

The Ethical Food Consumer - UK - April 2019

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“Widespread consumer doubts over whether their buying choices truly make a difference make it crucial for companies to explain to consumers the benefits to wider society of buying certified products. This would serve both to reassure the doubtful and tap into the strong feel-good factor around ethical food and drink.”

– **Alice Baker, Research Analyst**

This report looks at the following areas:

- Various options for companies to overcome the price barrier
- Educate consumers about ethical food and drink to boost uptake
- Need to reassure consumers that their actions make a difference

Buying of ethically certified food and drink is widespread. Retail value sales of products with selected ethical certifications also saw strong growth over 2018-23. However, price considerations remain a barrier to buying of ethical food and drink, and the sector stands exposed should disposable household incomes come under pressure in the coming years.

Animal welfare, and environmental and health concerns are among key reasons for buying ethical food and drink. Reflecting this, environmentally friendly packaging and limiting food waste stand neck-and-neck as being cited widely as influencing food and drink buying.

There is widespread uncertainty among consumers over what the different ethical certifications stand for and whether their buying choices make a difference. This makes it imperative for companies to explain clearly to consumers the principles underpinning ethically certified products and the benefits to wider society of buying these products.

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This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market

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Table of Contents

Overview

What you need to know
Products covered in this Report

Executive Summary

The market
Strong sales growth for ethical food and drink over 2013-18
Inflation and slowing volume sales anticipated for 2019-23
Figure 1: Retail value sales of food and drink with selected leading ethical certifications^, 2013-23
War on plastic continues
Food waste comes under increased government scrutiny
Companies and brands
Companies take action on plastic
More free-range claims in animal welfare
Sustainability is a major theme in advertising over 2017-19
The consumer
Eight in ten adults have bought food/drink with ethical certifications
Free-range is the most widely bought food with ethical certification
Figure 2: Awareness and purchase of food/drink with ethical certifications, by type, February 2019
Various factors underpin buying of ethical food and drink
Figure 3: Reasons for buying ethical food and drink, February 2019
Price is the principal barrier to buying ethical food and drink
Figure 4: Barriers to buying ethical food and drink, February 2019
Animal welfare, packaging and food waste are key influences on food and drink buying
Figure 5: Important factors in food and drink buying decisions, February 2019
Ethical aspects encourage loyalty and spark the feel-good factor
Figure 6: Behaviours relating to ethical food and drink, February 2019
Future direction of the economy is crucial for ethical food and drink
Figure 7: Attitudes towards ethical food and drink, February 2019
What we think

Issues and Insights

Various options for companies to overcome the price barrier
The facts
The implications
Educate consumers about ethical food and drink to boost uptake
The facts
The implications

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Need to reassure consumers that their actions make a difference
The facts
The implications

The Market – What You Need to Know

Strong sales growth for ethical food and drink over 2013-18
Inflation and slowing volume sales anticipated for 2019-23
War on plastic continues
Food waste comes under increased government scrutiny

Market Size, Segmentation and Forecast

Increased distribution drives rapid growth in ethically certified food and drink over 2013-18
Fairtrade and Rainforest Alliance become increasingly mainstream
Supermarkets build up their organic ranges
MSC-certified fish and shellfish rapidly gains retail share
Figure 8: Value sales of food and drink with selected leading ethical certifications, 2013-18
Inflation and improved household incomes boost sales in 2018
Sales growth to slow over 2019-23
Inflation expected in line with overall food market 2019-23
Figure 9: Retail value sales of food and drink with selected leading ethical certifications^, 2013-23
Figure 10: Retail value sales of food and drink with selected leading ethical certifications^, 2013-23
Forecast methodology

Market Drivers

War on plastic continues
Government tax plans add urgency for manufacturers to use recycled plastic
Companies which switch to recycled packaging early should benefit
Governments plan to introduce deposit return schemes for drinks packaging
Supermarkets trial deposit return schemes
Technical issues for manufacturers in creating biodegradable packaging
Initiative to turn food waste into plastic packaging receives government funding
Food waste comes under increased government scrutiny
Widespread concerns about food waste among consumers
Retailers and manufacturers commit to halving food waste by 2030
Supermarkets take various steps to limit avoidable food waste
UK's low self-sufficiency in food raises concerns
Questions surround Brexit and its potential impact on legislation
State of the economy is crucial for ethical food and drink
Figure 11: CPI vs average weekly earnings, January 2013-October 2018
Scientists advise the public to reduce meat and dairy consumption
Strong growth for meat-free foods and dairy alternatives

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Animal welfare concerns help to drive the meat reduction trend
 Parliamentary committee calls for international agreement to protect the world's oceans
 Livestock industry makes progress on antibiotics reduction
 Eat organic meat and poultry to help combat antibiotic resistance, advises the Chief Medical Officer

Companies and Brands – What You Need to Know

Companies take action on plastic
 More free-range claims in animal welfare
 Sustainability is a major theme in advertising over 2017-19

Launch Activity and Innovation

Overview

Environmentally friendly packaging remains the leading ethical claim
 Figure 12: Launches in the UK food and drink market, by selected ethical claims, 2015-19

