

A FITTING TRIBUTE

Friends and colleagues remember Peter Aldis **p4**



BEE CAMPAIGN

Defra urged to speed up action on pesticides **p4**

ORGANIC SEPTEMBER

Celebrating all that is good about organic **p49**

THE CLASS OF '23

Meet the emerging stars of the future **p34**



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news

A large underwater photograph of seaweed, likely kelp, with large green and yellowish-brown leaves. The background is a clear blue water with sunlight filtering through.

From under the sea

The 'rediscovery' of seaweed is leading to major innovations in sustainable nutrition, beauty and health **p28**

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Editor's comment



Tributes and triumphs

It's always a very sad day when we begin the news pages with an obituary, but I'm sorry to say when you turn to page 4 that's exactly what you'll find. Peter Aldis was someone many of you knew professionally from his 29 years at Holland & Barrett, and from the tributes which have landed on my desk I'd guess a good number of you were also his friends. I had the opportunity to interview Peter a few years back in the Marble Arch store. Renowned for being an astute businessman, I remember being pleasantly surprised by how his sense of humour would cut through his down-to-business demeanour at unexpected moments. There was no ego, just a man on a mission, smashing his commercial goals with charisma and confidence. My thoughts are with his family as they navigate their loss.

The eagle-eyed among you will notice that Peter's daughter, Aoife Aldis, is featured in this year's 30 under 30 (p34). There's a sad poetry in this, but I know that Peter – like any parent – would be bursting with pride to see his daughter's name in editorial lights. It's clear that Aoife will follow in her father's footsteps and soar to great professional heights, wherever she chooses to apply her skills. We congratulate her (and the many other impressive 30 under 30 finalists) on the part she's playing in shaping this great industry's future.

The immediate future for the industry, of course, features Organic September, and on page 49 Tom Campbell-Smart says it's time to 'go hard or go home' as he embraces the challenges and opportunities of this yearly celebration of everything organic.

In other news, Anabel Kindersley expresses disappointment after a meeting with Defra reveals the Government's hesitancy to set a pesticide reduction target (p4), while in Beauty Buzz (p21), Skin Diligent co-founder, Tule Park, also protests against harmful toxins, this time in skincare products that contain endocrine-disrupting chemicals.

This month's features see Jim Manson investigate how the gut-brain axis affects brain function (p18); Jane Wolfe discovers the versatility of sustainable seaweed (p28); and if you're feeling a bit peckish, Kate Miller munches her way through a selection of healthy lunch and snack ideas (p50).

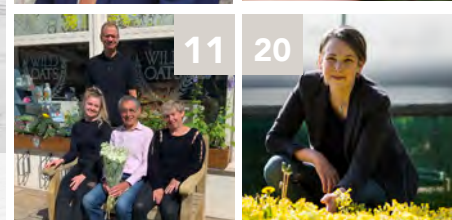
Wishing you all a hugely successful month embracing and sharing the bounty of organic!

Rosie Greenaway

What's inside this issue

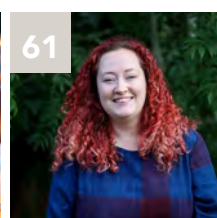
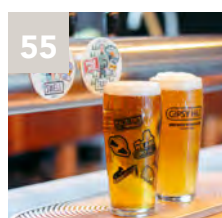
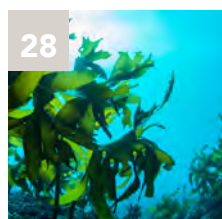


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Take time for a healthy lunch with Kate Miller as she unpacks what's trending

NaturalProducts news

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- *Natural Products News* aims to inform and entertain health food retailers, suppliers and others in the natural healthcare movement by communicating news, opinions and ideas from all sectors of the industry
- *NPN* seeks to encourage the professional and business-like development of the industry while safeguarding the principles on which the health food movement was founded
- *NPN's* writers work independently of the advertising department. Stories about manufacturers and their products are judged solely on their merit and published if considered to be of interest to retailers

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Meeting reveals Defra's reluctance to act on pesticides

FOLLOWING a meeting with Defra, Anabel Kindersley, co-owner of Neal's Yard Remedies, has reissued an industry-wide call to action to apply continued pressure on Government to protect Britain's biodiversity.

Kindersley met with Mark Spencer, MP for Sherwood and Minister of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, at Defra headquarters in June.

As an active campaigner for bees, Kindersley had intended to instigate an 'open discussion' about pesticides and to impress upon Spencer not only the damaging effects of neonicotinoids on pollinators but their negative impact on business. Spencer was, she reports, less engaged than she had hoped and the meeting cast doubt on the Government's willingness to address pesticide use with any urgency.

Neal's Yard Remedies, like many natural and organic brands, depends on a healthy ecosystem for the ingredients within its products. As such, Kindersley's Stand by Bees campaign has drawn support from a coalition of more than 100 businesses and NGOs, united in their goal of cutting the use of hazardous pesticides to protect nature and the economy.

The Government's *Sustainable Use of Pesticide: National Action Plan* is yet to be published, and no follow-up conversations between Kindersley and Spencer were agreed.

"[I] really hope that the minister will have the chance to reflect, post our meeting, and wish to work with the wider business community – a collaboration of over 100 businesses across all industries who care about nature and our bees.

"Our Stand By Bees campaign is asking to work with the Government towards a pesticide reduction target to protect our bees and pollinators, before Britain's biodiversity is even further depleted," she tells *NPN*.

Neal's Yard Remedies is encouraging customer to write to their local MPs and request the 'long-awaited pesticide reduction plan', and Kindersley is now repeating her previous call to industry to 'make its voice heard' and push the issue up the political agenda.

"We need to keep the pressure up and as a collective raise awareness of the critical need to protect our pollinators. After all, one in three mouthfuls of food depend on them." *Updated campaign assets for use on social media can be downloaded at tinyurl.com/snpsbky5*



**SAVE
THE BEES
#STANDBYBEES**

Industry pays tribute to Peter Aldis



AFTER the unexpected death of Peter Aldis, former CEO of Holland & Barrett (H&B), on 30 June, *NPN* hears from friends and former colleagues who pay tribute to a man they describe as a 'larger than life character' and 'self-made winner'.

Martin Moran, a close family friend and former operations director at H&B, reflects on Aldis' early professional life: "His retail career started when he dropped out of his A-Level studies [and] decided to take a sales assistant role in Curry's – a decision his father frowned upon, saying 'Retail will never give you a career of note'. If only he had survived to see his son's achievements. Peter would tell people, when asked to describe his skills, that he was a 'simple shopkeeper', which severely underplayed his prolific achievements. There is a saying that typifies Peter: 'Winners make it happen; losers let it happen'. Peter Aldis was a self-made winner."

After Curry's came Asda, where Aldis worked on the management team of several stores across London. In 1990 he joined H&B, beginning a 29-year career with the chain which would see him span several divisions; he moved from area sales manager to senior positions within property and acquisitions – where he was instrumental in driving the chain's rapid bricks

and mortar expansion – and marketing, before becoming commercial director in 2000 and launching the famous 'Penny Sale'. In 2006 he was promoted to managing director and in 2009 became CEO, following the retirement of Barry Vickers. As MD, Aldis developed H&B's online presence and launched a global franchise division across Europe, Asia and the Middle East. A new manufacturing plant was built in Burton and a new headquarters established in Nuneaton.

"Under his leadership ... the brand was ahead of the curve on areas such as vegan and natural beauty," recalls Moran. "Under his leadership H&B was recognized on two occasions as Speciality Retailer of the Year and the H&B training programme recognized as a leading programme for the health food industry. Peter was a loud voice within the industry and served as chairman of the NAHS [now Health Stores UK] for several years. He helped develop strategies ... to promote the industry and fight legislation where necessary. He would be very active and have lively presence at shows and conferences – a larger than life character who loved socializing and was always on hand to help guide or advise anybody who asked for his help."

When H&B was sold by Carlyle in 2017, Aldis' com-

mercial legacy showed an 'unprecedented 38 quarters of like for like growth' – a record Moran says has never been delivered before and is unlikely to be again.

In 2019, after 29 years with the business, Aldis left H&B and was appointed managing director for US-based vitamin manufacturer Piping Rock, which he subsequently expanded to the UK. Taking on various additional advisory and non-executive roles within the industry, in 2022 he founded consultancy business Aldis Advice, supporting companies within the health sector. "He was actively working on the day he passed away. A winner to the end. Gone but never forgotten," comments Moran.

Roger Craddock, former group legal director and company secretary, H&B, adds his own tribute: "I was a director of Holland & Barrett for over 25 years, working with Peter. He was a larger than life character; sometimes infuriating, but always an astute businessman and invariably great fun. He would describe himself as a 'shopkeeper' and thought his greatest strength was his passion for the industry, which he certainly had in spades."

Aldis, a proud Irishman and avid Leicester Tigers fan, owned five dogs and was a judge on *The Apprentice*. He is survived by wife Sile, and children Fred, Conor, Aoife, Kitty and Arthur.

Protein powder recalled over 'potentially lethal' caffeine levels

FOLLOWING Food Standards Agency (FSA) testing, three batches of Sci-Mx Nutrition Ultra Muscle Strawberry Flavour protein powder have been recalled from sale in Home Bargains stores over excessive, unsafe caffeine levels.

FSA tests of the 1.5kg pouches detected over 5g of caffeine per serving, equating to 'potentially lethal' amounts when following the on-pack advice to consume two helpings a day (over 10g).

The FSA notes that for most people 10g of caffeine can be 'a lethal dose', but in certain individuals doses as low as 3g have had lethal consequences. The advice for pregnant and breastfeeding women is no more than 0.2g a day.

"This makes the product unsafe to consume. Some of these products were found to contain levels of caffeine ... that could be fatal." says the FSA,

noting that excessive amounts of caffeine can also cause 'anxiety, sleeplessness, agitation, palpitations, diarrhoea and restlessness'.

It adds: "Individuals with a mental health condition ... can experience worsened psychosis and [this can] result in the need for higher amounts of medication. Caffeine can reduce how well your antipsychotic medications work."

In a Facebook post, SCI-MX Nutrition said it is continuing to liaise with the FSA. "We deeply regret the incident and sincerely apologize to all our customers. Whilst we believe the incident is isolated we will be rigorously reviewing ... our processes to ensure we retain the trust and confidence of our customers."

The brand confirms the affected batches as W110429, W110430 and W110431 – all with a BBE date of 03/2025.

Minister advocates expediting gene editing

WITH the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Act now passed into law, Thérèse Coffey, Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, is advocating for quick progress with its implementation.

According to *Food Navigator*, Coffey spoke at a recent event in London about the need to bring the theory of gene editing (GE) into practice as soon as possible. "We need to get on with it frankly," commented the minister, adding that GE would 'help us design climate-resilient wheat and could help us design out the need for quite so much pesticide or use of artificial fertilizer', and could enable farmers to grow crops using less water. "It's a really exciting opportunity and a massive commercial opportunity too."

Coffey is also reported to have expressed support for the 'sensible' use of pesticides, including the controversial herbicide glyphosate, calling it 'perfectly safe' as a means of support for no-till farming practices. Her comments come amid reactions from environmental and health campaigners over EFSA's conclusion that glyphosate is 'unlikely to



pose a carcinogenic hazard to humans' (see p7).

When the Precision Breeding Act became law in March, Pat Thomas, director of Beyond GM, offered this view of the legislative changes: "The Genetic Technology Act has a single beneficiary: the biotech industry. It removes meaningful regulatory control – including safety assessments, consumer labelling and monitoring – from a staggering range of genetically modified plants and animals in our food system and the wider environment. It allows biotech developers to self-certify that their engineered organisms are safe and beneficial and imposes no penalties if that turns out to be untrue. I think it's absolutely right to question the motives and the consequences of any piece of legislation that allows

a large and well-funded industry to fly so far below the regulatory radar."

She added: "The political context of this Act is as important as the scientific context. The UK Government has shown complete disdain for science by inventing its own category of GMOs – the precision bred organism (PBO). This PBO is a special Brexit GMO that, we are told, will transport the United Kingdom to the sunny uplands of global tech dominance while at the same time fixing our food system and wider environmental problems. The catch is that gene-editing technology, which has been around for more than a decade, consistently over-promises and under-delivers, and that makes it an economic, food system and environmental failure. We should be focusing on solutions that work."

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Vegan businesswoman carries baton in climate action relay

TAKING part in the Running Out of Time Relay this summer, Lisa Gawthorne, managing director of plant-based distributor Bravura Foods, carried the baton through Liverpool as the climate action event made its way from Ben Nevis to Big Ben.

The relay is Britain's biggest sporting celebration of climate action and nature, involving thousands of runners, walkers, wheelers and cyclists, each contributing between one and 18 miles to the 1,653-mile route.

Travelling through 50 cities and towns, the relay aimed to 'inspire the nation to take collective action towards net zero, because the planet is running out of time'.

The baton featured a digital climate clock, 'symbolizing the

race against time'. It was delivered to Parliament on 11 July, carrying the following message: "What do we do when we're running out of time? We get moving! We are calling on everyone – from national Government to local Government, from individuals to communities, from schools to businesses – to work together to protect our world now and for future generations."

Gawthorne (pictured) – a decorated vegan athlete – escorted the baton from Liverpool's Wavertree Athletic Stadium to Stadt Moers Park, covering six miles.

"I am delighted to be involved in such a brilliant campaign that drives home the need to understand more and act with intention to reduce climate change. It's a matter

very dear to my heart and I am excited to be representing Vegan Runners on this relay through the streets of Liverpool," commented Gawthorne.

She says it was a close tie between either running or cycling my route, but she wanted to enjoy every step and felt she'd be more connected to the cause running it.

"It's great to see so many club members and the wider community who have chosen to move the baton from stage to stage. It's been carried in a variety of different ways – it's been walked, wheel-chaired, run, cycled, skied, Morris-danced, canoed, dragon boated and transported across the Thames in a cable car. I enjoyed every single step of the run," Gawthorne told *NPN* after finishing.





Patrick Holford

Patrick Holford is a nutritionist, author and leading commentator on natural health

Cause versus consequence

Last month's newspaper headlines pitched the new anti-amyloid Alzheimer's drug as a 'turning point'. The pitch has a lot in common with the statin story.

Is cholesterol the cause of heart disease? No. Do statins lower it? Yes. Are amyloid deposits the cause of cognitive decline? No. Do anti-amyloid drugs lower it? Yes. No doubt there will be a blood test soon for amyloid, just like a blood test for cholesterol, the effect of which pushed millions into taking statins.

Both statins, given to people with very high cholesterol, and anti-amyloid drugs, given to people with very high amyloid levels, do have marginal benefit. In the case of the new Alzheimer's drug the benefit is considerably less than half that shown from the combination of B vitamins and omega-3.

But, even more than statins, they come with a high risk of quite serious adverse effects – over a third in the recent trial got brain bleeding or swelling, and three died. Also, the whole brain shrinkage accelerated by 20% compared to placebo, a fact not reported in any newspaper. Any vitamin showing such adverse effects would be immediately banned.

But the important question is what's causing these diseases, be it cognitive decline or heart disease? To the extent that cholesterol or amyloid are relevant, what makes them go up? Cholesterol gets damaged by sugar and by oxidants and protected by antioxidants such as vitamin C and a low-carb diet. Brain cells get damaged by homocysteine and protected by B vitamins and omega-3.

Mind the gap

Also, in those with cognitive decline there's an energy deficit to brain cells. Ironically, they can't get the glucose they need due for 'insulin resistance' which is driven by eating too much sugar and ultra-processed carbs. So, the effect of too much sugar is to starve the brain of fuel which then leads to mental tiredness and cognitive decline.

There is a way around this and that is to give the brain an alternative fuel: ketones. Ketones can either be supplied as ketone salts or esters, both of which taste disgusting, or made from a type of fat – principally C8 oil, which is a medium chain triglyceride.

About 7% of coconut oil is C8. Studies giving people with cognitive decline a C8-rich MCT oil have shown clear improvements in cognition by increasing the brain's energy supply and production. Ripping out amyloid deposits isn't going to fill this energy gap. Eating fewer carbs, reversing diabetes (which is a big risk factor for dementia) and having C8 oil will.

An increase in amyloid in the brain is really a consequence of the disease, not the cause. It's part of an inflammatory reaction, much like the nodules in joints that occur from inflammation resulting in arthritis. Should you cut out the nodules or reduce inflammation? Do you eliminate the root cause or target the consequences? Inflammation is a function of a bad diet high in ultra-processed and fried food, smoking, lack of antioxidants, omega-3 fats and vitamin C, to name a few key nutrients. Having an active lifestyle is also important.

The same story exists with all major diseases. Cancer cells thrive on sugar. Do you starve them, and

in the process protect healthy cells, or cut or drug them out?

The big difference in approach – treating the cause or the consequences – is money. You can't patent nutrients, but you can patent drugs that stop you making cholesterol or amyloid. More than \$1 billion has been spent on the anti-amyloid approach, and the push isn't going to stop. Pharma needs a return on its investment. This latest drug treatment, according to the *Financial Times*, will be sold for \$26,000 a year. Taking B vitamins, eating fish and/or supplementing omega-3 (which has shown more clinical benefit and reduced the rate of brain shrinkage by over 70% with no side-effects) might cost £100 a year. Which would you choose? For a fully referenced version, visit foodforthebrain.org/amyloid-cause-consequence

The views expressed by our columnists do not necessarily reflect the views of our editor or publishers



A breakthrough for textile circular economy

IN A JOINT venture between Project Plan B and Salvation Army Trading Company Ltd (SATCoL), polyester textiles have been recycled back into raw materials.

The new 'game-changing' technology presents 'a huge opportunity for the fashion circular economy' by producing polyester pellets from second-hand garments and turning them into yarn.

The system was developed by Project Plan B and will be installed by SATCoL at its Fibersort processing centre this month, where 65,000 tonnes of donated items are sorted annually.

Plans have also been unveiled for the first commercial-scale recycling plant for post-consumer polyester.

Marianne Frost, head of environmental and sustainability, SATCoL, says: "There are always items which are too damaged and we cannot resell; they are often garments made from polyester. With this new technology we can give these clothes a new lease of life. When your favourite jumper is worn out, we will ... turn it into polyester pellets, ready to be turned back into a new jumper. This is the future of fashion."

Plant-based 'inaccessible' for low-income families

A NEW report from The Food Foundation highlights the need to support low-income families in achieving a more climate-friendly diet.

If the UK is to meet its net zero target by 2050, The Food Foundation says 'greenhouse gas emissions from the food system will need to be reduced by shifting UK diets so they contain more plant foods and fewer animal foods'.

But the report questions whether 'reducing the emissions footprint of UK diets is equally achievable for different income groups', pointing to the 'price premium' of plant-based meat and dairy alternatives as a barrier to low-income families. While fruit and veg costs an average of £11.79 per 1,000 calories, animal-based foods cost £8 for the same volume.

"In theory, low-emission diets can be affordable [but]

the briefing identifies that in practice such diets can be more expensive and inaccessible for low-income households," says the organization.

The briefing highlights an opportunity for pulses – a less expensive source of protein than meat – but points to 'poor availability' and 'low levels of familiarity' as reasons for minimal consumption of legumes in the UK.

The Food Foundation is encouraging businesses to make pulses and fresh produce 'more affordable, available and appealing', and is urging Government to 'use fiscal incentives to rebalance the cost of the basket'.

Wider promotion of fruit, vegetables and legumes, the group says, should include strengthened support for the UK horticulture sector and improved public procurement strategy.

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Anger as glyphosate risk 'swept under carpet'

AN EFSA peer review of a member states risk assessment of glyphosate has prompted anger from campaign groups, after the agency failed to recognize several critical areas of concern.

The controversial herbicide is currently approved for use in the EU until 15 December, yet has been deemed by the WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as 'probably carcinogenic to humans' since 2015.

As part of the legal process to renew glyphosate's use beyond December the risk assessment was peer-reviewed by EFSA. Despite acknowledging data gaps, the agency concluded that 'glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic hazard to humans', adding that 'the evidence does not support classification with regard to its carcinogenic potential'.

But campaigners argue the findings deliberately ignore clear threats posed by the herbicide. "For years the evidence of glyphosate's toxicity for people and the environment has been stacking up, but EFSA has once again decided to sweep it under the carpet. The commission and EU governments have a duty to protect people and nature: they must reject its reapproval and put European farming on a sustainable course," says Eva Corral, Greenpeace EU.

