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COMMENT

Do we need any more hot air on global warming?

David Burrows
Editor-in-chief



AT 2,600 pages it's hardly surprising that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change took three years to compile its latest report. My concern is whether anyone will spend the next three years reading it.

The report – officially titled “Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability” – is a catalogue of horrible things that could happen if emissions continue to rise and the climate continues to change. The panel's chair Rajendra Pachauri said he hoped it would “jolt” people into action (the final report caused one author to remove his name because he claimed it was too alarmist).

My feeling is that it's more likely to result in insomnia than inspiration. As discussed in our analysis on page 4, do people need reminding of the consequences of doing nothing to reduce our emissions?

Haven't there been enough reports and science to showcase what might go wrong? And far too little action to ensure we're at least prepared (adaptation) and at best limiting the impacts (mitigation)?

The IPCC certainly doesn't think so. I can see where it's coming from. Kind of. Political action on climate change has been laughable; our own coalition government is doing its best to join the likes of the US with watered-down commitments and the shelving of green policies because “they're too expensive”. This confusion has given some businesses an excuse to plod along rather than pioneer on environmental issues.

A look back at Lord Stern's groundbreaking review on the economics of climate change shows that if temperatures rise, then it'll send economies into meltdown. That was published in 2006; so while I see the IPCC's point it only seems to be labouring the same one as others have before. Climate change is shit scary; we need to cut emissions, and quick – the economic and environmental consequences don't bear thinking about.

Those are the facts. The science is undisputed. And for those who have suggested the whole thing is a ruse, fine. But I, for one, don't want to take the risk.

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Green 10 helps foodservice businesses monitor their unique responsible sourcing goals and provide a means by which their commitment to improvement may be measured.

9/10 Packaging

Definition

It will soon become a legal requirement for food service providers to monitor and report upon the volumes of waste associated with packaging and delivery. Green10 calculates the volume of input and output waste associated with the delivery of goods by site.

Measurement

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Driven to inaction

The latest report on climate change is impressive in stature and detail but it's unlikely to make governments, businesses or consumers take action, says **David Burrows**.

THE LATEST global climate report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was published on March 31st 2014. At 2,600 pages, incorporating 73,000 published works, this was no April fool. The panel's chair, Rajendra Pachauri, said he wanted to "jolt people into action".

The US secretary of state, John Kerry, said: "Read this report and you can't deny the reality." He added: "Science tells us our climate and our way of life are literally in jeopardy." And in a spookily similar statement the UK climate change secretary, Ed Davey, admitted that "the science has clearly spoken. Left unchecked, climate change will impact on many aspects of our society, with far-reaching consequences to human health, global food security and economic development."

We live in an era of man-made climate change. In many cases, we are not prepared for the climate-related risks that we already face

Hold on a second. Wasn't all of this already clear?

True enough, this has been one of the most impressive reports of its kind. It was built on the work of 300 scientists, and the authors had access to twice as much science literature as their predecessors did for the 2007 edition (this is the second of three). Some of their conclusions have thus been made with a greater degree of certainty, while the vulnerable people, industries and ecosystems have been assessed in more

detail than ever before. All vitally important stuff.

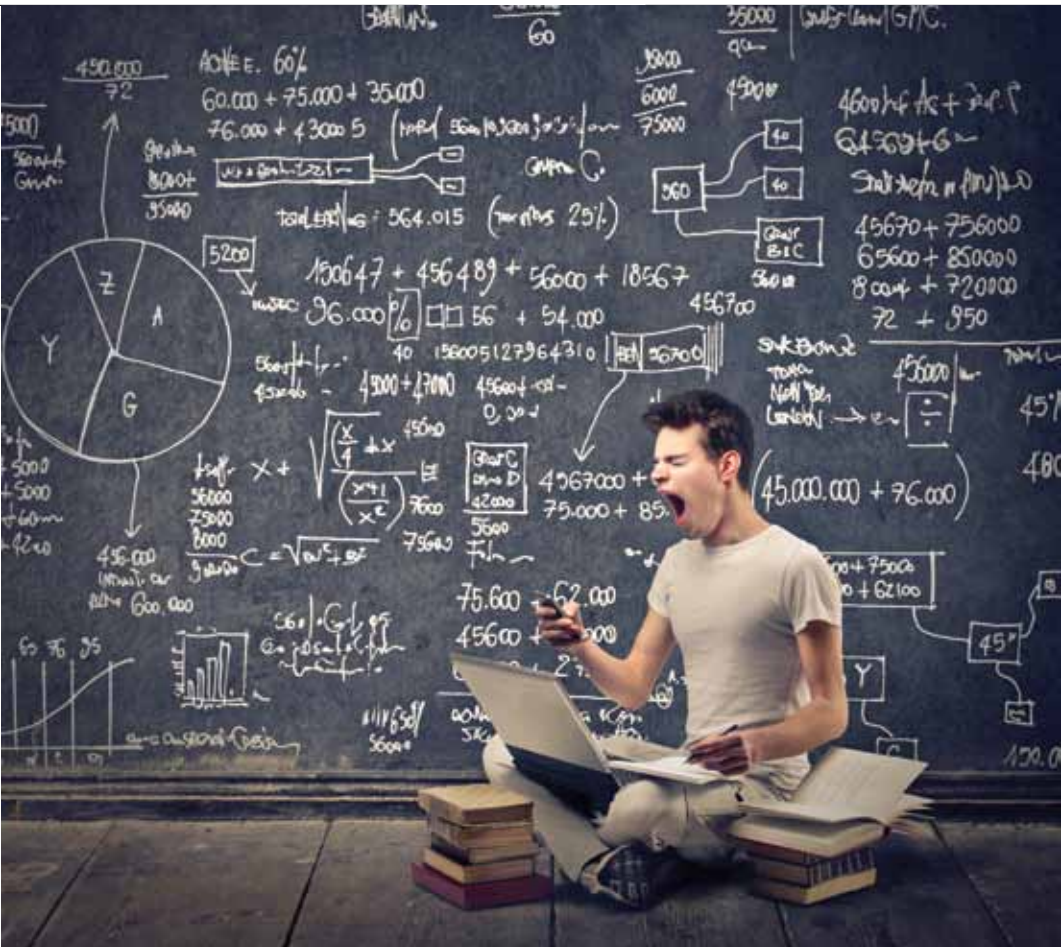
But the bottom line (as the co-chair of the working group in charge of the publication, Vicente Barros, said) remains: "We live in an era of man-made climate change. In many cases, we are not prepared for the climate-related risks that we already face. Investments in better preparation can pay dividends both for the present and for the future."

In other words, the time for talking is over. The risks are too great. Now is the time for action. As Davey put it: "We cannot afford to wait."

So why has everyone been waiting? Is this the report that will break the camel's back and force governments across the world to unite in a new agreement to curb carbon emissions – something that they have spectacularly failed to do so far?

It's unlikely. Even the WWF, one of the most rational voices in the climate debate, preferred to point out the shortcomings of report after report after report. Sandeep Chamling Rai, who led the group's delegation to the IPCC meeting, explained that the gap between the science and what governments are doing "remains huge" – and this despite the warnings by the IPCC in its reports for the past two decades.

"The science is clear and the debate is over," he added. "Climate change is happening and humans are the major cause of emissions, driven mainly by our dependence on fossil fuels. This report sets out the impacts we already see, the risks



we face in the future and the opportunities to act. Now it is up to people to hold their governments to account, to get them to act purposefully and immediately."

The gap between the science and what governments are doing remains huge – and this despite the warnings given by the IPCC in its reports for the past two decades

Many will have seen the coverage in the national papers, TV and radio, but will it have prompted them to take action? According to a poll by WWF-UK in March, seven out of 10 people already believe that climate change is one of the biggest issues facing the planet, with 64% admitting that the recent floods have made them "more concerned about the impacts". Nine out of 10 also feel that "we all have a role to play" to help protect the environment.

But as Jonathan Rowson, the director of the social brain centre at the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), managed to sum up in less

than 140 characters on Twitter recently: "The biggest climate challenge is that most people accept the problem, but don't live as though they do."

Two-thirds of the public, according to RSA/YouGov figures, are also very good at what Rowson calls "stealth denial" – they accept the reality of anthropogenic climate change but feel they are not part of the problem or can do little about it. This perhaps explains why 73% (according to WWF's poll) feel political leaders do not focus on the environment enough and 72% want the government to put more emphasis on green energy and carbon reductions.

Annual greenhouse gas emissions have risen 60% to 36 billion tonnes a year. As heavy and shocking as they are, the reports don't appear to be working

This isn't an excuse for inaction, however, and the pioneers of green business have long argued that being climate smart is an environmentally and economically sustainable approach to doing business.

Businesses realise that climate change is a risk to their business and they will have to adapt – none more so than those in the food sector. The IPCC concluded with "high confidence" in its report that "based on studies covering a wide range of regions and crops, negative impacts of climate change on crop yields have been more common than positive impacts".

It was even more confident that the effects of recent climate-related extremes, such as the floods in south-west England, reveal "significant vulnerability and exposure of some ecosystems and many human systems to current climate variability", and that these events can result in the "disruption of food supply".

