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#### **Novel looks to improve sauce consistency**

**Date:** Wed, 31 May 06

**Story Text**

A new heat exchanger is being tested as a method of improving the consistency of sauces, Food Production Daily has reported.

Campden and Chorleywood Food Research has announced that it is currently evaluating a heat exchanger produced by Ashe Morris, which utilises a new technique known as "constant flux control".

Heat exchangers allow food processors to control the temperature of food production – used in situations where a product needs to be held at a constant temperature or where heat needs to be added to alter a food process..

"This simple, innovative batch vessel has potential for several advantages over conventional processing," Campden and Chorleywood said. "We are looking in particular at its potential for high-response process control, flexibility in processing varying product volumes, and reduction in burn-on of splashes."

Ashe Morris added that the constant flux method gives producers greater temperature accuracy.

"For the first time, manufacturers can use industrial reactors as reaction calorimeters. The on-line data that this provides can be used to improve the economics of manufacturing processes in a variety of ways," the firm said.

#### **Northern Foods in "radical refocus"**

**Date:** Wed, 31 May 06

**Story Text**

UK-based food producer Northern Foods has announced it plans to sell off two-fifths of its businesses as part of a "radical refocus", with final year results showing the company made a loss during the last 12 months.

The proceeds gained from the sale of certain company divisions will be used to slow down its rate of borrowing, address its pensions deficit and invest for future growth.

Final year results show that despite the company's revenue increasing 2.2 per cent to £1,438.2 million, profits of £22.8 million in 2005 have now evaporated to a loss of £5 million.

Attributing the loss to rising energy costs and an increasingly competitive environment, Pat O'Driscoll, Northern Foods chief executive, explained that businesses not sold will be simplified, with a "clear focus" on driving returns and lowering costs – especially in branded businesses.

"In the last three months we have completed our business review to make Northern Foods a more profitable and competitive business in its chosen markets," he said.

The chief executive revealed that the company would turn its attention to five key food areas, including pizza, biscuits, ready meals, sandwiches and Christmas puddings.

"The company will be radically refocused to drive improved shareholder returns. The new group will be targeted on fewer, higher performing product categories. This will reduce complexity, drive improved performance, earnings and cashflow, and create a simpler, more competitive and resilient business," Mr O'Driscoll added.

Anthony Hobson, company chairman, conceded that "major challenges" lay ahead for Northern Foods, which produces Goodfella's Pizza and Fox Biscuits, but claimed that the firm was determined "to create value for our shareholders and to ensure that we are best positioned to provide great value, quality products for our customers".

## **Mirinda Vitamin C launched**

**Date:** Wed, 31 May 06

### **Story Text**

Mirinda Vitamin C has been launched in the Middle East, offering fans of the drink in the Persian Gulf region a new alternative.

The product, owned by PepsiCo, offers a smoother and richer addition to the Mirinda Orange line, offering an intense and thrilling flavour, according to the makers of the product.

The new version is expected to attract consumers from across the region, including many from the UAE, allowing the Miranda brand to capture significant market share.

"Based on extensive market and product research conducted throughout the region, PepsiCo International continues to offer beverages that their consumers desire," said the Mirinda marketing manager for the Arabian Gulf Region.

"The launch of Mirinda Vitamin C reflects our ability to connect with our consumers and satisfy their every need."

The product is the latest attempt by PepsiCo to increase its portion of the UAE market by upgrading its current line of products.

## **Unhealthy diet 'as bad as smoking'**

**Date:** Wed, 31 May 06

### **Story Text**

A bad diet could be as harmful as smoking, according to a study by the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RVIM).

The report said that eating an insufficient amount of fruit, vegetables and fish could lead to significant health problems and is often the cause of serious illnesses within the Netherlands.

It said that many public health gains could be made through encouraging healthy eating - more so than through improving health and safety. The report will be used by the European Food Standards Agency as a guide for future policy.

"About 50 per cent of [serious illnesses] can be avoided through interventions which appear feasible from small-scale experiments," said the report's authors, adding that reducing saturated and transfatty acid intake could actually save lives.

"Taking into account not just deaths but also years spent living with serious disability, unhealthy dietary habits together cause as much health loss as does smoking," they added.

Losing three kilograms of bodyweight could help reduce deaths from serious illness by 25 per cent, it added.

[http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=healthNews&storyID=2006-05-29T155343Z\\_01\\_L29748930\\_RTRIDST\\_0\\_HEALTH-FOOD-DUTCH-DIET-DC.XML](http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=healthNews&storyID=2006-05-29T155343Z_01_L29748930_RTRIDST_0_HEALTH-FOOD-DUTCH-DIET-DC.XML)  
>Further information</a>

## **Widespread RFID use 'still years away'**

**Date:** Wed, 31 May 06

### **Story Text**

Use of RFID, a tool used in the food and beverage industry, in every part of distribution and retail channels is still a way off, according to a German retailer.

Metro AG has been using RFIDs since March 2004, staggering the technology's introduction throughout its supply chain. The firm already has the system integrated into 20 of its distribution centres, while 40 suppliers are attaching RFIDs to pallets.

However, MGI Metro Group's Gerd Wolfram told the Financial Times that the RFIDs will not come to fully identify individual products for a decade and a half, despite the firm putting tags on individual cases of products.

"We will see RFID increasingly replace bar codes for certain products but the technology won't be used to identify all products for a good 15 years," he said, claiming that the price per tag would have to be lowered to  $\hat{=}$ 0.01 before it could gain widespread acceptance.

However, he added that the system could still provide many labour and inventory efficiencies.

"We firmly believe that we'll be able to lower our operating costs with this technology and also provide our customers with a richer shopping experience," he said.

[http://news.ft.com/cms/s/37315a64-efec-11da-b80e-0000779e2340,dwp\\_uuid=863bb51c-1f76-11da-853a-00000e2511c8.html](http://news.ft.com/cms/s/37315a64-efec-11da-b80e-0000779e2340,dwp_uuid=863bb51c-1f76-11da-853a-00000e2511c8.html)>Further information</a>

## **French firm eyes Britvic**

**Date:** Wed, 31 May 06

### **Story Text**

Rumours are circulating that Britvic is the subject of interest from a number of companies regarding the purchase of the soft drinks firm.

According to a number of sources, Britvic is being targeted by French firm PAI Partners as well as private equity company The Blackstone Group and Lion Capital.

Britvic has been the subject of takeover talk for some time now, with last year bringing attention from private equity firm Kohlberg Kravis Roberts.

Just last week, Britvic announced in its interim trading statement that poor sales and revenue from the carbonated soft drinks portion of its business contributed to what the company called "a difficult first half" of the year.

The shift towards healthier drinking is said to have hit Britvic hard, something other beverage firms have sought to address and that the Britvic chief executive, Paul Moody, said would drive the company in the long-term.

Lion Capital, one of the firms rumoured to be interested in Britvic, was last year involved with the buyout of the European beverage arm of Cadbury Schweppes.

[Further information](http://news.independent.co.uk/business/analysis_and_features/article622157.ece)

## **Vimto plans to target younger drinkers with Indigo**

**Date:** Tue, 30 May 06

### **Story Text**

Vimto Soft Drinks is looking to relaunch its energy drink, Indigo, according to the latest reports.

Industry magazine Marketing has said that the company, part of the Nichols Group, is aiming to target younger drinkers with the product, which was first launched approximately a decade ago.

Repriced and repackaged, the new Indigo drink and promotional campaign will play on the fact that it contains fruit juice along with the energy-boosting ingredients caffeine and taurine, according to Marketing.

Vimto has cited ever-increasing competition in the energy drinks market as the reason Indigo is currently struggling, with Red Bull, Red Devil and soon perhaps Osotspa's Shark to compete with.

Recently, Nichols also relaunched the Panda Pops range of soft drinks, which was "very well received" by the trade, according to chairman Jon Nichols.

When it was initially launched in 1996, Indigo was backed by a £1.5 million promotional campaign, Marketing reports.

[Further information](http://www.brandrepublic.co.uk/login/index.cfm?fuseaction=Login&resource=BR_New&articleType=news&article=560824)

## **New deal could spell success for Scottish dairy**

**Date:** Tue, 30 May 06

### **Story Text**

A Scottish dairy farmer has confirmed an agreement with a local wholesaler which he hopes will help him to expand his Sandyknowe drinking yoghurt brand.

According to Farmers Weekly, Alistair Stewart launched the drinking yoghurt, which has since won awards for innovation from NFU Scotland and the Milk Development Council.

However the business, which makes three fruit flavours of the yoghurt, is only just breaking even at present as the milk has to be driven 100 miles to be processed and bottled.

The business has now forged a link with Glasgow-based Lomond Foods which Mr Stewart hopes will increase sales and distribution.

Mr Stewart told Farmers Weekly: "Most people seem to like the product â€“ the difficulty is not getting it onto the shelf, but getting people to pick it up and buy it."

The yoghurt drinks are currently sold in farm shops, farmers' markets, Dobbies garden centres and Harvey Nichols in Edinburgh.

<a

href="http://www.fwi.co.uk/Articles/2006/05/30/94932/Scottish+dairy+farm+turns+to+yogurt+for+healthy+lift.html">Further information</a>

## **Dairy launches perfect milk for a frothy coffee**

**Date:** Tue, 30 May 06

### **Story Text**

A dairy co-operative has launched a new brand of milk as part of its plan to explore new markets.

South Caernarfon Creameries (SCC) is targeting the booming coffee shop sector, which has trebled in size since 1999, the Western Mail reports.

The creamery produces milk which, thanks to its natural optimum levels of protein and butterfat, is ideal for making the perfect cappuccino.

The milk has been tested at the Food Technology Centre at Coleg Menai, where studies concluded that it produces a "consistently high standard and level of foam".

The cappuccino milk, called Fresh Caf, was launched at the Caffè Culture event last week where it was praised for its ability to make the best frothy coffee.

Colin Jardine, commercial manager at SCC, told the Western Mail: "Owners of coffee shops and bars will spend time and money to get the very best coffees, but often they give little thought to the milk they use.

"Our milk is benchmarked monthly and is always of the highest quality."

SCC's milk comes from 190 farmers across north-west Wales, enabling the creamery to exercise a high level of control over the type and quality of milk it produces.

<a href="http://icwales.icnetwork.co.uk/farming/columnists/tm\_objectid=17148334&method=full&siteid=50082&headline=dairying-sees-hope-in-bubbles-name\_page.html">Further information</a>

## **Scented packaging will improve cereal's appeal**

**Date:** Tue, 30 May 06

### **Story Text**

An international food company is planning to unveil a scented cinnamon and raisin liner later this year, in an attempt to improve the appeal of its cereal product.

According to Pira International, the unnamed company will use aroma encapsulation technology from ScentSational to improve the smell of its cereal.

ScentSational has been working with its European distributor, The Aroma Company, for around one year.

Simon Harrop, chief executive of The Aroma Company, told Pira: "The company has a great tasting product but it does not smell great and it wanted to improve this aspect for consumers."

Mr Harrop says that, although there is a large initial development cost, the technology is "easily integrated into the company's production process and only adds 100ths of a cent (US) per pack".

The scented liner should be launched around the world in around six months' time.

<a href="http://www.pira.co.uk/pira/piranet.asp?page=/Pira/newsitem.htm&NewsItemId=8452&Group=2&SubGroup=0">Further information</a>

## **Nestle focuses on brand extensions**

**Date:** Tue, 30 May 06

### **Story Text**

Nestle Waters is looking to combat what it sees as a weak market for traditional water products by introducing a number of extensions to its brands.

According to trade magazine Marketing, the company that carries the San Pellegrino, Vittel and Perrier brands, among others, believes that drinks that offer other benefits, such as energy boosts, are the way forward in the beverage market.

The decision was made by chief executive Carlo Donati following a company review, the magazine reports, with the emphasis placed on the need for continued innovation in the soft drinks market.

It is believed the company will pursue the route of using some of its Nestle food products that

carry health benefits as drink sources, using liquid versions for the beverage market.

Up and Go, a yoghurt-based drink, has already been launched along these lines, Marketing reports.

Sales of the company's 75 brands stood at \$5.7 billion worldwide for 2005.

<a

href="http://www.brandrepublic.com/login/index.cfm?fuseaction=Login&resource=BR\_News&articleType=news&article=560805">Further information</a>

## **Gas-selective packaging extends shelf-life**

**Date:** Tue, 30 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new packaging has been developed which is capable of quadrupling the shelf-life of vegetables and mushrooms.

Developed at the French Institute for Agronomy Research (INRA), the packaging is said to have advantages over modified atmosphere packaging (MAP), as it enables the gas composition inside the package to be modified over time.

"In controlled atmosphere packaging such as MAP, the package is flushed when the fruit and vegetables are packed," Stephane Guilbert, a professor at INRA, told Pira International.

"In MAP, you cannot sustain optimal gas levels " the packaging usually consists of micro-perforated film and there is a lot of exchange with the external atmosphere."

The new packaging controls the composition of gases through the produce's respiration, thereby maintaining the correct gas levels throughout the product's shelf-life.

When INRA tested the packaging material on cultivated mushrooms, it found that the mushrooms could be stored at 20 degrees Celsius for four days, rather than for just one day using existing micro-perforated film.

Mr Guilbert revealed that INRA is currently holding discussions with a number of packaging companies, including European outfit Cofresco, to commercialise the product.

<a

href="http://www.pira.co.uk/pira/piranet.asp?page=/Pira/newsitem.htm&NewsItemId=8450&Group=2&SubGroup=0">Further information</a>

## **Bavarian flavours in Manchester**

**Date:** Fri, 26 May 06

### **Story Text**

The German food and drink market that has been wowing shoppers in Manchester since 2004 is back for a third year.

For the first 18 days of June, the city centre will be decked out with regional delights imported by Arnd Baggen, head of Bavarian Beer, Wine and Food, who will bring a host of traders to brighten up the streets outside the Victorian Town Hall.

Councillor Paul Murphy, executive member for markets, commented: "Manchester's Markets are always warmly received and I am sure that people will enjoy socialising, eating and soaking up the continental atmosphere this summer".

Alongside the staple fare of wine and beer, delicacies including cheese, nuts, almonds and meat from Bavaria will all be brought before the crowds, with many of the dishes cooked on site using traditional culinary methods from the region.

Chocolate, gingerbread and other forms of sweets will also help recreate the sights, smells and taste that make up the bustling atmosphere of a German market town.

"We are always looking at ways to bring interesting and delicious food to Manchester's Markets," commented Krys Zasada, head of Manchester Markets. "We support local traders and local produce as well as sourcing continental food."

[Further information](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/markets/specialist/german.htm)

## **Boom in ready-made toddler meals**

**Date:** Fri, 26 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new survey has revealed the growing trend for ready-made toddler foods, fuelled by the increasing unsuitability of family meals for very young children.

A study by Bounty and Hipp Organic found that one in three toddlers are usually fed ready-made toddler food, rather than receiving selected items from their parents' meals.

Nearly three quarters of parents said that their family meals tended to be unsuitable for their toddlers to share.

Jane Mayall, a nutritionist at Hipp Organic, commented: "The days of having meat and two veg every night are gone and our fondness for spicy and exotic foods means that our toddlers can no longer join in at family mealtimes.

"The marketplace is booming and sales of meals especially for toddlers aged over ten months have risen by 42 per cent in the past two years."

Over 70 per cent of parents said that the main reason for purchasing toddler meals was because they had the right nutritional value and over half said they chose meals that contained organic ingredients.

[Further information](http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/cgi/news/release?id=171896)

## **Polytunnels used to shelter strawberries**

**Date:** Fri, 26 May 06

### **Story Text**

The strawberry crop in Britain has been saved from a month of heavy rain by the use of polytunnels.

Polytunnels are tubes made of polyethylene and are usually used to grow plants that require a high temperature in order to grow in a similar way as greenhouses.

They have been used to prevent the rain damage that can cause a loss of up to 40 per cent of a strawberry crop in Britain.

The month of May is a key time for the growth of strawberries and the heavily increased rainfall could have proved disastrous for the British crop.

However, the increased use of polytunnels should prevent the problem, according to the National Farmers Union (NFU).

Anthony Snell, horticultural board member of the NFU, said: "The enclosed nature of polytunnels means that growers can reduce their use of pesticides by 50 per cent and the enclosed environment means they can also release natural enemies like lacewings to eat aphids and other pests."

"British growers are now successfully competing with foreign imports from Egypt and Spain; extending the growing season has a big impact on the food miles that used to be attached to strawberries before June and after July."

Polytunnels have been criticised for their visual appearance as they produce a strong glare due to the reflective material used on the outside of the tunnel.

