The Grocer

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Alcohol: Beer & Cider (by Daniel Woolfson daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

After the bonanza of 2018's World Cup and summer heatwave, have beer and cider makers coped in a considerably less eventful 2019? Which brands maintained growth – and how did they do it? Which ones slumped? How much of a threat are craft brand to the biggest players? Will cider return to its glory days? And is ale becoming fashionable again?

Alcohol: Spirits & RTDs (by Daniel Woolfson daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

Sprits continue to soar. And they're getting pricier. Who and what is driving these factors? And why have some very well-known names slumped? What have been the big trends of the year in terms of flavours and formats? What's driving Brits' thirst for RTD, and what has been the most eye-catching innovations in this area?

Alcohol: Wine (by Daniel Woolfson daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

Has the bubble burst for sparkling wine? The market's value has fallen into the red along with its volumes. The good news for shoppers is prosecco, cava and the like are cheaper than they were a year ago. What happened? And which brands have struggled most? Meanwhile, Champagne continues to flag. And still wine continues to add value only through price rises – although some challenger brands are soaring. Who are they, and what's the secret of their success?

Baby & Infant Care (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Babyfood continues to struggle – but own-label is soaring. What have brand been doing to combat to arrest their declines and combat the threat from supermarkets? Which brands are bucking the downward trend – and how are they doing it? The baby snacks market is looking strong – at least in terms of value as the result of price rises. What's driving this? Who are the standout suppliers? And why have others slumped?

Bagged Snacks (by Daniel Woolfson daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

It's been another good year for crisps and popcorn in terms of value, with gains for the majority of brands. But these were largely been from price rises, as volumes were more or less static. How much of a part did premium innovation play in adding value? Are big flavours and healthier options still playing leading roles? Are sharing formats still where it's at? Own label is shifting considerably more volume than the larger market? Is that entirely down to price, or are other factors at play?

Bakery & Bread (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Supermarkets have increasingly favoured premium lines of wrapped loaves, in an effort to return value to the category. To what degree have they succeeded? What variants and brands did best for them? Own label prices are up significantly? Are the mults own lines getting posher? Meanwhile, many big brands' prices are up as volumes fall. What's driving that? And who's making the most from it?

Batteries (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Price was the major driver of growth for batteries this year, as volumes fell notably for both brands and own-label. Does that mean people are finally fully stocked on batteries and rechargeable power packs, or has a lack of innovation simply meant shoppers have lost interest in the category?

Biscuits (by Emma Weinbren emma.weinbren@thegrocer.co.uk)

Savoury biscuits are back in the black, with many brands shifting much larger volumes. How have they done this? How much has NPD played a part? Have health trends helped? In sweet biscuits, value and volumes are up in spite of the war on sugar. What's driving this? How much influence have healthier innovations had?

Canned Food (by George Nott george.nott@thegrocer.co.uk)

What's driving the rise in value for canned veg? Is it Brexit stockpiling? Health concerns? Price relative to fresh and frozen? Without veg's success, the overall canned sector would be in decline, after other major areas – beans, fish and the like – have dropped back into the red. What caused these falls in value? And is there any chance of the category regaining steam?

Cakes (by Emma Weinbren emma.weinbren@thegrocer.co.uk)

Cake continues to rise. Brits are eating quite a lot more, and paying slightly more. What's driving this appetite? What flavours and formats are paying off? Who's eating them? How come cakes seem immune from the war on sugar? And why have some well-known brands struggled in such a buoyant category?

Cereals (by Ash O'Mahony ashleigh.omahony@thegrocer.co.uk)

Cereal's value is back in growth. But the extra value is largely down to price rises as volumes have declined. What continues to drive shoppers away from a bowl of breakfast? Is it concerns about sugar (in spite of much reformulation and healthier NPD)? Is cereal losing out to more convenient and/or innovative morning options? Which brands are bucking the downward trend? And how?

Confectionery: Chocolate (by Daniel Selwood daniel.selwood@thegrocer.co.uk)

Chocolate is booming, with value and volumes both up significantly. Are shoppers no longer concerned about their sugar intake? Or are other factors driving growth? Is it gifting? Dark chocolate? How much headway have nascent healthier options made so far? How have concerns about childhood obesity coloured the landscape? And how come some brands have slumped in a buoyant category?

Confectionery: Sugar (by Ash O'Mahony ashleigh.omahony@thegrocer.co.uk)

Sugar confectionery is doing pretty well. Brits are buying more sweets and spending more on them. Nevertheless, some brands have really struggled over the past 12 months. So who's keeping the market in the black, and how? How much has innovation played a part – particularly in relation to the plant-based trend? And how can the strugglers regain value? Meanwhile, gum's got more expensive but less popular: why?

