

The Grocer

Focus On: Jam, Preserves and Honey by Emma Sturgess (emma-sturgess@hotmail.co.uk)

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The Story

Spreads & honey are in rude health with chocolate spread and nut butters continuing on their successful streak to secure double digit growth. Honey, meanwhile, has bounced back following a difficult 2015 adding more to category value than any other sub-sector. Why are these sectors doing so well? How much does health and trends towards protein and away from sugar have to do with it? And, what can be done to help the jams sector?

Key themes:

Nut butters: The market is in huge growth. And it's no longer just about peanut butter. Several established players and new entrants have launched almond and cashew butters, among others. They're also benefitting from the high-protein trend sweeping grocery. Which ones have been successful? And, what's next? How is the trend towards natural products affecting it?

Health: Health is big business in grocery. With the war on sugar raging, the jams, spreads & honey category seems to have escaped relatively unscathed. How come? Which health trends are affecting this market? How are suppliers and retailers adapting their strategies to tap into this? What about savoury brands which avoid the sugar debate. Are they utilising their position?

Honey: Honey has turned itself around. Last year value was down and volume growth was negligible. This year it's secured nearly £10m growth for the sector. How has this been achieved? Which products are driving this? Are they own label or branded?

Own label: Branded is growing ahead of own label. How come? How have retailers changed their own label ranges to compete with branded over the past year? Are there any sub-categories where own label is out-performing branded? How come?

Prices/promotions: This feature will explore how the promotional strategies of retailers and brands looking have changed over the past year. How has this affected average prices?

New opportunities: With bread in severe decline, how are jams, spreads & honey being targeted at new occasions? Is there any NPD targeted specifically at baking or breakfast, for example?

Innovation: This will be key to this feature. We will be investigating how NPD has shaped the category over the past year and what is in store for shoppers in 2016. We will be profiling four of the most interesting launches in a separate innovation panel. Has there been any key NPD in chocolate spreads and nut butters that have helped drive growth? And what about jam and honey?

Advertising and marketing: This feature will also investigate how the marketing and advertising strategies of the category's biggest players have evolved over the past year and how they will develop in the coming year to sustain growth or return brands to growth.

Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- What consumer trends have impacted the category over the past year?
- How have promotional strategies (both in terms of price and marketing) evolved?
- How have individual retailers' strategies impacted the market?
- How has merchandising changed in the market?
- What impact has own-label had on branded players?
- What's next for the category?