a balanced diet.

The system, which is being promoted by the Food Standards Agency, has also been adopted by Sainsbury and Asda, although many food manufacturers, and the supermarket giant Tesco, have chosen to use an alternative, Guideline Daily Amounts system.

In a statement on the company website, Waitrose says: "We have introduced this type of labelling on sandwiches and ready meals so you see at a glance the differences between products in

addition to the nutrition information per pack."

<a

href="http://www.fishupdate.com/news/fullstory.php/aid/5193/Waitrose_launches_new_seaf
ood_products_.html">Further information

Highland Spring releases ideal Halloween offering

Date: Thu, 24 Aug 06

Story Text

The UK's leading natural mineral water producer, Highland Spring, has unveiled a Halloween pack for children.

The limited edition version of Highland Spring for Kids is available as a 12-pack of 330ml bottles, with Halloween imagery to make them stand out at themed parties.

The water itself is obtained from organic land in the Scottish Highlands and is 100 per cent natural mineral water.

"Halloween is a fantastic opportunity for retailers to increase sales of healthy products for children," said Sally Stanley, marketing director of Highland Spring.

According to Ms Stanley, children often overindulge on sugar-laden drinks and snacks at Halloween, so the limited edition water will enable parents to provide fun, healthy alternatives to soft drinks.

"The new Halloween packaging is extremely eye-catching and will appeal to children and adults alike and, if merchandised correctly, is sure to have a positive impact on sales," she added.

The individual bottles have a special panel where children can write their name, making them the ideal party drink.

Further information

US vintners ponder GM yeast

Date: Thu, 24 Aug 06

Story Text

Wine-makers in the US are experimenting with genetically-modified yeast in an attempt to eliminate the headache-causing properties of red wine.

Some people experience headaches, migraines or other allergic reactions when they drink red wine, a response which is thought to be caused by chemicals.

Researchers have inserted genes into the DNA of a yeast species, resulting in a strain known as ML01 yeast that eliminates the chemicals which trigger headaches and allergic reactions, such as diarrhoea, palpitations, rashes and vomiting.

In an industry built on tradition, the research has been greeted with a certain amount of

scepticism.

"As an industry, we're definitely interested in research when it comes to genetic engineering," Paul Dolan, chairman of the Wine Institute in California, told the Sacramento Bee.

"But I don't think we're prepared to look at genetically modified products yet," he added.

US regulations do not require product labels to indicate whether a food contains genetically modified ingredients and a number of wines containing the yeast are reported to be on the market already.

However, European regulations require foods containing a certain amount of genetically-modified ingredients to carry labels, leading US food companies to avoid using such ingredients in products intended for the EU marketplace.

Further information

Brits lap up yoghurt drinks

Date: Thu, 24 Aug 06

Story Text

Sales of yoghurt drinks have rocketed in the UK, according to a new Mintel report.

Consumers are expected to eat yoghurt to the value of Â£1.3 billion this year, representing a 62 per cent increase on 2001 figures.

A large reason for the dairy product's success is the massive rise in popularity of yoghurt drinks, sales of which have increased by 432 per cent over the last five years.

While the market was worth just Â£62 million in 2001, it is now worth an estimated Â£330 million.

"Yoghurt drinks are ideal for eating on the go and tap into the snacking zeitgeist of modern Britain in a way that yoghurt pots struggle to do," said David Bird, senior market analyst at Mintel.

"However, their real success lies in the fact that many are functional drinks and are designed to have a specific benefit beyond their nutritional value."

Functional food and drink products are those which market themselves as offering additional health benefits, aside from the basic nutritional value of the product.

Mr Bird continued: "The functional food and drink market is booming in Britain and, by offering consumers a quick and easy way to enjoy the benefits of functional products, these yoghurt drinks have come up with a winning combination."

Despite the popularity of yoghurt drinks, sales of yoghurt pots are still expected to rise by five per cent this year and Mintel expects the total yoghurt market to grow by 40 per cent between now and 2011.

New cereal is Kellogg's 'tastiest high-fibre food'

Date: Wed, 23 Aug 06

Story Text

Kellogg's has added a new cereal to its All-Bran range, extending its breakfast provision in the UK market even further.

The latest addition to the cereal giant's portfolio is All-Bran Crunchy Oatbakes – a baked cereal made with oats, wheat and oat bran, according to Checkout Magazine.

In addition, the company has launched a Crunchy Nut Nuts About snack bar, which is available in Nut and Fruit 'n Nut varieties.

Commenting on the cereal launch, UK sales director Kevin Brownsey told Checkout Magazine: "All-Bran Crunchy Oatbakes is the tastiest high-fibre food Kellogg's has ever made and provides 21 per cent of the guideline daily amount (GDA) for fibre."

Describing the cereal as a "strong offering", Mr Brownsey added: "It extends the appeal of the All-Bran range by attracting consumers who want a really tasty high-fibre cereal."

Kellogg's cereals are free from hydrogenated vegetable oils and the company recently announced the imminent removal of all trans fats from its snack products, a move which should be completed by the end of 2006.

<a

href="http://www.checkoutmagazine.co.uk/product_news/product_news_story.ehtml?o=2160

Defra considering GM request

Date: Wed, 23 Aug 06

Story Text

Genetically-modified (GM) potatoes could soon be found in British fields if a request from a plant science company is granted.

BASF has asked the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for permission to conduct two trials of GM potatoes in Britain, - a request which, if granted, could produce commercially-viable crops within ten years.

Field trials of the variety, which is resistant to late blight disease, have already been conducted in Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands.

"Assuming we get the go-ahead from Defra to start planting next year, we will plant for three or four years depending on how fast we can get the scientific and technical information from the trials," Barry Sticking, a company spokesman, told Radio 4's Farming Today programme.

Mr Sticking explained that late blight disease is currently treated with fungicide spraying, which is only 90 to 95 per cent successful and requires 15 sprayings a season.

"So there is a cost involved and there is also a loss involved," he revealed, adding that crop losses amount to around £50 million per year, in addition to the cost of spraying and the necessary

equipment.

[Further information](http://www.inthenews.co.uk/news/news/science/britain-set-gm-potatoes-448364.htm)

Consumers put off by 'best before' labels

Date: Wed, 23 Aug 06

Story Text

'Best before' dates on food packages have an impact on consumers' perception of freshness but not necessarily food safety, according to a new study.

Research at Cornell University found that the decision to accept a product, when influenced by freshness dating on the package's label, is fuelled by perceptions of freshness and healthfulness, not by the thought that the product might be unfit for consumption.

"We found that, as the expiration dates approached or went by, the panelists' acceptance of the food diminished, as did their perceptions of the food's healthfulness and freshness," revealed Brian Wansink, professor of marketing and nutritional sciences at Cornell University.

"It appears that it's the food's perceived freshness rather than its safety that is the driving factor," he concluded.

The researchers suggested that manufacturers might be better labelling products with 'use by' dates rather than 'best before' dates, as many consumers are likely to throw away food that has passed its 'best before' date because of a perceived lack of freshness, even if the food might still be safe to eat.

[Further information](http://www.newswise.com/articles/view/522932/?sc=dwhr)

Flax seed oil patent granted

Date: Wed, 23 Aug 06

Story Text

Burcon NutraScience Corporation has been granted a European patent for a novel protein isolate derived from flax seed oil.

Although the company's main focus is its canola protein isolate technology, it has recently filed patent applications for a number of other oilseeds and oilseed meals, including sunflower, soybean and hemp seed.

However, the announcement marks Burcon's first successful application for an exclusively non-canola based technology.

The patent, which it intends to register in 20 European countries, includes the low linolenic acid variety Linola oil seed, which is being developed by Canada's Agricore United in conjunction with Australia's CSIRO.

"Flax is an important oil seed crop which has seen strong growth in consumer awareness for its health benefits including omega-3 fatty acids, lignans and fibre," said Johann Tergesen, president

and COO at Burcon.

"Burcon will continue to devote some of its resources to exploring opportunities beyond its core canola protein isolate technology," he added.

[Further information](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=11854&fSite=AO545&next=6)

Cool innovation wins award

Date: Wed, 23 Aug 06

Story Text

Canada's Labatt Breweries has won a Diamond Award recognition for a packaging innovation which keeps beer colder for longer.

The brewery's Labatt Blue Cold One cans have a thermal sleeve label which keeps the aluminium beer cans cold.

By placing a hi-tech, polymer insulation between two layers of Melinex polyester film, the company has created a thin thermal barrier which protects the beer from heat from the drinker's hands, as well as making the cans more comfortable to hold.

The material is applied to filled, seamed cans before a protective shrink overwrap is applied over the material.

The innovation has been trialled in Canada and the US where, according to Labatt Breweries' innovation manager Elaine Stokes-Noble, it was "extremely well-received by consumers".

"The Cold One is a very successful initiative and we will continue to look at opportunities," she added.

[Further information](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=11856&fSite=AO545&next=7)

Camelbert on EU horizon

Date: Wed, 23 Aug 06

Story Text

An English-born lady has set up a dairy in Mauritania to pasteurise camel milk, which she hopes to export as 'Camelbert' cheese.

Nancy Abeiderrahmane invites semi-nomadic herdsmen to bring their camels to collection points, where they are milked in exchange for money, the BBC reports.

The milk is tested for cleanliness and quality before being transported to the capital, Nouakchott, for pasteurisation and packaging.

"We customised standard dairy equipment to suit the special properties of camel milk," Mrs Abeiderrahmane told the BBC.

"Demand has grown over the years because we deliver it to thousands of corner shops and it has caught on as a refreshing and convenient drink with the public."

Ms Abeiderrahmane believes that cheese made from the milk, which is lower in fat than cow's milk and contains more vitamins, could be sold in Europe.

"It's only European Union red tape and regulations that are holding us back," she commented.

"Buyers from some of Europe's most prestigious food shops think the cheese is great. I'm sure it will appeal to the European taste for new and exotic delicacies."

[Further information](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/5272430.stm)

Meat-free meals 'not just for vegetarians'

Date: Tue, 22 Aug 06

Story Text

Sainsbury's has launched a new range of ready meals, which it claims will appeal to vegetarians and meat-eaters alike.

Aptly titled 'Not Just For Vegetarians', the new range consists of a number of adventurous recipes designed to demonstrate just how tasty meatless meals can be.

Dishes include Moroccan style vegetable tangine with couscous, sweet potato and goats cheese burgers, and a Malaysian vegetable curry with noodles.

As well as the more exotic recipes, the range also includes vegetable-based versions of some old English favourites, such as Yorkshire pudding with vegetarian sausage and a Cumberland pie made with soya mince.

The variety of dishes is bound to provide something for everyone and Sainsbury's has made sure that each one provides a healthy quota of essential amino acids, many of which are lacking in vegetarian diets.

In fact, some of the dishes contain all nine of the essential amino acids and each one contains at least one of the required daily portions of vegetables, if not more.

The new range will be available from September 3rd 2006.

[Further information](http://www.j-sainsbury.co.uk/index.asp?PageID=422&subsection=&Year=2006&NewsID=747)

Sharwood's to benefit from Britain's snacking obsession

Date: Tue, 22 Aug 06

Story Text

Sharwood's is taking a significant step into the snack market with the launch of a new range of exotic culinary treats.

Available in "big bags", the new products will include mini puppodums and prawn crackers and, according to mad.co.uk, a range of dips will be launched to accompany the snacks.

The mini puppodums are seasoned with crushed cumin seeds, sea salt, tikka spice and black pepper, while the prawn crackers are chilli-flavoured.

Sharwood's new dips will include mango chutney and chilli, sweet red chilli, and spiced tomato and red pepper.

The company also recently launched a new range of sauces, taking inspiration from unusual Asian flavours from Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

A blend of traditional expertise and innovation has made Sharwood's the leading UK brand in Asian sauce meals, with 45 per cent of households thought to use their products.

Further information

Pepper treatment enzyme unveiled

Date: Tue, 22 Aug 06

Story Text

A new enzyme should provide substantial benefits for white pepper producers, decreasing processing time and improving quality and yield.

Rohament Pulpex has been developed by AB Enzymes, which claims the new enzyme will improve on the traditional method of white pepper production.

"We are proud to offer a product that offers both customer-perceivable benefits as well as process savings to pepper producers," said Jorg Kohler, business unit manager of food and specialities.

"This product will help us to achieve the global growth that we think can be achieved by opening up new enzyme segments," he added.

The enzyme product helps to eliminate processing weaknesses that are inherent in traditional processes, such as long processing time, foul smell, colour fading and loss of aroma.

It also uses a process which is more environmentally-friendly than traditional methods.

AB Enzymes' CEO, Aryan Moelker, said that the product is in line with the company's strategy to be a leading player in the food enzymes industry.

"Moreover, this product helps preserve the environment, another key element of our approach," he added.

Further information

Congress to hear about omega-3 crops

Date: Tue, 22 Aug 06

Story Text

Ongoing research into developing crops which produce omega-3 is due to be described at a conference in Adelaide this week.