The effects of climate change on



Running scared. Increased incidences of extreme weather and acceptance of the science have done little to encourage the world to cut emissions.

agriculture have been one of the more controversial aspects of the study, prompting one of the authors to ask for his name to be removed from the summary. Richard Tol, a professor of economics at the University of Sussex, suggested that the drafts had become "too alarmist" and he wanted more focus on opportunities in a document he believed was becoming saturated by risks (the word was actually mentioned 230 times in the summary alone, up from 40 times six years ago, according to the Red Cross).

The public spat between scientists that ensued has attracted widespread media attention, and has certainly softened the "jolt" that the IPCC's chairman had been looking for. Whether it would ever have been enough to wake up the political system and make the world respond, as Kerry put it, is debatable.

In the past two decades of IPCC reporting, the annual greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels have risen 60% to 36 billion tonnes a year. As heavy and shocking as they are, the reports don't appear to be working.



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FOOTPRINT AWARDS 2014 SHORTLIST

Winners announced at the Footprint Awards Dinner
East Wintergarden 22nd May 2014



FOR THE fourth year running entry levels to the annual Footprint Awards – the industry's only scheme that celebrates achievement throughout the entire food supply chain – has broken previous records, it has been revealed. The record quantity, as well as the quality of submissions received for Footprint Awards 2014, is indicative of the extent to which responsible business practices are being embedded in foodservice and hospitality corporate agenda, say organisers.

The news that previous records have been broken comes as the eagerly anticipated shortlists for the 2014 awards are announced.

There are 13 awards in total, 11 open to nominations, and two – the Community Vote and Special Achievement Award, which are in the hands of the public and a special team of Footprint judges.

The shortlists for the 11 award categories open to nominations are:

Sustainable Use of Natural Resources Award

Bidvest 3663
London Linen Group
Mara Seaweed

Waste Management and Reduction Award

Brakes
Coca-Cola Enterprises
Lexington Catering
Nestlé Professional
Winnow Solutions

Environmentally Friendly Logistics Award

Aramark & Chef Direct
Bidvest 3663
Spirit Pub Company

Responsible Sourcing Award

Ampersand
Court Catering
The University of Manchester

Sustainable Supplier Award

Delphis Eco
Huhtamaki
London Linen Group
Uptown Biodiesel
Wyke Farms

Energy Efficiency Award

Court Catering
Quintex
Wyke Farms

Sustainable Catering Equipment Manufacturer Award

Active Food Solutions
Electrolux Professional
Gram UK
Victor Manufacturing
Winterhalter

Economic Sustainability Award

Enterprise Inns
Spirit Pub Company
Wyke Farms

Stakeholder Engagement Award

Green 10
Solocup Europe
WRAP

Social Impact and Diversity Award

Centreplate
CH&Co
Compass Group
Enterprise Inns
Sodexo

Sustainability in Education

University of Brighton
University of Durham
University of Manchester

Special Achievement Award

Café Muse at Manchester Museum
The Coffee Cube at the University of Central Lancashire
The Duke of Cambridge in Islington, London
The Globe in Chelmsford, Essex
The Green Man at Brackley Heath, Northamptonshire
Woolton Hall on Fallowfield campus, University of Manchester

For the Community Vote Registrations please visit www.footprint-awards.com/awards/shownominations.php

* Categories where there are more than three companies shortlisted indicate where some scores are currently tied.

Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony to be held at East Wintergarden in London, on 22nd May 2014.

To book tickets visit www.footprint-awards.com

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FOOTPRINT ANALYSIS

State of the union

EU membership is a hot political topic with the general election looming but what has Europe done for the food industry?

WITH THE general election looming large on the political horizon battle lines are already being drawn over the key issues. One of the main areas of contention is certain to be the UK's relationship with Europe – an issue that continues to polarise opinion.

Last month the UKIP leader, Nigel Farage, and his Liberal Democrat counterpart, Nick Clegg, faced off in a series of live interviews in which they put forward forceful cases for, respectively, severing links with and staying part of the European Union.

While the two main political parties are likely to occupy a safer middle ground for fear of alienating a section of the electorate, the issue of whether EU membership is really in the UK's interests is certain to remain a contested area of policy both here and across Europe in the months and years ahead.

So what has membership of the EU ever done for us? In the area of the environment and climate change, the answer appears to be: well, quite a lot actually. In 2012, the UK government launched a wide-reaching

review of the EU's competences – essentially an audit of what the EU does and how it affects the UK.

Each government department was tasked with consulting Parliament and its committees, business, the devolved administrations and civil society to consider how the EU's competences work in practice and to report on its findings.

The review of environment and climate change was published in February and concluded that, taken as a whole, the EU competence has increased environmental standards in the UK and across the EU and this has led to improved performance in addressing key environmental issues.

Inevitably, there were specific issues on which contributors' opinions were divided. The interests of industry and individuals often diverge and the report notes the inherent tension between laws designed to protect the environment and the cost to business of implementing those laws.

EU targets on waste and climate change were seen by some as burdensome and prescriptive while for others they provided greater certainty

In particular, EU targets on waste and climate change were seen by some as burdensome and prescriptive while for others they provided greater certainty for investors and a level playing field across the single market.

Where food is concerned the undoubted benefits to exporters of common standards and free trade has to be reconciled with long-standing criticisms of EU food policy. Unsurprisingly, the Common Agricultural Policy came in for plenty of stick with many UK stakeholders considering it a cause of significant environmental damage, especially

on account of the EU's failure to allocate sufficient CAP funding to agri-environment schemes.

GM was another area that provoked contrary opinions. Some respondents, including the Scottish government, believed legislation on GMOs should allow for regional flexibility. Others, including several Green MEPs, believed they should be banned altogether.

The Agricultural Biotechnology Council, meanwhile, noted that the implementation of the current approvals system for GMOs, which it described as unequal and incomplete, is disadvantaging UK agriculture against countries such as Brazil and China where approval systems function more effectively.

With the current UK government showing signs of warming towards GM, this is an issue that is set to remain high on the environmental agenda for the foreseeable future.

Disagreements will always exist around the fringes where Europe is concerned and on some major issues it is clear that many organisations and individuals would favour a greater degree of subsidiarity for the UK, particularly on politically sensitive issues such as planning and flooding.

However the bottom line, according to the review, is that EU competence has increased environmental standards. Given that the UK has been a positive force in shaping European climate policy over the past 20 years, we should take pride as a nation that we are facing up to these truly global issues.

What the review of competences ultimately shows is that while UK stakeholders continue to be divided on the detail of our relationship with Europe, a broad consensus is that we're better off together.



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Waste Watch

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SETTING TARGETS for food waste reductions across Europe would be extremely difficult, according to a report published by the House of Lords EU committee. With no common definition of food waste, adequate baseline data would prove extremely hard to come by, said the committee, so it has recommended the introduction of “aspirational targets” at each level of the supply chain. This includes foodservice. During the Lords’ extensive inquiry the likes of Sodexo and Aramark were called to give evidence. Indeed, it was noted in the final report that individual hospitality and food sector and retail businesses, by contrast, are in a relatively good position to assess their own food waste when motivated to do so. However, Europe-wide data has proved trickier; for instance, the information collated by FoodServiceEurope is likely to be “unreliable”. Sodexo was among those that welcomed the idea of an aspirational target given that it “raises the profile” and acts as a reference point for EU member states and individual organisations. The committee’s chair said food waste was “morally repugnant” yet the EU threw away 90m tonnes a year. Baroness Scott of Needham Market said the issues related to definitions and monitoring of food waste were complex, but this “cannot delay action any further”. She urged the new European Commission, which will be appointed this November, to publish a five-year strategy on reducing food waste by summer 2015.



SUPERMARKETS WERE singled out in the Lords committee’s report to act more responsibly and reduce incidences of cancelled orders which see “millions of tonnes” of crops ploughed back into fields. More waste food at the store level should also be redistributed.

The increase in food banks, and the number of people relying on them, has been a political football of late with DEFRA accused of suppressing its “review of food aid”. It was finally published in February, about 12 months late, and showed that low incomes, unemployment and benefit delays had triggered demand. This issue has also spotlighted the amount of food that could be redistributed but isn’t. The Lords committee suggested that the UK government should consider tax incentives to encourage retailers to ensure that unsold food that is still fit for human consumption is actually eaten by people. WRAP has just published the findings of its research into food redistribution, which will be covered in more detail in next month’s issue.

The Political Print



ONE OF THE great challenges in formulating a national food strategy is to marry economic realities with environmental and social aspirations. So three cheers for Wales, whose recently published “Action Plan for the Food and Drinks Industry 2014-2020” sets out a roadmap for achieving a profitable food system that is also sustainable, fair and culturally sensitive.

The Welsh government has identified food and farming as one of nine priority sectors which it sees as key to prosperity. The sector has a turnover of £5.2 billion and employs 45,000 people, many of whom are self-employed or work in micro-businesses. In common with other Celtic nations, central to Wales’s approach is an export-led strategy focused on promoting commodities such as Welsh beef and lamb which already have a strong reputation internationally.

