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Christmas food gets Oriental twist

Date: Fri, 24 Nov 06

Story Text

A Chinese grocer is developing its own unique take on the festive season by creating a variety of innovative festive foods, it has been announced.

While not what the country has come to expect from a December dish, Wing Yip, the UK's

leading Chinese grocer, is offering lighter alternatives such as lobster and king prawns.

With chairman Wing Yip describing Christmas as an ideal opportunity to cook "more extravagant or gourmet" dishes, his development chef was also confident that the new moves would prove to be successful.

"Szechuan pepper works well dry roasted in a hot pan and used sparingly to season the turkey before cooking and lychees offer an ideal alternative for toppings on flans or glazed tarts," advised Chef Lin, outlining some of the alternative Christmas dinners the grocer aims to offer.

Festive recipes and the ingredients needed to create them are available on the firm's website, found at www.wingyipstore.co.uk

[For further information click here](http://www.wingyipstore.co.uk)

'Underhand' techniques used in kids' junk food advertising

Date: Fri, 24 Nov 06

Story Text

Food companies are turning to 'underhand' methods in order to promote unhealthy products to children, a report from consumer watchdog Which? has claimed.

The report criticised companies for using techniques such as viral marketing, children's clubs and branding to promote foods that were high in fat, salt and sugar to kids.

Which? cited McDonalds as one user of the branding technique, after it gave away codes with Happy Meals allowing children to access special Funky Friends content, aimed at seven to 12-year-old girls, on a McDonalds branded website.

The watchdog accused food companies of inconsistency "between the responsible policies they claim to adhere to and the techniques they actually employ".

Masterfoods came under fire too, as, despite claiming not to advertise to children, the Skittles website ran a contest letting teams of boys and girls compete for Robbie Williams tickets, Which? claimed.

"Food marketers are treating children as blank canvases on which to paint their branding; embedding unhealthy food choices from a very young age and adding to the UK's rising child obesity problems," said Which? campaigns and communications director Nick Stace.

Media regulator Ofcom recently banned all junk food advertising in and around television programmes for children under the age of 16.

[Click here for more information](http://www.which.co.uk/reports_and_campaigns)

Waitrose launches authentic French fish readymeals

Date: Fri, 24 Nov 06

Story Text

Waitrose has launched a new line of frozen seafood dishes they describe as "delicious dishes de la mer".

The Just for Seafood Lovers line has been launched with three products and is created from traditional French recipes like the famous Coquille Saint Jacques made with scallops and mushrooms in a white wine sauce.

Fish tarts in French pastry are also part of the new Waitrose offering, where both scallop and prawn or salmon tarts are finished in bechamel sauce and shavings of cheese inside a traditionally French flaky pastry.

The company recommends the meals for both the busy weekday, since they take less than 30 minutes to bake, and the impromptu dinner party for the taste appealing to any gourmet.

Pricing is kept low on the new products, with the tarts at £2.49 each and the Coquilles St Jacques at £3.99.

The new succulent seafood dishes are available all across Waitrose's 183 supermarket branches in England, Scotland and Wales.

An average of 11 varieties of fruit and veg in the weekly shop

Date: Fri, 24 Nov 06

Story Text

The reports that say Britons' health is in crisis have had the desired effect on people's grocery baskets, it is reported.

Sainsbury's data from their quarterly British Food Index survey has confirmed that salads, vegetables, and fruit are "taking over" the shopping basket, where an average of 11 different varieties are being taken home from the grocer for the weekly meals.

Sainsbury's nutritionist, Beth Flower, said "Our study gives clear evidence that the British public are eating much better than has been presumed."

All groups, including those prone to struggling with healthy are buying 11 varieties each week, regardless of socio-economic status or education.

Even students - traditionally limited through their tendency to cook for one - are eating 9.6 varieties of fruit and vegetables each week.

"Fresh fruit, salad and veg command the biggest share of weekly shopping trolley," Ms Flower continued.

"Their popularity is not simply dictated by the weather and they account for five-fold more trolley space than convenience and ready meals."

Entrepreneurs create world's first single malt vodka

Date: Fri, 24 Nov 06

Story Text

Two entrepreneurs from Glasgow have created a new alcoholic beverage which they hope will be a worldwide success.

The drink is the world's first single malt Scottish vodka, created using a distillation process with Scottish malt barley that is usually used in the manufacture of whisky.

Created by Lawrence Craig and Ricky Christie, the new beverage, which has been named Valt, will be launched initially in the UK, America, Russia, Asia and Europe before being rolled out on an even wider scale.

"Valt is a completely new product for the drinks market and one which we are immensely excited about thanks to this new and complex distillation process," said Mr Craig, who is the new brand's marketing director.

"It's been an exciting year for us with the research, development and now the impending launch of the product and we look forward to Valt becoming one of the world's leading super-premium spirits," he told the Glasgow Evening Times.

Mr Craig believes that there is a "real niche in the global market" for the beverage and is confident that discerning drinkers will enjoy a "sophisticated, pure and natural drinking experience".

[Further information](http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/hi/news/5059632.html)

Innovative FreshCan concept opens door for functional beverages

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 06

Story Text

An innovative packaging manufacturer has succeeded in creating a revolutionary new drinks can which is perfect for the functional beverages sector.

The FreshCan, which was created by RPC Bramlage in collaboration with Ball Packaging Europe and Degussa FreshTech Beverages, keeps active ingredients separate from the liquid contents of the drink, thereby increasing shelf-life.

Many active ingredients only last for a short time while in aqueous solution and therefore lose their effectiveness quickly.

However the FreshCan enables the active ingredients to be added to the liquid only when the beverage is opened by storing the dietary supplements in a plastic capsule within the can.

The capsule, known as a wedge, floats in the can and the fall in pressure when the can is opened causes the wedge lid to spring open, releasing its contents into the liquid.

The concept is likely to have a range of applications, including sport and energy beverages and milk drinks.

[Further information](http://rpc.xture.com/xture/xt_view.aspx?TT=140672&SB=875115)

Venison sales up by 55% as consumers seek healthy meats

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 06

Story Text

Venison looks to be a popular alternative to turkey this Christmas, as the tasty meat has been literally flying off shelves.

Waitrose has revealed that sales of its fresh venison, all of which is sourced from within the UK, have risen by 55 per cent.

Consumers are increasingly looking for low-fat alternatives and have undoubtedly been attracted by venison's health credentials, flavour and high standards of rearing.

"Traditionally an autumn dish, these impressive figures suggest consumers will be seeking more adventurous alternatives to the traditional Christmas fare," said Andy Boulton, one of the supermarket's meat buyers.

"Customers are increasingly interested in scratch cooking but they still want food that can be prepared quickly," he revealed.

"Venison fits very well into this category as steaks can be on the table within 15 minutes."

Venison is very similar to lean beef in texture, but has a characteristic gamey flavour.

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

Unilever restructuring to focus on innovation

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 06

Story Text

Unilever has announced ambitious plans to restructure its food research departments across the continent, heralding a new focus on innovation.

The company is aiming to extend its reach so that innovations can now encompass global, regional and local developments, with specially-designated Centres of Excellence being set up across Europe.

Further to such changes, a series of country and factory-based groups will be on hand to ensure that localised, shop floor-based knowledge will be able to filter through the supply chain, a move that Unilever hopes will ensure consistent innovation.

Following a review of the company's scientific capabilities, Vindi Banga, president of Unilever's Foods Category said he was certain that improvements would take place.

"[The review showed] that by organising ourselves so that we could leverage our scale and play to our strengths we could improve our market competitiveness.

By getting the benefits of focus and synergies I am convinced that today's announcement will

make a significant difference to our innovation delivery."

The changes are due to begin next year, with a full roll out aimed for 2008.

For further information click here

Engineered cotton rich oil and protein source says study

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 06

Story Text

Researchers at the Texas A&M University have said that they have developed an edible form of cotton by 'silencing' the genes which make natural strains toxic.

Scientists originally bred a cotton-variant free of the toxin gossypol in the late 1960s, but the end plant was vulnerable to insects.

The new study has succeeded in just removing toxins from the seeds, leaving the plant able to fight off pests and allowing the oil and protein-rich seeds to be used.

"In terms of human nutrition, it has a lot of potential," said Dr Keerti Rathore of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station which collaborated on the study.

Cotton seed is about 22 per cent protein, comparable to soya. Researchers report that unprocessed the seeds taste much like chickpeas.

