

FOODSERVICE FOOTPRINT

Sustainable Responsible Business
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FOOTPRINT
HEALTH &
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**Caterers quiet
over milk price**

**No medal
for olympic
health legacy**

**No shame
in profiting
from changing
climates**

**HANDS UP WHO
WANTS TO WORK IN
HOSPITALITY?** Special feature on
apprenticeships

FOOTPRINTchannel

Waste – What Next?

Powered by WRAP, Brakes, Nestlé Professional, Huhtamaki & Acquire, this is an interactive broadcast streamed live to the industry from a studio in London on 8th October, 10.30-11.15am. See page 3 for more details.



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innocent orange juice

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Comment...

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Do you have the bottle to disclose milk price?

DO YOU KNOW the price of a pint of milk? I don't and I'm notoriously inquisitive when it comes to the supermarket shop. If you do, then well done you, but I'd bet you are in the minority (even the former agriculture minister hadn't a clue).

However, I'd also bet that if you were asked how much you pay for a pint of milk for your business, then you'd have an answer. Or at least know very quickly who would have.

In the past couple of months the price of milk has been in the media spotlight, thanks to a brave and hugely ambitious campaign by the UK's farmers (page 30-31). Their case was simple: the supermarkets can't keep paying us less for our milk than it costs us to produce it. Many of the retailers have now budged, eagerly publishing the prices they have agreed to pay on the NFU website.

While the foodservice sector isn't the milk-guzzling behemoth that retail is, there are some big buyers in our midst: the high-street coffee chains, for instance, the large distributors and the public caterers. I asked as many as I could about their milk procurement

policies – and the majority answered, referring to “fair prices” and “support for British farmers”. But none would divulge what the farmers who supplied them were being paid. Was it because they didn't want to? Or they couldn't for contractual reasons (if so, how can the retailers do it)? Or perhaps they didn't know (one tried, but after a few days gave up, citing a very complicated supply chain).

Complex as the supply chain might be, this lack of transparency is what makes this debate about more than milk. Responsible sourcing requires companies not only to work much more closely with their direct suppliers but to have a grasp of what goes on further down the chain.

The NFU is investigating a FairDeal scheme for UK farmers. Yes, price will be a critical mechanism but, more than that, it could help bring the foodservice industry closer to its farmers. That is where the real value will be. By the time you read this we will have had our first ever forum on a farm – perhaps this should mark the start of a closer relationship between our industry and our farmers.



David Burrows
Editor-in-chief

FOOTPRINTchannel

Interact with Thought Leaders and Authorities on waste. Watch those shaping the waste agenda and have your say by submitting comments and questions live on the show. Send in your questions (on registration) to shape the content of the programme or submit questions in real-time from your desk top to benefit from the industry-wide live exposure. Also broadcast live at The Restaurant Show.

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**Footprint Forum:
Sustainability Reporting 18th
October,
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the stock specialists



making every day a better day

Sodexo's sustainability strategy to 2020, the Better Tomorrow Plan has been developed to consolidate its corporate citizenship efforts across the world and is built around three pillars: 'We Are' - which embraces values and ethics, 'We Do' - which sets out 14 commitments to action on sustainability challenges, and 'We Engage' - which recognises the dialogue required to translate commitments into action.

For more information on Sodexo's actions visit www.ccr2012.sodexo.com or www.sodexo.com

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This month's contributors



Rachel England Rachel is a freelance journalist and editor with expertise in environmental issues, particularly renewable energy and sustainability (despite her green tendencies she struggles to keep houseplants alive). Rachel investigates why an otherwise hugely successful London 2012 Games seems to have missed a trick when it comes to a healthy food legacy.



Louise Neville

Foodservice Footprint has been closely following the debate on sustainable diets. We challenged Louise, sustainability officer at Quorn Foods, to outline how she sees the diets of the future and the challenges the food industry faces.

Caterers not taking sustainability seriously

THE FOODSERVICE sector's commitment to sustainability has been questioned in a hard-hitting new report.

Research carried out by Allegra Strategies for the Foodservice Consultants Society International (FCSI) found that sustainability will have a greater impact on the foodservice sector than any other issue. However, less than half of consultants (43%) feel that caterers are taking sustainability seriously, with cost the primary barrier. Only 49%, for example, said their clients are taking food security seriously.

This has led the FCSI to conclude in its "Taste of the Future" report that the sector "may be guilty of paying lip service rather than truly grasping the sustainability nettle".

Report snapshot

- 55% said sustainability is a key trend
 - Energy reduction is the most important issue (89%)
 - 43% believe caterers are taking sustainability seriously
 - Fairtrade is the scheme that most agreed was important (75%), followed by Red Tractor (57%) and Rainforest Alliance (52%)
 - 86% said that local sourcing will have a serious impact on procurement in the next three years
 - 49% said their foodservice clients are failing to take food security seriously
 - 89% said government can guide the sector on sustainability
 - 45% said healthy eating is a key trend
 - 76% agreed that consumers are choosing more meat-free options
- FCSI surveyed 64 consultants

It continues: "There is no doubting the complexities, but the sector should begin by taking a serious look at existing energy management systems and monitoring methods, developing more efficient waste plans and waste disposal systems, continuing to make use of the latest recycling technology and working with suppliers to put more local food on the menu."

Another key finding was that health is not a top trend, yet a tipping point was fast approaching with 49% of those quizzed suggesting that the popularity of meat-free menus will grow.

The report concluded that caterers needed to be "more imaginative when it comes to choice, range and portion size".

New apprenticeship scheme

THE CATERING company Compass UK & Ireland is launching a new apprenticeship scheme for 16 to 18-year-olds.

The Chefs' Academy, as it's been branded, will offer at least 40 places in its first year.

The two-year programme will be based in three cities – Manchester, Birmingham and London – and will blend professional cookery workshops with business mentoring and assessment.

Andrew Richards, the Compass HR director, said he wanted to attract "people with a real passion for food and who strive for a career in this industry".

After 24 months of working across a range of Compass locations, each successful apprentice will be offered a commis chef position within the organisation.

• For more on apprenticeships see page 21

Marketing unfashionable fish

SODEXO PRESTIGE London is promoting less fashionable, underused fish at its client restaurants and venues to help protect overfished species like cod.

Fish varieties such as dab, gurnard and pouting are being given a culinary makeover and promoted as gourmet fish specials of the day on restaurant blackboards at locations such as the Churchill War Rooms and city firms.

Sodexo is one of a number of caterers to have launched policies on sourcing more sustainable fish. Compass, Lusso, BaxterStorey and others have all made commitments of one sort or another.

The Seastainable Catch initiative, a partnership with the supplier Direct Seafoods, means Sodexo Prestige London selects fish from the catches landed by fishermen along the south coast rather than just pre-ordering old favourites.

The problem is that less popular varieties, caught in nets alongside target catches such as plaice or Dover sole, sometimes end up being discarded because of weak market demand.

So chefs from the London division of Sodexo Prestige – the specialist corporate catering, fine dining and hospitality arm of Sodexo – are tempting diners to try lesser-known types of fish with dishes such as pan-roast gurnard and bag-baked megrim with heritage carrot, spring onion and ginger.

Sodexo Prestige London also plans to showcase an unpopular but plentiful fish each week in a Fish Shop Fryday promotion.

Fish map for caterers



CONSUMERS WILL be able to identify where they can buy sustainable fish in their area using a new interactive map.

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has produced the map to spotlight caterers, schools, restaurants and chippies that are using MSC-certified fish.

Freedom from information

THE OUTGOING farming minister, Jim Paice, has told pubs, restaurants and caterers that they should tell diners which countries their food is from.

Defra (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) explained on its website: "While some food products bought in store are beginning to offer this information, many caterers have not yet taken on the challenge."

A press release also lists the contributions made by retailers, with detailed analysis of labels on more than 500 meat and dairy products bought from the major supermarkets and independent shops.

However, when asked what information it had on the scale of origin labelling in the foodservice industry to back up the former minister's attack on the sector, a Defra spokeswoman could not provide an answer.

"The information is based on the work our policy officials have been doing with industry to promote the use of country of origin labelling," she said.

The news followed a tough period for Paice, who was at the centre of the milk pricing storm (see page 12). Back in December his department was also found to have failed to meet the government buying standards it developed.

John Dyson, food and technical affairs adviser at the British Hospitality Association (BHA), said he supported country of origin labelling, but it's not always easy for caterers.

"Suppliers – and their source of supply – can change suddenly for reasons of availability, cost, quality or other factors. Restaurants with standard printed menus will have great difficulty in allowing for such sudden changes."



Robyn Makenzie/Shutterstock

New health deal pledges

THREE NEW salt pledges, specifically focused on the catering sector, have been announced by the Department of Health.

The pledges, which are part of the government's Public Health Responsibility Deal, will encourage more companies to make their commitment to improving public health through salt reduction.

Seventy-seven businesses have signed up to the Responsibility Deal 2012 salt reduction targets, but there is still a long way to go to achieve the goal of cutting individual salt consumption to 6 grams a day, said the department.

With one in six meals eaten outside the home the catering sector has a vital role to play.

The new pledges, which have been developed by the British Hospitality Association, focus on procurement, changing kitchen practices and training, and reformulating the final meal on the plate.

Fifteen companies have already signed up to the pledges relevant to their businesses, including McDonald's, BaxterStorey and 3663.

Waste Watch

In association with



THERE'S GOOD news for Wrap's **Hospitality and Foodservice Agreement** on waste with more high-profile signatories joining since the launch in June. Marston's, Accor and Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons are all on board, a Wrap press officer told WW. In all, 91 companies are involved, including 33 signatories and 58 supporters. That equates to almost one every couple of days since the launch, when there were 69 companies involved. The agreement aims to cut food and associated packaging waste by 5% – the equivalent of around 100m meals – and increase the food and packaging waste that is recycled, sent to anaerobic digestion or composted to 70%.

There is increasing support for the

government to introduce a **landfill ban on food waste**. The idea has been used to great effect in other European countries, and Scotland is gearing up for one too thanks to its ambitious Zero Waste Regulations. England, it seems, is being left behind, and there are few signs that the policy will budge. The wording of a consultation document published last month on the possible restriction of food to landfill suggests that the coalition government is about as keen on landfill bans as the chancellor is on renewable energy.

But food waste is something the government needs to focus on, according to the conclusions of its **Green Food Project**. The project (see page 26) is intended to

provide an outline – eventually – of how the food system needs to change in order to keep food affordable while considering the natural environment. Food waste will be "a big part of the debate", the initial report concluded, with much more to do to cut out food waste through the entire supply chain – especially the parts that rely on fresh produce. There has been good progress, though, with household food waste having fallen by over 1m tonnes since 2006/07.

.....
FootprintChannel is running the first in a series of free-to-attend TV debates. Waste – What's Next? will be aired on October 8th. For more details see foodservicefootprint.com/events/forum



FOUR TIMES as many businesses and households could be at risk from flooding in 20 years' time. On the flipside, businesses are also being warned about water use. Droughts have already affected parts of the UK this year and they are set to become the norm rather than the exception.

Most food businesses are aware of the issues that a changing climate could bring. Seasonal changes have caused disruption to services – for example, heavy snow last year delayed some deliveries to pubs and hotels, while flooding this year caused damage to a number of businesses. It's not on the scale of, say, Queensland (where 30% of one chain's restaurants flooded), but businesses are being affected.

For those in the food industry, the major concern, however, is supply. This year's wheat harvest is a case in point, but businesses are preparing for the frequency of shortages and market fluctuations to increase.

But does a changing climate only bring risks? Are there opportunities for food businesses too? New crops, new products and new services, perhaps?

According to a new government study: yes. Commissioned by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), "Climate Change Adaptation: Risk and Opportunities for Businesses in the South East of England" is based on interviews with leaders of global Fortune 500 blue-chip companies and smaller, UK-based companies across the south-east in five target sectors, each identified as particularly vulnerable to climate change effects. Interviewees included a number of foodservice businesses ranging from global fast food restaurants, international hotel and coffee house chains to UK-based contract catering companies with public-sector and business clients.

Many of these businesses are already experiencing change, says Belinda Miller, the director of insight at Corporate Culture, the agency commissioned to carry out the study.

"Rising crop prices have led most to actively seek new sources of ingredients and build new supply chains for the future," she explains. "This includes moving away from barley or wheat to harder crops less affected by the weather and price sensitivity."