The International Congress of Plant Molecular Biology, being held from August 20th to 25th, is set to hear a report on the progress of the technology, which could mean that people no longer have to rely on seafood for their omega-3 intake.

Many food manufacturers have recently been launching products enriched with omega-3 fatty acids, which are important for development and growth, but enabling plants to produce the fatty acids could confer huge health benefits.

Anna Koltunow, congress convener, told ABC News: "There are people working on plants, synthesising things like omega-3 fatty acids which are normally products that are made from fish oils and they're very beneficial for health.

"So we're trying to introduce those pathways into plants so that it will be possible to just extract those oils from plants rather than depleting fish stocks."

Further information

Cheese researchers use DNA extraction to prove quality

Date: Tue, 22 Aug 06

Story Text

Researchers are using genetic analysis to determine the quality and safety of Andalusian goat's cheese.

Led by Professor Manuel Martinez Bueno of the Department of Microbiology at the University of Granada (UGR), the team is attempting to characterise the bacterial strains found in a number of different local goat's cheeses.

The cheeses are produced using a traditional production process using raw milk and rennet and are microbiologically richer than industrially-produced cheeses.

Using a combination of traditional and more innovative molecular DNA extraction and characterisation methods, the team is identifying the organisms found in the cheese and the way those different organisms impact on the quality of the end product.

In addition, they are using the information to determine the safety of such cheeses, particularly regarding the presence of enterococci, a bacterium usually found in foods which have been contaminated by faeces.

However, the team found that the presence of the bacterium does not pose a health risk and can even enhance the cheese.

"Even in industrially-produced products we have found enterococci, and it does not mean that

they are unfit," said Manuel Martinez Bueno.

"The analysed goat's cheeses are completely safe," he added.

[Further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=50129)

Quest to recreate a much-loved recipe

Date: Mon, 21 Aug 06

Story text

The wonders of modern science could be about to unveil the secrets of one of Scotland's favourite, but currently extinct, drinks.

Creamola Foam, said by the Sunday Times to bring about "sticky, fizzy puddles of swooning nostalgia" in any Scot over the age of 25, was created in the mid-1960s and subsequently withdrawn in 1998, reportedly due to high production costs.

Available in a tin, the drink was made by adding cold water to a sherbet-like powder, creating a foaming, frothy liquid.

However, after the Creamola range was taken over by Leeds-based conglomerate Brand Partnership, the recipe for the powder was lost.

Now David Paton, proprietor of website Retrosweets.co.uk, has tracked down three unopened tins of Creamola Foam and, according to the Sunday Times, plans to determine the product's formula.

"I don't think there's any precedent for this in the world of sweets," he told the newspaper.

"The company hasn't shown much interest in the Creamola brand and the formula could be too costly to reproduce, but the brand is sitting there doing nothing while people are crying out for it."

Mr Paton said that, of all the confectionery he receives enquiries about, Creamola Foam is the most common.

"It's our holy grail at the moment," he revealed.

[Further information](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2090-2318790,00.html)

Flavoured milk – so good, the cows want it back even more

Date: Mon, 21 Aug 06

Story text

Arla Foods' popular milk brand, Cravendale, is launching a new range of flavoured milk drinks.

The first brand extension since Cravendale's original launch seven years ago, the new drinks will be called Hint of ... and will include wild strawberry and vanilla variants, according to Brand Republic.

Free from artificial ingredients and with the appearance of regular milk, Hint of ... is made from fresh British semi-skimmed milk and has "just a tantalising hint of natural flavour", according to the company.

According to Cravendale, the vanilla-flavoured variety is ideal for use in coffees, smoothies, and to give breakfast cereals a delicate twist.

Available in one litre cartons and a new 284ml bottle, the new flavoured milks stay fresh for seven days after opening.

The company hopes that the drinks will follow in the footsteps of the original Cravendale milk, which achieved popularity largely as a result of the successful "So good, the cows want it back" marketing campaign.

[Further information](http://www.protectingthetaste.com/theCravendale/targetCravendale/vanilla/)

Edible viruses approved as food additive

Date: Mon, 21 Aug 06

Story Text

A mixture of edible viruses has been granted approval as a food additive by US federal health officials, according to the Associated Press.

Reported to be the first ever to be approved as a food additive, the six bacteria-killing viruses are designed to be sprayed onto cold cuts, hot dogs and sausages to help combat harmful microbes.

They target strains of *Listeria monocytogenes* bacteria, which are responsible for a serious infection called listeriosis.

"As long as it is used in accordance with the regulations, we have concluded it's safe," said Andrew Zajac, a spokesman for the Food and Drug Administration's office of food additive safety.

Mr Zajac told the Associated Press that the Department of Agriculture would be responsible for regulating the use of the product in the US and insisted that consumers would be unable to detect any difference in products treated with the spray.

"The FDA is applying one of the toughest food safety standards which they have to find this is safe," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, food safety director at the Centre for Science in the Public Interest.

Baltimore-based Intralytix has licensed the product to a multinational company, which intends to market the viruses worldwide.

[Further information](http://www.cantonrep.com/index.php?ID=302977&Category=23)

Novel gym joins oral hygiene battle

Date: Mon, 21 Aug 06

Story Text

A new chewing gum is being developed which contains bacteria capable of helping to prevent tooth decay.

German chemical firm BASF is researching a bacterium found in yoghurt called lactobacillus, which can help to disperse the harmful bacteria which build up on teeth, where they release acids that break down tooth enamel.

By incorporating the lactobacillus bacteria into a product such as chewing gum, the researchers believe they can create a simple, cost-effective product which could help to fight tooth decay.

They are currently trying to combine the bacteria with an artificial sweetener in order to produce a new generation of oral hygiene chewing gums.

Stefan Marcinowski, executive director of research at BASF, said that the gum had already been "tested on large numbers of people and demonstrated the ability to significantly reduce bacterial levels".

The product, if it is released in chewing gum format, could be on shelves next year, although the company is also looking at a number of different formats and uses for the bacteria.

[Further information](http://www.inthenews.co.uk/news/news/health/yoghurt-bacteria-fight-tooth-decay-448116.htm)

Brits say yes to sushi

Date: Mon, 21 Aug 06

Story Text

Sales of sushi have enjoyed a year on year increase of 30 per cent over recent months, according to manufacturers.

Taiko and Ichiban, suppliers to many of the UK's best-known high-street stores and supermarkets, have reported a surge in the popularity of the Japanese dish, which is characterised by small portions of raw fish, rice and vegetables.

In just a couple of years, the dish has rapidly become commonplace alongside packaged sandwiches and salads and, according to the Western Mail, is fast becoming the lunch of choice for Welsh workers.

Sushi is high in protein but low in fat and cholesterol, making it much healthier than many other lunchtime offerings.

Food writer Phillip Moss attributes the success of sushi to a combination of its healthfulness and its reflection on lifestyle.

"It's Asian and so it's seen as quite stylish," he told the Western Mail.

"Sushi restaurants, even in Japan, tend to have clean-line interiors and dramatic lighting and you also get the combination of theatre and dining, with chefs being on show."

Further information

New pub flavours are the real McCoy

Date: Mon, 21 Aug 06

Story Text

Popular crisps range McCoys has gained an extra three limited edition varieties which celebrate traditional pub food favourites.

The United Biscuits UK (UBUK) brand will now include McCoy's Sausage, Onion and Gravy, Ploughman's Cheese and Pickle, and Steak and Ale Pie varieties.

The new additions will be available in variety six packs, which will contain two packs of each flavour.

In addition, the company has added limited edition, pirate-inspired flavours to its Hula Hoops range, including Smugglers Smokey Bacon and Caribbean Prawn Cocktail, and has created a limited edition Cheese and Onion flavour to add to the Mini Cheddars stable.

"The exciting flavour news we have developed across our trio of leading savoury snacks brands is an excellent way of bringing excitement and interest to the bagged snacks category," Michael Rouse, impulse trading director, told the Publican.

"By offering consumers flavour variety, we can create interest at point of purchase and bring new users to the brands," he added.

Further information

GM maize could benefit poultry producers

Date: Fri, 18 Aug 06

Story Text

Researchers have created an edible vaccine which protects poultry against Newcastle disease.

The deadly virus is a major killer of poultry in developing countries and, although vaccines exist, producers are usually unable to afford to vaccinate their flocks.

Mexican researchers have now genetically modified (GM) maize plants by inserting a gene from the Newcastle disease virus into the plant's DNA.

Chickens fed on the GM maize produce antibodies against the virus, protecting them against future infection.

Frans Dolberg, a spokesman for the Network for Smallholder Poultry Development, told SciDev.Net that the disease is a big killer.

He commented: "There is a big problem in delivering the vaccine to the many millions of poor

poultry keepers around the world, and the GM maize could be a possibility."

The most recent case of the disease in the UK was confirmed in July 2005 in a holding of pheasants in Surrey.

The outbreak was successfully controlled and the UK regained its disease-free status in January 2006.

[Further information](http://www.springerlink.com/content/c747u453j63781p4/fulltext.pdf)

Seafish helps industry with allergen labelling

Date: Fri, 18 Aug 06

Story Text

An online guide is now available to help the food industry comply with new labelling legislation.

Manufacturers have been required to include details of 12 specified allergens and their derivatives on packaged food and drink products since the European Commission introduced legislation in November 2005.

The EC has now extended the requirements to include molluscs and lupins – both of which can bring about serious allergic reactions.

Many people who are allergic to peanuts are also likely to react to lupin, while individuals with allergies to crustacea, such as crabs, lobsters and prawns, have a strong likelihood of also being allergic to molluscs such as snails, mussels and scallops.

Seafish's new guide has been designed to help the food industry, which must act to comply with the requirements by autumn 2008.

Allergens are a growing concern for the food industry and the FDIN has therefore organised a Free-From 'Allergy & Intolerance' seminar, scheduled to be held in Daventry, Northamptonshire on Wednesday 20th September.

For further information on the seminar, take a look [HERE](http://www.fdin.co.uk/seminars/ffai.html)

For further information on the story, take a look [HERE](http://www.seafish.org/land/legislation.asp?p=fi474)

Award-winning product is unique in Britain

Date: Fri, 18 Aug 06

Story Text

A Pembrokeshire farm now has the honour of producing the first organic black puddings in Britain.

Bumpylane Rare Breeds Welsh Organic Black Puddings are hand-made in Druidstone from an ancient Patagonian recipe, according to the Western Mail.

The black puddings have just received the award for Best New Produce at the annual Pembrokeshire County Council food awards.

"We were killing organic pigs and sending the blood away to be incinerated so I started to ask why we couldn't make black sausage," said Richard Blacklaw-Jones, one of the puddings' creators.

"I gather the blood in a bucket as the pig is stuck and stir it to stop it coagulating before mixing in herbs, oatmeal, milk and onions," he revealed.

The mixing and cooling is carried out at Shortlands Farm at Druidston, owned by sheep and cattle farmers David and Pam Williams.

Mr Williams explained: "We already had organic certification for our own products, including sausages and burgers, so adding black pudding was relatively easy."

Further information

Kellogg's finds alternatives to hydrogenated oils

Date: Fri, 18 Aug 06

Story Text

Cereal giant Kellogg's has confirmed that all trans fats will be removed from its snack products by the end of 2006.

The company's UK breakfast cereals are already free from hydrogenated vegetable oil and are virtually trans free already.

A small number of Kellogg's products do still contain "trace amounts" of trans fats, according to the company, and these are naturally inherent in certain ingredients, rather than being purposefully added to the products.

"We have been actively working to remove hydrogenated vegetable oils, and therefore trans fats, from the small number of Kellogg's™s snack products which currently contain them and plan to achieve this by the end of 2006," confirmed Sam Fulton, the company's corporate communications manager.

"Kellogg's is committed to providing products that meet changing consumer nutrition needs and we are pleased to have found alternatives to hydrogenated oils that can be used without compromising on taste, texture and quality," he added.

Further information

Healthier food could be achieved via incentives, taxes

Date: Fri, 18 Aug 06

Story Text

The idea of placing taxes on high calorie foods in a bid to encourage healthy eating has been tabled at an international convention.

According to one expert, providing farmers with incentives to produce more healthy foods could also be an attractive option and would lead to clear health benefits for consumers.

The number of overweight people in the world has now exceeded the number who are undernourished, said the University of North Carolina's Professor Barry Popkin.

Speaking at the 26th conference of the International Association of Agricultural Economists in Australia, the professor said that eating habits and decreasing activity levels are largely to blame.

"Obesity is the norm globally and under-nutrition, while still important in a few countries and in targeted populations in many others, is no longer the dominant disease," he said.

"The reality is that globally, far more obesity than under-nutrition exists and the rates of change for the former are large and positive while those of the latter are small and negative."

The professor said that governments needed to develop strategies, such as placing taxes on high calorie foods and providing subsidies for healthier options, thus encouraging people to eat more healthily.