Jörg Rohwedder, executive director, Foodwatch International, joins Corral in demanding governmental intervention. "If the scientific evidence does not provide clear answers, a political decision must be taken to protect the health of consumers – and as long as the evidence of potential cancer risks has not been refuted, only one decision is

conceivable: the European Commission must take the precautionary principle into account and withdraw glyphosate's approval."

Angeliki Lysimachou, PAN Europe head of science and policy, adds: "The glyphosate scandal continues. The positive response of EFSA to proceed despite acknowledging data gaps and shortcomings in glyphosate's evaluation undermines public trust in European institutions which have a role in safeguarding the health of citizens and the environment. While EFSA acknowledges that glyphosate products can harm biodiversity, be neurotoxic and affect the microbiome, it refrains from providing a negative opinion and instead shifts the responsibility to member states, who never examine the long-term human toxicity of their products despite the requirements of the EU law."

Psychedelics legalized for mental health in Australia

IN A WORLD first, Australia has legalized psychedelics for the treatment of certain mental health conditions.

On 1 July authorities placed two drugs on the list of approved medicines by the Therapeutic Goods Administration, meaning that controlled doses of MDMA can be prescribed in a clinical environment by approved psychiatrists for patients with post-traumatic stress disorder, along with psilocybin for treatment-resistant depression.

While hailed in the scientific community as a game-changer placing Australia 'at the forefront of research in this field', the move isn't

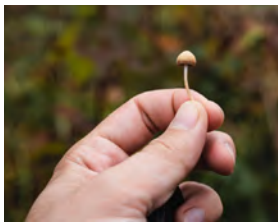
without controversy, with warnings that hype shouldn't eclipse concerns over the risks. While clinical trials have shown 'consistently positive outcomes', according to Associate Professor Daniel Perkins of the Psychae Institute, Melbourne, trial data is limited. "We don't exactly know how well it's going to translate to the real-world settings."

It is also an expensive route; each round of treatment is likely to cost between AUD\$15,000 and AUD\$25,000, says Perkins.

Dr Mike Musker, mental health researcher, University of South Australia, suggests there's a risk of self-

administration; if treatment isn't affordable, 'desperate' patients may 'try and treat themselves' at home.

"Psychiatrists will need to provide a clinical justification for why ... these substances are appropriate for the patient group they're proposing to treat," says Perkins. "Patients will be able to access these only in supervised clinical settings."



Denmark opens energy-efficient 'Smart Store'

A NEW 'Smart Store' has opened in Nordborg, Denmark, showcasing a range of technologies which limit food waste, strengthen food safety and enable the retailer to be 50% more energy efficient than a regular supermarket.

Industrial machinery manufacturer Danfoss is behind the Smart Store project, installing innovative refrigeration and heat capture and reuse technology which reduces energy consumption and operating costs in the 1,500 sq m space. Among the features, high-end case controllers optimize fridge performance, and a heat recovery unit captures excess heat from cooling systems and redistributes it around the store and local community through a heating network servicing the district (saving up to 90% in heating costs).

Danfoss also uses a novel approach which integrates refrigeration, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, further reducing the supermarket's carbon footprint.

Other cost-saving measures include installing

doors on fridge and freezer cases; swapping incandescent bulbs for LED lights fully powered by solar energy from rooftop panels; and implementing Alsense Food Retail – a food waste reduction scheme operated via IoT (Internet of Things) devices and a cloud service platform which gives the store real-time insights into how it can dispose of less food. The technology comes with a 24/7 monitoring feature and alarm system to alert and dispatch technicians should a freezer break down overnight.

Jürgen Fischer, president at Danfoss Climate Solutions, comments: "We have developed this new Smart Store ... to demonstrate that it is possible to build a climate-friendly and super-efficient facility, using world-class heating and cooling technology. [It] proves that the future is now. This supermarket is purpose-built for the world ahead of us; a world of more urbanization, larger populations, greater energy demands, a growing need for cooling, and efficient food storage."





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The NMI Summit is also a place to connect with colleagues. Hundreds of people from all over the world converge to meet and collaborate with a shared sense of purpose. Together we are progressing towards better healthcare via personalised nutrition and lifestyle medicine.”

Benjamin Brown, NMI Director

Event highlights:

- ✓ Special theme of the microbiome, gastrointestinal and systemic health
- ✓ 12 presentations from world-leading researchers, scientists, and clinicians
- ✓ Healthy morning snacks, break refreshments, and lunch inclusive
- ✓ Exhibition area featuring leading brands and services
- ✓ Conference tote bag with sponsor samples and giveaways
- ✓ Gala Evening social event included with your ticket
- ✓ Course materials including notes, supplementary research, and video recordings

13-14 October 2023 · Millennium Gloucester Hotel · London
Learn more & book now at nmi.health/summit2023

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Wild Oats co-founder hands over reigns

AFTER leading the team at Bristol's first independent health food store for more than 40 years, Wild Oats co-founder Mike Abrahams is retiring and handing over the reigns to three directors.

Founded in 1981, when Abrahams and wife Loes took over a small deli, Wild Oats now houses one of Bristol's most extensive ranges of wholefoods, supplements and natural remedies, and is regarded as a Bristol institution and a vital health hub for the local community.

"After more than four decades at the helm of Wild Oats, I hand over to a more than capable team of directors," he told *NPN*. "Alicia Stephens, Heather Wilson and Don Dickinson each have their own unique set of skills that will see Wild Oats thrive

in this changing economy for small independents."

Abrahams assures customers the directors, who collectively have a 'vast amount of experience' working for the

store, will ensure Wild Oats' core values are maintained.

Wild Oats celebrated its landmark 40th birthday last year and continues to pave the way for indie health stores.



Pictured L-R: Stephens, Dickinson, Abrahams, Wilson

Eversfield Organic incorporates Coombe Farm Organic

DEVON-based organic grocery service Eversfield Organic Ltd has announced its incorporation of Coombe Farm Organic in a move that will double the size of its online offer of ethically sourced meat.

As part of the incorporation, Eversfield Organic will assume management of Coombe Farm Organic's operations, including its online butchery and all future deliveries.

"We're excited to be able to continue the outstanding mission that Coombe Farm Organic has set out to accomplish," says Mark Bury, Eversfield Organic MD. "We have been incredibly impressed by their ethos and their dedication to providing customers with an exceptional range of sustainable and traceable products ...

Our shared beliefs and commitment to championing top-quality, ethically sourced meat and regenerative farming processes make this partnership a perfect fit and we are delighted to be strengthening our businesses with this incorporation."

Founded in 2004, Eversfield Organic began as a local organic grocery service and has expanded to offer nationwide deliveries, operating several farm shops, organic inns and cafés, and running the butcher and fishmongers in Selfridges Food Hall.



Spitalfields welcomes raye the store pop-up for Edition 06

OLD SPITALFIELDS Market welcomed raye the store throughout July, playing host to its latest health and wellness discovery space.

The pop-up (Edition 06), in partnership with artisanal ice cream brand Araw, housed over 240 products from 70 emerging food, drinks and wellness brands and hosted a range of immersive in-store events. Raye's curated selection of products sat alongside an all-natural ice cream bar serving Araw's inventive flavours and weekly dessert specials.

"I created raye as a destination for discovery, since then we have evolved from offering a beauti-

ful curation of brands to immersive events where customers can experience new offerings and learn about product innovation directly from founders and industry experts," explains founder Nicole Compen. "We are delighted to partner with ice cream brand Araw during this pop-up as they share our vision for food innovation, creativity and transparent business practices."

The 600 sq ft space was led by design team Studio Böreck alongside architectural designer Rawan Muqaddas and aimed to evoke the feel of summer with a bright orange palette.



Rebel supermarket HISBE sees fundraising success

ETHICAL supermarket HISBE managed to far surpass its stretch target of £75,000 on Crowdfunder to reach over £106k, garnering 191 supporters.

"These last three years have been tough, on all of us," says co-founder Ruth Anslow. "HISBE has been in survival mode – and we are so grateful to all our customers and supporters for sticking with us. HISBE simply wouldn't still be here without you."

She adds: "Running any small business at the moment is extra challenging, with rising costs and customers watching their pennies. But it's even more of a balancing act for HISBE, as a social enterprise. It costs us extra to follow our values and do the right thing, whilst still keeping prices affordable for our shoppers. Thankfully we are now

seeing the shoots of recovery in both stores, but we also need to raise funding to keep going and return HISBE to expansion-readiness. Our goal is to build a network of stores in Sussex – and we're in talks with Lewes Council about bringing HISBE store number three to Lewes High Street in 2024."

The crowdfund received match-funding from Aviva and Be The Earth Foundation.



Counter Culture

Cheshire

It felt like it was meant to be when we found this place

I co-own the store with my sister Jackie, and it feels lovely to be part of a family business. We're both really passionate about what we do. I've been in the industry for twenty-something years and she's an excellent nutritional therapist. We've just had our tenth birthday, which was a major milestone. It was also amazing to be a finalist in the Natural Beauty Retail Awards 2023.

I feel like my background in the industry comes across as a bit strange! But basically, I've always wanted to work in natural health for as long as I can remember. When I was much younger, I used to just go into health stores and try and understand what all the herbal products were for. It was definitely my dream to work in a health store from a young age – and it finally came true.

Eventually, after I'd had a lot of retail experience, we got together to find our own store. It felt like it was meant to be when we found this place. I



KYLIE WILLIAMS,
THERAPY ORGANICS,
WILMSLOW



remember distinctly thinking 'If we don't do it now then it's never going to happen'. We've never looked back.

We didn't want it to feel like a traditional health food shop. We wanted to create a space that felt modern and just fill it with the loveliest

products that we could find. We have oils burning in the diffuser and it just creates a relaxed atmosphere. Our clients come in, take a deep breath and think 'Everything feels calm and nice here' – even if we might not be feeling like that at all!

I think that our customer base has really changed through the years. So, before the Internet it felt like we were seeing people who weren't getting the information they needed from the medical profession. It was a lot of women, often looking for information about menopause. But today it's a lot broader than that. It's hard to say who a typical customer is these days. There's a younger generation coming



What's selling?

VMS: We do well with Terranova and Viridian. From the start, we were always insistent that everything should be filler-free. Yeah, we've never stocked anything with fillers. And at the time it felt like a risk as it was moving away from brands we knew. But it paid off because now people specifically come in for that reason.

Food: We don't do a lot of food just because we have a Waitrose literally a few doors down. However, it's good for us because it has the

same demographic, so people come in here after they've done their food shop.

Natural beauty: We do a few mainstream brands like Dr Hauschka, but we also really love Oskia, which is a London brand. Its range was founded on the benefits of MSM for healing, reducing inflammation and detoxing. All things that help the skin. We also started with de Mamiel. That's really beautiful because it combines advanced nutritional ingredients with the energetics of plant medicine.

Matt Chittock spends time with Natural Beauty Retail Awards finalist Therapy Organics in Cheshire



in now and they're into things like medicinal mushrooms or collagen. Also, we've grown with what we've done on the Internet. So, we take care about what we put on social media to represent the store and have plenty of information online. That helps show people that we're the experts.

Our blog is definitely something we want to grow and develop. But if I'm honest we get extremely busy, and it can be a struggle to keep it up to date. Like with our social media, it's about trying to be as honest and as educational as possible online. It's about getting good information out there from well-qualified people. It's a bit of an extension of the way we

spend time with people on the shop floor.

We get customers from across the town and the rest of the county. And we do quite a bit online now. It really is all genders and people who want to get to the root of their issues. On the natural beauty side, I think customers are looking for



natural alternatives with some science behind them.

I think one of the main reasons customers shop with us is because we're able to give a lot of advice on the shop floor. So, we make sure that our staff are qualified nutritional therapists. There's so much information out there now – and it can be confusing for people. It sounds corny but we never try and 'sell' anything – we just tell customers about it. If they're going to buy it, then they're going to buy it.

I think our passion is for digestive health. Everything else stems from that. It's at the heart of our business: the clinic, the nutritional therapy, treatments, everything. From a personal perspective I used

to work in a clinic where we specialized in candida treatment. I got to kind of see over about seven years the differences that simple things like taking a probiotic can make. I thought 'Wow – there's so much involved in this', but at the time doctors weren't acknowledging it.

I feel really excited about the future. The last few years have been challenging in having to adapt fast to things. But now hopefully there's going to be a bit more stability. You never know what's around the corner, but we're passionate about building, about growing and we never want to go away from the one-to-one personal service – that is just so important to us.

Health stores driving Healthy Kids campaign

Viridian Nutrition and Oliver McCabe bring new cookery tour to health retailers.

Health Stores in the UK and Ireland will be equipping kids "with a lifetime of good health" in an exciting campaign led by wholefood chef Oliver McCabe and Viridian Nutrition.

The Calling All Kid Warriors initiative starting this month, sees the ethical vitamin company partnering with Oliver to educate and encourage positive eating habits for the next generation by getting kids back in the kitchen, learning about food, cooking for themselves and building their confidence.

The campaign involves the launch of new inspiring cookbook Kids' Kitchen Takeover featuring tasty and nutritious recipes written by Oliver. Additionally, a national cookery tour and book signing events will be rolled out across health stores, coupled with large-scale press coverage and significant promotion across social channels.

With a food first emphasis to nutrition, the campaign will also educate families on how food supplements can address nutritional shortfalls and be used to create nutrient packed meals.

The campaign shines a light on health stores, recognising them as a valuable community resource, and how they can bring families and future generations together to live healthier, happier lives.

Key features:

- Kids' Kitchen Takeover cookbook sold exclusively through independent health retailers
- Cookery tour and demonstrations instore
- Free goody bags for children attending
- Impactful and informative POS materials to attract customers
- Digital and social media resources



Oliver said: "I'm thrilled to be working with Viridian on this important campaign. Kids' nourishment and wellbeing, along with ensuring easy access to wholesome quality ingredients for all, is one of my passions. I truly believe health stores have a

central part to play in driving change."

Oliver has worked in the independent health and wellness sector for over 20 years. A nutritional therapist, Oliver has previously authored the bestselling cookbook The Fuel Food

Cookbook.

As well as going on a UK and Ireland tour, Oliver will be appearing in the press to encourage children to start a health and happiness revolution in their homes, eat a wide variety of fresh foods and move away from processed foods by enjoying the wholesome recipes contained in Kids' Kitchen Takeover.

Cheryl Thallon, Founder and Managing Director of Viridian, said: "Health Food Stores are at the heart of our communities, right there on our local high streets with a wealth of knowledge and are accessible. By providing resources, information, and partnering with chefs such as Oliver, we can in time slowly help create change by getting the message out there to help children and young adults learn more about lifestyle, eating habits, and how the food choices they make can affect their own lives and their future."

Stores interested in getting involved can contact their Territory Manager or email: marketing@viridian-nutrition.com



Kids' Kitchen Takeover – a must-have for the family

Kids' Kitchen Takeover, is a must for all families who want their kids to grow into super-healthy adults. Packed with 35+ delicious and simple plant-based menu ideas, this fun cookbook encourages kids from 6 to 15 to embrace wholesome and nourishing food, and to share them with their families.

At the same time, this budget-friendly recipe collection equips the younger generation with essential life skills, building their kitchen confidence and has a dedicated page-long introduction to health stores, highlighting retailers as a key resource for families.

More than half the recipes can be made for under £10/€10.

With easy to follow, step-by-step picture guides and child-friendly nutritional information, children can have a go at making Easy-Breezy Pancakes, Sweet & Spiced Granola, Oatlycious Bread to Sundried Tomato Falafel or Vegtastic Pizza.

"Food and lifestyle habits have a big part to play in our immediate and distant future," explains Oliver. "It's all about having fun in the kitchen, eating well, and sharing food with friends and family," explains Oliver.

"Simply put, the foundations of good long-term health can be found in the kitchen!"

To order, contact the info@viridian-nutrition.com or call 01327 878050

Viridikid Multivitamin

Specifically formulated for the needs of children between the ages of 2-14 to support optimal growth, immunity, energy and long-term health. This complete multivitamin contains vitamin D, zinc and magnesium to support growing bones and strong teeth, along with copper, selenium and vitamin C to strengthen the immune system. Zinc, iodine and iron have been added to support cognitive development, whilst biotin, copper and magnesium provide energy support for growing bodies. The inclusion of beta carotene enables the body to produce vitamin A which is a particularly important vitamin for children's vision, skin and immune health. The nutrients are contained in an easy-to-swallow microcapsule and suitable for vegans.



Viridikid Organic Omega Oil

Viridikid Organic Omega Oil is a select combination of certified organic, vegan, plant based oils, rich in omega 3 to support kids aged 1-12. Specially formulated for these developing years, this nutrient dense oil provides alpha linolenic acid, which can be metabolised by the body to create the fatty acids DHA and EPA. These are important additions in any diet, and especially for children as they develop. DHA contributes to the maintenance of normal vision and normal brain function. Organic vanilla and organic orange oils ensure a pleasant natural taste. Can be taken straight from the spoon, or mixed into water, juice, smoothies or yoghurts if preferred.



Synerbio Viridikid Children's Powder

Synerbio Viridikid Children's Powder is a vegan targeted formulation comprising four scientifically studied strains of good gut bacteria with added prebiotics. With vitamin C to support normal function of the immune system, bones, cartilage, skin, gums and teeth. The unique prebiotic FS2-60 offers full-spectrum prebiotic fructo oligosaccharides and plant-derived inulin. Specially formulated for children aged 1-14, this pleasant tasting dairy-free powder can be mixed with cereals, juice or smoothies. This is a great way to deliver high-quality support to keep little tummies happy. Good for replenishing the digestive system after a bout of illness or medication and also ideal for daily support.



Viridikid Liquid Vitamin D3 Drops 400IU

Viridikid Liquid Vitamin D3 Drops 400IU features vegan vitamin D3. Whereas most vitamin D3 supplements on the market are derived from the lanolin in sheep's wool, Viridian's advanced form of vitamin D is plant sourced from lichen and has been clinically trialled at the University of Surrey. This great tasting liquid formulation for children with natural orange oil, is in an easy to use dropper bottle. Vitamin D supports growth and development of healthy bones in children. Vitamin D contributes to normal immune functioning of the immune system in those aged 3-18 years, and supports teeth and muscles.



Organic Viridikid Liquid C drops

A delicious way to get a natural boost of vitamin C, Viridikid Vitamin C drops contain fruit sourced acerola cherry combined with organic coconut glycerine, natural orange and vegan friendly oil. Delivering up to 30x more vitamin C than oranges, acerola cherry is a potent natural source ideal to support normal immunity. Vitamin C contributes to the normal function of the immune system. Grown ecologically in Brazil, once hand-harvested Viridian's acerola cherries are freeze dried to lock in nutrients to ensure the highest possible vitamin C content. Certified organic by the Soil Association. This formulation can be mixed with cold drinks or added to food.



Kids' Kitchen Takeover

Imagine if everyone learned cookery skills and healthy eating habits as a child – what impact might that have on our lifetime health and happiness? Kids' Kitchen Takeover offers 35+ easy-to-follow, step-by-step recipes that are sure to become family favourites. Author and Wholefood Chef Oliver McCabe shows how good wholesome delicious food, bursting with flavour and essential nutrients can help families live the healthiest and happiest lives possible. This colourful and engaging cookbook spread over 140 pages is a must for all families who want their kids to grow into super-healthy adults. Simply put, the foundations of good long-term health can be found in the kitchen!



To order, contact your Territory Manager or call 01327 878050

What's new in store

What's new in store is the definitive guide to the best new natural and organic products coming on to the market

Sleep Broad Spectrum CBD Oil

Discover blissful nights with Evopure's Sleep Broad Spectrum CBD Oil. Our organically sourced EU hemp, extracted from the entire plant, creates the potent "entourage effect" for maximum wellness benefits. Complemented by 100% natural calm-inducing ingredients like passiflora and our unique terpene blend, our CBD sleep blend soothes the mind and body, deepening sleep cycles. This citrus tasting oil contains 30 servings, in a 500mg or 1000mg CBD bottle. Awarded the UK's best CBD oil by Reader's Digest & Natural Health Magazine. Grab your bottle now for a new dawn of revitalized sleep & energy!

Contact: Evopure
Tel: 020 3383 0117
www.evopure.co.uk

Available from: Hunt's Food Group



natural brands

This month's shout out from Natural Brands - Supporting Independent Retail...

Limited Edition Seasonal Lattes

NEW from Organic Traditions - Four Festive Favourites to Spice Up this Winter Season.

Both delicious and nourishing, these Seasonal Lattes will liven up your hot drinks range and create a great seasonal display. The whole range is Dairy Free, Gluten Free, Kosher and Super Convenient – just add hot water! Choose from Pumpkin Spice, Red Velvet, Mint Chocolate and Holiday Spice.