"Few business are realising opportunities at the moment and most are focused on risk mitigation".

Risk is the key driver to act – especially among food businesses. The report concludes: "Food and beverage companies were more likely to see risks than opportunities as the impact on natural resources and rising commodity prices is an immediate threat that has the potential to severely affect their bottom line. Many companies are adapting by finding new sources of raw materials and developing new supply chains to ensure business continuity."

There is nothing wrong with couching adaptation in financial language. Miller's team found that "every food business is doing something in terms of adaptation to climate change as a risk". However, her concern is how few are doing anything to take advantage of the opportunities.

"Few businesses are realising opportunities at the moment and most are focused on risk mitigation," she explains. There are examples of some product sales increasing, including a

new range of iced teas and cold drinks that has been really successful. There is also a perception that there may be future opportunities for hospitality from increases in tourism as a result of longer summers, but this is yet to be realised.

New product development from food businesses in response to changing weather is, so far, limited to substitution. An increase in sales of ice-cream during long periods of warm weather is very often coupled with a fall in hot desserts, for instance.

“In the supply chain, the opportunity is to identify new raw materials”

However, some are working on new crops. “In the supply chain, the opportunity is to identify new raw materials,” one business told Miller’s team. “By fully understanding the cocoa genome, we can find that some strains of cocoa are better adapted.”

This kind of opportunism isn’t yet anywhere near as prevalent in the food sector as it is in others. Those working in the built environment, for instance, are actively developing new consultancy programmes and resources specifically based on climate change adaptation to help drive new product development and differentiate from competitors.

Miller says businesses need to see a clear commercial opportunity from adaption to provide an imperative to take action now. However, cost is a barrier. “Adaptation is seen as expensive and it can be hard to convince business leaders that it’s worth investing in. I was surprised that the majority of UK businesses still prioritise short-term profits over fundamental existence in the long-term, and don’t see commercial opportunities. There is too much focus on risk and this should be reversed,” she adds.

In the UK it is only really businesses with public-sector customers seeing demand for adaptation who are realising any benefits. Change therefore has to be driven, says Miller.

DEFRA will be using the insights to launch a behaviour change campaign. The environment minister, Lord Taylor of Holbeach, says the smart firms which take action now will be able to ensure the resilience of their business and supply chain. But they will also be the ones that “explore avenues for new products and markets that will open up as the world’s climate changes”.

From her research, Miller is in no doubt that adaptation needs be made easy, focusing on “what companies can do now without the need for lots of expensive consultants [and additional resources]. The advice also needs to be sector-specific.”

In its green growth report, the CBI defined a green business as one that is working towards reducing environmental impacts or adapting to environmental changes. Its head of energy and climate change, Matthew Brown, says businesses should be including their climate exposure in corporate reports – and this includes the risks and opportunities presented.

The climate will change, however hard we work to mitigate it, and that means businesses need to adapt. If that brings commercial benefits, then it is nothing to be ashamed of, adds Miller.

What’s on the web



Healthy school meals up

The number of kids eating healthy school meals has risen for a fourth year running. New figures from the Children’s Food Trust show that almost 626m healthy school lunches were served up last year – and almost 3.3m children had healthy school meals every day in 2011-12. The Children’s Food Trust chairman, Rob Rees, said school canteens have the potential to be “powerhouses for children’s health and their performance at school”.



Disruptive innovation

Are you a follower or a pioneer? Many businesses are making small changes to the way they do business: recycling more, reducing energy use, sourcing some Fairtrade products. But is this enough? Forum for the Future’s Vicky Murray doesn’t think so. In an exclusive comment piece she explains why more businesses need to innovate, not just to change the way they work but to change whole markets. She uses Cafédirect as an example of what can be achieved.



Fairtrade hits [or more accurately nears] €5bn

Consumers just love Fairtrade. They spent €4.9 billion (£3.9 billion) on Fairtrade certified products last year, according to figures released by Fairtrade International. That’s good news for farmers and workers who earned an extra €65m in Fairtrade premiums. In Fairtrade’s biggest market, the UK, shoppers spent 12% more on Fairtrade certified products in 2011 than in 2010.



Farmers get technical

Gone are the days when farmers had to rely on cumbersome and inaccurate manual measurement to predict crop yields. A new app created by the University of Cambridge with PepsiCo will use photos of the leaf canopy to predict crop development. The new technology will be linked up to the i-crop system, which helps farmers measure and reduce their water use.



Low-salt products struggle

The number of products being launched with “reduced”, “low” or “no” salt has declined 5% in the past couple of years. Salt replacements have not yet “caught the imagination” of consumers, said analysts at Mintel. According to the new research, consumers don’t yet appear willing to compromise on taste, either for reduced salt or calories. “Health stealth” is seen as one viable solution, with gradual reductions over time.



Telling porkies

Red Tractor has been given a rap on the knuckles and told to ditch its adverts promoting British pork as “high welfare”. The ads, which read “Pork not porkies: Red Tractor pork is high welfare pork”, are supposed to compare British standards with those in Europe, said Red Tractor. Many EU member states still allow sow stalls, for instance, which have been banned in the UK for over a decade. However, a challenge by Compassion in World Farming that the message was misleading given that “many pig farms in the UK, be they Red Tractor or not, have poor welfare standards” was upheld.

SALT, SUGAR, SWEAT

With massive sponsorship from fast food companies and a veil of secrecy covering alternative catering, London 2012 was quickly titled 'the junk food Olympics'. But was that an accurate moniker, and could it actually have a positive outcome?

Rachel England reports.

LONG BILLED as the "largest peacetime catering operation in the world", the Olympic Games saw over 14 million meals served to hungry spectators, athletes and journalists across 40 venues around London.

In keeping with LOCOG's aspirations for the "greenest Games ever", this not-insignificant task saw tremendous drives towards sustainable catering: eggs were free range and milk organic across the board, meat was Red Tractor assured and fish, remarkably, was sustainably sourced as standard.

These achievements – executed on such an enormous scale – certainly suggest that a positive sustainable food legacy will be left behind, and can be attributed in many ways to LOCOG's Food Vision document, which clearly laid out tangible sustainability benchmarks and standards for caterers. (Indeed, the success with fish pushes London ever closer to becoming a sustainable fish city).

However, as successful as this plan was, it was undermined by a proverbial elephant in the room; an elephant chomping on burgers and chocolate and slurping soda.

Many have rightly questioned the appropriateness of companies such as McDonald's and Coca-Cola sponsoring a world-captivating event concerned with fitness and health. In the run-up to the Games the company behind the golden arches proudly unveiled its Olympic Park restaurant – capable of seating 1,500 customers – and claimed that it would be serving 50,000 Big Macs throughout the proceedings.

Coca-Cola, meanwhile, estimated it would shift 23m units, and Cadbury – the official

50,000 Big Macs were expected to be served

"treat provider" of the Games – claimed that its temporary inflatable Olympic House, packed full of free chocolate samples, would attract 50,000 visitors.

These three sponsors were responsible for literally millions of additional calories consumed during the event, and health organisations, medical professionals, parents and cynics were not happy about it. According to a Which? online survey, nearly two-thirds of people interviewed believed that "it undermines the healthy ethos of the Olympics to be sponsored by companies that are perceived to make mainly unhealthy food and drink".

Granted, fast food and soft drinks pose no health threat when consumed as part of an otherwise healthy, balanced diet. Both McDonald's and Coca-Cola offer some "healthy" choices (the former tweets incessantly about its sub-400 calorie offerings) and their Olympic menus did carry GDA information, but as Tim Lang, a food policy professor at City University, observes: "The ubiquity of the offer and domination of the offer around the Olympics is troubling and sends out very contradictory messages."

"Domination" is the key word here. Cadbury negotiated an exclusivity deal that meant other suppliers within the Olympic Park were unable to offer healthier alternatives to its products. Coca-Cola had the monopoly on all non-alcoholic drinks served at Olympic venues. And McDonald's signed a deal that gave it complete catering rights. This would be a tremendous logistical undertaking, of course, so the company settled for a 10% stake in catering provision, with the caveat that the 800 other food outlets kept schtum about their own efforts during the Games.

Companies such as Sodexo, Compass Group and Eden Catering all played their part in delivering those 14 million meals, and perhaps could have played a greater role in dispelling the "junk food Olympics" label had they been able to talk about their work. Instead, inquiries were directed





to LOCOG, and subsequently to the Food Vision document with its vague nods towards “making sure that lower salt, fat and sugar options are available” and, ironically, “helping people understand what makes a balanced diet”.

BaxterStorey, given the task of catering for the media centre and feeding 25,000 journalists 24 hours a day, did reveal some of its strategies, though. An arduous nine-day tasting session saw more than 1,000 dishes rigorously tested for taste, sustainability and nutritional value, resulting in a menu of more than 450 freshly prepared options to suit customers from around the world, each meal carrying information on guideline daily amounts.

“We’re providing sustainable, locally sourced and nutritionally balanced food, freshly prepared by highly trained chefs,” says BaxterStorey’s CEO, Noel Mahony. “But that’s what we do every day anyway.” The company provided delis, barbecue areas, coffee bars and two restaurants with combined seating for 4,700 diners, dwarfing McDonald’s offering.

No doubt other catering companies have similar stories to tell but, without a platform to do so, McDonald’s, Coca-Cola and Cadbury reigned supreme in the public perception of Olympic catering – a paradigm which was not helped by the high prices of alternatives; £8.40 for a curry and rice surely made a Big Mac

meal at half the price a more attractive choice for visitors stripped of cash when buying tickets.

The London Assembly has since called for a ban on fast food sponsors within the Olympic movement, and even the International Olympics Committee (IOC) president, Jacques Rogge, admitted there is a “question mark” over future sponsorship from McDonald’s (despite the extension of the deal until 2020). But should these companies really be so vilified? After all, it’s the IOC which dictates the secrecy surrounding the sponsorship deals and, as the nutritionist Amanda Ursell notes, these companies are very well-placed to influence positive change.

“McDonald’s in particular has made huge strides in the last decade to improve the quality of its food by sourcing in a more responsible manner, and it does do some promotion around fruit and milk options – it’s very good at making things look

attractive and appealing in that way,” she says.

“What’s vital to keep in mind, though, is that in order to create a change in the way this country views diet, nutrition and obesity, companies like McDonald’s need to create a change, and in my view, that’s happening, albeit slowly. Having them at the Olympics at least stimulates debate and opinion, which will push this along.”

‘The Olympics is the super-fat watching the super-fit’

Like the Games themselves, where some fail, others will succeed. In light of Food Vision’s nutritional shortcomings a new initiative – the Healthier Catering Commitment – has come to light, championed by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. Food outlets signing up to the scheme commit themselves to reducing saturated fat, sugar and salt in their meals, and it’s hoped that the guidelines will be widely adopted in time for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

“We live in a world with a distorted food culture,” says Lang. “And the Olympics has become a festival of the super-fat watching the super-fit. We’ve only recently started having these important conversations, but at least we’re having them now.”

Perhaps, then, a positive food legacy will come out of London 2012, albeit one born of discontent.

The diet of champions

TEN THOUSAND athletes from around the world took part in the London 2012 Games, each with their own nutritional needs and dietary requirements.

While gymnasts and wrestlers require a fairly usual 2,000-2,500 calories a day, protein is at the top of their lunch list to help aid muscle recovery. Endurance athletes, however, are likely to put away up to 8,000 calories every day through carb-loading (or up to 12,000, as was the case for Michael Phelps at the 2008 Beijing Olympics).

Fridges and freezers in the Olympic Village were stocked with huge amounts of food to satisfy every need, totalling 25,000 loaves of bread, 232 tonnes of potatoes, 21 tonnes of cheese, 31 tonnes of poultry, over 82 tonnes of seafood and 330 tonnes of fruit and vegetables. And despite massive sponsorship from Coca-Cola, milk was the

preferred drink after water, with 75,000 ice-cold litres on hand to quench athletes’ thirst.

The Jamaican runner Usain Bolt has made no secret of his love for chicken nuggets, even claiming that most nutritionists would be “horrified” by his diet during the Beijing Olympics. However, Team GB’s head of sports science, Marco Cardinale, declared that athletes would be making “the wrong choice” if they chose burgers from any of McDonald’s on-site restaurants.

Given some of the athletes’ more specific needs, though, they wouldn’t have had that option anyway. Some unusual dietary requirements included: 16 ripe bananas a day for runner Yohan Blake, almond butter sandwiches for beach volleyball player Kerri Walsh and swigs of natural honey for gymnast Jonathan Horton.