It is also a rich source of oil and is highly durable, meaning that it is suited to environments where other grains will not grow.

Click here for further information

New tea to star in county's celebrations

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 06

Story Text

Inhabitants of the historic county of Lancashire will be able to celebrate Lancashire Day on November 27th with a new regional tea.

Lancashire Tea, which is a member of the North West Food Alliance and North West Fantastic Foods, was set up this year by Paul Needham and Lynn Hitchen to give the county its own tea product.

Mr Needham said: "There are Lancastrians all over the world who remain very proud of their heritage. We set up Lancashire tea to give the people of the county " wherever they are in the world " their very own brand of tea.

"We are proud that this year true Lancastrians can complete their celebration and loyal toast with a cup of the county's very own brew."

The company said that it has created the finest blend for tea lovers everywhere, which has resulted in a smooth, subtle tea which infuses instantly in the cup and appeals to all tastes.

The tea is available in the UK's main supermarkets, including Morrison's, Asda, Spar and selected Sainsbury's stores.

Britain's biggest supermarket Tesco recently listed the product and will be selling it in 72 stores across the north-west.

[Click here for more information](http://www.lancashiretea.com/profile.htm)

Cell-nique launches nutritious fruit drinks

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 06

Story Text

US company Cell-nique has created a range of health drinks designed to help improve energy levels and general well-being.

Super Green Drinks were created by Dan Ratner when he wanted a simpler alternative to taking handfuls of vitamin supplements, website [foodingredientsfirst.com](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com) reports.

He decided to combine the vegetable supplements with drinks to create a tasty alternative to the pills.

Mr Ratner, who is founder and president of Cell-nique, told the website: "It took me a month to come up with a formula and a year to make it taste good without destroying the organic and medicinal properties."

The drinks come in a range of flavours, including Emerge Pomegranate, Embody Citrus Vanilla and Lau-Tzu with Kukicha Tea.

Ingredients in the drinks also include organic alfalfa and blue-green algae.

[Click here for further information](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=12721&fSite=AO545&next=2)

Danisco launches probiotic kefir shot

Date: Thu, 23 Nov 06

Story Text

Danisco has unveiled the latest addition to its Kefir range – a probiotic ethnic shot which claims to provide health-enhancing benefits.

The new product was launched at the Health Ingredients Europe (HIE) show, held in Germany from November 14th to 16th, and is said to have immune-modulating properties thanks to the inclusion of Howaru Kefir Bifido, a kefir blend which contains a probiotic strain.

Kefir is a fermented milk drink which has many reputed health benefits, including antibiotic and antifungal properties. It is also rich in vitamins, minerals, enzymes and amino acids.

The new blend is based on freeze-dried kefir grains, yeasts and lactic cultures and, according to Danisco, has the typical light fizziness and nutty flavour associated with kefir.

"Our new kefir formulations provide not only a unique refreshing sensation but also an extended shelf life compared to traditional kefir, reaching up to 21 days," said Jana Parn, a dairy application specialist at the company.

Further information

Burger King launches unique Angus burger

Date: Wed, 22 Nov 06

Story Text

Burger King is to attempt to entice an increasingly health-conscious nation back to its restaurants via a new Angus beef burger, the fast-food chain has announced.

With meat provided from cattle in Britain and Ireland, the Angus certification is designed to assure consumers that the beef is of the highest quality.

Angus cows are one of the most widely-known breeds of cattle in the world, with its Scottish breeding considered to constitute a mark of quality.

The burger is the only fast-food in the country to be certified by the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society, Burger King has announced. But consumer groups and nutritionists have already voiced concerns regarding the innovative product, saying the burgers could mislead consumers into thinking the meat came from local produce.

But Aberdeen Angus stood by its association, citing a wider penetration as one reason for the deal.

"This is the first time a restaurant of this size has had Aberdeen Angus beef on its menu. This is a unique opportunity for people in the UK to taste and enjoy the difference and quality of 100 per cent Aberdeen Angus beef," said Ron McHattie, chief executive of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society.

For further information click here

Flavour innovator changes hands for Â£1.19bn

Date: Wed, 22 Nov 06

Story Text

British chemicals firm ICI has sold its flavours and fragrance innovation unit to French firm Givaudan for Â£1.2 billion.

Givaudan is the world's biggest flavors and fragrances maker.

Headquartered in Naarden, The Netherlands, in 2005 Quest had sales of $\text{Å}£560$ million and a trading profit of $\text{Å}£52$ million.

The company currently employs around 3,400 globally with major activities in the US, UK, Continental Europe and Asia Pacific.

The French firm told Bloomberg that the acquisition of Quest will complement its product offering and create the potential for faster growth in the food service segment.

http://www.ici.com/IC IPLC/news/po_story.jsp?newsId=492>Further information

Wine product launched to aid fermentation process

Date: Wed, 22 Nov 06

Story Text

Chr. Hansen has launched a new product which will help winemakers to control the fermentation process.

Viniflora LS provides an alternative method of fermentation for quality wines and has already been tested out on 50 million bottles of Beaujolais Primeur.

The product has been launched due to the uncertainties involved in the fermentation process and it is hoped that winemakers will take to it to help them control the art of making good quality wine.

Sarita Bairoliya, marketing manager of wine cultures at Chr. Hansen, said: "Viniflora LS is a natural easy-to-use bacteria solution that gives winemakers the possibility to control the malolactic fermentation process, thereby avoiding fermentation problems and resulting off-flavours."

Nicolas Prost, a commercial oenologist at Chr. Hansen, added: "Our customers are very satisfied with the performance and quality they get from using our cultures in their Beaujolais wines.

"One quality-oriented customer alone bottles ten million bottles of Beaujolais wine using our cultures."

http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=12709&fSite=AO545&next=2>Click here for further information

Food firms missing out on multi-million fairtrade market

Date: Wed, 22 Nov 06

Story Text

Food and drink firms are failing to tap the market for fairtrade goods, missing out on a sector with a potential multi-billion pound annual value.

Research for beverage company Fruit Passion has shown that shoppers are almost twice as supportive of fairtrade goods as they are of organic food.

While UK retailers are rapidly moving to cater for the organic market after a very slow start, no such move toward fairly traded food and drink has occurred, said Fruit Passion.

The sector has more than doubled over the past four years and with the values behind the products reaching a 'tipping point' in public consciousness can only accelerate.

A third of shoppers taking part in the survey said that they would like everything in their shopping baskets to guarantee a fair deal for the producer.

They added that they would be prepared to pay a premium of between ten and 30 per cent for a fairtrade guarantee. Lack of options was cited by shoppers as a key barrier.

Click here for further information

Baxters unveils 'largest product expansion in its history'

Date: Wed, 22 Nov 06

Story Text

Baxter's food group has unveiled what it claims is the largest single expansion to its product range in its 138-year history with the introduction of new soup ranges and recipes.

The first new range, Soup Choices, has been designed to capitalise on an increased trend towards healthy eating and to appeal to lunch time diners.

Among the flavours included in the new range are Rustic Chunky Vegetable and Lentil; Aromatic Chicken with Thai Herbs; and Sweet Parsnip, Honey & Thyme, all available in 300g individual portion sizes.

Baxters' Luxury Range, sub-branded as Chefs Selection, will see the addition of three new flavours - Wild Mushroom & Smoked Bacon; Red Lentil & Pancetta; and Carrot, Chilli & Mascarpone with Parmesan.

These recipes have been inspired by the menu of the modern bistro, the company said, capitalising on the trend of premiumisation and targeting empty-nesters with its 420g starter portion size.

The company is also introducing a range of fresh chilled soups, Fresh Ideas, including six innovative deli-quality seasonal and globally-inspired recipes, such as Vegetarian Hungarian Goulash with Smoked Paprika and Spanish Chorizo & Chick Pea with Sweet Paprika.

Brand controller Arthur Kerr said: "Despite recent growth, which has seen the value of the fresh soup market break through the Â£100 million barrier, fresh soups still lag behind other categories.

"But the development of this new range addresses what we believe have been the main problem areas, including incorrect portion size, uninspiring recipes and a lack of innovation."

[Click here for more information](http://www.bbcgoodfoodshow.com/page.cfm/T=m/Action=Press/PressID=33)

Food marketing graduate clinches entrepreneur award

Date: Wed, 22 Nov 06

Story Text

A food marketing management graduate from Sheffield Hallam University has won a national competition for her "entrepreneurial flair".