Enjoy 15% Off this September via CLF and Hunts Food Group.

www.organictraditions.com

Prices: RRP £11.99

Available from: CLF: clfdistribution.com and Hunts Food Group



www.naturalbrands.co.uk

Email: hello@naturalbrands.co.uk

Naked & Natural Soap

Get Naked & Natural with Friendly Soap! Packaging-free natural soap bars that represent a beautiful harmony between sustainability, skincare and simplicity.

By choosing these eco-friendly alternatives, you support a greener future while supplying a luxurious and nourishing bathing experience to zero waste consumers. Friendly Soap is free-from synthetic additives and harsh chemicals, just natural soap bars providing gentle and skin-friendly cleansing.

So embrace the beauty and benefits of these packaging-free natural soap bars. No wrapping required, they've got your bare essentials covered!

Prices: Trade £8.22 (7) RRP £2.45 (1)

Contact: Friendly soap Tel: 01422 400282

www.friendlysoap.co.uk

Available from: CLF, Hunts, Dundeis, Infinity, Essential.



Jamu Wild Water

Natural drinks company Jamu Wild Water are making a splash with their range of gut-friendly sparkling waters. Their prebiotic, immune-boosting drinks sparkle with natural fruit flavours and gentle sweetness the whole family can enjoy with no sugar or artificial sweeteners in sight! Each can provides a whopping 100% of your suggested prebiotic intake, thanks to the wonder-plant Chicory Root Inulin.

Made in the UK Jamu Wild Water proudly sources British-grown botanicals, and pledges 10% of its profits to rewilding and educational charities. It's all part of their mission to embrace nature-led living that rewilds from the inside-out.

Prices: Trade £1-1.10 RRP £2-2.85

Contact: Jamu Wild Water Tel: 01392 984311

Website: jamuwildwater.co.uk

Available from: CLF, Diverse Fine Foods, Delicious Ideas, Inn-Express, Artisan Food Club



lunch!

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Brahmi Extract

New and improved Viridian Brahmi Extract is formulated by nutritionists for optimum potency. The 100% pure, standardised Brahmi herb provides the therapeutic dose based on clinical research, in an each easy-to-take capsule. To ensure a reliable and consistent level, the brahmi leaf is standardised to 50% bacosides, the key active compound which supports memory and mental focus. Viridian's Brahmi leaf is grown in India and extracted from the fresh leaf to provide optimal potency. Brahmi helps with the maintenance of good cognitive function and also helps to maintain memory with age. Viridian Brahmi Extract avoids artificial excipients, so every capsule contains pure brahmi extract which is sourced according to Viridian's strict ethical criteria.

Contact: Viridian Nutrition Tel: 01327 878050

Website: www.viridian-nutrition.com



Herbetom Liver Support

Liver health is becoming a key health category as the issue of non alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) increases.

This condition is often symptom free in the early stages and may not present until more serious liver symptoms occur.

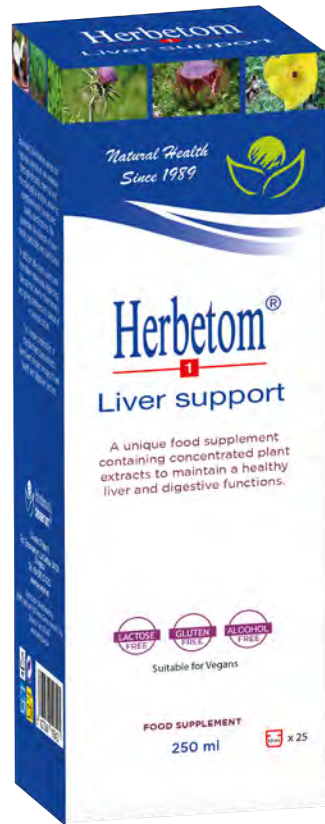
Herbetom Liver Support is a complimentary formulation with blackcurrant extract, milk thistle, artichoke, blessed thistle, radish, fennel, peppermint and sage.

Each plant is known for its positive effect on the Liver health, detoxification and health bile production

Samples bottles and point of sale is available from your WFBM representative or call Nicola on 01782 528611

Contact: WFBM Healthcare Ltd
Tel: 01782 528611

E-mail: mark.mccarty@wfbm.co.uk
www.wfbm.co.uk



Herbetom Transit

New to the Herbetom range is Herbetom Transit.

Formulated with vegetable glycerin, inulin, plum juice, rhubarb, fennel, green anise, artichoke and Aloe juice.

The convenient liquid formula provides reliable and natural relief from sluggish intestinal transit which can lead to constipation in increasing the potential for diverticular issues.

Samples bottles and point of sale is available from your WFBM representative or call Nicola on 01782 528611

Contact: WFBM Healthcare Ltd

Tel: 01782 528611

E-mail: mark.mccarty@wfbm.co.uk

www.wfbm.co.uk



12 Tissue Salts from Helios Homeopathy

Following an extensive development programme and launch, we are delighted with the response to our new range of Tissue Salts. The 12 individual Tissue Salts are made to the original formula and method first pioneered by Dr Wilhelm Schuessler in the 19th Century, after his extensive work and research.

These popular remedies, often known as Biochemic Cell Salts, cover a wide range of common complaints and first

situations, and can help nervous disorders such as anxiety and sleeplessness too. They act as a support to the 12 essential minerals that our bodies need to maintain balance and good health.

Helios Tissue Salts are made in traditional, quick dissolving tablet form using the 6x dilution and are suitable for all ages and your pets too. We will be adding combinations to the range later in the year and are committed to supporting retailers with free, informative point of sale material, staff training and advertising campaigns in consumer magazines. For more information and Special Introductory discounts on the Tissue Salts and please contact us.

Helios Homeopathy Ltd
Tel: 01892 511555
E-mail: retail@helios.co.uk



Organic Kombuchas

Our new range of sparkling organic kombuchas are craft-brewed and traditionally fermented from natural ingredients.

Suma kombucha offers a quality product and packaging and includes the traditional bestseller, ginger; a fruity option with strawberry and raspberry; and a more adventurous peach and turmeric.

The kombucha market is still in its infancy with growth predicted as

people look for alternative soft drinks that are natural, low in calories, without artificial sweeteners and alcohol free.

They RRP at £1.75 making them competitive in comparison to other kombuchas and, importantly, in relation to other healthy soft drinks in the chiller.

They come with an introductory offer for September and October, of 20% off.



Suma | Tel: 01422 313848 | www.suma.coop/wholesale

Suma Paper Packaged Pasta

We've ditched the plastic. Our Italian organic wheat pasta is now packaged in biodegradable and recyclable paper, sourced from sustainably managed forests. Printed with water-based ink and heat-sealing lacquers without solvents.

Our pasta is made using traditional methods by a co-operative bringing together over 300 farms. It's produced

using a slow drying process that uses 100% renewable energy. We have eight different types of pasta, so plenty of choice.

The product lasts as long as it would in plastic packaging if stored correctly, and has a highly competitive RRP, at just £1.89 for the penne, macaroni and spaghetti, and £2.25 for tricolore fusilli.



Ferti-Over-40, Her Estro Balance, Detox Remedy

GinSen are Chinese medicine and natural fertility experts. With over 30 years of experience, we have two prime location clinics in London, along with a large online presence. GinSen's supplements have been expertly formulated to support and enhance fertility and wellbeing. GinSen's large range of fertility supplements are designed to address various fertility challenges, women's health and general health issues including pain, digestion and more. Moreover, GinSen's fertility supplements are manufactured in the UK to the highest GMP standards, approved and certified vegan by The Vegan Society ensuring accessibility and suitability for a wide range of patients.

Prices: RRP £45.00

Contact: GinSen (Ginseng Ltd) Tel: 07917 885925

Website: <https://www.ginseng-london.com>



Madhūka flowers

The Madhūka flower comes from a tree native to the Indian subcontinent and is prized for its healthy concentration of fibre, vitamins and minerals, including potassium, manganese and vitamin B3.

An extremely versatile ingredient, it is the perfect natural sweetener. And, for the first time, it's now available in the UK, thanks to new food brand oForest. Discover Madhūka's distinctive and delightful taste in oForest's nibs (great as a crunchy breakfast topping), powder (to add a nutty caramel flavour to cakes and smoothies) and five herbal teas including blends such as Madhūka, clove and rooibos, and Madhūka, fennel & peppermint.

Contact: oForest Email: contact@oforest.co www.oforest.co

Available from: Direct sales accepted, or online via Faire www.faire.com/direct/oforest



SAY HELLO TO...



healthstoresUK

The National Association of Health Stores has changed its name to Health Stores UK in a major brand refresh that signals an exciting period of development for your trade association.

We're making the change as Health Stores UK formally takes over the HealthyDoesIt consumer website, creating a powerful new platform for independent retailers to connect directly to consumers – and support them on their natural health journey.

We think our new name encapsulates the ambitious, forward-looking retailer organisation we are. And we hope the bold changes we are making at Health Stores UK will help us create a more powerful voice for independent natural products retailers.

Join us now for just £21 per month and be part of our growing community of like-minded retailers.



Your Association. Your Voice.



Faith In Nature ends crowdfunding raise with 138% of target

IN ITS first ever Crowdfunder campaign, Faith in Nature has smashed its initial goal of £550,000 with a final total of £761,452, having raised 97% of the target within the first 24 hours.

The crowdfund will enable the ethical personal care brand to continue taking steps to reduce its environmental impact, seeking out greener ways to manufacture, more sustainable product innovation and helping to create more eco-friendly options.

"After 50 years, we're really excited to be welcoming investors for our business for the very first time," comments Faith in Nature's creative director Simeon Rose. "We truly believe that this isn't just an opportunity to invest in a commercially successful brand, but in everything we stand for too."

From looking after the future of our planet and seeking out sustainable innovation to championing the brand at the forefront of the legal rights of nature movement, we want to make it even easier to do good both for people and the planet."

He continues: "It's not an easy time financially for people, so to be joined by nearly 850 new investors tak-

ing us to 138% of our target is amazing. We're a much loved company that's earned our customers' trust over nearly 50 years and I think our investors recognize that."

The company intends to use the funds to become the first UK company to implement SAP Footprint Manager to get a steer on their environmental impact and ensure responsible growth.



Jayn Sterland recognized in CEO Today Awards

WELEDA UK managing director Jayn Sterland has been voted one of 100 inspirational female leaders in the *CEO Today Business Women of the Year Awards 2023*.

The awards recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of women leaders who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership in their respective fields, significantly impacting the business world through shaping their industries and breaking down barriers.

"This year, more than ever, we've seen an incredible display of resilience, innovation and leadership in the face of unprecedented challenges," says *CEO Today*. "The women we honour today are not just leading their respective organizations to new heights but



are also trailblazers for equality, diversity, and inclusion, setting the stage for future generations."

Sterland comments: "I feel incredibly humbled to win this award in such a competitive and talented field. Working closely alongside me is a team of incredible capability who inspire me daily, as well as our long history of women leaders at Weleda which began with our pioneering founder Dr Ita Wegman a century ago."



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Body Proud goes live with #noBODYlikeyou campaign

WITH studies showing that 78% of Gen Z feel pressured to get 'summer body ready' and 26% saying they're made to feel anxious about the way their bodies 'should' look, Body Proud has launched the #noBODYlikeyou campaign.

Aiming to inspire Gen Zs to feel good about the skin they are in – stressing that 'everybody is a summer body' – and champion positivity and self-love, it highlights the fact that everyone is different and has something special to offer.

Body Proud aims to take over the hashtag #summerbodyready, which has over 12 million TikTok views, and create a social movement to flood TikTok with #noBODYlikeyou messaging, led by positive affirmation TikTok creator, Alethea Francis Crimmin. It is encouraging its community to feel inspired by Crimmin and upload their own TikTok video championing the power of positivity and sharing stories around their own unique qualities.

"With summer in full swing, there are added

pressures that are being showcased across social media platforms to portray perfect and often unrealistic body images," says Nora Zukauskaite, Body Proud global marketing director. "We are championing the healthy-looking skin you are in without the toxicity. We are once again rebelling and inviting our community to take over the hashtag and covert it to message that uplift and empower us. We are proud to be raising awareness and championing positivity to ... support Gen Zs and our community by celebrating #noBODYlikeyou and promoting positivity."

The brand is also partnering with student-led non-profit Body Positive Alliance. "We are excited to partner with Body Proud on the #noBODYlikeyou campaign to champion body positivity and deconstruct unrealistic beauty standards," says founder Cate Navarrete. "Body Proud aligns with our organization's advocacy for acceptance, representation and fair treatment for all bodies."





Beauty Buzz

Tule Park,
co-founder, Skin Diligent

Avoiding endocrine-disrupting chemicals in skincare

If a skincare product only stayed on the outer layer of the skin, we wouldn't have to worry about endocrine-disrupting or carcinogenic ingredients in the formulas. The fact is that some ingredients break through the epidermis.

Some get through due to their tiny sizes, for example small molecular weight ingredients and nanoparticles. Others travel via the 'delivery system' – these are non-active ingredients that help other ingredients cross the skin barrier. If we are applying an anti-ageing cream with claims to boost collagen, we would want the active ingredients to reach the collagen in the dermis (below the surface of the skin). If the desired active ingredients can get through, then unfortunately the presence of toxins in the formula also can.

Regulatory frameworks exist to protect consumers. For instance, in the UK and the EU, there are a minimum number of tests that skincare products need to pass before being sold. Tests for product stability and skin irritation are standard, but none are required to show that they are potentially carcinogenic or endocrine-disrupting. Skincare SKUs simply need to avoid anything on the banned lists of endocrine-disrupting, mutagenic or carcinogenic ingredients.

Sadly, regulatory frameworks are notorious for being slow in adding toxins to their lists. Take, for example, endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs): did you know that the global framework to consider EDCs as toxins only dates back two decades? That is early 2000s! The EDC list is currently extremely short. It takes approximately a decade for a chemical ingredient to be agreed by various parties to go on the list. The lobbying power of chemical companies is huge. Moreover, products containing those toxins can still be sold to consumers up to seven years after the ban. Another frustration arises when scientists tweak an ingredient to circumvent a ban; the 'new ingredient' would need to go through a

whole decade of debate and proofs before it gets banned too.

What do EDCs do to human health? The endocrine system, or the hormonal system, is involved in foetal development, immune response, human reproduction, metabolism, obesity, brain development and even DNA epigenetic modifications. EDCs mimic or interfere with hormones in the body, potentially leading to imbalances or disruptions. More and more data links the drop in global sperm count and rise of advanced puberty to EDCs.

When I started Skin Diligent, one of the pillars of the brand was to ensure our products didn't trigger any endocrine disruption. This was important because our mission was to produce skincare to improve skin health. I soon learned that technology was lacking for testing skincare products for all hormonal activity. However, the skin has oestrogenic receptors, and we could at least test to ensure our products were free of oestrogenic endocrine disruptors. We are the first brand in the UK to do so.

By opting for natural skincare, you can minimize your exposure to potentially harmful chemicals and reduce the risk of skin sensitivity or allergic reactions. It's worth noting that 'natural' doesn't always mean 'safe for everyone'. Some people may still have sensitivities or allergies to certain natural ingredients. Therefore, it's essential to read product labels, conduct patch tests, and consult a dermatologist if you have any concerns or specific skin conditions. It's fair to also note that not all synthetic ingredients in skincare products are harmful; equally, not all natural ingredients are harmless. Some, like certain essential oils and plant extracts, can also be endocrine-disrupting.

It's onerous for consumers to try to understand the ingredients list, so products with a high percentage of naturality can be a good guideline as natural products in general will be safer than synthetic ones. Or, opt for products that have undergone endocrine disruption tests.

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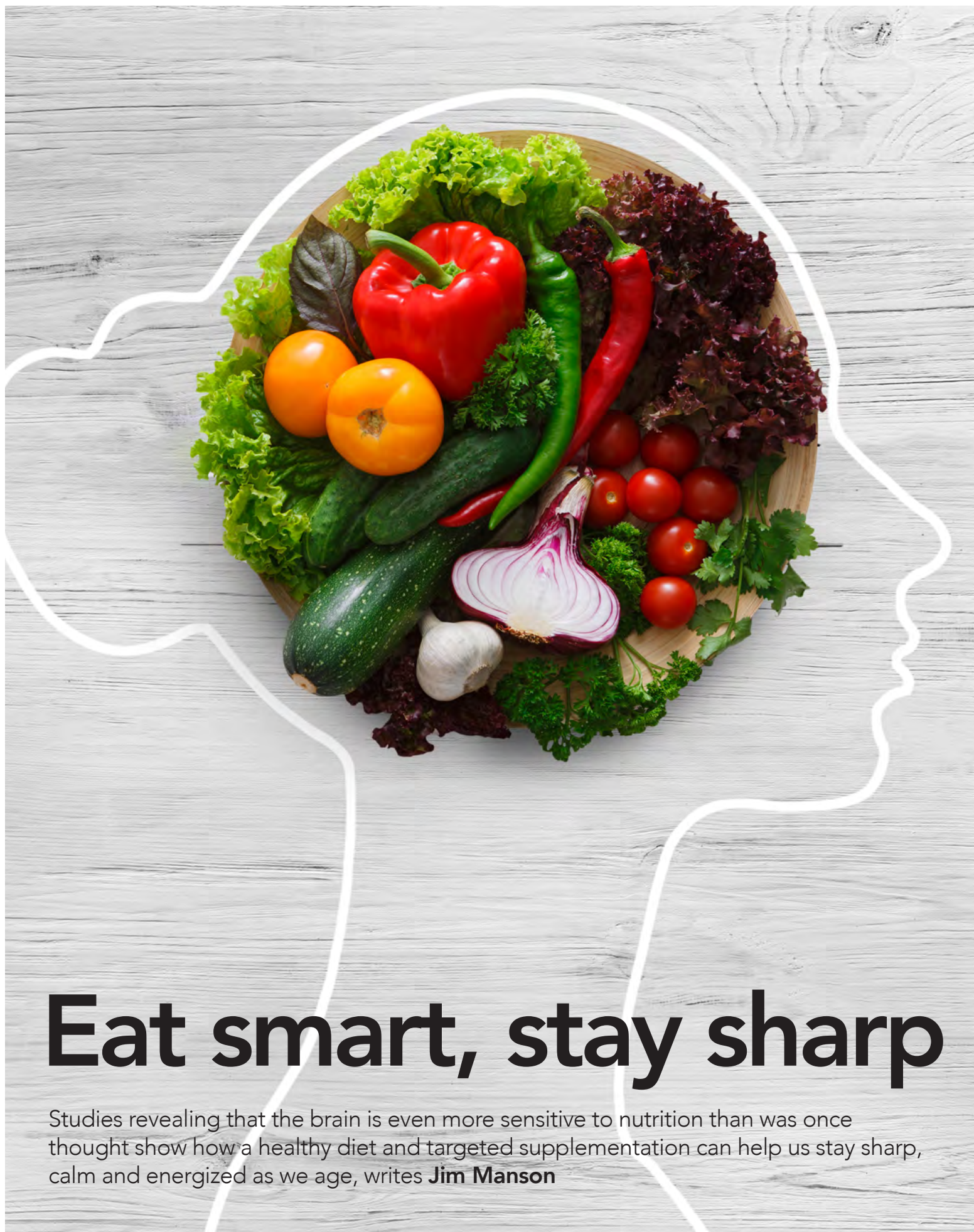
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Eat smart, stay sharp

Studies revealing that the brain is even more sensitive to nutrition than was once thought show how a healthy diet and targeted supplementation can help us stay sharp, calm and energized as we age, writes **Jim Manson**

In 2019, researchers at Harvard University began work on a study to examine how taking a daily multivitamin might affect memory in older people. With cognitive ageing a major concern for a growing number of older adults, the Harvard team wanted to test whether a simple, low-cost intervention that many people already make for their general health could help to slow cognitive decline – a major global issue with huge public health cost ramifications.

The researchers had already established that very few large-scale, randomized trials had been done in this specialist area. They set the bar high for their own study, recruiting over 3,500 older adults onto their randomized, placebo-controlled trial and studying their progress over three years.

By the end, the group who had taken the multivitamin demonstrated an improvement in their memory equivalent to a full three years of age-related memory decline. The team described the finding as ‘remarkable’. But the biggest takeaway, said lead author Lok-Kin Yeung, was the discovery ‘that the ageing brain may be even more sensitive to nutrition than we realized’.