"A central issue affecting the world's public health is the need to shift the relative prices of a range of foods to encourage healthier, less energy dense and more nutrient dense foods," he added.

Further information

Consumers seek out soy for health benefits

Date: Fri, 18 Aug 06

Story Text

Soy products are becoming increasingly popular, with consumers turning to foods which promote health and wellness.

An annual study into consumer attitudes to nutrition has revealed that interest in the relationship between health and diet is growing.

Nearly 90 per cent of consumers said that they were at least somewhat concerned about the nutritional value of their food and three quarters claimed to have changed their eating habits during the past three to five years in response to those concerns.

This trend has led to increased demand for functional foods, including soybean oil, which is one of the healthiest cooking oils.

Functional foods consist of products and ingredients which are thought to provide a health benefit beyond basic nutritional advantages.

Food manufacturers are currently working to develop new soy-based products with lower trans fat and saturated fat content and many of the study participants said that they recognised the

healthy benefits of soy products.

Steve Poole, director of soyfoods and soybean oil programmes at the United Soybean Board (USB), commented: "I'm not surprised that consumers recognise the healthfulness of soybean oil.

"Liquid soybean oil is naturally low in saturated fat and contains zero grams of trans fat," he revealed.

Further information

Cow genome opens door to superior production

Date: Thu, 17 Aug 06

Story Text

Scientists are a step closer to improving the nutritional value of beef and dairy products, following the announcement of the most complete sequence of the cow genome yet.

The genome is the result of an international joint effort, including Australia's national science agency, CSIRO, and AgResearch New Zealand.

Including one third more data than earlier versions of the cow genome, it will help scientists to identify specific genes that play a part in key functions such as lactation, reproduction and muscle growth rate.

Commenting on the advance, CSIRO's Dr Ross Tellam said: "This is very valuable information.

"We could potentially achieve as much improvement in cattle breeding and production in 50 years as we have over the last 8,000 years of traditional farming."

The main focus of the research concentrated on the Hereford breed and geneticists will now be able to use the genome to highlight genetic variation within and between various breeds.

"This is just the beginning of a revolution in the way we produce our animals and food," said Dr Brian Dalrymple, head of bioinformatics research at CSIRO Livestock Industries.

"Once we have a complete set of genes that influence tenderness, for example, we will be able to predict that animals of a certain type, fed a particular type of pasture or grain, will consistently produce meat of a particular standard of tenderness and marbling."

Further information

Filippo Berio launches new TV ads

Date: Thu, 17 Aug 06

Story Text

A new advertising campaign is being launched to promote Filippo Berio, the UK's leading olive oil brand.

The company, which is known for its quality and product innovation, hopes to increase brand loyalty and increase consumer demand for olive oil.

Airing on September 11th, Filippo Berio's new television commercials will promote the popular brand, featuring a range of recipes designed to highlight the versatility of olive oil and reinforce the quality of the brand.

The company said that it aims to reach over one million 25 to 54-year-old housewives, who it deems to be the key purchasers of olive oil.

Filippo Berio recently launched a milder-tasting version of its olive oil, designed for people who find the strong flavour of extra virgin oil too overpowering.

The new, milder oil has a smoother, more delicate flavour and is said to be ideal for cooking white fish, drizzling on salads, and making sauces and marinades.

[Further information](http://www.filippoberio.co.uk/home/default.asp)

Monitors detect turbidity and pH of waste water

Date: Thu, 17 Aug 06

Story Text

Food manufacturers now have a helping hand when it comes to complying with recent legislation.

Analytical Technology (ATi) has launched new suspended solids/turbidity and pH monitors which will help manufacturers to meet the Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) regulations.

All European food and drink manufacturers are now required to implement the Best Available Techniques (Bat) to provide a high level of protection to the environment.

The new range of AutoClean monitors from ATi help to ensure that water emissions are harmless and provide a cost-effective way of meeting the requirements.

They enable manufacturers to measure the amount of suspended solids in emissions water and to check that the pH level of the water meets IPPC regulations.

"The introduction of this new legislation will have a massive impact on all food and beverage manufacturers as they will be forced to focus more on their water emissions," said Dr Michael Strahand, Europe general manager at ATi.

"At ATi we can simplify the transition by providing a range of instruments which can monitor all water emissions and prove to the Environment Agency that the company is not releasing any harmful effluent into the environment," he added.

[Further information](http://www.processingtalk.com/news/anl/anl108.html)

UK debut for world's first fairtrade chocolate drink

Date: Thu, 17 Aug 06

Story Text

The world's first 100 per cent fairtrade chocolate drink has been unveiled by Cafedirect.

The UK's largest fairtrade hot drinks company is launching Cocodirect, a drink which offers a better deal for producers in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to website mad.co.uk.

Made from 40 per cent cocoa solids, the new hot chocolate brand contains twice as many cocoa solids as regular drinking chocolate and will be available in 250g powder tubs in major UK supermarkets.

"Not only does Cocodirect help benefit growers and their families, but the extra income it generates also contributes towards improving services in local communities," a Cafedirect spokesperson told the website.

Campaign groups have been asked to encourage local stores to stock the product, which is being marketed as a "guilt-free" brand.

Fairtrade was introduced to improve the situation for overseas producers, many of whom are unable to obtain a fair price from buyers.

There are now over 1,500 fairtrade products available in the UK and over 800,000 families of farmers and workers from countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America are benefiting from the organisation.

Further information

Sainsbury's to stock new wine

Date: Thu, 17 Aug 06

Story Text

A premium Austrian wine is being introduced in one of the UK's leading supermarkets.

Gruner Veltliner is due to become the latest addition to Sainsbury's premium Taste the Difference line from September and will cost Â£6.99 per bottle, according to Checkout Magazine.

The white wine has been sourced from a small family producer in the Traisental region near Vienna, Weingut Huber.

Said to be one of Austria's most exciting young winemakers, Markus Huber has been making wine from the family's grapes and those of his neighbours since 2000 and is the tenth generation of his family to work in the trade.

The Gruner Veltliner grape variety is said to produce fruity wines, characterised by a floral aroma, green plum flavours, and a hint of spice.

The Austrian wine industry suffered a crippling blow in 1985, when a scandal involving a number of dishonest growers adding diethylene glycol to thin their wines was revealed.

Austrian wine exports were almost entirely halted but, as a result, the country's industry now has

some of the highest standards in the world and its wines are beginning to regain international recognition.

Further information

Waitrose extends Spanish meat offering

Date: Thu, 17 Aug 06

Story Text

Waitrose has added four new meat selections to its continental range, boosting its European meat offerings.

The hams are obtained from the meat of Iberico pigs, a special breed which are allowed to roam freely in a natural habitat of Spanish oak woodlands and meadows called La Dehesa.

Iberico hams are some of Spain's finest delicacies and the supermarket recommends them to be served with tapas and crusty bread.

The new additions include free range Jamon Iberico de Bellota, an air dried cured ham which is seasoned and matured for over 30 months, and free range Paleta Iberico, which are slices of air dried pork shoulder, matured for over 20 months.

A dry cured pork sausage, Chorizo Iberico de Bellota, has also been added to the range. Seasoned with a unique blend of paprika, oregano and garlic, the meat has a characteristic nutty flavour which is produced as a result of the pigs feeding on the acorns from oak trees.

Finally, Waitrose is now offering a selection of cured Iberico meats, including dried cured pork sausage, dry cured pork salami and cured pork loin.

Further information

Flavoured alcoholic beverages in 'steep decline'

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 06

Story Text

The UK is experiencing a decline in the popularity of flavoured alcoholic beverages, according to a new report.

A new report by Research and Markets analysts, entitled Flavoured Alcoholic Beverages (FABs), has highlighted retail sales data which points to a definite fall in the drinks' popularity.

In a summary statement, analysts said that overall growth in an otherwise successful alcoholic drinks market was being "held back" by the "continued decline" of FABs.

While the decline was initially driven by the April 2002 rise in duty levied on FABs, there has also been a change in consumer behaviour, the report claims.

Younger female drinkers in particular have been turning away from the beverages, preferring instead to drink white spirits such as vodka.

"This situation is compounded by a lack of innovation and promotion on the part of manufacturers, who seemed unwilling or unable to step in and stop the decline," the analysts concluded.

[Further information](http://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/c40711)

NFU agrees that innovation will save milk industry

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 06

Story Text

The National Farmers' Union (NFU) claims that a recent report by the Milk Development Council (MDC) "explodes" the theory that cutting production would benefit the milk industry.

Many dairy companies and commentators have been calling for a reduction in raw milk supply to help save the industry.

However, a recent MDC report, entitled "Routes to Profitability", concluded that the current state of the milk industry would be turned around through more innovation, better contracts and improved efficiency, rather than production cuts.

The NFU supports the report's findings, insisting that the milk industry is set for growth as a result of competition and market potential.

"It has always seemed implausible that shrinking supply in a country that is not self-sufficient in milk or dairy products would have any long-term benefit," said Tom Hind, chief dairy advisor at the NFU.

"Hopefully this report will help to draw a line in the sand."

[Further information](http://www.nfuonline.com/x9844.xml)

New, non-bleeding Surimi colours

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 06

Story Text

Chr Hansen has unveiled a new range of colours for surimi, a ground food product typically made from white-fleshed fish.

The new products offer a wide variety of colours that provide both heat and light stability and do not bleed.

"As a leading global producer of natural colours, it is our goal to become one of the main suppliers to the surimi industry within the next few years," said Lionel Schmitt, vice president of commercial development for colours.

Mr Schmitt explained that it is important that colours in surimi-based products do not bleed or migrate into the white part of the surimi, or indeed to neighbouring items in the same package, as this would reduce the product's appeal.

"In this application, the non-bleeding property of a colour is therefore a significant functionality

equal to colour shade and heat and light stability," he added.

The company has developed a sample surimi box, so that food producers can trial the capabilities of the colours.

Mr Schmitt continued: "Many consumers in both the United States and Europe consider surimi a good source of protein, minerals and vitamins.

"It is recognised as a healthy food product that is low in fat and therefore it fits very well into the current health trend."

Further information

Organic fish farms get the go-ahead

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 06

Story Text

The Soil Association has given its full backing to organic aquaculture, following eight years of thorough research.

The organic standards association has assessed every aspect of the UK's farmed fish production, enabling it to develop rigorous aquaculture standards.

"This is great news for our certified fish-farmers who've been producing top quality organic fish for several years," said Peter Bridson, a Soil Association aquaculture specialist.

"They and we take our responsibility to justify the trust of consumers extremely seriously," he insisted.

Mr Bridson said that there was more work to be done, but added that Soil Association-certified organic salmon and trout are now "the most sustainably produced fish consumers can buy".

"Another key factor in choosing organic farmed fish is that this premium product allows smaller-scale, locally-based producers to make a living whilst respecting the ecological constraints of the aquatic environment," he added.

Further information

Lipofoods seeks permission for food ingredient

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 06

Story Text

The Food Standards Agency's advisory committee has been asked to consider an application for a phytosterol ingredient to be used in food products.

Spanish firm Lipofoods has requested that its phytosterol ingredient be considered as equivalent to an ingredient already marketed by ADM which was authorised in 2004.

In cases where a company believes a novel product to be substantially similar to an existing ingredient on the market, the European Commission Novel Foods Regulation provides a simplified procedure for approval.

Lipofoods plans to use its soya-derived ingredient in a range of food products, including yellow fat spreads, salad dressings, milk type products, yoghurts and cheese type products.

A growing number of food products contain phytosterols, which are found in vegetable oils and are marketed for their cholesterol-lowering properties.

The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) will accept comments until September 4th, after which it will finalise its opinion on the ingredient.

[Further information](http://www.acnfp.gov.uk/assess/simproc/349196)

Weaker beer hoped to boost sales

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 06

Story Text

Greene King Brewing Company is lowering the alcohol content of its Old Speckled Hen brew, in a move which the firm hopes will increase its appeal.

The ABV will be lowered from 5.2 per cent to 4.5 per cent, following research which showed that licensees and customers found the existing beer enjoyable, but too strong, the Publican reports.

However, the taste, ingredients and brewing process will remain unaltered, the brewery said.

"Feedback from our drinkers is that they love the full flavour of Old Speckled Hen, but a significant number find it too strong," managing director Justin Adams told the Publican.

In addition, he said that the entire duty saving would be passed onto licensees, enabling them to make an additional £2,300 profit on 30 barrels of the new, lower ABV Old Speckled Hen.

The new drink will be available from August 21st, when the brewery's Old Speckled Hen Smooth will also increase from 4.3 to 4.5 per cent ABV, bringing both products in line.

[Further information](http://www.thepublican.com/story.asp?sectioncode=7&storycode=52546&c=3)

Supermarket highlights importance of local organics

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 06

Story Text

Waitrose has launched a new organics range, consolidating its position as a leading organic retailer.