Emma Killilea, 34, developed an idea for gluten and lactose-free products after being diagnosed with a wheat intolerance, Sheffield Today reports.

Her products, which are now part of the Deliciouslyyorkshire brand, have won her the 2006 National Business Plan Competition, with her Delicious Alchemy company impressing the judges enough to award her the £15,000 prize.

The range includes gluten and lactose-free luxury cakes, bread and muesli, all of which are free from additives, preservatives and genetically-modified ingredients, and is now being targeted at Sainsbury and the US firm, Wholefoods.

Ms Killilea is no stranger to award-winning, as her food innovations have already won her a number of accolades, including the university's 2005 Enterprise Challenge and the Yorkshire Universities' 'winner of winners' title.

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[Fur](http://www.sheffieldtoday.net/ViewArticle2.aspx?sectionid=60&articleid=1888045)
ther information

British tastes hot up

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 06

Story Text

Tesco is giving some of its products a spicy makeover in response to changing British tastes for hotter foods.

The supermarket said that in the past 50 years the growing popularity of spicy world cuisine such as Indian, Chinese, Thai and Mexican food had caused UK tastebuds to adapt.

Regular exposure to spicy foods had caused tongues to change and harden, making it more difficult to tantalise the tastebuds.

Tesco said that the new trend for ever-hotter foods was reflected in figures from analysts TNS which showed that demand for fiery Vindaloo ready-meal curries grew by 50 per cent in the past year, sales of Vindaloo cooking sauces soared by 33 per cent and demand for hot fresh chilli peppers grew by 16 per cent.

In response, the supermarket has been working on making some favourite products even hotter.

This year it launched what it claims is Britain's hottest 'triple X-rated' pizza with extra chillies and

an extra-hot range of traditional curries. Thai, Chinese and Mexican dishes are currently under consideration to get the extra-hot treatment.

Tesco's John Hale, who advises the supermarket on creating new recipes, said: "The more spicy food we eat the more we get used to that sensation which is why over time some people want to increase the spiciness to get a bigger buzz."

 Click here for more information

Firm develops pea-flavoured drink

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 06

Story Text

US beverage company Jones Soda has developed a new green pea-flavoured soda drink.

The company is no stranger to unusual drink flavours, having gained notoriety with flavours including turkey and gravy in the past.

The unusual flavours developed by the firm are brought together every year for the festive limited edition Holiday Pack.

This year the pack will include Green Pea Soda, Sweet Potato Soda, Dinner Roll Soda, Turkey and Gravy Soda and Antacid Soda, with a portion of sales being donated to charity Toys for Tots.

President and CEO of Jones Soda Peter van Stolk said: "Our holiday sodas have zero calories and zero carbs, but have all the full rich flavour you have come to expect from the nation's number one selling poultry flavoured soda."

The company also sells more conventional flavours of soda such as ginger ale, root beer and watermelon. A further festive dessert pack will include Cherry Pie, Banana Cream Pie, Key Lime Pie, Apple Pie and Blueberry Pie-flavoured drinks.

The soda is packaged in bottles with labels featuring photographs submitted by customers.

 Click here for more information

Isle of Wight products to hit local Tesco

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 06

Story Text

A new range of unique Isle of Wight-based products are set to hit the shelves of supermarkets in the region following meetings between local producers and food giant Tesco.

Tesco's local sourcing food initiative meant that the company was able to meet regional suppliers at a recent Meet the Buyer event, according to the Isle of Wight County Press.

Tomatoes, milk, beer, spring water and manufactured goods will soon be in the island's Tesco stores as part of the initiative to buy locally sourced stock for every supermarket shelf in the retail chain.

Emily Sharma, local sourcing head at Tesco, visited the Isle of Wight to meet producers from the island, where 20 suppliers showcased their products - including local chutney and baked goods.

Ms Sharma said the event provided opportunities for suppliers to learn about Tesco's commitment to supporting local farmers and dedication to giving customers more choice.

"Today has been a great success and we hope to see some of the fantastic island products in store soon," she said.

For further information click here

Spicy cuisine sees Brit tastebuds changing

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 06

Story Text

Spicy foods enjoyed over the past 50 years in Britain has seen a rise in the need for even more spicy foods as tastebuds become hardened to the fiery foreign staples, said retail analysts TNS.

Curries, Chinese, and Indian foods are now common in most British kitchens and the rising sales in spicy foods are a testament of the change in tastes.

Vindaloo cooking sauce sales climbed 33 per cent over the last year, according to TNS data, while red thai curry meals rose 27 per cent.

Spicing up the run of the mill foods is gaining popularity since hot pepper condiments' sales rose 19 per cent and fresh chilli sales were up 16 per cent.

The change in UK tastes is likely for the better since recent data has classified chilli peppers into the superfood category for its link to potentially fighting cancer.

Tesco's John Hale said that eating spicy food was also a bit like taking drugs.

"As soon as very spicy food touches our taste buds the brain sends out natural chemicals called endorphins which act as pain killers," he said.

"This is why many people get a warm, feel-good sensation when eating a curry."

He added that spicy food was nearly a retail food trend all on its own.

Food supplement claims to negate the health effects of binge drinking

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 06

Story Text

People who love their 'sauce' can now drink a lot more without affecting their immediate health, according to the manufacturers of a new dietary supplement.

The pill, catchingly named Dink "so one can "Dink when they drink" is designed to replace the resources used while metabolising alcohol, but won't really affect the buzz.

It's made from a potent combination of phospholipids, dextrose, L-Glutamine, ascorbic acid (vitamin C), magnesium stearate and vegetable carbon which will all work to replace lost vitamins and supply energy.

The recommended dose is three pills with the first drink and three with water after the last.

Testimonials by Dink users have been overwhelmingly positive but the pill-makers say responsible drinking is still the best way to avoid the dreaded hangover.

Drinking water between cocktails is a great way to maintain the health in the wake of binge drinking, says Dink, and Dink recommends consulting a doctor if there is any doubt about the long-term effects of alcohol.

[Click here for further information](http://www.dinkwhenyoudrink.co.uk/acatalog/Help_your_body.html)

UK faces food scientist skills crisis

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 06

Story Text

The UK food and drink sector will soon face a scientific skills crisis if manufacturers do not invest in new training programmes, Improve has warned.

Jack Matthews, chief executive of sector skills council Improve, said that without action it will face a shortfall of 13,000 scientific and technical staff in the next eight years.

"We need to attract more scientists to the sector in order to tackle the skills shortage and help maximise productivity," Mr Matthews told Fish Update.

"It's vital that employers work with us to develop effective ways to solve this problem.

"For example, we believe that the creation of postgraduate conversion courses will be a key way to boost the supply of scientific and technical workers in the sector.

"However, we need employers' help to determine the content of the programmes, and to agree to offer sponsorship and work placements."

He added that the shortage reflected difficulties across all levels of scientific industry and stemmed from problems as far back as GCSE level.

The findings are part of research commissioned as part of the Sector Skills Agreement for food manufacturing, an action plan for trainers, industry and government to be launched next year.

[Click here for further information](http://www.improveltd.co.uk/)

Haribo launches new Halal range

Date: Mon, 20 Nov 06

Story Text

A new Halal range of sweets designed specifically with Muslim children in mind will be available in UK supermarkets this month, it has been announced.

The Haribo range has been overhauled to make allowances for purity restrictions under Islamic law.

Gelatin, traditionally made from pork products, has been replaced with naturally-grown hydrocolloids in the new Halal jellies, and all alcohol-based dyes and colourings have been replaced with alternatives.

The first line of confectionary products marketed to Muslim consumers will be distinguished by its green sticker, which will signify that the sweets are Halal-based in both English and Arabic.

So far, the eight Haribo Halal varieties are only available in Muslim neighbourhoods in north west England, but retailers have reported encouraging sales.

Distributor Forest Tree Foods' owner, Neville Finlay, said: "The Haribos taste more or less the same as the standard product but their texture is a fraction softer and they are not quite so rubbery.

"More than 10,000 packets are being sold each week and we hope to sign contracts soon with both Morrisons and Woolworths," Mr Finlay continued, speaking to the Daily Mail.

An Imam from the Muslim Association of Austria, where the jellies are prepared, has certified the confectionary as 100 per cent Halal.