Dairy: Butters & Spreads (by Henry Sandercock henry.sandercock@thegrocer.co.uk)

Brits are buying fewer butters and dairy spreads, although value remains static as prices rise once again. What are the reasons behind this? Who are winners? And who are the losers? What are brands doing to address their woes and encourage more shoppers to buy into the sector?

Dairy: Cheese (by Kevin White kevin.white@thegrocer.co.uk)

Cheese volumes are back in growth. How have suppliers persuade Brits to eat more? Is it innovation or advertising? What about added value variants: are they a potential for growth? And is the protein trend helping sales? Or is it simply that cheese has got a little cheaper on average? Also, what types of cheese are people choosing? And what formats? How significant is snacking in driving sales?

Dairy: Drinks (by Henry Sandercock henry.sandercock@thegrocer.co.uk)

Coffee-based RTDs have been the lead story in dairy drinks this year. How much of a lift have they given the category? And who did it best? Who's buying the caffeinated drinks? Prices for some leading flavoured milk brands have risen while others have dived. What's causing this churn? Meanwhile, yoghurt drinks have had a rather disappointing year, with Brits buying into them much less. What's put punters off?

Dairy: Yoghurts (by Kevin White kevin.white@thegrocer.co.uk)

Yoghurt's value is down – and its volumes are down further. That means a struggling category has just got more expensive per litre. What has happened? How much have concerns about sugar played a part? Which categories is yoghurt losing out to? And what are dairy suppliers doing to regaining customers.

Free-from (by Lois Vallely lois.vallely@thegrocer.co.uk)

Another year of strong growth of free-from was powered, in absolute terms, by leading milk alternative brands. Who are they, and how do they continue to appeal to shoppers? Is dairy-free the only trend driving growth? What about gluten-free? And allergen-free? Most brands are in growth – but not all. Why is this?

Fresh: Fruit & Veg (by Henry Sandercock henry.sandercock@thegrocer.co.uk)

The UK has a new second-best-selling fruit. Bananas have overtaken grapes in terms of value. How? And why has the value of apples dropped noticeably? In veg, the likes of cucumber and broccoli have made serious extra money. What were the drivers? And how have the big issues of 2019 – Brexit, climate change and veganism – affected the fruit & veg sector?

Fresh: Meat, Fish & Poultry (by Kevin White kevin.white@thegrocer.co.uk)

While the top five fish remain the same in value terms, basa and mussels have joined the top ten. For what reasons? How much impact has flexitarianism and environmental concerns had on shoppers' choices? Are retailers offering a wider variety of less common fish? What innovations have meat and poultry seen to keep people's interest? Any eye-catching ranging by grocers? Can chicken avoid stagnation? And how likely are steak, sausages and bacon to return to growth soon?

Frozen Food (by Ash O'Mahony ashleigh.omahony@thegrocer.co.uk)

Fish and potato products are the UK's two biggest frozen sub categories. Brits are turning their backs on the former but going crazy for the latter. How come? Pizza's also going great guns, but brands are flagging behind own label. What are the big players doing to address this? And who are the challenger brands? What's going on in desserts and pastries?

Hot Beverages (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Brits' love of posh coffee abides – and the ready ground stuff is getting (ever so slightly) cheaper. Which brands are making the most of it the sector's success? And how? It's a different story in instant coffee. How are suppliers addressing its declines in value and volume? Tea has added a touch of value but only due to higher prices. What's scaring people away? What are suppliers doing to return to volume growth?

Household: Cleaning (by Maddie Maynard maddie.maynard@thegrocer.co.uk)

What Mrs Hinch effect? The household Instagram star's influence doesn't appear to have changed shoppers' cleaning habits much. The category is still down in value across all major sectors, although decline has slowed. But some volume declines have picked up pace, and average prices have fallen. Is there any way cleaning can move into the black? What other trends, innovations or marketing strategies have the potential for success?

Household: Laundry (by Maddie Maynard maddie.maynard@thegrocer.co.uk)

In terms of average price, laundry is pretty much static. But in absolute terms, the category has shed another £35m. That means it's lost almost £127m since 2017. What's going on? Who has suffered the worst? Who has managed to add value – and how? Are there new formats or formulations that have the potential to pull brands out of their dive?