An export-led strategy is also at the heart of the British government’s long-term economic plan, not least in food where the environment secretary, Owen Paterson, has spent much of his tenure touring the globe banging the drum for UK produce. But while DEFRA has focused its efforts on boosting competitiveness of the food sector it has struggled to produced a convincing vision for what a sustainable, equitable food system should look like.

In this regard the Welsh plan could provide a useful template. The government’s vision is for a food system that contributes towards its overarching goal of delivering “healthy productive lives in a more prosperous and innovative economy” while contributing towards “safer more cohesive communities, with lower levels of poverty and greater equality” and “a resilient environment with more sustainable use of our natural resources and a society with a vital sense of its own culture and heritage”.

This is music to the ears of anyone who believes food can deliver on many more aspirations than purely financial ones.

Wales deserves credit for showing faith in food’s ability to act as a force for social and environmental good while supporting economic growth through enterprise and exports. Its next challenge is to deliver on its bold ambitions.

My viewpoint

A refreshing look at what “Circular Economy” means to Foodservice.

“ IT MIGHT sound strange coming from someone whose working life is about helping firms to improve their sustainable credentials but I can’t abide the term “circular economy”. It’s one of those phrases that was invented to engage people on particular topic but has since become a buzz-phase and been applied to anything to do with recycling and good sustainable behaviour. It has therefore lost most of its meaning and is likely to cause as much confusion as it is to engender positive change. So let’s start with what “Circular Economy” really means. Quite simply it means keeping resources circulating within one economic system. Normally it refers to the UK but it could just as well be applied to Europe or even wider. In other words, once used a material is collected for recycling, taken to be processed into a raw material and used again without leaving our shores (in the case of the UK). Largely it arose in the UK context as a reaction to the fact that a lot of recyclable materials are exported to places like China. It is a whole other debate on whether it makes sense to ship used cardboard to be recycled in the places where they need to make more boxes to package the consumer goods being manufactured there (a global circular economy). Sustainability is rarely the black and white set of issues that some would like. So, do Foodservice businesses have a role to play in the circular economy? Well yes, two main roles in fact. For any resource to circulate it needs to be presented for recycling and for recycled materials to have a market and find their way back into use people need to buy products that use them. So really what this latest buzz-phase means is the good solid sustainable practices that we are all familiar with but could all improve to a greater or lesser degree; Sustainable procurement and sustainable waste management and



recycling. The fact you are reading this via Footprint would suggest you are one of those that have really bought into these goals. I was asked to write a piece about the drive towards the circular economy. Rather than that I am saying don’t be distracted by it. Let’s keep talking about the basics; the components that we can affect in our companies and lives haven’t changed and collectively we have a long way to go yet. I’m sure you know the questions... How much of your waste could be avoided? How much do you recycle? If you purchased differently could you recycle more, or throw away less? Do you have a sustainable purchasing policy? Is this adhered to or green-wash for your website? Are your goals in all of these areas aggressive enough? There are few (if any) businesses that can’t ask these without finding more opportunities for improvement. I sense we are at a bit of a plateau in the UK in the drive to this “Circular Economy” (There, I’ve met my brief!). Sustainable ethics are driven too much by profit and not on core values. Many companies seem satisfied with their performance now, not because it is great but because they have improved from unimpressive starting points. Spending more to be more sustainable is still too rare an occurrence in my experience. I have confidence that this will change as the leading companies (which I hope includes yours) raise the bar and therefore the expectation on what good performance means.”

Giles Whiteley is CEO of SWR

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FOOTPRINT REVIEW



Organic again?

ORGANIC FOOD has had a tough few years, but the 2014 market report by the Soil Association suggests that it's back in vogue. Sales were up 2.8% in 2013 – the first time the category has been in growth for five years. Indeed, sluggish performances following the economic downturn have seen the land put down to grow organic crops fall – just 3.5% of UK agricultural land is now organic.

But the Soil Association hopes the new figures will breathe life back into the sector. A survey published alongside the report found that organic shoppers expect to buy more organic products this year than last, reason enough to be "positive about the outlook for organic in 2014 and beyond", according to Rob Sexton, the CEO of Soil Association Certification. "To see the organic market showing such strong signs of growth, particularly when grocery sales as a whole are slowing, shows just how much potential there is in the organic sector."

The horse meat scandal has been a factor (there was a "spring surge"), but increased new product development and investment in marketing are thought to be the main reasons for the sales uplift.

Four in five households bought organic

food in 2013, with under-34s most willing to spend more on it. Shoppers perceive it as healthier, natural and better for the environment. One in three consumers also believe organic to be healthier.

However, sales growth in the supermarkets was dwarfed by that in independent retailers and caterers. In foodservice, sales rose by 10% to £17.5m, fuelled by the popularity of the Food for Life Catering Mark and demand from high-street chains such as McDonald's and Pret A Manger.

Government backing has also helped, says the Soil Association – the Department of Education's School Food Plan highlighted the Catering Mark as an effective way to raise food standards. About 6,000 schools now serve meals accredited under the scheme.

The creation of a new Catering Mark supplier membership last year is also driving interest. The network already has over 100 members, including large wholesalers and distributors such as 3663, Brakes, E-foods and NCB.

The Soil Association is now hopeful that the sector can return to its pre-recession heyday, when double-digit year-on-year sales growth was the norm.

NUMBER CRUNCHER	10%	- growth in foodservice sales of organic food
	£1.79bn	- UK organic sales
	37%	- consumers who buy organic due to fewer chemicals
	33%	- consumers who buy organic because it is 'healthier'
	605,629	- hectares used to grow organic food – down 7.3%

Who said that?



"Food waste in the EU and the UK is clearly a huge issue. Not only is it morally repugnant, but it has serious economic and environmental implications. We cannot allow the complexity of the issues around defining and monitoring food waste to delay action any further."

Baroness Scott of Needham Market, chair of the Lords sub-committee that conducted an extensive inquiry into Europe's food waste problem, was left shocked and confused by slow progress among many of the UK's businesses (see page 8).

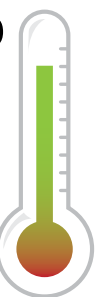
From the web

GREENER

- Sweet laws – a sugar tax could help tackle rising obesity levels, according to two-thirds of foodservice companies (*Footprint* poll)
- 100% zero – Unilever's European factories are not sending any non-hazardous waste to landfill.
- Good eggs – Sainsbury's is the first UK retailer to provide in-store collection points where customers can recycle their Easter egg packaging.
- Meat-free balls – Ikea is developing veggie "meatballs" in a bid to cut the impact of its menus.

GROSSER

- Allergic to change – 33% of foodservice companies are not prepared for changes to allergen regulations later this year (*Footprint* poll).
- Full responsibility – Oxfam claims that rich countries have so far provided "half-baked" plans to cut carbon emissions.



Nice day for a green wedding

With the cost of tying the knot in the thousands, are couples turning their backs on ethics for their big day?

Jo Roberts reports.

FROM A RECYCLED wedding dress to an organic buffet, ethical loved-up couples can have the biggest celebration of their lives without compromising on their green beliefs. There are dedicated eco-suppliers that can help bring their green party together and websites advising couples how to celebrate their day without damaging the environment.

Of course, the growing list of wedding caterers and suppliers is not surprising – weddings are big business for the UK. Brides and grooms celebrating their big day are expected on average to spend between £18,000 and £24,000 on the event. The industry as a whole is thought to be worth £10 billion a year, with couples spending an average of £2,552 on catering alone, according to the wedding website Hitched.co.uk.

Francesca Cribb, Hitched's site editor, says that if a couple want an eco-friendly wedding there are plenty of options. "There are loads of eco-friendly suppliers around the UK; from wedding dress designers making gowns with organic cotton lace, to organic catering companies, stationery made from recycled paper and even wedding venues dedicated to staying green."

Hitched.co.uk features real weddings on its site to provide inspiration for couples who are planning their wedding day and Cribb says



one couple they recently featured approached their wedding with ethical thinking from start to finish.

"For one recent wedding the couple sent wedding invitations printed on recycled paper made from elephant dung."

She explains: "For one recent wedding the couple sent wedding invitations printed on recycled paper made from elephant dung, served a delicious and organic, vegetarian style menu and provided recycled wedding favours. They also had a guest book made

from recycled banknotes and they even honeymooned in the UK to preserve their carbon footprint."

What the bride wants, as the saying goes. However, this is the exception rather than the rule. According to Climate Care, the average wedding emits around 14.5 tonnes of CO₂ – about the same as four return trips to Australia – but this is not a primary concern for the majority. The Royal Society of Arts found that there wasn't the interest in its Footprint Wedding Package, which it promoted as a way to "help you plan a more

environmentally-friendly wedding and reduce the carbon footprint of your special day".

Tim Barrett-Jolley, the sales and marketing manager at RSA, says that although there wasn't the interest in this particular approach to getting married, the company ensures that it runs its business in a way to minimise the impact on the environment. "We try to be as ethical as we possibly can be and we source local food using caterers Harbour and Jones," he says.

