

CLIMATE DEAL

UN summit heavy on rhetoric but faint hopes of global accord remain

TRANSPARENCY

SRA rating for cafés must be closely scrutinised

COOKING ON GAS

How the green agenda is driving sales of catering equipment

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A change in shopping habits opens the door for smaller grocers

FOOTPRINT



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The health minister is confident that soft-touch regulation will curb obesity levels, but is time running out?

HEALTH & VITALITY SPECIAL:

SEE PAGES 5, 7, 13, 19, 19, 20, 21, 23 & 24

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COMMENT

Yes, minister, there's more to do

David Burrows
Editor



FOR THOSE of you opening this month's magazine expecting to see Jane Ellison on this page, I apologise. The health minister was due to guest edit this month but due to the Ebola issue, events took over and it didn't quite happen.

However, she has penned two articles for this special issue on health and vitality. The first, on page 13, shows the confidence the minister and the government still have in the voluntary Responsibility Deal to curb rising levels of obesity – and in turn relieve the strain on the NHS.

The minister's assessment of research by Mintel on the eating-out market (page 19) affirms her loyalty to this form of arm's-length regulation. The fact that "70% of fast-food and takeaway meals and one-third of all meals sold on the high street have calories labelled" can, quite rightly, be labelled as progress. However, with just 15 out-of-home businesses committed to reduce calories, the minister is spot on when she suggests "there is further to go". Campaigners would argue this is an understatement.

On page 22 you'll find what experts think about the current government's policies –

and the one thing they'd change. The views of the campaigner, the policy expert, the nutritionist and the caterer show how hard it is to find agreement. And the soft-touch approach favoured by the coalition will become an even harder sell if obesity levels keep rising.

The chief executive of NHS England has referred to obesity as "the new smoking", representing a "slow-motion car crash in terms of avoidable illness and rising healthcare costs".

Using seatbelts and quitting smoking required tough regulation. Being health minister requires a tough skin. "Jane Ellison needs to sharpen up very quickly indeed", is the call from one campaign group on page 21.

With 23 years of experience in retail behind her, Ellison will know as well as anyone how to engage with business and deliver results. Progress was never going to happen overnight and salt does offer a pinch of encouragement. In the past decade, as the minister observes, intake has been cut 15%. But can the NHS survive another decade if the same tactics don't work for fat and sugar?

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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.

10/10 Food Waste

Definition
It's widely recognised that improved production processes can have a positive impact on the level of food waste. Food waste as a by-product is also a valuable commodity (animal feed/organic fertiliser). Careful food production planning, ordering and proactive menu management will have the greatest effect on reducing food waste.

Measurement
We advise on best practice and connect organisations with suitably qualified waste process management organisations. In addition the Green10 business intelligence system will capture details of production and plate waste and our menu based ordering module promotes less waste through accurate and effective ordering mechanisms.



www.greentten.co.uk

Changes in allergen regulations

THE FOOD Allergy Information Regulations, to be introduced mid December 2014, will cause a major shift in how the foodservice industry approaches their communication to consumers in relation to the ingredients in the food and drink they serve.

To comply fully with the regulations businesses need to ensure staff have adequate training in allergens, understand cross contamination issues, and can be in a position to advise the ingredients in their menu offering to consumers in a clear and consistent manner.

There are several businesses offering training packages and solutions to help businesses achieve this. It is not just a change in terms of consumer's access to menu information however; it also has a significant impact on how menus are compiled and also how ingredients are procured.

To facilitate a responsible approach to the regulations the ingredients purchased in foodservice outlets need to be consistent, particularly where processed foods such as sauces, stocks, pasta etc. are used. Different brands contain different ingredients and potentially one of the 14 allergens that need to be declared.

We recognised that businesses need a firm control on their ingredient data and instant access to a wide variety of information. The Green10 databank already holds over 10 million attribute records on some of the most popular ingredients and products used within the foodservice industry.