However, many farmers are experimenting with different types of plastics in an attempt to reduce this visual problem.

[Further information](http://www.nfu.org.uk/x7118.xml)

## **Farm hopes to create market for crocodile meat**

**Date:** Fri, 26 May 06

### **Story Text**

A farmer in East Anglia is hoping to create a new market in the UK for crocodile meat, which he claims is low-fat and environmentally-friendly.

Andy Johnson currently has just eight crocodiles on his farm but plans to breed as many as a thousand over the next few years.

Mr Johnson commented: "It's white, low fat meat with the grain of fish. Some people say it is similar to chicken, but it's not, it tastes of crocodile."

The farmer explains that the farm is environmentally-friendly as the crocodiles are fed on hens that would otherwise be incinerated.

In addition, the farm is looking into heating the building from renewable energy sources such as

solar power.

"Crocodile meat is a small market now but I think the demand for alternative meats will grow in the next few years," Mr Johnson said.

He added that there is no real danger outside the crocodiles' heated building as the reptiles tend to move slowly, if at all, when cold.

<a

href="http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/05/25/ucroc.xml">Further information</a>

## **Raspberry wine - an award-winning mistake**

**Date:** Fri, 26 May 06

### **Story Text**

A Bury winemaker has won first prize in an annual competition for a wine that only came into existence by chance.

John Kemp's Raspberry Sparkler is actually the fruit of an "embarrassing mistake" that he made while experimenting with a batch of his still raspberry wine.

"I have been making a still wine from raspberries for about six years," Mr Kemp told the East Anglian Daily Times, "but during an early batch, something went wrong with the filtration plant and yeast got into the bottles."

Customers began phoning in to let Mr Kemp know that the corks were popping out of the bottles as a result of the wine re-fermenting and becoming fizzy, but surprisingly the wine was actually proving popular.

"It was very embarrassing, but people seemed to love it, so we decided to deliberately produce a sparkling raspberry wine," Mr Kemp explained.

The wine is sold at venues throughout the region and recently won the annual competition run by the National Fruit Wine, Mead and Liqueur Association, while Mr Kemp's still raspberry wine and sloe gin both won silver medals.

<a

href="http://www.eadt.co.uk/content/eadt/news/story.aspx?brand=EADOnline&category=News&tBrand=EADOnline&tCategory=znews&itemid=IPED23%20May%202006%2019%3A17%3A02%3A463">Further information</a>

## **New brew from Tennent's**

**Date:** Fri, 26 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new brew has been unveiled by Tennent's, which is one of the largest brands owned by Belgian brewery giant InBev.

Versa is the brewery's first new offering for seven years and is described as a "super-chilled, continental-style lager, combining a sharp taste with an easy-drinking creamy smoothness",

according to the Scotsman.

The new lager has cost Â£750,000 to develop and the firm intends to spend an additional Â£100,000 on a marketing push later this year.

Kirsty Hunter, marketing controller, told the Scotsman: "The lager market has taken some criticism of late for failing to innovate and bring new products to market, so we are proud to be one of the companies bucking that trend."

Tennent's hopes to gain popularity among UK drinkers with its new brand, especially with those drinkers over the age of 25.

Versa will be served in silver-trimmed glasses in 500 bars throughout Scotland from June 2006.

[Further information](http://business.scotsman.com/agriculture.cfm?id=777452006)

## **UK shopping baskets getting healthier**

**Date:** Thu, 25 May 06

### **Story Text**

The latest annual report from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has revealed that UK shoppers are spending more on healthy vegetables, fresh fruit and wholemeal bread than previously and less on alcohol and fats.

The findings of the Expenditure and Food Survey also revealed that the average person spends Â£34.31 on food and drink every week.

Household expenditure on fresh fruit and vegetables in 2004/5 increased by 2.7 per cent and 2.8 per cent respectively compared to the previous year, while money spent on wholemeal bread rose significantly by 24.2 per cent.

Meanwhile, sales of white bread decreased by 6.6 per cent and alcohol consumption in the home fell by 3.7 per cent.

A spokesman from Defra told the BBC: "We try not to put any particular spin on these figures but it would appear from this, and from anecdotal evidence, that people are trying to improve their eating habits."

In addition, the survey revealed a 2.3 per cent decrease in total purchases of fats and oils and a 6.2 per cent increase in sales of bottled mineral water.

[Further information](http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/statnot/efsstatsnotMay06.pdf)

## **Cheese-maker goes from blue to white**

**Date:** Thu, 25 May 06

### **Story Text**

Yorkshire cheese-maker Shepherds Purse is launching a new white cow's milk cheese under the

brand name Ryedale.

The new brand is the first such product for the company, which usually specialises in blue cheeses.

Ryedale is a soft cheese and should be available in supermarkets later in 2006, following an initial phase in local delicatessens and specialist cheese shops.

Judy Bell, chief executive of Shepherds Purse, told the Yorkshire Evening Post that the company had been founded on its specialist approach to making ewe's milk blue cheeses.

"But following the success of our blue cow's milk cheese, Yorkshire Blue, we have been looking for some time to develop more cheeses using cow's milk because it is in plentiful supply and it will always be locally sourced."

Ms Bell added that consumers are buying more and more local and regional produce because of its traceability and said that the company therefore believes the new range will be well-received.

The new cheese is being launched at the Ryedale Festival of Food and Drink on May 28th and 29th.

[Further information](http://www.shepherdspurse.co.uk/index.html)

## **Low-calorie Cobra launched**

**Date:** Thu, 25 May 06

### **Story Text**

Cobra Beer is targeting women with its new Cobra Lower Cal beer this summer, using a combination of advertising and sampling.

The £1 million advertising campaign will focus on the beer being a "lighter alternative to a premium lager", rather than focussing on any health benefits.

Simon Edwards, marketing director of Cobra, commented: "Previous 'lite' beers on the market have not flourished, largely because a great deal of confusion surrounds what 'light' or 'ultra' actually means.

"With Cobra Lower Cal it is clear about what it is, which appeals to today's discerning consumers, particularly those who are enthusiastic about watching their calorie intake."

The beverage contains just 100 calories per bottle and less than half the amount of carbohydrates found in other premium lagers.

The marketing campaign will target 25-35 year-old women, using a combination of print and online advertising and a national sampling drive in Tesco stores.

[Further information](http://www.drinks-business-review.com/article_news.asp?guid=50982AF7-55BE-42AC-9995-66258434905D)

## **New mushroom business uses innovative growing system**

**Date:** Thu, 25 May 06

### **Story Text**

A couple have set up a new business growing gourmet mushrooms at their small Scottish farm.

Robert and Justine Dunn's new venture, Ardnamushrooms, uses an innovative new system from China to produce its mushrooms, according to the Scottish Food and Drink website.

The system will give local restaurants, hotels and members of the public access to the Highland grown, edible fungi throughout the year.

At present, the farm is focussing on producing shiitake mushrooms but the couple plan to introduce other varieties, including oyster and lion's mane, by the end of the year.

The business has been made possible thanks to a generous grant award from Lochaber Enterprise.

Alison Boyle, development manager at Lochaber Enterprise, commented that fungi growing would help the business to diversify.

"The business will also allow them to put their scientific background to good use," Ms Boyle added, "monitoring the fungi growth cycle and experimenting with different mixtures and fungi types."

[Further information](http://www.scottishfoodanddrink.com/view_item.aspx?item_id=25715&list_id=list1-7161&list_index=0)

## **Thai spritzer creates new drink category**

**Date:** Thu, 25 May 06

### **Story Text**

A refreshing wine spritzer from Thailand has been launched in selected stores following a 12 month trial in bars across the UK.

Sabai is a refreshing, lightly effervescent wine spritzer made from white wine and infused with the red fruit of the hibiscus flower.

Named after the Thai word for 'being chilled', the wine uses the white Malaga Blanc grape which is grown in the Siam Winery's unique floating vineyards of the Chao Phraya Delta.

The spritzer gets its fruity taste and deep ruby colour from the fruit of the hibiscus flower, which has been used for centuries in the Far East and the Caribbean as a popular remedy for stress and anxiety.

According to the company's website, Sabai was first introduced by Siam Winery in 1986 and now sells 90 million bottles every year in Thailand alone.

The drink will be available in 275ml bottles and will create a brand new bottled spritzer drinks category in the UK.

The drink is available this summer in Tesco and Sainsbury's stores, costing £4.99 for a pack of four bottles.

[Further information](http://www.sabaichilled.com/v2/home.htm)

## **Sales of healthy dark fruit rise**

**Date:** Thu, 25 May 06

### **Story Text**

A growing appetite for dark fruit is boosting sales of berries in the UK, according to research from Tesco.

With consumers becoming more health conscious, blueberries, blackcurrants and blackberries have become the "trendiest" foods in the UK, the supermarket says.

Thanks to scientists and nutritionists emphasising the health benefits of dark fruits, sales of blackberries have risen by 121 per cent over the last year.

Blueberry consumption has risen by 80 per cent and blackcurrants by 60 per cent, breathing new life into Britain's soft fruit industry.

Tesco fruit buyer Andrew Gaunt said: "Dark coloured fruit are, healthwise, among the most beneficial foods one can eat, being literally packed with goodness.

"Thanks to great publicity from health gurus in the last year there has been an incredible rising demand for berries all year round."

Scientists say that eating berries can help to lower cholesterol, boost brainpower, and maintain a healthy immune system and healthy cells.

They also have a low GI (glycaemic index) rating, which means they break down slower and therefore keep hunger at bay for longer. This is good news for dieters as it means they are less likely to snack in between meals.

## **Industry invited to comment on nanotech**

**Date:** Wed, 24 May 06

### **Story Text**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is urging industry members to comment on a draft report it has produced on the use of nanotechnologies in food manufacturing.

The report details the findings of a review carried out by the agency, which looks at the potential gaps in regulation or risk assessment regarding the presence of nanomaterials in food products.

Nanotechnology involves the manufacture and use of materials and structures that are constructed on a minute scale; one nanometre measures just one millionth of a millimetre.

Nanomaterials are therefore defined as materials that have at least one dimension measuring less than 100 nanometres, including thin films, tubes and wire-like structures.

At present, there are not thought to be any food products containing nanomaterials on the UK market but recent technological advances mean that the potential to add manufactured nanoparticles to products is now a pressing issue.

The FSA is therefore issuing its draft report for public consultation before the document is finalised after July 14th.

[Further information](http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2006/may/nanoreview)

## **Researchers aim to produce longer-lasting broccoli**

**Date:** Wed, 24 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scientists at Warwick University's plant research department, Warwick HRI, have taken their "super broccoli" to the Chelsea Flower Show to demonstrate how far they have reached in their attempts to breed a longer-lasting variety.

The researchers are attempting to locate a gene which keeps vegetables fresher for longer and hope to breed a new variety of broccoli which lasts longer than present varieties.

Most broccoli only lasts for around three days and the scientists hope to prolong the vegetable's shelf-life by an additional one to three days.

This would also have a positive impact on human health, as the antioxidants in the broccoli would remain potent for longer, conferring greater health benefits to consumers.

The research department has over 6,000 plants in its gene bank, providing it with an invaluable resource.

In addition, its breeding programme has identified opportunities for cross-breeding different varieties to produce a broccoli plant that can withstand aphids and pathogens.

The researchers hope that this will be achieved within the next decade, enabling growers to use fewer pesticides.

[Further information](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/pressreleases/NE1000000205114/)

## **Organic sustainable cod unveiled**

**Date:** Wed, 24 May 06

### **Story Text**

Fish from the world's biggest cod hatchery, based in Shetland, will be sold in Tesco supermarkets from the end of the month, under a new fresh fish brand called No Catchâ€¦ Just Cod.

The new brand is being launched by Johnson Sustainable Seafoods and, according to Brand Republic, is aimed at health-conscious shoppers with an ethical approach to food consumption.

The sustainable seafood firm feeds its cod with off-cuts of fish that have already been harvested and ensures that the fish do not come into contact with any pesticides or dyes.

The company claims that its new brand is environmentally-friendly, as it comes from a sustainable source and therefore does not contribute to diminishing fish stocks in the Irish and North Seas.

In addition, the producers claim that No Catchâ€¦Just Cod is the world's first organic, sustainable cod and say that it is of a higher quality than wild cod because it takes less time to reach shops.

[Further information](http://www.brandrepublic.com/bulletins/design/article/560584/sustainable-seafood-firm-adds-cod-brand)

## **Soya-based fruit drink launched**

**Date:** Wed, 24 May 06

### **Story Text**

Unilever has launched its first new product brand in the UK in 12 years â€“ a soya-based fruit drink called AdeZ.

The beverage is a combination of fruit juice and soya and is already available on the Argentinean market under the brand name AdeS.

The new drink is available in three varieties â€“ pineapple and passion fruit, mango and apricot, and orange and peach.

The international food giant is hoping to capitalise on the growing consumer demand for healthy drinks with its new offering, which is reported to retail at Â£1.69.

The launch is being managed by marketing agency Closer and will include TV advertising and national sampling, promoting AdeZ as a healthy product with functional benefits.

According to the Daily Mail, soya-based drinks are the fastest growing food/drink category worldwide and the UK market for soya meat alternatives alone is worth Â£77 million a year.

However, a number of scientists and consumer groups are concerned that soya might not be as healthy as people imagine, and researchers at Kings College, London believe that it might have a negative effect on fertility.

[Further information](http://adez.com)

## **New fruit desserts launched by Dole**

**Date:** Wed, 24 May 06

### **Story Text**

US fruit giant Dole Food Company is launching its new Fruit Parfait dessert range in the UK with a series of roadshows in supermarket stores.

The new desserts combine real fruit with a smooth layer of light-tasting creme and are low in

saturated fat and rich in Vitamin C.

They will be available in Peaches and Creme, Pineapple and Creme and Apples and caramel Creme varieties.

According to Brand Republic, Dole has employed the services of Carbon Marketing to help promote the launch, running the roadshows over the next two months in Tesco and Sainsbury's stores to enable consumers to sample the new product line.

The marketing campaign will also involve competitions in regional newspapers with the chance to win a mountain bike.

Founded in Hawaii in 1851, Dole produces over 200 products, including fresh fruit and vegetables, packaged and frozen foods and fresh-cut flowers.

<a href="http://www.dole.com/Products/Products\_Detail.jsp?CatGroupID=5&ID=413">Further information</a>

## **New tomato varieties for 2007**

**Date:** Wed, 24 May 06

### **Story Text**

Israel's largest exporter of fresh produce will be providing the UK market with two new varieties of tomato from next year, according to Freshinfo.com.

Tiger and Pink tomatoes have already been trialled in Israel, where they have proven popular with consumers.

The company, which is currently celebrating its half century, has developed a particular interest in producing new breeds of premium tomatoes ever since its first cherry-on-the-vine variety a few years ago.

According to the sales manager Steve Hopkins, the Israeli tomato industry has had a challenging season but seems to be enjoying a turnaround.

UK demand for Israeli cherry-on-the-vine varieties has increased by 50 per cent since last year and imports of baby plum tomatoes have risen by 200 per cent.

"Consumers are becoming more aware of the improved taste and quality of vine tomatoes and are prepared to pay for the premium product that we offer," Mr Hopkins told Freshinfo.com.

<a href="http://www.freshinfo.com/index.php?s=n&ss=nd&sid=38990&PHPSESSID=9baa675d1b708176d1f78c75a244f096">Further information</a>

## **More goodness in Robinsons fruit & barley**

**Date:** Tue, 23 May 06

### **Story Text**

Britvic is promoting the fact that Robinsons Fruit & Barley now has extra nutrients as it aims to

capitalise on the consumer climate for healthier drinks options.

The range of squash drinks now contains extra B3 and B6 vitamins and Britvic has said that a host of supporting promotional materials will be available to retailers, including wobblers and display trays.

"Fruit & Barley is already perceived as healthy thanks to its barley content, nutrients and no added sugar," said Robinsons brand controller, Jonathan Gatward.

"Robinsons Fruit & Barley's new extra vitamins, additional flavours and revitalised labelling will help increase stand out on shelf and provide retailers with expanded profit opportunities."

Britvic is hoping that the added vitamin content, along with the recent launch of Apple & Pear and Tropical flavours for the Fruit & Barley range, will enable it to further impact a market which is worth Â£377 million annually.

The company said it had increased the nutrient content of the squash range "in response to consumer demand".

[Further information](http://www.britvic.com/NewsArticle.aspx?id=13)

## **Biodegradable water bottles on shelves**

**Date:** Tue, 23 May 06

### **Story Text**

Britain's first biodegradable water bottle hit shop shelves yesterday, with Belu mineral water being released in Waitrose stores up and down the country.