Diet, not genes

The Harvard study lands at a time when growing numbers of specialists in the field of brain health are concluding that diet, not genes, is the major driver of age-related cognitive decline and dementia. Earlier this year, a landmark study published in the *British Medical Journal* showed that even for carriers of the APOE gene – the strongest known risk factor for Alzheimer’s disease and dementia – a healthy lifestyle was found to slow memory loss, with a healthy diet having the strongest effect on slowing memory decline, followed by cognitive activity and then physical exercise. The study followed 30,000 people over a decade and found that those with a healthy diet were about seven times less likely to have age-related cognitive decline or dementia than those with an ‘average’ diet.

“Several studies have indicated that gut microbiota can help regulate brain function directly through the gut-brain axis”

Golden era of cognitive research
Public awareness of dementia, Alzheimer’s and cognitive function decline more generally, is helping to drive a huge research effort to find treatments – but also to explore ways to boost brain power in the present and prevent or delay decline in later life. One of the most promising areas of research is how the gut-brain connection can be positively influenced with the help of

probiotics. Several studies have indicated that gut microbiota can help regulate brain function directly through the gut-brain axis, helping to manage and reduce episodes of depression and anxiety.

For example, a 2023 randomized controlled trial (RCT) carried out by the Brighton and Sussex Medical School showed that participants who took a probiotic supplement experienced a ‘significant reduction in scores for depressive symptoms’ compared to a placebo control. Professor James Stone, senior investigator, believes the findings are especially important as 60% of people suffering major depressive disorder do not respond to conventional antidepressants.

Meanwhile, a review by Chinese researchers of 14 studies that used probiotics to regulate intestinal microbiota showed that over a third reported a reduction of anxiety symptoms.

The protective role of the polyphenolic compounds flavanols in reducing the risk of age-related memory loss was further confirmed this year by research from Columbia University. A three-year study of 3,562 people aged around 70 found those with high regular flavanol consumption had better hippocampal memory function (which includes short-term memory-making) than those who didn’t. The team concluded that an optimum daily intake of flavanols – found in tea, apples and berries – would be around 500mg, which they said was ‘readily achievable’ with dietary adjustment.

Scientists from Reading University have been harnessing the power of

polyphenols in a study that explored the effect of wild blueberry powder supplements. In a placebo-controlled study, the team gave one group a drink containing 26g of freeze-dried wild blueberries over a 12-week period. The group who had the wild blueberry powder showed signs of better memory and greater mental flexibility when completing cognitive tasks.

Sometimes, combinations of nutrients exert an amplifying effect, increasing benefits. This seems to be the case with a combination of B vitamins and omega-3, which has shown itself to be a potent force against brain shrinking. University of Oxford researchers found that

by giving older people with the first signs of cognitive impairment supplemental B vitamins at higher levels than can be achieved through diet, 73% less brain shrinkage was achieved in those with sufficient omega-3 fats, compared to a placebo. “The effect is greater than that of drug treatment to date, with no adverse effects,” comments lead study author Professor David Smith.

Nootropics still setting the pace
Natural nootropics is a health foods category that has taken off spectacularly in recent years, as Vicky Perks, owner of Beanfreaks in Cardiff, explains: “The cognitive nutrition section has really come

**THE BRAIN HEALTH OPPORTUNITY:
A RETAILER’S PERSPECTIVE**
Vicky Perks, Beanfreaks, Cardiff

What are the most common brain health issues and concerns that customers seek advice on?

Adult ADHD diagnosis is huge at the moment so we have a lot of customers seeking more information on medicinal mushrooms, particularly lion’s mane.

What issues are driving current growth in the brain health category?

I really think COVID has been a marker point in the health of a lot of customers. A lot of our older customers experienced mental decline, while middle-aged customers found readjusting to work situations more challenging or found the frailty of life a wake-up call; and the younger customers needed more focus. Many years ago, the cognitive health section would either be ginkgo for granny or DHA for little Timmy; now it’s definitely across the board.

What type of customer is most likely to be looking for brain performance and cognitive enhancement-focused products?

The understanding and openness to discuss mental decline has really opened up the development of newer supplements. And we now have customers across

the board for concerns spanning menopause, work performance, vascular and age-related issues. Your particular shop’s situation will probably influence the type of customer seeking you out. Certainly, in my area menopausal ladies looking for more sharpness are probably the biggest group. Athletic performance-seeking and extra edge is another big group. We don’t have the same ‘work hard, play-hard’ culture as you’d expect in London and Manchester, but I certainly understand this is where the rise in this section has its roots.

What specific products or nutrients/botanicals are customers asking about currently?

Obviously lion’s mane is the category frontrunner, but herbs such as tulsi (holy basil) and saffron are also exciting cognitive remedies and have really taken over from ginkgo as the go-to brain herbs. There is a surge in popularity for zinc and magnesium, and a better understanding of its different forms. B vitamins and essential fats are often neglected in TikTok videos, so I take a pride in talking about co-factors to help absorption or for the fundamental ‘running’ of the brain!

on over the last four years. Initially it was driven by American nootropics gurus, with twenty-somethings looking for a 'natural high' or a way to burn the candle from every end. It's more fully evolved now to customers from all age groups seeking better clarity or focus, or brain circulatory support."

Cheryl Westbury, senior nutritionist at Earthfare in Glastonbury, agrees that nootropics are still very much an in-demand category. "They're among our bestselling supplements, lion's mane being an especially strong performer."

The potential for natural nootropics – which include l-theanine, ginseng, *Rhodiola rosea*, lion's mane mushroom, ginkgo biloba and choline – to boost brain function is becoming increasingly well understood. One study by researchers in Malaysia showed how nootropics act as a vasodilator against the small arteries and veins in the brain, helping increase blood circulation, energy and oxygen flow.

Brands themselves are increasingly undertaking their own research. Mind-Lab recently commissioned an RCT on its MindLab Pro supplement. The study found that participants who took the supplement achieved 'significant improvements' across all memory tests.

“The ageing brain may be even more sensitive to nutrition than we realized”

Recent additions to the ever growing nootropics lineup include Nature's Way's Brain Fuel formulation, which harnesses its Cognigrade grape extract to support short-term memory and concentration; and Flow Coffee from London Nootropics, a stylishly packaged adaptogenic coffee with lion's mane and rhodiola blended to aid mental clarity and focus.

Be uplifted

Health food retailers have a growing armoury of brain health and cognitive function products to call on. Here, we highlight some of the latest contenders in the category and hear from retailers about the brain health products catching their attention.

Focus fruit-powered vitamin chews from The Secret Nature of the Fruit blends choline, l-theanine, and vitamins B6 and B12 to support energy production and alertness, while passion fruit and strawberry (containing anthocyanins) support healthy brain function.

Viridian Organic Peak Focus, meanwhile, combines extracts of lemon balm and sage to help maintain optimal mental wellbeing, and works within one to two hours of a single dose.

Focus & Clarity from The HerbTender is an adaptogenic herbal blend pitched as an 'uplifting go-to for study and exams, and pressured work deadlines'.

HOW TO HELP CUSTOMERS WITH BRAIN FOG

Studies suggest around 39% of the population experiences brain fog to some degree. And following the pandemic it seems to be on the rise, being a symptom reported by 69% of long-COVID sufferers.

Amanda Williams, nutritional therapist and CEO, Cytoplan, who developed a successful Brain Health Community Programme, says: "While brain fog is not a medical condition itself, it often stems from underlying causes such as stress, lack of sleep, poor nutritional status, hormonal imbalances, certain medications, and medical conditions."

"Good nutrition plays a crucial role in ... reducing brain fog. Consuming a wholefood, nutrient-dense diet, rich in essential fatty acids can provide the necessary fuel for optimal cognitive function, helping

people to regain mental clarity and focus. "In addition to implementing lifestyle changes and seeking professional help when necessary, incorporating brain-boosting foods into your diet can significantly contribute to cognitive function. Foods such as antioxidant-rich blueberries, mineral-dense broccoli and quality sources of oily fish and walnuts are excellent to include. It is also essential to reduce sugar intake. Sugary and high carbohydrate diets can also lead to many symptoms such as poor memory and concentration, mood swings, depression and frequent headaches."



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Organic coconut specialist Tiana has taken a bold move into the category with the launch of its Memory Oil which, the company says, is packed full of 'brain-boosting bioactive ingredients' formulated to reduce oxidative stress and inflammation in the brain cells – a leading cause of memory deterioration.

Brain Patch from LifeBio introduces an innovative transdermal alternative to capsules and powders, with each patch primed with a synergistic blend of brain-boosting actives.

Westbury says that, generically, lion's mane, NAC and ashwaganda KSM-66 are regularly requested at Earthfare. She also reports good initial interest in products from cognitive health specialist R.Y.M. Nutrition, including its Focus & Memory, De-Stress and Sleep lines.

Perks adds: "Living Nutrition has a gorgeous fermented herbal combination called Wisdom, a really fabulous combination of holy

basil, gotu kola, matcha, and lion's mane. In terms of brands in this space, there are so many but I tend to fall back on my favourites: Viridian, Terranova, Biocare, and Natures Aid. They cover the nutritional needs for most of my customers. Companies such as Wiley's Finest, Living Nutrition, Mushrooms 4 Life and Feel Supreme offer some more specific or specialized products. That's the beauty of an independent health store – I'm in a position to buy something new in if it offers something that my customers are asking for and I feel warrants my interest."



Hot Stocks

Delivering the goods

Presented as an elixir, De-liver-ance by Equilibrium Labs aids mental clarity through a careful ratio of antioxidants, anti-inflammatories and herbal extracts. Ginseng and 'super molecule' seanol assist the body's natural detoxification which in turn improves liver health and enhances mental clarity. The product is taken as a shot, followed by a glass of water.

Making memories

Aiming to help cognition-conscious consumers achieve better mental function, Nutrigums Mind and Focus Ashwagandha Gummies contain a mix of B vitamins, D3 and L-theanine which work alongside the ancient Ayurvedic herbal extract to reduce mental stresses, boost mood and improve focus and memory.

Geeking out

New from Nutrition Geeks is Lion's Mane Focus+ which is designed to promote nerve growth factor and enhance memory and mental clarity. With a minimum of 4,000mg of lion's mane extract per serving, the product is polysaccharide-rich and contains vitamin B1 to boost the brain's agility and offer the user heightened concentration and alertness.

New from Norway

Sustainably sourced wild Atlantic cod make up this highly absorbable Norwegian Cod Liver Oil by Osavi Marine. Containing EPA and DHA – which together help maintain blood flow to the brain and normal blood pressure and function of this vital organ – one teaspoon a day provides 1,000 mg of omega-3. Available in Unflavoured, Lemon, Orange and Lemon-Mint.

Brain boosters

Designed specifically for cognitive processing and stress support, Wiley's Finest new Wild Norwegian Cod Liver Oil+ offers 'brain-boosters' lutein, zeaxanthin and vitamins D3 and E alongside EPA and DHA to optimize brain function and, additionally, vision. The 125ml bottle contains 25 servings and comes in Orange Bliss flavour.

Puresport Adaptogenic Mushroom & Supplements Range

Elevating Brain Health with Puresport's Adaptogenic Mushroom Supplements

Puresport, a trailblazing brand in the health and wellness industry, has taken a ground-breaking approach to enhancing brain health through their mission-driven ethos, which revolves around empowering individuals to unlock their full potential by offering premium, science-backed solutions for a healthier life. This commitment is reflected in their range of adaptogenic mushroom supplements, carefully formulated to optimise brain function and support mental resilience.

Puresport's product line draws from the wisdom of ancient herbal traditions and modern scientific research to offer a holistic approach to brain health. Adaptogens, renowned for their stress-

combating properties, play a pivotal role in helping the body and mind adapt to various challenges. Puresport's adaptogenic mushroom supplements harness the power of nature, providing a natural remedy for the pressures of modern life.

At the heart of Puresport's adaptogenic range are carefully selected mushrooms renowned for their cognitive benefits. Lion's Mane, revered for its potential to enhance memory and focus, takes a prominent place in their offerings. This remarkable fungus contains compounds that may stimulate nerve growth factor (NGF), supporting the regeneration of brain cells and promoting overall cognitive wellness.

Another gem in Puresport's collection is the Cordyceps mushroom, recognized for its potential to

increase oxygen utilization, bolstering energy levels and mental stamina, making it an ideal companion for those aiming to excel in various aspects of life.

The Reishi mushroom, known for its calming properties, helps to mitigate stress and promote a balanced mood. By reducing the impact of stress on the brain, Reishi supports better cognitive function and emotional well-being, crucial components of overall brain health.

Their triple-lab-tested range comes with Informed Sport certification and endorsements from a roster of world famous athletes, wellness professionals and key opinion leaders, making them the most trusted on the market and a must-have on the shelves of health & wellness retailers.



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Ginkgo biloba is one of the oldest living tree species, and records show its use in traditional Chinese medicine for cognitive function and circulation. Ginkgo is revered throughout Asia, where it symbolises longevity and enlightenment. Lamberts has created a high strength standardised Ginkgo Biloba extract. Each tablet contains 120mg extract, equivalent to 6000mg of dried leaf, standardised to contain 24% ginkgo flavone glycosides. By offering a standardised extract, the stated levels of the active constituent ginkgo flavone glycoside can be guaranteed. The tablets are time release so that the ginkgo is released gradually over a period of approximately 2 hours.



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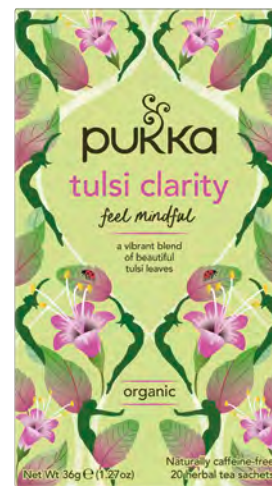
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Seaweed: the forgotten food

Seaweed has been garnering some diverse press attention recently: North Sea Farmers are set to launch the world's first seaweed farm between wind turbines in the North Sea, funded by Amazon; in Israel, new technology has been developed to enable the growth of nutritionally powerful 'super seaweed'; and UK start-up NotPla became an Earthshot Prize-winner for its green, seaweed-based packaging.

One man who has been extolling the virtues of seaweed for over 25 years is Simon Ranger, founder of Seagreens. The Seagreens project started in Norway in 1997 with a mission to produce the 'best wild seaweeds specifically for human nutrition' and has since developed sustainable harvesting and production in the British Isles and the Nordic region. In addition to producing its own products, Seagreens' certified ingredients are used in food and health products by brands including Pukka Herbs, Green People, Viridian Nutrition, Cytoplan and Heath & Heather.

Seagreens was also instrumental in developing the first production standard for seaweed for human consumption, introduced in 2016 as the Nutritious Food Seaweed quality assurance scheme and standard, to provide full transparency.

Nutritional clout

"Beyond any other virtue it may have, whole seaweed is a uniquely complete source of all the micronutrients not replicable in land-grown foods or formulated supplements," explains Ranger. "This is the main reason to include seaweed in our diet. Micronutrients are deficient in large sections of the population, in our agricultural soils, and profoundly imbalanced in manufactured foods.

"Whereas land-grown foods have comparatively limited nutritional profiles (which is why a balanced diet requires variety), seaweed contains a little of all the nutrients, including all the minerals and trace elements which leach from our overworked and under-replenished soils into this vast soup literally at the bottom of the food chain.



Jane Wolfe dives into the world of seaweed to discover how its nutritional value, sustainable credentials and varied applications – from food to supplements, beauty to packaging – are being recognized and utilized

"Unlike proteins, carbohydrates and fats, which fuel our daily activities, micronutrients are the catalysts for thousands of daily processes to defend, detox, digest, grow, repair and above all, balance the nutritional profile of our daily food. They are taken up by receptors in the body, in tiny amounts, but frequently, which is why they are called micronutrients. Any excess to fairly immediate requirement is normally broken down for its useful components or excreted."

Ranger proposes that a small amount of seaweed be used daily as a dietary supplement rather than consumed as food. "A gram a day of seaweed of a known, balanced composition, in an otherwise healthy diet is enough, that is a quarter teaspoon of dried granulated seaweed. It fills the gaps. Even in an imbalanced or restricted diet, in recuperation or nutritional therapy, seldom more than a few grams are needed, but daily use is

essential because the most valuable micronutrients are neither manufactured by the body, nor readily stored."

"One of the most important aspects of the Seagreens project was to make it very easy indeed to use the seaweed in

everyday food and drinks or capsules and for all ages and in any health condition," says Ranger.

Engaging consumers

Dr Craig Rose (aka Doctor Seaweed) MD of Seaweed & Co, cites research showing that although 88% of consumers believe seaweed is good for them, 78% rarely or never consume it. "When you look at the reasons it was down to availability and accessibility of product formats. If we get this right, then consumers are really engaged and looking for seaweed products. We did the maths recently, and have sold well over 12 million capsules. End-to-end, that is as long as 3,700 blue whales or over ten times the height of Mount Everest. That shows the extent at which consumers are getting on board, and that's really just the UK for us.

"As a marine biologist, I have always been passionate about bringing sustainable seaweed to people in ways that they can really engage with, and to make them look and feel wonderful," says Rose. "Seaweed is something people inherently know is good for them, but the format of how they include it in their daily diets needed to be accessible and appealing. This is why supplements are an ideal way to help people engage with seaweed and see the benefits for their health and wider wellness."

UP FOR A CHALLENGE

This year saw a raft of startups and SMEs pitch their seaweed-based products in the Seaweed Innovation Challenge, established with North Sea Farmers and Brave New Food. The four successful pitchers were:

Seaweed Food Solutions from the Netherlands which specializes in processing and application of seaweed for the food industry. For the challenge, it presented a plant-based spare rib, made from seaweed and jackfruit – an innovative snack described as 'juicy, savoury, meaty and even better than the original'. **Seaweed & Co** – in addition to its Weed & Wonderful line of supplements and condi-

ments, Seaweed & Co produces PureSea ingredients from wild-harvested seaweed which are supplied in easy-to-use formats designed to be commercially viable for food and nutrition applications. **Kelpi** is a UK-based material innovation company which replaces single-use plastics with bioplastics that harness the novel properties and environmental benefits of seaweed. Its bioplastic packaging is home compostable and marine-safe – after use it will readily decompose in under a year, leaving no toxins. **BettaFish** from Germany creates plant-based Tu-Nah made from seaweed that, it claims, looks like tuna, tastes like tuna, works like tuna, but

'doesn't cost a fortuna'. With Europe currently only cultivating five species of seaweed, it wants to invest in R&D to start and scale production of other species to develop seaweed-based alternatives for all food categories.



One of the nutrients seaweed is best known for providing is iodine, the deficiency of which impacts about two billion people globally, with one study finding that 60% of females over 55 are deficient, which is particularly concerning as our bodies can't produce the nutrient.

"Seaweed is a powerhouse of nutrition, and the core focus and benefit nutritionally is the natural source of essential iodine," says Rose. "This is a nutrient that the vast majority of us do not get in our diets. Seaweed is the only natural and plant-based source of iodine. Without sufficient iodine in our diet, our thyroid cannot work properly, and an underactive thyroid can lead to issues of weight gain, low energy, brittle hair and nails, poor skin, loss of libido and sensitivity to cold." He asserts that by incorporating seaweed into the daily diet, the benefits can be seen within weeks.

Sustainability

As is so often the case in any burgeoning sector, growth comes with quality and sustainability issues. "Precisely because of its extraordinarily broad and valuable composition, any seaweed for human nutrition, wherever in the world it's produced, must be subject to scrutiny and monitored using independent, accredited compositional analysis," stresses Ranger. "We must know what we're eating. A lot of seaweed on the market today has dubious provenance, both from small artisan and industrial scale production, and increasingly of deeper water species from offshore cultivation, driven more by investment in carbon capture than for its nutritional use."

Rose sources seaweed from the pristine Scottish Outer Hebrides, where it is sustainably wild harvested on specially adapted boats that simply trim the top of the seaweed. "It is then carefully dried and milled using our own proprietary technologies before placing in the capsules with the other natural and plant-based nutrients used across the range," he explains.

"Seaweed is a forgotten food and resource that is being rediscovered for a huge range of diverse industries"

"We focus on one species as it is sustainable and has very good natural levels of iodine. Being able to get high quality, safe and nutritious seaweed at large volumes and sustainably is critical in growing the market and giving people access to this essential nutrition. Traceability too is critical to our process, and we offer online transparent traceability of every batch we produce," he adds, emphasizing that this is a growing consideration for consumers.

A question of taste

For those who love seaweed straight up, Clearspring is a go-to brand, offering everything from Nori for sushi to Organic Atlantic Sea Spaghetti, which can be added to pastas, soups, salads and stews, and Japanese Hokkaido Kombu for creating vegan dashi stock.