<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/news/article-23375028-details/The%20Halal%20Haribos%20for%20Muslim%20children/article.do>>For further information click here

Researchers develop edible E. coli-killer

Date: Mon, 20 Nov 06

Story Text

An edible coating for fresh fruits and vegetables has been improved with the addition of an anti-E. coli bacterial agent and flavour enhancer.

Awareness about the E. coli hazard in food has risen recently after there was an outbreak in commercially-available spinach in the US.

The coating, made of apple puree and oregano oil, is a natural antibacterial agent that is effective for both its longevity and potency relative to other agents.

"All produce-cleaning methods help to some degree, but our new coatings and films may provide

a more concentrated, longer-lasting method for killing bacteria," said Dr Tara McHugh, who led the research.

The coatings need some more work before they can be presented for commercial use since they have not yet been tried for fresh produce or used against all types of E. coli.

Researchers are now trying to increase the kill rate in the deadly bacteria.

The coatings have a 50 per cent kill rate in less than three minutes, where a sticky solution can adhere to fruits and vegetables for much longer periods of time.

[Click here for further information](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=56890)

Vitamin C-packed apple snacks launched

Date: Mon, 20 Nov 06

Story Text

Italian fruit supplier and derivatives company VOG has introduced a new single-serve apple slice snack for children with an added dose of vitamin C.

The apple slices are treated with both ascorbic acid and vitamin C before being packaged to prevent the cut fruit from turning brown and provide added health benefits.

Michael Grassner, VIP marketing manager, said the convenience market is huge in the US and UK and effectively drove their move into the market.

"We have seen that there is a big market for prepared apple slices in the US and the UK and we don't want to lose out on this," he said.

"We know we have to follow the convenience train."

Fruit-inspired cartoon characters will be featured on the new packaging, available in snack-sized portions.

VOG expects to sell the new product in 2007 alongside its popular consumer fruit juices for distribution across Europe and were showcased at the Interpoma show.

[Click here for further information](http://www.vog-products.it/en/company/goal/)

New food-safety pilot programme launched

Date: Fri, 10 Nov 06

Story Text

Five food companies in Scotland have joined a national pilot scheme that aims to improve the quality of produce provided by Britain's small food businesses, it has been announced.

The Safe and Local Supplier Approval Schemes (SALSA) have now been adopted by 15 Scottish businesses as part of a voluntary trial phase.

The five latest members, all part of the Shetland Food and Drink Group, join businesses from Arran, Dumfries and Galloway that have already signed up to the project.

"SALSA is a great opportunity for small food producers to verify their quality to the buyer and potentially open the market place for those who may wish to sell their products to supermarkets and wholesale retailers," commented Scottish Food Quality Certification (SFQS) chairman David Whiteford.

SFQS, who are co-funders of the project, has initiated a number of culinary schemes in the past, including the EatScotland promotion and the CookSafe awareness campaign.

For further information click here

Soy yoghurt offers diabetes relief says study

Date: Fri, 10 Nov 06

Story Text

Soy yoghurt could help control the symptoms of high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes, particularly with the addition of fruit, researchers have said.

People with diabetes are usually discouraged from sweet snacks but some soy and dairy yoghurts with fruit seem to aid with the regulation of enzymes that affect blood sugar.

Around 150 million people around the world suffer from type 2 diabetes, which is typically manifested by unusual increases in blood-sugar levels after meals.

The effect of the yoghurts is thought to be due to their high levels of organic antioxidant compounds, known as phenols and polyphenols.

"What one eats should be part of an overall approach to therapy," said researcher Dr Kalidas Shetty of the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

"Cost-effective dietary changes are essential for fighting this disease, and traditional diets that have a higher content of these protective antioxidants are an important part of the solution.

"We should be able to use diet along with other therapies, and diabetes is a disease where this especially makes sense."

Click here for further information

Smart oxygen sensor tests food freshness

Date: Fri, 10 Nov 06

Story Text

A material that changes colour when exposed to oxygen is being analysed for its possible application in food packaging.

The study, published by Chemical Communications, said University of Ottawa researchers developed the material using a liquid reagent that showed a short colour change when reacting to oxygen.

That liquid's reaction was made more permanent by trapping the sensory molecule in a porous and inorganic solid known as a zeolite.

Dr JC Scaiano led the research team and said the most obvious application of the compound would be in identifying contamination in common supermarket products.

"Other applications may include laboratory glove boxes and other instrumentation normally required to operate under oxygen-free conditions."

The research team is hopeful the material will develop into a commercial product.

Dr Scaiano was most recently awarded the Order of Canada and a number of other honours for his work in developing cancer treatments.

<a

href="http://www.rsc.org/Publishing/ChemTech/Volume/2006/12/food_contamination.asp"

>Further information

Fullprotein – the world's first egg-white drink

Date: Fri, 10 Nov 06

Story Text

A new egg-white drink is set to give synthetic protein shakes some heavy competition by a new offering by Spanish-based Egg Derivatives.

Fullprotein, the low-calorie, high-protein drink is meant a fresh and sweet alternative to protein powder drinks but is also safe as part of a balanced diet.

The drink contains pasteurised egg albumin combined with whey and milk proteins and comes in vanilla and strawberry flavours.

It also is high in essential amino acids and branched chain amino acids- proven aids in muscular regeneration.

For the time being, the drink will only be sold in the UK, Spain and Portugal but the company plans to take the drink global this year.

The liquid eggs are heat-pasteurised are not to be confused with harmful raw eggs - which are not completely digestible by humans and could cause salmonella poisoning if not cooked correctly.

An active and healthy person requires one gram of protein for every pound of their body mass every day- each 250 millilitres pack has about 23 grams of protein.

[Further information](http://www.drinksmediawire.com/afficher_cdp.asp?id=749&lng=2)

Award-winning Richmond praised for innovation

Date: Fri, 10 Nov 06

Story Text

The UK's largest ice-cream manufacturer has come first in two categories at the 2006 Food Manufacture Excellence Awards, held at the Dorchester Hotel in London.

Richmond Ice Cream beat off a record number of competing entries to walk away with the top prize in the Frozen Food and Productivity Through Skills categories.

The first award came for the recent launch of the company's Skinny Cow brand, which already has a 19.9 per cent share of the healthy ice-cream sector.

The judges acknowledged that innovation had been key to Richmond's growth, "felt that this was a superb entry and applauded the company's efforts," the commendation read.

According to judges in the Productivity Through Skills category, the company's training model, the Richmond Vocational Qualification, had enabled the firm to achieve 96 per cent manufacturing efficiency and was described as "an excellent initiative".

"To enter two categories and win them both is a fantastic achievement," said Peter Pickthall, director of HR and training at Richmond Ice Cream.

"The awards clearly demonstrate the firm's total commitment to successful product innovation and I am also delighted the judges were so impressed with our own training model," he added.

[Further information](http://www.richmond-foods.plc.uk/news/detail.asp?id=68)

Ventura adds to vegan confectionary range

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 06

Story Text

Vegetarian food company Venture Foods has unveiled two new organic, fairtrade confectionary bars for vegans.

The Premium Organic White Bar is billed as an alternative to white chocolate for vegans and those who prefer to avoid dairy products.

Described as smooth, rich and creamy, the bar is made from rice milk, with added natural vanilla and sugar.

A second product, the luxurious Swiss Dark Chocolate Bar with Mint Crisps contains 65 per cent cocoa solids and is filled with crystallised mint crisps. It is recommended as being perfect on the palate with an after-dinner coffee.

In addition to being organic and vegan, the bars are both gluten free and non-GM and have been approved by the Soil Association and the Fairtrade Foundation.

The 100g bars will be priced at around £1.79 each and will be available from outlets including Waitrose.

The new bars join the four existing vegan chocolate bars in the range, which include a Swiss Dark Chocolate Bar with Hazelnuts and a Premium Swiss Chocolate Couverture Bar.

[Click here for more information](http://responsesource.com/releases/rel_display.php?relid=QEXQA)

Virgin launches new 'Best of British' menu

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 06

Story Text

First-class passengers on Virgin Atlantic flights will be able to taste a bit of Britain as they cross the ocean to lands abroad.

The company's new 'Best of British' menu is set to launch in December 2006 with a two-week Christmas theme before reverting to more long term New Year menus.