According to the Daily Express, the new Bio-bottles for the Belu mineral water are made from a corn derivative and take just a few months to break down into mulch.

Belu, which says that all of its profits from beverage sales go to clean water projects, claims that every bottle of natural mineral water bought gives someone in India or Africa clean water for a month.

The newspaper reports that, as a nation, Britain uses some 15 million water bottles daily, which translates into 275,000 tonnes of plastic bottle waste each year.

Belu works with charity WaterAid to put its profits to good use in a similar way to One Water, whose profits fund innovative roundabout playpumps which enable children in developing countries to pump clean water while they play.

[Further information](http://www.belu.org/)

## **Scientists develop cancer-fighting chewing gum**

**Date:** Tue, 23 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scientists in Finland have produced a brand of chewing gum which could help to prevent certain

oral cancers associated with smoking and drinking, according to Medical News Today.

Launched at the International Congress of Oral Cancer from May 14th to 17th, the chewing gum contains an amino-acid called l-cysteine which is thought to help reduce exposure to acetaldehyde, a likely carcinogen.

Acetaldehyde is found in tobacco smoke and is also produced when the body metabolises ethanol. It is thought to be instrumental in the onset of cancers of the upper digestive tract.

The amino-acid l-cysteine has long been known to bind with acetaldehyde, eliminating its toxicity.

Professor Salaspuro and Professor Martti Marvola, both of the University of Helsinki, developed preparations containing the amino-acid for use in the prevention of digestive tract cancers.

The chewing gum releases l-cysteine as it is chewed, eliminating the acetaldehyde produced during smoking or alcohol consumption.

"We know that, with this chewing gum, it is possible to eliminate acetaldehyde totally from the saliva during smoking," Professor Salaspuro tells Medical News Today.

"We do hope that this will in the future turn out to be a novel method for the prevention of alcohol and tobacco smoking associated oral cancers."

The researchers are now planning studies to demonstrate the extent of the product's cancer preventing properties.

[Further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=43867)

## **Joint innovation effort announced**

**Date:** Tue, 23 May 06

### **Story Text**

Chemical supplier Cognis has signed agreements with natural ingredients manufacturer Wild to jointly develop new products and systems for both the European and US markets.

The two companies will co-operate to produce a range of products, with particular focus on beverages, nutritional bars, sweets and ice-creams.

Cognis' expertise in emulsifiers, compounds and functional ingredients will be incorporated into Wild's innovative food preparations, providing both companies with additional scope in the development and marketing of products for the food and beverage industries.

Norbert Weitkemper, director of strategic business development, nutrition and health at Cognis, commented: "The combination of Wild's formulation expertise and Cognis' broad range of ingredients is a perfect strategic match.

"As a team we will be able to develop and market new solutions effectively and cover a wide range of consumer needs in the field of health and functional ingredients."

<a

href="http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker\_article.asp?fSite=AR283&nw=hd&size=ld&sno=1&main\_page=1&id=480">Further information</a>

## **Trainee chefs compete with innovative soups**

**Date:** Tue, 23 May 06

### **Story Text**

Student chefs from around the country have been competing in regional heats of this year's New Covent Garden Food Company's national student chef competition.

The company, whose fresh soup cartons are sold in stores nationwide, invites budding chefs to invent a new soup flavour which could end up being sold as one of the company's soups of the month in November.

According to the Sheffield News, one of the regional winners was Megan Harrod of Sheffield College whose Far East Chilli and Coconut soup proved a hit with the judges.

Georgina Brown of the Covent Garden Soup Company commented: "It's great to see the students getting involved with the project, using fresh ingredients and considering the business elements of the project as well."

Other winning flavours included Cauliflower in Spring Onion and Fried Banana, which was created by Hannah Nicholson from Carlisle College, and a Thai Flavoured Mussel Chowder, developed by Wakefield College's Adam Harrison.

<a

href="http://www.sheffieldtoday.net/ViewArticle2.aspx?SectionID=58&ArticleID=1519208">Further information</a>

## **Calls for scientists to save Ribena blackcurrants**

**Date:** Tue, 23 May 06

### **Story Text**

Ribena owner GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) is calling on scientists to make sure certain varieties of blackcurrants "used to make the drink" do not die out.

Approximately 95 per cent of the nation's blackcurrants are used to make the fruit cordial drink and GSK is worried that certain varieties risk dying out unless something is done, the Telegraph reports.

Despite the fact that two new varieties of blackcurrant are ready to emerge in the next year, GSK is worried that these are "not the answer", a charge which is also levied at the global source of the fruit.

"We could never rely on buying from the world market " we just couldn't guarantee the flavour and vitamin C content our British farmers can," Anne MacCaig, the category director of Ribena.

GSK has commissioned scientists to cross breed blackcurrant varieties in the hope that a type

will be developed that does not necessarily require the harsh frost that is sometimes missing from the mild British winters.

<a href="http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/05/21/nribe21.xml&sheet=/news/2006/05/21/ixuknews.html">Further information</a>

## **Fat substitute reaches the UK**

**Date:** Mon, 22 May 06

### **Story Text**

US company FiberGel Technologies has announced that its Z-Trim product is due to enter the UK market following the placement of an order by a non-dairy cheese manufacturer.

The UK company has placed an £1,100 order for the non-GMO Oat Z-Trim powder for use in its product line.

The powder is a natural, zero-calorie fat-substitute that can be used in a variety of food products, reducing the calorie content by 25-50 per cent without affecting the taste or texture.

Developed at the US Agricultural Research Service, Z-Trim is a natural weight loss product that can help individuals to achieve a healthier lifestyle through cooking.

Rick Harris, vice president of sales and marketing at FiberGel's international distributor DKSH, commented: "This is our first production order from a UK food manufacturer. Z-Trim continues to show its versatility across all food categories."

Z-Trim can be used in a wide range of food products, including dairy, dressings, ice-creams, sauces, baked items, processed meats and cookies.

<a href="http://www.ztrim.com/about.html">Further information</a>

## **Women targeted with low-alcohol wine**

**Date:** Mon, 22 May 06

### **Story Text**

Sainsbury's is introducing a new, reduced-alcohol white wine for women who find conventional brands too strong.

According to the Times, the supermarket claims that many women find today's wines too strong and has spotted a market for weaker varieties.

The retailer will launch Early Harvest, an Australian semillon sauvignon blanc which, with an alcohol content of just 9.5 per cent, is weaker than the usual 12.5 - 14.5 per cent varieties on offer.

The wine uses grapes which are picked earlier in the season to cut sugar levels but, according to Sainsbury's, will be indistinguishable from more potent wines in terms of taste and quality.

Julian Dyer, Australian wine buyer for Sainsbury's, believes that there will be a big demand for the new brand.

"Our research shows that customers are put off low-alcohol wines because of their perceived poor taste," Mr Dyer told the Times.

"Early Harvest addresses that concern, and will appeal to today's more health-conscious consumer who does not want to compromise on taste."

The new wine, which also has 19 per cent fewer calories than regular wines, is due to go on sale in June.

[Further information](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-2191257,00.html)

## **Cains returns to its roots with new stout**

**Date:** Mon, 22 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new full-flavoured creamy stout is being launched by Liverpool brewer Cains, adding to its increasing reputation both in the north-west and beyond.

The 4.1 ABV stout will have to compete with the likes of Guinness and Murphy's but the brewers are confident that it will be a success.

Joint managing director Sudarghara Dusanj commented: "We are offering something different, a full flavour brewed by traditional methods.

"It may look like the other stouts on the market but it is elegant and smooth – a black velvet texture with a beautiful creamy, rich, chocolate taste."

Mr Dusanj added that, while other stouts are either quite bitter or sweet, the new stout will be "somewhere between".

The man behind the original brewery, Robert Cain, built up the brand's reputation in the 19th century with his "superior ales and stouts", so the company feels that it is returning to its roots in launching this new version.

The stout will initially be available in Cains' pubs before being distributed more widely.

[Further information](http://icliverpool.icnetwork.co.uk/business/news/tm_objectid=17103890%26method=full%26siteid=50061%26page=1%26headline=cains%2d%2dstout%2dchallenge-name_page.html)

## **Innovative company seeks to make impression on food**

**Date:** Mon, 22 May 06

### **Story Text**

US setup Gourmet Impressions has announced that its unique food embossing and impressing tools should be on the market before long.

The company has designed a handheld kitchen tool, for both consumer and commercial use, which can be used to impress images onto a variety of products.

The roller, stamper and secret wand prototypes can be used on more than 40 food products, such as pastries, bread loafs and chocolates, as well as other materials such as candle wax and bars of soap, providing a simple and novel way to communicate messages.

The product has removable letters which can be snapped on and off to create personalised messages, logos and images, and is both heat-resistant and dishwasher-safe.

The company's chief executive officer, Rich Errera, comments: "Since unveiling the initial prototypes to the public just to gauge interest, we have been inundated with requests to order these revolutionary, patented products from more than 57 countries around the world.

"This translates to a huge, pre-manufactured demand of epic proportion."

Gourmet Impressions is currently in the process of selecting an appropriate manufacturer to convert its prototypes into marketable products.

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

## **Luxury orange shortbread unveiled**

**Date:** Mon, 22 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scottish shortbread manufacturer Walkers has unveiled a new product in its luxury Royal range.

Orange Royals consist of crisp pure butter shortbread baked with Mediterranean oranges and surrounded by a thick layer of smooth milk chocolate.

The premium quality shortbreads make an ideal after-dinner treat or an indulgent luxury gift.

Jim Walker comments: "Luxury is at the heart of the Royal range and these new products fit well with our other brands at the top end of the market.

"They are ideal for an indulgent treat or gift."

Made from the finest ingredients, the new product is free from artificial colouring and flavouring and is suitable for vegetarians and consumers requiring Kosher foodstuffs.

It is aimed at the gourmet and premium gift market, along with other established products in the Walkers portfolio.

In addition, Walkers has just announced the relaunch of its Fruit & Lemon Biscuits which, due to customer demand, are now back on the shelves.

<a

<http://www.walkersshortbread.com/index.asp?tm=2&nid=7&newsdate=052005>>Further information</a>

## **FAO meets to discuss obesity**

**Date:** Mon, 22 May 06

### **Story Text**

In some ways, Europeans are eating worse now than 45 years ago, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) has said.

FAO economist Josef Schmidhuber told a two-day international meeting between the World Health Organisation and the FAO that the EU diet has become "too rich in fats, particularly saturated fats, sugar and cholesterol".

Mr Schmidhuber commented that even the diet in Mediterranean countries, where people generally eat more healthily than elsewhere in Europe, has been showing clear signs of deterioration.

However, Mr Schmidhuber did acknowledge that EU citizens were eating more fruit and vegetables than previously.

Eric Kueneman, chief of the FAO service responsible for crop production, said that increased consumption of fruit and vegetables would play a key part in the fight against obesity.

"FAO is actively promoting fruit and vegetable production for both health and for income-generation for producers," Mr Kueneman said.

He described the ongoing initiative as "an exciting avenue for expanded cooperation in the health, education and agriculture sectors".

<a

<http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2006/1000297/index.html>>Further information</a>

## **Meat-free mince launched for national vegetarian week**

**Date:** Fri, 19 May 06

### **Story Text**

Plant-based food company Redwood has produced yet another of its feted products, this time a vegetarian mince.

The product is reported to be the first of its kind in the UK and is packed with a number of vitamins that are frequently lacking in meat-free diets.

The new Vegideli Cheatin' Vegetarian Mince is fortified with Omega 3 and 6 and vitamins B6 and B12, as well as containing a chicory-derived pre-biotic called inulin which promotes healthy intestinal bacteria.

With National Vegetarian Week just around the corner, the new product will be ideal for creating

meat-free versions of dishes such as spaghetti bolognese, lasagne and tacos.

Keith Stott, director of Redwood, commented: "Research shows that vegan and vegetarian diets can often be lacking in vitamins and fatty oils essential to health.

"By fortifying the mince, we hope to be instrumental in reducing health problems sometimes associated with nutritional deficiencies."

Redwood produces over 40 natural plant-based foods and has received industry accolades for its ethical food production policy.

[Further information](http://responsesource.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=QmLEL)

## **Online guide will aid food processors**

**Date:** Fri, 19 May 06

### **Story Text**

Gas-based technology supplier Air Products has constructed an online tool to help food processors select the best gas in which to package their products.

Modified atmosphere packaging (Map) is employed to help extend the shelf life of food products by replacing air with a mixture of inert gases inside the packaging.

According to the Dairy Reporter website, the gas mix usually contains carbon dioxide or nitrogen, reducing the oxygen content of the packaging and thereby extending the shelf life of perishable foods such as meat and vegetables.

The new Freshline guide to Map contains information on 17 different food types, including fresh fruit and vegetables, raw and cooked meats and fish, pasta and dairy products.

Although a hard copy of the company's guide was published last year, the new online gas selector will make life easier for processors, providing them with a simple, accessible guide to gases, films, machinery, legislation and relevant technology.

[Further information](http://www.airproducts.co.uk/food/MAP/default.asp?code%3D3129%3Bdate%3D2006-05-19%3Bseqno%3D898936)

## **School junk food standards announced**

**Date:** Fri, 19 May 06

### **Story Text**

The government is publishing new nutritional standards aimed at limiting the amount of junk food available in Britain's schools.

Under the new rules, due to be announced by education secretary Alan Johnson today, low quality meat, fizzy drinks and chocolate will be among food items banned from school lunch menus.

From September, school caterers will be required to offer pupils high quality meat, poultry or oily fish on a regular basis.

Children will also be served a minimum of two portions of fruit and vegetables with every school meal, while deep fried foods such as chips will only be on offer twice a week.

The new nutritional standards follow a high-profile campaign by TV chef Jamie Oliver to improve the quality of school meals.

His Channel 4 reality show, Jamie's School Dinners, revealed the poor quality of food on offer in south-east London's schools and disclosed how little some education authorities were spending on pupils' meals.

The government subsequently pledged to provide an additional £280 million to improve the quality of school dinners.

Commenting on the government's new nutritional guidelines, a spokesman for the Department for Education and Skills said the standards would "undo decades of neglect in school meals provision".

"They are the result of over a year's work and have been widely consulted with professional associations, dieticians, health charities, and food and drink organizations," added the spokesman.

[Further information](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/4995268.stm)

## **Californian vintner inspects English soils**

**Date:** Fri, 19 May 06

### **Story Text**

Just as English wines have been enjoying some welcome media attention, Californian wine tycoon Randall Grahm is reported to have been investigating the possibility of investing in some land in southern England for his latest wine-making venture.

According to the Decanter, the Bonny Doon proprietor recently took a helicopter ride to inspect the Hampshire landscape "to scout out vineland".

Mr Grahm has apparently been looking for land on which to plant more of his own vines. Currently, although Bonny Doon produces around 30 labels, only ten per cent of them are produced from the mogul's own grapes.

One of the primary incentives behind using more of his own vines is reported to be the frustration that Mr Grahm has been experiencing over growers' reluctance to plant certain Italian and French grape varieties which he is particularly keen to use.

Nicholas Quille, fellow wine-maker and Mr Grahm's second-in-command, told the Decanter that, although nothing concrete has been decided, the purchase of lands in England still "remains a possibility".

Hampshire's position in the south of the country makes it one of the warmer counties and, with

the ongoing effects of global warming, there has been speculation that it will soon be possible to make quality red wine there.

At present, England is best known for its sparkling wine varieties as its chalky soils and climate are very similar to those found in Champagne.

[Further information](http://www.decanter.com/news/84919.html)

## **More trans-free fat solutions launched**

**Date:** Fri, 19 May 06

### **Story Text**

The range of solutions for trans-free fats has been extended by Danisco, who have added two more application opportunities to their portfolio.

The new solutions are part of the Grindsted Crystallizer Emulsifier Blends range and are for use in puff pastry, and cake and cream margarine.

The blends will be useful for those producers of bakery and filling fats who want to meet consumer pressure to use trans-free alternatives instead of trans-rich fats, which have been scientifically proven to have a negative impact on blood cholesterol.

Manufacturers have had difficulties with trans-free alternatives thus far, as they have a slower crystallisation rate and thereby result in reduced capacity and increased costs.

Apart from improving the crystallisation and performance of trans-free fats, the new Danisco blends also optimise production capacity and tend to enhance the overall quality of the product.

Dorte Petersen, industry marketing manager, said that Danisco intends to continue increasing the applications covered by the range in order to help manufacturers solve their issues with trans fatty acids.

"We have ensured that puff pastry and cake and cream margarines made with our latest blends continue to provide a superior performance in the final applications," Mr Petersen commented.