The supermarket represents 16 per cent of all organic grocery sales, despite holding less than four per cent of the total UK grocery market.

Available from September, the chain's new organic range will consist of 1,500 products, the majority of which will be sourced from UK suppliers.

All of the supermarket's fresh organic beef, pork, lamb and chicken is sourced in the UK, while 60 per cent of its organic vegetables come from Britain, and the supermarket claims to be the only one in the UK to have its own range of organic herbs and spices.

Spokesman Graham Cassie said that Waitrose is committed to British farming, animal welfare and British wildlife.

"The fact that consumer demand for organic has risen considerably shows how important buying organic has become," he commented.

"From staple to unique, we are responding to this demand by offering our customers a whole host of organic foods."

Further information

Fresh produce is key to British diet

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 06

Story Text

Seven out of the top ten most purchased items consist of fruit, vegetables and salad, according to new research.

A study by Sainsbury's has revealed that 32 per cent of the average British shopping basket is made up of fresh produce, with sliced bread only taking 14th place in the list of top shopping list items.

The survey of 6,432 shoppers found that bananas came close to the top of the nation's favourite shopping items, beaten to the top spot by fresh milk.

Women seem to be more keen on fresh fruit and vegetables, placing two more bundles in their baskets than the average man.

Nutritionist Beth Flower commented: "It is encouraging to see the nation enjoying a more balanced diet, with fresh, tasty and healthy food holding a significant share of the average shopping basket.

"In stores across the country, we have supported the expansion of our fresh food ranges with simple but inspiring recipe ideas intended to get the nation's taste buds going."

Further information

Food nanotech report released

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 06

Story Text

A new report has been published, detailing the various innovations within the food industry that involve nanotechnology.

Nanotechnology in the Food Industry, produced by world leading nanotechnology information supplier Cientifica, is purported to be the first comprehensive analysis of the various applications of nanotechnologies within the food industry.

Commenting on the technology, Cientifica CEO Tim Harper said: "While there is so little on the supermarket shelf that you can buy today, a quick glance at the ingredients list on any processed food will show you the impact that chemistry has already had on the food industry.

"In every market, from textiles to plastics, where chemistry goes, nanotech is never far behind, leading to rapid adoption and high growth opportunities."

According to the report, which looks at both the current and future applications of nanotechnologies within the industry, the market will be worth an estimated US\$ 5.8 billion by 2012, with applications in smart packaging and food safety expected to demonstrate particularly high growth rates.

Further information

Gene discovery may protect rice crops

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 06

Story Text

Researchers have identified a gene which enables rice to survive flooding, even if the plant is completely submerged.

The team, consisting of scientists from the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines and the University of California, is now developing new rice varieties which could potentially offer relief to millions of rice farmers and poor communities.

Pamela Ronald, a rice geneticist on the team, commented: "Our research team anticipates that these newly developed rice varieties will help ensure a more dependable food supply for poor farmers and their families.

"And, in the long run, our findings may allow rice producers [elsewhere] to reduce the amount of herbicides used to fight weeds."

Over three billion people worldwide rely on rice as their primary source of food. However, a quarter of rice crops are grown in areas prone to seasonal flooding and annual global crop loss is estimated at over US \$1 billion.

Commenting on the discovery, study co-author David Mackill said: "We're especially pleased that we have been able to use the latest advances in molecular biology to help improve the lives of the world's poor.

"We're confident that even more important discoveries like this are in the pipeline."

[Further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=49325)

Britons are 'snack addicts'

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 06

Story Text

Britain has become addicted to nibbling on food throughout the day, with some people even forgoing meals, according to a new survey into residents' eating habits.

Ten per cent of respondents to a survey by Panda Licorice admitted that they do not bother with regular main meals, instead preferring to snack throughout the day.

Over half of the respondents said that they regularly eat junk food in addition to their main meals, while just a quarter claimed to consistently eat three regular meals alongside healthy snacks.

Crisps proved to be the nation's favourite snack, with 47 per cent of respondents citing it as their preferred food in-between meals.

Chocolate and biscuits took the second and third positions, while fruit only managed to reach fourth place.

"We are clearly a nation of snack addicts," remarked nutritionist Suzannah Olivier.

"It is natural to snack or 'graze' throughout the day but it is important to make healthy choices which are nutritionally positive."

[Further information](http://www.responsesource.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=26713&hilite=)

Welsh firm attracts women with cider

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 06

Story Text

A Welsh family business is tasting success with its new ciders, which include traditional and lower-alcohol varieties.

The Welsh Cider & Perry Company, Gwynt y Ddraig, believes that its unique local products are a popular addition to the market, a claim that is borne out by the high level of interest at the Royal Welsh Show.

The company's innovative ciders include a traditional variety, called Black Dragon, and Orchard Gold, which contains a lower alcohol volume than most ciders.

Co-founder Andrew Gronow told the Western Mail that the family had been promoting the ciders at farmers' markets around the country and that many women had commented that other brands tend to be marketed to a predominantly male audience.

"We were pleasantly surprised how many women came up to the stands every week, making the point they loved cider," he revealed.

"Producing a cider that caters for both males and females was the answer."

Further information

Protein added sports drinks found not to work

Date: Mon, 14 Aug 06

Story Text

Adding protein to sports drinks does not help boost performance, according to a new study.

Researchers at McMaster University in the US found that protein-laced sports drinks could not improve cyclists' performance when compared to standard sports drinks sold to athletes.

In assessing the results from a simulated 80km bicycle race, it was found that professional cyclist given a protein sports drink did no better than those given a standard sports drink. Cyclists were unaware of which drink they received, with some given a placebo.

"Sports drinks improve performance during prolonged exercise because of two key ingredients: carbohydrate, which provides fuel for working muscles, and sodium, which helps to maintain fluid balance," said Martin Gibala, an associate professor at McMaster.

But she added: "Our study shows that protein confers no performance benefit during 'real life' exercise when athletes consume sufficient amounts of a sports drink."

However, Ms Gibala stated that eating protein was important after exercise to help promote "training adaptations" and repair damaged muscles.

Further information

Leeds and Salford to host Centre of Food Robotics and Automation

Date: Mon, 14 Aug 06

Story Text

Universities in Leeds and Salford are spearheading plans to boost growth in the Yorkshire food and drink industry, according to the Yorkshire Post.

The Centre of Food Robotics and Automation will be set up by a consortium of higher education institutions, including the University of Salford and the Food Chain Centre of Industrial Collaboration, based at the University of Leeds.

Established with the support of Yorkshire Forward, the centre hopes to help the region's food and drink industry stay competitive and improve efficiency while increasing productivity.

Using targeted research, education and development, the centre will help promote links between industry and academia and help assist food firms solve industrial problems with advanced automated systems.

"The Food Chain Centre of Industrial Collaboration has been working closely and successfully with Yorkshire and Humber's food and drink producers over the last two years," said John Sorsby of Yorkshire Forward.

"We are delighted that they will be further developing their work with the sector in partnership with the University of Salford, the UK's leading university in robotics and automation technology."

Further information

Food innovation at threat from lack of scientists

Date: Mon, 14 Aug 06

Story Text

UK research into food could be at risk because of a lack of science graduates, according to reports.

The CBI has said that a combination of problems within the British education system was putting off young adults from taking up science and engineering degrees, and reducing the number of science A-level candidates.

A report from the employers association claimed that the number of young people taking physics A-level fell by 56 per cent in the last two decades, while the amount of pupils pursuing chemistry dropped by 37 per cent.

It blamed the fall in part on the lack of specialist teachers, a reduced science curriculum and bad careers advice.

Chief executive Richard Lambert said that employers were becoming increasingly worried at the lack of A-level science candidates.

"They see, at first hand, the young people who leave school and university looking for a job, and compare them to what they need - and increasingly are looking overseas for graduates," Mr Lambert said.

He added: "We must smash the stereotypes that surround science and re-brand it as desirable and exciting; a gateway to some fantastic career opportunities. But the UK risks being knocked off its perch as a world-leader in science, engineering and technology. We cannot afford for this to happen."

Further information

Food miles cut with direct farm to shop deliveries

Date: Mon, 14 Aug 06

Story Text

In a bid to reduce its food mileage, Asda is to begin receiving food direct from local farmers.

The Wal-Mart owned supermarket chain said it had launched an initial trial of the scheme in Cornwall, which will see local farmers send their produce direct to the store itself, rather than on to distant distribution centres.

By avoiding the round trip it's hoped the supermarket can save 6,000 road miles a year. It predicted that it could make a saving of three million miles if the scheme was rolled out across Britain.

Chris Brown, Asda's ethical and sustainable sourcing head, said in a statement: "We are committed to cutting the number of miles our food travels before it reaches our stores.

"Rather than send it up the motorway, our farmers in Cornwall will deliver it direct to their local stores. That way we can ensure our fruit and veg is as fresh as possible, and we'll minimise the impact on the environment."

Three farms will join the two-month pilot, supplying potatoes, cabbages, strawberries, broccoli, leeks and other produce.

[Further information](http://www.asda-press.co.uk/pressrelease/42)

Affluent consumers drive specialty food market

Date: Mon, 14 Aug 06

Story Text

A new study shows that as the 'affluent' and 'high worth' sectors of the consumer demographic have grown in Europe and the US so has the specialty food and drinks market, now expected to be worth almost \$120 billion by 2009.

According to Research and Markets' report, these groups have expanded by almost a quarter across Europe and the US since the year 2000, growing to 24 per cent to 44.9 million in the US and by 25 per cent to 39.3 million in Europe.

It said that the value of separate "healthy" and "indulgent" occasions across Europe and the US will grow by 2.6 per cent in the five years to 2010 whilst combined "healthy-indulgent" occasions will only grow by 0.6 per cent.

The report also found that the gourmet and specialty food and drinks share of new product launches grew across all categories between 2003 and 2006, except for bakery and cereals.

[Further information](http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20060814005386&newsLang=en)

[Further information](http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20060814005386&newsLang=en)

Food scientist discovers pH is key to pork selection

Date: Fri, 11 Aug 06

Story Text

A food scientist has found that the quality of pork is determined by its pH, which is revealed by the colour of the meat.

Ken Prusa, a professor of food science and human nutrition at the University of Iowa, had noticed that Japanese exporters always selected the darkest cuts of pork.

His research has since revealed that the colour of the meat indicates its pH and that darker pork, which has a higher pH, tends to be more tender, juicy and flavourful.

A higher pH means that the meat is low in acid, which damages the muscle proteins and causes the meat to be pale and watery.

Commenting on his findings, Professor Prusa said: "It tuned us into an opportunity to add value to pork products in the marketplace.

"Now producers and packers are hearing more about the pH factor and learning that it's in their best interest to produce products with higher pH."

The professor revealed that he is now working with food processors and hopes to see higher pH products on the market in the near future.

"We're looking at ways of marketing products on the basis of the deeper, richer colour and flavour.

"People can see the difference. Once they taste it, the better quality is obvious," he added.

Further information

Electronic nose could improve wine quality

Date: Fri, 11 Aug 06

Story Text

An electronic "cybernose" could one day be used to measure the flavour and aroma of wines, researchers have said.

Scientists from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the Australian National University and Monash University are studying the smell sensors in worms and insects in an attempt to create the cybernose.

The creatures have simple nerve structures and genomes, making it easier for researchers to examine their smell capabilities.

Stephen Trowell, head researcher, hopes that the study will result in a marketable product within the next five to seven years, which should help wine makers to know when to pick their grapes

and how to tailor their wines to taste, according to the Scotsman.

It won't change the wine," he said. "But it will make it much easier to achieve a higher quality of wine at every point."

[Further information](http://news.scotsman.com/latest.cfm?id=1167542006)

Salmonella test gains approval

Date: Fri, 11 Aug 06

Story Text

A new salmonella test has been certified by the AOAC Research Institute, the scientific association dedicated to excellence in analytical methods.

Strategic Diagnostics' (SDI's) RapidChek Select Salmonella has been approved for use in raw meat, raw poultry, deli meats, liquid eggs and chicken carcass rinsate applications.

Matthew Knight, president and CEO of SDI, commented: "It's exciting to have received AOAC approval just prior to the official launch of the product at the annual International Association of Food Protection meeting in Calgary on August 13th to 16th.

"We believe that the RapidChek Select Salmonella test offers a clearly differentiated solution to our customers, with several advantages over competitive methods, including simplified media preparation, fewer transfer steps and less false positives that, for the customer, translate into reduced overall total cost in use."

Salmonella is the second most common cause of food poisoning in the UK after campylobacter and food processors are constantly looking for more accurate testing methods to ensure effective control of the bacteria.

[Further information](http://www.laboratorytalk.com/news/stg/stg104.html)

Gluten intolerance test should help sufferers

Date: Fri, 11 Aug 06

Story Text

A Welsh biomedical firm is marketing a self-diagnosis kit to help consumers identify whether they suffer from gluten intolerance, otherwise known as coeliac disease.