Andrew Day, food and drink manager at Virgin Atlantic, said the pilot project he conducted for the menu had such an overwhelmingly positive reaction that he had to make it the main attraction for flights in 2007.

"We will be offering upper class passengers a wide variety of freshly prepared food," Mr Day said.

"The best of home grown British produce [will be mixed] with a contemporary twist on traditional and using quality local seasonal ingredients from regional suppliers," he continued.

Starters like broccoli and stilton soup, mains like beef hotpot or fish pie and desserts like rhubarb trifle are some of the dishes that Virgin hopes will delight first-class passengers.

[For further information click here](http://www.travmedia.com/uk/pressrelease.php?id=20413&mo=5&referencekey=aec8d235e5a3f858fe652b27b54cfa6)

UK to be net milk importer "within five years"

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 06

Story Text

The UK will be a net importer of milk within five years unless action is not taken to support dairy farmers, the head of Waitrose has said.

Sir Stuart Hampson told the Daily Telegraph that it would be "scandalous" if the UK had to import milk, adding: "There is a lot of scaremongering about tipping points, but we are reaching a point where unless action is taken we won't have a viable sector."

According to government figures England lost one dairy farm a day in 2005.

Tom Hind, the chief dairy adviser to the National Farmers Union, said: "Although it will probably take a spectacular fall in milk production before we started to see large amounts of fresh liquid milk come into the country, I think it should be seen as a wake-up call for the rest of the entire dairy industry."

Sir Stuart said he wanted to see more dairy producer groups that invested in farmers and offered them long-term contracts and financial support.

[Click here for further information](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/)

Irish trade bodies call for unified approach to food and drink sector

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 06

Story Text

The food and drink sector is the most important contributor to Irish manufacturing, adding â, 18 billion to the national economy annually, trade groups have said.

Nonetheless, the industry is facing serious challenges on several fronts said employers federation IBEC, which has called on the government to coordinate its approach.

Because the sector is so widely spread, with interests in agriculture, fisheries, research, retail, manufacturing and export markets, it is faced with multiple government agencies " often with widely varying priorities, said IBEC.

The industry needs a single government approach and support for product development if it is to thrive, said Larry Murin, chair of Food and Drink Industry Ireland.

"If we are to sustain our manufacturing base, the government should support measures to enhance productivity," said Mr Murin.

"We need a trade policy that recognises the importance of the food and drink sector to the wider economy.

"The state could assist with a programme to identify, develop and support more world class Irish food and drink companies and brands.

He added that the industry recognised the need for innovation and research, and called for government assistance in coordinating this with universities and other institutions.

[Click here for further information](http://breakingnews.iol.ie/news/story_business_island.asp?j=200607076&p=zxx6x778z)

LycoRed promotes new line of carotenoid colorants

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 06

Story Text

A line of ready-to-use food and beverage colorants are set for launch next week at the Health Ingredients Europe (HIE) exhibition in Frankfurt.

The carotenoid colorants are derived from a line of base vegetables like tomato lycopene, beta carotene and lutein - used as much for the antioxidants inherent in each as for the splash of vibrant colour.

Leo Cullen, president of LycoRed, said: "Tomat-O-Red's stability in the presence of vitamin C makes it a good candidate for colouring of beverages - especially juices, smoothies and sport drinks."

The colorants are also safe to use in a wide variety of temperatures and acidity, and are not affected by processing or pasteurisation processes.

The company hopes the product will fill the void in stable, non-allergen food colourings and has already partnered with ingredients distributors in North America to launch the product.

Officially, the new line will be launched on November 14th during the HIE exhibition.

Further information

Danisco launches dairy-free cultures

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 06

Story Text

Brand new kosher pareve non-dairy cultures from Danisco are guaranteed not to have come into contact with meat or other dairy products, making it a useful ingredient in vegetarian and vegan dishes.

The YO-MIX vegetal cultures developed by Danisco are intended to provide a culture suitable for fermenting dairy-free soy yoghurts.

Catherine Duong, fermented business development manager for Danisco, said the new cultures masked the 'beany' flavour of soy.

"[The cultures] have also been carefully selected to enable processors to easily succeed in fermenting soy and in particular soy protein isolates," she said.

Soy product demand is growing at a healthy 17 per cent a year, where the global market sales hit \$1.9 billion for 2005, according to Euromonitor, where demand might have been piqued by the US Food and Drug Administration's approval of soy as a cholesterol reducer.

The new Danisco cultures are also suitable to ferment other dairy alternatives like oat, almond and rice-based products.

Further information

Coca-Cola scoops innovative packaging award

Date: Thu, 09 Nov 06

Story Text

Coca-Cola has been awarded in a ceremony honouring the most innovative drinks packaging.

The company scooped this year's Can of the Year award at the Canmaker Summit in Spain for its Blak coffe-cola drink.

As well as winning the coveted award, the company also won the Gold award in the conference put on by Canmaker magazine in recognition of metal packaging innovation.

One of the judge's said: "The Blak bottle was the clear winner overall. It was the sexiest of the lot."

Exal Corporation which produced the packaging were delighted at the award. Sales manager Michael Clark said: "The bottle has been a long time in development and it's not fully executed, but it is good to be creatively recognised."

[Click here for further information](http://www.spgevents.com/coy/2006.htm)

Jam makers increase product distribution

Date: Wed, 08 Nov 06

Story Text

Follain preserves have announced plans to extend their business throughout the Republic of Ireland, with further expansion remaining a possibility.

The food producer has created a range of award-winning preserves via its back to basics approach, which avoids added sugar, salt or additives.

Earlier in the year the Guild of Fine Food Retailers' Great Taste Awards, open to retailers from the UK and Ireland, announced that Follain no sugar products were to receive two of its prestigious awards.

"New product innovation has always been key to our brands' ongoing success," owner Peadar O'Lionaird said to Ireland online.

The organic policy has resulted in Follain becoming the fastest growing preserves company in the country, with its completely natural, whole fruit, fat free products now experiencing growth levels of 20 per cent per year.

Original recipes were also the secret to Follain's first ever product, a grapefruit marmalade that launched in 1983. The company says that the marmalade was created via a 100 year old Irish recipe.

[For further information click here](http://breakingnews.iol.ie/news/story_business_island.asp?j=200628256&p=zxx6z896z)

Del Monte launches kids' snack bags

Date: Wed, 08 Nov 06

Story Text

A new range of fruit and vegetable snack bags has been launched by Del Monte Fresh.

The new snack packs are aimed at primary school children aged between five and 11 and include apples, carrots and grapes, website freshinfo reports.

It is hoped that schools will take up the 50g bags as part of a push to improve diets among the UK's youngsters and encourage more children to eat their five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

James Mills, foodservice director at Del Monte, said: "This new range was born out of huge demand, one that comes from the government, influential campaigners such as Jamie Oliver, the educational community and mums.

"With fruit at the heart of our business, our integrity is unquestionable when it comes to offering children tasty, nutritional snacks."

Mr Mills added that the company was "excited" at the opportunity to influence the eating habits of British youngsters.

[Click here](http://www.freshinfo.com/index.php?s=n&ss=nd&sid=40095) for further information

New generation of PET bottle resin launched

Date: Wed, 08 Nov 06

Story Text

Eastman Chemical Company has launched what it describes as the next generation of PET packaging, claiming it offers improved clarity, purity and efficiency.

ParaStar resin does not require a solid-stating step, significantly cutting energy used in production compared to traditional PET.

Eastman says that its IntegRex method of production that enables this also increases clarity and product consistency and lowers acetaldehyde levels by 25 per cent or more.

This makes the material particularly suitable for bottled water, said Eastman.

"Simply put, ParaStar resins will help our customers better achieve both their packaging goals and their long-term brand objectives," said Thomas Stevens of Eastman.

"The ability to design and manufacture products that have performance, brand and environmental benefits is essential for companies looking for viable packaging in the years to come."

ParaStar can be used on traditional PET production lines with no equipment or process changes and is 100 per cent recyclable alongside traditional PET plastics.

[Click here for further information](http://www.chemicalonline.com/content/news/article.asp?DocID=%7B113336EE-3A3B-41CD-A511-1C0E6AAC22B6%7D&Bucket=Current+Headlines&VNETCOOKIE=NO)

Baking on the rise in British kitchens

Date: Wed, 08 Nov 06

Story Text

Demand for home baking products and do-it-yourself baked goods have jumped 25 per cent in the last five years, with no signs of slowing down.