Information Information Information

As the nation gets chubbier, more and more companies are pledging to provide facts about how (un)healthy their food is. But do diners need or want them? David Burrows reports.

ALBERT EINSTEIN once said that “the devil has put a penalty on all things we enjoy in life. Either we suffer in health or we suffer in soul or we get fat.”

As the national waistline expands, healthier food that doesn't compromise on taste is becoming the Holy Grail of 21st-century catering. Those signing up to the Public Health Responsibility Deal have to cut salt, fat and sugar from foods and recipes without turning customers off. What's more, they need to show diners just how (un)healthy their meals are with calorie labels on the menus. Many believe this is the right way to go and have backed the government's stance and signed up to the responsibility deal's pledges.

This month, Morrisons will be rolling out a new menu across all its staff canteens. The new recipes, designed in collaboration with Unilever Food Solutions, include new guidance for cooks – adding salt, for instance, is not recommended. Calories will also be displayed at the point of choice which will, says Morrisons, “help our colleagues make informed choices about what they eat”.

Taking responsibility for your staff is one thing, but do consumers really want to be bombarded with information when they eat out? Do families want to see big numbers alongside a McDonald's Happy Meal on their day out? Do office workers want to be faced with a calorie count when they rush to pick up a quick Subway sandwich on their five-minute lunchbreak? And, perhaps most of all, do diners at a restaurant want to feel guilty when they open the menu?

It would be premature for calorie labels to come unstuck on the back of one report

The answer, according to a new study by Allegra Strategies, is no. Consumers want to eat healthily when they dine out, but they don't see calorie labelling as something that would influence what they choose.

The “Eating Out in the UK 2012” report found that less than a third of consumers (31%) would be influenced by a calorie count when eating out. Instead, they look at ingredients, cooking technique and the portion size. In fact, calorie labelling falls

way down the list of the indicators people use to choose healthier food. So one might ask: what's the point?

The issue here is timing and consistency. Calorie labels on food, other than that bought at the supermarket, are a relatively new concept. Forty-one companies have signed the relevant pledge in the responsibility deal, but it will take time before such labels become ubiquitous (if ever, given that this is a voluntary initiative).

As Phil Hooper, the Sodexo corporate affairs director, told FoodserviceFootprint.com on the first birthday of the responsibility deal in March: “It's a large-scale voluntary initiative, and as with any new initiative, sufficient time is required before we can start identifying key results and successes.”

It would be premature for calorie labels to come unstuck on the back of one report. “With one in six meals eaten out, consumers need to have the same level of information they would have when buying food in-store,” says a Department of Health spokeswoman on reviewing the Allegra



findings. "There are currently 41 companies signed up to our responsibility deal pledge to display out-of-home calorie information. And as more companies sign up and post information, calorie displays in restaurants will become more the norm."

This is key: the norm. Look at the struggles that carbon labels are facing. Tesco, a huge supporter of the concept, invested massive amounts of time and money in a bid to label all of its 70,000 products, only to drop the project this year. Its climate change director blamed other retailers: "We expected that other retailers would move quickly to do it as well, giving it critical mass, but that hasn't happened."

Calorie labelling will go a similar way unless the labels become ubiquitous and, critically, there is education about what they represent. In spite of all the regulatory fuss around food labelling, many consumers still don't know what to do with the information they are confronted with.

Unilever Food Solutions, in its latest "World Menu Report", published in July, found that lack of knowledge about RDAs (recommended daily allowances) is "a

clear barrier" when choosing healthier options out of home. Globally, a very high proportion of respondents were unable to identify the recommended daily calorie intake for men and women – what UFS has called the "nutritional knowledge gap".

Intriguingly, the report also found that cost, taste and satisfaction were stopping them choosing healthier options. They wanted to eat healthier, the report concluded, but only "slightly".

Consumers have noticed changes to meals following the responsibility deal

Whether calorie labels can provide this nudge, it's hard to say. Time, as Sodexo's Hooper has said, will tell. But what both the Allegra and UFS reports show is that consumers are beginning to think about what they eat out of home. They don't want menu overhauls or to be faced with only healthy options, but there is a growing expectation for chefs to provide a higher standard and range of healthy meals.

"Eating out should still be a treat for

consumers when they want it to be and we don't want to change this," says Tracey Rogers, the Unilever Food Solutions managing director. "Chefs have a lot of influence upon consumers' diets, so it's important that they understand their position and use their skills to add healthier twists to our favourite dishes."

Progress has already begun, with consumers having noticed changes in restaurants since the introduction of the responsibility deal in March 2011. Allegra found that the number who have observed that not enough healthy options are available has fallen from 47% to 42%. They also weren't completely turned off by the idea of calorie labelling.

As one respondent remarked: "I think calorie counts displayed on menus is going too far. Eating out is a treat to be enjoyed. However, I do think restaurants have a responsibility to have such information, as well as salt, fat and sugar level and ingredients. All this information should be available on the website so that the consumer can check if they wish to, either before or after their dining experience."

Hippocrates: Organisations are what they eat

NAPOLEON, SAID to be one of the greatest military commanders of all time, is often quoted as having said that an army marches on its stomach.

Today, enlightened, forward thinking managers, directors and CEO's in organisations across the UK are beginning to appreciate that employees 'work' on theirs.

I often find with nutrition that looking back helps us to move forward.

We are all familiar not just with Napoleon's words, but also with those of Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine who way back in fifth century Cos, declared that we are, quite simply, what we eat

Feed our bodies well and regularly and we have the foundations to help us to thrive physically and mentally. Feed them excess quantities of junk on an ad hoc basis...and we don't.

In today's world where things need to be researched and measured and have a proven significant impact before we really take them seriously, we can sometimes lose track of this undeniable fact.

Thankfully scientists are beginning to quantify the impact that eating well has on people's performance at work, revealing for example that when employees experience well implemented programmes aimed at

improving their health and nutrition in the work place, levels of productivity increase, absenteeism drops and people are more engaged with their work.

But this is just the tip of the 'beneficial' iceberg when it comes to giving people access to good food at work.

When employees feel that their health is being taken seriously, there is a strong likelihood that they will feel nurtured. Feel they matter. Feel happier.

You can see what's coming next; happier people tend to work harder, more efficiently and to feel inclined to go that extra mile for their company. They are also more likely to stay with their company, cutting costs in recruitment.

There may be a temptation to wait for better, fuller dossiers of ultra robust data to reinforce what these emerging studies suggest.

But while this is accumulating, why not take the lead not just from famous military leaders' and ancient medical men but what, in many cases, our very own grandparents and parents implicitly knew; that eating a well-balanced breakfast, lunch and dinner helps to optimise our health.

We understand enough already to appreciate that eating in this way nourishes our body, brain and soul whether we are at work or play.

And so with this in mind, I would like to congratulate Footprint, for having the foresight and conviction to initiate the Health & Vitality Honours.

The Honours are a fantastic platform, giving companies a good reason, to in some cases continue development of and in others, begin initiating programmes that build towards a healthier food-based culture in the workplace.

The Footprint Awards have encouraged



Amanda Ursell

organisations in just 3 short years to appreciate the need for and then take steps to put their green credentials in order.

It is my belief that the Health & Vitality Honours will do the same for the wellbeing of individuals within organisations in the cost and profit sector through encouraging the provision of more nutritious food.

A place of work or learning which is bursting with energised people, is in a great position to thrive, develop and grow. Good food is a crucial foundation stone for good energy.

As a modern-day Hippocrates may say, organisations are what they eat.

HEALTH & VITALITY HONOURS

- Honours Submissions at www.healthandvitalityhons.com
- Submission deadline 31st of October
- Honours Lunch 18th of January The Long Room Lord's Cricket Ground
- Book Tickets at www.healthandvitalityhons.com

FOOTPRINT
HEALTH &
VITALITY
HONOURS

Louise Neville

Sustainability officer, Quorn Foods



ENCOURAGING CONSUMERS to adopt sustainable diets is important for health, environmental and social reasons. But there is difficulty in defining what such a diet is and how to communicate this to the consumer in a way they can engage with.

Consumers will ask why they should make changes, what they should be, how to make them and how to afford them. As an industry, we need to be ready to answer.

Recently we've seen consumers become more aware of the unsustainable nature of the current food system and our consumption patterns. This has led to questions on what the alternatives might be and how we might move towards them.

The sustainable diet involves minimising negative effects on health, nutrition, and environmental and societal issues at both macro and micro levels. As a result, it is starting to dawn on us that we face a range of issues including widespread diet-related health problems, clear inequality of food access globally, extensive food wastage and a food chain that is largely ignorant of the footprint it exerts on the environment.

We are also beginning to realise that our food consumption patterns have the potential to contribute more to climate change than activities that may come to mind more readily such as flights or car journeys – showing just how big the issue really is.

Enjoyment of food is the chief driver that will lead consumers to think more carefully about the choices they make. A shift towards sustainable diets will promote dishes that are nutritionally well-rounded as well as satisfying and tasty.

What's more, with consumers having a closer connection to the food they consume they will want to waste less. They'll be more aware of where it comes from, when it's available, how

it's grown and by whom.

Creativity and innovation from food companies with concepts such as leftover menu ideas could also help trigger a culture where waste becomes taboo. However, the extent of food wastage before it reaches the plate must be dealt with further up the supply chain too.

It is vital that a joined-up industry movement pushes this agenda forward and brings together a clear and simple vision of sustainable food choices, moving it beyond just a concept, if it is to become feasible for the majority of consumers in the UK.

Personal and global health tie in together very well, so this could be the starting point for food policy to engage with the consumer. Some organisations – such as the WWF – have already made admirable attempts to help consumers engage with the issues. For example, its Livewell 2020 campaign recognises that what is good for us is, generally, good for the planet – this is a powerful message.

More food businesses and supply chain partners need to take the initiative and evaluate their own impacts. This will help to unveil some of the mystery and complexity behind the overall impact of the food supply chain.

If there is one thing that opinion formers in this area agree on, it's the significance of the meat industry and its contribution to climate change. However, to encourage a reduction in meat consumption, consumers need to be educated on the options they have and this is where meat-free alternatives have an important role to play.

The origin of Quorn actually lies in an innovation challenge in the 1960s concerning food security in the 1960s in which scientists were asked to find a new food source to counteract a predicted world food and protein shortage if there was a population boom. In this way, the sustainable diet agenda represents a new opportunity for innovative food production techniques to play a vital part in helping consumers enjoy a truly balanced diet.



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Know your association

There are a number of bodies representing the foodservice and hospitality sector, but how high does sustainability rank in the priorities and are they all working towards the same goals?



**Institute
of Hospitality**

BRITISH RETAIL CONSORTIUM
for successful and responsible retailing

IN THE PAST few years, sustainability has become a business need rather than a nice-to-have. Many companies have set targets, others have partnered with NGOs and some have led industry-wide initiatives. Nearly all businesses have made progress in one area or another – cutting their waste, reducing carbon emissions, sourcing more responsibly – and in some cases this has stimulated industry-wide progress.

A notable example is the waste campaign led by Unilever Food Solutions (UFS). Waste is an issue that the foodservice sector struggled to grapple with for some time. Huge amounts of waste – both leftover food and packaging – were ending up in landfill, costing businesses huge sums in collection and disposal fees. UFS decided to take a stance.

In a bid to stimulate a reduction in waste across the whole sector, it launched the United Against Waste campaign this time last year. A toolkit was also produced to help businesses make simple savings and track the improvements – both environmental and financial – that they were making. The

progress has been impressive, and kick-started the voluntary Hospitality and Food Service Agreement on waste announced by Wrap this year.

UFS has proved what a single business can do to effect change. So imagine what a group of businesses could do. The foodservice and hospitality sector is represented by a number of membership associations, including the British Hospitality Association, Institute of Hospitality and the British Retail Consortium. Each represents businesses in the sector, and each has designated workstreams relating to sustainability. There are also organisations that focus solely on sustainability, namely the Sustainable Restaurant Association and Considerate Hoteliers.

But what have been their achievements to date? How are they representing the industry on sustainability issues? And, critically, is their work complemented or duplicated by each other?

“We have always sought to find areas for collaboration, trying to complement the good work others do, rather than duplicate it – that’s in no one’s interest,” says the

Sustainable Restaurant Association managing director, Mark Linehan.