Green10 holds information on products in several groups, one of which is allergens. The groupings have also been extended over recent months to incorporate not just key nutritional data



Kate Windebank, head of e-procurement and client services

but also micro nutrients, ingredient lists and itemised cereal specifications.

Suppliers are being encouraged to complete as much of the information as possible so we are able to make information available to operators in one hit.

The Green 10 information has already been made available within the epsys e-procurement system. This has enabled epsys users to have immediate access to the attribute and allergen data relevant to the products they purchase. The information can also be fed into recipe banks so that allergen and nutritional information on menu items can be retrieved, checked and reported on.

At Green10 we believe that the only way to effectively manage information flow to consumers in the vital area of allergens is to ensure sufficient systems and controls are in place. Using electronic data is by far the most efficient and responsible way to ensure businesses understand and can report on the ingredients being used in menu offerings. The foodservice

industry has, on average, quite a high turnover of staff and a major challenge will be ensuring that all new starters are fully trained in allergen content and understand how to access the data they need to keep customers informed. Using manual processes, accessing allergen information from packaging, using static recipe cards and keeping purchasing information from paper invoices is not going to deliver the transparency and control businesses need. Consistency is the key and can be achieved where electronic systems and data are utilised.

The Green10 databanks have also been expanded to ensure that the information required in the 2016 nutritional information regulations are covered too. In fact we are seeing the tip of the iceberg in terms of the information that foodservice outlets will need to advertise and display to their customers.

Ensuring systems are solid enough to deliver consistent, accurate information in real time is going to become more and more critical as time goes on.

Feeling the pinch

Obesity crisis could bankrupt NHS; councils ask for an extra £1bn to cope with expanding waistlines; and big names drop off renowned sustainability index.



COUNCILS HAVE gone cap in hand to the government after new figures revealed they spent £127m tackling obesity in 2013/14. According to the revenue account budget published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, this was a 21% rise on the previous year. "Councils are already doing what they can, but they need to be properly resourced to make a real difference," said the Local Government Association, which represents councils in England and Wales. The association is calling for 20% of the VAT from sales of fast food, soft drinks and confectionery to be diverted to tackling obesity. Councillor Izzi Seccombe said the extra £1 billion could "directly transform the lives of three and a half million overweight young people and would be a much better use of funds rather than just boosting the Treasury pot". Indeed, it probably would. But arguably, so would limiting the number of fast-food outlets in town centres.

Five-year plan

THE COST of the obesity "epidemic" (do you catch it during visits to infection zones like burger bars or the local Chinese take-away, one wonders) to the public purse was also a focus of Simon Stevens' speech in September. The head of the NHS,

speaking at the Public Health England conference, was trailing his new five-year plan (published last month) to tackle the UK's growing waistline. "Obesity is the new smoking," he said, "and it represents a slow-motion car crash in terms of avoidable illness and rising healthcare costs". Stevens suggested the health service would go bankrupt unless major changes were made. This could include "devo max" powers for councils to take action to cut promotions on unhealthy food (they are a form of "health pollution") and tax breaks for employers that introduced certain health and wellbeing programmes – and that includes the NHS.



Driven to temptation: Vending machines could disappear from hospitals under new plans to help curb obesity.

Three-quarters of NHS trusts offer staff help to quit smoking, but only a third offer similar support for those who are overweight. There could also be changes to the vending machines and forecourt areas.

New sustainability stars

DOW JONES has published its 15th annual sustainability index which brought bad news for Starbucks and McDonald's – both companies dropped off the list. The DJSI follows a "best-in-class" approach and includes companies that outperform their peers in a range of sustainability metrics. To be eligible, firms have to score at least 40% of the highest score within their sector. Sodexo came top in the consumer services sector, while Unilever proved the leader in food, beverage and tobacco. Asked why Starbucks and McDonald's had failed to meet the criteria this year, a press officer for the index explained that the scores are "discussed and shared only with companies". Companies also apparently take part in the assessment and disclose internal reports and documents only under the precondition that DJSI treats that information as confidential. Given that "tax strategy" was among the new criteria, one can hazard a guess for at least the coffee chain's omission.