Unlike carbon footprints, food sourcing is something that has become a mainstream

consideration for weddings, according to Rose Ames, the founder of Green Union, a website dedicated to linking up sustainable brides and grooms-to-be with ethical suppliers. Ames founded the site eight years ago after a stint as a florist and a wedding planner. Back then only the really committed looked at eco-weddings, but now couples are much more interested in the provenance of food and many caterers promote the fact they source locally to meet this desire.

"It's been interesting how the trend has developed," she says. "When we launched, it

was very new – there was a specific type of person. I would say those people had a very dark green wedding but now green weddings cover such a wide area.

"Some people are really ethical; a growing number of people just want to do the best that they can, by supporting local producers for example."

These days, the wedding breakfast isn't limited to a limp piece of meat and overcooked veg. The options are endless. A vintage afternoon tea, a hog roast or a fish and chip van are just some of the catering options on offer to the happy couple. But as the big day comes closer, are couples able to find affordable sustainable catering options or are they out of reach for most?

Unlike carbon footprints, food sourcing is something that has become a mainstream consideration for weddings.

Ames says that ethical weddings don't necessarily come at a premium – people can be green but get good value at the same time by eating seasonal produce and having more low-key intimate weddings. "I don't think it's so important that they don't buy organic food but buy seasonal food or source flowers that are in season," she says, adding: "If you really want roses and strawberries then get married in summer."

Vincent Charles, the owner of Organic Buffet, which caters for weddings and corporate events, says people are much more interested in where their food comes from, especially after extensive media coverage of the horse meat scandal. He runs his entire business sustainably – from sourcing food and ensuring that local staff are hired in a bid to cut down on transport, to calculating exactly how much food people are going to eat in order to cut waste.

Ames admits that hits on her Green Union website haven't risen for two years, suggesting that a start-to-finish eco-wedding is not on the agenda for most couples. But she concludes that the trend for local and seasonal produce, and the trend for more personal homemade weddings, mean that more people are going to have a green tinge to their big celebrations.

For an interview with Vincent Charles check out foodservicefootprint.com.



TUCO

Share. Learn. Buy. Grow.

TUCO PROUD TO ANNOUNCE KEY FOOTPRINT PARTNERSHIP FOR 2014

The University Caterer's Organisation (TUCO), leading professional membership body for 'in house' higher and further education sectors, is proud to announce an industry partnership with Foodservice Footprint for 2014.

The partnership has already seen Foodservice Footprint create a bespoke partnership package for TUCO for the upcoming academic year. The package, and more broadly, the deal will bring a range of benefits to TUCO member(s) / universities.

In terms of general benefits, as a leading source of information on responsible business and sustainability for the foodservice supply chain, Foodservice Footprint will provide information, guidance and support to TUCO member universities on tackling green issues in the catering industry. This level of support will encourage greater commercial and reputational success for members and promote their long-term commitment to a green catering ethos. Members will be offered access to industry reports, as well as discounted Footprint membership prices to encourage their further involvement in Footprint events and awards.

The bespoke partnership package will

also include the sponsorship of a new category within the Footprint Awards for the Best Sustainability Initiative in Education. Additionally, this year will see the two bodies work together to hold a specially created Footprint-hosted event, discussing pertinent issues on the sustainable agenda, bespoke to Universities and higher education colleges.

TUCO Chair and Director of Accommodation & Hospitality Services at Brighton University, Julie Barker, on behalf of the TUCO Board, is keen to enhance TUCO's sustainability offering and add further value to its growing TUCO membership base through these kinds of relationships and comments:

"We always welcome closer links with complementary member organisations and are delighted to announce our partnership with Foodservice Footprint for 2014.

"TUCO has developed a reputation for its forward-thinking approach to sustainability through unique links with the Marine Stewardship Council and WRAP. TUCO is determined to continue its work in this area with a demonstrable commitment to the industry and we look forward to working with Foodservice Footprint to communicate and share insights across the higher education and further education arenas."

The date for "Footprint Forum: Sustainable Ethics" in partnership with TUCO will be announced in the June issue of Footprint.



Eat at the Square, Reading Uni

Winning meal by 'Chef of the Year', Eric Barre: TUCO Skills Competition 2013



Lucky number seven



New research suggests that recommended guidelines for daily fruit and veg intake need to increase from five portions to seven. This could be hard to swallow given current intakes, says **David Burrows**.

WHEN IT COMES to fruit and veg seven is the new five, according to research in the *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*. Researchers from University College London studied the eating habits of more than 65,000 people in England from 2001 to 2013 and found that eating seven or more portions of fruit and vegetables reduces the risk of death by cancer and heart disease by 25% and 31% respectively. Current government guidelines recommend five.

"Our study shows that people following Australia's 'Go for 2 + 5' advice will reap huge health benefits," says Oyinlola Oyeboode, the study's lead author. "The clear message here is that the more fruit and vegetables you eat, the less likely you are to die at any age."

The numbers are daunting for a UK public who have long struggled to up their fruit and veg intake. Statistics released last month by Leatherhead Food Research showed that consumers are eating about 4.3 portions a day. The 1,185 consumers were also asked

if they could manage seven portions, but nearly half said it would be difficult. "Many consumers believe they are actually eating enough fruit and vegetables and can't imagine how they would incorporate more into their diet," explains Leatherhead's strategic insight manager, Emma Gubisch.

There is little doubt that seven a day would require a shift in consumer mindset and behaviour – especially given large variations in consumption. It has been 10 years since the government launched its five-a-day initiative and there is evidence that average intakes might be lower than 4.3 and falling.

Research published in October by the retail analysts Mintel found that 16% of households were cutting back on fruit and veg and just 24% of the country ate the recommended five portions. In the US, a study published by American University researchers in February's *Pediatrics* journal showed a "small, but significant, association between the prices of fruit and vegetables and high child body mass index".

Rising prices have caused 16% of consumers to cut back on fruit and vegetables and just 24% eat the recommended five portions

When prices go up, families switch to processed foods with higher calories. In the case of fruit and vegetables, they might also turn to canned and frozen options. However, UCL's study – the strength of which comes from the big numbers involved using data from the real world rather than a survey of a small sample – warns that canned and frozen fruit appeared to increase risk of death by 17%.

The British Frozen Food Federation says these results are "highly misleading" given that frozen and canned were categorised together. The researchers, who also found no benefit from fruit juice, agree that these findings are "difficult to interpret".

Oyeboode explains: "The negative health impacts of the sugar may well outweigh any benefits. Another possibility is that there are confounding factors that we could not control for, such as poor access to fresh groceries among people who have pre-existing health conditions, hectic lifestyles or who live in deprived areas."

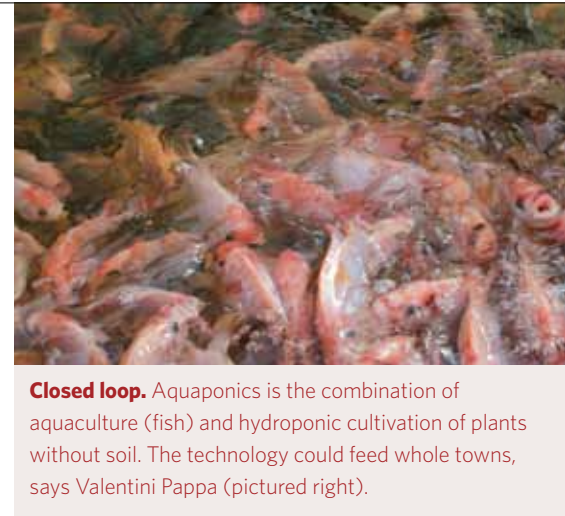
In 2012, the government introduced new pledges to its Public Health Responsibility Deal to encourage more fruit and vegetables to be added to ready meals. Many supermarkets have committed to expand their fresh produce sections. Frozen, canned and dried fruits are all included, as are juices.

One of those signed up is the food distributor Bidvest 3663. It's working hard to introduce healthier, more sustainable menus, but it's not always easy. "We would love to go into schools and say you need to serve X amount of fruit and veg but all we can do is support and inspire," said its national accounts marketing manager, Philippa Norton, recently.

Though the targets appear challenging, Oyeboode is also keen to inspire rather than alienate. "People shouldn't feel daunted by a big target like seven," he says. "Whatever your starting point, it is always worth eating more fruit and vegetables. In our study even those eating one to three portions had a significantly lower risk than those eating less than one."

The future's looking up for city farms

Switzerland is taking the concept of rooftop food production a step further with a new 'aquaponics' system that could revolutionise urban farming. By **Valentini Pappa**.



Closed loop. Aquaponics is the combination of aquaculture (fish) and hydroponic cultivation of plants without soil. The technology could feed whole towns, says Valentini Pappa (pictured right).

WITH SEVEN billion people to feed, human agriculture exerts a tremendous toll on the planet, from water and air pollution to energy use and habitat loss. But with every great challenge comes the possibility of great sustainable solutions. With land at a premium and population rising, could urban farming be one of them?

Rooftop farms provide a new experience by revolutionising the idea of fresh produce. When food is grown directly on the roof, just a few steps away, consumers can see, smell, and taste the difference.

What's more, rooftop farms enable businesses to monetise vacant real estate assets and reduce their environmental impact. Urban rooftop farms save energy, water and natural resources. They're also scalable: farming vegetables and fish on rooftops without fossil-fuel-based fertilisers, chemical pesticides or antibiotics can be done as a small home-based system, a large supermarket-based one – and anything in between.