Sales rose to £429 million this year, according to Mintel research, and are expected to hit the half-billion mark in 2009.

A whole new generation of keen bakers are being inspired through popular cooking programs by Nigella Lawson and Martha Stewart; while in schools, the government is currently trying to nationalise cooking lessons.

Vivianne Ihekweazu, senior market analyst at Mintel, said: "The government's initiative to introduce cooking lessons into all schools by September 2008, should help market growth and ensure that school leavers are able to pass on cooking skills to the next generation."

Baking from scratch accounts for almost half of bakers and cake and flour mixes have propelled cakes into top spot as the most popular confection.

"The current popularity of home baking looks set to continue, but the market will need ongoing investment by suppliers in new products to maintain the high levels of interest," Ms Ihekweazu concluded.

[Click here for more information](http://www.mintel.co.uk/press_release.php?id=242170)

New fridge produces drinkable beer colder than ice

Date: Wed, 08 Nov 06

Story Text

Beer can now be enjoyed at sub-zero temperatures while remaining in liquid form, thanks to a new refrigeration process developed by beer makers Anheuser-Busch and fridge-makers Hussman.

The new fridge, dubbed the Chill Chamber, can chill a beer in aluminium bottles to 22 degrees Fahrenheit without freezing it - keeping a beer colder for 17 minutes longer on average.

Gary Goldstein, vice president of national retail sales at Anheuser-Busch said they were really excited about the new product.

"The Chill Chamber provides a distinct point of difference that offers consumers a unique beer drinking experience," he said.

"It is another example of our commitment to bring new tools to the industry."

The Chill Chamber was developed by Hussman Corporation and comes in industrial multi-case models and consumer countertop varieties.

Doors on the refrigeration system are also made to eliminate condensation to showcase the beer inside.

In addition, the units are also designed to keep plastic bottles cold alongside the more attractive aluminium bottles.

Mr Goldstein emphasised: "We know today's consumers want choices- and they like their beer cold."

<http://sev.prnewswire.com/food-beverages/20061107/CGTU04907112006-1.html>> Click here for more information

McDonald's to reduce trans-fats

Date: Wed, 08 Nov 06

Story Text

McDonald's has responded to rising health concerns over trans-fats and has vowed to reduce the level of such fats found in its products by mid 2008.

McDonald's has said the move away from trans-fats was responding to recent awareness that they could be potentially harmful and cause coronary heart disease and increased cholesterol levels.

The new trans-fat reduced cooking oil will have only two per cent trans-fats, compared to the current nine per cent, and contain a blend of rapeseed and hi oleic acid sunflower oil.

The announcement comes after renewed pressure on McDonald's to reduce trans-fats content since KFC announced it had cut them out of all its products this week, instead favouring healthier soybean oil to cook its chicken in.

Many other fast food restaurants like Wendy's and Burger King have already switched to trans-fats free products.

Australia's McDonald's, however, have already reduced its use of trans-fats by introducing the new oil blend as part of the chain's worldwide flavour re-organisation.

The McDonald's oil blend will also contain high concentrations of monounsaturated fats, which are essential to maintain good health.

CIA initiative to focus on food research

Date: Tue, 07 Nov 06

Story Text

The Culinary Institute of America (CIA) has announced that it is to establish a new programme dedicated to the science of food research and the development of the food service industry.

The new research and development programme, entitled The Menu R&D and Flavor Discovery Initiative, has been backed by four partners, The Coca-Cola Company, Campbell Soup Company, Tyson Foods and Ventura Foods, which have donated \$250,000 each.

Applied research is a key part of the project and will centre on areas including flavour discovery, consumer preference in a foodservice environment and the application of emerging foodservice technologies.

Studies generated by the research will be published via trade and technical journals.

CIA president Dr Tim Ryan said: "The foodservice industry needs research to help it address rapid changes in the environment.

"The recent proposal to ban trans fats in New York City is just one example, and the use of trans fats is one of the many topics the CIA will address in its research."

The new scheme will also supplement the support available for scholarships in the CIA's Menu Masters online programme, increasing support from its current level of 50 scholarships per year.

<http://sev.prnewswire.com/food-beverages/20061106/NYM02106112006-1.html>
Click here for more information

Sonoco packaging for new custard product

Date: Tue, 07 Nov 06

Story Text

A new Angel Delight custard product from Premier Foods is to be packaged in a paperboard can made by Sonoco.

The Angel Delight custard mix will be available in nine flavours – banana, butterscotch, chocolate, lemon, raspberry and strawberry, as well as no-sugar versions of butterscotch, chocolate and strawberry.

Containing enough powdered mix for 24 portions, the 500g products will be packaged in cans measuring 99 x 161.9 mm.

The cans will feature a medium barrier liner to protect the custard mix from oxygen and moisture to keep it clump-free, as well as a recessed peelable membrane to protect the integrity of the product, while being easily removable.

As the can contains 24 portions, it has been designed with a plastic plug lid to make it easy for customers to open and securely reclose it.

The new product will feature six-colour litho-printed labels as well as the Bird's logo.

Premier Foods acquired the Birds Custard and Angel Delight brands from Kraft in 2005.

[Click here for more information](http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/061102/clth004.html?v=67)

Fish farm wins innovation award

Date: Tue, 07 Nov 06

Story Text

An innovative method of cod farming has led Johnson Sustainable Seafoods to triumph at the annual Fusion Innovation Awards.

The company, whose desire to provide cod without reducing the numbers available in the wild led it to create the scheme, has succeeded in ensuring that the "No Catch â€œ Just Cod" product is sold in major supermarkets nationwide.

The awards ceremony, which was open to a variety of companies across all disciplines, saw the business praised for its novel, environmentally friendly methods, as well as its success in achieving an increase in revenue of just under Â£1 million in 2006.

Johnson Sustainable Seafoods has been farming salmon for over 20 years, but has only just ventured into the cod market.

Earlier this year it was revealed that one third of the global demand for cod comes from Britain alone.

[For further information click here](http://www.inverness-courier.co.uk/news/fullstory.php/aid/1372/No_catches_as_fish_farm_wins_innovation_award.html)

New compostable packaging film developed

Date: Tue, 07 Nov 06

Story Text

A new and compostable film for fresh food applications has been developed by Innovia Films.

The high gloss NatureFlex NVS film has been specifically developed to provide improved dimensional stability under chill conditions.

According to the company, the film is semi-permeable to moisture providing good anti-mist properties but is also a good barrier to gases and aromas.

Sainsbury's is one of the first retailers to use the packaging and are using it to help meet its new strategy of cutting packaging waste.

Sainsbury's chief executive Justin King recently highlighted that such compostable packaging "created an opportunity for customers to dispose of their own waste at home".

Andy Sweetman, Innovia Films' market development manager, sustainable technologies said

"Innovia Films have been supplying Sainsbury's packers with NatureFlex through ASP for use on organic produce for nearly five years.

"Their recent declaration to considerably increase the use of biodegradable and compostable packaging is a strong indication that environmental issues are seriously being considered by the major retail chains. Our new NatureFlex NVS grade significantly improves packaging performance in such applications."

NatureFlex films are cellulose based, derived from renewable wood pulp and are certified to meet both the European EN13432 and American ASTM D6400 standards for compostable packaging.

Click here for more information

North-east banks on a slice of the culinary pie

Date: Tue, 07 Nov 06

Story Text

Consultants ADAS has produced a regional food and drink strategy for the north-eastern England development body to help carve the area a slice of the growing industry.

Development agency One NorthEast will launch the project when it opens the tendering process for membership of a regional food group (RFG) to local producers.

This will form the strategy for linking regional food and drink suppliers to supermarkets, catering businesses, schools, hospitals councils, and tourism outlets.

"This is a call to action. It needs to be easier to buy good local food and if you visit a restaurant to find local food on the menu," said Ian Brown of One NorthEast.

"If this works, there will be more jobs and profit in the north-east and for consumers it will be easier to buy a wide range of high quality local produce," he told the Newcastle Journal.

"We have many excellent, small-scale operators and a lot of people feel deeply about local food. Individually they can't overcome all of the barriers, but collectively we can."

Click here for more information

EI announces a £15m functional food R&D fund

Date: Tue, 07 Nov 06

Story Text

Enterprise Ireland (EI) has announced that it is to establish a £15 million functional foods research and development fund with four of the country's largest dairy companies.