But for those who aren't so enamoured with the taste or texture of seaweed, there are plenty of options that can be easily incorporated into the diet, such as Clearspring's Green Nori & Tamari Brown Rice Crackers and Sea Vegetable & Black Pepper Organic Oatcakes, or Ocean's Halo recently launched Tray-less (plastic-free) Seaweed Snacks – thin sheets of seaweed in Sea Salt, Wasabi and Maui Onion varieties.

More snacking ideas come from Shore Seaweed, which along with a duo of Ramen Broths in Chilli and Miso, has created a four-strong range of Seaweed Chips in Lightly Salted, Sweet Sriracha, Peking Duck and Smoky Barbecue. And for the slightly more adventurous, how about its Seaweed Pestos? Available in Red Pepper, Dulce & Chilli, Italian Basil and Black Kale, the plant-based pestos are high in iodine and contain vegan cheese.

Abakus Foods' crispy tapioca-coated Seaweed Crisps are available in Sea Salted, Salt & Vinegar and (vegan) Cheese flavours; and in addition to its Seaweed Chips range, Seamore's collection also spans Seaweed Wraps, Pasta and even Bacon, which consumers can easily use in place of conventional equivalents.

Seaweed condiments are a great way to sprinkle additional nutrients into any dish, and Mara Seaweed's collection features Shony Seaweed Flakes which blend *Palmaria palmata*, *Laminaria digitata* and *Saccharina latissima* for an everyday seasoning to add a salty, umami flavour without the hit of sodium salt; and Dulce Powder, which imparts a natural, smoky taste is a multifunctional ingredient for use in baking, stir-fries, roasting, chocolate cake, salad 'and everything in between'.

Commenting on the future potential of this sea-based superfood, Rose remarks: "Seaweed is a forgotten food and resource that is being rediscovered for a huge range of diverse industries. My focus is health and nutrition, and there are also biomaterials, biofuels, biomedical and pharmaceutical benefits of

seaweed. It is a sustainable resource with vast scope to give us and the planet a positive and hopeful future in which all can thrive. Estimates of market size by 2030 reach \$48 billion globally."

Ranger cautions that although the British Isles has among the best of chances to take top quality seaweed into international markets, it needs the Government to restructure the regulatory framework and get behind the innovators if progress is to be made, adding: "As 'an industry', other countries like Canada and Norway are streaks ahead."

We can only hope that these necessary changes are fast coming because, as Rose asserts: "Seaweed alone is not a panacea – nothing is – but it will play a vital role in providing the nutrition we so desperately need and in a sustainable way."

GREEN SKIN SUPPORT

With seaweed offering numerous skincare benefits – supporting collagen synthesis, defending against free radicals, prolonging hydration and supporting all-round skin health – here are a few marine-based picks:

Awake Organics Sea Quartz Exfoliating Micro-polish – formulated with organic spirulina and clear quartz crystal powder to slough away dead surface cells, this sweet orange, chamomile and coconut-scented paste transforms to a milk upon contact with water.

Green People for Men – No. 2 Soothing Wash & Shave Gel combines mineral-rich Irish moss – which provides skin slip to protect against razor burn and nicks – with soothing aloe vera, antiseptic grapefruit and mandarin.

Ishaga's Shampoo & Body Bar features *Fucus serratus* extract which contains natural polyphenols to help with hair conditioning, dry scalp and damaged skin, alongside soothing aloe vera and spring water.

Essential Blend Skincare's Super Hydrating Eye Gel is a blend of skin-smoothing botanicals including Ecocert-approved marine algae extract which is high in

essential carotenoids and fatty acids to stimulate cell renewal and collagen.

Sea Magik Algimud Active Seaweed Face Mask is a combination of Dead Sea Mud, Dead Sea Salt, and *Laminaria digitata* (kelp) which has antioxidant properties and a high iodine content to help with dry, flaky patches of skin while helping regulate sebum production.

Voya's Bouyancy Body Butter blends the brand's signature hand-harvested, collagen-boosting seaweed with shea butter to moisturize and soothe the skin, while lavender and rosemary energize and revive.

YESforLOV's Natural Lubricant with Seaweed – this glycerine-free lubricant made with hand-harvested organic Brittany seaweed is designed to protect the pH of vaginal flora and moisturize the mucous membranes.



Sea Quartz Exfoliating Micro-Polish

Awake Organics
Tel: 07497 261242

E-mail: hello@awakeorganics.co.uk
www.awakeorganics.co.uk

Sea Quartz is a 100% natural, waterless exfoliation treatment that detoxifies, clears and oxygenates the skin with organic Spirulina and micro-fine Clear Quartz crystal powder. Formulated to slough away dead surface cells and reveal glowing skin. This multi-award winning, vibrant green cleanser harnesses the power of the sea to gently buff away impurities, leaving skin instantly brighter and smoother without over-drying. Sea Quartz nourishes skin with organic Blue Chamomile and softens with organic Hemp Seed oil and Coconut Milk. Rinses away easily with water or can be left on as a mask for even more skin benefits. Designed for all skin types. 100% Natural, vegan, certified cruelty free, plastic free and made in England.



Easy Bean's Seaweed & Sesame Chickpea Crispbread

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Tel: 01963 441493
Email: sales@easybean.co.uk
www.easybean.co.uk
Instagram: [_easybean](https://www.instagram.com/easybean)

A handmade crispbread seasoned with a nutritious and colourful blend of native seaweed. Dulse, Sea Lettuce and Kelp are harvested by hand then slowly dried to lock in essential minerals. The seaweed adds delicious umami flavours (a Japanese word that means a pleasant savoury taste) and provides a good source of iodine. Naturally gluten free chickpea flour, Somerset butter and organic buttermilk are used in the dough, topped with sesame seeds and slowly baked in small batches. Gluten free, high fibre and no added sugar. A delicious snack or serve with lunch.



Sea Moss with Bladderwrack and Spirulina

Feel Supreme
Tel: 03330 501553
E-mail: info@feelsupreme.co.uk
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The power of marine superfoods Irish Sea Moss and Bladderwrack with added Spirulina is specially formulated to promote overall health and wellness providing a comprehensive range of nutrients that can support overall health and wellness. While Irish Sea Moss alone is a valuable addition to any diet, the addition of Bladderwrack and Spirulina in this supplement can provide you with a more complete and balanced nutrient profile. Irish Sea Moss has been used for centuries in traditional medicine to promote digestive health, boost the immune system, and improve overall wellness. Our Irish Sea Moss capsules contain a unique blend of equal amounts of Bladderwrack and Spirulina.

Bursting with a variety of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that can promote overall health and wellness including iodine, omega-3 fatty acids, magnesium, calcium, iron and potassium, antioxidants, such as beta-carotene and phycocyanin as well as vitamins A, C, E, B12 and K.



Seamoss Gel

My Healing Kit
E-mail: contact@myhealingkit.com
www.myhealingkit.com

If you are looking for a natural and effective way to improve your health, My Healing Kit's Seamoss Gel is the perfect solution. Seamoss is a powerful superfood that is rich in essential nutrients & minerals such as Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Iodine, Selenium, Vitamins A-E and K. It can easily be added to your daily wellness routine and benefits people of all ages – whether you are looking to support your immunity, improve gut-health, increase energy levels or do wonders for your skin. MHK's Seamoss is organic, vegan and free from chemicals or nasties, offering a pure route to your wellness.



Is your packaging assessed by accredited experts for regulatory compliance?

Is your product compliant with the Food Information to Consumers Regulation?

Are your claims permitted under Nutrition and Health Claims Regulation?

Are you using authorised nutrient sources?



Trusted. Respected. Valued.

HFMA CLEAR CHECK is an **accredited** compliance service, helping you to navigate legislation around food supplements, botanical food supplements and health foods.

Buckinghamshire & Surrey Trading Standards, the HFMA's Primary Authority Partner, has assessed and provided Assured Advice for the HFMA's CLEAR CHECK service

Buckinghamshire & Surrey trading standards





Excitement builds for the first Natural Health Trade Summit Bristol

Plans are in full swing for this year's **Natural Health Trade Summit**, which for the first time in the event's history will take place in Bristol

Organized in association with Health Stores UK, the Natural Health Trade Summit on Saturday 8 October invites independent health food retailers from across the country to meet at the event dedicated to their business. The summit – which has historically taken place in Manchester – has spread to Bristol for its first Southern-based show.

Registration is free for independent health store owners and their staff, and includes:

- Access to the expo featuring over 100 natural health brands all dedicated to independent health stores and showcasing their new product launches
- Roundtable discussions hosted by independent retailing experts
- Plenty of time to network, with a free, healthy buffet lunch and refreshments for every visitor

With the expo space almost sold out, excitement is growing for the event, as



exhibitor, Gabrielle Avis, Education and Trade Events Specialist at Lamberts Healthcare explains: "The Natural Health Trade Summit Manchester has always been a valuable show for Lamberts and we are delighted to be show partner once again, but this time in Bristol! The show brings a great opportunity to network with so many like-minded people, a fantastic atmosphere and plenty of learnings. The team is ready and is looking forward to supporting independent health food retailers, and is confident that Bristol will shine just as well as Manchester."

Exhibitors confirmed so far include: A. Vogel, Absolute Aromas, BetterYou, BioCare, Clearspring, Faith in Nature, Good Health Naturally, HealthAid, Higher Nature, Kinetic Enterprises, Nature's Dream, Pharma Nord, Viridian Nutrition and many more.



Independent health food retailers can register free at www.nhtsummit.co.uk or telephone 01279 810080 (normal BT landline rates apply)



NEW
for 2023

📍 Sunday 8 October, **Bristol**

THE ESSENTIAL EVENT FOR THE INDEPENDENT HEALTH FOOD TRADE



In association with



-  **100+ exhibitors**
Hundreds of brands dedicated to independents
-  **Networking**
Free welcome drinks reception
-  **Free lunch & refreshments**
Healthy lunch & refreshments (worth £50)
-  **Show-only offers**
Save £££ with our show-only offers and discounts

After seven years in the north, we feel the time is right to spread our wings and go slightly further afield...

Sunday 8 October sees the launch of the Natural Health Trade Summit, Bristol.

Register you and your colleagues completely free and look forward to an event completely dedicated to your business.

PLUS, £20 cash-back towards your travel/parking! (terms & conditions apply)

Show partners





Ready to meet our class of 2023?

We're delighted to introduce the inspiring people who make up this year's exceptional 30 under 30.

One question our industry has always embraced is 'what's new?'. That's because the sector thrives on fresh ideas that generate innovative products and even conjure up entirely new retail categories. But for fresh ideas to truly flourish we need people with the talent to transform world-changing concepts into reality. And that's where our 30 under 30 hot list comes in.

If you haven't met before, then welcome. This is our annual oppor-

tunity to champion the innovators who are breaking moulds and creating something incredible from the ground up, maintaining the roots of natural health while making room for something new and exciting to grow. So while the Baby Boomers helped shape the industry in the '60s and '70s, 2023's cohort are connecting with Generation Y, Z and beyond.

Please join us in raising a glass to everyone on the list (while looking them up on LinkedIn). We believe the future of natural health is in safe hands – and we hope you agree.



The Irish entrepreneur

Aisling Tuck, founder, Oh Happy Treats and co-founder, Naked Bakes

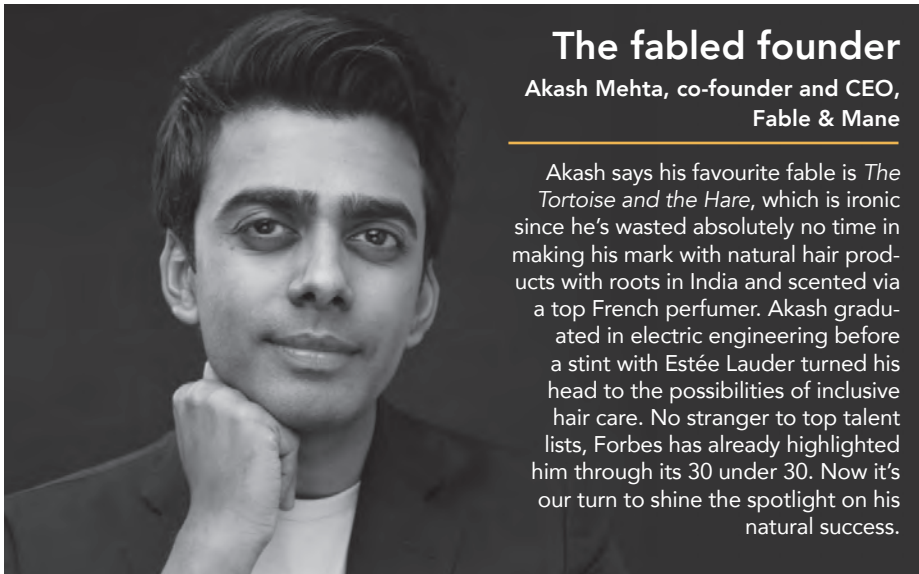
When rising star Aisling went vegan at 18 she spotted a massive gap in the market for plant-based treats in her native Dublin. Using her parents' kitchen table as her launch pad, she worked hard to transform her passion into two forward-thinking bake-based businesses with sweetness in their DNA. Both have been delighting customers through her unique take on Insta-ready treats ever since. Oh Happy Bakes' Marie Antoinette-inspired tagline might well double as her mission statement for life: 'Let them eat vegan cake!'.



The rock star

Aoife Aldis, product development and innovation manager, Piping Rock UK

"Someone very wise once said 'retail is detail', and Aoife has that in spades," says Piping Rock UK's managing director Emma Cockerill. Aoife's meticulous approach allows her to assess the ever-changing world of food supplements and spot opportunities in new and emerging markets. She's not only tasked with launching innovative lines, but also seeks to improve the existing range — all with talent, creativity and a genuine love for what she does. Incredibly passionate and dedicated, Aoife is definitely one to watch.



The fabled founder

Akash Mehta, co-founder and CEO, Fable & Mane

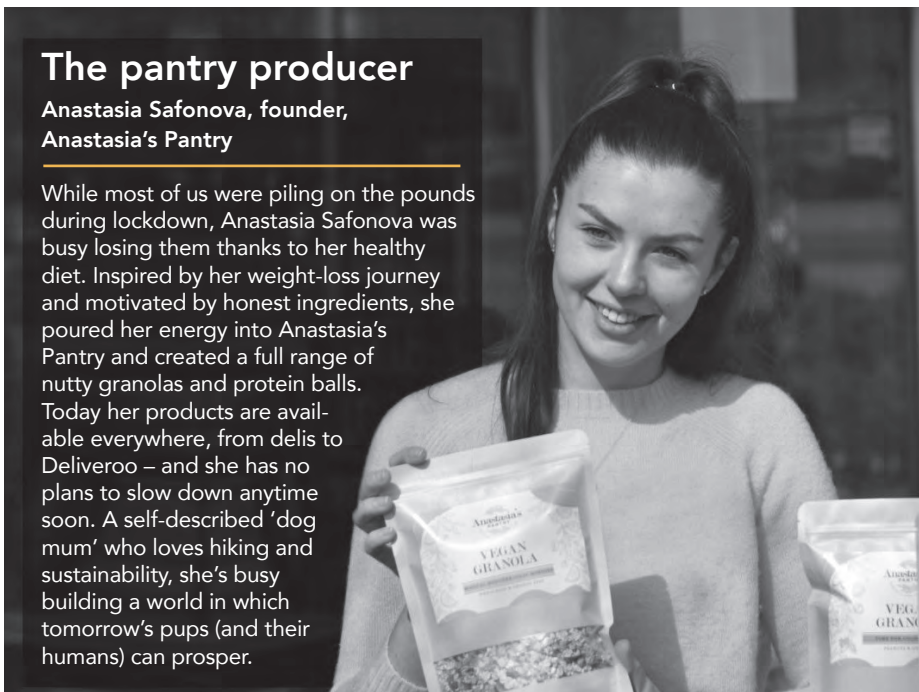
Akash says his favourite fable is *The Tortoise and the Hare*, which is ironic since he's wasted absolutely no time in making his mark with natural hair products with roots in India and scented via a top French perfumer. Akash graduated in electric engineering before a stint with Estée Lauder turned his head to the possibilities of inclusive hair care. No stranger to top talent lists, Forbes has already highlighted him through its 30 under 30. Now it's our turn to shine the spotlight on his natural success.



The true B'liever

Aria Beheshtaein, founder, B'liev

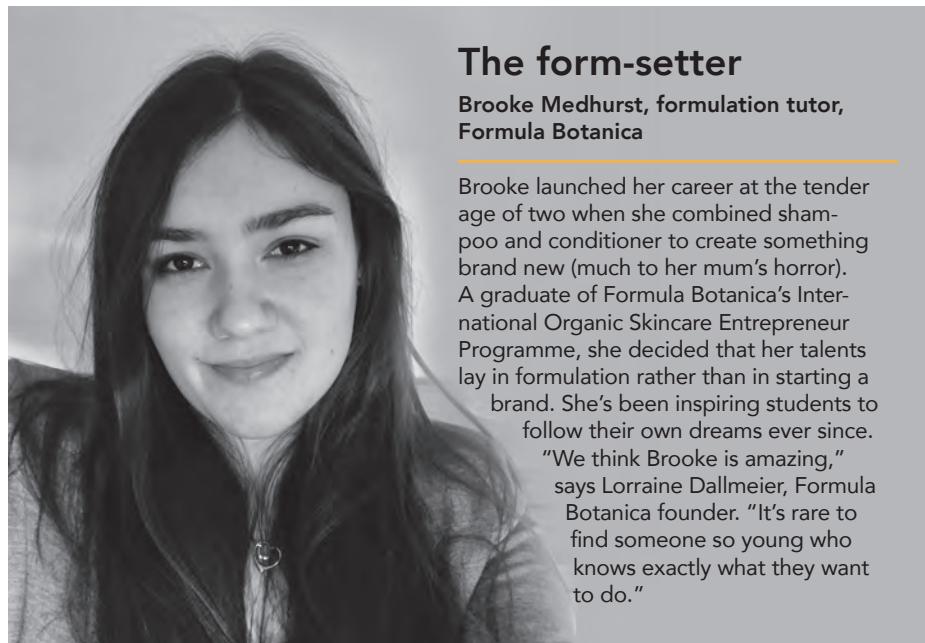
Innovative protein-packed, plant-based shake brand B'liev has one overarching philosophy: believing in yourself without allowing anyone to limit your success. That could double as the life story of founder, Aria. He came to the UK six years ago and became obsessed with nutrition while studying at university. After applying for an innovator visa he successfully launched his vegan brand and hasn't looked back since. Expect to see him claim more of the spotlight as he continues his mission to promote healthy plant-fuelled living.



The pantry producer

Anastasia Safonova, founder, Anastasia's Pantry

While most of us were piling on the pounds during lockdown, Anastasia Safonova was busy losing them thanks to her healthy diet. Inspired by her weight-loss journey and motivated by honest ingredients, she poured her energy into Anastasia's Pantry and created a full range of nutty granolas and protein balls. Today her products are available everywhere, from delis to Deliveroo — and she has no plans to slow down anytime soon. A self-described 'dog mum' who loves hiking and sustainability, she's busy building a world in which tomorrow's pups (and their humans) can prosper.



The form-setter

Brooke Medhurst, formulation tutor, Formula Botanica

Brooke launched her career at the tender age of two when she combined shampoo and conditioner to create something brand new (much to her mum's horror). A graduate of Formula Botanica's International Organic Skincare Entrepreneur Programme, she decided that her talents lay in formulation rather than in starting a brand. She's been inspiring students to follow their own dreams ever since.

"We think Brooke is amazing," says Lorraine Dallmeier, Formula Botanica founder. "It's rare to find someone so young who knows exactly what they want to do."



The skin sensation

Darcy Laceby, co-founder, Absolute Collagen

Darcy didn't hang about launching her career in skin science. Straight after graduating from university she co-founded liquid collagen supplement brand Absolute Collagen to help people of every age feel strong in their own skin. Starting as a kitchen table venture, her talent has helped the brand become the fourth fastest-growing privately-owned business in the UK. "At its heart, Absolute Collagen is all about championing absolute possibility at any age," she says. "We now have a bigger purpose: a purpose to inspire and empower others in the most authentic way."



The world leader

Ellie Clifton, manager, Out of this World

Entrepreneurial Ellie first cut her teeth on ethical retail in junior school when she ran a healthy tuck shop for pupils and parents. Today she may be much more experienced, but her core principle remains the same: selling healthy products with the healthiest values for the planet. "Working at Out of this World is not just a job, it's a lifestyle choice," she explains. "I love finding new brands around the world. It is one of my favourite jobs to do – it's exciting to see what's available and trying to find the next big thing."