By growing what is needed, near where

it's needed, food miles are also cut. It's the freshest produce money can buy, and there's no excuse not to eat in season. The question is: what's not to like about urban farming and why isn't there more of it about?

With green space in cities being hoovered up, urban farmers have had to look at the world in a different way. Specifically, they've looked up.

The concept of growing food in cities isn't new. In the postwar period the allotment offered many city residents a necessary complement to their weekly supplies. And there's a growing army of small-scale farmers today. The Swiss Family Gardener Association, for instance, has 25,000 members making use of 640 hectares of land. This might only be 0.2% of the total arable land in Switzerland, but nearly 5% of the vegetable crops are grown in that space.

But with more people comes the need for more buildings. Green space in cities is being hoovered up, with backyards shrinking or disappearing. But that has forced the world's urban gardeners and farmers to look at the

world in a different way. Specifically, they've looked up.

Rooftop farms belong to a special category of food production and cannot be compared with the conventional greenhouse plants that we find not far from city centres. Roof farms in urban areas aim to supply local markets and take advantage of the short transport distances.

Freshness and enjoyment are the two trump cards for today's growing army of urban farmers. Growing salads such as salanova (a modern type of lettuce), tomatoes with different flavours, microgreens and herbs can provide a very good basis for gourmet restaurants.

These are not competition for professional vegetable farms – they are an additional supply stream. And it's not just carrots and peas that are sprouting up on rooftops either.

Aquaponics is the combination of aquaculture (fish) and hydroponic cultivation of plants without soil. The technology works as a closed-loop system that reduces consumption of fresh water

compared with conventional monocultures; meanwhile, the nutrients excreted by the fish are passed through a biofilter and used as fertiliser.

This marriage of age-old techniques and cutting-edge technology makes the system unmistakably Swiss, and the first 260-square-metre professional pilot plant was completed just over a year ago in the Dreispitz area of Basel.

The farm can produce about 0.8 tonnes of fish and five tonnes of vegetables – small fry in output terms, but it's a pretty small roof. Replicate it and the numbers become a lot more impressive.

Basel has an estimated 2m square metres of vacant rooftop space and researchers at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences have calculated that if just 5% of that space (100,000 square metres) was used for aquaponic production, 40,000 people could be fed. This means that theoretically the city's entire population of 170,000 could be fed if just 20% of the vacant roof space was converted into aquaponic farms.

Local restaurants support the idea of more

rooftop farming systems and have been busy buying the products – some chefs even helped with harvesting. They have also given the researchers a wish list, including speciality foods that they spend a fortune importing from miles away.

Turning 20% of Basel's roof space into aquaponic farms could theoretically feed the entire city

This type of technology doesn't come cheap either, though. The production costs of a rooftop farm are eight times higher than that of a large greenhouse, not least because of existing building regulations – the fish basins need a load capacity of about one tonne per square metre – and the requirements for heating, ventilation, shading and energy. Scale helps – a rooftop of more than a thousand square metres makes a big difference.

So could UK farmers follow their Swiss counterparts up the stairs to the rooftops? Existing farmers would certainly like to learn more about the possibilities of systems using aquaponics, especially to produce

speciality crops that attract high prices from restaurants and premium catering operations.

However, more research is needed, especially into reducing energy use, nutrient use and the best use of space. I'm working very closely with the Urban Farming Company and a farmer in Cupar, Fife, to develop the systems in the UK.

There is much work to be done, but so much potential to produce good food in our cities. Could the waste heat from buildings be used to heat greenhouses, for instance? Or perhaps the carbon dioxide rich air being belched out of buildings could be fed directly to plants?

The options are almost limitless. I'm in no doubt that aquaponics can help bring food security within the next few decades. The beauty is that we'll be feeding people using land that we are already using to house them and protect them.

Valentini Pappa is a specialist agriculture-environment researcher at Scotland's Rural College

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Storm in a teacup

A complex array of packaging requirements have led to high volumes of substandard packaging entering Europe, say manufacturers. Foodservice and grocery firms therefore need to be alert to the potential health and environmental risks.

AN ALIEN INVASION is reportedly taking place at Europe's borders and it's threatening to damage the continent's packaging sector, distorting usage figures, contaminating recycling streams and, in some cases, endangering the public. Substandard packaging could be coming to a takeaway coffee near you.

"In Europe, we rightly expect our packaging to be manufactured to the highest levels of safety and quality, and companies are proud to deliver on that expectation," says Tony Waters of Solo Europe, the outgoing president of Pack2Go Europe, which represents a number of leading foodservice packaging manufacturers. "Double standards are being applied because national market surveillance organisations and customs services don't adequately check imports from outside the EU."

A survey of Pack2Go's members in November showed that 87% of respondents reported experiencing loss in market share in the past that could be directly attributed to cheaper imports – products that may not be meeting the EU's standards. Some 73% said they were currently suffering from such unfair competition. More worrying, perhaps, is that nearly 60% felt that those using the packaging – catering firms, snack food companies and the like – are not aware that the products they buy from distributors do not conform to EU requirements.

"It's time for foodservice packaging users to start asking questions about the quality of imported products and demanding serious answers from importers and distributors,"

says Jan Schürman of SwissPrimePack, Waters's successor at Pack2Go. "Recent reports out of China show that locally manufactured packaging is not even meeting Chinese rules. It's naive to think they are meeting ours when nobody ever checks."

Is the situation as bleak as Pack2Go suggests? How damaging is the influx of substandard packaging? Are foodservice companies to blame for not checking, or is there a need for enhanced border control and checks?

Legal confusion

EU legislation requires that certain materials and "articles which are intended to come into contact with food" must meet specific requirements. Regulation 1935/2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food is the framework regulation. Article 3 sets out the general principle that materials and articles must be manufactured in compliance with good practice so that under normal or foreseeable conditions of use, they do not transfer their constituents into food in a harmful way. The other key regulation is 2023/2006, which gives further detail on what good manufacturing practice means.

Each member state has adopted these within its own laws. These are not new regulations – in place nine and seven years respectively. However, there are some surprisingly large discrepancies between them.

This makes for a fiercely complicated landscape, as Richard Inns from packaging

experts the PEC Partnership explains: "The problem lies with countries whose legislation either is not clear or where it is only applied indirectly to the packaging. This latter point is a technicality, but an important one.

"In some countries you can only obtain legislative approval for a package in combination with a very specific product; not the packaging on its own for a specified product type [fatty foods for example] as in the EU.

"These two factors together can make it very difficult for an importer of packaging to determine

whether it is in line with EU or national legislation," he adds.

Inns has compiled a list of all legislation relating to food contact packaging from 67 countries. In July last year he was invited to present his findings to MPs from the all-party parliamentary group on packaging. His research clearly shows why packaging companies in the EU are getting nervous.

One table in the presentation compares food contact requirements or processes in paper-based packaging products across the world versus the UK. China, for example, has a similar legislative infrastructure to Europe, but for four main requirements – heavy metals, migration test, optical brightness and positive list – the test application refers to the "food contact layer only". In other words, the printed side of the packaging might be excluded – and that's where a large part of the contamination risk can occur.

Alarm bells

Cross-border confusion will have been present ever since companies starting



FPA chairman Neil Whittall says the quality of products and materials is paramount, with the FPA having "long questioned the validity of claims made by some suppliers".

importing packaging from outside the EU. Alarm bells have only now begun ringing because the volume of imports has increased so rapidly. Lorenzo Angelucci is MD of Seda UK, part of the Seda International Packaging Group, which produces paper cups, cartons and a plastic packaging for some of the biggest food companies in the world including Kraft, McDonald's and Nestlé.

"It's time for foodservice packaging users to start asking questions about the quality of imported products and demanding serious answers from importers and distributors."

He explains: "We hear constantly about environmental issues, packaging waste reduction, the Courtauld agreement, carbon footprints for packaging and so on. But currently, if a UK distributor wants to buy a container of cheap paper-based packaging products from China, which are made from unknown origin recycled fibres or printed with benzene, they can be on the streets of UK cities in just three weeks and nobody can check or be aware of it."

Angelucci says there has been a "progressive and significant" expansion of non-European packaging in the past five years in Europe – and the UK in particular. This comes mainly from the Far East and the US.

The products tend to be comparable in range, but they are generally cheaper and made from lower-grade material and of lower quality. "In some instances we came across post-consumer recycled fibres and strong-smelling solvent-based print."

In the past, issues such as this have been raised directly with the foodservice operator or distributor, but such is the scale of the problem that Europe's packaging companies have decided to play hardball: they want regular testing of imported packaging.

"We want the fundamental differences on what is classed as food approved in the UK and EU versus other countries to be considered by the authorities as a potential risk in terms of food contact approval of non-EU packaging," says Angelucci. "We also want a statistical percentage of non-EU imported packaging to be sent to a lab for

analysis to ensure they comply with UK legislation on an ongoing basis."