[Further information](http://www.danisco.com/cms/connect/corporate/media+relations/news/archive/2006/may/businessupdate_79_en.htm)

## **Super low-fat ice cream unveiled**

**Date:** Fri, 19 May 06

### **Story Text**

Danisco has developed a new low-fat ice cream that contains less than one per cent fat.

The company has developed a new ingredient blend, based on its Cremodan IcePro technology, which prevents unwanted ice crystals from forming in the ice cream.

This makes it possible to achieve the same creamy textural quality as is normally achieved by

using fat in traditional ice creams.

Jens Holstborg, director of global product management at Danisco, comments: "With Cremodan LF IcePro, consumers can enjoy ice cream with hardly any fat but with the same smooth texture, and ice cream manufacturers can actually benefit from cost savings by applying the new ingredient blend.

"In addition, the quality of the ice cream is long-lasting, as the blend prevents the formation of unwanted ice crystals," he adds.

The technology has already been launched in the US and should provide super low-fat ice cream for the European market next summer.

Although low-fat varieties currently take only a 1.5 per cent share of the ice cream market, Danisco estimates that their ability to produce quality low-fat ice cream will in time allow them to steal up to 25 per cent of the total market.

<a href="http://www.danisco.com/cms/connect/corporate/media+relations/news/frontpage/pressrelease\_358\_en.htm">Further information</a>

## **Tomato paste provides added health benefits**

**Date:** Thu, 18 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new product has been launched which could help to increase the amount of lycopene found in tomato-based pastes and liquids.

Ingredient company LycoRed believes that its new Lyc-O-Mato paste could help to reduce the sugar content of standard tomato paste, without affecting its taste.

Lyc-O-Mato Red contains around three times as much lycopene as regular tomato paste and could provide producers with added marketing impetus as consumers become increasingly concerned with the health benefits of foods.

In addition, lycopene is reported to play a key role in protecting against the development of prostate cancer.

Dr Zohar Nir from LyroRed commented: "Since secondary tomato processors understand that promoting the health benefits of lycopene is a natural way to boost sales, we set to work to develop a paste version of our high lycopene Lyc-O-Mato Powder."

"They are looking for a healthy ingredient that they could easily implement into their formulations and Lyc-O-Mato Red is designed to answer their specific needs," he added.

<a href="http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker\_article.asp?fSite=AR283&nw=hd&size=ld&sno=1&main\_page=1&id=479">Further information</a>

## **Macphie unveils new shortbread mix**

**Date:** Thu, 18 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scottish food ingredients manufacturer Macphie has released a new shortbread mix, designed to make life easier for home cooks.

According to the Scottish Food and Drink website, you simply add softened butter, mix and bake.

The resulting shortbread has a home-baked appearance, creamy flavour and satisfying crunch and is free from hydrogenated fats, additives and artificial flavourings.

Ian Wolfenden, commercial director of bakery solutions, described the new Macphie Shortbread Mix as "an indulgent treat that is reminiscent of the past".

"Simplicity and tradition are driving the 'comfort' trend and many people are seeking comfort from traditional favourites with a twist," Mr Wolfenden told Scottish Food and Drink.

"Macphie Shortbread Mix can be prepared in under five minutes and it is easy and convenient to use. It is extremely versatile. It can be cut or moulded into a variety of shapes including fingers and petticoat tails."

Mr Wolfenden also suggested that bakers could create "trendy" flavours such as ginger, lemon and lime or rosemary and honey by adding their own ingredients.

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

## **Baked beans soon even more convenient**

**Date:** Thu, 18 May 06

### **Story Text**

Trials of a ready-made version of beans on toast will be held in New Zealand this year, prior to an intended unveiling in Britain in 2007.

Designed by food giant Heinz, the new frozen product involves beans parcelled between two slices of bread which can be placed straight into the toaster and prepared in just 60 seconds.

The innovative idea brings the idea of easy, student-style meals to another level and is part of the company's drive to provide the public with new ways to eat beans.

Heinz also hopes to place its brand in the forefront of consumers' minds in order to maintain its dominant position in an increasingly competitive category.

Bill Johnson, chief executive of Heinz, commented: "If people take the time to cook beans and put it on toast, why shouldn't we cut the process for them and give them beans on toast."

The company holds a 60 per cent share of the British market, which sees 1.5 million cans of baked beans sold every day.

<a

href="http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/05/18/nbeans18.xml&sSheet=/news/2006/05/18/ixuknews.html">Further information</a>

## **Food cravings stirred by pleasure sensation**

**Date:** Thu, 18 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new study has provided some answers to the puzzling question regarding some people's ability to resist tempting foods more than others.

Reporting on their findings in the Journal of Neuroscience, the team of UK scientists discovered that people have variations in a brain mechanism that causes a pleasure sensation in response to certain stimuli.

For this reason, some people feel an overwhelming urge to eat a particular food that they have seen advertised on television, whereas others are relatively unaffected by the visual stimulus.

The researchers presented volunteers with pictures of foods such as chocolate cake and rotten meat and monitored their brain activity.

The results revealed noticeable differences in "reward sensitivity" between the volunteers, indicating that some felt a greater level of pleasure sensation than others.

In their report, the scientists said: "Our findings demonstrate that there is considerable personality-linked variability in the neural response to food cues in healthy participants and provide important insight into the neurobiological factors underlying vulnerability to certain eating problems."

<a

href="http://www.jneurosci.org/cgi/content/abstract/26/19/5160">Further information</a>

## **Test identifies fake organic foods**

**Date:** Thu, 18 May 06

### **Story Text**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has launched an innovative new test to see whether food which is labelled as organic is actually organic.

Developed by the government's Central Science Laboratory, the tests check chicken or pork for the presence of a number of antibodies, indicating whether the animal had been reared organically or using non-organic methods.

Antibiotics are only permitted for use within organic pork and chicken once a year. Conventionally reared pigs and chicken may show the use of antibiotics more often.

"The tests will also indicate when antibiotics have been used more systematically - and illegally - on the animals as a growth promoting agent," the FSA said.

Mislabelling fraud will continue to be spotted by local authority officials, however, using a paper trial technique to discover where food was sourced from and whether the label used is authentic.

The FSA recently provided funding for a local council to pursue legal action over mislabelling.

Richmond Borough Council was given cash by the FSA to take two meat traders to court, who had been found to be selling non-organic meat products as organic.

[Further information](http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2006/may/organicstests)

## **Countdown to Coca-Cola Zero in July**

**Date:** Wed, 17 May 06

### **Story Text**

Coca-Cola Enterprises has announced that the launch of its new Coke brand will be the biggest since Diet Coke was unveiled 22 years ago.

Coca-Cola Zero, a no sugar variety of the Coke beverage, is designed to taste like original Coke and will target male drinkers.

Due to appear on shelves in July, the company is spending £8 million in the space of a month to ensure that the beverage is found in 20,000 on-trade outlets within the first six weeks of its presence.

Andy Slee, the company's trading director for the licensed sector, commented: "We are really excited about launching Coca-Cola Zero into the licensed channel and believe it will offer a real opportunity for publicans to re-invigorate sales of carbonated soft drinks.

"About 70 per cent of consumers in the licensed trade are men so Coca-Cola Zero will be an essential product within the channel."

The new addition to the portfolio will not be available in draught format due to the flat sales of postmix recently and will therefore be available only in 330ml bottles.

[Further information](http://www.thepublican.com/story.asp?sectioncode=7&storycode=51714&c=3)

## **New 9 bars are packed with healthy pumpkin seeds**

**Date:** Wed, 17 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new snack bar made from pumpkin seeds is the latest in a succession of healthy snacks to hit the market.

Wholebake's Pumpkin 9 bar provides iron, zinc, calcium and magnesium, four of the most important minerals needed for a healthy and active lifestyle.

Pumpkin seeds and the oil they contain have been used as natural medicines for years because of the long list of health-promoting substances contained within them.

The seeds are also an excellent source of protein, fibre, copper, manganese, potassium and phosphorus as well as linolenic acid, which is said to help prevent hardening of the arteries.

The amino acids arginine and glutamic acid are also present, along with selenium, folate and niacin.

With such a lengthy list of healthy components, it is no surprise that recent medical studies have highlighted the benefits of pumpkin seeds and it is thought that they could help to reduce the risk of some diseases.

Traditionally, they have been used to treat urinary tract infections, depression and learning difficulties and the new snack bar can help to lower cholesterol and maintain a healthy heart when used in conjunction with a healthy, balanced diet.

The bars come in regular, nutty and flax varieties and contain no hydrogenated fats or artificial flavourings or colourings. They are also wheat and gluten free.

The individual 50g bars are priced at 69p and are available in Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Holland & Barrett stores.

[Further information](http://responsesource.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=QmLiQ)

## **Soldiers benefit from beverage warmer**

**Date:** Wed, 17 May 06

### **Story Text**

Soldiers are now able to enjoy a hot cup of coffee while engaging in mobile operations, thanks to an innovation from the US Defence Department's Combat Feeding Directorate (CFD).

The creation is a re-sealable high density polyethylene bag, known as a Hot Beverage Bag (HBB), which provides a safe and easy method to heat water.

The technology uses surplus flameless ration heaters, usually used to heat up meals, to warm water which can then be used to make hot drinks or for washing.

Stephen Moody, team leader for the Individual Combat Ration Team, described the HBB as a plastic zippered bag with markings for different water levels and instructions for heating beverages.

"The feedback to date has been overwhelmingly positive. This is a very simple, dependable and inexpensive addition to the ration that is an enormous benefit to the warfighter," Mr Moody said.

"Not only does it give the soldier the opportunity to enjoy a hot beverage, it also helps to keep them hydrated by encouraging additional fluid intake," he added.

[Further information](http://www.natick.army.mil/about/pao/2006/06-18.htm)

## **Nanotech research shows promise for food industry**

**Date:** Wed, 17 May 06

### **Story Text**

A research initiative by collaborators in Spain, France and Italy has developed nanobiosensors which could have a potential use in the food industry.

The Spot-nosed project, coordinated by Josep Samitier, has developed a technology which mimics the way human and animal noses respond to different odours.

According to a report in Medical News Today, tiny bioelectronic sensors are used to replicate the human olfactory system, although the system is in fact capable of detecting odorants at concentrations that are imperceptible to humans.

Mr Samitier commented that the bioelectronic sensors represent a "major leap forward" in smell technology, the potential uses of which are "endless".

"Our tests showed that the nanobiosensors will react to a few molecules of odorant with a very high degree of accuracy," Mr Samitier told Medical News Today.

"Some of the results of the trials surpassed even our expectations," he added.

The technology could lead to medical applications, such as diagnosing bacterial infections or cancer, as well as systems for use in the food industry to detect rotten food.

[Further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=43490)

## **Mini temperature monitor is ideal for small firms**

**Date:** Wed, 17 May 06

### **Story Text**

Silvertree Engineering, producers of the Icespy temperature and humidity recording systems, has launched a new kit for smaller companies.

The Mini System 5 is ideal for small companies such as independent food shops, caterers, restaurants and any other firm required to comply with food hygiene standards.

This simple-to-install entry level kit offers a wireless, automatic measurement data recording system at a competitive price and comes with five 'Scout' wireless loggers, a data bridge and the necessary PC software.

The system is tamperproof, freezer proof and waterproof. It is also free from wires, cables and connectors and can be moved between locations with ease.

The 'Scouts' have internal temperature sensors which make a measurement every 60 seconds and transfer the data to the bridge every two minutes via a radio transmitter.

The bridge then delivers the information to the PC, which will provide real time and historic data access.

Upper and lower alarm limits can be set and alerts can be sent to selected people via email or SMS text message.

[Further information](http://www.icespy.com/default.asp)

## **EU food labelling laws welcomed**

**Date:** Wed, 17 May 06

### **Story Text**

Food products displaying new health claims on labels will need to be checked before they enter the retail market, under new laws passed by the European parliament yesterday.

The new legislation comes as the parliament attempts to stamp out misleading labelling on food products.

A standardised definition of what constitutes a certain claim, such as being low-fat, will need to be met by food producers before they will be allowed by law to display this on packaging.

If a certain product states a positive attribute of one of its ingredients, for example it being low in salt, a company will also be required by law to state any negative aspects, such as it being high in sugar, on the label.

"Food labels have a huge influence over consumers' choices and it is only reasonable to expect that the claims on them are not false or misleading," commented Markos Kyprianou, the EU health and consumer protection commissioner.

"The new laws will ensure that consumers will be able to rely on the truth and accuracy of information on food labels."

He added that the new legislation, which will come into effect at the end of the year, will create a "level playing field" for food manufacturers that wish to use claims pertaining to health and nutrition on their products' labels.

[Further information](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/625&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en)

[Further information](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/625&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en)

## **New firm produces Brazilian flavours**

**Date:** Wed, 17 May 06

### **Story Text**

A former chef who came to the UK from Brazil is hoping to capture the imagination of the Yorkshire public after setting up a new company that sells a range of Brazilian snack foods and flavours.

Brazilian Flavours, founded by Isobel Gordon, is looking to benefit from the growth in gluten-free foods sold in Britain and has already released an authentic ready-to-bake cheese bread pao de queijo snack.

The Bradford-based company is currently developing a range of pao de queijo products, which include savoury biscuits, garlic and herbs, reports the Yorkshire Post.

These products will be sold in farm shops across Yorkshire, such as Weeton's in Harrogate.

However, Brazilian Flavours aims to sell its products in the rest of the UK and abroad. It is negotiating with national food service firms and has received enquiries from France and Russia.

Ms Gordon commented: "The gluten-free market could be big for us; we have also had people talking about fillings and creating canapes with our pao de queijos.

"It's wonderful to see customers looking at the product and seeing how they could use it. It's great that it stimulates their imagination."

<a

href="http://www.yorkshiretoday.co.uk/ViewArticle2.aspx?SectionID=1299&ArticleID=1504888">Further information</a>

## **Roots from GM cassava could ease starvation**

**Date:** Tue, 16 May 06

### **Story Text**

The cassava plant, which is relied upon by millions of people for food, could provide a solution for alleviating hunger in countries with starving populations.

Scientists in the US have succeeded in genetically modifying the plants to produce over-sized roots.

Since it is these starch-filled roots which provide a vital source of food, the research could have a huge impact on the attempt to overcome the problem of hunger in developing countries.

The team, led by Richard Sayre from Ohio State University, inserted a bacterial gene for starch production into the plant's DNA, promoting root growth by up to 2.6 times more than in a normal cassava plant.

In addition, the plants produced more leaves, which are also eaten in Africa.

Over 600 million people rely on the cassava plant for food in countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

<a

href="http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-7652.2006.00195.x">Further information</a>

## **Screw cap converts water into flavoured drinks**

**Date:** Tue, 16 May 06

### **Story Text**

A US company has patented a technology which allows consumers to screw a cap onto a bottle of ordinary drinking water and turn it into a variety of beverages.

Flavor Tops caps, developed by Innovation Fund, can be used with any bottle of water, turning it

into a soft drink, tea or even alcohol.

The product, which will be available in early 2007, instantly converts the water into a wide range of beverages, releasing either powders or liquids at the point where the consumer screws on the cap.

Donald Spector, chairman of Innovation Fund, believes that Flavor Tops will enable many new and exotic flavours to become readily available, while opening up the market to companies that have found it difficult to get shelf space in convenience stores and supermarkets.

"Every convenience store carries cold water," says Mr Spector. "Now, with that single product, our non-refrigerated caps can offer the consumer a world of choices."

In addition, the new product could have a place in the armed forces, where limited spaces such as ships or supply areas could just carry bottled water, while still giving troops a choice of hundreds of drinks.

[Further information](http://pdfserver.emediawire.com/pdfdownload/383689/pr.pdf)

## Healthy growth in salad market

**Date:** Tue, 16 May 06

### Story Text

The market for prepared salads in the UK is showing healthy growth, according to data from AC Nielson.

Even though some sub-categories have been declining, the category as a whole has been buoyed by excellent progress in the salad bowl division.

According to a report on freshinfo.com, 490,000 new customers were persuaded to try out salad bowls within the space of 12 months, increasing sales by 64 per cent.

Florette continued to outperform the rest of the category, with sales of family-bowls increasing by 77 per cent.

Other areas have not performed so well, with sales of bagged salads dropping by 0.2 per cent and crunchy prepared salads declining by 7.7 per cent.

Elaine Smith, marketing director of Florette, told freshinfo.com that there had been a lack of real innovation in the category.

"Retailers have extended fixture space, but our research has shown us that consumers who are looking for convenience and inspiration were getting confused when shopping the fixture."