The clock is ticking

It's just over 12 months until an international climate agreement will be thrashed out in Paris. The preambles in New York last month offered nothing new other than hope.



MUCH LIKE the other 100 or so heads of state gathered in New York in September for the UN climate summit, the Seychelles president, James Michel, had four minutes to address the plenary. "It is four minutes too many," he said. "For now is not the time for speeches, but for action. We have heard it all before: the well-crafted speeches, the promises and the exhortations ... We have also heard the scientific facts, the complaints, the pleas for help from those on the front line."

Indeed we have. But this didn't prevent the majority of presidents and premiers going over their allotted 240 seconds. Nor did it stymie the rhetoric. These were recycled statements with few new policies of note. But does this mean there's no hope of reining in emissions under a new global deal to be agreed in Paris next December?

China, for one, is beginning to budge. Given that it now produces 30% of the world's greenhouse gases, it has to. Its vice-premier, Zhang Gaoli, in what many believe was China's most committed speech on climate change to date, said he hopes to see the country's emissions peak as early as possible. He didn't offer a timeframe, however.

Alas, ambiguity is commonplace in the

run-up to major talks. In fact, it's one of the reasons why the Copenhagen summit in 2009 was such a disaster: everyone turned up with a different agenda to thrash out an umbrella agreement within a fortnight. Naturally, there wasn't one given the "you show me yours first" culture.

There is a very different approach to these negotiations than five years ago in Copenhagen

The US president, Barack Obama, provided the perfect example: announcing nothing new, he used his time to flag up the "special responsibility" that his country and China had to lead (they hold the top two rankings in terms of total emissions). The EU also attracted criticism for its rehashed "new" renewable energy funding and soon-to-be agreed but thought-to-be-too-low target to cut emissions by 40% by 2030 (campaigners want 55%).

Copenhagen was the nadir of international climate change talks, but lessons have been learned. The 100 or so statements might well have been, as WWF put it, a "laundry list of modest country actions", but the dozens of private-public sector commitments

announced on everything from palm oil and deforestation to carbon pricing were "sector-busting".

Experts are still examining these for a sense of what's new and deliverable. However, for Jason Anderson, the head of EU climate and energy at WWF, the five-page list of commitments heralds a very different approach to five years ago. "It's not the all-or-nothing we had in Copenhagen," he said.

Voluntary targets among business leaders cannot overshadow the main aim. In Paris next December a new protocol, legal instrument or "an agreed outcome with legal force" must be signed if there is any hope of keeping global warming below two degrees. New York was never intended as a formal negotiating platform, but it has generated some momentum and, according to the UN general secretary, Ban Ki-moon, "delivered".

In March, countries are expected to submit their intended nationally determined contributions towards reducing greenhouse gases. This will offer a much clearer insight in to who is committed to what. "Only then can we judge whether [this summit] was a success or not," said Jan Kowalzig, a senior policy adviser for climate change with Oxfam Germany.

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Life is like a box of chocolates...

...you never know what you are going to get. For those following the obesity debate it's like that too. Almost every week there seems to be new advice, new research, a new call to action or a new campaign. So where do we stand and where do we go from here?

Growing waistline
Our country has higher levels of obesity and overweight people than anywhere in western Europe apart from Iceland and Malta.

Europe's fattest
In the UK 67% of men, 57% of women and over a quarter of children are overweight or obese, according to the Global Burden of Disease study.

And getting fatter
The seminal Foresight report in 2007 suggested that half the population of England could be obese by 2050 if sufficient action wasn't taken.

Nudge nudge
The responsibility deal has failed to win over critics so far, but industry and politicians are pleading for time. Signatories need to rise – and fast.