The Rheal deal

Charlotte Ali, co-founder/chief brand officer, Rheal

Charlotte never shies away from a challenge – as anyone who saw her successful skirmish with the panel on *Dragons' Den* will know. Her knowledge and enthusiasm for health has helped her biz – co-founded with husband Sean – achieve triple-digit growth, while her eco-nurturing nature has been instrumental in making it a certified B Corp. "This [is] something very close to Charlotte's heart, as she is a massive believer of business being a force for good," explains colleague, Matt Long. No stranger to the Forbes 30 under 30 list, expect to see a very long and healthy career for her in the future.



The product pro

Emily Simpson, NPF specialist, BetterYou

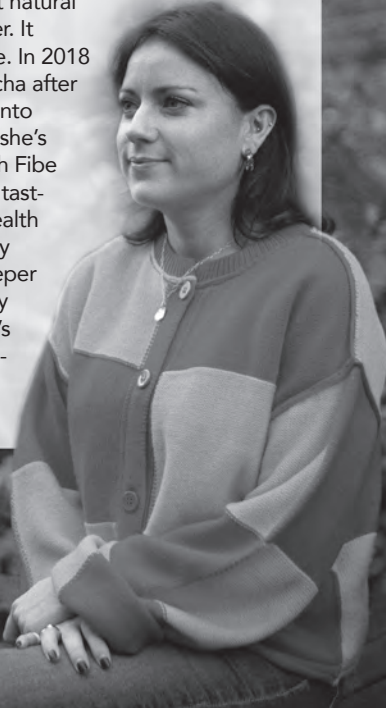
Ask any retailer for their top products and chances are most will mention BetterYou. It's Emily's job to make sure it stays that way. A scientific scholar and first-class biological sciences graduate, Emily studied at Durham University before joining the brand's busy product development team. She makes sure innovation is at the heart of everything the brand achieves, while keeping products safe and effective. "Emily has played an important role in both new product development and quality and regulatory processes, and continues to work at a level well beyond her years," says her colleague Jen Julian.



The effervescent entrepreneur

Freya Twigden, founder, Fix8 Kombucha and Fibe Soda

After graduating from Edinburgh University, Freya quickly eschewed a career in the city in favour of following a gut feeling that natural health was the place for her. It proved to be a smart move. In 2018 she launched Fix8 Kombucha after world-straddling research into its benefits. More recently she's bolstered her portfolio with Fibe Prebiotic Soda – a 'classic' tasting cola with added gut health functionality. She's currently continuing her journey deeper into health at the University of Westminster, where she's studying nutrition and public health in preparation for her next project.



The bar-raiser

Henry Skinner, UK & ROI commercial account manager, Ombar Chocolate

Top retailers already recognize Henry as the face of Ombar in the UK. Inside the brand he's also known as a friendly and positive all-rounder who's helped grow sales by 55% – and is happy to get hands-on with the cacao refiner when required. "His passion for sustainable, ethical, purpose-driven trading is second to none and he swapped an early career in corporate chocolate for ethical chocolate," says Stephen Hannah from Mood Foods. "Not only this, but he fits being part of Team GB Dodgeball in and around his busy work life."



The breakfast champion

Hugh Hamilton-Green, co-founder, ELEAT

For most people the only thing that grew in their student flat was unidentified mould. Yet Hugh definitely had more get-up-and-go than most students. At university, he and his team spent 18 months creating ELEAT, a high-protein healthy cereal designed to disrupt the moribund breakfast market. This July the brand celebrated a successful first year in business – and, thanks to Hugh's acumen, the products he's passionate about are spreading to more bowls across the UK as the business expands.



The health store heir

Holly Thallon Steenson, next generation manager, Viridian Nutrition

"There really is nothing more important than health, and to work in a business that is genuinely having an impact is a privilege," says Holly. And she should know. Since toiling in the family health store from a young age she understands exactly the challenges and opportunities facing the supplements market in 2023. Like her mum, Cheryl, she has a passion for experiential retail and community engagement, but she's determined to bring her own insight and talent to make Viridian as relevant to the next generation as it is right now.





The cereal thriller

Hywel Rose, co-founder, ELEAT

A keen Rugby player, Hywel has harnessed his sporting talent to tackle the boring breakfast category as co-founder of ELEAT. As an active person he's seen first-hand how healthy food can combine with exercise to power all-over wellbeing. Now he's funnelling those personal insights into creating cereals that are both fun to eat and packed full of protein. Captain of his rugby club, his success on the field is set to be replicated on health store shelves nationwide.



The up-seller

Iza Berghoef, global sales manager, UpCircle Beauty

"We wouldn't be global without Iza!" enthuses colleague Sophie Jones, as she explains how Iza has taken the brand into over 40 countries and made sure it captures plenty of media attention in the process. Friends say her success is down to a strategic approach to business, plus a natural work ethic that drives her to create positive relationships while concentrating on expanding revenue. For a fast-growing sustainable brand her efforts certainly make sense as she gets more products into the make-up bags of shoppers determined to make an ethical difference.



The surplus food seller

James Barthorpe, co-founder, Food Circle Supermarket

James has helped square the circle between surplus food and healthy snacking through a business that connects both. At Food Circle customers get cut-price products from forward-thinking brands drawn from excess and redundant stock. It's up to James to make sure his business runs as smoothly and efficiently as possible – a job to which he gives his all. "Our messaging to the end consumer is centred around how surplus food works and the positive environmental impact they are contributing by shopping with us," he says.



The natural leader

Joe Contomichalos, key account manager, Creative Nature

This summer Joe celebrated his first year with Creative Nature – and what a stunning start he's had. Since joining the free-from brand he's overseen its launch into key territories like Singapore, Israel and Iceland. Never one to rest on his laurels, he's also worked hard studying for a politics, philosophy and economics degree at the Open University. "To have such a crucial role in the business at his young age shows how much confidence owner Julianne Ponan has in his abilities, essentially leading the sales team," says colleague Matthew Ford.



The diamond Jubilee

Jubilee Fox, founder, The Good Grain

Jubilee kicked off 2023 by completing a major personal goal: getting her healthy overnight oats brand into Whole Foods Market.

It's the latest milestone in an epic journey that has seen her discover the benefits (and sales potential) of her oats, which she originally made for friends who were feeling lethargic during lockdown. And it's just the start of her mission to get the unique products, which promote the growth of healthy gut bacteria, onto more people's breakfast tables nationwide.



The organic orchestrator

Margaux Jacquot, junior national account manager, Mr Organic

From France to London, Margaux has been orchestrating what her colleagues call an 'organic symphony', sharing the best Italian produce with shoppers from around the world. Her reach extends from the UK to the Middle East, fueled by the focused camaraderie of her team and love for organic culture. It's part of Mr Organic's vision towards a sustainable, healthier world for everyone. With Margaux in the mix, that future feels closer than ever.



The positive force

Meg Kay, technical manager, Rude Health

Described as a 'super-talented glass-half-fuller', Meg's planet-friendly positivity shines through in everything she does. She's a people person too – as one supplier told her: "Among professional relationships it's easy to get overwhelmed, but you have always kept a human approach, and this represents enormous added value." As befits a foodie business, Meg is crazy about cooking, creating masterpieces in the kitchen when she's not making sure Rude Health keeps its reputation for the highest standards of safety and quality.

The matcha maven

Marisa Poster, co-founder, PerfectTed

Twenty-six-year-old Marisa didn't just impress the *Dragons' Den* panel with her 'crash-free' green tea, she also won their admiration for her honesty about her ADHD and anxiety, helping destigmatize the conditions on TV. This is vital, since a key selling point is that the brand's consumers don't experience the same anxious effects of traditional caffeine. Her openness and drive have paid dividends; since launch, the tea has reached over 3,000 retail locations – and the multi-million pound business is brewing nicely.



The high roller

Milo Pinckey, founder, Rollr

As the brains behind Rollr, Milo is on a mission to reinvent deodorant as we know it. His innovative take transforms a functional single-use product into a beautiful refillable concept that's kind to the planet as well as underarms. "I know he could have launched a few months ago but was determined not to because he wanted to make a product that is as good as it could be – maximizing user uptake, retention and Rollr's positive impact on our environment," enthuses Jess Borrill from Broody London, who nominated Milo for the 30 under 30.



The chocolate connoisseur

Noor Freiha, founder and CEO, Kyoot

Noor says that she 'can't live without chocolate' – a craving that comes from memories of her Lebanese family dipping squares of the dark stuff into their Turkish coffee on the daily. This beloved ritual is the inspiration behind Kyoot (pronounced 'cute'). It's the plant-based, better-for-you Belgian bar that her grown-up wellness philosophy demands, but with the moreish quality of those childhood chocolate chunks. With Noor's gimlet eye on both quality and health, expect her chocolate to take the world by storm, Willy Wonka style.



The fantasy founder

Raphael Nahoum, co-founder, Crispy Fantasy

It's no surprise that the founders of revolutionary better-for-you ice cream brand Halo Top back the entrepreneurial ventures of Raphael Nahoum. As the co-founder of healthy cereal brand Crispy Fantasy, his product aims to upturn the nation's breakfast bowls in pursuit of more nutritious mornings. Since launching in 2022 the company has already become an Amazon best-seller and the most followed breakfast brand on TikTok. Raphael loves storytelling, and with fans all over Europe who are rooting for him to take on the cereal establishment, we predict a happy ending.



The organic talent

Paige Tracey, business development manager, non-food, Soil Association

Paige is well known for taking care of business at the Soil Association, where she's just been promoted to a fresh role incorporating her twin loves: organic textiles and beauty. This means successfully coming up with creative and innovative comms, showcasing to the public the connection between organic certification and climate action. No stranger to industry panels, she's a leading judge for The *Marie Claire* Sustainability Awards as well as a reliable regular on this list and Who's Who in Natural Beauty.





The sauce savant

Simona Deifta, founder, NOJO

After gaining a degree in management, Simona made a brave switch away from the corporate whirl to start-up life with NOJO – her trail-blazing vegan condiments brand. A huge foodie (and enthusiastic parent) she pours her love for nutritious and healthy ingredients into everything she does. Her passion has paid dividends, with NOJO becoming a best-seller on key platforms like Ocado and Whole Foods Market. In addition to being a canny entrepreneur, Simona says she's living a very important life lesson for her child: the power of chasing your dreams.

The energetic entrepreneur

Teddie Levenfiche, co-founder, PerfectTed

Can you really have a naturally energizing drink that doesn't give consumers the jitters? Teddie believes he's found just that with PerfectTed's ceremonial grade 'crash-free' matcha green tea. Investors seem to agree: the brand won £200k of sales in its first year of trading and is on course to capture over £5 million in revenue for its second. Part of this winning approach is choosing strategic hospitality partners, supplying prominent High Street chains like Joe & The Juice and Blank Street to push quality matcha further into the mainstream.



The retail revolutionary

Sonny Drinkwater, co-founder, WellEasy

Sonny's personal mission is to make healthy living easy and accessible for everyone, whatever their budget. So he's stepped up with WellEasy, a fresh retail concept where members can get keen deals on a raft of everyday natural products. And the idea's catching on: in the last 18 months his business has attracted nearly a million pounds in funding from both angel investors and capital funds. Will it be giving Amazon some healthy competition soon? Watch this space for Sonny's next move.



The coffee crusader

Victoria Halina Poon, founder, Alpaca Coffee

When Victoria founded Alpaca Coffee she didn't want it to be just another java brand that contributed to the 320 million tonnes of plastic pollution the industry generates each year. Instead, Alpaca offers a top-quality product (described on its site as 'awkwardly good') that promises to be better for consumers and the planet. It's the natural next step in her journey, which has seen her facilitate fresh ideas for everyone from nexplorers to Samaritans. In 2023, Victoria is doubling down on her determination to create positive social change through ethical business – one espresso at a time.



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Bristol hosts the BOOMs



Presenting to a packed house, on 5 July TV personality Andy Clarke welcomed the full spectrum of the organic industry to Paintworks in Bristol, where Soil Association Certification 'celebrated excellence' with the tenth edition of the BOOM Awards.

Coinciding with 11 consecutive years of market growth, the BOOMs provided an opportunity to recognize the people behind the brands, organic innovation and the sector's 'remarkable resilience'.

Described by Alex Cullen, Soil Association commercial and marketing director, as 'the best that organic has to offer', the winners from each of the 36 categories and special awards were invited up on stage to collect their accolades before a packed in-house crowd and virtual audience.

"Organic farming and production offers vital solutions for climate and nature, which is why we're so excited to see these products making an impression with the public," Cullen said of the winning and shortlisted entries. "New and diverse representatives are



appearing all the time, and we're proud to celebrate them here. We've heard so many of their fantastic stories working with sustainable businesses.

"These are the people who make the system work and draw other people in. This drive to innovate means the organic market remains popular and resilient. It's thanks to them that we're so hopeful for the future, and we're thrilled we've been able to recognize them."

Of the judges, Cullen said: "We've been so lucky to work with such a dedicated and expert panel of judges, who worked through hundreds of shortlisted products and entries with the unenviable task of making the key decisions."

The panel included chef and food writer Xanthe Clay; *The Great British Bake-Off* contestant and TV presenter Briony May Williams; broadcaster, writer and chef Romy Gill; beauty and fashion director Scott Wimsett; author and radio DJ Janey Lee Grace; chef Jenny Chandler; and *NPN* editor Rosie Greenaway.

An executive judging committee was comprised of Cullen; Jenny Alford, senior farming advisor, Soil Association; Lisa Oxenham, beauty and style director, *Marie Claire*; Shannon D'Arcy, brand experience manager Huboo (BOOMs' headline sponsor); and Steve Ashworth, board member of Feeding Bristol and judge for the Guild of Fine Food.

Running alongside the usual categories – organic food and drink, farming, beauty

and wellbeing, fashion and textiles, and home – were four key standalone awards.

Winner of Winners went to Brown Cow Kefir Fermented Yoghurt, with the judges commenting on its sweet-sour flavour, ethos and single-ingredient recipe.

The Nation's Favourite was awarded to Clearspring for its Organic Tofu – Silken & Smooth, which received the highest number of votes from a public poll.

Aweside Farm's Sinead Fenton and Adam Smith were crowned Rising Star for their transformation of ex-arable land into 'an ecologically thriving smallholding'. "Our certified organic flowers celebrate the essence of seasonality, just grown as nature intended, never forced. Our flower farm is actively helping to regenerate the landscape and our flowers are home to an ever-increasing number of wildlife. We supply some of the most innovative chefs, creative cake-makers, cutting-edge caterers in the country with edible flowers and herbs. We pride ourselves on delivering

the best of the best, produce that showcases the finest flavours, colours, scents and tastes that the seasons have to offer," comments Fenton.

The Lifetime Achievement award, which stirred the biggest applause of the night, was handed to Iain Tolhurst of Tolhurst Organic, described by SA chief executive Helen Browning as 'someone who represents a real generation of radical pioneers ... an imitable trail-blazer who's always shared his wisdom with huge generosity'.

"He went net zero before it was invented," said Browning as she presented the award. "Iain has dedicated his life to organic and has led the way in so many areas. He has farmed organically for 40 years and has held the Soil Association organic symbol for over 30 years, making Tolhurst Organic one of the longest running organic vegetable farms in England. He is a true advocate for the movement both in theory and in practise, and we are so thrilled to be able to recognize this with this special BOOMs Lifetime Achievement award."

Meet the winners of 2023



FOOD & DRINK CATEGORIES

Best of Organic Chocolate:

Ecotone – Alter Eco Organic Fairtrade 70% Ecuador

Best of Organic Snacks:

Clearspring – Seaveg Crispies (Original)

Best of Organic Free-from Products

Après at Home – Organic Sticky Toffee Pudding

Best of Organic Store Cupboard

Bold Bean Co – Organic White Beans

Best of Organic Vegan Products

Palace Culture – Feta Barrel-Aged Plant Based Organic Cheeze

Best of New Organic Food & Drink Products

Blue Goose Coffee – Eco Coffee Pod Advent Calendar

Best of Organic Meat & Poultry

Ocado – Organic Two Beef Fillet Steaks

Best of Organic Alcoholic Drinks

South Hams Brewery – Vintage Cider

Best of Organic Bakery

Celtic Bakers – Organic Vermont Sourdough

Best of Organic Dairy

Brown Cow Organics – Natural Kefir Fermented Yoghurt

Best of Organic Non-Alcoholic Drinks

Hampstead Tea & Coffee Co – Organic Biodynamic Earl Grey

Best of Organic Baby & Children's Food & Drink Products

Pip Organic – Sparkling Apple

Best of Organic Fresh Produce

Clover Nursery – Hericium Coralloides

Best of Organic Chilled & Frozen – Savoury

Borough Broth Company – Free-Range Organic Chicken Bone Broth

Best of Organic Chilled & Frozen – Sweet

Luscious – Organic Madagascan Vanilla Custard

BUSINESS AWARDS

Best of Organic Eating Out – The Bull Inn, Totnes

Best of Organic Independent Retailers – Better Food, Bristol

Best of Organic Online Retailing – Riverford Organic Farmers

Best of Organic Supermarkets – Waitrose & Partners

Best of Organic Box Schemes – Riverford Organic Farmers

Best of Organic Innovations – Terre Verdi's NeroliPom Moisturiser

Best of Organic Sustainable Packaging – SunFresh Produce Sustainable Packaging

Best of Organic Marketing Campaign – Riverford Organic Farmers, Riverford and FareShare South-West Campaign

Best of Organic Food & Drink Start-up – Kinetic Kitchen

Best of Organic Farms over ten hectares – Manor Organic Farm

Best of Organic Smallholdings & Market Gardens under ten hectares – Sunshine and Green, Ark Farm

BEST OF ORGANIC BEAUTY & WELLBEING, FASHION & TEXTILES AND HOME PRODUCTS

Best of Organic Hair Care Products

Intelligent Nutrients – Soothe-Sayer Bi-Phase Scalp Serum

Best of Organic Skincare & Make-up Products

Rhug Wild Beauty – Protecting Face Oil with Bakuchiol

Best of Organic Pregnancy & Baby Products

Neal's Yard Remedies – Baby Bath & Shampoo

Best of Organic Health & Personal Care Products

HayMax – Organic Drug Free Allergen Barrier Balms

Best of Organic Fashion & Textiles Products

Piccalilly – Puffin Three Piece Baby Set

Best of Organic Home Products

Hypnos – Organic No 4 Mattress and Topper

Natural Kefir Fermented Yoghurt

Brown Cow Organics

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Packed into glass jars, with paper labels, so suitable for re use/refill schemes.

Green energy powers our manufacturing site. Along with the scientific led research enhancing our farming practices, we aim to combat climate change and produce great tasting dairy products.



Feta - Plant Based Organic Cheeze

Palace Culture

E-mail: hello@palaceculture.co.uk

www.palaceculture.co.uk

Our vegan feta is made from organic cashews that are fermented to provide gut-boosting properties and aged in oak wooden barrels for up to six weeks. This process not only slows down the aging process, giving the feta its creamy, matured taste but also enhances its delicious flavours! Throughout the years, we have perfected our craft of creating artisan plant-based cheezes that prioritise tantalising flavours, clean ingredients, and sustainable practices. From truffle cream cheeze to picante mouldy blue, we have something for everyone to enjoy.



Mr Organic Tomato Ketchup

Mr Organic

Tel: 020 7993 6829

E-mail: steph@mr-organic.com

www.mr-organic.com

Mr Organic Tomato Ketchup is packed full of juicy, organic red tomatoes! We squeeze more than 30 of our Italian sun-ripened tomatoes into each bottle - it's the ketchuppiest!

Our Tomato Ketchup is made and bottled at our very own sustainable production base next to our Organic tomato farms in Pontinia, Italy and we can track each tomato back to the field in which it was grown. Bursting with natural Organic tomatoes, Mr Organic Tomato Ketchup is full of Just Yummy Naked Goodness.



Fresh Chilli Cooking Chorizo, Organic

Rare & Pasture

Tel: 01752 428660

E-mail: hello@rareandpasture.com

www.rareandpasture.com

Rare & Pasture is an award-winning charcuterie and smokery in the heart of South Devon. Our frankfurters, hot-smoked meats and air-dried charcuterie are made using traditional methods, high-welfare and organic meats, avoiding artificial additives.

Rare & Pasture's cooking chorizo is from high quality cuts (shoulder, leg and belly) of organic British pork for a really juicy texture. The meat is flavoured with sweet paprika and some fresh chilli to give a lovely building warmth without being volcanically hot, and then smoked over beech and applewood to finish.