[Further information](http://www.freshinfo.com/index.php?ei=j&fiemt=10022006051648096110&s=n&ss=nd&sid=38915)

## **West Country products benefit from brand recognition**

**Date:** Tue, 16 May 06

### **Story Text**

Regional food group Taste of the West is helping local food producers to sell their goods by launching a range of branded food products sourced from the West Country.

The new range, which includes dozens of food and drink products, can be found on the shelves of Budgens stores in the region following a deal with the retailer.

According to Farmers Weekly, the producers should benefit from the use of the brand name, making the products more recognisable.

Lesley Tout, who owns the stores, told Farmers Weekly: "Local sourcing is becoming increasingly important and customers expect to find locally produced food in their community store.

"Sourcing the products through Taste of the West makes it much easier for us," he added.

The move should help to meet customer demand for local products, while helping the producers' businesses to take off.

<a

href="http://www.fwi.co.uk/Articles/2006/05/16/94529/Brand+names+to+promote+West+Country+flavours.html">Further information</a>

## **Supermarket tactics could backfire, says NBA**

**Date:** Tue, 16 May 06

### **Story Text**

An organisation representing Britain's beef industry has accused supermarkets of trying to pay less for beef in spite of the rising costs its producers are facing.

The National Beef Association (NBA) has accused the big retail chains of conspiring to keep cattle prices down, with market averages for beef farmers down in spite of the EU having allowed them to export again as of May 3rd.

NBA chief executive Robert Forster warned that such a tactic could "backfire" if British supermarkets do not realise that they could now lose their supply of beef to their European counterparts if they refuse to pay a fair price for it.

He explained: "Processors, some of whom already face severe cash flow problems, were desperate to create a price plateau because it was the only way they could break the chain of constantly paying more for cattle than they are recovering from customers whose retrospective payments constantly trail price increases when the market is on the rise.

"However even slaughterers caught in a supermarket armlock will not be able to hold down prices for long."

Mr Forster said that the big chains must therefore show they are willing to accept cattle prices

have now risen permanently and that they are enthusiastic to construct new supply chain relationships in light of this.

Otherwise, he warned, they will be locked in a struggle with their processors that could well see their suppliers look abroad instead for clientele.

<a href="http://www.nationalbeefassociation.co.uk/NBA\_New/HTMLDocs/press%272006/pric e%2715%2705%2706.htm">Further information</a>

## **Regulation needed for food supplements**

**Date:** Tue, 16 May 06

### **Story Text**

A leading food safety expert has warned that a lack of regulation means that dietary supplements could actually be doing consumers more harm than good.

Hildegard Przyrembel from Berlin's Federal Institute for Risk Assessment claimed there are considerable limitations in existing legislation on food supplements and called for it to be made impossible to purchase such products without prior advice.

She told a conference at London's Royal Society of Medicine that the problem is that it is the consumer who currently chooses which supplement they take and how much, without any distinction being made between healthy and unhealthy use, Life Style Extra reports.

Ms Przyrembel commented: "Dietary supplements must not be allowed to have an adverse effect on health. It must be guaranteed that these products are safe.

"At the moment there is no such guarantee because dietary supplements are freely available to whoever chooses to take them, without prescription and without medical or dietetic advice."

She added that another major problem with existing legislation on supplements is that it does not take into account the small but important percentage of people who have special conditions and therefore react differently to certain incremental substances.

Ms Przyrembel concluded that supplements could certainly have a part to play in improving people's diets, but only if legislation ensures that they are properly monitored and that exactly what they contain is written clearly on their packaging.

<a href="http://www.lse.co.uk/ShowStory.asp?story=IF1525157A&news\_headline=food\_supple ments\_should\_be\_regulated">Further information</a>

## **Cake processing system improves quality and cuts costs**

**Date:** Mon, 15 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new processing system for cakes promises to improve quality, increase efficiency and reduce labour costs for food producers.

Turbo Systems' new twin line indexing system is designed to fill and decorate many different kinds of baked goods, including puddings, celebration cakes and desserts.

The manufacturer promises any depositing, filling or decorating requirements can be met with the system, using specialist nozzles and decorating heads.

Originally designed with one patisserie supplier in mind, the line can be redesigned for other manufacturers requiring different size requirements or capabilities.

"I believe this type of production line is relatively unique to Turbo Systems," said sales manager Clive Butcher.

"It has proven to be very successful for our dessert patisserie customer - reducing manual labour costs and improving product quality."

He added: "We can adapt the system to provide bespoke solutions and allow all bakery and patisserie manufacturers to benefit from this type of automation."

In the system set up with Turbo Systems' main patisserie customer, one side carries fresh cream and finger doughnuts, while the other produces fresh cream chocolate eclairs.

[Further information](http://www.processingtalk.com/news/tub/tub114.html)

## **Automation could provide greater profitability**

**Date:** Mon, 15 May 06

### **Story Text**

A major survey has revealed that the UK food manufacturing industry is failing to use automation and robotics handling to its full potential.

The Appetite for Automation study, which was sponsored by RTS Flexible Systems, found that companies are missing out on potential cost reductions and production efficiencies.

The survey was designed to explore the UK food industry's comparatively small investment in automation compared to its counterparts in other industries, despite being the nation's largest manufacturing sector.

It concluded that companies could widen their horizons by justifying spend on automation and considering its broader impact on profitability and suggested that manufacturers would benefit from greater knowledge of the potential applications and commercial benefits of automation.

David Bradford, managing director of RTS Flexible Systems, said that the onus is on suppliers to work with the industry to raise awareness of "the potential and versatility of automation".

"Rather than calculating on straight labour replacement, a well-planned and specified automation project is likely to demonstrate other benefits, for example increased throughput, reduced waste or improved yield on raw materials," Mr Bradford explained.

"Suppliers like ourselves can have a positive impact in helping retailers to access the technology and potential benefits.

"For those with the foresight and perhaps a little entrepreneurial spirit " automation affords some immediate opportunities to win commercial and competitive advantage," Mr Bradford concluded.

[Further information](http://www.rtsflexible.com/default.asp?id=1228&news=431)

## **Long-life milk to be unveiled**

**Date:** Mon, 15 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scottish dairy company Robert Wiseman Dairies is launching a new long-life milk, designed to appeal to consumers with busy lifestyles.

According to Scotland on Sunday, the company uses new filtration technology to produce the extended shelf life (ESL) milk, which will be called Puriti.

The milk has a 30-day shelf life, although the publication reports that it is expected to carry a 21-day sell-by date.

The brand has already been trialled in Tesco for a year, where it was sold as the supermarket's own-label ESL milk under the name Pure.

The trial was deemed to be a success, with the brand accounting for 60 per cent of ESL sales, and Puriti is now expected to go on sale in the early summer in a number of retailers.

Robert Wiseman Dairies has invested £8 million in the new brand and is hoping to make substantial progress in an area of the market which is currently worth just four per cent of all milk sold.

[Further information](http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com/business.cfm?id=718122006)

## **Norway gets money for seafood research**

**Date:** Mon, 15 May 06

### **Story Text**

More money is to be allocated to seafood research in Norway, following a forthcoming budget revision.

According to Fishupdate.com, the Norwegian government has said that it proposes to revise the 2006 Fiscal Budget, giving an additional £350,000 to the National Institute of Nutrition and Seafood Research (NIFES).

The extra funding will be used to provide new analysing equipment as the Norwegian fisheries minister reportedly said that, by strengthening the analysis capacity of NIFES, the institute would be in a better position to deliver necessary support and special advice to the Norwegian Food Safety Authority.

Norway is currently the second largest exporter of seafood in the world, according to the board chairman of the Norwegian Seafood Export council (NSEC).

Speaking at a press conference in Brussels last week, Rolf Domstein announced that Norwegian seafood exports had reached an all time high, valued at almost EUR 1.5 billion between January and April 2006.

<a href="http://www.fishupdate.com/news/fullstory.php/aid/4501/Strong\_growth\_in\_the\_Norwegian\_economy\_means\_more\_money\_for\_seafood\_research\_.html">Further information</a>

## **Organic food permeates industry worldwide**

**Date:** Mon, 15 May 06

### **Story Text**

The world's leading supermarket giant Wal-Mart enters the organic food industry with a promise to change the way Americans buy food.

The supermarket is the globe's biggest retailer and any change in buying policy will have a huge impact throughout the agricultural and food production industries.

The move will encourage the major food producers such as Pepsi, Kraft and Kellogg to expand into organic production.

Kellogg and Kraft have already begun to work on developing organic versions of their products. The move by these massive multi-national companies has caused some to welcome the increase in people who will be able to afford organic food.

Organic products are usually sold at a premium due to the improved productivity of the pesticides used by most farmers.

The entry into the market by the big food producers will drive down the cost of organic food production and therefore make it more accessible but some campaigners fear that the multi-nationals may also bring down standards.

Director of US Organic Consumers Association told The Guardian: "When Wal-Mart places a gigantic order, the wholesalers start to lobby for lower standards, and out-source to places overseas where the standards are lower or the labour practices are horrible."

Wal-Mart recently moved into the UK supermarket industry when they acquired Asda.

<a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1773941,00.html">Further information</a>

## **Wine-flavoured chocolate to be unveiled**

**Date:** Fri, 12 May 06

### **Story Text**

Yorkshire is to be used as a European testing ground for a new Australian product – the world's first vintage wine-flavoured chocolate bars.

According to the Yorkshire Evening Post, the bars have been extremely successful in Australia, where they are sold in off-licences, delicatessens, fine food stores and florists.

Made in Queensland by Cocoa Farm, the chocolate bars are available in Shiraz, Merlot and Pinot Noir flavours.

Each 100 gm block of chocolate is said to contain a natural antioxidant from Australian grapes which offers the same health benefits as a standard glass of red wine.

The company's director, Barry Kitchen, told the Yorkshire Evening Post: "We know that the British are passionate about chocolate but want to launch this extremely sophisticated product in a controlled way taking a particular geographic area at a time."

Mr Kitchen also revealed that, while London had been deemed too big for the initial launch, places like Leeds had made fantastic commercial progress in "catering for people who work hard and like to enjoy the good things in life".

<a href="http://thisisleeds.co.uk/ViewArticle2.aspx?SectionID=39&ArticleID=1500002">Further information</a>

## **Llamas provide caffeine test**

**Date:** Fri, 12 May 06

### **Story Text**

Chemists have developed a new method of determining the presence of caffeine in hot and cold drinks.

According to a report in Nature, a team of scientists in the US have discovered that a molecule taken from llamas can be used to detect the compound.

The team injected llamas with caffeine, causing them to produce antibodies against the drug. They then extracted the antibodies and tested their ability to detect caffeine in a range of drinks.

Unlike antibodies from most animals, those taken from llamas and camels are able to withstand temperatures of up to 90 degrees Celsius, making them ideal for use in hot drinks.

The team, led by Jack Ladenson of the Washington University School of Medicine in Missouri, now intend to develop a dipstick which, when placed into a drink, changes colour if it comes into contact with caffeine.

Previous tests for the chemical have not been consumer-friendly, requiring equipment found only in laboratories, but a new test would enable drinkers who are trying to avoid the drug to be certain that their drink is caffeine-free.

"The goal is to make it user-friendly," team member Dan Crimmins told Nature.

"It won't be a sophisticated device; it would be something like a home pregnancy test," he

revealed.

[Further information](http://www.nature.com/news/2006/060508/full/060508-13.html)

## **Label Rouge Norwegian salmon available from July**

**Date:** Fri, 12 May 06

### **Story Text**

Marine Harvest, supplier of farmed fish products, has announced that it will begin supplying Label Rouge salmon from Norway.

The move was announced at the European Seafood Exposition and will make the company the first to supply the range, which will be available in France from July.

The salmon has a controlled fat content and is farmed with respect for animal welfare. In addition, the salmon are identified and traced per batch from egg to consumer.

Laurent de Baynast, sales director of Marine Harvest Europe, revealed that the Marine Harvest Label Rouge salmon will be sold fresh, either as whole gutted fish or as fillets, portions or steaks, and will be in modified atmosphere packaging.

"Our Label Rouge Norwegian salmon will be recognisable by special gill tags on whole fish and by labels on the packaging," said Mr de Baynast.

"With the introduction of Label Rouge Norwegian salmon next to Label Rouge salmon from Scotland we will offer customers and prospects a new choice and make Label Rouge salmon available and accessible to a much larger audience, thus increasing the total market size," he added.

[Further information](http://www.marineharvest.com/news-2006/marine-harvest-announces-first-label-rouge-salmon-from-norway.html)

## **Improvement needed in allergen control**

**Date:** Fri, 12 May 06

### **Story Text**

Poor allergen control is to blame for the majority of food recalls across the globe, according to research from Reading Scientific Services Ltd (RSSL).

In a review of some 200 recalls from around the world, the UK consultancy found that 40 per cent occurred as a result of the mislabelling of allergens.

Over half of these were in the United States, but RSSL was quick to stress that European food manufacturers should also be careful, since food recalls can be very expensive and can damage a company's reputation.

"It's by no means certain that Europe's relatively low recalls for undeclared allergens is due to companies getting their labelling right," said Simon Flanagan, RSSL's allergen's expert. "It may be

that the mistakes are not being spotted."

Incorrect cooking and storage information on labels was also identified as a problem when it comes to food recalls, as were "foreign bodies", the most common cause of recalls in the UK.

Gil Palmer, a member of RSSL's food training team, stressed the importance of putting in place adequate procedures to ensure effective allergen control.

"Whilst this should be a statement of the obvious, it's clear that some companies have not addressed these basic requirements, and therefore food safety and quality is being compromised, leading to expensive and wasteful recalls," she said.

RSSL says that tough new allergen labelling regulations, which were introduced in November 2004 as a result of an EU Directive, are partly to blame for the mislabelling problems.

The new rules list 12 major food allergens that must be declared on a food label if they are present in any packaged food.

[Further information](http://www.just-food.com/article.aspx?id=94837)

## **ID theft undermines pork industry**

**Date:** Fri, 12 May 06

### **Story Text**

Identity theft is threatening the recovery of the British pig industry, according to the National Pig Association (NPA).

The warning comes as increasing quantities of pig meat imports are being brought into the UK, putting the British premium under even more pressure.

Figures from the British Pig Executive (BPEX) show that over 70 per cent of pork products that came into the country last year were produced under conditions which would be illegal in the UK.

As a result, retailers are trying to pass off imported meat as British by faking the labelling to make foreign pork products sound British, or displaying Union Jack flags on shelves containing imported pig meats.

The NPA says that, by doing this, they are committing ID theft and undermining the British pork industry.

Despite years of campaigning by the NPA, this kind of ID theft is still occurring and the association is urging the industry to crack down on it.

The European Commission is currently reviewing labelling laws and is considering introducing country-of-origin labelling and other regulations to dissuade ID thieves.

The NPA is calling on the British pig industry to make its voice heard to the Commission before the consultation deadline on June 16th.

[Further information](http://www.npa-uk.net/)

## **Money for food safety training**

**Date:** Fri, 12 May 06

### **Story Text**

As part of a wider programme to help regulators and businesses meet the newly introduced EU hygiene regulations, the Food Standards Agency is to provide extra funding for training purposes.

Last year 22 London authorities were given Â£414,000 in training grants, allowing them to provide business workshops and one-to-one coaching sessions to some 2,000 catering firms in the capital.

A similar project was launched in the north-west of England, where 17 local authorities, together with the Northwest Food Alliance, were awarded Â£344,500 in funding.

This year all local authorities across England will be able to apply for funding and priority will be given to those who did not receive a grant last time.

The agency has also created a food safety management pack which gives details of how business and regulators can meet the new requirements, which make all food operators responsible for food safety.

The EU legislation, which came into effect on January 1st this year, brings together the many complex hygiene requirements into one simple set of regulations.

[Further information](http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2006/may/sfbbgrants)

## **Fisheries receive financial boost**

**Date:** Fri, 12 May 06

### **Story Text**

Defra (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) has put aside Â£400,000 of its budget to fund science projects that promote the fishery industry and fishery research.

The department has announced that it will begin accepting bids for projects and each bid will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Projects should conform to Defra and the Common Fisheries Policy's objectives for sustainable fisheries and priority will be given to short term projects.

Projects can cost between Â£5,000 and Â£80,000 and top priority will be given to those projects that support the work of the Regional Advisory Councils.

Lindsay Harris, head of Defra's Sea Fisheries Conservation Division, said: "This money will help provide additional information to improve fisheries management and enable fishermen to get involved.

"We are working towards ensuring sustainable fish stocks for a sustainable fishing industry."

The initiative also has the backing of the Marine Fisheries Agency (MFA). Nigel Gooding, chief executive of the MFA, said: "The MFA and Defra work very closely with fishermen to improve fisheries management and enforcement."