Household: Paper Products (by Steve Farrell steve.farrell@thegrocer.co.uk)

Toilet tissue is in sturdy growth – mainly down to impressive own-label sales. Does this mean consumers are sacrificing quality for lower price? Or are the supermarkets simply beating the brands at their own game? Kitchen towel, meanwhile, is struggling due to losses by brands. What are they doing wrong? And how do they intend to correct it. How are sustainability concerns impacting all areas of paper products, including facial tissues and nappies?

Ice Cream (by George Nott george.nott@thegrocer.co.uk)

It was almost inevitable ice cream sales would dip this year, after the bonanza that was the 2018 heatwave. How much did the category lose across tubs and handheld – and what did brands and retailers do to minimise losses? Was it more NPD? Fewer promotions? Are healthier options still the biggest story? Or did 2019 herald the summer of indulgent options? What were the trendiest flavours this year?

Jams & Spreads (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

It's the same story last year for jams: some brands have enjoyed great success, others not. And across the category, value and volumes are in the red. But people do appear to be buying in a little bit more. Is the beginning of a resurgence for jam? Have there been innovations and trends to re-spark shoppers' interest? Meanwhile, spreads such as nut butter have added value thanks to price rises. Why are such options getting more expensive?

Meat-free (by Kevin White kevin.white@thegrocer.co.uk)

Plant-based was unavoidable in 2019. The pipeline of NPD was seemingly endless as more and more shoppers embraced vegetarianism, veganism and flexitarianism. Among the flurry of innovation from brands and retailers, who stood out the most? How big can the category get? What recipes and formats were most in demand? And how did suppliers cope under increased scrutiny of the sustainability and health claims of meat-free foodstuff?

Oils (by Emma Weinbren emma.weinbren@thegrocer.co.uk)

Brands appear to be using lower pricing to fight back against own-label. Who has raked in the most extra cash? And who has failed to capitalise? What other moves have brands made in terms of innovative flavours and formats? How have concerns about health and sustainability shaped the category this year? Which types of oil are most popular? And which are on the up?

Personal Care: Cosmetics (by Ellis Hawthorne ellis.hawthorne@thegrocer.co.uk)

Top cosmetics brands are declining in all major sectors, mainly suffering from distribution cuts and worsening rates of sale. Almost all subsectors are declining – but there are exceptions. What are they, and who is most benefitting? What trends have supported whatever growth brands have experienced? What has been the pivotal NPD?

Personal Care: Grooming (by Lyndsey Cambridge lyndsey.cambridge@thegrocer.co.uk)

Is sustainability changing the bar soap sector. As some leading mainstream brands have seen their values slump, the smaller players on the up are ones that boast natural formulations and eco-friendly packaging. What are the top soap makers doing to combat this and return value to the market? Meanwhile, most top ten showering gel brands have had a lousy year. Why? In female skincare – unlike in other personal care sectors – brands are beating own-label. How?

Personal Care: Haircare (by Lyndsey Cambridge lyndsey.cambridge@thegrocer.co.uk)

It looks like long hair is still in fashion – meaning people are washing it less. Shampoo volumes have continued to fall. However, value decline has slowed thanks to price rises, which appear to be driven by brands with functional and sustainability credentials. Is that the case? Who are the eye-catching challenger brands? And what are big names doing to stave off the category's upstarts?

Personal Care: Male Grooming (by Daniel Selwood daniel.selwood@thegrocer.co.uk)

Shave preps are really struggling – down in value for the top five brands. Who are they, and why are they in trouble. Who is bucking the trend, and how? It's a more mixed bag in razors & blades – many brands are down in value but up in volume. Are they being forced to lower prices? Is so, why? Skincare's looking much healthier. What are suppliers doing right? Who are the big winners? And who is losing out? In cold & flu treatments, what have brands done to combat the dominance of own-label?

Personal Care: Oral Care (by Lyndsey Cambridge lyndsey.cambridge@thegrocer.co.uk)

As everyday toothpaste takes a dive – with both brands and retailers proving less popular with shoppers than last year – suppliers are turning to far-out flavours and sustainable options to add a premium shine to the category. Who's doing what, and how are they doing so far? Own-label has made great gains in toothbrushes: is that down to anything other than price?

Personal Care: Over the Counter (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Is modern living making grown-ups more susceptible to allergens? Or are people simply paying more mind to treating longstanding allergies? They're certainly paying more money for adult analgesics – and buying more of them. What's the story behind that – and why have kids' analgesics dipped?