Bottled water brands explore recycled plastic
 Figure 13: Evian water bottles made with 50% recycled plastic, 2018

Leading and smaller brands turn to recycled plastic for sweet treat packaging
 Figure 14: Thorntons explores use of part-recycled plastic, 2019

Brands and retailers take action on plastic waste
 Supermarkets remove plastic packaging from fresh produce
 Replacing black plastic
 Figure 15: Examples of ready meals launches using alternatives to black plastic, 2019

The Collective alters dye for yogurt pot lids
 M&S launches 'plastic take-back' initiative
 Various brands link with Terracycle on recycling schemes
 Figure 16: Hovis Facebook advert for its recycling scheme, 2018

Baby food brand launches 'zero waste' scheme
 Supermarkets invite shoppers to bring in their own containers for meat and fish
 Asda looks to encourage recycling with milk bottle app
 Figure 17: Asda promotes its recycling app on on-pack labels for its own-label milk, 2019

Biodegradable claims remain rare
 Leading and niche brands release biodegradable tea bags
 Figure 18: Examples of tea launches with compostable tea bags, 2018

Niche coffee brand unveils biodegradable coffee pods
 Figure 19: Example of biodegradable coffee capsules, 2018

Multiple claims used to build all-round ethical positioning
 PG Tips goes biodegradable and puts stronger emphasis on Rainforest Alliance links
 Figure 20: PG Tips makes multiple ethical and environmental claims, February 2018

Smaller brands highlight eco-friendly packaging and charity links
 Figure 21: Smaller brands highlight eco-friendly packaging and charity links, summer 2018

Rise in sustainable claims

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Tesco completes move to 100% sustainable chocolate

Free-from brands are the most active in promoting their use of alternative energy

Figure 22: Examples of free-from launches referencing use of alternative energy on-pack, 2018

Dairy brands flag up their green credentials

Figure 23: Examples of dairy launches referencing use of alternative energy on-pack, 2018

Start-up looks to set new standard on sustainable fish

Iceland launches fish fillets bag of solely bycatch species

Figure 24: Iceland puts the spotlight on lesser-known fish species, September 2018

Iceland removes palm oil across its own label range

Figure 25: Iceland flags up the absence of palm oil on-pack, 2018

New packaging features aim to prevent food waste

Organic brands look to make the benefits of organic more tangible

Sweet treats highlight soil health and supporting the local environment

Organic tea brand makes conservation statement

Figure 26: Organic brands look to make the environmental benefits more tangible, 2018-19

Animal welfare claims remain niche

Free-range claims appear on white milk...

...spoonable and drinking yogurts...

Figure 27: Examples of free-range milk and yogurt launches, 2017-19

...and cream

Figure 28: The Free Range Dairy Facebook advert for its clotted cream, 2019

New fruit and vegetables brand aims to make organic more affordable

Start-ups and Disruptors Case Studies – Toast Ale

Company overview

What is it?

Founded

Company mission statement

Founders' story

Mintel analyst view

Mintel Trends

Why it could succeed

Why it could fail

The verdict

Product information

Figure 29: Toast Ale, March 2019

Media profile

Social media metrics

Figure 30: Social media metrics for company as of March 2019

The brand's view

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Revenue in the last year (as of 1st December 2018):
Sources of funding and support
Target audience
What consumer needs does the range meet?
Product stockists
Looking to the future

Start-ups and Disruptors Case Studies – Garçon Wines

Company overview
What is it?
Founded
Company mission statement
Founders' story
Mintel analyst view
Mintel Trends
Why it could succeed
Why it could fail
The verdict
Product information
Media profile
Social media metrics
Figure 31: Social media metrics for Garçon Wines as of March 2019
The brand's view
Sources of funding and support
Target audience:
What consumer needs does the range meet?
Product stockists
Looking to the future

Advertising and Marketing Activity

Overview
Tesco presents sustainable chocolate as extra permissible
Figure 32: Outdoor advert from Tesco promoting its sustainable chocolate sourcing, 2019
Supermarkets focus on provenance and traceability
The Co-op plays up support for farmers and communities
Morrisons emphasizes close relationship with suppliers
Waitrose highlights responsible sourcing for fish and dairy cows' grazing access
Iceland Christmas advert reignites the palm oil controversy
Figure 33: Iceland anti-palm oil Christmas TV advert, 2018
War on plastic ramps up
Soda Stream urges the public to give up bottled water to save the planet

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Figure 34: Soda Stream 'Time for a Change' TV advert, 2018

Thames Water also moves against bottled water

Figure 35: Thames Valley 'Tap Tastic Not Plastic' direct mail advert, 2018

WWF runs the #UseLessPlastic twitter campaign

Animal welfare

Vegan groups continue to criticise the dairy industry

Figure 36: Anti-dairy adverts from vegan organisations, 2017-18

Figure 37: Advert from Viva! Mother's Day campaign, 2019

High-welfare dairy systems take to social media

Figure 38: YouTube adverts from high-welfare dairy systems, 2018

CIWF brings to light the 'sad truth about parmesan'