"It is part of our commitment to maintain and protect valuable fish stocks."

The initiative is part of the government's ongoing aim to provide a greater understanding of what constitutes good fishery management.

[Further information](http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2006/060511b.htm)

## **Poultry sustainability in doubt**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

### **Story Text**

The National Farmers Union (NFU) has raised concerns that the current British poultry sector is not sustainable because of spiralling prices and pressure on suppliers.

A study conducted by the NFU reveals that the current climate of downward price pressure and rising costs means that many farmers will be forced out of the industry over the coming years.

Peter Kendall, NFU president, said that the British chicken industry had enjoyed strong development and is now worth Â£3 billion at retail.

However, he added: "As the product price is squeezed and input costs soar, the farmer is left with little over the cost of production.

"This means the industry cannot modernise and invest and Iâ€™m sorry to say it may mean farmers going out of business with an obvious impact for long term supply."

The union is calling on consumers to increase pressure on retailers to supply British farm-assured Red Tractor chicken at a fair and sustainable price that allows farmers to recuperate their costs, especially as the threat of a widespread Avian Influenza outbreak continues.

[Further information](http://www.nfu.org.uk/x6754.xml)

## **Microleaves promoted in UK**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

### **Story Text**

Humber VHB, producer of fresh herbs and salad cress, has teamed up with Westland Nurseries to distribute microleaf products.

Westland has invested Â£3.2 million developing a range of new varieties of microleaf plants, which Humber VHB has agreed to market and distribute, according to freshinfo.com.

Microleaves are reported to be superior in taste to fully-matured leaves, making them an ideal addition to a range of dishes.

Humber VHB's account manager, Peter Prior, told the food website that the company is very excited about the opportunity offered by the joint venture.

"We believe that the taste profile of these products will be of great interest to leading chefs and discerning consumers – initial feedback has been extremely positive and we have seen the huge success that microleaves have enjoyed in markets such as the USA and Japan," he commented.

Mr Prior added that Humber VHB is confident that its logistics, marketing and technical expertise will ensure the success of the project and help Westland to develop the fresh herb category in the UK.

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

## **Organic port to be unveiled at wine fair**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

### **Story Text**

Mentzendorff is using the London International Wine Trade Fair to launch its new, fully-certified organic port, Fonseca Terra Prima Organic Reserve.

Approved by the Port Wine Institute, the new drink is made using grapes grown in an organic vineyard in Portugal's Pinhao Valley.

The new entry into the port category was pioneered by the Fladgate Partnership, owners of Fonseca, one of the most prestigious port houses.

The port is produced by winemaker David Guimaraens' team and is one of the first organic ports to be produced in the region, drawing on the knowledge gained from over a decade spent managing an organically-farmed plot.

"The experience obtained from 13 years of organic viticulture at Panascal has led to dramatic changes in the way we manage all our vineyards and the technical advice we pass on to our grape suppliers," Mr Guimaraens said in a statement on the company's website.

"Not only have we returned to the use of sulphur and copper sulphate as natural substances but we have introduced new viticultural practices to our vineyards such as grass covers which originates from our experiences in the organic vineyard," he added.

Fonseca Terra Prima will retail at around £11 a bottle and is said to have a rich, plump flavour with layers of berry, plum and cherry.

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

## **Contemporary cognac for 'image-conscious urbanites'**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

### **Story Text**

Francis Abecassis Vineyards is launching the cognac category's first contemporary brand, ABK6,

which has been styled to attract a new generation of cognac lovers.

The brand has already met with significant success in the first 12 months of its existence, being rolled out in France, Belgium, Holland, Russia, Estonia, Denmark and the US.

The brand will include VS Premium, VSOP Super Premium and XO Grand Cru, all of which are Single Estate cognacs and are aged nearly four times than is required by law.

The company oversees the entire process from viticulture right through to the blending and bottling processes.

Francis Abecassis commented that the phenomenal growth of the brown spirits category is a great sign for the future of the new cognac.

"While the cognac market has been dominated by brands that play on heritage and tradition, ABK6 is sure to ignite the category with its Single Estate authenticity, quality and modern look," he said.

The managing director of ABK6 Cognac said that the drink is aimed at "image-conscious urbanites" who are seeking "a more robust and flavourful spirit" and added that the bottles themselves are "modern and provocative, reflecting the changing face of cognac and its drinker".

[Further information](http://www.abecassis-cognac.com/)

## **New hybrid bananas needed**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

### **Story Text**

A global breeding effort may be required to save the banana, the world's most popular fruit.

According to a report in New Scientist, the wild gene pool of the fruit has collapsed, with the primary variety being at serious risk from disease.

The vast majority of bananas traded internationally are of the Cavendish variety but the crop is at constant risk from the black sigatoka fungus.

New hybrids that are resistant to the fungus need to be bred but this is a difficult and time-consuming process.

In addition, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has voiced concerns that species are rapidly going extinct, reducing the options for producing resistant hybrids.

NeBambi Lutaladio, a plant scientist with the FAO, told New Scientist that many of the genes which could save the Cavendish variety might already have been lost.

Bananas represent the fourth most important food crop in the world and, according to the Fair Trade Foundation, sales are worth over \$10 billion every year.

They are a rich source of carbohydrates, phosphorus, calcium, potassium and vitamin C and are easily digested, as they contain no fat.

[Further information](http://www.newscientist.com/channel/life/mg19025513.700-a-future-with-no-bananas.html)

## **Refrigeration system will slash energy use**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

### **Story Text**

Camfridge, a spin out company of Cambridge University, has announced that a pre-production prototype of its new refrigeration technology should be ready this summer.

According to the Silicon Fen Business Report, the company has been developing the technology using magnetic refrigeration.

This relatively new technology will enable compressors, condenser coils and gas refrigerants in existing refrigerators to be replaced with low cost alternatives, using magnetic fields and special metal alloys to cool.

Managing director, Neil Wilson, told the Silicon Fen Business Report that the company aims to deliver a superior product at a competitive price to meet the growing demand for high-efficiency refrigeration.

"This offering should be timely, able to provide the new 'green products' now being demanded in an environmentally conscious age," he said.

According to the company, refrigeration consumes 15 per cent of total electricity generated in the UK and almost 50 per cent in the US, where an estimated \$200 billion is spent on refrigeration application and services each year.

The new technology should provide a reduction in energy consumption of up to 40 per cent, as well as eliminating gas refrigerant leakage and aiding recycling.

[Further information](http://www.siliconfenbusiness.com/index.php?articleid=133)

## **Cherries found to have anti-inflammatory properties**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

### **Story Text**

Researchers have discovered that cherries may help to counter the inflammation of arthritis, heart disease and cancer.

A study found that the blood levels of three inflammation-linked compounds dropped significantly after eating cherries.

Volunteers were required to consume a daily quantity of 45 fresh Bing cherries, one of the most famous sweet varieties, for 28 consecutive days.

At the end of the period, blood samples revealed that levels of nitric oxide, C reactive protein and Rantes, a marker for white blood cell activation, had dropped by 18 to 25 per cent, indicating

a decrease in inflammation.

Four weeks later, the volunteers' levels of Rantes was still declining, although their levels of nitric oxide and C reactive proteins had begun to increase again.

The researchers discovered that levels of several other inflammation-linked compounds were not affected by eating cherries, indicating that the natural chemicals in the fruit suppress production of some, but not all of the compounds.

The research, led by the US Agricultural Research Service chemist Darshan Kelley, appears in the April 2006 Journal of Nutrition and could help to provide a natural source of relief for arthritis sufferers.

[Further information](http://jn.nutrition.org/cgi/content/abstract/136/4/981)

#### **Summary Text**

Researchers have discovered that cherries may help to counter the inflammation of arthritis, heart disease and cancer.

## **Carlsberg Elephant returns to UK**

**Date:** Thu, 11 May 06

#### **Story Text**

Danish brewer Carlsberg is to reintroduce the Carlsberg Elephant brand back into the UK after a seven year absence.

According to mad.co.uk, the premium lager brand will be available from selected retailers and bars in 275 ml bottles this month, following increased production capacity.

Darran Britton, Carlsberg UK's marketing director, told mad.co.uk that the decision to re-launch the brand, which was first brewed in 1959, was made as a result of popular consumer demand.

"Our customer helpline has received numerous calls and emails from people who have fallen in love with Elephant beer when they have tried it overseas and want to know where they can buy it in the UK," he revealed.

The brand takes its name from the elephant symbol of the Carlsberg brewery and from the Elephant Gate, which was built at the Copenhagen-based brewery of Carl Jacobsen, the son of Carlsberg's founder, in 1901.

[Further information](http://www.mad.co.uk/Main/News/Articlex/43a5ea5f094b4fae994351fdee4ad35b/Carlsberg-to-relaunch-Elephant-beer.html)

[Further information](http://www.mad.co.uk/Main/News/Articlex/43a5ea5f094b4fae994351fdee4ad35b/Carlsberg-to-relaunch-Elephant-beer.html)

## **Hops provide unusual modern cuisine**

**Date:** Wed, 10 May 06

#### **Story Text**

Retailers across the north-west region are aiming to cash in on the short but popular hop shoot season, which runs through May.

A plant widely associated with medieval diets may be an unlikely source of modern cuisine, but regional supermarket Booths claimed to have been inundated with demand last year.

This, according to the company, is partly because the vegetable adds genuine nutritional value to a meal, with recent studies showing that hop shoots contain compounds including lupulin - a strong anti-cancer compound and mild sedative.

In addition, the vegetable abounds in hopein - a phyto-oestrogen that replicates the effects of the female hormone oestrogen and has helped many women avoid the experience of hormone replacement therapy.

However, Chris Treble, fresh produce buyer for Booths, added that one big motive among purchasers was support for a plant that grows widely throughout the north-west and offers new business opportunities for local agriculture.

"Customers look forward to trying new products - especially if they're fresh, British and good for you," he commented.

[Further information](http://www.booths-supermarkets.co.uk/assets/news/20060502_PR_Hopshoots.html)

## **Cumbrian puddings tackle new markets**

**Date:** Wed, 10 May 06

### **Story Text**

A Cumbria food business is hoping for raised profits after becoming one of the leading participants in a government-backed trade and exports scheme for new or inexperienced businesses.

Cartmel Sticky Toffee Puddings signed up to the UK Trade and Investment Passport to Export programme last summer and is now hoping to take its products worldwide, trading on the name of a popular British dessert.

The company, which employs 35 staff to maintain a turnover of approximately 1.2 million, will be delivering its products to retailers in Belgium, France, Switzerland and Italy.

Bosses at the firm said the toughest challenge lay in devising a strategy for transporting fresh, refrigerated food overseas - the problem was surmounted via advice and support from Passport to Export.

Cartmel Sticky Toffee Puddings began as a family business in the Cartmel village shop, but has expanded rapidly in recent years, on the back of glowing verdicts from celebrity chefs Nigella Lawson and Antony Worrall Thompson.

In Britain, the company sells its goods to retailers including Harvey Nichols, Selfridges, Fortnum and Mason, Booths and Waitrose.

[Further information](http://www.stickytoffeepudding.co.uk/index.html)

## **Grapefruit find paves way for food research**

**Date:** Wed, 10 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scientists in the US say they have identified the way in which grapefruit juice impacts upon the efficacy of some medications.

The juice is known for its metabolic properties and as a result patients taking some drugs, in particular those for the treatment of blood pressure or cholesterol-related conditions, should avoid consuming it.

Researchers involved in the study, conducted by the University of North Carolina, have identified a component of the juice called furanocoumarin, which they say reacts with the human enzyme CYP3A.

Drugs which are inhibited by the intestinal enzyme can sometimes enter the blood stream faster if grapefruit juice is consumed as it impacts on the natural function of CYP3A.

Lead researcher Dr Paul Watkins said: "It should now be possible to market the furanocoumarin-free grapefruit juice to patients who would otherwise need to avoid grapefruit.

"In addition, it should be possible to screen new foods for the potential for drug interactions by determining whether they contain furanocoumarins."

[Further information](http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=1941228)

## **School kids get nutrition boost**

**Date:** Tue, 09 May 06

### **Story Text**

Yorkshire schoolchildren are being enlisted into a campaign aiming to boost nutritious diets and healthy living as the route to tackling obesity among the younger generation.

Pupils in Goole have been signed up to the Phunky Foods programme put together by health experts Purely Nutrition, in association with Northern Foods, to support teachers in their efforts towards dietary improvement.

Following the mission statement of "Nutrition Made Easy", the organisation aims to get the message of a healthier lifestyle across in the classroom via the creative arts as well as direct cooking experiences, with music, painting and drama all having a role to play.

Supported by the resources of books and DVDs, the programme will unfold over 39 weeks of the school year, with activities carefully tailored towards children ranging between four and eleven-years-old.

Teachers participating in the scheme will get the chance to gain a special qualification in nutrition.

It is estimated that obesity counts for 30,000 deaths in England each year and the government has recently pledged more resources for schools to attack the problem early, following a high-

profile healthy eating campaign by chef Jamie Oliver.

<a href="http://ichuddersfield.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/0100localnews/tm\_objectid=17019972&method=full&siteid=50060&headline=healthy-days-at-school-name\_page.html">Further information</a>

## **Research holds promise for allergy-free soybeans**

**Date:** Tue, 09 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scientists from the University of Illinois have revealed the successful isolation of two types of soybean which do not contain an allergenic component.

They are grown without utilising a primary protein which is thought to cause soy allergies, which could mean that allergy-safe products can now be manufactured without the use of genetic engineering.

Professor Theodore Hymowitz of the University of Illinois revealed: "We are releasing this information with no patents so that companies and breeders involved with soybeans can incorporate these two lines as quickly as possible."

"Soybeans are slowly but surely increasingly being used in the foods we eat, and with that we are noticing an increase in the number of children and adults that have allergies to soybeans," he said.

The search for a natural way of producing allergy-free crops has been prompted by consumer scepticism about genetically modified foodstuffs.

<a href="http://www.news.uiuc.edu/news/06/0504soybeans.html">Further information</a>

## **Milk producers turning organic**

**Date:** Tue, 09 May 06

### **Story Text**

There has been a significant rise in the number of organic milk producers, reflecting an overall growth in sales of organic dairy products.

According to the Western Mail, the number of organic dairy farms in Wales rose from 30 to 140 in the space of five years and sales also enjoyed a substantial increase.

Despite the fact that organic milk is still rarely seen in local shops, sales of other dairy products are thriving.

Forty per cent of Welsh organic dairy sales are made up of yoghurt, much of which comes from a new factory in Aberystwyth which was opened last year by Rachel's Organic, a pioneering organic producer.

In addition, sales of organic cheese are growing and, in 2001-2002, it accounted for 13 per cent

of total organic dairy sales.

Research has shown that 70 per cent of people would like to see organic or locally-produced food in schools and it is hoped that National Organic Dairy Week, which began yesterday, will help to promote the products and give the industry an additional boost.

<a href="http://icwales.icnetwork.co.uk/farming/farming/tm\_objectid=17050422&method=full&siteid=50082&headline=more-milk-producers-go-green-name\_page.html">Further information</a>

## **New Zealand supports EU fruit innovation**

**Date:** Tue, 09 May 06

### **Story Text**

New Zealand fruit science company HortResearch has announced that it is teaming up with Europe's Isafruit project to promote the consumption of fruit through a combination of consumer awareness and improving the quality of produce.

The company has agreed to partner the multi-million dollar project, which is supported by over 60 research partners from 14 members of the European Union, and will initially be involved in developing instrument tests to accurately assess fruit texture.

Jill Stanley, the company's European representative, explained: "Crispness, hardness and juiciness are all key aspects in the overall consumer experience of fruit.

"If we want to breed fruit with these characteristics then we must first be able to measure them.

"We'll be looking to tell breeders what they should be looking for at the molecular level, helping them to select the best plants for their breeding programmes."

The data and techniques will eventually help to bring tasty fruit to consumers around the world.

<a href="http://www.hortresearch.co.nz/index/news/483">Further information</a>

## **Microbe detection system launched**

**Date:** Tue, 09 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new system, designed to provide a rapid alternative to traditional microbiological tests, has been launched by Biotrace International.

The Cogent Microbial Luminescence System (MLSII) is for use in the assessment of ultra heat treated (UHT) and extended shelf life (ESL) products in the dairy industry.

The system provides high levels of precision, sensitivity, flexibility and reliability, making it ideally suited as a microbial detection system for end product screening in the dairy industry and other industries producing sterile products.

In addition, the Cogent MLSII provides a more rapid analysis than previous systems, requiring just a 27 minute assay time after the sample incubation, which means that you can release the product over 48 hours sooner than with traditional methods.