Business will provide around 20 per cent of funding with the rest coming from the taxpayer. The project is expected to begin operating early next year.

The commercial partners have not been named, but the Irish press said that the industry-leaders such as Kerry and Dairygold would be interested.

Four research groups drawn from 11 organisations have submitted research proposals so far, said EI Food & Retail Consumer Markets director Mike Feeney.

"Companies are having to face the fact that they are no longer low-cost operators and are turning to research and innovation to give them a competitive advantage."

"What's brilliant about it is that this is industry-led, a joint research programme, targeted on areas that needed to be focused on more," he told the Irish Examiner.

[Click here for further information](http://www.enterprise-ireland.com)

New food hygiene system launched in Scotland

Date: Mon, 06 Nov 06

Story Text

A new two-year pilot scheme has been launched in Scotland aiming to highlight the results of local hygiene inspections, the government has announced.

Scottish consumers will now be able to find out at a glance how well local eateries and takeaways have done at their last governmental hygiene inspections thanks to a sign which must be displayed in a prominent position on the door or window of the premises.

Developed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Scotland, the Food Hygiene Information Scheme will initially be trialled in Perth and parts of Edinburgh, Fife, Aberdeen and Renfrewshire.

"We hope this new scheme will increase consumer confidence and help people make informed choices about where they eat or buy their food," said director of FSA Scotland George Paterson.

"[Which? has] been calling for this for many years, so we welcome the decision by the Scottish councils to take this important step forward," added Julia Clarke of the Which? consumer organisation.

Earlier this year it was reported that poor food hygiene standards among the British populace contributed to the 79,000 cases of food poisoning that were reported during 2005.

[Click here for further information](http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2006/nov/hygienescheme)

Seafish claims industry advancements have not been taken into account

Date: Mon, 06 Nov 06

Story Text

Seafish, the UK seafood industry body is annoyed after a report undermined the future of fishing, and they plan to prove otherwise.

The regulator is commissioning its own scientists to report on the advances in sustainable fishing in place right now all over the UK.

Seafish chief executive John Rutherford is concerned that the study published in Science magazine did not take into account recent advances in fisheries technology.

"Measures include voluntary closure by the fishing fleet of areas around our coast; huge growth in certification of sustainable fisheries by the Marine Stewardship Council," and a long list of other regulations to ensure fish survival, according to Mr Rutherford.

Mr Rutherford plans to dissect the implications of the Science study and to better understand source data for the report.

"There is always more to be done, but the industry is moving in a positive way and this should be recognised," he added.

[Further information](http://www.seafish.org/whatsnew/detail.asp?p=ca&id=1394)

Innovative kids' juice packaging introduced by Masafi

Date: Mon, 06 Nov 06

Story Text

Masafi has just unveiled their revolutionary new juice packages to mark their launch into markets in the Middle East and further afield.

The popular cartoons Toto the Turtle, Jami the Camel, Hoofy the Zebra and others will adorn the new Masafi line, which were first featured on the children's mineral water packs.

Ashraf Abushady, chief executive at Masafi, said the company was pleased to introduce the new packs as a marketing tool that will continue to add value.

"This distinctive new packaging also reflects Masafi's commitment to raising awareness among the younger generation on the benefits of healthy juices among children," Abushady added.

"The cartoon characters, which have been a huge success in our mineral water and tissue segments, is being implemented in our juice line for children, who would love to have something that is vibrant and great fun."

The no-preservative juices were originally launched in May as a supplement to Masafi's success in Middle Eastern bottled water industries.

[Further information](http://business.maktoob.com/foodnew.asp?id=20061105005206)

Fifth food innovation forum begins in Dublin

Date: Mon, 06 Nov 06

Story Text

The fifth annual World Food Technology & Innovation Forum is getting underway in Dublin today, focussing this year on innovation and issues around product development.

Also on the agenda are functional foods and health and wellbeing trends and the relationships between them.

Enterprise Ireland is sponsoring the forum, which was established to give international food industry professionals and research and development specialists a opportunity to meet

Key speakers include Dr Peter Leathwood, senior scientist at the Nestle Research Centre, and Dr Jan Maat, chair of Unilever, among others.

Speaking ahead of the forum, Irish minister for food at the department of agriculture and food pledged the government's support for the industry and emphasised its national importance.

The Irish food sector has an output of €18.7 billion, directly employs 54,000 and contributes €7.5 billion to the country in export earnings.

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

Vacuum-packed meals help diners save time

Date: Mon, 06 Nov 06

Story Text

Leading chefs are dishing up vacuum-packed meals at top restaurants in order to reduce the time it takes to deliver food to diners' tables, it has been reported.

Michelin-starred Heston Blumenthal, who runs Berkshire's Fat Duck restaurant, and Raymond Blanc are among those who are dishing up "boil-in-the-bag meals" to diners, Glasgow's Daily Record newspaper reports.

The cooking method, known as 'sous-vide', the French term for 'under vacuum', involves vacuum packing individual portions of meat and fish in plastic before boiling the food for up to 48 hours and chilling it in a refrigerator.

The ready-made meals are then taken from chillers and heated up in a frying pan or under a grill so that dishes can be served to diners within a few minutes.

Earlier this year, it was revealed that French master chef Alain Ducasse had embarked upon a mission to produce vacuum-packed gourmet meals for astronauts to consume whilst in space.

The 49-year-old chef, who owns restaurants across ten countries, had teamed up with the European Space Agency to create the tempting treats for astronauts under the label, Space Food, the Daily Telegraph reported.

[Click here for further information](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/tm_headline=3%2Dstar-chef%2Ds-%2Dpound%2D100-boil-in-bag-meals-%26method=full%26objectid=18049571%26siteid=66633-name_page.html)

Dough-strengthening enzyme launched

Date: Fri, 03 Nov 06

Story Text

A new enzyme has been launched for bakers to strengthen dough more cheaply.

Lipopan Xtra is the latest in the Lipopan product range to be launched by Novozymes and will replace chemical emulsifiers which have often been deemed too costly.

The launch follows that of Lipopan F in 2001, which the company heralded as one of the most innovative in recent years.

Lipopan is a lipase enzyme which helps to strengthen the natural lipids that can be found in flour, making the dough more stable, website [foodingredientsfirst.com](http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com) reports.

Launch manager Anett Lund-Nielsen Colstrup said: "Together, these two enzymes represent the most cost-effective dough-strengthening solution for a broad range of baked products."

Andrew Fordyce, cereal food marketing director at Novozymes, told the website: "Novozymes is focused on supporting bread improver manufacturers by creating innovative, cost-effective enzymes to increase the quality and optimise the cost of baked goods.

"We are delighted to launch Lipopan Xtra as the latest result of Novozymes' efforts for the baking industry."

<http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/> For further information, click here

Diageo patents fizzy drink technology

Date: Fri, 03 Nov 06

Story Text

Diageo has applied to patent a method of adding sparkle to hard spirits, according to media reports.

Researchers have developed a method which is similar to that used for champagne and sparkling wines, combining spirit with yeast and a fermentable carbohydrate to create fizziness, according to the Just-Drinks website.

The technology could enable Diageo to produce sparkling gin, vodka and whisky which could be sold to consumers without the need for additional carbonated mixers.

The company is reportedly keen to use the technology in new beverages as soon as possible, in order to benefit from the current consumer trend for sparkling alcoholic drinks.

Diageo owns many of the most popular beverage brands in the world, including Smirnoff, Johnnie Walker, Baileys, Guinness and Captain Morgan.

<http://www.just-drinks.com/article.aspx?id=88306> Further information

KP Nuts to get new Sonoco can

Date: Fri, 03 Nov 06

Story Text

British favourite KP Nuts is to get a festive makeover with a new paperboard can from Sonoco.

United Biscuits' KP Nuts will be packaged in new Christmas-themed cans in time for the festive season, featuring eye-catching, shiny, varnish-enhanced graphics and an elegant silver cap.

United Biscuits' European head for tins, tubs and rigid plastics Dave Head said: "People tend to snack more during the holidays, and our new pack gives loyal customers, as well as impulse shoppers, a new reason to choose KP Nuts."

The lines that will be packaged in the 99 x 160mm gas-flushable paperboard cans will be dry roasted peanuts (560 grams), original salted jumbo peanuts (600 grams), honey roasted peanuts (620 grams) and sweet chili peanuts (620 grams).