Gluten is a protein occurring in wheat, rye and barley and is therefore found in common, everyday food products, such as bread, pasta and gravy.

However, around one in every 100 people are unable to tolerate gluten and their immune system produces antibodies that attack the lining of the small intestine.

Wrexham GP, Dr Peter Saul, told the Western Mail: "Coeliac disease can go undetected for years because the symptoms are often difficult to relate to the cause."

The new Biocard Coeliac Test, distributed by JRBiomedical, gives an accurate result in just ten minutes and should help sufferers to understand their symptoms and enable them to stick to a gluten-free diet.

A growing number of food manufacturers are now developing foods that are free from gluten and they are now required to label all foods that contain gluten.

Food manufacturers have a massive opportunity to benefit from innovation in the "free-from" category, with scope to create products that are free from potential allergens in just about every food and drink category.

Industry members will undoubtedly benefit from attending the FDIN's Free-From 'Allergy & Intolerance' seminar, scheduled to be held in Daventry, Northamptonshire on Wednesday 20th September.

For further information on the seminar, take a look [HERE](http://www.fdin.co.uk/seminars/ffai.html)

'Sour' proteins identified in taste buds

Date: Fri, 11 Aug 06

Story Text

Two proteins that occur in taste buds have been found to be responsible for detecting sour tastes.

The discovery of the two proteins, PKD1L3 and PKD2L1, by researchers from Duke University Medical Centre could pave the way for manipulating our perception, so that we think that something sour actually tastes sweet.

Senior scientist, Dr Hiroaki Matsunami, said that the study is the first to define the way in which humans perceive sour taste, although others have previously studied bitter and sweet taste perception.

Each of the tongue's taste buds contains a separate subset of cells which are able to specifically detect five primary flavours – sour, sweet, bitter, salty and umami.

The taste receptors on the surface of the cells are made up of proteins which are responsible for detecting the different tastes of particular foods and then sending signals to relay the information to the brain.

Duke University researchers found that, when a sour-tasting acid was applied to cells containing these two proteins, the concentration of calcium ions inside the cells increased, possibly triggering a signal to the brain.

When salty, sweet or bitter solutions were applied to the same cells, there was no change in the concentration of calcium.

One possible use of the research could be to explore ways to trick children into thinking that unpleasant tastes, such as cough medicines, are actually sweet.

The findings are due to be published in the August 15th issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

[Further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=49100)

Demand for cheese prompts Danish expansion

Date: Thu, 10 Aug 06

Story Text

Production is being increased at Arla Foods in response to increased demand for the company's feta and mozzarella cheeses.

The company is increasing production of mozzarella at its Rodkaersbro Dairy, boosting capacity from 37,000 to 50,000 tonnes per year, and will increase feta production at Bov Dairy to 26,000 tonnes.

Mikael Sternberg Christiansen, the company's group executive director, commented: "Mozzarella is a growth area in Europe and our type of mozzarella is particularly popular on pizzas.

"Arla Foods supplies several of the leading pizza producers and pizza chains in Europe and all of them are seeing increased sales," he revealed.

The European feta market has been increasing by around 15 per cent each year, making it one of the fastest growing dairy products, the director said.

Arla Foods has therefore had to adjust its expectations for sales over the next few years, prompting the planned expansion of its dairies.

Further information

Survey reveals attitudes to food safety and quality

Date: Thu, 10 Aug 06

Story Text

Food safety is the main guarantee that consumers expect from manufacturers, a study has revealed.

In a survey conducted by product development research company MST'S, 100 per cent of respondents insisted that it was vital for manufacturers to ensure that the food they make is safe to eat.

With the recent salmonella scare concerning confectionery giant Cadbury's fresh in people's minds, it is hardly surprising that consumers view food safety as being of paramount importance.

A spokesperson for MST'S commented: "It is clear from consumers that food safety is the 'ultimate' responsibility for food manufacturers and to treat it with anything less than 100 per cent diligence and transparency will not wash with the general public."

The survey revealed that trust in food manufacturers is far from absolute, with 28 per cent of respondents claiming not to trust companies to sell products that are safe to eat and just 21 per cent completely trusting manufacturers over the issue of food safety.

"Trust in food manufacturers in the area of food safety is trailing behind its importance in the

minds of consumers, and manufacturers need to work hard not to allow this cynicism to grow," the spokesperson added.

Many consumers seem to be of the opinion that manufacturers are motivated primarily by profit, rather than by the need for food quality and safety, and consumers fear that too many companies are prepared to use substandard ingredients and chemicals in their products.

In addition, the survey looked at the importance of healthy attributes in food products and found low sugar to be the most important feature, ahead of low fat.

Interestingly, consumers were more interested in Fair Trade products than organics, although both were deemed to be of above-average importance.

[Further information](http://www.msts.co.uk/augnews.htm)

Vital research will benefit potato production

Date: Thu, 10 Aug 06

Story Text

The Scottish Crop Research Institute (SCRI) is currently conducting vigorous research into potatoes, the fourth most important food crop in the world, in an attempt to boost production.

This year's Potatoes in Practice event provided an ideal opportunity to showcase the range of initiatives that are underway to improve the potato industry.

Professor Peter Gregory, chief executive of the SCRI, told the Courier that the potato industry is currently worth Â£140 million a year in Scotland alone.

Key to the centre's research is the developing partnership with the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC), said Professor Gregory.

"I regard the work we are doing together as showing the way for the development of the UK and the European potato crop."

The professor said that the latest scientific tools are allowing a rapid rate of change.

"Our understanding is increasing phenomenally, largely because we can now understand and compare the genetic make-up of different plants," he said.

An important step has been the recent release of a variety of potato that is resistant to the pallida strain of potato cyst nematode.

This, along with the ongoing work to develop varieties which are resistant to potato blight, is vital for the future viability of potato crops.

Professor Gregory added that the more understanding the researchers gain, the more likely they will be to find solutions.

"If we understand the genetic make-up of the plant then we can answer the question. Then we can start from scratch in designing new varieties which incorporate these genes," he added.

[Further information](http://www.scri.ac.uk/press/PIPNewSCRIVarieties.htm)

McLelland gets seriously farmy

Date: Thu, 10 Aug 06

Story Text

McLelland has introduced a new packaging style for its popular cheddar cheese range, to help consumers identify with the different tastes.

As part of the review, the company has introduced Seriously Farmy, which replaces Seriously Strong Farmhouse to reinforce the focus on taste, the Grocery Trader reports.

Marketing manager Renee Milkop told the Grocery Trader: "Our research shows that farmhouse cheddar can be a confusing category for consumers and there is a need for clarity of definitions.

"Switching the name to 'Farmy' puts the focus on taste, so consumers can see exactly what they are getting."

The packaging will also contain flavour descriptions, with Seriously Farmy described as "a traditional cheddar with a rich country character", while different rosette colours will help to clarify the flavour for consumers.

The Seriously Farmy packs will have a green rosette, with red rosettes for Seriously Strong and blue for Seriously Smooth.

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

UK liqueur sales up as cocktail culture grows

Date: Thu, 10 Aug 06

Story Text

Sales of liqueurs have been rising in response to growing demand for sophisticated cocktails, according to research by Mintel.

Market analysts found that sales of liqueurs, including Cointreau and Grand Marnier, are likely to increase by £16 million to over £655 million this year, with drinks such as the cosmopolitan and margarita becoming increasingly popular.

Mintel also reported a fall in sales of alcopops and 'shooter' drinks such as sambuca, with concerns over binge-drinking triggering a noticeable decline.

Julie Sloan, an analyst at Mintel, told the Scotsman that the traditional Christmas demand for liqueurs is becoming a year-round trend.

"Rather than rows of shots at the bar driving the market, it is the popularity of cocktails which has boosted sales," Ms Sloan said.

"Cocktails have rejuvenated the staid image of liqueurs as Britons now look for something a bit more cosmopolitan on a night out."

In addition, exotic new ingredients and mixers, such as pomegranate, are regularly being introduced onto the market, further boosting the appeal of cocktails.

[Further information](http://news.scotsman.com/uk.cfm?id=1158632006)

Ingredients manufacturer praised for innovative waste disposal

Date: Thu, 10 Aug 06

Story Text

A food ingredients manufacturer has won a prestigious award for its innovative waste disposal project.

Manchester Rusk Company (MRC), which specialises in the production of high quality glazes, coatings, marinades, seasonings and sauces, was awarded the Envirowise Award at the Northwest Food Awards for excellence in the 'preserving our environment' category.

The company received the award for its range of measures for reducing its environmental impact and becoming more resource-efficient.

By reducing the amount of waste it sends for landfill by 85 per cent, the company has saved £10,000 a year in waste disposal costs and now only needs waste collections every fortnight.

Production manager Dave Wheeler commented: "We realised our waste disposal could be more efficient and, like many other companies, we faced rising disposal costs.

"As an environmentally-aware business, we were determined to resolve those issues and we encouraged all employees to think again about waste matters by increasing their awareness of the benefits of recycling."

[Further information](http://www.processingtalk.com/news/mnc/mnc102.html)

Boots launches nutritious baby foods

Date: Wed, 09 Aug 06

Story Text

Boots has created a new line of baby food and related equipment, designed to help mothers provide their babies with nutritious meals.

Available from mid-August, the Make Your Own range will include organic pasta shells, tricolour alphabet pasta shapes for toddlers, and various equipment products such as an electric hand blender and long-handled measuring spoons, according to Marketing.

Later this year, another seven organic ingredient products are scheduled to be added to the range, including spreads, sauces and drinks.

The range has been developed by author Annabel Karmel, who has written several books on cooking for babies, with packaging designed by Dew Gibbons.

With branding aimed at positioning the products as healthy, fresh, premium foods, the products should appeal to mothers who are concerned about the kind of foods that their offspring are exposed to.

[Further information](http://www.brandrepublic.com/bulletins/design/article/576171/boots-adds-babyfood-line)

Clarification needed before anti-freeze protein approved

Date: Wed, 09 Aug 06

Story Text

British food regulators have said they need more information before giving the go-ahead to the use of genetically modified "anti-freeze" protein in food.

Unilever recently applied to the Advisory Committee for Novel Food and Processes (ACNFP) to be able to use ice structuring proteins (ISPs), found in insects, fish and plants, in low-fat ice creams, Food Manufacture reported.

ACNFP agreed at a meeting in late July that further clarification on the ingredient was needed before it could be approved. A spokeswoman said that the committee would look at the matter again during September.

The firm said that the ISPs will allow it to produce ice cream with practically no fat, producing a creamy texture and taste by influencing the formation of ice structures in the manufacturing process.

A spokesperson for Unilever claimed that the ISPs will also allow the production of "products with more intense flavour delivery, a wider range of novel textures and more intricate shapes".

ISPs have been the focus of protest in the anti-GM lobby, with the Independent Science Panel claiming that the proteins could potentially cause inflammation.

[Further information](http://www.foodmanufacture.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/3507/Regulators_request_more_information_on_Unilever's_'anti-freeze'_ice_cream_ingredient.html)

Britons reject 'non-ethical' eggs

Date: Wed, 09 Aug 06

Story Text

British consumers are rejecting eggs from "non-ethical" sources, according to a report.

Research from Mintel found that cheap battery eggs are no longer cracking it with consumers, with more and more heading for organic, free-range and barn eggs.

Brits bought 2.04 billion ethical eggs in 2005, a rise from 1.64 billion in 2002. Sales of free-range eggs have been particularly impressive, rising by 31 per cent over the same period.

Meanwhile, sales of battery or laying cage eggs fell by eight per cent between 2002 and 2005 - from 3.19 billion to 2.95 billion - although they still account for six out of every ten eggs bought.

"The widespread uptake of ethically-positioned eggs by both retailers and consumers is testament to the emotive nature of this particular market," said Claire Birks of Mintel.

"People are becoming increasingly concerned about the way animals are reared and more aware of how environment can impact on the flavour of the food."

"As such consumers are increasingly turning their backs on eggs from laying cage hens, which are often housed in poor conditions."

GM techniques could boost food production

Date: Wed, 09 Aug 06

Story Text

A genetic modification technique, borrowed from a root-eating bacterium, could help boost food production.

Agrobacterium, a bacterium which inhabits the soil around plants, causes crown gall disease when it is absorbed by broken roots. Plants with the disease suffer from swellings in both roots and branches, and eventually die.

Scientists have found that the bacterium, once entered through the roots, snips off some of its DNA. This transfer DNA (T-DNA) invades plant cells and becomes part of the plant genome, causing plant cells to grow rapidly. Cells in the swelling also become factories of nutrients for the bacterium.

Scientists at the Imperial College London became excited at the prospect at being able to use the same technique to introduce foreign DNA into plants - by inserting a desired gene into the Agrobacterium's T-DNA.

One researcher explained to the Daily Telegraph how forms of rice found in Bangladesh could be modified by the approach.

