

## Prepared Meals Review - UK - May 2014

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“International cuisines have been widely explored by operators in the prepared meals market looking to cater to adventurous palates and continuously refresh their offering. Mintel’s consumer data show the ongoing demand for such NPD, with South American, Vietnamese and Korean cuisines enjoying the highest interest.”  
– Amy Price, Senior Food & Drink Analyst

### This report looks at the following areas:

- Emphasising involvement in the cooking process could help to mitigate the scratch cooking threat
- Consumer interest in new cuisines poses an opportunity for flavour innovation
- Rising incomes will create scope for encouraging trading up
- Promoting vegetable content in prepared meals could improve health image

The horsemeat adulteration scare of 2013 is still having an adverse effect on the prepared meals sector. This was particularly pronounced in frozen ready meals, the scare appearing to have acted as a trigger for consumers to leave the category.

The soup segment is particularly beholden to weather and the warmer 2013/14 winter had a negative impact on sales. A few operators in the segment are looking to drive usage throughout the year through NPD, such as the development of ‘summer’ soup flavours or cold soups, as well as products that can be drunk on the go.

Highlighting how convenience remains a key factor within the prepared meals market, more than half of UK adults see prepared meals such as ready meals, pizza, soup and pies and pasties as ‘convenient’.

Events such as the Brazil-based Football World Cup present scope for innovation around South American flavours. More than a quarter of buyers of prepared meals express an interest in ready meals based on recipes from different countries. Meanwhile, pizza is well positioned as a meal accompaniment for convivial occasions such as watching sports events, with usage geared towards larger households and households with children.

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