

The Grocer

Focus On: Yoghurts & Potted Desserts by Paul Davies (paul.artist@gmail.com)

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The Story

Yoghurts & potted desserts are defying the downturn the wider dairy sector, with value growth and volumes up. Some sectors, such as big pot natural yoghurts, are flying, and Greek-style yoghurt's seemingly unstoppable growth means the variant now accounts for nearly a third of category sales. What's driving all this? Which brands, retailers and own label manufacturers are cashing in? Is anyone being left behind?

Key themes:

Greek: Thirty one per cent of yoghurt consumed in Britain is now Greek or Greek style, following years of impressive growth. Which retailers and brands have been driving this? How long will it continue and what are players doing to sustain the growth? Why is it so popular?

Dairy free: This is another part of the market that's flying, the market leader is going from strength to strength and a number of new players are moving in. Coconut based products are also in strong growth. What's driving all this and how long will it continue?

Retailers: Central to this feature will be an exploration of how different retailers are approaching the category and to what effect. Particular attention will be paid to retailers' branded and own label ranges and how ranges may have been rationalised in the past year. Have there been any major delistings?

Luxury: How are yoghurt products positioned at the luxury end of the market doing? Can the drive towards indulgence be reconciled with consumer desire to cut back on sugar and sweeteners? What can the sector do to return to growth?

Kids yoghurts: Brands in this part of the market are struggling thanks to concern over sugar and the introduction of free school meals. Who's been hardest hit? Is anyone in growth? What will it take to put kids yoghurts back in growth?

Potted desserts: Value is up at a higher rate than volume. Why? Does the rise in average price reflect a move towards more premium, indulgent products? What are the biggest brands doing to inject some life back into the sector?

Big pots: Big pot sales continue to do very well. Which players and trends are driving this growth? To what extent had NPD been behind the growth of the past year? And are such formats fulfilling shoppers desire for indulgence because they give such bigger portions?

Own label: Own label is outgrowing brands at the moment. This feature will explore the reasons for this, from the extension of premium, pricier own label lines (average prices have risen over the past year) to the growth of the discounters, who rely more heavily on their own lines.

Innovation: This will be key to this feature. We will be investigating how new product development 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.

Promotions: This feature will explore how the promotional strategies of retailers and brands have changed over the past year. Attention will be paid to the promotional strategies of retailers and how this has affected average prices over the past year.

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

Yoghurt innovations: new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before, including launch date and RSP, and image

Potted desserts innovations: new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before, including launch date and RSP, and image

Dairy-free innovations: new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before, including launch date and RSP, and image

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?