“It can sometimes be difficult to find a way of ensuring a single voice represents the views of everyone, but decision-makers don’t want to hear 50 different voices. We do need to remember that each organisation was set up to address a particular issue or set of issues, or to represent the interests of a particular constituency, but we must all try to find a way to articulate our views in a way that will be heard.”

Others agree. “Greater collaboration on any issue adds to the value and the strength of what you are communicating,” says the Institute of Hospitality chief executive, Philippe Rossiter. “None of us is sending out mixed messages.”

But do you agree? Foodservice Footprint approached each of the five main sector representatives to find out what they are working on, how they are collaborating with others and what they see as the main challenges for the sector going forward. Their responses are overleaf, so you can decide if five voices are better than one.

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Institute of Hospitality

Philippe Rossiter,
chief executive



The facts: The Institute of Hospitality is the professional membership organisation for individual managers and aspiring managers working in the hospitality industry. The institute promotes the highest professional standards of management and education.

Current activity: I'm a member of the Vision 2020 Panel, which is campaigning to eradicate food waste from landfill by 2020. The panel is tasked with finding ways to help businesses and the public sector tackle the millions of tonnes of food waste that go to landfill each year, with a particular focus on addressing the challenge of developing a nationwide infrastructure to deal with food waste.

Upcoming projects:

At our next briefing (September 26th in Devon) the programme includes Glenn Roberts of Gram UK giving an overview of the challenges faced by foodservice manufacturers in exceeding the energy efficiency requirements of the market. Further briefings follow on October 3rd in Dundee and November 2nd in Leicestershire. On November 7th, as part of our hotel programme,

the institute is hosting a seminar on hotel design at World Travel Market, ExCeL, London.

Collaboration:

We're all promoting the same message. We are complementing the work of others due to the broad nature of our membership, which enables us to deliver the same initiatives and information to hospitality personnel at every level and in every discipline.

Future challenges:

I think it is how we define sustainability. The major challenge, though, is to simplify the message so that people within a business can accept responsibility for their own actions – both in their personal and professional lives – in terms of their impact on the environment.

Final thought: Greater collaboration on any issue adds to the value and the strength of what you are communicating. None of us is sending out mixed messages. For example, Considerate Hoteliers, by definition, is focusing its work on the hotel sector whereas the Vision 2020 initiative is engaged in reducing food waste, not just from the hospitality sector, but across the board.

Sustainable Restaurant Association

Mark Linehan,
managing director



The facts: We represent operators of all sizes and types across the UK. We work with large groups such as Carluccio's and Prezzo, Michelin-starred restaurants including Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, fish and chip shops, pubs, and contract and mobile caterers. We help restaurants to link with suppliers too – bringing them closer together and approving those suppliers and producers that meet the requirements of our Supplier Approval Scheme.

Achievements to date:

In the two years since our launch we've started to standardise best sustainable practice across the industry, developing a quality mark that restaurants and diners identify with and understand. We've rated the sustainability of more than 300 restaurants, with more going through the process each week. In 2011 we ran the Too Good to Waste campaign which raised consumer awareness and provided restaurants with advice and information on how to reduce the amount of food they waste.

Forthcoming projects:

In many ways, it's business as usual, helping restaurants to negotiate their

way through the various sustainability challenges they face. Raymond Blanc has recently become our first president and, working with him, we hope to persuade more restaurants to look at the social and environmental responsibilities.

Collaboration: We already work with a number of partners in the sector – Sustain, the Soil Association, Compassion in World Farming, Wrap and the Marine Stewardship Council, to name a few. We also have good relationships with many of the other industry bodies and associations.

Final thought: The restaurant sector is remarkably resilient but these are difficult times – customers are careful about what they spending, costs are increasing and margins are being squeezed. At times it might feel like sustainability is a luxury many can't afford. But we know, from a variety of sources, that customers care about this stuff. And, of course, being sustainable can generate really significant savings in some areas, and we have lots of examples of how our members have done this.

British Hospitality Association

John Dyson, food and technical affairs adviser



The facts: The BHA, incorporating the Restaurant Association, is the national trade association for the hotel, restaurant and catering industry. Members include almost every publicly quoted hotel group, many independent hotels, restaurants and clubs, major food and service management companies, motorway service operators and many local hospitality associations, as well as hospitality education establishments. In total, it represents more than 40,000 establishments.

Recent achievements:

In 2011 we launched a toolkit to help members to make the switch to LED, which can help save as much as 90% of energy use, set new standards in watts consumed per square metre and eliminate the need for hazardous substances. We also worked in partnership with DEFRA on the Hospitality and Food Service Agreement on waste and contributed to the Green Food Project.

Forthcoming projects:

Our sustainability strategy. In November 2011 and February 2012, we held



British Retail Consortium

Andrew Opie, food director

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Considerate Hoteliers

John Firrell, director



workshops, in partnership with Coca-Cola Enterprises and Nestlé Professional, to feed into the development of our sustainability strategy. This will be published shortly, and will include the development of a Sustainability Business Case launching this autumn. We are planning to hold a forum of hospitality industry leaders including People 1st to discuss how new entrants to the industry can be given the skills to promote sustainable consumption.

Future challenges:

The movement towards a low-carbon economy will represent a significant challenge. We will work together with the major trade associations in the food chain on sustainability issues to get a "whole food chain" approach.

Final thought:

Communicating our members' expertise, creativity and commitment to sustainability is and will continue to be an important part of our sustainability strategy – in particular the potential of the use of low-carbon technology in food production and the development of the voluntary waste agreement.

The facts: The British Retail Consortium is the lead trade association for the retail sector and the authoritative voice of the industry to policy makers and the media. We campaign to promote and defend retailers' interests, and advise retailers of threats and opportunities to their business. We also look to improve the perceptions of retailing in the UK.

Achievements to date:

Our flagship sustainability project is called A Better Retailing Climate. Launched in April 2008, it sets out the sector's collective environmental ambitions. Leading retailers, accounting for 52% of UK retail by market value, have signed up to this voluntary initiative. Signatories to this initiative continue to make impressive progress to increase efficiency, reduce their direct impact and support their customers and suppliers to do the same. Individually and in collaboration with others, the sector continues to seek innovative solutions and to understand more about the complex challenges we face.

Forthcoming projects:

We are working towards getting more "food to go" members involved in our sustainability project and

we're speaking to lots of catering companies to get them involved in the next version. The current commitments come to an end in 2013, when we will set new, more ambitious sector-wide commitments. We will also continue to bring different retailers together to learn from one another. They are all doing things, but sometimes there are different approaches. Different companies are also at different stages in the journey, and this is one of the challenges in moving the whole industry forward as one.

Collaboration: I meet regularly with the British Hospitality Association and the likes of the National Farmers Union. Our work is probably more focused on the key stakeholders, including NGOs such as WWF and Forum for the Future and the government and devolved administrations.

Final thought: The milk issue showed how vital it is that all food companies have clearer links with all their suppliers and producers – especially as resources diminish and the population increases. The big issues will be related to resource efficiency and sourcing.

The facts: We are a body of like-minded hoteliers who encourage, assist, motivate and cajole fellow hoteliers to adopt sound and sustainable environmentally friendly and socially responsible policies and practices. We do this through a network of member hotels and by providing events, advice and information for members on environmental and sustainability issues.

Achievements to date:

We have been around for over 21 years and during that time the annual awards have become the Oscars for the growing band of considerate and responsible innkeepers who have embraced sustainability and social responsibility. Each year new categories are added reflecting the evolving nature of the green marketplace.

Forthcoming projects:

We have developed a vision for the future and over the coming months will be putting the first part of that vision in place. Up to now we've been a UK-positioned organisation but with an ethos that has global possibilities – we will now be taking this ethos and objectives and placing them at the service of international hotels.

Biggest challenge: The flippant answer is to find a new word that encapsulates sustainability and greenness, now both overused and frequently abused. However, more accurately, it is keeping the ball in the air during these times of economic hardship. All too often the first thing that goes during downturns is training and marketing. Short-termism is not the answer.

Collaboration:

We work directly with hotels and accommodation providers. We are run by hoteliers for hoteliers. There is however considerable common ground in the sustainability sector and to this end we partner and work alongside the Green Tourism Business Scheme and Green Traveller while maintaining the independence of each entity. We are also affiliated to the British Hospitality Association, Institute of Hospitality and Sustainable Restaurant Association.

Final thought: By working in concert on several fronts we can exert influence within various relevant debates. Many of the principals involved in the various organisations act as advisers and judges and are generally accepted as the voice of sustainability in the hospitality industry.



Netting the benefits



M&J Seafood, the UK's largest independent seafood supplier, offers the widest range of fresh and frozen seafood in the foodservice market. From its network of 12 branches located throughout the UK, M&J Seafood is passionate about supplying customers with top quality fish and seafood, offering outstanding local service, a bespoke filleting service and unrivalled expert advice.

Partnerships with skippers

M&J Seafood works in close partnership, through 'our British Skippers Daily Catch' Scheme, with specifically selected skippers and boats around Britain to ensure that consumers get the finest quality fresh fish, caught responsibly. Through the scheme M&J Seafood receives reports directly from the fishermen, advising exactly when the boat is going to land, ensuring it has access to the best of their catch.

There are a range of different boats in the scheme, from inshore day boats to larger vessels that fish at sea, where only the best of the last day's catch is reserved for M&J Seafood and its customers.

Sustainability

M&J Seafood is committed to the use of sustainable seafood and was

the first in foodservice to offer Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) approved products. They responsibly source and supply from well-managed and sustainable fisheries, sourcing products within UK and international regulatory guidelines, while maintaining a commitment to actively promoting greater variety and under-utilised species.

Expert fishmongers

M&J Seafood's fishmongers are experts in the art of filleting and skilfully prepare the fish to exact customer requirements during the night, for delivery fresh the very next morning, six days a week. For the second year in a row an M&J Seafood fishmonger won the title of British Fish Craft Champion at the prestigious National Federation of Fishmongers Fish Craft Championships. M&J Seafood fishmongers won fourteen awards at the event, proving their commitment to providing customers with top quality service, as well as fish.

Tally initiative

M&J Seafood is proud of its award winning fishmongers, so much so that a personalised 'Tally' initiative has been introduced. When a customer receives their order they will find a tally slip

inside the box, giving them the name of the fishmonger who prepared it. M&J Seafood's fishmongers are experts, and proud of their skills, something that we believe should be shared with our customers.

Martin Bott, Chief Executive Officer, M&J Seafood, said: "As a company we are incredibly proud of both our fish and the fact we have the best fishmongers in the country working for us. Each of our trained fishmongers is also proud to now be able to put their name to each order as they share our passion for top quality fish and expert, personal service."

The website www.mjseafood.com features information and advice for those who wish to enhance their knowledge of filleting and fish and seafood preparation; as well as information about M&J Seafood's commitment to sustainability and how to purchase the finest fish at the best of today's market prices.

M&Jseafood
fresh fish specialist

Opening the kitchen doors

Against a background of job shortages and rising university fees, the foodservice sector is an increasingly attractive option for young talent from the UK, writes Nick Hughes.



CONVINCING YOUNG, homegrown talent to consider a career in the foodservice sector has historically been an uphill struggle for employers. Perceptions of long, unsociable hours, poor pay and a propensity to hire international staff at the expense of UK nationals have been hard to shift. Indeed, the closest many UK youngsters get to a career in foodservice is washing pots for pocket money during the school holidays.

But recently the wind has changed in the UK jobs market and is blowing favourably for the foodservice sector. For a start, the contraction in job vacancies – particularly for 18 to 25-year-olds – has meant young people have had to keep a more open mind

when considering career options. And the fact that qualifications are not a prerequisite for a career in hospitality is proving attractive to the increasing number of candidates who don't want to accumulate the debt that a university degree entails.

Recent research from the charity Springboard showed that more than 50% of school leavers would seriously consider a career in the industry. What's more, the British Hospitality Association (BHA) claims that hospitality is in a position to generate 236,000 new jobs by 2015. How many other sectors can say that?

But are employers in the foodservice sector taking advantage of the favourable climate and attempting to attract and nurture the business leaders of tomorrow?

The latest signs are promising. In July, more than 140 young people and industry leaders came together in London at the first of a series of forums, branded as Big Conversations in Hospitality. The aim was to encourage more hospitality companies to introduce structured work placements and apprenticeships for unemployed 18 to 24-year-olds and the upshot was pledges by businesses to create thousands of work placements, apprenticeships and job opportunities during the next three years.