Overall, this is a top-notch organic chorizo that brings unforgettable flavour to your dishes.



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Wooden Spoon

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www.woodenspoon.eu

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It has strong antibacterial and anti-inflammatory benefits - calms irritation, redness, and diaper rash, and fights against everyday skin challenges.

The cream contains only premium-quality natural ingredients. The product complies with the latest EU requirements and has an external professional assessment of its safety and effectiveness. This product is free from chemicals, petroleum derivatives, preservatives, GMOs, and synthetic ingredients.





Craig Sams

Craig Sams is a pioneer in the UK organic and wholefood sector

50 years on an organic farm

Craig Sams reflects on the history of Welsh farm Bwlchwernen Fawr and argues its recent half-century celebrations should be repeated for its 51st birthday

In around 1971 an organic farmer called Jimmy Anderson got in touch – he lived in Forest Row, in the heart of the biodynamic community. His wife, Pauline, wanted to open a shop modelled on our Ceres Grain Shop in Portobello Road. They called it Seasons; it opened in 1972 and is still trading successfully.

A young hippie, Patrick Holden, was training on the Andersons' farm, immersing himself in the organic principles they applied so conscientiously. Then he moved to Wales with a few other committed people to a place called Bwlchwernen Fawr. At that time the Soil Association was just getting its act together and Patrick was deeply involved. I met him in 1987 on a flight from an organic conference in Zurich. "You're not another bloody vegetarian, are you?" he asked. It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship that has lasted for decades.

Charlotte Mitchell (Edinburgh Realfoods) became chair of the Soil Association and asked me to stand for the council. I failed to get elected; the Soil Association membership were dubious about business people like myself. Charlotte drafted me onto the council anyway and I became honorary treasurer. The following year I charmed the membership at the AGM with a treasurer's report that one attendee commented was the first time a report had made sense to her. I stood for council a year later and got elected. Patrick, Charlotte and I drove change at the charity and supported the expansion of the subsidiary certification business. Patrick took care of things at his farm but lived in Bristol, so he was a regular at Soil Association HQ; he held the role of director for more than 20 years.

When our patron resigned and we were looking for a successor, we were talking with Jonathan Dibley, and my wife, Jo, asked: "Why not ask the Prince of Wales?" Patrick's comment was "Do you think he'd do it?" and Jonathan said "I'll ask him." Patrick went on to form a beautiful relationship with the then Prince of Wales, who commissioned a sculpted head of Patrick that stands on the entrance to his walled garden at Highgrove. The Soil Association benefited from being able to host six visits a year to Highgrove as the

Prince felt that 'seeing is believing'. Visitors to the farm would be treated to a tour with the farm manager David Wilson and a discussion led by Patrick, lunch and a walk in the gardens of Highgrove House in the afternoon. This galvanized support from far and wide. But Patrick never stopped campaigning and his media appearances helped drive the swing of public opinion in favour of organic farming. He went on to form the Sustainable Food Trust, which has done so much to broaden the organic message.

50 years on ...

Scroll forward half a century and Patrick hosted an event at Bwlchwernen Fawr to celebrate his 50 years at the farm.

Before he left the Soil Association he fell in love with a staffer called Becky, married her and she took a keen interest in the farm. Their main product was organic milk but they took this forward to produce an award-winning Cheddar cheese called Hafod that is made with unpasteurized milk and has 'rich, layered flavours' and great texture. Becky conducted dairy

tours at the 50th birthday celebration and you had to respect her mastery of the cow-to-Cheddar process.

The celebration covered three days, with attendees coming from California (Albert Straus Dairy), Egypt (Helmy Abouleish of Sekem growers' cooperative), India (Vandana Shiva), Ireland (Darina Allen, Ballymaloe Cookery School), Cornwall (Tim Smit, Eden Project) and Holland, Denmark and Sweden. We enjoyed delicious organic food and it was a once in a lifetime networking opportunity, meeting old friends and making new ones. We had discussion circles where issues like health, education and the future of organic brought together inspiring perspectives and robust conclusions.

Organic food and farming is on a roll; Patrick's contribution to its success, in theory and practice, is immeasurable. I think he should repeat the event for the farm's 51st. We can't wait another 50 years to have such a good, constructive time.

The views expressed by our columnists do not necessarily reflect the views of our editor or publishers

Finding 'common ground' at Groundswell



AT GROUNDSWELL farming festival, the UK's three largest political parties welcomed a vision for nature-friendly food production put forward by environmental groups, leading to 'common ground' being established on the future fundamentals of farming.

Helen Browning OBE, chief executive, Soil Association (SA), chaired a session in which a consensus on food, farming and nature was put forward by the RSPB to representatives from the Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats.

The Consensus for Food, Farming and Nature calls for a transformation of the food system to 'ensure diets sit within planetary boundaries' and secure a fair deal for farmers. It recommends that future farming must 'embrace nature as an ally' by breaking ties with chemicals, using technology responsibly and regenerating soils – a vision backed by WWF, Nature Friendly Farming Network, the Wildlife Trusts and the Woodland Trust.

Participating in the panel were Daniel Zeichner MP (Labour), Stuart Roberts, Liberal Democrats advisor, and Lord Benyon, Minister of State, Defra.

"There's not a lot that actually divides us on these key issues," commented Benyon. "Unlike ... the US, we agree that humanity's greatest challenge is tackling climate change."

Discussions led to cross-party agreement that change must occur in order to address the diet-related public health crisis.

After moderating the debate, Browning said:

"There's so much common ground between parties. Everyone acknowledged the problem; no one is saying we need to get back on the chemical treadmill that farming has been on in recent decades.

"What is frustrating is the pace. If we had 30 years, I would feel very optimistic – but we don't, we have five years. We need to act faster and to be more long-sighted to stop us going off the cliff on both climate and public health.

"Things are happening around sustainable farming policy, but the big failing is on health. Politicians need to grasp the importance of tackling the issue of ultra-processed foods and using the cost of living crisis to stall on things like junk food promotions is quite disgraceful."

Warnings over poor diet were echoed throughout Groundswell; during a panel on public procurement, Rob Percival, head of food policy, SA, criticized Governmental inaction on junk food marketing. "The supermarkets are saying do it, we're ready. It's political cowardice not to. There is really good evidence that buy-one-get-one-free deals make people spend more money. There is public appetite for Government intervention – [there are] no excuses."

Percival went on to urge Government to follow Henry Dibley's National Food Strategy recommendations around improving foodservice in schools and hospitals, using the standards set out in the SA's Food for Life model.



Lee Holdstock

Lee Holdstock is senior business and trade development manager, Soil Association Certification

Here comes the tide

“Is this the new era for organic?” asks *The Grocer's* Emma Eversham. Yes! That's the sort of headline I like to read after so many months of modest value growth in organic and double-digit volume declines (-11.9% according to Kantar for the 52 weeks to April this year). But why the optimism?

Not only are the significant delistings we saw during the previous downturn in 2008 failing to materialize, but, as the article points out, we are seeing key retailers such as Waitrose actually bucking the trend. According to Kantar, Waitrose – keen to ensure that the dedicated shopper can do an entirely organic shop if they so wish – has used both its Duchy brand and promotional activity to grow its organic sales by a whopping 17.78%. As we hit Organic September, we're also seeing promotional activity from other retailers, with both Tesco and Morrisons making similar efforts.

It seems that retailers have not gone cold on organic – rather, they are sticking with it and in some cases expanding their ranges. This renewed commitment appears to come from two places. As our own research at Soil Association Certification shows, despite economic pressure, around half the organic consumers surveyed expressed an intention to keep buying the same amount of organic food. Unsurprisingly, there is a lack of willingness on the part of some retailers to let high-spend, loyal organic consumers drift away. Equally, in these times of growing concern about biodiversity and climate, retailers are conscious that turning their backs on a tried, tested and trusted sustainability practice like organic isn't exactly a good look for them.

If this is the start of a new growth period for organic, what could stand in the way? Despite promotions and the unwavering commitment of a dark green hardcore of price-insensitive consumers, price remains one of the biggest barriers to further uptake. We Brits are easily wooed by cheap food, and there remains too little transparency and understanding around the impact of under-priced food, which means that persuading more consumers to pay a little more for organic is never an easy task.

There are also elements of retailer strategy that really aren't helping. Take, for example, the loss-leaders,

which Dan Crossley of the Food Ethics Council argues are unfair to certification schemes and brands. Negative margins applied to popular basket items to lure consumers can exaggerate the price differential between organic and non-organic products. Crossley argues that this distortion of cost affects all consumers, underprivileged and wealthy alike. No doubt this margin differential can make the ethical trade-up difficult for many consumers to justify. This is especially the case where food has become a low priority for those who have other distractions for their disposable income, and where awareness of the impacts of food choice remains low.

This September, Soil Association will once again be doing our bit to promote awareness of organic. When it comes to food choices and sustainability, this year's Organic September will be getting to the point. Whilst we know that times are tough for many who perhaps have no option to spend more on food (and for those citizens, we have lots of ideas on other ways they can both support and access better food), we think there remains room for many consumers to prioritize better food and help make a real difference.

We'll be leading this year's campaign with a clear and unapologetic message that organic *is* climate action, highlighting the impact that intensive farming has on the water we swim in and the air we breathe, asking the question – will you make one small swap to organic to support a cleaner, safer world?

I'm often heard quoting a one-time director of the Soil Association who pointed out that the tide has come in and gone out on organic many times, yet each time it comes back in, it returns much stronger. I'm not sure whether this is really the start of a new era for organic, but I hope it is, as the world needs a system of farming that reduces the impact on nature and climate more than ever (and we have one that consumers already know and trust). I'm certainly sensing the tide is turning our way again, so, as a sector, let's prepare for growth.

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For more information about the Soil Association visit www.soilassociation.org



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Organic September is a wonderful event. A flagship month in our industry that as an organic-focused import agency we completely buy into and support. An opportunity to celebrate all that is good about organic: the quality of the products, the lack of chemical residue, the reduced impact on biodiversity, the general strength of the cause and mission. The decade-long growth in sales as consumers continue to engage and purchase despite the myriad other challenges faced by them both as individuals and as a wider society.

As a team, we here at Brand Organic embrace the month with open arms. Without Organic September and those who support it, the industry would no doubt be less visible, less celebrated. It is, and has become, a powerful marketing tool to engage those in the know, and to spread the word to those less-so-in-the-know. Like Veganuary to the vegan world, Valentine's Day to anyone involved in anything remotely romantic, Christmas to those in the gifting arena, Organic September is the place to talk, promote and market organic.

An opportunity for celebration
In the current trading climate, what an opportunity that provides for some celebration. The opportunity for some 'singing in the rain' – to laugh at the clouds that have been present via wider society-driven issues for a large part of the year to date. A few weeks of putting organic firmly in the spotlight, without worrying about the economy, inflation and/or anything overtly trade-related and beginning with B, which I am under strict orders from the editor to omit from my articles for a while.

As a company we've been planning for months: promotions, PR, new product launches and even entire new brands being introduced to the portfolio. It is, after all, Organic September – for us it is go hard or go home. This is the one time of the year where we have (and want) to be there, which for a portfolio of brands demands some forethought, making sure

Organic September – time for some 'singing in the rain'?



Tom Campbell-Smart, operations director at Brand Organic, picks apart Organic September from a brand perspective, exploring the opportunities and challenges that the event presents to manufacturers and brand owners alike in the current trading climate



every brand has its place, its story, its offer for the month ahead. Imagine the alternative. It would be like one of the bunnies not turning up at Easter. It would be a PR disaster.

I don't think we are the only ones. In my experience the event has always generated interest from consumers and buyers alike, and that has only grown over the years. Organic September has long been earmarked as a major point in the calendar for many in this industry. Sales and exposure go up and so brands have kept investing, and over time it seems to have snowballed. That's great to see for the

industry as a whole, continuing the momentum year-on-year to grow the profile of the industry yet further.

“Without Organic September ... the industry would no doubt be less visible, less celebrated”

This success also drives innovation and progress. Because in Organic September it isn't just one organic brand doing the marketing, it's all of them. Everyone promotes, releases new products, engages with clever PR and advertising – because, like Brand Organic and its

offering of brands, they just 'have to be there'. Therefore each year you have to be a little bit smarter, your execution a little bit better, and that's an exciting proposition that continues to drive our business forward. Ten years ago a token 10% promotion would suffice. Not anymore. As a close team and collective of brands, this year our discussions around how to differentiate and how to get noticed were more prevalent than ever before in the planning phases of our activities across the portfolio. It forces us to be better.

Tough times

That's not just down to competition. It's also down to the pressures of the current trading climate. Times are undoubtedly tough for all in the chain, and they do not look to be getting any easier in the short term. For brands, this makes investment in marketing events more and more difficult as the microscope runs its way through the P&L sheet. It does not, however, make them any less necessary, hence our careful planning of this month more than ever before. Now is not the time to lose momentum in our professional opinion, and perhaps in this month of all months, the effort and the expenditure is more necessary than ever to maintain the upward trajectory. Only time will tell.

But all of that is history now; the ads are in, articles are in full swing and new products are on-shelf. It will be a few months until we start planning all over again.

For now, there is nothing left but to engage with and enjoy the month-long celebration of all that is good about our industry, and trust that our plans are strong enough, because when it goes well it can be a truly wonderful month for all those involved. I for one hope that the whole thing continues to grow, for want of a better phrase and a less obvious pun to end on, as organically as it has done to date.

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If snacking were an Olympic sport there are many of us who, through no small effort, would have come within a whisper of a gold during the pandemic. Left to our own devices, like teenagers home alone, there were no designated mealtimes, making the line between snacking and meals blur until it no longer existed. And now, with the trend towards working from home, some of that blurring seems to have continued.

So it's no surprise that the latest food trend on TikTok – termed the 'girl dinner' – is one where these blurred boundaries are celebrated, with women worldwide sharing a variety of artfully arranged snacks as their main meal, meze style. What connects the meals – which can include meats, cheeses, olives and nuts – is the fact that they are quick to prepare and contain small snacking bites. LA-based Olivia Maher, who coined the term, has said that these 'girl dinners' were inspired by the type of snacks that medieval peasants might have eaten, although quite which country's peasants would have had access to charcuterie and an array of cheeses from the four corners of the Earth is anyone's guess. Maybe they bought them from Ye Olde Wholefoods.

Probably more reflective of wider eating habits than the TikTok trend is, Noel Bollman, joint CEO of nutritionally complete brand yfood, says that there is a nutritional gap between meals and snacks. "The difference between these two intakes on your physiology is huge. A meal, due to its combination of protein, fibre, carbohydrate and fats in solid form, is digested and absorbed very slowly in comparison to the same foods eaten in isolation. This slow digestion results in staying satiated and fuller for longer."

Founder of organic snack brand Nourish, Ineke Nugteren, says she thinks that, post-pandemic, people are more curious about the snacks they eat: "People who overindulged realized they'd put on weight [and] had more health conditions so have now shown an interest. I think COVID changed everything about the way people eat."

The fact that the TikTok trend is female-led is reflected

Grazing on goodness



Kate Miller grazes on the £5.2 billion snack market, translates what TikTok's 'girl dinner' is all about and finds an alternative to odorous workplace microwaves

in a 2022 YouGov study examining the UK's eating habits which found that women are significantly more likely than men to pay 'a lot of attention' to the amount of processed food they eat, with half of Britons ranking taste (over health) as the most important factor when it comes to food (24%).

And this extends into snacking, according to the most recent Mintel report which discovered consum-

ers still want to make healthy choices, with 63% of people who eat and buy these snacks wanting to see their favourite brands offer more healthy options in their ranges [*Mintel UK Savoury Nuts and Snacks Market Report 2023*]. And even the treat-focused are keen on healthier versions being available to them, with 65% of those buying crisps, savoury snacks and nuts to treat themselves saying this was

desirable. Some 72% of those who would like more healthy options are interested in trying new savoury snacks made with different base ingredients (eg, chickpeas, lentils) compared to 60% overall.

Most snacks in the £5.2 billion market fall in the 'self-treat' category, with a move away from snacking on-the-go towards evening consumption. Nugteren, who has a nursing background and is a functional

medicine practitioner, says this emphasis on self-treat is key to her brand focus: "We wanted food to taste amazing and still be clean in their ingredients. So often food that is deemed healthy [tastes] like cardboard or has had so many shortcuts done to it to make it for the masses, or it hits the dietary requirements but it loses all of its taste. So the biggest thing for us is that it must taste delicious while being in its most natural form, without being too ... altered. So simple ingredients, very few of them. It tastes like it should be naughty, but it's not."

One snack item aiming to tick the healthy box without sacrificing taste is from RawQ which utilizes the ingredient *du jour*, buckwheat, as the basis for a bar providing long-lasting energy. Launched in three flavours – Coconut, Spirulina & Almond; Bilberry, Apple & Hazelnut; and Mango, Banana & Cashew – founders Arina Kuzmina, nutritionist, and Daria Medvedeva, former pro athlete, say it fills a gap in the market for an energy bar 'that provides a sustained energy release without a sugar crash'. Vegan and gluten-free with a list of superfood ingredients, the bar is backed by Grand Slam champion Daniil Medvedev.

Protein was the big snack story for a few years and new onto the market is a low-carb, low-sugar keto snack from The Protein Ball Co. Spotting a gap in the market for a range of grab-and-go Keto Balls, the range has a sweet nut butter base, is high in fibre and packs 5g of protein per 25g gluten-free serving, providing slow-release energy at less than 1g of carbs per ball.

On the savoury side of the market, 'gut happy' brand Boundless launched two new chip flavours in March in 25g grab-and-go bags and 90g sharing bags; and Human Nature Food launched its award-winning plant-based snacks with Degusta Box in January. The brand's Hot Jalapeno & Lime Lentil Sticks plus its Sour Cream & Onion variant also won a Great Taste Award.

Clearspring is another company launching NPD this year with two gluten-free, vegan Japanese Brown Rice Cracker flavours: Black Pepper & Tamari and Green Nori & Tamari. According to the brand, the majority of Japanese and Asian

rice crackers are made using white rice and usually contain fish stock, added sugar and MSG. It took Clearspring over a year to perfect two minimally processed recipes using organic wholefood ingredients.

For those wanting something more along the lines of a traditional lunch, Nice Rice is a new sustainably-farmed rice brand, launched earlier this year with a mission to create demand for a better industry by sourcing its rice from a farmer group which tackles the grain's poor sustainability record by using a farming method endorsed by the UN and IPCC for being significantly more sustainable – achieving a 49% reduction in CO2 equivalent emissions per tonne of rice compared with the national average. Water used for irrigation is also reduced by 3,300 litres per kilo while farmers' yield is improved by 10%.

HFSS compliance

Of course, for any health food retailer the fly in this category's ointment is the issue of HFSS compliancy which has banished many a best-seller away from fast-selling till spots.

The legislation has come under fire from many quarters due to its seemingly arbitrary application of what it deems healthy. For instance, a product which scores positively for sugars, fruit and nuts, etcetera, but contains coconut, scores negatively due to the latter's high fat content.

Some brands have tackled the legislation with innovation: Kind launched two compliant products last year with Maple Pecan Almond and Fruit & Nut, and has since added Caramelised Biscuit Nut and Chocolate Chip.

Jade & Joy has launched six new HFSS-compliant chocolate bars to its luxury range. The new Wellbeing line comes in six flavours:

Key Lime, Caramel Blondie, Speculoos, Cookie Crumb, Double Choc Brownie and Hazelnut & Almond.

Nugteren says that despite the legislation, health food stores are in a good position if staff are well informed about products. She also says that brands can help retailers by providing scientific-backed information to give those selling products the confidence to speak about their benefits.

As well as being very active on social media, the company has recently launched a podcast – *Nourishing Lives* – featuring expert opinion on a variety of health topics, and the part that food, functionality and nutrition plays in health. "We pull in experts who have got experience in those fields so they can educate people [to] feel more knowledgeable and ... make those choices themselves," she explains.

LUNCHING OUTSIDE THE BOX

For those of us stuck at our desks, an office lunch usually means a creaking, slightly grim shared microwave where you are in line behind someone reheating last night's obnoxiously smelly dinner, complete with splashes. However, an interesting launch into the marketplace seeks to address this. Steambox is a rechargeable system which can heat up to three meals on one single charge. Users pack their meal inside the box and fill the small water container. When it's approaching time to eat, the water is added to the heating element and the timer is set. On average, food takes just 15 to 20 minutes to heat up through steam. There is also an app to control the

box, and the brand provides recipe ideas.

An accompaniment to Steambox comes from Mnched which has launched a Travel Cutlery Set made from stainless steel and porcelain, packed in a recycled polypropylene box free of BPA, BPS and phthalates.