Riverford portrays organic eggs as the best option to ensure animal welfare

Veganuary urges the Prime Minister to join the campaign

Figure 39: Veganuary outdoor advert, 2019

Organic UK portrays organic food as better for environment and health

...and looks to explain the meaning of organic

The Consumer – What You Need to Know

Eight in ten adults have bought food/drink with ethical certifications

Free-range is the most widely bought food with ethical certification

Various factors underpin buying ethical food and drink

Price is the principal barrier to buying ethical food and drink

Animal welfare, packaging and food waste are key influences on food and drink buying

Ethical aspects encourage loyalty and spark the feel-good factor

Future direction of the economy is crucial for ethical food and drink

Awareness and Purchase of Food and Drink with Ethical Certifications

Eight in ten adults have bought food/drink with ethical certifications

Figure 40: Awareness and purchase of food/drink with selected ethical certifications, February 2019

Over-55s are key buyers of ethical food and drink

More women than men buy ethically certified food and drink

Over half of adults buy three or more types of ethical food and drink

Figure 41: Buying repertoire of food/drink with ethical certifications, February 2019

Awareness and Purchase of Food and Drink with Ethical Certifications by Type

Free-range is the most widely bought food with ethical certification

No bias in free-range buying by financial health

Figure 42: Awareness and purchase of food/drink with ethical certifications, by type, February 2019

Free-range milk

Half of adults buy Fairtrade food and drink

Fairtrade should benefit from highlighting its environmental credentials more

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Environmental sustainability chimes most with under-35s

Urgent need in some categories to reassure younger consumers on the environment

Reasons for Buying Ethical Food and Drink

Animal welfare is the top reason for buying ethical food and drink

Figure 43: Reasons for buying ethical food and drink, February 2019

Four in ten buyers are driven by environmental concerns

Strong overlap between animal welfare and environmental considerations

Figure 44: Examples of food launches with both an animal welfare and an environmentally friendly packaging/product claim, 2018

A desire to avoid unwanted ingredients motivates a quarter of buyers

Younger Millennials are especially likely to see certified products as healthier than standard versions

Organic buyers see a strong health halo for certified food/drink

...as do buyers of MSC fish

Figure 45: Example of MSC-certified product promoting wild-caught fish as a healthier choice, 2019

Barriers to Buying Ethical Food and Drink

Price is the principal barrier to buying ethical food and drink

Figure 46: Barriers to buying ethical food and drink, February 2019

Need for retailers to highlight where ethical products do not carry a price premium

Presenting ethical products as the savvy option should boost sales

Discounters can help to drive uptake

Consumers' trust in standard products hinders uptake of ethical food and drink for a small minority

One in five are unsure about what the different certifications stand for

Need for producers to make their differences from standard practice more tangible

Important Factors in Food and Drink Buying Decisions

Animal welfare sways 45% of food and drink buyers

Figure 47: Important factors in food and drink buying decisions, February 2019

Strong overlap in interest in welfare of animals and supporting farmers

High-welfare producers are not getting the full benefit of consumer concerns around animal welfare

Making animal welfare policies more tangible would help high-welfare systems to attract 'missing' users

Videos of farms would help to tangibly demonstrate welfare standards and transparency

Environmentally friendly packaging is valued by four in ten

Consumer expectations add to the urgency for companies to tackle plastic waste

Need for companies using sustainably sourced cardboard to highlight this more strongly on-pack

Figure 48: Examples of food/drink launches highlighting sustainable cardboard sourcing, 2018

Food waste is neck-and-neck with packaging in consumers' priorities

In-store recipe cards on using up leftovers would help to reduce food waste

Strong overlap in packaging and food waste concerns

Figure 49: Waitrose pasta with packaging made partly from food waste, 2019

Over-55s are particularly keen to support local producers/farmers

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Promoting local produce would help to spark the feel-good factor
Antibiotic-free labels appeal to a quarter

Behaviours Relating to Ethical Food and Drink

Seven in ten adults have made efforts to reduce plastic packaging use
Concerns about food waste set challenge for companies looking to reduce packaging
Many are amenable towards using their own containers at supermarkets
Eco-friendly packaging is well-placed to appeal
Figure 50: Behaviours relating to ethical food and drink, February 2019
Half of adults are loyal to companies whose ethics align with their own
Need to put ethical claims directly in the path of shoppers
Strong feel-good factor around ethical food and drink buying
Need to reassure consumers that their actions make a difference

Attitudes towards Ethical Food and Drink

Widespread expectations on retailers to reduce packaging waste
Figure 51: Attitudes towards ethical food and drink, February 2019
Future direction of the economy is crucial for ethical food and drink
High-welfare producers can benefit from promoting a 'less but better' mentality
Widespread uncertainty over whether independent ethical schemes are superior to those from companies
Ethical buying is strongly linked with social image for the young

Appendix – Data Sources, Abbreviations and Supporting Information

Abbreviations

Appendix – Market Size and Forecast

Forecast methodology
Figure 52: Forecast of UK value sales of food and drink with selected leading ethical certifications^, best- and worst-case, 2018-23

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