Whitbread, for example, has pledged to fill half of all new jobs from the ranks of the unemployed and recruit 500 apprentices this year. "The industry has many job vacancies for youngsters and the unemployed and has huge opportunities at apprenticeship

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and other levels. If only more young people realised this," says Patrick Dempsey, the managing director of Whitbread's hotels and restaurants division.

The plan is for the first Big Conversation to be the start of a concerted effort to convince young jobseekers of the benefits of a career in hospitality. "There are 200,000 businesses in the industry. If every business pledged to offer one work placement and employ one more local person we would easily meet our growth target," says the BHA chief executive, Ufi Ibrahim.

The BHA has pledged to work with Springboard and Business in the Community (BITC) to hold more Big Conversations, both regionally and sectorally, in an effort to reach out to young people throughout the UK. "Hospitality is one of the very few industries in the UK creating jobs, apprenticeships, work placements and career opportunities," says Ibrahim. "It is one of the very few industries where you can start at the bottom and excel right up to the top."

Thomas Dubaere is living proof of Ibrahim's claim. Dubaere began his career as a maître d' at the Novotel Bruges Centre and progressed through the ranks at Accor to the position of managing director of the UK & Ireland business.

In June, Accor announced a new £5m people and development strategy that has talent identification and improvement at its core. "Now, more than ever, finding and developing talent is vital to achieving our ambitious growth strategy," says Dubaere. "This is why we are making this significant investment."

The company's commitments include a partnership with the education service provider Babcock to develop its management apprenticeship scheme, which will employ



Be the Best: Finalists in the Nestle Toque D'Or were tasked with producing a three course meal for eight covers using only improvised cooking equipment and operational ration packs.

100 young people this year, giving them on-the-job training and a national qualification.

Accor is also formalising its student placement internship scheme that will offer 100 placements each year to students on UK hospitality courses with a view to recruiting promising candidates after they complete their studies.

Perhaps most significantly of all in the current economic climate, Accor has launched a work programme named Hospitality Futures. Run in partnership with Springboard, it will offer 25 unemployed people aged 18 to 24 a starting job in the hospitality industry.

What's notable about Accor's people strategy is its inclusivity. The aim is to attract potential talent from as wide a pool as possible – from teenagers struggling to find employment

to graduates from the UK's best hospitality courses.

"There are opportunities whatever people's backgrounds," says Phillip Addison, the human resources director of Accor UK & Ireland. "What we're trying to develop is entry points and opportunities for development at different stages in their career."

The management apprenticeship scheme began in 2004 and Addison says over 50% of the roughly 250 students that have passed through still work for the company, with many occupying key roles.

If retaining apprentices is a challenge, attracting young talent in the first place is arguably even tougher. There's no hiding the fact that the hospitality sector suffers a bad press for hiring international employees

Pret apprenticeship scheme

Angela knows as well as anyone the life-changing potential of apprenticeship schemes. She was working as a volunteer for a housing association while serving the end of a prison sentence when she was put forward by the Working Chance charity for Pret A Manger's Simon Hargraves Apprenticeship Scheme – named after a former Pret employee who passed away. The scheme offers up to 70 places a year to ex-offenders and homeless people who benefit from a three-month work placement with Pret.

Angela admits to being sceptical of taking part in the scheme at first and says she had no idea of what to expect. She was placed in Pret's customer services department for three months, where she helped to deal with customer queries. "It really boosted my

confidence and helped me integrate with people," she says. "It gave me the experience I needed in an office role to get a better job."

Angela says her opinion of Pret, which gives full pay and benefits to its apprentices, has changed since she began working for the company. "I just thought it was like any other food brand but Pret has a great ethos. I have never seen a company that is so homely, inviting and fantastic."

Angela now has a full-time administrative job with Pret and plans to help more homeless people and ex-offenders get into work in the future and benefit from the same opportunities as her.

Angela's name has been changed



rather than home-grown talent, which has, in many cases, created a high staff turnover as employees hop from country to country without putting down roots.

Nevertheless, the opportunity to attract talented people who have not previously considered a career in foodservice has rarely been greater. Graduate jobs are at a

premium, while the reputational damage done to the banking sector – which has traditionally skimmed off much of the cream of the graduate crop – by the financial crisis has caused graduates to think twice about a career in financial services.

This summer, Springboard has been trying to tap into the market for students with transferable skills. Dee Smith, the programmes director for Springboard UK, speaks proudly of a molecular science student who was persuaded to sign up to one of Springboard's summer schools and is now a chef at a Thistle hotel.

"A lot of what we've been doing is going out to universities and attracting people who may have done a geography course or may have done a business course who are so important to the industry," says Smith. "They definitely hadn't thought about a career in hospitality until we started talking to them about it."

Graduates are just one piece of the jigsaw and getting children enthusiastic about the prospect of a career in hospitality is another key plank of Springboard's work. Its FutureChef programme, which aims to find the next generation of chefs, starts from the age of 12 and runs until 16. If a student comes through the programme and hasn't secured employment they will go into Springboard's summer schools programme, Inside Track.

Smith says school-age children present a huge opportunity for Springboard because the vast majority have yet to seriously consider their career options. "For us that's an amazing opportunity because if we're rolling out programmes such as FutureChef in schools we can try and get those people that haven't thought about a career and get them into hospitality."

Once talent has been secured, the emphasis moves on to development. Among Accor's recent investments is the opening of a campus in London for its Académie Accor – a first-of-its-kind UK professional training centre dedicated to staff development and career progression.

The benefits of holding on to talented individuals go beyond mere social sustainability. Employee retention and development can be key to achieving environmental goals. Businesses that are considered pioneers in sustainable development – such as Unilever and Marks & Spencer – have sustainability underpinning every function of the business. It stands to reason that employees who progress through the ranks of those companies also have sustainability in their DNA.

Addison believes promoting from within can play an important role in Accor achieving its sustainability goals. "Once people are in the business they understand the culture,"

Profile: Thomas Dubaere

Thomas Dubaere is living proof that ladders are there to be climbed. Twenty-two years after joining Accor as a maître d' in Bruges, Dubaere is sitting atop the company's hierarchy as managing director of Accor UK & Ireland.

Having graduated from the Brussels Hotel School, Dubaere worked at the Novotel Bruges Centre then held several general manager positions before being appointed director of operations for economy brands in Belgium and Luxembourg in 2005.

Dubaere then switched to the UK & Ireland business where he worked as managing director for budget brands. During this time he played a key role in the expansion of Accor's budget brands network and helped develop the Ibis "megabrand" which launched in 2012.

In February 2012, Dubaere was appointed managing director for the UK & Ireland business. He is now responsible for managing the overall development and strategy of the Accor brand in the UK & Ireland.

Reflecting on his rise, Dubaere says: "Hospitality is one of the most giving industries, offering a wealth of opportunity and experiences. Accor has given me the autonomy to explore and develop my own ideas and to create a team and business that thrives on passion and imagination."



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he says. "We've made some very strong commitments at Accor so we have to back those up and we have to get people to understand what we're trying to do."

All new starters in the hotels go through a training programme, which is based around Accor's Planet 21 sustainability plan.

The programme consists of an e-learning package divided into two modules. The first module is about generic sustainability – why it's important and why it's important to Accor. Employees can then choose from 13 options, depending on what area of the business they're working in, which gives

more specific training on how to work sustainably in areas such as housekeeping and food preparation. Accor is increasingly finding that many employees are prepared to go that "extra mile" to embrace the company's sustainability agenda, says Addison.

There is reason to believe that businesses too will continue to go that extra mile to make a career in foodservice appeal to young people. Compass recently launched an apprenticeship programme specifically for 16 to 18-year-olds in partnership with Springboard. The Chefs' Academy will aim

to attract unemployed school leavers who "have an appetite for developing culinary skills". Compass Group's UK & Ireland HR director, Andrew Richards, says: "The new scheme will enable us to attract people with real passion for food and who strive for a career in this industry."

But the battle to attract young British talent has not yet been won. "I still think there's a long way to go," says Smith. "I'm waiting for the day that a chef turns round and says he doesn't need another head in the kitchen."

Competitions

In the wake of London 2012 much political talk has focused on the need for more competitive sport in British schools, the rationale being that competition brings out the best in young people. But why stop at sport?

Springboard UK's FutureChef competition, which helps young people aged 12 to 16 to learn to cook, was created 13 years ago after the industry raised concerns that there was a lack of interest in entering a career as a chef. From an initial entry of 130 students, the competition now attracts over 7,000 students from more than 600 schools throughout the UK. Students work through four stages in the competition towards the goal of securing employment in the catering sector.

Like FutureChef, the aim of Nestlé's Toque D'Or competition

is to spawn the next generation of cheffing superstars. Anton Mosimann won the first ever Toque d'Or before going on to be appointed head chef at the Dorchester. Jamie Oliver also competed as part of the Westminster team, while James Martin entered the competition when he was at college in Scarborough.

Stephen Alexander, who represented Blackpool & the Fylde College in this year's Toque D'Or, said he was proud to have been part of the grand finals. "It really is one of the most prestigious competitions out there, and inspires other students in the college, not just the team competing. It is also a great springboard for students to make it in the industry. For example, one of our former students who did well at Toque went on to work for Gordon Ramsay and is now head chef at one of Sydney's leading hotels."



In it to win it: Westminster Kingsway won this year's Toque D'Or, run by Nestlé. Left to right are: Caroline Kerber Wetzel (front of house), Vince Cottam (lecturer at Westminster Kingsway) and Nuannapa Ratanakitsunthorn (chef).



Environmental Innovation and Investment From Stalbridge Linen



From boreholes for water to eco-friendly chefs' wear made of recycled plastic bottles, Stalbridge Linen is actively helping the textile services industry reduce its carbon footprint through continued investment in, and development of, energy efficient processes and sustainable practices.

As a major specialist supplier of table linen, bed linen, towels and chefs' wear to the hospitality, catering and leisure industries, Stalbridge Linen processes around

60 million pieces every year across its four UK plants. A sustained programme of investment in energy and water recycling systems now ensures that the company maintains best practice in terms of environmental legislation, sustainability and corporate responsibility.

Two water boreholes in Dorset now contribute up to 100 cubic metres a day – a significant amount which would otherwise have to come out of the local water supply. And, says operations director Alan Mulholland, because the company has invested significantly in the use of the boreholes, it's not going to waste the water and therefore respects it as a valuable resource.

"Our use of water is monitored very carefully and we have implemented a range of systems to ensure that it is used and recycled as efficiently as possible," adds Alan.

"The average amount of water per kilo of laundry processed is now five litres as compared to 10 litres six years ago."

Another innovative environmental initiative implemented by Stalbridge Linen is the inclusion of Ekocloth in some items of chefs' wear - a recycled fabric made from recycled plastic bottles and PET packaging. Ekocloth has all the traditional qualities of polyester such as durability and strength, but it is stronger and much more eco-friendly.

"Making polyester from recycled PET bottles reduces the amount of plastic that is otherwise buried in landfill," adds Alan Mulholland. "For every metre of polyester fabric made of 80% recycled PET, eight plastic beverage bottles are kept out of landfills. The production of one tonne of Ekocloth also uses six tonnes less fossil fuel than traditional polyester."

Another eco-measure employed by Stalbridge Linen is a fleet management programme designed to reduce repeat journeys and minimise CO2 emissions. Closer to home, last year the company sent 67 tonnes of redundant linen for recycling into wipe cloths!

"Our environmental policy places great value on the importance of regular and continued investment in energy recovery, waste reduction and sustainability," adds Alan, "and we enthusiastically and actively support any action, large or small, which increases environmental awareness and responsibility."



Getting change on the table - FAST

Persuading people to eat sustainably could take time that we don't have. The government's Green Food Project is tackling the big question of what to do right now, writes *David Burrows*

WHAT WILL our food industry look like in 2050? It's a fascinating debate and one that everyone has an opinion on (see opposite). But the bottom line is always the same: the system needs to change. There needs to be less waste, better resource efficiency and, when required and where it's safe, an embracing of technology. What we eat will also change – whether we like it or not.

Crystal ball gazing is all well and good, but 38 years is not a long time when it comes to the kinds of changes that many are proposing – encouraging people to recycle has taken years, so convincing them to eat genetically modified foods, or less meat, could take even longer. So the big question is what to do now, in 2012.