The system provides on-screen results as they are generated and, when used in conjunction with the company's reporting software, is capable of producing detailed reports and summaries to enable overall quality performance to be tracked over time.

[Further information](http://www.biotrace.co.uk/content.php?hID=1&nhID=21&nID=85)

## **Company develops lobster powder**

**Date:** Tue, 09 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new food powder, made from whole lobster, has been launched onto the world market.

Natural Seafoods, a Florida company, has launched the first ever lobster powder to be added to seafood cooking and gourmet dishes.

The powder is made from the PacificBlue, or Langostino, lobster, which lives 100 feet below the surface of the Pacific Ocean off the coast of El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The lobsters are fished for by Natural Seafoods' Salvadorean partner, which harvests the animals straight into a powerful turbine that converts them into powder.

Naturally red in colour, the powder can be added to soups, sauces and other gourmet seafood dishes as it tastes and smells like pure lobster.

The company has combined it with dishes such as lobster newburg, lobster fried rice, lobster curry powder and sushi rolls.

The product also provides health benefits, as it is high in amino acids and contains minerals such as zinc, calcium and chitin, which is suggested to help lower cholesterol.

[Further information](http://www.prweb.com/releases/2006/5/prweb382290.htm)

## **Scottish beers to be sold south of the border**

**Date:** Mon, 08 May 06

### **Story Text**

A major retailer has agreed a deal with Edinburgh-based Caledonian Brewing Company to stock three of its products in branches across the UK.

The move will see Deuchars IPA, Caledonian 80 Shilling and organic ale Golden Promise on shelves in the two new Edinburgh stores, due to open next month, as well as in stores south of the border.

Steve Wallace, buyer of beers and cider at Waitrose, told the Scotsman that the brewery has a strong heritage and affiliation with the people of Edinburgh and described the three beers as "a great addition to our range".

"As a result," he added, "not only will we be stocking the brands in our new Edinburgh stores when they open, but they will be available at a number of our branches nationwide."

Waitrose is renowned for its focus on natural ingredients and the decision will give English drinkers access to Golden Promise, which was the world's first organic beer.

[Further information](http://business.scotsman.com/retail.cfm?id=689972006)

## **Adieu to blue as Smarties get natural colours**

**Date:** Mon, 08 May 06

### **Story Text**

Children's confectionary favourite Smarties is to receive a new healthy makeover, eliminating all artificial colours.

The move is part of Nestle's drive to improve the nutritional content of its products following claims that artificial colours and flavouring make children hyperactive.

The colourants being removed from Smarties include Brilliant Blue, Quinoline Yellow, Sunset Yellow, Ponceau 4R and Carmoisine.

The chemicals are to be replaced with natural alternatives; however, Nestle will stop producing the blue variety as there is no natural alternative to the current blue chemical.

Blue Smarties were initially introduced in 1988 to celebrate the brand's 50th birthday but were so popular that it was decided that they should replace the light brown variety permanently.

Reports suggest that a white variety will replace the blue Smarties until a natural blue dye can be found.

The makeover, which will take place next month, will be followed by a £3 million marketing campaign in the summer.

[Further information](http://www.guardian.co.uk/food/Story/0,,1769797,00.html)

## **Packaging solution launched**

**Date:** Mon, 08 May 06

### **Story Text**

A leading food packaging company has revealed a new innovation to enhance its resealable wrapping products.

US-based firm Zip-Pak has announced the successful development of what it terms a Colour Reveal indicator.

Intended to maintain the freshness of foodstuffs packaged using the technology, the zip is transparent on one side and coloured on the other.

The company claims that as a result, when the bag is closed users can identify whether it is airtight by checking that the coloured strip shows through, Packaging & Converting Essentials reports.

It has been created specifically for the hygienic storage of small amounts of unconsumed food.

According to the company's director of international sales and marketing Robert E Hogan: "This value-added feature allows brand owners to provide the benefits of resealable technology while helping consumers keep multi-serving portions of food fresh."

[Further information](http://www.packagingessentials.com/news.asp?id=2006-05-08-09.52.49.000000)

## **British-produced meats in Tesco Finest relaunch**

**Date:** Mon, 08 May 06

### **Story Text**

Tesco's premium Finest brand will now include cuts of British pork and lamb for the first time in years.

According to Farmers Weekly, Tesco is relaunching its quality range of fresh meat in a bid to meet consumer demand for locally-sourced meats.

Steve Murrells, commercial director, told the magazine: "Customers tell us they are increasingly concerned with provenance and quality and we hope this range will rekindle their interest in buying top quality British meat.

"It has taken us some time to develop a range that we think meets the grade on consistent quality, but we are confident that with the focus on traditional butchery and maximum tenderness, we've got there," he added.

The move will spell good news for British meat producers who will earn a premium for supplying to the Finest brand.

The makeover will extend to beef in the summer and will include new packaging with simplified cooking instructions.

According to Tesco, their Finest and Organic ranges already make up ten per cent of their fresh meat sales and the relaunch should help to boost growth.

[Further information](http://www.fwi.co.uk/Articles/2006/05/05/94422/Tesco+relaunches+its+top+quality+meat+range.html)

## **Cholesterol-lowering cheese launched**

**Date:** Mon, 08 May 06

### **Story Text**

The largest independent dairy company in the UK, Fayrefield Foods, has launched a new brand of cheese in Asda stores, designed to help lower cholesterol levels.

Heartfelt+ cheese is a fully flavoured, 12 per cent fat cheese which contains Reducol, an ingredient known to lower cholesterol safely and naturally.

The Heartfelt+ range also includes a cholesterol-lowering milk drink which was launched in March in Tesco stores.

Chris Swire, commercial director at Fayrefield Foods, told just-food.com: "It is notoriously difficult to produce a cheese that has a good taste, while matching the requirements of a cholesterol lowering diet, so we are delighted with the development of heartfelt+."

As many as 50 per cent of Britons are thought to have high cholesterol. This can be a key factor in the onset of coronary heart disease, making cholesterol-lowering food products a key sector for food innovation.

Mr Swire added that the new product should help consumers to maintain the necessary dietary controls and still be able to enjoy cheese.

Heartfelt+ will be available in Asda stores from May 8th onward and will retail at Â£1.98 for a 200g pack.

[Further information](http://www.just-food.com/article.aspx?id=94778)

## **Seaweed wine 'like a fine sherry'**

**Date:** Mon, 08 May 06

### **Story Text**

Scientists in Germany have developed a new variety of organic wine, made from seaweed.

The wine, made from brown laminaria saccharina seaweed, has been created by oceanographers at the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Ocean Research and is matured in PVC barrels.

The wine, which is said to taste like a fine sherry, has taken eight years to develop and is said to be gaining in popularity among top German chefs.

Dr Inez Linke, head of coastal research and management, says: "Marine algae contains many minerals, salts, vitamins and proteins that makes this particular wine extremely healthy and boosts the immune system."

The brown seaweed is commonly found in beauty products such as algae-based skin creams and body scrubs and is said to provide relief from neurodermatitis, a condition similar to eczema.

The algae wine is retailing at around Â£15 for half a litre and is also available as a three-year-aged Reserve variety.

The scientists hope that the wine will eventually be sold throughout Europe and beyond.

<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,1993083,00.html>>Further information</a>

## **Fruit trees on the menu at takeaway outlet**

**Date:** Fri, 05 May 06

### **Story Text**

A Bury takeaway business has adopted an unusual strategy to broaden its range of food provision – by offering to plant free fruit trees in the gardens of regular customers.

The Manchester Evening News reports that Tashek Shorkar Abu, manager of Kyae's Pizza and Curry takeaway, has specialised in brightening up the streets of the town with cherry and pear trees growing up to 6ft tall.

Every month, he is aiming to increase his range of repertoire by purchasing new types of fruit tree with funds raised by donations from his customers.

Mr Abu told the Evening News that he picked up the hobby in his native Bangladesh, where "fruit trees provide an easy source of food and help the environment", especially in the parched conditions of the summer.

Public figures from celebrity chef Jamie Oliver to Conservative leader David Cameron have recently urged retailers to help the nation increase its fruit consumption, in an effort to counter the 30,000 deaths in England believed to be caused by obesity alone each year.

According to the Food Standards Agency, everyone should have five portions of fruit or vegetables every day as part of their diet.

[http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/212/212034\\_buy\\_a\\_curry\\_and\\_the\\_tree\\_comes\\_free.html](http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/212/212034_buy_a_curry_and_the_tree_comes_free.html)>Further information</a>

## **Agency chosen to launch Coca-Cola Zero**

**Date:** Fri, 05 May 06

### **Story Text**

The company that will spearhead the Coca-Cola Zero launch campaign has been announced, according to reports.

Advertising, marketing, media and PR industry magazine Brand Republic has revealed that the company has chosen Vallance Carruthers Coleman Priest (VCCP) to take charge of the multimillion pound campaign.

According to Marketing, the Brand Republic subsidiary, VCCP coped admirably with the Diet Coke Tort campaign, which was intended to give the Diet Coke brand a more unisex appeal.

The new beverage, which will be released this summer, will trade blows with Pepsi Max, the no added sugar carbonated cola drink already on the market.

Pepsi has decided on a marketing campaign to promote Pepsi Max to young males during this summer's World Cup with the hope of offsetting the impact of the Coke Zero product launch.

Coca-Cola's own World Cup promotional competition began at the end of last month, offering World Cup tickets as a prize.

<a

href="http://www.brandrepublic.co.uk/login/index.cfm?fuseaction=Login&resource=BR\_New s&articleType=news&article=557789">Further information</a>

## **Organic dairy launches new yoghurt diet**

**Date:** Fri, 05 May 06

### **Story Text**

A Welsh organic dairy firm has launched a new yoghurt diet, aimed at helping consumers to shed pounds before the summer months.

According to the Western Mail, Rachel's Organic Dairy in Aberystwyth is promoting dairy products, reputed to be high in fat, as a good way to lose weight and stay healthy while enjoying the tasty yoghurts.

In an initial trial, some people lost ten pounds in two weeks and a stone in less than a month.

The diet has been created by Monica Grenfell, a nutritionist and author of Five Days to a Flatter Stomach, and involves including three portions of dairy a day which, Ms Grenfell claims, helps to strengthen your bones and can reduce body fat.

Yoghurt in particular is recommended by the diet as it contains bacteria which help the body to deal with damaging toxins as well as having a high nutrient count.

Neil Burchell, managing director of Rachel's Organic, told the Western Mail: "We wanted to create a diet which allows people who want to lose weight to enjoy food and flavours so that they don't have to punish themselves.

"It's based on a lot of sound research and we hope it will teach people to appreciate the role of dairy products and of organic dairy," he added.

<a

href="http://icwales.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/health/tm\_objectid=17034134%26method=full%26siteid=50082%26headline=welsh%2dfirm%2dlaunches%2dyoghurt%2ddiet-name\_page.html">Further information</a>

## **Holsten Pils taps the market**

**Date:** Fri, 05 May 06

### **Story Text**

Carlsberg's Holsten Pils is to be launched in a new draught format in the UK to cater to those drinkers who prefer their beer on tap.

The draught version will continue to be five per cent ABV and will be available in 30 litre kegs this month.

Darran Britton, marketing director for Carlsberg UK, said that the company is aiming to plug a gap and meet demand from consumers by launching the new draught version.

He revealed that Holsten Pils is now the number three premium packaged lager brand in terms of actual bottles sold in the on trade.

"There is a real opportunity for current stockists of Holsten Pils to increase sales through Holsten Pils draught when you consider that rate of sale for a typical premium lager brand is five times higher than that of its counterpart," he added.

Holsten Pils was first imported in 1952, creating the premium packaged lager category in the UK, and is available in over half of all UK pubs.

[Further information](http://www.thepublican.com/cgi-bin/item.cgi?id=20649&d=32&h=24&f=23&dateformat=%25o%20%25B%20%25Y)

## **Irish seafood industry receives innovation boost**

**Date:** Fri, 05 May 06

### **Story Text**

A major conference is being organised to help boost innovation in the Irish seafood industry.

The Waves of Innovation conference will help the seafood industry to maximise its growth potential through innovation and will be based on recent research findings among international buyers of seafood.

One of the key findings of the research was the need for new product innovations, particularly in the value-added category.

In addition, another critical area for improvement was deemed to be presentation and packaging formats, particularly in the case of product line extensions.

Enterprise Ireland director Mike Feeney said that there is tremendous scope for innovation in the Irish seafood industry.

"The survey highlighted some interesting comparisons with alternative proteins, in particular beef and poultry and the level of innovation occurring in these categories as opposed to fish.

"Increasing the current level of innovation for new fish products will be an issue for future seafood development in Ireland," Mr Feeney concluded.

[Further information](http://www.bim.ie/templates/reports.asp?action=detail&node_id=377&item_id=900)

## **Leak detector now works on vacuum packs**

**Date:** Fri, 05 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new attachment for a leak detection system means that it can now be used to detect for leaks in vacuum packs, making it highly beneficial in the food industry.

Cheshire-based Witt Gas Techniques recently launched Pack-vac, a low cost leak detection system for use with individual packages, and has now announced a special attachment to test for leaks in vacuum packs.

The Pack-vac uses water and compressed air to test for leaks, eliminating the need to use trace gases, and can now be used to test vacuum packs in the food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic packaging industries.

The package is placed in a water chamber and inflated using compressed air. Any leaks are indicated by a stream of bubbles within just 30 seconds and the system is easy to use, maintain and clean.

Carl Long, general manager at Witt Gas, commented: "Because Pack-vac can now test vacuum packs, it has opened up a new market sector for Pack-vac and, because it is much simpler and easier to use than other systems for detecting leaks in vacuum packs, operators require very little training."

[Further information](http://www.manufacturingtalk.com/news/wit/wit136.html)

## **Nanotech safety checks required**

**Date:** Thu, 04 May 06

### **Story Text**

The Royal Society has called upon the nanotechnology industry in the UK to provide more information about the process by which products are safety-checked.

Coinciding with the publication of an inventory of nanotechnology consumer products in the UK by the US-based Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, the calls are the result over concerns about the effects of the technology.

In particular, questions have been asked about the potential impact of 'free' nanoparticles on the environment and human health.

The inventory highlights some 200 items that are produced using nanotechnologies, including some cooking oils and nutritional supplements.

Chair of the Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering report Professor Ann Dowling said: "In order that the public can have confidence in these products the industry should publish details of their testing procedures.

"Increased transparency would also help stimulate collaboration between industrial researchers and academic scientists to develop consistent and agreed methods of testing."

[Further information](http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/news.asp?id=4639)

## **Drinking straw prevents water-borne diseases**

**Date:** Thu, 04 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new drinking straw which filters bacteria from water as it is drunk could become part of a disease solution in developing countries.

The LifeStraw, from Denmark's Torben Vestergaard Frandsen, was named one of the best inventions of 2005 by Time magazine.

It is a complete water purification kit that uses a combination of mesh filters, iodine-impregnated beads and active carbon to remove particulate matter and bacteria from water.

The product of ten years work, the LifeStraw could provide an efficient, affordable water-purification system for the developing world, where water-borne diseases kill a child every few seconds.

According to the company, over one billion of the world's population have no access to safe drinking water and this innovative device could offer relief from diseases such as typhoid, cholera and dysentery.

One LifeStraw, costing around \$3.50, is sufficient to filter 700 litres of water, providing safe drinking water for one adult for up to a year.

[Further information](http://www.lifestraw.com/en/low/low.asp)

## **Food-borne diseases targeted by new centre**

**Date:** Thu, 04 May 06

### **Story Text**

A Dutch food safety company has announced the opening of the first facility for the industrial scale production of bacteriophages in the western world.

EBI Food Safety has established the Phage Technology Centre in the Netherlands to produce agents to fight food-borne diseases and the first batches of Listex P100, the company's new Listeria-fighting product, should be shipped in July.

The company is the first to have a commercial anti-bacterial food safety solution based on bacteriophage technology. Its Listex P100 product targets Listeria, a food-borne disease which poses a serious health threat in Europe and the US, killing a quarter of those infected.

The product contains bacteriophages, which are found in natural environments and destroy harmful bacteria without damaging humans, animals or plants.

The company's chief executive officer, Mark Offerhaus, described the opening of the centre as a "milestone in the history of phage technology".

"This will reinforce EBI Food Safety's position as product leader in the field of applied bacteriophage technology and marks a breakthrough in the fight against dangerous bacteria," he commented.