For at-home lunchers, Naksha Recipe Kits have launched into the UK. The kits are comprised of recipe cards and specialist ingredients for authentic flavours, such as spice blends, herbs, grains, noodles, sauces and other extras. Recipes include Cuba's Ropa Vieja, Lemak Cili Padi from Singapore, Turkey's Dark Chocolate Fondant with Turkish coffee, and Curried Goat from Jamaica.

Hot Stocks

Lucky dip

Suma's award-winning Edamame Hummus can be paired on-shelf with vegetable crisps thanks to its ambient presentation in a 135g glass jar. Equally tasty teamed with crudités or used as a plant-based protein spread in sandwiches, the vegan, organic dip's ingredients include soya beans, green peas, sesame seeds, black cumin, fenugreek and chilli.

Healthy hydration

No lunch is complete without something to wash it down. Jamu Wild Water's gut-friendly Sparkling Lemon is a prebiotic-filled refreshing soft drink, packed with immune-boosting British-

grown botanicals and fibre from chicory root. Raspberry and Blood Orange complete the collection.

Multi-seed selection

Slow-baked in the oven, Roots & Wings' hand-made MultiSeed Brittles are savoury crackers packed with seeds, providing a versatile vehicle for toppings or as a straight-from-the-box snack. The three gluten-free variants – Original, Dates & Black Olives and Black Olives & Sun Dried Tomatoes – also come in a Selection Pack.

Popped and punchy

Chika's new Popped Rice Crisps are full of punchy, elevated flavours and familiar

crisp-crunch. Each variant – Smokey Barbecue, Salt & Vinegar, Sweet Chilli Samba and Sour Cream & Onion – is gluten-free and non-HFSS. Sharing bags and individual servings are available. The brand says they offer 'a world of goodness in every bite'.

Starters and mains

Lunchtimes just got more flavoursome with Mr Organic's new soups and dips. Bringing Italian flare to snack boxes are three Antipasti Dips: Blackbean & Red Pepper; Butter Bean & Yellow Pepper; and Chickpea & Tomato. Follow with a hearty bowl of soup in high-protein Blackbean & Vegetable or classic Tomato & Basil.



DIARY DATE

Discover trend-setting brands, hear industry-leading discussions and find foodie inspiration for your store's snack section at lunch!, 27-28 September 2023, ExCeL London. Register for a free trade ticket at <https://tinyurl.com/2s4ym65s>

lunch!

The contemporary food to go show

27-28 SEPTEMBER 2023
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Slow Roasted & Signature Chocolate Impulse range

Kestrel Foods Ltd
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E-mail: hello@forestfeast.com
www.forestfeast.com

Snacking brand Forest Feast have replicated their best-selling Signature chocolate & Slow Roasted Nuts in handy Impulse packs. These are perfect for front of store, as part of a meal deal, or in café areas. The slow roasted & seasoned nuts such as Heather Honey Roast Peanuts & Cashews or Sea Salt & Black Peppercorn Nut Mix, are gently air roasted, not fried to deliver a richer flavour, distinctive texture, and a healthier product, perfect for stores who need to consider non-HFSS snacks. The chocolate covered lines, such as Salted Dark Chocolate Almonds or New Valencia Orange Milk Chocolate Almonds are made using traditional artisan panning, a continuous layering of chocolate around the centres and are adding a presence in the mindful indulgence category. The 40g packs are all gluten free, vegetarian or vegan friendly, packed into recyclable film and are available in branded Shelf Ready packaging.



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Seeded Gluten Free Sliced Bread & Original Flax Keto Bread

Dillon Organic Ltd
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www.dillonorganic.co.uk

Dillon Organic make delicious Keto breads, including the Original flax with only 3g carbs per 25g slice. They recently launched tasty Gluten free sliced bread in 2 flavours (Seeded and Olive) packed full of organic seeds including Sunflower, Flax, and pumpkin. All the keto and Gluten free breads are Organic, Gluten Free and low carb, vegan and high fibre. No preservatives, additives, gums, fillers or other nasties either.

All flavours are available through CLF, Suma, Essential, Queenswood, and Independent Irish wholesalers.



Clearspring Limited Edition Organic Okumidori Matcha

Tel: 0300 373 1919
E-mail: sales@clearspring.co.uk
www.clearspring.co.uk

Clearspring is launching an exclusive limited-edition Matcha to celebrate the brand's 30th anniversary: Clearspring Organic Japanese Ceremonial Grade Okumidori Matcha.

The limited-edition Organic Okumidori Matcha has been specially selected by Clearspring's tea master Nagata-san. Okumidori, meaning 'deepest green', is a superior, artisanal matcha from Wazuka, in Uji, Kyoto, a place steeped in eight centuries of matcha history. Of all the tea fields in Japan, fewer than 5% are dedicated to growing Okumidori Matcha, which makes it so valuable. Clearspring will be donating £1 from the sale of each pack of its Limited-Edition Matcha to long-term charity partner and community cookery school Made in Hackney.



JAMU WILD WATER

JAMU WILD WATER
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www.jamuwildwater.co.uk

Say hello to these all-natural, gut-friendly drinks that deliver prebiotic fibre to support your gut-microbiome without any sugar or artificial sweeteners in sight! Jamu Wild Water's award-winning drinks won gold at the Nourish Awards, the UK's leading health food awards, which means you'll have to keep them under lock and key if you intend them for yourself! Each flavour sparkles with gentle sweetness and contains Vitamin C and Zinc to further support immune health. These refreshing drinks bursting with botanicals are certainly making a splash by harnessing the functional benefits of plants for healthier hydration.

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Bonsan Toscana style spread and cashew chive cheese-free spread

Biona
Tel: 020 8547 2775
E-mail: sales@windmillorganics.com
www.bonsan.co.uk

Bonsan's 100% vegan, yeast-free, and organic spreads cater to the growing 40% of UK consumers demanding plant-based options. Bonsan has launched two irresistible vegan spreads - Toscana style spread and cashew chive cheese-free spread. The light and creamy Toscana style spread boasts distinctively Mediterranean-inspired flavours that will elevate any sandwich, while cashew chive cheese-free spread is a velvety, dairy-free delight. Bonsan offers vegan foods bursting with flavour that flexitarian and plant-based consumers will love!



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Flawsome! launches UK first with paper-wrapped straws for kids

AS PART of its new Wonky Fruit Water Cartons range, Flawsome! has created what it says is a UK first in the kids' category: an on-carton paper straw in paper packaging.

The move means that the entire product can be recycled and has contributed to its carbon footprint being 50% lower than the average small juice company.

The new drinks are available in three flavours:

Apple, Mango & Orange, Sweet Apple and Apple & Sour Cherry. Made using only wonky and surplus fruit, the drinks have no added sugar, are 100% vegan and provide children with their daily dose of iron and vitamins D and C.

"We're really excited to finally introduce both our new range of Wonky Fruit Water Drinks and revolutionary paper straw in paper packaging," comments Flawsome!

co-founder Karina Sudenyte. "We pride ourselves on being innovators within sustainability and prioritize this throughout the business.

"The new range will join our current products in providing children and families with healthy, delicious and affordable options for fruit drinks while ensuring today's children have a planet to enjoy as they grow up."



The FIRST paper wrapper for kids cartons in the UK

Mills-owned firms buy Plant and Bean site

INTERPATH has announced that two companies run by Heather Mills – Vegan Solo Consulting Limited and Duo Renovations Ltd – have purchased Plant and Bean's (P&B) manufacturing site and associated equipment after the latter entered into administration.

The Lincolnshire-based company operated from a 125,000 sq ft factory manufacturing meat-free products for brand names including Wicked Kitchen and Quorn, but the joint administrators, who were appointed in May, said that P&B had experienced significant inflation across its cost base and suffered operational issues.

Commenting on the purchase, announced in July, Mills says: "I am delighted to acquire the P&B facilities and to keep it as a non-meat factory. I am also pleased to try and help

the founder of P&B who has worked in a similar vein to myself for many decades to drive positive change for the environment, the animals and for the health of the global population."

July also saw news of another vegan brand in trouble, with Samworth Brothers revealing it's in talks about possibly shutting its Revolution Kitchen site in Melton Mowbray.



CRAVE modifies snacks to avoid legal battle with multinationals

FOLLOWING infringement notices from two leading multinational food brands, free-from snack brand CRAVE had to make changes to its range this summer to avoid facing a costly legal battle.

Commenting on the situation, CRAVE founder Rob Brice says: "Constraints of time and money make it very difficult for us to take on these giants, we are not a big threat to their success, we are just here to make 'normal food' available to everyone.

"We operate in a very niche market of free-from

and vegan, and so clearly [these are] very different products from mainstream brands. We don't see there being any confusion between the two. We see this as an opportunity for us to have fun and get creative with some new ideas."

The brand's pickled onion flavour maize snacks have now been renamed Pickled Onion Noughties and have changed shape from feet to rings; its hot and spicy maize puffs are rebranded as Hot & Spicy Hot Dawgs; and its chocolate hazelnut spread has changed to Sir Spread-a-lot.



Glebe Farm investment to bring production process on site

PUREOATY producer Glebe Farm Foods has made a multi-million pound investment in its Cambridgeshire farm so its entire production process will take place on one site.

With its new cutting-edge packaging plant – which includes a Tetra Pak filling line – the company says PureOaty will be the only British oat drink fully produced on a single UK site and that its food miles will be significantly reduced – with just 300 metres between the oat milling and packaging processes.

The facility can pack 10,000 litres per hour and will introduce tethered caps across all the brand's packs to make recycling easier and reduce litter. It will also create the opportunity for the firm to co-pack for other manufacturers and retailers.

"Our new plant is an investment in meeting a growing demand for oat drinks as part of a plant-based diet," explains Philip Rayner, Glebe Farm co-owner and MD. "Not only will our new facility enable us to produce in greater quantity, but it'll help us do so in an even more sustainable way. We won't need to take our oat drinks elsewhere to be packaged, which will mean they'll have the lowest food miles of any oat drink brand in the UK."



Quorn joins Plant-based Food Alliance UK

PLANT-based meat pioneer Quorn has become a member of the UK Plant-based Food Alliance (PBFA) in a move that is hoped will strengthen the alliance's influence at Westminster.

Commenting on the move, Marisa Heath, PBFA CEO, says: "It's fantastic to have such a strong player in the market like Quorn join us in our push for policies that promote plant-based eating in the UK."

"There is so much the Government can do to encourage climate-friendly diets – in the form of trade, public procurement, research, marketing, as well as regulation – and we really need the big plant-based companies by our side as we negotiate our way there."

"Quorn is such an excellent example of a company using the power of science to come up with sustainable

solutions to global crises. We know that policy makers will take notice of what Quorn has to say as a member of the Alliance going forward."

Adds Tess Kelly, the brand's head of external engagement: "Quorn Foods shares the conviction that making positive change happen on our plates is a vital step to regenerating

human and planetary health. We look forward to contributing to the work of the PBFA and are proud to stand alongside fellow pioneering organizations that are at the forefront of providing the solutions needed to speed the transition to a food future that is healthy, sustainable, equitable and absolutely delicious."



Finnebrogue Artisan invests £2.8MN in plant-based factory upgrade

COUNTY Down food manufacturer Finnebrogue Artisan has invested £2.8 million to upgrade its plant-based food factory.

As part of the move, Finnebrogue – which supplies vegan food to UK supermarkets on a private-label and co-manufacturing basis – has installed 2,846 solar panels on the roof of its vegan food factory.

The investment will eliminate 580t of CO2 emissions and provide further energy security, as well as expanding infrastructure around the site to accommodate its growth within the plant-based category, says the firm.

"As we continue on our growth trajectory in the plant-based sector and across the other categories in which we play, we also continue to invest in our people and our facilities,"

comments Finnebrogue's chief strategy officer Jago Pearson. "Our latest investment in our industry-leading plant-based facility will

reduce our carbon emissions, deliver additional energy security and provide us with additional room to grow."



Clearspring marks three decades in business with meals donation

AS PART of its 30th anniversary celebrations, Clearspring has teamed with its long-term partner Made In Hackney, through which it will donate 30,000 free vegan meals to communities in need.

The plant-based community cookery school and food charity, Made in Hackney – which is itself celebrating its tenth anniversary this year – will work with Clearspring to donate products and cooked meals to families and individuals with emergency support needs.

Clearspring will also be fundraising to support the work Made in Hackney is doing, as well

as partnering with other organizations including City Harvest, which helps distribute food to more than 350 local charities.

MD Maria Dawson says: "Reaching 30 years as an independent family business is a great achievement to celebrate. We wanted to take this opportunity to make a concerted effort to give back with our pledge to donate 30,000 free plant-based meals. We also wanted to say thank you to everyone who has helped us reach this 30-year milestone."

Founded by Christopher Dawson, Clearspring now offers over 300 natural, plant-based products.



Gipsy Hill Brewery brews up offset-free carbon negative pint

SOUTH London-based Gipsy Hill Brewery is claiming a world first with the launch of its offset-free carbon negative beers, Swell Lager and Trail Pale.

The beers are made using certified regenerative barley, sourced from Wildfarmed, and hops which have been recaptured and reused. Each pint removes more greenhouse gases from the atmosphere than it produces.

Gipsy Hill states that the brews have per pint carbon footprints of -40gCO2e (Swell Lager) and -30gCO2e (Trail Pale), adding that this is the first time a brewery has produced a carbon-negative beer without using offsetting.

"Making great quality beer has been our obsession for ten years, but I felt we had to find a way to do it

more sustainably," explains brewery co-founder Sam McMeeken. "Great beer should be guilt-free, and our new Trail Pale and Swell Lager mean that for the first time our drinkers can enjoy a pint safe in the knowledge it's actively improving the environment and helping solve our climate crisis."



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NAHS is the only trade association in the UK representing the interests of independent health food stores. Our aim is to protect and enhance the businesses of our members.

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Natural Products Global (NPG) is the global news resource for natural and organic industry professionals. NPG's eclectic mix of news, business insights, comment and analysis deliver compelling content on a range of hot topics in the natural and organic sectors. Following closely on product and consumer trends, regulation and standards, companies and M&As to name a few, NPG is committed to building a natural and organic future by connecting people and growing businesses. Sign up for the free weekly newsletter online at www.naturalproductsglobal.com



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The Nature's Bounty Co. Ltd

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Email: trade_orders@nbty.com
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Tel: 01557 870203
Email: trade@pravera.co.uk
www.praveratrade.co.uk

Pravera has been distributing natural and organic certified brands in the UK for over 21 years and currently offer 12 brands of synergistic products for health stores, pharmacies and e-tailers, covering make up, skin care and aromatherapy, through to period products, herbal hair care and household cleaning.



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Rr

Rhumveld UK

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email customerserviceuk@rhumveld.com
www.rhumveld.com
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Rio Health Products Ltd.

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Based in Brighton, Rio Health supplies and distributes natural products from around the world, specialising in high quality, whole-plant South American botanicals, including Pau d'Arco (Lapacho), Suma (Pfaffia), Guarana, and Rosa Mosqueta (Rosehip seed oil). The Rio Amazon collection consists of botanical extracts, tropical teas and superfoods including Maca, Graviola (soursop), Quebra Pedra and the award-winning, natural and vegan Rio Rosa Mosqueta skincare products. The new Rio Health brand was launched in 2020, providing mainly South American botanicals as tinctures, including Cat's Claw, Manayupa (Burbur), Cecropia (Takuna) and Stevia. These feature in the Rio Health Support Program (RHSP). Rio Health is the UK distributor for Green Magma, TS Choice (previously Best Choice) and Epigenar.

Ss

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The Terranova philosophy embodies complete nourishment, deep healing and profound wellbeing. Intensely synergistic formulations with a scientific yet holistic

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Vv

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Q&A What are you like?

We ask *Natural Products News* readers to tell us a little bit about themselves

What led you to the natural and organic industry?

I have been lucky enough to grow up around the industry. Visiting independent health stores from a young age with my parents, helping on exhibition stands and visiting suppliers. Seeing the passion, enthusiasm and love for the independent health stores from my mum, Cheryl Thallon, drew me to the natural and organic industry.



If you weren't doing your current job, what would you be doing?

I really can't imagine doing anything else. I have won the lottery with my job. I get to work in an incredible industry with a team that feels like a family. We are on a mission to help people to health and happiness, there is no greater goal!



What is the worst job you've ever had?

This one is hard as I have enjoyed all my jobs for a variety of reasons, but I would say volunteering at a charity shop. I loved the work and the team, but sometimes unpacking donated dirty delicacies would take the shine off the work. Please wash before you donate!

Who is your inspiration in our industry?

As corny as it may sound, it would be my mum. Her com-

mitment, love and determination for the industry and the independent health stores is truly inspiring.

What wisdom would you pass on to the younger you?

Seize every opportunity and immerse yourself in every experience life has to offer.

What one thing would you change in the natural and organic world?

Everyone talks about conventional or organic farming. Whereas I would change conventional to 'intensive' or 'industrialized' farming. That



one small linguistic change could highlight the reality of the business of farming.

What is your motto in life?

This above all: to thine own self be true. It is a quote from *Hamlet* that has stuck with me through the years.

If you got stuck in a lift which famous person would you want with you?

Actor Tom Hardy ... no explanation necessary!

What is the first film you remember watching at the cinema?

Shrek. The projector broke down and the audience started singing 'why are we waiting'. I was very confused, thinking this would happen at every film. Now as an adult I have found a love for sing-a-long films!

What is your most treasured possession?

In truth it's hard to choose. I treasure my memories, experiences, friends and family.

What's your dream travel destination?

New Zealand, I am a *Lord of*



Holly Thallon Steenson

NextGen co-owner of Viridian Nutrition, Holly Thallon Steenson carved out her own career in business and events management before following in the footsteps of her mum and Viridian founder Cheryl Thallon and demonstrating a passion for experiential retail and community engagement

the Rings fan so would love to explore the Shire.

Tell us your nickname?

I have never had a nickname, unless you class Hol or the Viridian Tree Girl!

What would be the one record you'd like on a desert island?
Californication by Red Hot Chili Peppers.

What is the most surprising fact about you?

As a child, I fell into the Grand Canal in Venice. As a baby, I was nearly eaten by a baboon. As a newborn, I was kept in a desk drawer.

What animal best reflects your personality?

Meerkat – team player, curious and relentless.

What celebrity, dead or alive, would you like to share a meal with?

The Prime Minister (whoever that might currently be) to discuss the importance of the natural health movement and the environment.

What is your guilty pleasure?

Crafting. The only guilt that I have is with the amount of half-finished crafts I have in my house. Jack of all crafts!



What is your perfect plate of food?

Fajitas – very fun to cook, versatile and I have fond memories of making them as a child with my mum.

What food item could you never give up?

It would have to be cheese, Gromit! Every kind from a mild Cheddar to a Stinking Bishop.

It's my round – what are you drinking?

Sweet, sour, fresh and minty, it would have to be a mojito for me.





Our monthly round-up of the best of your posts, tweets and updates

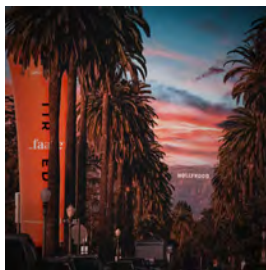
Padstow to Rock



Away from the shop floor, Cornish retailers Debbie, Neil and Ellie from Elixir Health Foods in Wadebridge swam the Padstow to Rock challenge to support Marie Curie UK. The choppy one-mile sea swim saw Debbie conquer her fear of open water, learn front crawl and raise funds for end-of-life care.

Masks and monuments

Travel FOMO can put a real dampener on summer spirits. But don't worry, in this case it's only the new miniatures from Faace which are jet-setting. The brand got creative with visuals of London, LA and Rio de Janeiro to launch its set of three hand luggage-sized Mini Face Masks (Period, Tired and Sweaty), all 30ml.



Barbiemania

Social feeds were a flood of pink Barbie memes over the summer: Hoopsy used one famous scene from the film to announce a 50% discount on its eco pregnancy tests in July; while Clearspring introduced an alternative doll, Licca Chan, which comes from Japan – just like the brand's matcha.

Finding out Hoopsy Pregnancy Tests are 50% off until end of July!!!



Salad season

The Soil Association published this useful guide to British seasonal, local produce, highlighting some UK-grown fruit, veg and herbs easily available for summers salads, including: aubergines, courgettes, new potatoes, beetroot, cucumbers, carrots, beans, parsley, fennel, rocket, watercress and chard.



Tell us who you'd nominate as our social media star, and why – email: rgreenaway@divcom.co.uk with the details

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