This is why the government set up the Green Food Project (GFP). It already had its blue-sky paper, thanks to the report “The

Future of Food and Farming” published in January 2011. But now it has to think about the “urgent action” required to set the UK, and indeed the world, onto a path of sustainable production, manufacture, provision, consumption and disposal.

That's what the GFP, and its well-respected steering group, is supposed to conjure up.

So what are the key conclusions and how might the foodservice sector play its part?

Its initial findings published in July contain 37 pages of recommendations on the possible changes to the food system required to keep food affordable, balance resource use better and cut emissions.

The commitment to an industry-wide debate on genetically modified (GM) foods is certainly an intriguing one, with next year the tenth anniversary of the GM Nation? debates.

But perhaps more controversial will be the commitment to set up a “consumption forum” to drive discussions on sustainable diets.

The role of industry in influencing consumer behaviour and encouraging more sustainable food choices features heavily in the report, with the British Hospitality Association (BHA) set to start the ball rolling with a “forum of leading members from across the hospitality and foodservice sector, working with the sector colleges, to develop an approach to promote skills and professionalism in sustainable consumption”.

Sodexo was also heavily involved in one of the subgroups that reported to the GFP. Tony Cooke, until recently Sodexo's director of government relations, led the “curry subgroup”, which included an experiment to change the contents of a meat curry to include less meat and use sustainable ingredients while maintaining the taste and “fullness” of the dish. The group concluded that “retailers and the foodservice sector in particular can lead the shift to reformulated healthy, lower impact products/meals, and using more UK-produced ingredients as part of dishes”.

In an exclusive comment for FoodserviceFootprint.com, Cooke explained how the group took a typical chicken dhansak recipe and challenged a team of Sodexo development chefs to develop an alternative recipe in response to these challenges.

Their response demonstrated the kind of creative flair you would expect from professionals: they minimised the use of high-impact ingredients by reducing the

volume of chicken, using chickpea flour in roti bread as an alternative source of protein, substituting coconut milk with chopped tomatoes and cutting out rice by introducing lentils. All while reducing salt, sugar and calories but maintaining taste.

As Cooke explained: “They demonstrated that not only is it possible to dramatically improve the environmental credentials and the healthiness of a curry dish through reformulation and ingredient substitution, but it is possible to do so right now and in a way that would be acceptable to consumers. The feedback from the chefs was that once they understood the challenges, they found it easy to respond.”

The foodservice industry is ready to respond, and some companies already are. It is an issue where some believe the sector can act as pioneers, paving the way for the retailers to follow.

To date, the idea of encouraging people to eat less meat has been a hard concept for retailers and the government to swallow. The GFP's steering group members had similar issues and found it “difficult to reach a consensus” on issues surrounding the sustainability of meat consumption. The new forum will therefore have its work cut out, but it has to be more than a talking shop.

There is a chance to start looking at what we do

“The establishment of a consumption forum is a useful initiative, but [it] must report back with clear recommendations and a timetable for action from government, business and civil society,” says WWF-UK's food lead, Mark Driscoll.

According to the steering group, a “scoping discussion will take place within three months to maintain momentum”. That means next month.

In the past few years some impressive food visions have been published, most notably the Cabinet Office's “Food Matters” in 2007, which spawned Sir John Beddington's report “The Future of Food and Farming” – big, high-profile reports that in a combined 320-plus pages were very useful in setting out the challenges. The hope is that, in the Green Food Project, there is a chance to start looking at the “what do about it”. The first report is only 32 pages long; actions will, after all, speak louder than words.

Farms of the Future



Fifty years ago this month the book 'Silent Spring' kick-started the environmental movement and changed the way we grow our food. As climate change and population growth exert growing pressure, what will the next generation of farms look like?

THIS MONTH marks the 50th anniversary of Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring". Al Gore credits the book with his involvement in environmental issues, while others credit it with kick-starting the environmental movement of the 1960s. The Daily Telegraph claimed it "brought ecology into the popular consciousness".

There is little doubt that Carson's exposé of the destruction of wildlife and the environment through the use of pesticides was one of the most influential books of the 20th century. Despite condemnation in the press, Carson succeeded in creating a new public awareness of the environment, which led to changes in government policy.

But we're now in the 21st century and farming has new challenges ahead. Farmers today have four billion more people to feed than in 1962; by 2062 that number could well have exceeded nine billion. Consumers are also demanding land-intensive and greenhouse-gas-intensive foods. As developing countries become wealthier, this demand can only intensify as more and more people crave the diets of the developed world.

And all this extra food has to be produced on less land, using fewer resources and in

a changing climate. This year the UK has already had droughts and floods while in the US forecasts for drought-hit corn production were slashed by 17% sending some commodity prices to record levels and raising fears that a new global food crisis is on the way. Experts predict that this is just the beginning, and in the future climate change will decrease global agricultural yields and increase production volatility.

Indeed, in his foreword to the 2011 "Future of Food and Farming" report the government's chief scientific adviser, Professor Sir John Beddington, wrote that the case for urgent action "is now compelling". He adds: "We are at a unique moment in history ... The food system must become sustainable, whilst adapting to climate change and substantially contributing to climate change mitigation."

The changes will have to be radical, the report concludes, and "there is an urgency in taking what may be very difficult policy decisions".

Deciding how to balance the competing pressure and demands on the global food system is a major task facing today's policy-makers as well as farmers and food businesses.

So where do we go from here? We know we

can't go on as we are, but is the mainstream agricultural sector reluctant to make a major shift?

Sustainable intensification is an idea that is being supported in some quarters, and there is also a debate about the role of genetically modified crops in enhancing yields, reducing pesticide use and growing crops in a changing climate. Agriculture finds itself at a crossroads, with big challenges ahead and tough decisions to make.

In 1962 Carson wrote about a similar crossroads: "We stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost's popular poem, they are not equally fair."

"The road we have long been travelling is deceptively easy, a smooth, super-highway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road - the one 'less travelled by' - offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of our earth."

So which path will we take now? On the 50th anniversary of "Silent Spring" we asked prominent food industry representatives how agriculture needs to change in the next 50 years in order to feed the world without destroying the planet.

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We can feed the world – but it won't be easy



"There's enough food to feed the world today, and there should still be enough food to feed the world in 2062 – but only if we free ourselves of today's cornucopian fantasies. Agriculture will have to dramatically reduce its dependence on fossil fuels, dramatically reduce the amount of water it needs for irrigation, and seek to eliminate the chronic waste of food that goes on both in the poor world and the rich world. Small farms will matter as much as big farms, local will matter as much as global, and we'll all have to get used to the idea of eating a lot less meat."

Jonathan Porritt, founder and director,
Forum for the Future



"The big change in agriculture will be its relationship with foodservice and its need for a clear, well-communicated strategy of what foodservice requires. At present, the lowest price of any agricultural product on the market irrespective of sustainability sets the base to what sustainability can achieve in terms of price. What's needed to encourage investment, research and improvement in agriculture producing sustainability is quite simply cost of production plus contracts into foodservice and clear concise commitments from them as to how they wish their food to be produced."

Mark Hayward,
Dingley Dell Pork



"Fifty years ago we also saw the 'green revolution' inspired by the great Nobel Peace winner Norman Borlaug; a revolution that spared untold millions from hunger and starvation. We face an even bigger challenge in the next 25 years: to increase production dramatically, confronted with climate change, water shortages and years of neglect in agricultural research. The future must be to produce more while striving to reduce negative impacts on the environment. 'Sustainable intensification' is the phrase used by the Royal Society. We all struggle to grasp exactly what it will mean, but of one thing I am sure: farmers will have to produce more with less."

Peter Kendall, president
NFU



"Strategic leadership (and appropriate incentive frameworks), effective land management and strategic planning are all essential to encourage sustainable and sustained production. Existing technologies can deliver yield increases and improved resilience, but this requires substantial global investment. Unlocking that investment with appropriate frameworks and incentives is key to preserving food choice and availability in the long term."

Dr Patricia Thornley, senior researcher,
sustainable consumption institute,
University of Manchester



"I think two key things are required. First, a recognition of the potential magnitude of the challenges facing the food system. This is going to need action across the board: increasing production, moderating demand, reducing waste and improving food system governance. Second, on the production side, the realisation that we are going to have to produce more food from existing land in a way that has much less impact on the environment – this is 'sustainable intensification' and requires a continuing refocusing of efforts on producing food in more resource-efficient ways."

Professor Charles Godfray, department
of zoology, University of Oxford



"We need a new economics built on equity and ecology to underpin how we farm. Agriculture will be based on an ecological not a fossil-fuelled, industrial, corporate-controlled model. It rewards farmers and farm workers fairly for their work, values and supports small farmers' knowledge and abilities, and redirects research activities accordingly. Its priority is food production linked to health needs not feed, fibre or fuel. It respects the animals used for food but diets would be largely plant-based."

Geoff Tansey, trustee, Food Ethics
Council



"In 2062 a sustainable agricultural system will be one which has achieved a paradigm shift, moving from the outdated 'more production' model to one based on 'better production' and which meets the nutritional needs of populations. This takes into account the need for improved production efficiencies as well as consumption changes in both the developed and developing world. We will have shifted from an ideological approach to farming, to one based on a set of key principles, which recognises that there is no 'silver bullet' approach. We recognise the fundamental bottom line, the 'true cost of food' including the social and economic value of ecosystems and the services they provide."

Mark Driscoll, One Planet Food lead, WWF-UK

"Three-quarters of the world's coffee is produced by smallholders and every one of them is at risk from the effects of climate change. There is a real possibility that, if nothing is done, we will face shortages and price rises – a double whammy that will affect everybody in the coffee supply chain, from grower to manufacturer, from retailer to consumer. There are many different ways that coffee farmers can adapt to climate change; for example, one of the projects we have running in Peru is reforesting an area above 6,600 coffee farms. These trees both generate income through carbon credits, whilst also creating a water catchment area to prevent flash floods damaging the coffee trees. What we need now is for other companies to follow suit and create adaptation projects all over the world."

Robyn Kimber, impact and sustainability manager, Cafédirect



"Farming must adapt to the climate change and water scarcity it has partly caused. But the world also depends on it for livelihoods, thriving ecosystems and by the way producers and animals are treated. Achieving a fairer, greener and healthier agriculture will take ecological management, for example using rotations to cycle nutrients and control pests. Organic farming encourages integrated management at a farm scale, where we know it works – could innovative co-operation and joint ventures achieve similar benefits at a landscape scale? To meet the challenges of the next 50 years we need farming to be principled, collaborative and creative."

Michael Bond, Food for Life catering manager, Soil Association



"We know we can't go on as we are, but the mainstream agricultural sector is reticent to make a major paradigm shift. If we did, it would require applying an ecological approach to agriculture, one that is more holistic and with the aim of optimising yields rather than maximising them. We would see more perennial agroforestry systems, and this in turn would mean a change in diet to one that is actually healthier. Agricultural research paradigms would similarly need to change, as well as food processing and distribution systems that would be dealing with different compositions of produce and from different farm arrangements. All this is possible."

Dr Julia Wright, acting director, centre for agroecology and food security, Coventry University



"Agriculture and food production is going to be under the spotlight as never before as the world strives to produce more food with fewer resources whilst reducing its impact on the planet. The main changes needed to bring this about are associated with a step change in the adoption of new technologies capable of reducing the use of resources per unit of output such as vertical growing, precision farming, genetics and so on. The focus for all food supply chains will be to maximise output per unit of all inputs – water, fuel, fertiliser, land and labour. This will require greater collaboration and long-term thinking along supply chains to provide confidence to those investing in this innovation and enable such a focus to be effective."

Elizabeth Bowles, European Food and Farming Partnerships



"I see two scenarios: one in which Europe ignores the 'perfect storm' of rising populations and climate change, and allows political pressures to install a museum-type agriculture, until the crisis hits, when a reverse in previous policies is required, perhaps too late for farmers and growers to respond. The second is one in which Europe recognises the 'perfect storm' and puts the right policies in place to promote productive and sustainable agriculture, allowing the European food supply chain to not only ride out the storm but to have progressed as a result of it."

Julian Little, communications manager, Bayer CropScience

Whiter than white?

Foodservice businesses talk a good game when it comes to supporting British dairy farmers, but few are willing to divulge details of the price they are paying for milk. *David Burrows* reports.