"The main objective is increased food production, and development of salt tolerance. Bangladesh is particularly prone to seawater flooding and it is a huge problem," said Professor John Mansfield.

It is hoped that the production of salt-resistant rice will help reassure farmers in Bangladesh of the benefits of genetic modification.

Further information

New snack range inspired by lifestyle trends

Date: Wed, 09 Aug 06

Story Text

A new range of snack flavours, inspired by changing lifestyle trends, has been designed by flavour firm Quest.

The company said in a press release that it had conducted market research to identify lifestyle trends which could inspire new flavours, picking out "fusion", "comfort", "back-to-basics", "well-being" and "pleasure".

Quest claimed that its research informed its new range of snack flavours, designed around a growing demand for snacks which have a culinary influence.

"Our work has demonstrated many fast-moving trends in the European snacking market that are linked directly to people's lifestyles and meal preferences," said Jolanda van Haarlem, marketing and sales director of savoury flavours.

In addition, the firm claimed it was using a 3D approach in forming flavour ideas, incorporating all of the senses such as sound, touch, taste, sight and smell.

"We've been able to call on Quest's dual expertise in both flavour and fragrance to develop an all-inclusive sensory approach to matching these very diverse consumer needs – and being able to anticipate them too," added Ms van Haarlem.

[Further information](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?fSite=AR283&nw=hd&size=ld&sno=1&main_page=1&id=544)

Positive outlook for phytosterols market

Date: Tue, 08 Aug 06

Story Text

Demand for foods and beverages that contain phytosterols has soared recently, as a growing number of consumers seek to lower their cholesterol levels.

Phytosterols have been shown to have a beneficial effect on heart health and many people are attempting to improve their health through nutraceuticals rather than rely on prescription medications.

According to research by Frost & Sullivan, the phytosterols market in the US was worth \$103.9 million last year, a sum which is expected to rocket to \$196.7 million by 2012.

"The growing trend towards fortification of foods with vitamins, folate, minerals and herbal extracts has helped to create a more conducive environment for the incorporation of phytosterols in foods and beverages," said Kaye Cheung, a research analyst with Frost & Sullivan.

"Phytosterols are now incorporated into a range of foods and beverages such as yoghurt, milk, sausages, cold cuts, bakery products, spicy sauces, margarines and spreads," she added.

However, public awareness of the benefits of phytosterols needs to be raised, said Ms Cheung, as many young people are still unaware of the problem of cholesterol.

"Shifting consumer attitudes from awareness to understanding to overall acceptance will be a major area of focus for phytosterol ingredients manufacturers across the globe," she concluded.

[Further information](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=11730&fSite=AO545&next=1)

New clean-label bouillon flavour from Exter Aroma

Date: Tue, 08 Aug 06

Story Text

Exter Aroma has launched a new product range, introducing a unique bouillon flavour.

The company, which specialises in producing bouillon bases, savoury flavours and savoury blends for food applications, has created Exter CL - a clean-label bouillon flavour based on sunflower.

Free from allergens, genetically modified ingredients and E-numbers, Exter CL delivers "a superb savoury taste to food applications like soups, sauces, meat, snacks and ready meals", the company said.

Labelling issues have become of paramount importance, with many food manufacturers focussing on creating products that are free from various allergens and controversial ingredients.

Exter Aroma claims that it puts "much effort" into creating products that have clean labels but still taste excellent.

The new product is available in a basic meaty bouillon flavour, although other varieties such as chicken, beef and vegetable are available on request.

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

The FDIN's Free-From 'Allergy & Intolerance' seminar is scheduled to be held in Daventry, Northamptonshire on Wednesday 20th September.

For further information on the seminar, take a look [HERE](http://www.fdin.co.uk/seminars/ffai.html)

Premium desserts spell indulgence

Date: Tue, 08 Aug 06

Story Text

Greencore has launched its first range of frozen puddings, aimed at the premium end of the indulgence market.

The Pudz range is made up of eight different recipes, including sticky toffee pudding, syrup sponge and custard, bread and butter pudding and summer pudding, all of which are designed to be kept in the freezer and prepared with the minimum of fuss.

The four hot puddings take minutes to prepare in the microwave, while the four cold desserts simply need to thaw for an hour before serving.

The range has been launched in Tesco and is also being introduced into Asda, Somerfield, Co-op, Morrisons and Sainsbury's.

Ruth Stead, marketing manager, told the British Frozen Food Federation that the company is spending Â£500,000 to promote the range, including consumer press, retailer magazine advertising and in-store activity.

Greencore has positioned itself among the leading players in the delivery of convenient, premium quality meal and snack solutions at affordable prices.

[Further information](http://www.pudz.co.uk/flash.html)

Probiotic drinks aren't always as effective as claimed

Date: Tue, 08 Aug 06

Story Text

Many probiotic yoghurts and drinks could be ineffective and some could even do more harm than good, according to scientists.

The researchers claim that, although major brands such as Actimel, Vitality and Yakult are fine, other less well-known brands may not be of benefit.

In particular, the scientists warned about trusting brands which claim to contain probiotics but which do not provide information on the specific bacteria they contain.

Commenting on probiotic products, Professor Christine Edwards, head of human nutrition at the University of Glasgow, said: "It's difficult to know what's in them and hard for the consumer. Probiotic products need to contain at least ten million bacteria to be effective."

The team, which also included Professor Glenn Gibson of the University of Reading and Dr Sandra McFarlane of Dundee University, revealed that the majority of the 50 brands currently on the UK market contain fewer bacteria than claimed, and some contain none at all.

Professor Gibson said that many products advertised on the internet contain ineffective bacteria, with some even being harmful, but insisted that the major manufacturers are generally reliable.

"On the other hand there are a lot of products out there that no one's ever heard of and this is where the problems arise," he added.

Around two million Britons regularly consume probiotics, leading a number of food manufacturers to include bacteria-enriched products in their own functional food ranges.

[Further information](http://www.news-medical.net/?id=19353)

Frozen food companies in trouble

Date: Tue, 08 Aug 06

Story Text

Many frozen food companies need to make changes or risk collapse, according to a new report.

A survey conducted by Plimsoll Publishing has revealed that 47 per cent of Britain's top 500 frozen food businesses are either in the danger zone (19 per cent) or have reason to be worried about their future (28 per cent).

An additional 19 per cent of firms are only performing at a mediocre level, according to Fish Update, raising concerns that the industry is in severe decline.

David Pattison, senior analyst on the report, said that the message was to "change or risk failure".

"At these high risk companies, the managers need to act quickly to get their firms back on a

decent financial footing," he told Fish Update.

The British Frozen Food Federation is currently working to improve the image of frozen food, much of which has suffered recently from a down-market portrayal as a result of large numbers of 'buy one, get one free' offers.

A number of frozen food specialists are bucking the trend, however, including Young's, the UK's leading specialist fish brand, which regularly unveils healthy new frozen meal options.

Further information

Trio of new products from Cadbury

Date: Tue, 08 Aug 06

Story Text

Cadbury has announced three new product innovations, due to be launched over the coming months.

One of the new products, Cadbury Highlights, will be a no-added-sugar milk chocolate bar, allowing health-conscious chocolate lovers to indulge without guilt.

The chocolate bar is an extension of Cadbury's existing Highlights drinking chocolate brand and will contain just 160 calories per bar, although the company insists that the snack does not compromise on taste or quality.

Other products will be Cadbury Dairy Milk Melts, a box of eight individually wrapped pieces of smooth chocolate in a Dairy Milk shell, and Cadbury Flake Dark, which will be a dark chocolate version of the popular Flake brand.

Dark chocolate has grown in popularity in recent months, with three million new shoppers developing a taste for the confectionery over the last two years.

Simon Baldry, managing director at Cadbury Trebor Bassett, commented that the company's innovation pipeline aims to deliver "differentiated products that tap into emerging consumer trends".

"Ensuring innovation is at the heart of our strategy enables Cadbury Trebor Bassett to grow sales and market share," he added.

Further information

New vitamin-enriched drinks for extreme sports fans

Date: Mon, 07 Aug 06

Story Text

A new range of drinks is being launched which contain mineral waters enriched with added vitamins.

The Aqua Vitamins range has been created by Extreme Drinks to coincide with an overhaul of the company's entire range of soft drinks.

Available in lemon lime, orange passion and raspberry flavours, the new mineral waters contain a range of health-promoting vitamins including folic acid, biotin and a number of B-complex vitamins which help the body with everything from breaking down carbohydrates, fats and proteins to maintaining healthy skin and hair.

Containing 100 per cent natural ingredients, the drink caters for the ever-increasing number of consumers who are keen to avoid artificial ingredients and has been branded using eye-catching designs from packaging design consultancy Dragon Brands.

Samantha Dumont, the design consultancy's creative director, told website mad.co.uk: "We wanted to create packaging that played to its own rules and avoided category generics.

"The illustrations add life and energy to a dull aisle and truly reflect the nature of the Extreme Drinks brand."

Further information

Major brand launch for new cholesterol-lowering cereal

Date: Mon, 07 Aug 06

Story Text

Cereal giant Kellogg's is this month unveiling its biggest brand launch since Special K, with a new heart health cereal designed to boost category growth.

Optivita is expected to fuel a new sub-category of cereals which deliver cholesterol-lowering benefits.

The new product, which will initially be available in raisin oat crisp and berry oat crisp varieties, provides at least 1g of beta glucan soluble fibre in every 40g serving, which equates to one third of the suggested daily intake.

Kellogg's will also be launching Optivita cereal bars in September, enabling consumers to have a quick, healthy snack on the move, while still obtaining the same cholesterol-reducing benefits.

Kevin Brownsey, UK sales director for Kellogg's, said that Optivita would be big news for the market.

"Optivita has been developed to ensure that there is a tasty and functional cholesterol-reducing range of cereals and snacks in the Kellogg's portfolio that supports heart health," he commented.

"This fantastic new cereal and the cereal bars are only the first offering from the Optivita range and demonstrate Kellogg's commitment to radical innovations to meet consumer needs."

Seven out of ten people over the age of 45 suffer from raised cholesterol, which contributes to nearly half of all coronary heart disease-related deaths.

[Further information](http://www.kelloggs.co.uk/mediacentre/press_release.asp?pressid=64)

Ice-cream versions for Quality Street

Date: Mon, 07 Aug 06

Story Text

Nestle is due to launch new ice-cream versions of three of the most popular Quality Street chocolates next month.

The manufacturer has created ice-cream variants of the Purple One, Big Green Triangle and Orange Crunch sweets, which will contain the same ingredients as the individual chocolates.

The frozen treats are being manufactured under license from Nestle by Richmond Ice Cream, the leading UK ice-cream manufacturer, and will take the form of ice-cream sticks.

Initially available in single-variant packs of three, the ice-creams will also be available early next year in single item format for the impulse trade, Helen Scandle, Nestle brand manager, told the *Irn Talking Shop* website.

Richmond Ice Cream acquired the Nestle UK Ice Cream business in 2001 and has since produced major brands such as Fab, Smarties and Rowntrees Fruit Pastil-Lolly.

It also launched a range of Mr Men mini pots earlier this year, which are ideal for small children and enable parents to provide offspring with portion-sized ice-cream treats.

[Further information](http://www.richmond-foods.plc.uk)

Canola proteins to be tested by food, drink companies

Date: Mon, 07 Aug 06

Story Text

Samples of Burcon NutraScience Corporation's proteins are due to be tested by food and beverage companies with a view to their commercialisation.

The company, which is currently developing the world's first commercial canola proteins, has announced that it has entered into material transfer agreements with a number of major food and beverage companies for the testing of Puratein and Supertein.

The two proteins are derived from canola, the world's second-largest oilseed crop, and the company hopes that they will figure in the rapidly-expanding protein ingredient market.

They could potentially be used in prepared foods in place of soy, dairy and egg proteins, as well as in nutritional supplements and personal care products.

Johann Tergesen, Burcon's president and COO, commented: "Burcon is excited about having samples of its proteins analysed by the scientists and other professionals at these major food and beverage companies.

"We view this as an important step in the commercialisation of Puratein and Supertein," he added.

[Further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=48785)

Transgenic milk could provide health benefits

Date: Mon, 07 Aug 06

Story Text

Transgenic milk could be used to provide health benefits for infants and children, according to a new study.

Researchers at the University of California found that milk produced by transgenic goats changed the intestinal bacteria in young goats and pigs that drank the milk, according to Scientist Live.

The milk contains a gene for an antibacterial enzyme called lysozyme which is found in human breast milk, tears and saliva.

Lysozyme prevents bacterial growth by destroying their cell walls, limiting the growth of bacteria that cause intestinal infections.

Professor Jim Murray, one of the lead researchers, told Scientist Live that the goat's milk represents "one of the first transgenic food products that has the potential to really benefit human health".

He added: "This study underscores the potential for using biotechnology to improve the healthfulness of the milk of dairy animals by introducing the beneficial properties of human milk into dairy animals."

The results are published in the August issue of Transgenic Research.

