

The Grocer

Focus On: Spreads, Jam & Honey

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Growth in spreads, jams and honey is coming against a tough backdrop. “Positive value growth... [is] due to the global climate crisis, rising labour costs and high prices due to demand for natural sweeteners, declining bee populations, high production and transport costs,” says NIQ client manager Karl Ruggiero. So, spreads producers are passing on increasing costs due to the global omni-crisis through higher prices. But what are they doing to tackle the big issues? And how much do consumers care? To what extent are brands using environmental, ethical and health cues to create loyalty and drive volume growth?

Palm oil: It’s noteworthy that many of the peanut butter brands in volume growth over the past year happen to be those that don’t use palm oil as a stabiliser in their recipes. How much of a consideration is this for them? And how important is this for retailers? And consumers? Why does it matter?

Bee friendly honey: Declining bee population is cited as a factor in honey producers’ rising cost base. Just how much of an impact is this having? What are honey producers doing to ensure the welfare of the bees they rely on and the wider environment? Is there an opportunity for bee friendly/environmentally-friendly/vegan honeys in the UK?

Health: This feature will also explore the extent to which brands and own label are using health cues to create a point of difference and drive growth. How much potential is there for lower sugar jams, high-oleic peanut butters and the like? Who’s doing best by playing the health card?

Price: Own label represents a sizeable slice of spreads, jams and honey sales. To what extent are consumers trading down to cheaper own label lines in response to economic pressure? And to what extent does trading down to own label entail foregoing ethical considerations?

Innovation: There’s been no shortage of interesting innovation over the past year in these categories. NIQ points to the hot honey trend and new flavours of jam such as pineapple & passion fruit and rhubarb & fig. Meanwhile, one brand has launched a premium crunchy chocolate spread. How successful have such lines been and what’s next? We will profile four new products or ranges, ideally ones that have not appeared in The Grocer before. We need launch date, rsp, and a hi-res picture of each.