Personal Care: Sexcare (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Sex is getting more expensive. Lubricants have risen in price on flat volumes, while condoms have also got costlier has volumes have sunk faster than value. Meanwhile, little innovation has appeared to reignite shoppers' ardour for the category. What are brands to do? And how are retailers attracting people to the sexcare segment?

Pet Care (by Daniel Selwood daniel.selwood@thegrocer.co.uk)

People are buying less petfood but spending more on it? How are brands and retailers persuading them to do so? What trends are driving premiumisation? Which suppliers are making the most of them? And is own-label doing so well for any other reason than competitive pricing?

Ready Meals (by Ian Quinn ian.quinn@thegrocer.co.uk)

Chilled ready meals are down in value despite brands ramping up the prices. Why? Is the sector losing share to increasingly fashionable (and more convenient) pot meals – which are celebrating a respectable year of sales. These ambient meals are also up in price. What's driving these increases? And why can't frozen ready meals climb into the black?

Rice, Noodles & Pasta (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

It was a great year for noodles. What attracted shoppers to them? How have suppliers innovated? And who did it best? Meanwhile, pasta has picked up considerably, while rice has barely changed. So are more people buying into the larger category? Why? Is another starchy side losing out as a result? Or are people just treating themselves to more carbs? If so, why?

Sauces: Cooking (by Ash O'Mahony ashleigh.omahony@thegrocer.co.uk)

What are this year's trends in and around cooking sauces? Is it further-flung cuisine? Or traditional recipes? Healthier options? Or more indulgent ones? Some big brands have slipped noticeably, while others have grown impressively. Why the incongruity? Is it down to NPD, marketing spend, delistings or something entirely different?

Sauces: Table (by Ash O'Mahony ashleigh.omahony@thegrocer.co.uk)

Among the UK's leading ketchups and mayos this year, there have been a number of standouts. Who are they and how have they achieved their double-digit growth? What type of shopper is buying them? How big an influence have demands for plant-based, free-from and low sugar been on the category? How significant are bigger and/or less traditional flavours?

Savoury Pastries & Meat Snacks (by Rob Brown rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Meat snacks are soaring for brands. Growth has picked up considerably in spite of the vegan super-trend. Why? And who has been most successful? How? Meanwhile, savoury pies are getting less popular and more expensive. However, brands are seeing success while own-label falls into the red. What's the secret to brands' success? Is it healthier options? New formats? More meat-free lines? What are the fanciest fillings of the year? Meanwhile,

Soft Drinks: Bottled Water, Squashes & Cordials (by Daniel Woolfson daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

After a fantastic 2018, bottled water has dropped into the red in terms of both value and volume. Is this a backlash against single-use plastic? Are people turning to tap water, or are they choosing other means of hydration? It's a similar story for squashes and cordials – although some brands have nevertheless enjoyed growth. Who are they, and how did they succeed?

Soft Drinks: Carbonates (by Daniel Woolfson daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

Fizzy pop has got significantly more expensive over the past year – especially among brands. Is that simply the effect of the soft drinks levy? Or is the rising price of sugar? Something else? What are suppliers doing to stand out in an increasingly crowded market? NPD? Healthier reformulation? How are they addressing concern about the environmental impact of their packaging? Who's made the most impressive eco-moves?

Soft Drinks: Juices & Smoothies (by Daniel Woolfson daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

Juices and smoothies are really struggling. Value and volumes are down across almost the entire board, and the majority of the top 20 brand are in the red. Have Brits turned their back on the category? Why? In favour of what? Who are the few names bucking the downward trend? By how much, and how?

Soup (by Ian Quinn ian.quinn@thegrocer.co.uk)

There's been some serious churn in the chilled soups' top ten. Who are the winners and losers, and why have they won/lost over the past 12 months? Why has the category dropped into the red? What flavours and formats have been launched to address this decline? Meanwhile, ambient soup's value decline has picked up speed. How can it slow down its fall?

Tobacco (by Ronan Hegarty ronan.hegarty@thegrocer.co.uk)

As cigarettes continue their unstoppable decline – with volumes falling faster than a year ago – value losses have slowed due to major price rises. Will they be enough to save the category from extinction? Who is still buying ciggies? What's leading people to pay more for nicotine replacement products?

Tobacco: Vaping (by Ronan Hegarty ronan.hegarty@thegrocer.co.uk)

Vaping may have become increasingly controversial in the US, but here in the UK it's just getting more popular. What continues to drive shoppers to e-cigs? And what formats and flavours are doing the best? What have been the outstanding innovations? Under how much pressure from challengers brands are the categories' longstanding leaders?