

The Grocer

Focus On: Meat by Carina Perkins (carina.perkins@wrbm.com)

Publishing: 12 May
Advertising deadline: 3 May
Submissions deadline: 26 April

The story

You can hardly move for all the talk about vegetarian and veganism these days. According to a poll conducted on behalf of the Grocer, 40% of young people are either worried about the environmental impact of eating meat or have cut it out of their diets altogether. Now campaigners are talking about introducing a meat tax to further reduce consumption. And so the meat industry finds itself in a tough position – battling concerns about the environment and health as shoppers cut back (to the tune of 822,000 fewer trips over the past quarter). But there are some reasons for positivity. Lean meats are growing and the emergence of more convenient cuts and formats could make meat more of a mid-week option. So can the industry put meat back on the menu?

Themes to cover:

Red meat: Times are tough for red meat. Beef, lamb and pork are all in volume decline, with the growth in lamb solely down to price rises. What is the reason behind this? Are shoppers shunning red meat for health reasons? And how can the industry fight back?

Chicken: As shoppers look for leaner meats, one success story is chicken. Volumes are up 0.5% despite the negative publicity towards the end of last year. To what extent is this growth fuelled by promotions? Will this continue? Can the rise of new formats such as chicken sausages encourage further growth?

Buy British: The mults stocked nearly twice as much British lamb this Easter as last year – will this buy British trend continue to rise and what impact will it have?

Return of the roast: Roasting joints of beef are popular once again, while steaks and mince have declined. Why is this?

Steaks: There have been some high-end innovations at the retailers, including picanha and gold-leaf steak. Will these appeal to shoppers looking for a 'dine in' experience?

Convenient cuts: Can new cuts of meat aimed at the convenience market revitalise Britain's appetite for meat-based mid-week meals?

Vegetarianism: To what extent is this having an impact on meat sales? According to Nielsen data, sales remained strong in January despite the popularity of Veganuary. So is the effect being overhyped?

Innovations: A run-down of the top launches in meat, that haven't been featured in The Grocer before.

Exotic meats: A look at the rise and fall of exotic meats.

US imports: What could a trade deal with the US mean for our meat in the UK?

Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- How have promotional strategies (both in terms of price and marketing) evolved?
- How have individual retailers' strategies impacted the market?
- How has merchandising changed in the market?
- What impact has own-label had on branded players?
- What's next for the category?