Focus On: Butter and spreads by Kevin White (Kevin.white@wrbm.com)
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Online Listicle to go live on 10 May: What are the main innovations & how are they shaping the market

The Story

As butter regains popularity, many health-conscious shoppers are turning away from marge due to concerns over trans fats and artificial ingredients - but margarine could be due a second wind. Are natural credentials and an appeal to plant-based consumers enough to get margarine back in the black? And how could that shake up the spreads market this year?

Key Themes:

Return of the marge: Who else is looking to up margarine's street cred this year? Where are the key innovations for the sector, and how are brands working to reposition margarine as more than an artificial alternative to butter?

Block: It might be the fastest growing sector in the category, but that's largely due to price rises. As fewer people buy blocks for their health benefits less, how can brands revive flagging volume sales this year? And could the potential resurgence of margarine prove a threat?

Shopper habits: Shoppers swapped out of and into various sectors within butters and spreads this year, yet few actually left the category. To what extent are higher prices to blame for this swapping around, and which sectors are benefitting from this movement?

Innovation: Rising average prices has driven innovations across branded and own label spreads this year. What are the key trends being capitalised on, and where is there room for further growth this year?

Pack sizes: The past year has seen a raft of new pack sizes for the category. Who are these new packs targeting, and how have they performed?

Discounters: Brands may dominate the category, but it was the discounters who saw double digit growth this year. How much of Aldi and Lidl's performance in butters and spreads last year came from their own label lines, and are the big four looking to adopt a similar strategy this year?

Innovations: We identify four new products that ideally have not appeared in The Grocer before. including launch date, image and RSP.

Streetbees data: What do consumers think of margarine

Kantar data: Using Kantar commentary, we explain the reasons behind the rise and fall of certain sub-categories.

Nielsen data: Using Nielsen commentary, we explain the reasons behind the rise and fall of the top 10 brands.