IT TAKES A lot of bottle to stand up to the might of the retailers, but dairy farmers are doing a pretty good job of it. Their SOS Dairy campaign has attracted widespread media coverage, pushed the government to oil the chains of a new voluntary code and forced several supermarkets to pay a more sustainable price for milk.

Price is, inevitably, where the battle started: a wave of price cuts was proposed which would result in farmers being paid less than the cost of production for milk. Bottled water, pint for pint, is being sold for more than milk – a fact that shocked Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, among others, to back the campaign and press the retailers into action.

“Dairy farmers can’t take industrial action. Their daily commitment to their herd makes it impossible. How cynical of retailers to take advantage of this. It’s time supermarkets stopped using milk as a loss leader,” he wrote in a letter to the *Times*.

But this debate isn’t just about the retailers – something the British Retail Consortium has been keen to publicise. Just before thousands of farmers marched into London for July’s “dairy summit”, it suggested that “the pressure should be on other big buyers of

milk to show the same strong support for the [dairy] industry that retailers do”. These other buyers included “the catering sector, food manufacturers and the public sector”.

So what is a fair price for milk, and are foodservice businesses paying it?

Last month the National Farmers Union (NFU), which is part of the dairy coalition behind the campaign for fairer prices, published a list of statements from milk buyers on their milk policies. The retailers all talk about the specifics of the prices they are paying, yet none of the foodservice businesses do.

Compass, for instance, says: “All of our milk is purchased from UK dairies that source their milk directly from UK farmers. We champion the use of British produce across our sites and we are fully committed to supporting British farmers and paying a fair price for the products we buy.” But when asked about the specifics of this “fair price”, a spokeswoman was unable to answer. “I’m sure you can appreciate we can’t comment on the details of our contracts with suppliers or clients.”

It’s a similar story with the high-street coffee chains. Starbucks states that it is committed to supporting the British dairy industry and is proud that all of its milk is sourced from



UK farms and carries the Red Tractor mark. The company also says that it's paying more for its milk than it was 12 months ago, has discussed the situation with its dairy supplier and is looking at options more widely for how it sources milk. A spokeswoman mentions a 2p per litre rise but there is no context. Costa Coffee, meanwhile, says it has "regular dialogue" with farmers to ensure that the prices paid are fair.

Costa is the UK's largest coffee shop chain and yet sells less milk than Iceland, a minnow in the retail market with just a 2% share.

But that doesn't mean the NFU isn't looking more closely at the foodservice sector.

"Farmers need to be receiving somewhere in the region of 29p to 30p per litre from the dairy," says Lee Woodger, the head of the NFU's food chain unit. "Part of the problem is that caterers might not know what a farmer is actually receiving or they'll complicate the issue by talking about what they pay for the milk [which includes the processor margin] or what it costs to get milk delivered to their distribution site or even catering outlet."

Woodger accepts that it's often more complicated for catering companies to trace back through the supply chain. A coffee chain with hundreds of stores (Costa has 1,390) will be sourcing milk in a number of ways. But low prices are "a situation that keeps recurring and the foodservice industry must play its part" to ensure a fairer deal for farmers, he says.

Are foodservice businesses paying a fair price? Woodger isn't so sure. "You'll see that most of the retailers talk about pricing, but not the others – including the caterers. You might like to take a view on what that means in terms of whether farmers are receiving a sustainable return or not. I'd suggest that if they don't tell us what the figures are the answer is 'probably not'."

Even those that have backed the SOS Dairy campaign are not necessarily practising what they preach. The Daily Telegraph discovered that Jamie Oliver, who signed the same letter as his fellow chef Fearnley-Whittingstall, was buying milk for his own restaurants from a processor that was paying farmers below the cost of production.

In the public sector there are also challenges. "Many public-sector contracts are on extremely tight budgets, which puts an even stronger emphasis on the price paid for raw materials," says John Dyson, a food and technical affairs adviser at the British Hospitality Association. "However, we believe the catering industry's support for the milk industry is strong and consistent. We will support the Dairy Industry Code of Practice and continue to promote milk

and dairy products produced by the UK dairy industry in food services outlets."

The association, among others, is in talks with the NFU about the possibility of a "Fairtrade-type" scheme for UK farmers. Discussions on how that might work are ongoing, both within the industry and with the Fairtrade Foundation. Woodger says the scheme, with a working title of FairDeal, is some way off; something similar to Fairtrade with a consumer-facing logo is a possibility though. Another option is a simpler scheme in which an independently calculated minimum price is published and promoted as a benchmark.

Whatever the scheme, foodservice businesses are likely to have to open themselves up to more public scrutiny. "The issue of a lack of transparency is partly why I'm so keen to see if a FairDeal scheme is possible to develop," says Woodger. "Even if this doesn't lead to a full Fairtrade-type model then at least having some kind of recognised number – and possibly a set of relationship principles – would be a step forward."

Most businesses were reticent to comment on the concept, given that it is in the early stages. However, a 3663 spokeswoman admits that it would need to be "very carefully thought out".

She adds: "It would also be important that the industry was fully behind any mark to ensure unanimous uptake and avoid a plethora of similar schemes being adopted to meet slightly varying needs with the potential to confuse customers and consumers."

Critically, any new system must not add any costs into the production process – for example costs to register, monitor progress or to use the logo use."

Of course, if it works, the scheme would not be restricted to milk.

What's on the table?

The National Farmers Union says it is a "long way" from knowing exactly what kind of FairDeal scheme is possible. Currently, there are three possible options being discussed with a variety of food companies:

- A full "Fairtrade-type" scheme with consumer-facing logo requiring audit
- A scheme designed to accredit processors/packers and the like
- A much simpler and more basic scheme that independently calculates some form of FairDeal minimum price which is published and promoted as a benchmark

The UK Games legacy



John Bennett is co-chief executive at BaxterStorey

As the hard work on one huge food operation finishes, another is already under way. BaxterStorey looks back at the 2012 Olympics...

AT THE START of 2011, BaxterStorey secured a contract to deliver catering at the main media centre for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The scale of the Olympics catering project required a committed and professional workforce and in order to deliver great fresh food and round-the-clock service we provided 400 chefs, baristas and customer service assistants to feed between 17,000 and 20,000 international journalists each day.

Headed up by the project director, Tom Barrett, the team had the task of providing 14 catering venues offering a broad range of cuisine including best of British, Asian, tortilla and salad, tastes of the world, and Mediterranean, plus two bars, a BBQ, deli bar, hospitality, vending and seven “grab and go” food and coffee outlets, which together would serve 450 different dishes every day. The international broadcast centre itself is the length of five jumbo jets wingtip to wingtip so it was an enormous venue to manage.

Staffing the project involved transferring over 200 existing staff members and recruiting an additional 275. It was a key LOCOG requirement that London 2012 should be the most diverse and inclusive ever and so we worked hard to ensure that we rose to the challenge.

All staff were recruited through a variety of sources including educational institutions, Jobcentre Plus and the Olympic Park’s local communities, and we engaged with the six host boroughs to recruit people who were long-term unemployed and were being prepared for work by local agencies. We also engaged with the De Vere Academy of Hospitality and a number of London universities with open recruitment days for students on full-time academic courses looking to gain work experience during the summer months.

Investment in employee training is the backbone of everything we do at BaxterStorey so we put all our Olympic recruits through our induction and training process to equip them with skills in basic cooking, food preparation, health and safety and customer service. It proved to be a valuable resource as the staff performance was excellent across all 14 of our venues.

You never know how it's going to pan out

Our commitment to local sourcing fitted perfectly with the LOCOG “Food Vision” and legacy approach. Having been founded on a vision of delivering fantastic food made from the freshest locally sourced ingredients, we were able to demonstrate to LOCOG how our supply chain is set up using a local supplier network that reduces food miles and allows chefs to buy fresh, seasonal produce at all times. Using BaxterStorey’s existing strong relationships with 250 independent regional

suppliers, we secured an additional 18 smaller artisan food suppliers for the Games period.

Throughout the Games it was important that we ensured the security of our supply chain to guarantee the volumes of ingredients required. We spent a lot of time working closely with the selected regional suppliers to make certain that they could provide the finest British ingredients with which BaxterStorey could deliver a guaranteed service, 24/7.

Before the Games we worked with them to predict popular foods and customer flow but you can never really know exactly how it will pan out and each day was completely different from the next. To manage this effectively, our supply chain manager contacted our suppliers at key points each day and implemented an emergency order and delivery system to ensure we could respond to customer demands on time.

We have received some really positive feedback from LOCOG and the global media about the food and service at the main media centre. The Olympic closing ceremony was also a great success as the chefs worked hard to provide a seamless pizza delivery service to the media unable to leave their desks. We set up an online ordering system and during that evening alone delivered more than 400 orders up until 4am.

The Games has created a real legacy for British food – providing the perfect opportunity to demonstrate the skills, craftsmanship and innovation that exists within our foodservice industry to the rest of the world. It has been a great platform to showcase BaxterStorey’s commitment to supporting local, artisan food suppliers by implementing a local supply chain throughout our operations – in short, buying British.

The international broadcast centre





James Withers is chief executive at Scotland Food & Drink

...while Scotland Food & Drink describes the lessons learned ready for the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

FOR MANY people the abiding memory of 2012 will be the Olympic Games. As a project, it started with cynicism rife at spiralling budgets. Even in the final days of preparation, news was dominated by rows over the provision of security personnel. But, over 17 days of competition, doubts were extinguished. It would have taken a pretty hard soul not to be swept up in Olympic fever. I certainly was.

Scotland Food & Drink was privileged to play its own small part in the world's

largest peacetime catering operation. We spent three weeks in the athletes' village doing a showcase of Scottish food, working among the 16,000 athletes and their support teams for whom the village was a temporary home.

On the busiest day we were in the village, 48,000 meals were served. The main dining hall was the focus, a riot of coloured tracksuits tucking into a fantastic variety of foods. It was a frenetic place, brilliantly organised. From the Brazilian ladies' football team coming in with their drums to the cheers from athletes as they watched their teammates win medals on the flatscreen TVs, the atmosphere was superb. But, by its nature, it was noisy too.

Our home was away from the hustle and bustle of main dining, in an inspired corner of the village next to the Team GB building. This was the street food area; a "casual dining" experience which acted as an antidote to the busyness that was the main dining hall.

Working hand in hand with Aramark, who provided the catering for the athletes' village, we hosted a Scottish stand showcasing some of our very best produce from smoked salmon and island cheeses to shortbread and strawberries. The interaction with the athletes was fantastic, many of them bringing us their medals to look at in awe.

Most pleasing of all was the feedback on our produce.

Reading some of the tweets the athletes sent out saying we had the best food in the village was a huge buzz.

Some of the Scottish food on offer came from large food companies. But it also came

from smaller producers who had the opportunity to play their part in feeding the Games. It demonstrated to anyone who doubted it that while large catering operations are delivered by large foodservice

companies, smart thinking and a willingness to engage can ensure that smaller producers are embraced too.

Aside from the success of the street food area, perhaps the greatest value I drew from my own five days in the village was seeing the catering operation at first hand and learning lessons. Those lessons are vital for Scotland because in 2014 we will be welcoming the world.

Two years from now, 53 nations from five continents will descend on Glasgow for the Commonwealth Games, and two months later the third most watched sporting event on Earth – golf's Ryder Cup – rolls into Gleneagles in Perthshire.

We want to set a new benchmark for showcasing regional foods

At Scotland Food & Drink we're working closely with both those events. Our ambition is to set a new benchmark for the showcasing of regional foods at major events. We believe Scotland is a land of food and drink, and there may not be a better opportunity for a generation to demonstrate that.

The 2014 food and drink masterplan – a partnership between the government and industry – has already been produced. We will be working over the next 18 months with Scottish food and drink companies to ensure they have all the capabilities they need to work with the foodservice companies that win the catering contracts.

The post-Olympic blues have been lessened by the excitement building already for 2014. "Legacy" is the word of the moment. The Olympics legacy for us is greater knowledge of how local food and drink can play a central role in events of this scale. There is much to do but we have a clear vision of what we want to achieve in 2014. There are less than 700 days to the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow; time to get to work.





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Greenwash

needn't be a dirty word

The toughest test of a business's sustainability credentials is what it does out of the public eye – and eco-friendly cleaning is the next challenge for foodservice operators.

Nick Hughes reports.



IT HASN'T HAPPENED overnight, but there's little doubt that foodservice operators are beginning to rise to the challenge of delivering food with stronger environmental credentials.