Border controls

In Germany this is already happening – there are proposed border checks for adherence to proposed protocols on mineral oil contamination. Even in China, authorities have recently banned products from 43 disposable cup producers. Angelucci believes there should be, at the very least, aligned legislation and action between the UK, Italy, France and Germany, including border checks on non-EU imports.

The Foodservice Packaging Association is lending its weight to the lobbying efforts; the issue was debated at the group's recent environment seminar. Neil Whittall is the FPA chairman: "We are pleased to see that this matter is being raised once again," he says.

"If a UK distributor wants to buy a container of cheap paper-based packaging products from China, which are made from unknown origin recycled fibres or printed with benzene, they can be on the streets of UK cities in just three weeks."

"The quality of products and materials is paramount, and we like many other organisations have long questioned the validity of claims made by some suppliers. As a trade body we will be increasing our activity in this area to make sure that we have a level playing field, but more importantly protect the consumer from more unscrupulous suppliers."

Politically, little progress has been made. The issue has been discussed with the UK Product Safety Focus Group, which is part of Trading Standards. Meanwhile, Carol Garrett, principal officer at Suffolk Trading Standards and the UK point of contact for border control of non-food products, has "noted the concerns" but cannot make any promises regarding changes.

More recently, the parliamentary under-secretary for Wales, Baroness Randerson, wrote to Angelucci. She explained that responsibility for investigation lies with

Continued on page 20

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Trading Standards and, in turn, the Food Standards Agency.

The letter reads: “Should there be a particular problem which becomes evident from intelligence sources, there are a number of possible actions open to the authorities. These include specific targeted sampling of that type of import, either on a national or European scale. However, such actions have to be both effective and proportionate, and thus there is a system of prioritisation with regards to any proposals.”

She cites the example of excessive levels of optical brightening agents that were suspected to be present in disposable paper cups from the Far East. Several months of investigations ensued, resulting in a “watching brief” rather than targeted sampling at ports.

Alarm bells have only now begun ringing because the volume of materials from overseas has increased so rapidly.

Nicky Strong, a consultant at the law firm Bond Dickinson, says there is a history of substandard imports to the EU, particularly from China. However, this more often relates to electrical goods and she is “not aware of any significant food packaging issues” recently.

Joanna Griffiths, a packaging technology manager at BRC Global Standards, is also unsure about the extent of the issue. “The specification of packaging materials within Europe may be over and above what is specified when Asian manufacturers are asked for a product to meet the same requirements,” she explains.

“Substandard packaging is the issue rather than where it comes from. And let’s be clear: non-European companies are just as legitimate as European packaging companies – they merely operate in a different geography with different legal requirements.

“The key is to ensure that packaging is properly specified whatever its use and wherever its origin, and an appropriate procedure is in place to ensure that the customer gets what the customer wants.”



Mixed up. Different rules outside Europe can confuse foodservice companies when it comes to packaging selection. Manufacturers are calling for more border checks.

Horried

It’s no secret that budget restrictions on regulatory authorities can play into the hands of those trying to bend the law to make a quick buck. But the Pack2Go alliance remains insistent that the confusion surrounding imported packaging and the corresponding legislation presents a risk to health and must be prioritised. Schürmann notes that foodservice companies using the packaging would be horrified if they found out that their customers might be at risk. Small businesses, in particular, are beholden to their packaging distributor for advice.

“We also want a statistical percentage of non-EU imported packaging to be sent to a lab for analysis to ensure they comply with UK legislation.”

“It’s all very well to keep piling regulatory demands onto packaging made in Europe but if we don’t demand the same of imports then consumers are not protected,” he says.

“It’s just too easy for third-country producers to take shortcuts and get away with it.

But this isn’t just a customs issue. Buyers must engage with their suppliers to ensure the packaging they are using meets the relevant standards. Strong encourages those who have concerns to raise them with the Food Standards Agency.

In a nod towards the wider issues in the food chain raised by the horse meat scandal, she concludes: “The complexity of the food supply chain makes it difficult to quickly identify and deal with potential and actual food fraud issues.

“Perhaps the message for food businesses is to review their relationships with suppliers to establish whether there are any issues with the packaging being supplied and to bear in mind that if something seems too good to be true, it probably is.”

Adapted from an article originally published in Recycling & Waste World magazine in May.



An Innocent Smoothie with... Vance Fairman-Smith

Spirit Pub Company’s head of supply chain and purchasing talks to Footprint about sustainability advances in the pub sector



Niki Goddard: Tell us a little about the sustainability stakes in the pub sector. Ahead or behind the sustainability agenda?

Vance Fairman – Smith: Good question! We have seen good progress with WRAP’s HaFSA but I think as a sector we are still fragmented and do not truly collaborate enough on the sustainability agenda. This will have to change as we have enormous leverage.

NG: What has driven Spirit to take such a pro-active approach to sustainability?

VF-S: Spirit was an early adopter of the requirement to address waste as an important cost category and to create a sustainable solution to reduce costs by unique recycling solutions. We have 750 managed and 450 leased pubs so the opportunity was staring us in the face.

NG: You have worked particularly hard on logistical opportunities to close loops?

VF-S: We designed a unique reverse logistics solution that has underpinned our waste recycling initiative. Over the last 3 years it has become part of everyday practice within Spirit pubs. It’s been a crazy journey but very rewarding.

NG: Are these initiatives making a measurable difference?

VF-S: The introduction of the waste recycling via Kuehne & Nagel reduced our waste costs by 30%. It created a new substantial recycled commodity value and I am very proud that we are now recycling over 16,000 tonnes of tin, oil, card, plastic and food waste per year. I know the vast majority, pre scheme launch, would have ended up in landfill. Let’s not forget the commercial aspect; we benefit significantly from the commodity values.

NG: What were the biggest challenges in the

implementation of these initiatives?

VF-S: We under-estimated the impact at pub level when we introduced the scheme. Initially we reduced general waste bins far too quickly. The main issues we faced were high levels of contamination on waste returns from pubs. We soon learnt that we needed to support pubs more with processes on how to efficiently recycle in a busy kitchen environment whilst avoiding additional costs or delay of service.

NG: Did you have internal engagement?

VF-S: Yes, actually surprisingly we had high levels of internal engagement but we didn’t really get close enough to the people who were actually recycling in the pubs. Initially we failed to really sell the benefits other than cost reduction as part of a bigger cost line. After the first year we introduced a credit scheme so pubs got a financial credit to their P&L based on what they recycled via Kuehne & Nagel. This really drove positive behaviours and now we are engaging with the teams via social media and with positive messaging within team inductions. With our partner K&N, from July, we are also introducing an area support manager’s role and a key part of this role will be visiting pubs to support the sustainability message on waste and energy.

NG: How much help did you rely on the cooperation of your suppliers and partners?

VF-S: Massively, without the ongoing support from our key partner suppliers this would not have been possible. We are still on the journey but the Spirit vision has been fully embraced.

NG: What next?

VF-S: Within 12 months our main focus is to raise awareness around energy management with the objective of equaling the impact

we have achieved on waste. We will also be focusing on how we can reduce repair and maintenance costs at our pubs. We will be analysing our current supply chain infrastructure and benchmarking product life-cycle costs, ensuring we refurbish and recycle as much as possible with disposal as the very last option. I want to ensure we start communicating to and engaging our guests more effectively to highlight the work Spirit is doing to minimise the impact to the local environment which underpins our pubs being a key part of the local community. We can’t take our eye off the ball though, so we need to continue the work commenced by WRAP on getting closer to our suppliers on how we can reduce waste impacts at pub level.

NG: Would you say that sustainability is a business principle built into Spirit’s business model and will it be an ongoing journey?

VF-S: Sustainability is a very real aspect of operations within the Spirit group. Its not merely an add-on we just report on in our annual report but is regarded as a key business initiative to drive benefits and support our ambition to be No.1 within the hospitality sector.

NG: What is your personal ambition for Spirit over the coming 5 years?

VF-S: My ambition is for Spirit to be recognised as a leader within the hospitality industry for having driven the sustainability agenda in the pub sector. I want to continue pushing boundaries and being a true innovator. Most important for me is my work to support wider industry initiatives. The thing that makes me so proud is when I hear the numerous positive stories about recycling from our publicans whether managed, leased or franchise. I want this to echo throughout the estate on all of our initiatives.