<a

href="http://www.ebifoodsafety.com/331/images/docs/EBI%20Food%20Safety%20\_Phage%20Tech%20Center\_Wageningen%20May%202006%20Press%20Release%20English.pdf">Further information</a>

## **Chemists unveil test to identify sham tequila**

**Date:** Thu, 04 May 06

### **Story Text**

An innovative new test will help to ensure the authenticity of tequila, an issue which has become increasingly pertinent with fraudulent versions on the rise.

The test, developed by Mexican and German scientists, should help to boost the quality assurance of the billion-dollar tequila market.

The chemical advancement detects the level of certain chemicals which should be present in higher volumes in authentic tequila.

At present, even though tequila is subject to strict production standards and labelling regulations, fraudulent samples are still occasionally reported.

High-quality tequila is made with 100 per cent Agave, while lower quality, mixed tequila often contains up to 49 per cent sugar which is added prior to fermentation.

However, in the event of the drink being exported and labelled outside the regulatory watch of the Mexican government, these low quality drinks are sometimes passed off as containing 100 per cent Agave.

Study leader, Dirk Lachenmeier, says that the advancements should help to protect the quality of the beverage.

The research team's chemical profiling tests could also be used to aid in quality control efforts among other spirits made from the Agave plant, including mezcal, sotol and bacanora.

<a href="http://www.webwire.com/ViewPressRel.asp?aId=13571">Further information</a>

## **New fungicide in the pipeline**

**Date:** Thu, 04 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new fungicide for use on soft fruit could be available later this year, helping growers to improve the yield, quality and shelf life of their produce.

According to freshinfo.com, agribusiness Syngenta has announced that the new fungicide, known

as A9219B in trials, is awaiting registration for use on protected and outdoor strawberries, vining peas and green beans.

The fungicide contains two new active ingredients, fludioxonil and cyprodinil, which provide long-lasting protection for the plants, targeting the disease on the leaves as well as from inside the plant itself.

It has proven to be effective in controlling Botrytis, Blackspot and Powdery Mildew, diseases which affect strawberries, as well as providing protection against a wide variety of fungal infections in vegetables.

Although the company recently suffered a five per cent fall in overall sales, its crop protection sales were up by one per cent.

[Further information](http://www.freshinfo.com/index.php?s=n&ss=nd&sid=38855)

## **Studies provide good news for fish industry**

**Date:** Thu, 04 May 06

### **Story Text**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has published two studies into the dioxin and metal trace content of fish and shellfish products.

In an attempt to establish whether UK consumers should alter their diets to include less fish-based items, the agency analysed 165 samples in a variety of processed and fresh forms.

One of the surveys was focused upon identifying the levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which can cause health problems if consumed over a long-term period.

The results showed that although some kinds of fish contained more dioxins or PCBs, none were of a level exceeding limits set by the European Union.

Research conducted for the second survey was aimed at establishing the presence of other metals and elements within fish food products, including mercury, arsenic, nickel and zinc.

The FSA found all the samples tested to fall within legal limits, with even those containing higher levels of one or more of the elements falling below the threshold for long-term consumption concern.

As a result of its research, the FSA has reaffirmed its recommendation that people in the UK eat at least two portions of fish weekly.

[Further information](http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2006/may/fishfsiss)

## **Britons develop taste for Mexican food**

**Date:** Wed, 03 May 06

### **Story Text**

Sales of spicy Mexican food are continuing to grow as new research reveals that the chilli-filled dishes are now more popular than ever in the UK.

Figures from TNS Research indicate that the flavoursome food is enjoying a surge of popularity and restaurant outings for Mexican cuisine are growing four times faster than for any other meal type.

Pubs seem to be latching onto the trend, with Mexican food enjoying a 42 per cent growth in the sector, while traditional meals such as pies, burgers and pizzas have declined.

Consumers are also becoming increasingly likely to prepare Mexican food in their own homes, with supermarket sales of tortillas and Mexican sauces growing by 17 per cent year-on-year.

James Bennett, head of marketing for Mexican food brand Discovery Foods, revealed that Mexican at home is the most likely meal to be eaten with friends – more than twice as popular as Indian, Chinese and Italian for group meals.

<a href="http://www.responsesource.com/releases/rel\_display.php?relid=25182&hilite=">Further information</a>

### **Industry breathes sigh of relief as beef exports resume**

**Date:** Wed, 03 May 06

#### **Story Text**

A decade-long ban preventing farmers from exporting British beef within the European Union (EU) officially ends today.

The ban, imposed in 1996 to prevent the spread of the degenerative brain disease Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), has been lifted by EU officials following a drop in the number of reported cases in the UK.

Over 160 people, mostly in Britain and Europe, have died from the human form of so-called "mad cow disease" - officially known as Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD).

EU food safety experts first agreed to end the ban on beef exports in March after concluding that Britain had met all criteria for lifting the restrictions.

The end of the ban means that the UK will now be able to export live cattle born after August 1st 1996, as well as beef produced from cattle slaughtered after June 15th 2005.

Restrictions will however remain in place for beef containing vertebral material and for beef sold on the bone.

The Netherlands, Greece and Italy are expected to provide the first major markets for British beef once exports resume, although some EU countries, including France, have yet to amend their legislation to allow for the resumption of imports.

Farmers have welcomed the opportunity to regain some of the business lost by Britain's beef industry, which exported some 274,000 tonnes of beef worth £520 million in 1995, the last year

of full exports before the imposition of the ban.

Chairman of the English Beef and Lamb Executive (EBLEX) John Cross said that winning trade back from existing suppliers would be hard work, but revealed that efforts were already underway to resume the promotion of British beef abroad.

"The whole of our beef industry can allow itself just one good sigh of relief and then be ready to join EBLEX in a monumental push to put our beef back where it belongs - on the plates of consumers around the world," said Mr Cross.

But animal rights campaigners, including the RSPCA and Compassion in World Farming, criticised the decision to resume live cattle exports, claiming that it will expose animals to unnecessary suffering.

[Further information](http://www.politics.co.uk/news/domestic-policy/farming/british-beef/ten-year-beef-ban-lifted-419146.htm)

## **'Ideal time' to invest in organic product development**

**Date:** Wed, 03 May 06

### **Story Text**

A group of milk producers in the north-west is launching a PR campaign to help promote its organic milk and milk products.

Some members of the North West Organic Milk Producers Group have been producing organic milk for five years but have been forced to sell it at the same price as conventional milk.

The group, which has an annual output of around 18 million litres, is now rethinking the marketing and promotion of its milk to help achieve a sustainable future for organic milk production in the region.

The project is being backed by Defra, the Soil Association and the North West Organic Centre at Myerscough College in Preston and is working closely with Dairy Farmers of Britain (DFB) which buys the group's milk.

"Now is the time to invest in new product development and consumer awareness of organic milk," a DFB spokesman told Farmers Weekly.

"The market for organic milk is increasing and we want to help maintain that growth and not see the downturn that happened a few years ago."

[Further information](http://www.fwi.co.uk/Articles/2006/05/02/94250/Project+aims+to+secure+future+for+organic+milk.html)

## **Innovation in kids' foods has declined**

**Date:** Wed, 03 May 06

### **Story Text**

The number of new food and drink products which have been targeted specifically at children has decreased over the last few years.

A new report from Research and Markets, entitled Innovation in Kids' Foods and Drinks: next generation products and key growth opportunities, looked at over 60,000 product launches to determine the main driving factors behind innovation in the sector.

The report has revealed that the number of launches in all categories of children's food and drink declined between 2001 and 2006, with the soft drink sector experiencing the biggest decrease.

According to the report, the soft drink sector's share of new kids' products launches fell by 54 per cent during the period.

Confectionery is now the largest category in the children's food and drink market in terms of new products, taking 29 per cent of total new kids' products in Europe and a massive 43 per cent in the US.

Key trends in kids' food are functional confectionary and novelty food and drinks, such as those produced by toy brands.

The report suggests that the overall decline in children's product launches is due to a combination of factors including childhood obesity and the earlier development of adult attitudes in today's children.

[Further information](http://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/c36388/)

## **Iced vodka coffee a 'genuine innovation'**

**Date:** Wed, 03 May 06

### **Story Text**

Halewood International, the UK-based producer of Red Square Vodka and Lambrini, has announced the launch of a new ready-to-drink beverage.

Cafe Kiss, a five per cent ABV iced coffee and vodka drink, is currently being trialled in Greater Manchester and is set to be rolled out throughout Tesco and Threshers stores nationwide in 2007.

Richard Clark, head of marketing at Halewood International, told the marketing portal mad.co.uk: "The response to Cafe Kiss from both the trade and consumers alike has been tremendous; they love the idea of it and see it as a genuine innovation in the drinks market."

Mr Clark added that the drink has a huge advantage as it has no obvious competitors, while the quality of the liquid and the concept make it highly desirable.

The brand will be available in 200 ml cans and will be supported by a £1.2 million advertising campaign which will target female consumers from 25 years of age upwards.

[Further information](http://www.mad.co.uk/Main/News/Articles/f1c9ecfeb1b641c3869414c337b3e291/Halewood-launches-Caf%C3%A9-Kiss.html)

## **Bottled water no longer a bore**

**Date:** Wed, 03 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new beverage claims to offer a tasty alternative for people who want to drink something other than plain water.

Vitsmart is a new bottled water drink that contains fruit juices, vitamins, plant extracts and natural flavours.

The water, which contains no added sugar, is available in four flavours – citrus fruits, blueberry, forest fruits and passion fruit and orange.

One 500ml bottle provides 50 per cent of the recommended daily intake of a variety of vitamins and the drinks, which are produced by Buckinghamshire-based company Vitaminsmart, contain vitamins A, C and E along with B vitamins Niacin, Pantothenic Acid and B6.

They also contain a range of natural extracts including guarana, rose hip, echinacea, ginkgo, green tea, ginseng, hibiscus and schizandra to help boost energy levels and promote fitness.

Vitsmart's managing director, Chris Pomeroy, reveals that the drinks have already been a big hit in the US and Japan and says that the vitamin enriched flavoured waters are tasty and provide added health benefits.

"Our drinks are for busy people who want to keep doing what they are doing, but put a bit of goodness back into their bodies.

"We like to think that we have helped water come of age," he adds.

Vitsmart is available in 500ml bottles priced at 99p in Tesco supermarkets.

<a

href="http://www.responsesource.com/releases/rel\_display.php?relid=25199&chilite=">Further information</a>

## **M&S ponders new name**

**Date:** Tue, 02 May 06

### **Story Text**

Marks & Spencer, the clothing and food retailer, is considering changing its name, according to reports.

Following the changing of the name on the front of its Edgware Road store in London to Your M&S, plans are believed to be afoot that would see all of the high street stores follow the Edgware Road store's lead.

Despite the fact that a spokesman referred to the Your M&S logo as "a one store trial", the 439 other Marks & Spencer stores may get the rebranding treatment if the new name proves successful and popular with customers.

The first Marks & Spencer store opened in 1890 and carried the traditional name, with the Your

M&S logo appearing on other Marks & Spencer products and goods, including advertising.

In 2000, Marks & Spencer dropped the St Michael clothing label after 72 years in an attempt to modernise the appearance of the store and its wares.

<a href="http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/05/01/nmns01.xml&sheet=/news/2006/05/01/ixnewstop.html">Further information</a>

## **Plastic products have inbuilt anti-bacterial properties**

**Date:** Tue, 02 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new range of anti-bacterial plastic products is being designed by a South Wales company, including additives that kill MRSA, E.Coli and salmonella.

The anti-microbial agents can be added to most plastics during the manufacturing process and the innovation could therefore have huge implications for the food industry.

SteriTouch, the company behind the products, has been developing the additives for over two years and thinks that the products could also have tremendous potential in the healthcare industry.

Nick Corlett, one of the company's directors, told the Western Mail: "This is not intended to replace good hygiene practices, but it hopefully represents a worthwhile and economical complementary measure."

Laboratory tests have shown that bacteria levels are reduced by 99.99 per cent within 24 hours of contact with the additive and the products appear to remain effective for upwards of nine years.

The company produces a range of anti-microbial products, including clipboards and keyboard covers which reduce the growth of potentially harmful bacteria.

<a href="http://www.steritouch.com">Further information</a>

## **New designer ingredient for salads**

**Date:** Tue, 02 May 06

### **Story Text**

A new, stripy tomato has been launched in Marks & Spencer stores to feed consumers' desire for designer foods.

The Tiger Tomato has green and red stripes and is the size of a cherry, with magenta-coloured flesh.

The new fruit is grown in Lancashire and the Isle of Wight and is reported to be slightly sweeter than standard varieties.

According to Marks & Spencer, sales of speciality tomatoes rose by 32 per cent during 2005 and Gerry Hayman, chairman of the British Tomato Growers Association, said that there is a continuing demand for novelty and variety tomatoes.

"The different shapes and sizes of speciality products make them popular as they are distinctive," he commented.

Marks & Spencer has been selling produce for over 40 years and now offers over 400 different varieties of fruits and vegetables.

Consumers who are opposed to genetically modified foods need not be concerned by the unusual looking tomato as the retailer guarantees that all of its food products are GM-free.

<a

href="http://icliverpool.icnetwork.co.uk/0100news/0100regionalnews/tm\_objectid=17019446&method=full&siteid=50061&headline=designers-put-a-tiger-on-the-supermarket-shelves--name\_page.html">Further information</a>

## **Tequila gets new fruity twist**

**Date:** Tue, 02 May 06

### **Story Text**

The world's premier producer of tequila has announced the launch of a new selection of flavoured tequila drinks.

Jose Cuervo International, the global marketing division for the Jose Cuervo brand, is launching orange, lime and tropical fruit flavoured varieties of the spirit.

The new tequila drinks are distilled and bottled in Mexico and contain premium silver-styled tequila and natural fruit flavours.

Carlos Arana, managing director of Jose Cuervo International, said: "Cuervo Flavoured Tequilas allow consumers to expand their tequila experiences and enjoy Cuervo in more versatile ways.

Mr Arana described the new drinks, which can be enjoyed as shots, on ice or mixed in cocktails, as "the perfect solution for those looking to add a new twist to their favourite drink".

Tequila, which is named after the town where its production started over 200 years ago, is distilled from the fermented juices of the blue agave plant.

Jose Cuervo, the largest producer of tequila, exports over 50 million litres of the spirit every year.

<a href="http://www.happyhours.com/pressRelease\_story.htm?&itemid=899">Further information</a>

## **Award-winning milk brand plans to diversify**

**Date:** Tue, 02 May 06

### **Story Text**

The producers of a Lancashire-based milk brand are preparing to diversify into other dairy products, according to a local newspaper.

According to the Lancashire Evening Telegraph, Bowland Fresh, a collaboration of farmers who produce milk for supermarkets, has decided to produce its own products, including cheese and

creme fraiche.

The operation, which is run by a firm called Connect Plus, is supplying regional retailer Booths with milk to be turned into cheese and has just won an industry award for its innovation in milk marketing from the Milk Development Council.

Commenting on their decision, the judges said: "The winner of the inaugural award earned this accolade for demonstrating the spirit and vision which will ensure the longevity of the smaller British dairy farmer."

William Slinger, director of Connect Plus, told the Lancashire Evening Telegraph: "All we have sold up to now has been milk but we are now supplying cheese.

"It allows us to make more milk and allows Booths to demonstrate their commitment to a lot of producers."

Mr Slinger added that the company is in the early stages of launching a range of creme fraiche and yoghurts.

<a href="http://www.thisislancashire.co.uk/news/localnews/display.var.746745.0.firm\_aims\_to\_milk\_success.php">Further information</a>

## **Pro-biotic drinks shape dairy industry**

**Date:** Tue, 02 May 06

### **Story Text**

The British craze for pro-biotic yoghurt drinks has "dramatically altered" the UK dairy industry, according to the latest figures.

Statistics from the Milk Development Council show that sales of the drinks tripled between 2003 and 2004, indicating a huge change in consumer taste.

The amount of yoghurt consumed by the average person has increased by 45 per cent within the space of a decade and four million more is spent on yoghurt advertising than on carbonated drinks.

Ken Boyns, head of Economics at the Milk Development Council, believes that the change in consumer taste has provided more opportunities for milk producers to sell their milk into non-commodity markets and says that times are good for those wishing to sell yoghurt drinks.

"There's a huge amount of investment and innovation in dairy products at the moment which may account for the change in buying habits," he comments.

In addition, there is a growing appetite for regional or speciality cheeses. According to the British Cheese Board, it takes ten litres of milk to make just one kilogram of cheddar.

"More of farmers' milk is going into cheese in a bid to meet increased demand, which has seen retail volumes increase by 15 per cent over the past ten years," Mr Boyns reveals.

<a href="http://www.mdc.org.uk/mdc-main/press-releases/dairystatistics2006.htm">Further

Prepared by Adfero on behalf of

information</a>

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