

The Grocer

Focus On: Lunchbox & Back To School by Rob Brown

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FEATURE #1 Adult Lunchboxes

The dramatic fall in carried-out lunches over the past year has impacted a raft of categories from soup, salad and dips to chicken portions, sandwich fillers and prepared fruit & veg. But what's next? Will a phased or partial return to workplaces give rise to a new type of lunchbox? How has the pandemic reshaped Brits' expectations of what a midday meal should look and taste like and how will this translate into lunchbox occasions?

Ingredients and flavours

What will the new packed lunch look like as people return to workplaces? How have Brits' tastes and expectations changed? Which categories and sub-categories have been affected over the past year and what is the outlook for the next 12 months?

Meal deals

How are brands and retailers preparing to recover and rebuild on-the-go opportunities with meal deals as workplaces and travel reopen? How have meal deals evolved since the pre-Covid era and what will commuters be seeking in terms of out-of-home lunches and why?

Prices

Amid the financial uncertainty of the past year, spending on each lunchbox occasion fell by 6%. With a recession looming, how will price influence lunchbox choices? Will Brits be less likely to seek more premium lunchbox products? Or will we see a surge in packed lunches as budget-conscious Brits forego high-street chains?

Innovation and NPD

How are brands and retailers tapping the lunchbox occasion with NPD? Which high street restaurant chains – such as Pret which launched a granola range in Tesco this spring – have reformulated products? What trends are emerging and why?

Promotions

According to Shopper Intelligence, 13% of lunchbox purchases are triggered by pre-store promotional activity such as adverts and coupons, over twice the average occasion. Once in-store, there is significantly more engagement from shoppers buying Lunchbox compared to the average occasion, with 23% of shoppers wanting to browse for their purchase. How are retailers and brands using pre-store and instore promotions to target shoppers and influence sales?

Healthy options

A range of healthy options is a key factor for shoppers buying into Lunchbox, according to Shopper Intelligence. Are lunchboxes getting healthier and which health cues are resonating with shoppers?

Innovations: We identify four new adult-oriented lunchbox products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including launch date, rsp and an image of each.

FEATURE #2 School Lunchboxes

The pandemic has meant that children have been having more lunchtime meals at home over the past year. But now schools have reopened fully, how has the traditional school lunchbox evolved? With sandwiches still very much a staple of the school pack-up, what opportunities are there for brands and retailers to cash in on lunchbox occasions?

NPD and flavours

How are brands tapping into the school lunchbox occasion with NPD and new flavours? Who are the new players and what opportunities are there for established brands to cash in?

Sandwiches

Sandwiches now feature in 56% of Brits' lunchboxes and for children this jumps to more than two in three lunchboxes, according to Kantar. What's new in breads and sandwich fillings and how are brands and suppliers innovating here?

Health

A range of healthy options is a key factor for shoppers buying into lunchbox occasions, according to Shopper Intelligence. What kind of health cues – such as immunity-strengthening or protein-rich – are resonating with parents and how is the government's crackdown on obesity influencing this?

Hygiene

The internet is awash with handy hygiene solutions, such as mini hand sanitisers for kids to ensure they're washing their hands before eating when out-of-home. What opportunities are there for such brands and suppliers to tap the school lunchbox occasion?

Innovations: We identify four new child-oriented lunchbox products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including launch date, rsp and an image of each.