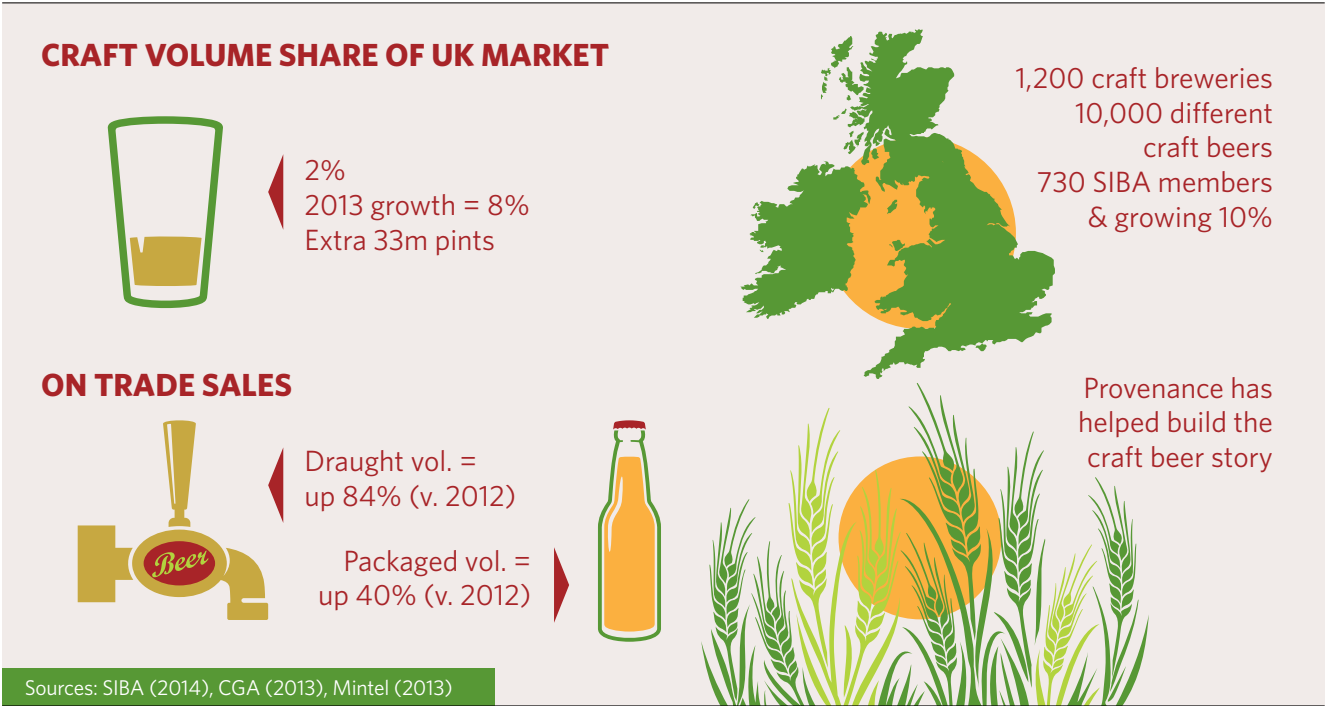
Small beers Big identity



The brewing industry is at odds over whether a strict definition of 'craft brewing' is needed as big players muscle their way into the booming sector, writes **David Burrows**.

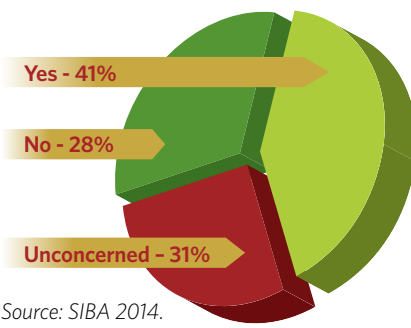
CRAFT BREWING used to be a bit like teenage sex – everyone was talking about it and many wanted to try it, but not many really knew how. Not any more. More independent breweries were created last year in the UK than at any time in the past 70 years, while sales of locally brewed beer jumped by 33m pints – volumes increased 8% in 2013 to 1.55m barrels. Much like sex, craft sells, with drinkers more willing than ever to experiment with different beers and pay more for the experience. And it isn't only the public that can't get enough of it. Keen to revive stagnating sales of their mainstream brands, the big players are snapping up small breweries at a frightening rate. But this raises the question: does this make the beer any less craft? And, if so, should the

UK follow the lead of the US and define what is meant by craft beer? These are questions the sector has been grappling with for years. In the most recent survey of members of the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA, in which members must produce less than 20m litres a year), 41% craved a definition, but 28% didn't and 31% didn't care. Graham Mercer, the distribution manager at Lerwick Brewery in Shetland, is in the no camp. "I can't see a regulation of definitions as being a good thing for the industry," he says. "I fear that an attempt to narrowly define and categorise craft beer within the industry may be self-defeating and stifle the creativity and innovation of brewers." Supporters point to the US market, where a definition has helped to create consistency



and a craft brewing sector that took 9.6% of the market according to recent figures from the Brewers Association. This was up from 7.8% the previous year. The target is 20% share by 2020. An adjustment to the definition of "craft beer" – moving the production goalposts from "under 2m barrels" a year to "under 6m" – has helped. In addition, less than 25% of the craft brewery can be owned or controlled by an alcohol industry member that is not a craft brewer. For those who want a definition here, size matters. Benevolent big brothers are seen as a curse. "If we do not look to put an industry recognised definition on craft beer then the large, monolithic brewers will simply exploit all that we have worked so hard to build," wrote the Scottish craft brand Brewdog in a recent blogpost. But they can also be a blessing: as small breweries team up with major brewers, so they vacate premises enabling new breweries to move in. Let's not forget, this is a sector where there has been safety in numbers, with sharing of best practice, techniques and equipment having played a huge part in lifting quality and sales across the sector. What's more, craft beer, in spite of its explosion, still only accounts for just 2% of the UK market according to this year's

figures from SIBA. A lack of definition might make accurate sales figures a headache, but it has allowed brewers to play on different marketing cues – provenance, quality, aroma and technique among them. It has also given bigger breweries the opportunity to steal a slice of the market. *The big boys are definitely brainstorming about how to stop the microbrewery tide riding against them. And if they can't beat them, they're likely to continue joining them.* The commercial success of craft beer was always going to fuel competitor interest. With their mainstream brand volumes stagnating or in decline, the movement is providing a lifeline for some of the brewing behemoths – especially in their home markets. **Does the industry need an agreed definition for craft beer?**



Some companies have been careful not to alienate consumers, launching joint ventures rather than equity shares in smaller breweries. One recent example is the partnership between the Tennent's lager maker, C&C Group, and the Alloa-based craft brewer Williams Bros. In an interview with the Scotsman this year, Scott Williams, the co-owner of Williams Bros, explained that "big breweries in other countries tried to understand the craft beer market by creating their own businesses within it and it never really worked because people saw through it. "I think that was one of the reasons why C&C thought they would work with someone who already has a good reputation in the craft beer market, so they can get to understand the market better and enjoy it better." But will the taste of craft beer turn sour in consumers' mouths as bigger companies begin to play in the subsector? Probably not. When asked whether they'd welcome a definition for craft beer, 46% of drinkers said yes, but it isn't a deal-breaker. Critically, they relate craft brewing to production methods and quality rather than size – 40% say they would consider trying a craft-style beer from a large brewer (Mintel research, 2013).

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"The beer drinker is the winner here," says Paul Butler, the founder of the craft brew website Bru Haroo, "as the larger breweries do the right thing and start producing quality, authentic beer again."

Second, the interest in craft beer shows no signs of drying up. According to Mintel, two-thirds of drinkers are prepared to pay more for quality beer, whilst 48% are keen to try different brands.

As fast as brewers experiment, consumers demand more variety. Pubs are devoting more and more coverage to craft beers, while in the supermarkets the ranges are expanding so quickly that craft beer is threatening to clutter the aisles and confuse customers.

The ale buyer for Tesco claims the beer market is undergoing its biggest facelift since canned lager was introduced in the 1960s. "Ten years ago we had about 30 bottled beers and some of our bigger stores would perhaps have stocked what was then considered exotic world brews, such as San Miguel," Chiara Nesbitt told the *Guardian*. "But nowadays, UK beer drinkers have become more discerning, which is why we now stock more than 300 bottles of ales and carry a whole range of specialist world beers."

Much like sex, craft sells, with drinkers more willing than ever to experiment with different beers and pay more for the experience.

But that means customers need help to navigate the fixtures. Georgie Denny is a senior research executive and part of the beer team at the qualitative research agency The Big Picture. Her team recently observed the beer fixture in some larger supermarkets and found there is little to aid navigation of the category – meaning consumers stand bemused in front of cluttered displays, often walking away empty-handed. She explains:

"Take a trip down the beer aisle in your local Tesco and you'll find a disorganised and overwhelming array of brews. Mainstream lagers sit side by side with traditional ales, and craft beers skulk among fruit ciders. The chaos is symptomatic of the rapid growth of the craft beer category."



No definition. Lerwick Brewery's Graham Mercer says a definition for craft beer would squeeze the innovation out of the sector.

In short, supermarkets need to work harder to bring some order to the fixture to aid consumer decision-making and increase sales. There are numerous themes that could be used to segment the category, she adds, such as provenance, colour, strength or technique.

Disorder, at least, is better than decline. In the UK beer category overall, volume sales are forecast to fall from 4.1 billion litres last year to less than 3.5 billion litres in 2018 (Mintel, 2013). Value is expected to rise – from £16.7 billion to £18.4 billion – but as prices increase many drinkers are hunting for "discernibly higher quality" to justify the cost, says Mintel's senior drinks expert, Chris Wisson. "Focusing on the quality of ingredients and the brewing process should help brands to convey their superior quality to drinkers."

For Mercer at Lerwick the debate about definitions all comes back to the customer. "The recent success and growth of the craft beer industry has been built on consumers looking for choice – for something beyond the definitions of traditional real ale," he explains.