[Further information](http://www.scientistlive.com/16140/transgenic-milk-may-help-tackle-childrens-illness.shtml)

Latex in food packaging poses health risk

Date: Mon, 07 Aug 06

Story Text

Consumers with latex allergies are being exposed to potentially deadly levels of the allergen in common food packaging, according to experts.

A UK study, conducted by Leatherhead Food International and published in the Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture, found that one third of food packaging was contaminated with latex and that this was transferred to food in a number of cases.

Some products contained up to 20 times the amount of latex required to bring about a potentially fatal reaction.

Experts at the UK Latex Allergy Support Group (LASG) said that the EU should consider the evidence and look into the possibility of labelling food packaging that contains latex to warn consumers of the risk.

Graham Lowe, a spokesman for the group, commented: "For a few people, natural rubber latex is a very potent allergen and for these individuals, there is no safe level of exposure.

"We would welcome an approach to the EU to consider this evidence and the issue of labelling," he added.

Latex is commonly used in a number of food packaging materials, such as meat netting, fruit and vegetable stickers and adhesives used to seal some confectionary.

Around one to six per cent of Britons are allergic to latex.

[Further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=48947)

Food Ethics Council seeks new members

Date: Mon, 07 Aug 06

Story Text

An independent expert body that champions better food and farming is appointing new members.

The Food Ethics Council is looking to strengthen its knowledge-base by making four new appointments and it is particularly keen to hear from lawyers, applied economists, environmental scientists and people who have worked in the food sector.

The council, established in 1998, has reported on issues ranging from veterinary medicines to nutrigenomics and public health.

Current and past members include leading ethicists, farmers, natural scientists and specialists in consumer affairs.

The organisation aims for a broad range of expertise amongst its members, including knowledge skills gained by practical experience, not just by academic research.

To find out more and to apply visit: <http://www.foodethicscouncil.org/jobs/newmembers>

Optimised pack design provides cost benefits, say experts

Date: Fri, 04 Aug 06

Story Text

Food and drink businesses could save money as well as helping the environment by making changes to the type of packaging they use, according to industry experts.

Envirowise, which provides free support and advice for firms wanting to become more resource efficient, insists that firms can reduce costs by minimising packaging waste and by altering the type and method of packaging they use.

Dr Martin Gibson, programme director, commented: "As an industry that provides an estimated ten per cent of all commercial and domestic waste, food and drink enterprises have a crucial role

to play in achieving long-term sustainability."

In Dr Gibson's experience, most businesses can achieve significant savings through simple resource efficiency measures without compromising the integrity of their end product, he said.

One company had found ways to reduce the amount of shrink wrap and cardboard they used by 15 and 19 tonnes a year respectively and was saving £45,000 per year as a result, Dr Gibson revealed.

"A systematic approach to optimising packaging design can also help businesses work towards more rigid legislative standards and often results in a product that is easier and cheaper to make," he added.

Further information

Watermelons stored at room temperature more nutritious

Date: Fri, 04 Aug 06

Story Text

Watermelons stored at 21 degrees Celsius provide more healthy nutrients than those kept in a refrigerator, a study has shown.

Scientists at the US Department of Agriculture have found that room temperature is a much better environment in which to store watermelons, as the fruits seem to gain higher levels of certain compounds in the warmer setting.

Watermelons naturally contain high levels of carotenoids – antioxidants which confer a number of health benefits.

Researchers decided to investigate the changes in levels of certain carotenoids, specifically lycopene and beta carotene, during storage for 14 days.

They found that watermelons stored at 21 degrees C gained between 11 and 40 per cent of lycopene and from 50 to 139 per cent of beta carotene following picking.

Fruits kept in a refrigerator, however, maintained levels similar to those found immediately after picking.

The team concluded: "Our results indicate that the carotenoid synthesis in watermelons continues to function long after harvest, and the system is enhanced by storage at 21 degrees C and inhibited by storage at five degrees C."

The findings are due to be published in the August 9th edition of the American Chemical Society's Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry.

Further information

Omega 3 bread gets Â£3m advertising boost

Date: Fri, 04 Aug 06

Story Text

Kingsmill is launching a new brand of Omega 3-fortified bread, which it believes will appeal to mums.

Many parents find it difficult to get their child to consume all of the necessary nutrients required for a healthy body, especially as they seem to appear in foods that children tend to avoid.

Omega 3, for example, is found in oily fish, which children frequently dislike the taste of.

However, Kingsmill claims that its new brand will enable parents to provide their children with additional Omega 3, without having to force their offspring to eat foods they dislike.

Jon Wilson, the company's marketing director, told Checkout Magazine: "Kingsmill Head Start range with Omega 3 is an excellent way to top up Omega 3 levels.

"The product has been developed following extensive research with our consumers and we wanted to make our new advertising campaign as distinctive as possible."

Kingsmill is therefore launching a 20 second commercial, designed to connect with busy mums, as part of a Â£3 million marketing campaign for the new bread.

<a

href="http://www.checkoutmagazine.co.uk/product_news/product_news_story.ehtml?o=2141

">Further information

Cadbury shares new chocolate box

Date: Fri, 04 Aug 06

Story Text

Cadbury is launching a new share box, featuring a number of tasty chocolate treats.

The new Cadbury Dairy Milk Special Variety box will include four flavours â€“ the ever-popular Cadbury Dairy Milk, Praline, Truffle and Butterscotch, according to Checkout Magazine.

The box will retail at Â£2.49 and is expected to be popular, as many consumers tend not to buy indulgent snacks on their own and are more likely to purchase chocolates to share.

Head of customer relations at Cadbury Trebor Bassett, Mike Tipping, told Checkout Magazine: "The growth in 'everyday share' reflects the growing trend of consumers spending time together with friends and family.

"The introduction of another superb new product from Cadbury further enhances the confectionery offer within this fast growing sector."

The company is confident that sales will recover following the recent salmonella scare which caused Cadbury to recall over one million of its chocolate bars.

Sales fell by up to 14 per cent over recent weeks, although the company said that this was also partly down to the hot weather.

Further information

Square melons soon on UK shelves

Date: Fri, 04 Aug 06

Story Text

Tesco has unveiled a new kind of melon that it believes will catch the eye of consumers.

The new watermelons are square-shaped and are therefore more convenient to store, easier to eat, and are certainly likely to attract attention.

Imported from Brazil, the watermelons will be available in the UK this autumn and, although they are currently on sale in Japan for around £46 per fruit, Tesco plans to sell theirs for considerably less.

The supermarket's exotic fruit buyer, Daniel Sutherland, commented: "We've seen samples of these watermelons and they literally stop you in their tracks because they are so eye-catching.

"Our ones will cost less than a fiver and, at that price, we will expect orders to come in from Japan let alone other parts of the world," he added.

With consumers' current hunger for new, healthy foods, the square-shaped watermelon is likely to be well-received when it arrives in October.

Further information

Colour, pattern and texture used to spot defects

Date: Fri, 04 Aug 06

Story Text

A new technology enables manufacturers to perform colour analysis of multi-coloured, patterned and textured items and should prove useful in the food industry.

HueView is the latest innovation from the Value Engineering Alliance, a company specialising in machine vision solutions, and can be used to inspect, classify and grade products based on colour, texture or a combination of both.

Existing technologies tend to spot defects by a combination of just size and colour and are therefore less efficient.

While the technology can be used for a wide range of applications, it certainly will be useful in the food industry for the inspection of packaging and to spot defects in meats, fruits and vegetables, cheeses and baked goods.

The easy-to-use software application supports images from FireWire cameras, Twain and analogue camera/framegrabber combinations and can be quickly trained to compare samples against reference examples, requiring no complex programming skills.

Further information

Truffle discovery in New Zealand confirmed

Date: Thu, 03 Aug 06

Story Text

Researchers in New Zealand have managed to grow a bianchetto truffle within a trial plot, it has been reported.

Crop & Food Research said that DNA analysis confirmed that the truffle was grown within its own Lincoln-based facility, following earlier announcements that the company had probably been successful in growing one of the first bianchetto truffles in the southern hemisphere.

Fungi leader Dr Alexis Gurin said that one of the firm's scientists had already identified the truffle under a microscope, but said that the DNA analysis was necessary to ensure the identity of the fungus.

He added that the researchers were over the moon with the achievement, especially as the research aims to combine the worlds of forestry with truffles.

"Farmers are able to produce timber and truffles from a single plot of earth," said Dr Guerin. "It is all about adding value."

Graham Smellie, senior business manager of Crop & Food Research, said there was a "huge demand" for borchii infected trees.

"Small existing bianchetto truffieres are scattered throughout NZ, from the North Island's east coast to the lower South Island. This is an indication of the versatility of the borchii species," he claimed.

Further information

A plum with a difference

Date: Thu, 03 Aug 06

Story Text

Sainsbury's supermarket has launched a new variety of stonefruit, combining the best of plums and apricots.

The Pluot is, according to the supermarket, 25 per cent apricot and 75 per cent plum.

Depending on the variety, the fruit's skin colour can vary from golden yellow to black, with green and red in between. Sainsbury's will sell different varieties throughout the year.

The fruit will be included under the company's Taste the Difference quality food label.

In a statement the company said it hopes the fruit will help increase awareness of stonefruit with children.

Sainsbury's anticipates that the fruits will be especially popular in school lunch boxes, as they are 25 per cent sweeter than normal apricots or plums.

"The Pluots have been five years in the making, and I have had to search far and wide to identify the most innovative breeders and most specialist growers to produce the best fruits," said the supermarket's fruit technologist Dr Theresa Huxley.

"We are very excited and proud to be at the forefront of this fruit evolution and feel confident that this is just the beginning of a range of healthy, tasty stonefruit varieties which will significantly increase fruit consumption in the UK."

[Further information](http://www.j-sainsbury.co.uk/index.asp?PageID=422&subsection=&Year=2006&NewsID=731)

Brands lose out to own-label foods

Date: Thu, 03 Aug 06

Story Text

When it comes to taste, well known brands are failing to compete with cheaper alternatives provided by Britain's supermarkets, according to new research.

The Supermarket Own Brand Guide found that many own-brands provided customers with superior quality food when compared to well known and more expensive brands, with even budget outlets such as Aldi giving good value for money.

For example, professional taster and study author Martin Isark found that Helman's french dressing tasted worse than alternatives available from Waitrose, Tesco, Marks and Spencer and the Co-Op, the Scotsman reported.

Meanwhile, McVities chocolate digestives received a lower rating than Aldi's similar product, which the author said tasted exactly the same as the brand despite being less than half the price.

"Over the last ten years as the big brands have become ever more powerful, the supermarkets have realised that in order to compete they, too, must pull out all the stops," said Mr Isark.

"There are some excellent own labels. At best they mirror or even better the brand and can be as little as half its price. At worst, you'll end up throwing them away."

[Further information](http://news.scotsman.com/scotland.cfm?id=1118402006)

Witt Gas Techniques unveils products to be showcased

Date: Thu, 03 Aug 06

Story Text

New equipment for producing modified atmosphere packaging (Map) will be on display at the UK's Total Processing and Packing Exhibition next year.

Witt Gas Techniques has announced that its brand new, fully-automated Leak-Master Inline micro-leak detection system will be showcased, demonstrating the latest technology for finding tiny leaks in individual food packaging, both flexible and rigid.

The machine is a flexible conveyor system which is capable of checking for leaks on both single and multiple packs, as well as boxed items using an adjustable testing chamber which detects the presence of carbon dioxide.

A portable version of Leak-Master will also be on display, complete with a new touch screen interface and impressive memory which enables users to store settings for as many as 1,200 different products, as well as personal identification capabilities for 60 users.

[Further information](http://www.manufacturingtalk.com/news/wit/wit148.html)

Panda helps to reinvigorate Nichols

Date: Thu, 03 Aug 06

Story Text

A naturally flavoured soft drink aimed at children has helped to give beverage company Nichols a healthy boost.

The north-west drinks manufacturer has reported a 15 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, part of which it attributes to the recent re-launch of its Panda brand.

Now a natural flavoured, sugar-free soft drink, the beverage is available in 20 flavour variants and has received a warm welcome, according to the company.

Commenting on the Panda relaunch, chairman John Nichols said: "To date it has been very well received by the trade and, for the first time ever, during the school holidays it is being supported by a national TV and cinema advertising campaign."

Mr Nichols also told the Manchester Evening News that Panda represents a move into the small bottled market and is specifically targeting the lunch-box sector.

"It is a new venture for us and we are keeping an eye out for more opportunities," he added.

The company's core Vimto brand has also performed well in recent months and is now available in over 65 countries.

[Further information](http://www.nicholsplc.co.uk/reports/2006/Interim2006.pdf)

New tea celebrates Yorkshire tradition

Date: Thu, 03 Aug 06

Story Text

A new brand of tea has been launched in Yorkshire to celebrate the county's long-standing ties with the drink.

