

The Grocer

Focus On: Snack bars

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Feature One: HFSS rules

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Snack bars are often presented as a more wholesome alternative to an indulgent chocolate bar. But HFSS restrictions are more interested in the nutritional content of the bar than the claims on the packaging. When they are implemented this year, the rules could have a disparate impact on the top ten. How will restricted suppliers market themselves in store and away from it? What about volume deals and display promotions? And, all this considered, which brands will reap the rewards?

Health: Health is both a restriction for the category given HFSS rules and an opportunity as shoppers think more about nutrition. So how are brands and own label suppliers adapting?

Functional benefits: More and more foods are highlighting the vitamins, protein or other benefits, with cereal bars being no exception. Which benefits are proving more appealing? Are consumers convinced? And how else could suppliers innovate in this area?

Indulgence: While many cereal bars will be playing to a more health-conscious consumer, there remains room for more indulgent products. How will such products change after HFSS rules? How will they be marketed? What new tastes, textures and ideas can we expect to see?

Top brands: An analysis of how the top 10 snack bar brands will be affected by HFSS regulations

Own label: Own label products are still a small proportion of snack bars, sales having declined over 2021. What can be done to improve the segment's prospects?

Innovations: Profile of four new products or ranges that have not appeared in The Grocer before. We need launch date, rsp, and a hi-res picture of each.

Feature Two: New occasions

By Megan Tatum wordsbymegantatum@gmail.com

Cereal bars were ravaged by the collapse of on-the-go eating during the pandemic. While many are returning to their workplaces, a sizeable group are splitting working hours between home and the office. This means more home snacking occasions alongside al desko breakfasts. Can cereal bars cater to our changing working patterns? What about the competition from home-cooked meals? And how else has on-the-go breakfasts changed since the easing of lockdown restrictions?

Breakfast: Before the pandemic cereal bars were an easy and convenient breakfast, something you could even pick up during the commute. Many workers are now adopting hybrid working patterns. Others have fully returned to the commuting lifestyle. Can cereal bars cater to both groups?

Formats: During the pandemic some brands launched multipacks to combat the decline of on-the-go impulse buys. With on-the-go eating having returned, have single bars recovered? And what is changing in bar formats given the experience of the last two years?

Sports nutrition: Protein bars have proven popular with athletes and amateur sports enthusiasts. What are snack bar suppliers doing to continue targeting this group?

Online: Ocado Internet saw a big boost in value sales in the past year, growing faster than most other retailers. Are cereal bars proving a popular product online? And how are DTC services faring in this category?

Innovations: Profile of four new products or ranges that have not appeared in The Grocer before. We need launch date, rsp, and a hi-res picture of each.