"The small independent brewers have

reacted to that demand – being innovative, entrepreneurial and coming up with a vast range of recipes to excite the consumer. I fear that an attempt to narrowly define and categorise craft beer within the industry may be self-defeating and stifle the creativity and innovation of brewers. We should trust our customers to taste our beers and let them decide if they want them."

"If we don't put a definition on craft beer then the large, monolithic brewers will simply exploit what we have all worked so hard to build."

And currently they want more and more. "There is no question that the trend is accelerating," remarked Spiros Malandrakis, an analyst at Euromonitor International, recently.

"Craft brewers take chances. The flavours, packaging and branding tend to be much more forward-thinking." He added: "The big boys are definitely brainstorming about how to stop the microbrewery tide riding against them."

And if they can't beat them, they're likely to continue joining them.

Team up to beat the energy price squeeze

This year's Budget did little to help caterers struggling with rising bills but the industry can group together to get a better deal, writes **Jonathan Senior**.

THERE'S NO DOUBT that the catering and hospitality industry has felt the impact of rising energy bills more than most, but unfortunately this year's Budget will do little to help.

The chancellor's central energy announcement on March 19th was to freeze the carbon price floor, a tax on the fossil fuels used to create electricity. The tax was introduced last year in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by setting a minimum cost for producing a tonne of carbon dioxide.

The floor was set to rise to £30 per tonne of carbon dioxide after 2016, but George Osborne's announcement means it will now be frozen at the current level of £18.

This change will save you money – but not much. The Treasury estimates that it will be about £15 a year off the average domestic energy bill, and while estimates for SMEs have yet to be released, the savings are

likely to be similarly small. There's also a big question about whether the big six will pass on their savings to consumers.

Furthermore, *Footprint* readers will be especially concerned about the damage this decision will do to the UK's commitment to a greener economy. While some have objected that it would be fairer to roll the costs of promoting renewable energy into general taxation, most would agree that it's important that the UK keep to its green energy commitments.

But as the energy news website Carbon Brief said: "Scrapping the plan just a year after it was introduced sent a message to voters and the rest of the world that the government was no longer fully committed to combating climate change."

Considering the tiny projected savings, and after years of price rises, many in the restaurant and hospitality industry will rightly see the chancellor's decision as

insufficient.

The 2014 Bookatable Dining Index, which is based on industry data and recent interviews with more than 200 UK restaurants, notes the scale of the challenge that rising energy costs have placed on the hospitality and catering industry: "Despite over half (68%) of restaurants adopting measures to cut their energy usage in the last year, the vast majority (90%) say that rising energy costs have made them reassess menu prices in the last six months."

A survey of caterers recently found that energy costs are ranked higher than costs for food, drink, rent and rates or staff. John Dyson, a food adviser at the British Hospitality Association, spoke for many when he said: "Higher energy bills and rising food costs have made it much tougher for restaurant owners to grow their business or remain profitable." What's the solution?

Those in the hospitality industry are used to hearing clichés about the importance of reducing energy usage: double-glaze your windows, install energy-efficient lights, etc. And it's true that such measures will help. But usage reduction can only go so far, and such advice has been common currency for years. What people in the restaurant industry really need is price cuts now.

That's where ThisIsTheBigDeal.com steps in. We are a national campaign for cheaper energy bills. By harnessing the collective buying power of a huge number of consumers, we can negotiate a better deal on behalf of all our members than they could get on their own.

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Jonathan Senior is head of research at ThisIsTheBigDeal.com

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Tell us a (sustainable) story

Businesses are moving away from bulky reports and towards more effective ways of communicating their performance on social responsibility.

WHILE POLITICIANS debate lengthy new reports on climate change, businesses are preparing some studies of their own. According to research by BSI, the business standards company, and the independent sustainability analysts Verdantix, every large UK firm they surveyed is planning to produce a sustainability report this year, with 91% of them integrating financial and sustainability data into their annual report.

The most commonly reported sustainability data will be carbon emissions (99%), energy (98%) and social responsibility (93%). A large majority – 77% – will report on waste, water and other greenhouse emissions.

The survey of 150 executives from 20 industry sectors, including retail and consumer products, also found that although 70% of businesses identified sustainability as a key driver for growth, only 51% believe that sustainability issues will affect their firm's financial performance over the next two years.

However, those who have made the



connection between sustainability and business performance are willing to invest in internal teams to manage and deliver sustainability. Four out of five (81%) of the respondents said they have more than five staff dedicated to sustainability at a programme management level – with some of the increase likely to have come from larger reporting schemes.

91% of business will be integrating financial and sustainability data into their annual report this year

Reporting can take time, effort and money, but that can all be wasted if it's not communicated effectively. As such, businesses are moving away from the trend for bulky reports of a few hundred pages. Twitter, for example, has enabled a transition from stats to stories.

October's 2013 RepTrak CSR survey, run by the Reputation Institute, found that 73% of global consumers are willing to recommend companies that are perceived to be delivering on their social responsibility programmes. What's more, 59% would go "out of their way" to communicate something positive about companies they see as being good corporate citizens.

The flip side to this more openly conversational style of reporting is that companies can attract negative feedback – which means this isn't necessarily a low-labour route to sustainability reporting.

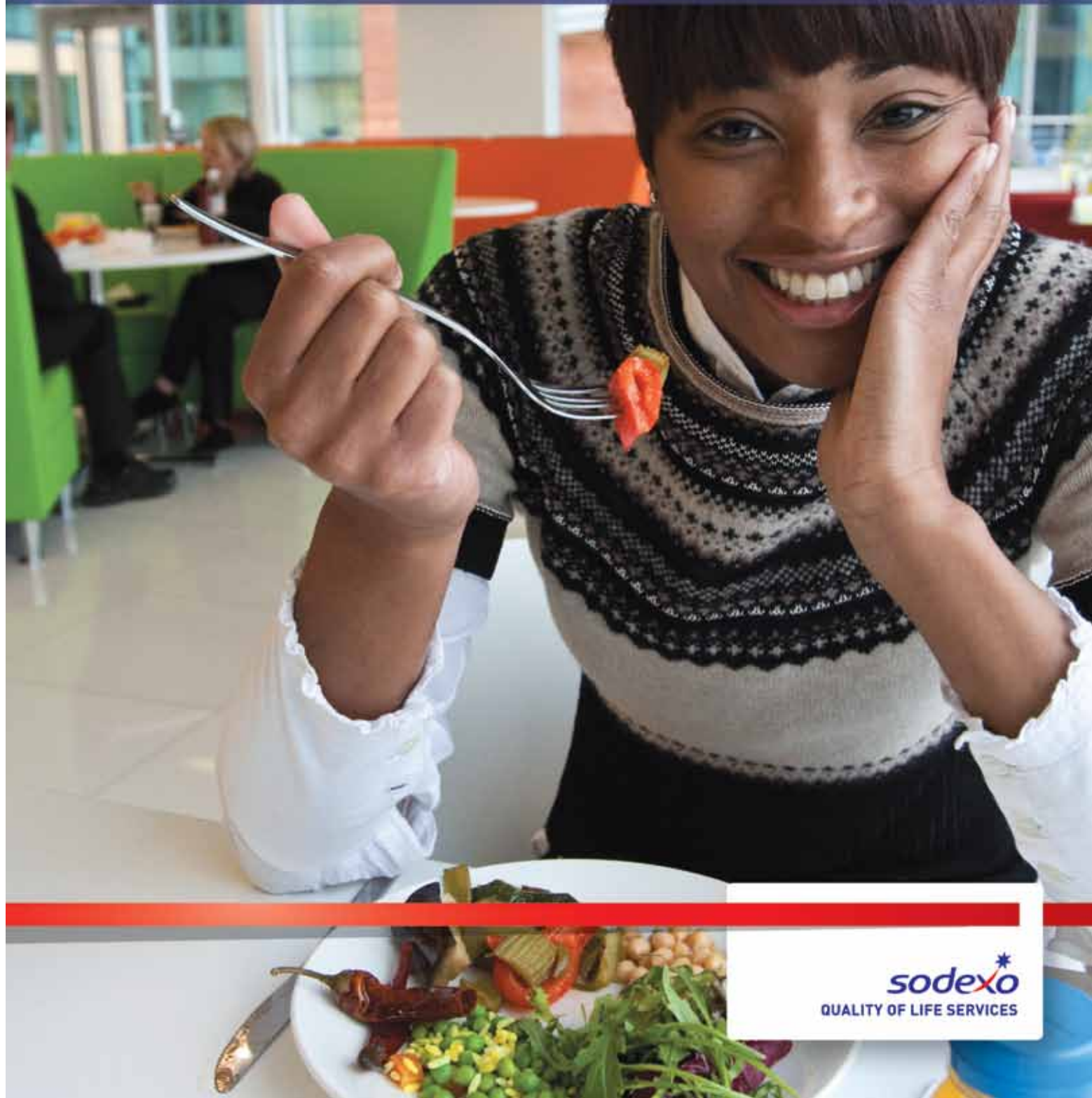
Journalism professors always say it takes twice as long to write a shorter story. And that's true. One of the beauties of electronic forms of communication is that you can have various levels of detail. So the person who wants to read it all can dig deep and get it. Those who want a summary can get that, too.

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