Pollards Tea and Coffee, a Yorkshire family business specialising in traditional tea and coffee, has developed a new brew made from white rose petals.

White Rose has been unveiled to coincide with Yorkshire Day, which takes place on August 1st

every year to mark the date in 1759 when local soldiers placed white roses on a German battlefield in honour of their fallen comrades.

The company's managing director, Simon Bower, told the Yorkshire Evening Post: "The White Rose is a China tea with a delicate rose petal flavour and is really refreshing so makes an ideal summer drink."

The company has been producing tea in Yorkshire for over 120 years, said Mr Bower, and is proud to be reinforcing local history and traditions.

"Yorkshire people are very discerning when it comes to tea drinking and we are inviting customers to sample our new White Rose blend on Yorkshire day in our tea and coffee shops," he added.

Further information

EC adopts salmonella regulations

Date: Wed, 02 Aug 06

Story Text

The European Commission (EC) has adopted new rules regarding the contamination of poultry and eggs with salmonella.

A recent European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) report found that levels of the bacteria in laying hens vary from nought to 79 per cent across the EU.

The first new regulation aims to reduce the prevalence of salmonella in hens and thereby cut the incidence of contaminated eggs, with each member state having to reduce the number of infected hens by a specific percentage each year.

A second regulation relates to methods of controlling salmonella in poultry and requires mandatory vaccination from 2008 onwards in any member state where the bacteria's prevalence exceeds ten per cent.

"Salmonella is one of the most prevalent food-borne diseases in the EU, affecting thousands of people every year, sometimes with very serious consequences," said Markos Kyprianou, commissioner for health and consumer protection.

"However, simple measures can greatly cut down the risk this disease poses to public health."

Mr Kyprianou added that reducing the incidence of salmonella at farm level would lower its incidence through the rest of the food chain and help to protect EU consumers.

Further information

Method developed for canning avocados

Date: Wed, 02 Aug 06

Story Text

Food engineers in Argentina have developed a method for canning avocados, without losing any of its nutrients.

Previously, canning has not been a viable option because of the high natural oil content of avocados and the presence of the polyphenoloxidase enzyme, according to Scientist Live.

In order to prolong shelf life, the fruits are usually frozen during transportation but this significantly reduces their nutritional value.

However, engineers Diego Prieto and Martin Cecchini managed to overcome this problem by giving the avocado a new coating and an antioxidant pre-treatment process.

They told Scientist Live that the resulting avocados have a shelf life of over six months, which is significantly longer than refrigerated avocados and means that they no longer need to be frozen during transportation.

This therefore improves shelf life and retains the health benefits associated with the fruit, including vitamins, enzymes, essential fatty acids and proteins.

[Further information](http://www.scientistlive.com/16066/avocados-canned-for-first-time.shtml)

McVitie's launches new "everyday"™ biscuits

Date: Wed, 02 Aug 06

Story Text

United Biscuits is to launch a new product that aims to take advantage of the nation's growing appetite for more healthy snacks.

Its new McVitie's Fruitsters range will be aimed at the everyday biscuit sector, according to industry publication Checkout Magazine.

The new range of biscuits is made with 40 per cent wholegrain and is high in fibre.

It is hoped that the product will breathe new life into the tired sector of the market, which is worth £253 million a year.

Four different variations of the biscuit will go on sale, which also play to a health-conscious audience.

The flavours are Cranberry and Almond, Sultana and Hazelnut, Blueberry and Oat and Apricot and Honey.

Included on the packaging will be information aimed at associating the brand and other McVitie's biscuits with healthy living, documenting the fibre and wholemeal content in its products.

A £1.5 million marketing campaign and promotional offers will accompany the launch, Checkout Magazine said.

New product innovations will follow health trend

Date: Wed, 02 Aug 06

Story Text

Healthy eating will be the main driver of innovation in the food and beverages industry in the 21st century, according to experts at an international industry convention.

Analysts attending this year's Heidelberg Convention will suggest that manufacturers of food products should use this trend as the backdrop of their research and development.

This year's convention has been given the title: "The Future is Healthy â€“ Creating Value through Innovation."

During the event, researcher Leo Nefiodow will be advising on emerging innovation opportunities in the industry.

Professors Jeya Henry of Oxford Brookes University and Philip Calder from the University of Southampton will explain how the industry can target the specific needs of consumers with concepts based on a low glycemic index or with omega-3 fatty acids as a functional ingredient.

Natural flavour ingredients manufacturer Wild, which lays on the annual event, will present current developments and future challenges of the international markets for beverages and food.

The convention, which has become an important fixture for food and beverage innovators, runs from September 18th until September 20th.

Cranberry powder guarantees active ingredient

Date: Wed, 02 Aug 06

Story Text

A US firm has launched the industry's first proanthocyanidin (Pac) standardised cranberry powder, the company announced yesterday.

PACran whole cranberry powder contains 1.5 per cent of cranberry Pacts, a compound which has been shown to be responsible for the anti-adhesion mechanism that protects the body from infection-causing bacteria in the urinary tract.

The product therefore guarantees the necessary amount of the active compound required to help prevent urinary tract infections.

Millions of women suffer from urinary tract infections every year, with 25 per cent encountering recurring infections.

Doug Klaiber, general manager of Decas Botanical Synergies (DBS), said that PACran "sets the bar" for cranberry products as it is the only product to guarantee the required amount of the active compound.

"We developed PACran after years of research and development and through the selection of Early Black cranberries which are higher in Pacts," Mr Klaiber revealed.

He commented that, although cranberries have long been associated with urinary tract health,

there has always been uncertainty regarding the amount of active ingredient required to maintain health.

"PACran changes this scenario and will be the basis by which all cranberry products will be compared in the future," he insisted.

Further information

New ingredient solutions for texturising market

Date: Wed, 02 Aug 06

Story Text

Renewable ingredients specialist Cesalpinia Food has launched two new products for the food texturising market.

Frimulsion MJF is designed to extend and enhance the quality of meat, such as marinated or spiced chicken, pork and fish.

Made from a blend of carageenan and locust bean gum, the ingredient makes the end product more juicy and tender after cooking and delivers cost savings to producers.

Frimulsion E130 and E132, meanwhile, are the first hot and cold non-dairy systems for egg-free dressings, according to Cesalpinia, and are ideal for medium and low-fat mayonnaises.

The cholesterol-free ingredient solutions are based on isolated wheat proteins, xantham gum, guar gum and Tate & Lyle modified food starches and remove the need to include animal products.

"These ingredient solutions represent a real breakthrough for meat and dressings producers and we are extremely proud to have developed the first ever non-egg, non-dairy system for mayonnaise," said Elio Tironi, the company's technical director.

Further information

Caledonian reveals new XPA

Date: Tue, 01 Aug 06

Story Text

The Caledonian Brewing Company, which has been brewing fine beers in Edinburgh since 1869, is in the process of launching its latest offering.

The new addition to the portfolio is Caledonian XPA, a 4.3 per cent golden beer which is being unveiled at the Great British Beer Festival from August 1st to 5th.

Brewed using optic and wheat malt, the new beer will be available in-trade from September onwards.

Caledonian's managing director, Stephen Crawley, told the Publican that the festival will be the perfect showcase for the new product.

"We're delighted to be introducing Caledonian XPA at the Great British Beer Festival," said Mr Crawley.

"In the last year, we've trialled XPA in key stockists who share our passion for serving quality beer and received some great feedback."

One of the pubs invited to trial XPA was the Ferry Tap in West Lothian, where manageress Linda Gamble revealed that it sold double the amount of any normal guest ale.

"As the beer is slightly stronger, people were more inclined to drink it on the weekend rather than in the evening of a weekday," she added.

Further information

Decantae chosen as official tournament drink

Date: Tue, 01 Aug 06

Story Text

Decantae has been selected as the official drink of a major golf tournament, due to take place in Wales this month.

The bottled water brand, which has recently invested in a new £750,000 bottling line to boost capacity, will feature at the International Pairs world final at the Celtic Manor Resort on August 10th and 11th.

Sales and operations director Ian Spooner commented: "The International Pairs has a great following across the golfing world and we are very keen to raise our profile in this area.

"Our water is one of the world's purest natural mineral waters and is named after the tribe that once lived in the area."

Decantae is sourced from the foothills of Snowdonia and has one of the lowest mineralisation and sodium levels of any mineral water, making it taste naturally good.

The company recently launched a new Classic range in 330ml and 750ml glass bottles, which has proven particularly popular in the hotel and restaurant sector.

Further information

Labelling scheme could 'revitalise' real ale industry

Date: Tue, 01 Aug 06

Story Text

A new labelling scheme for real ales has been unveiled which should make the drink more accessible to consumers.

The labels will rate each ale's taste on a scale of one to five for both sweetness and bitterness and the accompanying promotional material will contain information on the drink's smell and flavour.

Tony Jerome, senior marketing manager at the Campaign for Real Ale (Camra), commented that the system, known as Cyclops, would help drinkers to understand their taste preferences.

"Real ale is an incredibly complex drink with an enormous range of styles and tastes," he said.

"Cyclops will demystify real ale so drinkers will know what a beer will look, smell and taste like before they part with their cash at the bar."

Mr Jerome added that the system should help to revitalise the real ale market by encouraging younger drinkers to try different ales.

"They will quickly learn to appreciate its complex flavours and we are confident that they will soon become enthusiasts."

Around 14 breweries have already signed up to the scheme, which was unveiled at the Great British Beer Festival at Earls Court.

[Further information](http://www.politics.co.uk/press-releases/domestic-policy/media-and-culture/entertainment/camra-ale-sales-get-new-wine-like-tasting-scheme-$446374.htm)

Yorkshire locals benefit from organic egg traceability

Date: Tue, 01 Aug 06

Story Text

Organic eggs are becoming increasingly popular with Yorkshire consumers who, like the rest of the UK, are more concerned than ever about the origins of their food.

Eighty per cent of consumers believe it is important to know where food comes from, according to Farming UK, and seven out of ten consumers now purchase organic produce for either environmental or food safety reasons.

Brontebrown organic eggs, which are produced and marketed by Chippindale Foods, are now readily available across Yorkshire, with Morrisons and Booths both stocking the increasingly popular products.

The eggs are produced using traditional organic methods and consumers can log onto a website and determine exactly which farm an individual egg has come from.

Nick Chippindale, of Chippindale Foods, explained: "Consumers can now see for themselves, from the comfort of their own home, the actual farm where their individual eggs were laid.

"There's even the opportunity to ask questions of the farmer, see delicious Yorkshire recipes and even to find out the chickens' current weather conditions," he told Farming UK.

The eggs are all produced on local, Yorkshire farms, enabling traceability and helping to minimise food miles.

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

Blackcurrants to get vitamin C injection

Date: Tue, 01 Aug 06

Story Text

Scientists are currently working to boost the amount of vitamin C in Ribena blackcurrants.

Researchers based at the Scottish Crop Research Institute (SCRI) and East Malling Research in Kent have identified where and when the vitamin is produced in blackcurrant plants and are now trying to determine how it accumulates in the fruit.

Increasing vitamin C content would help to improve the taste of the juice and raise consumption of the vitamin, which is vital for tissue growth and repair and boosts the immune system, according to Dr Robert Hancock, research leader at SCRI.

"Blackcurrant production has soared in the UK in the last few years as demand has rocketed across Europe," Dr Hancock revealed.

"If we can help to improve the crop, we can give UK farmers a better, sustainable product to sell that will ensure they have a competitive edge."

The project will continue for the next two years and aims to develop techniques to accelerate the breeding of "super blackcurrant bushes".

Professor Nigel Brown, director of science and technology at BBSRC, added: "This is an example of how collaboration between different research groups with public and commercial research funding can produce real benefits for consumers, producers and the UK food industry."

[Further information](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2006-07/babs-sbw072706.php)

NZ to produce seaweed on commercial scale

Date: Tue, 01 Aug 06

Story Text

New Zealand is poised to join the international seaweed industry, in a move that it hopes will open up opportunities in the food and pharmaceuticals industries.

Scientists at Industrial Research (IRL) have spent two decades conducting research and are now growing seaweed in the Marlborough Sounds, according to the website Stuff.co.nz.

Dr Ruth Falshaw, team leader, told the website that they are currently trying to grow just one variety on a commercial scale – a red seaweed which has broad leaves, thereby producing a high yield from each plant.

The area is ideal for commercial seaweed production, with its clean, open waters and existing mussel and salmon farm infrastructure, and the researchers plan to market the seaweed as a value-added product, such as a food additive.

Seaweed is currently used as a thickening agent in ice-cream, where it prevents large ice crystals from forming, and is incorporated into chocolate milk and various other food products.

In an article on the IRL website earlier this year, Dr Falshaw commented: "I have people overseas who are interested in buying this material, but they need to know that there is a sustainable, reliable harvest before they can consider buying it.

"We are just on the cusp of moving to a commercialisation phase for this."

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3748574a13,00.html>>Further information