

Focus On: Lunchbox and Back to School publishing 30th June

Online Listicle to go live on 29th June

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Submissions deadline: 11 June

Advertising deadline: 18 June

The Story

Are we facing the end of the sandwich? Once a lunchbox staple, the humble sarnie is in continuing decline, being eaten on fewer occasions than they did in 2014, and frequency fell by 2% last year. So what is taking the place of the classic cheese and bread combo? What is driving this trend? And can new twists on the classic format bring consumers back?

Themes to cover:

Listicle: The 100-calorie snack

NPD that fits PHE guidelines on snacking, that children should have no more than two 100-calorie snacks per day.

Soup and salad: As sandwiches fall out of favour, Brits are tucking into soup and salad instead. Why is this? Are there any innovations driving this trend?

Health: A growing factor in choice of lunchbox options is health, potentially explaining why consumers are shunning carb-heavy options in favour of soups & salads. How are brands and retailers catering for these needs?

New sandwiches: The classic cheese sarnie may be falling out of favour but, as Brits get more experimental in their tastes, there is an opportunity to tempt shoppers with more exotic twists on the format. Which new flavours are capturing the imagination of consumers?

Tastes of the world: Over the past year, there have been an extra 10m lunch occasions involving Indian food (+83%), 7m involving Italian food (+18%) and 4m involving Oriental food (+25%). Who and what is driving this?

The 45+ worker: The demographic driving the lunchbox revival is the 45- to 64-year-old age group, who are consuming 49m (+8%) more lunchboxes than last year and 89m more than 2014. Why?

School lunches: The government announced plans to reduce spending on Free School Meals last month. How will this impact the children's lunchbox category?

Back to school: What are brands/retailers doing to prepare for the September return back to school?

Innovations x 8: A run-down of the top launches which haven't been featured in The Grocer before

FoodSpark: The most innovative sandwich alternatives to grace the nation's lunchboxes.

Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- What consumer trends have impacted the category over the past year?
- 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?