However, an even truer test of a business's sustainability credentials is what happens away from the gaze of the public eye. Take cleaning products, for instance. There's little reputational advantage from using an environmentally friendly product over one that relies heavily on toxic chemicals. But that doesn't mean it's not the right thing for businesses to do.

"Sustainability in restaurants is about much more than the provenance of foods," points out Mark Linehan, the managing director of the Sustainable Restaurant Association. "Environmental responsibility is also a key element and the availability of ecological cleaning products that are safe and competitively priced is a hugely positive step."

Ethical cleaning products are well established in the retail sector where brands such as Method and Ecover are widely available in supermarkets. Now eco-friendly brands are beginning to penetrate the foodservice sector as well.

EnviroProducts has been selling its e-cloth range of cloths, towels and mops through retailers since 1995 and counts major chains including Tesco, Waitrose and John Lewis among its stockists. Because of the high-quality fibres used to make the cloths, they require only water to clean, removing the need for harmful chemicals that can contaminate water cycles.





Laurence Smith, commercial director, EnviroProducts

At the beginning of last year, the commercial director, Laurence Smith, spotted an opportunity to tailor a range to the foodservice sector and the Professional range was born. "Within the retail market 'green' has been important for a number of years but the hospitality sector is catching up," says Smith. "Consumers are looking to hotels in particular to implement green policies."

Schools, for example, have a budget of 1p to clean a plate

Hotels account for the majority of EnviroProducts' professional business, with Best Western hotels and the Sheraton Park Lane among its customers. The Professional range already accounts for around 10% of e-cloth sales and Smith believes that in five years' time it could be as big as the retail products.

One thing holding back e-cloth's penetration of the foodservice sector is a reluctance on the part of large operators to switch from their current cleaning products. "It takes time because these companies operate on long-term contracts," explains Smith.

Mark Jankovitch, the chief executive of Delphis Eco, has also experienced resistance from the major contract caterers to switching to his plant-based range of cleaning products. Jankovitch started off selling to commercial cleaners and while he admits

foodservice "has not been our heartland", he says that "it's very obviously becoming a place to play".

Resistance to eco-friendly cleaning products has traditionally been rooted in a belief that they are more expensive, says Jankovitch. However, he is keen to stress this is often not the case. "In many cases our products are cheaper because we're using higher concentrations so you use less."

While in retail green products are often able to command a premium as the consumer buys into the idea of doing something good for the environment, in the cost-obsessed foodservice sector green premiums do not play so well. "The green thing is nice to have but ultimately it's all down to price and budget," says Jankovitch.

Schools, for example, have a budget of 1p to clean a plate, hence the need to deliver a cost-effective cleaning solution. "Our range of products are cost neutral, highly effective, simple to use, gentler on the cleaning staff and in many cases have resulted in the rationalisation of the range of chemicals used, which has resulted in saving on administrative costs," says Jankovitch.

Scepticism over performance has been another hurdle that suppliers have had to overcome. For EnviroProducts in particular, whose e-cloths entirely remove the need for chemicals, Smith admits that it's a challenge convincing potential customers that his products can clean just as effectively using only water. He stresses, however, that performance, rather than the brand's green credentials, has always been its key selling point. "In terms of an order of priority



Mark Jankovitch, chief executive, Delphis Eco

performance is first. We only put products out on the market that perform," he says.

Having made significant headway with small and medium-sized businesses, the next challenge for smaller suppliers such as EnviroProducts and Delphis Eco will be convincing the contract catering giants that their products can deliver the required all-round cleaning solution.

But simply talking up the green credentials of a product itself is often not enough to persuade the big boys to buy into your proposition. The environmental impact of cleaning products does not begin and end with the ingredients, explains Paul Bracegirdle, the environmental manager at Sodexo UK & Ireland.

Using two solid detergent products has reduced plastic packaging by 84%

Sodexo has been working with its global hygiene partner Ecolab for over 10 years to ensure its cleaning really is better for the environment.

"Over the past year we have increased our use of two-litre pouches of ultra-concentrated solutions which have the environmental benefit of reducing packaging by up to 98% compared with the one-gallon concentrated solution," says Bracegirdle.

Sodexo has also started to move away from liquid detergents as Ecolab has introduced solid detergents into its product range that create savings in both plastic and cardboard packaging.

"Over the last two years, plastic packaging, as a result of using two solid detergent products in our business, has reduced by 84% compared with packaging associated with a liquid detergent, which is equivalent to more than seven tonnes and has eliminated the need for approximately 12,000 boxes," says Bracegirdle.

All of this gives credence to Bracegirdle's view that there is "more to green cleaning than meets the eye". Regardless of the individual approach to cleaning, the very fact that the foodservice sector is giving careful thought to the environmental impact of cleaning products should be cause for celebration. Even though cleaning may be out of sight, it's no longer out of mind.

The next green thing: compostable packaging



PART OF THE attraction with environmental issues must be the debates. Genetically modified foods. Disposable nappies. Energy from waste. They all rumble on. And so it is with compostable packaging.

All the way back in 2007, Wrap warned bioplastics could cause “serious problems” for recyclers. The Association for Organic Recycling (AfOR) explains the disadvantages of compostable packaging in more detail on its website: “There is potential for major confusion amongst recyclers and contamination of waste sources whilst the public and the biowaste management industry comes to terms with what is and is not compostable”.

The real issue is confusion. Biodegradable means anything which can degrade over time by the action of biological agents. A lot of the time this simply isn't appropriate for the packaging application – for example, there is a big difference between “industrial biodegradability” and “home compostable”.

Some materials would only break down in an industrial composter at the right temperature and with the right biological agents; others would degrade within a few weeks if thrown in a home compost bin.

“Generally, consumers don't understand the terms used and there's a lot of confusion around what to actually do with the packaging at the end of its life,” says Jenni Donato, an eco-design expert at the global sustainability consultancy AEA.

Similarly, if compostable plastics are mistaken for traditional plastics and end up in the recycling stream, they can degrade the whole batch of recycle material. This is one of the main reasons why a lot of companies, among them Tesco, have reverted to traditional recyclable packaging as it's easier for the consumer to understand and less confusing for waste companies to deal with. Oxo-biodegradable additives – which make traditional plastic degrade at the end of life – are threatening to throw another spanner in the works.

And yet, the AfOR is not alone in thinking that compostable packaging does have the potential to “significantly reduce” the amount of waste sent to landfill. The foodservice industry, for one, is showing more than a passing interest in the idea.

“We're sure compostable foodservice packaging will expand further,” says Neil Whittle, the chairman of the Foodservice Packaging Association. The compostable packaging manufacturer Vegware has recently won tenders with “the largest contract caterers in the UK” and is working with “a very prominent high street chain”.

The Olympics could well reignite interest in the concept: almost all food packaging products – from drink cups to cutlery – used in the London 2012 Games were certified with the European standard EN 13432 for compostability. “The Olympics legacy for compostable packaging will show that in closed-loop environments it can be disposed of with food waste and sent to industrial facilities without any major issues,” says Whittle.

There have been reports of contamination in the bins and there is undoubtedly a huge amount of education about recycling to be done. Simplicity is the name of the game.

“It boils down to the fact that you can mix as many materials as you like as long as they can go down the same recycling stream,” explains the Vegware managing director, Joe Frankel. “So you can have a salad box which mixes card, a water-based coating and a corn starch window and it can go in the same recycling stream as the leftovers inside it.” If the window were plastic and the lining polyethylene, “you'd not be able to recycle any of it, and you'd need very, very well trained consumers to empty the leftovers into a separate bin and tear the window out of the box before disposal.”

Foodservice does create a unique set of issues and opportunities for compostable packaging. “The key point is that once you have the products covered in food it's much harder to separate them. It's really a question of access to recycling streams,” says Frankel. “My guess is that the big companies with vision are getting themselves positioned ready to turn the switch when they feel that the recycling infrastructure is ready.”

But, much like those other great environmental debates, the million-dollar question remains: is it more sustainable? “If I had a penny for every time someone asked me this...” says Donato. “My answer is: it depends.”

The mystery diner

MCDONALD'S HAS never been one to go for standard when there's a super-size option. Little surprise, then, that the London Games – where it was the “official restaurant” – became home to the biggest ever Maccy D's. At its busiest, over 1,200 customers – including some athletes – poured through the doors to indulge. Even the fastest of fa(s)t food couldn't cope with the demand – there were apparently queues to get both in and out. How sad that, at the world's top sporting event, replete with athletes in the finest physical form of any generation, we chose burgers and fries (see page 10). But perhaps some of them went for the fish? That would have been something. McFish

is, after all, sustainable. In fact, every UK branch of McDonald's sells MSC-certified fish. Over 4,000 schools do too, and a number of other restaurants and chippies. And now there's a map showing where they all are. There's an MSC-certified chippie just up the road from me in Stonehaven, just south of Aberdeen. So I paid it a visit. I had to queue to get in (a good sign), but not to get out (even better). Instead of plastic chairs and 1,199 other people, I had the sand and about a dozen other hardcore souls braving the east coast wind. The fish was excellent: cooked to perfection and served inside a decent little



box sealed with an MSC sticker (more about that on page 6). The chips were chips, not fries. And my supper came to no more than a Big Mac, fries and shake. In fact, it came to no more than I'd normally pay for fish and chips. Who says super-sustainable has to be super-expensive?

And finally...

Sex and sustainability. Sex sells. And nobody sells sex better than the adult entertainment industry. In fact, very few sectors sell better than the adult entertainment industry, full stop. So can those in sustainability learn a trick or two from their scantily clad counterparts? Well, yes, according to an expert at 2degreesnetwork.com. Now, before you start looking at ways to turn your business porno to help turn a profit, hang on. These are general guidelines and this is a sensible business proposition. OK?

For example, get to the point. Adult films don't have a plot – it's straight to business (ahem). Think about that when discussing your business plans with managers about

environmental pilots, investments and new sourcing tactics.

It's worth using teasers – a peek behind the curtain of what your business is doing, rather than the whole story in one giant report.

There's also no need to be original, says the 2degrees blogger. The pizza delivery guy and the sexy teacher are mainstays of many a pornographic movie (apparently). Likewise, your sustainability will be much the same as many other companies (energy efficiency, waste reduction and so on). The important thing is to get things done.

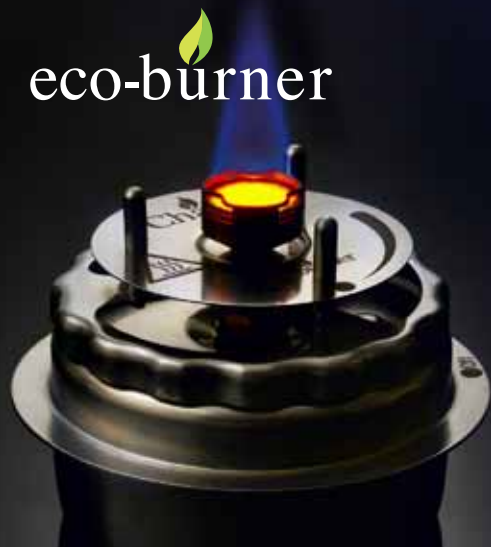
And finally: “You may find that if you and a competitor have similar goals, collaboration might be a solution to help you both achieve your targets.” That tends to be the way of many an adult film too (again, apparently).

Subway at schools. The idea of McDonald's at the Olympics raised more than a few eyebrows, but how about a Big Mac before PE?

The idea of food outlets at schools might not be too far away after the Manchester Evening News revealed that Subway is in talks with Parrs Wood High School in Didsbury over the possibility of opening a concession at the sixth form college. Discussions are at “an early stage”, apparently.

Intriguing stuff, though. At first the idea seems crazy. But think about it for a second and there could be mileage in such partnerships. Teachers and parents would have an opportunity to oversee exactly what goes into those foot-long baguettes and work with the company on how to encourage healthier options. Keeping an eye on people is what teachers and parents do best, after all.

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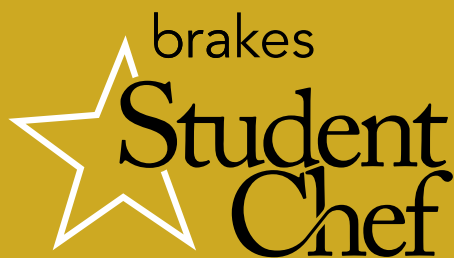


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