The can is hermetic to protect the freshness of the peanuts and has a Sealed-Safe foil membrane closure, which includes a tab to make it easier for consumers to remove the top of the can.

[Click here for more information](http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/cgi/news/release?id=183100)

Organics show unnatural market growth

Date: Fri, 03 Nov 06

Story Text

The taste for organic produce is growing unabated, according to a new report by research firm Datamonitor.

The UK market for organic food was valued at £1.6 billion in 2005, up from £0.8 billion in 2000, Datamonitor reveals, though this is still some way behind Europe's largest organic market Germany, which was valued at £3.5 billion in 2005.

"Environmental and ethical concerns obviously influence consumers, but buying organic is not typically an altruistic act. Concerns over food safety, health and perceived superior taste are the core motivations for buying organics," said Daniel Bone, the report author and consumer markets analyst at Datamonitor.

The growth does not appear to be slowing either with the UK market forecast to near £2.7 billion by 2010 – more than four times the market value in 2000.

"With three out of four UK consumers doing more to eat healthily over the past year, consumers increasingly switch to healthy alternatives. Organics are emerging as a credible healthy eating alternative, irrespective of the credence surrounding that perception," Mr Bone said.

Datamonitor said that the food industry should take note of these findings and market the fresh and wholesome aspect of food that consumers are increasingly demanding.

"Marketers can focus on the emotionally appealing sensory properties of fresh products rather than all the bad content that's been removed. Fresh, unprocessed or minimally-processed foods have strong potential to be the next major growth area," Mr Bone advised.

Click here for further information

Yahoo! serves up new food website

Date: Fri, 03 Nov 06

Story Text

Internet search engine giant Yahoo! is moving into the food business with a new website designed to engage and inform consumers, the company has announced.

The new website will offer thousands of recipes, advice from celebrity chefs and cooking guides as part of the company's desire to carve a niche for itself in the food market.

Though there are several big websites already dedicated to such topics, Yahoo! believes that it can create an industry-standard home for culinary culture via a series of innovative moves.

User participation is actively encouraged, with the company hoping that new recipes will be able to be spread across the world via the site's partially user-generated content. Visitors will be able to search for recipes through a series of different categories, including ingredients, taste and cuisine.

The site, found at food.yahoo.com, is currently a largely US-centric service, but Yahoo! has said that it plans to expand first into England, Canada and Australia in early 2007, and then into other global markets later in the year.

Further Information

Red wine antioxidant "Holy Grail of ageing research"

Date: Thu, 02 Nov 06

Story Text

Red wine could be the key to solving human ageing, a new study has suggested.

Researchers at the Harvard Medical School in Boston and the American National Institute of Ageing conducted experiments on mice and found that an antioxidant found in red wines had a number of health benefits.

It was found to be particularly helpful in cutting the risks of contracting conditions associated with obesity, such as type two diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

"If we are right, you could have the benefit of restricting calories without having to feel hungry. It is the Holy Grail of ageing research," said Dr David Sinclair from Harvard.

He added: "The 'healthspan' benefits we saw in the obese mice treated with resveratrol, such as increased insulin sensitivity, decreased glucose levels, healthier heart and liver tissues, are positive clinical indicators and may mean we can stave off in humans age-related diseases such as type-two diabetes, heart disease, and cancer, but only time and more research will tell."

Click here for further information

Chocolate bars to enhance sexual appetite

Date: Thu, 02 Nov 06

Story Text

Chocolate has long been loosely connected to love and emotion, but Devon firm Feeding Your Imagination has taken that to the next level to make a range of "sexy" chocolate.

Out of six new organic chocolate flavours introduced, three are dedicated to emoting a particular sexual emotion through the addition of essential oils and spices.

Master chef Paul Da-Costa-Greaves said the bars go beyond an intense taste experience, instead promoting physical and mental well-being.

The "Sexy" bar blends milk chocolate with chilli that is intended to get you in the mood.

"Sensual" combines sweet orange, nutmeg and chilli with milk chocolate that has a soothing effect- with a hint of sex.

Other bars are named Lovely, Fantastic, Dreamy and Beautiful.

"I wanted the response to my chocolate to be like when Augustus Gloop samples Willy Wonka's products in Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," Mr Da-Costa-Greaves added.

"He start's off saying: 'I can taste blueberry, then blackberry ...!', then another fruit and another as all the different tastes follow on from each other."

Further information

Poultry industry must 'innovate' to survive

Date: Thu, 02 Nov 06

Story Text

The Irish poultry industry faces a "major challenge" in coming to terms with falling output that can only be solved through innovation, a senior minister said yesterday.

Ireland's food minister, Brendan Smith, told a conference in Enfield, County Meath, that uncertain positioning of the industry had meant that the future was uncertain in the face of bird flu and competition from reduced production costs in Asian countries.

The conference also heard from a series of other speakers from within the Irish poultry industry, who urged that improved efficiency levels coupled with innovative products were the key to future success, the Irish examiner reports.

Recent innovations within the industry have seen the US confirming the introduction of a new test for salmonella within poultry, while elsewhere the recent furore surrounding childhood obesity has prompted KFC to commit to removing trans-fats from its own range of fried chicken.

Such developments were backed up by speakers at the conference, who said that any future innovations need to be made on a "health-conscious" basis.

[Further information](http://www.irishexaminer.com/irishexaminer/pages/story.aspx-qqqg=business-qqqm=business-qqqa=business-qqqid=17250-qqqx=1.asp)

CIAA calls for better regulation to promote innovation

Date: Thu, 02 Nov 06

Story Text

The CIAA (Confederation of Food and Drink Industries of the EU) has said better regulation was one of the main tools on offer in the EU to enhance the food and drink industry competitiveness and directly benefit European consumers.

Jean Martin, the president of the CIAA, said in his opening speech at CIAA's 2006 Congress in Brussels: "It's often forgotten, and regulators rarely acknowledge it, but the food and drink industry – almost 300,000 companies, 99 per cent of which are SME's – is Europe's largest manufacturing sector, largest manufacturing employer and one of Europe's largest export engines at a time when all you ever seem to hear about are a shortage of jobs and slow erosion of competitiveness."

According to Mr Martin, Europe's food and drink industry is hampered by red tape that hinders innovation and hurts Europe's competitiveness.

"Better regulation, including industry self-regulation, can deliver benefits to European consumers faster and create more jobs and growth than old-style outright regulation," Mr Martin said.

[More information](http://www.ciaa.be/pages_en/press_area/pressrel_list.asp)

Shocking Which? 'breakfast bar' criticism misguided, says Jordan

Date: Thu, 02 Nov 06

Story Text

Jordans cereal bars are not an alternative to breakfast, only an alternative to confectionary and shouldn't be held to the same standards as a meal, a Jordan spokesperson has protested.

The company, along with a number of breakfast bar manufacturers has been reeling under criticism that their bars are not healthy and laden with unnecessary sugars and saturated fats.

Which? Magazine's study into the top 20 breakfast bars on the market revealed every single one had an unhealthy concentration of sugars and fats.

Jordans Original Crunchy Honey and Almond bar had the most fat out of the 20 bars surveyed.

"The Jordans original crunchy bar was the first cereal bar launched in the UK back in 1980 as an alternative to confectionary," a Jordans spokesman said.

"The only way that we could reduce fat content overall would be to add artificial ingredients which as a business we don't believe in."

The company insists the sugar content mixed with wholegrains will give a longer energy release and has proven effective with sportspeople.

Jordans Frusli bar was the healthiest bar studied in the survey with the lowest fat content among the 20.

More information

Diamond-footed bottle for Rosemount wines

Date: Thu, 02 Nov 06

Story Text

Australian winemaker Rosemount Estate is to launch a new bottle for its range of wines.

The innovative bottle will feature a diamond-footed base and is intended to reflect the brand's distinctive diamond-shaped label.

Rosemount's winemaking team has spent the last year reviewing the brand's portfolio and hopes that the new bottle will signify a return to a position of contemporary style and innovation.

"Rosemount has always been an innovative company. The new design gives the bottle standout on the shelf â€“ it's about creating quality and elegance," said Rosemount chief winemaker Charles Whish, according to The Publican.

The estate, which has become one of Australia's leading wineries since its establishment in 1969, also announced that it would be adding screw caps to bottles across its ranges.

The screw cap should bring out the freshness and brightness of the wine, the estate hopes.

Click here for more information