Success with salt
Levels of salt intake have been falling (15% between 2003 and 2011) thanks to reformulation on the back of voluntary agreements and communication.

Doctor's orders
GPs are among those who have called for a sugar tax. They still find it hard to tackle the issue head on with patients.

Portion control
Reductions in the size of some supermarket products have been welcomed, but that's easier said than done in foodservice.

Bitter about sugar
Sugar has taken the place of fat as the demon ingredient. AB Sugar has had enough and launched a campaign to communicate "the facts".

Not too late to reformulate
Food manufacturers suggest they are reaching limits of what's possible in reformulating foods, but caterers suggest innovation can and must continue.

Tips from tobacco
Hard-hitting campaigns and tough regulation have helped to curb smoking. A tax on junk food, including sugary drinks, has been touted more than once.

It's a treat
A third of diners don't consider the healthiness of the meal when eating out. There's also a disconnect between what people know is healthy and what they actually eat.

NHS squeeze
The head of the NHS has warned that obesity could bankrupt the health service.



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Do you serve the best breakfast?

Register now for the Best Breakfast Awards!

The Best Breakfast Awards are returning for a second year, following a successful launch which saw over 250 foodservice venues enter their breakfast dishes. The awards take place as part of the celebrations in Breakfast Week 2015 (25th-31st January).

With 104.7 million breakfasts eaten outside of the home, organiser HGCA is encouraging venues across the UK to register their breakfasts to be in with a chance of winning. Eateries can enter one dish within each of the two categories, hot or cold, by simply visiting www.shakeupyourwakeup.com (Open now). The entries will be voted for by the public and winners will be announced during Breakfast Week. Public voting will run from 1st December 2014 through to 18th January 2015.

TV chef, Phil Vickery, who is supporting Breakfast Week 2015, will join HGCA to present a special award for the most unique or innovative dish.

Keith Gurney from The Tavern Company, overall winner of last year's awards, said: "We entered the Best Breakfast Awards after hearing about it on the local radio. It was a great way to get our valued customers to show their appreciation for our breakfast menu and we were delighted with the local support we had. We had some great media coverage after the event and we've now even extended our breakfast hours."

Nik Little from Lancers House, the winner of the best hotel breakfast with their Eggs Mandeville added: "Entering the competition was not only great for staff morale but meant we had the opportunity to interact further with our customers. It drove us to take our breakfast offering to an even higher level. Our advice to potential entries for 2015 is go for it!"

Karen Levy from organiser HGCA said: "The Best Breakfast Awards were a great success and highlight the growing out of the home market for breakfast. We are excited to be running the awards for a second year and look forward to receiving entries from even more venues this year!"

Breakfast Week aims to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of breakfast. In addition to the awards, foodservice companies can also get



Phil Vickery, TV chef

involved by running competitions and promotions, highlighting local suppliers, holding tasting sessions and arranging events in the local community in celebration of the week.

For more information about Breakfast Week, the Best Breakfast Awards and how to get involved, visit www.shakeupyourwakeup.com.



FOOTPRINT ANALYSIS

Sustainable leap

As more and more of the world's seafood is certified sustainable, a new scheme for UK food companies promises to offer consistent labelling.

IT WAS BACK in 2011 that ClientEarth found out that something fishy was going on with seafood labels. The environmental law firm had tested 100 different products across nine supermarkets and found that 32 of them had misleading or unverified claims on the packaging. "Sustainably sourced" and "Responsibly farmed" were among those used frequently together with the particularly perplexing "Protects the marine environment" and "dolphin-friendly" tuna caught in areas where there was no threat to dolphins but rather turtles and sharks.

Playing good-cop bad-cop, the firm's CEO, James Thornton, said at the time that he would "like all supermarkets that have misleading claims on the products to remove them ... or to prove them with evidence. If they don't, complaints can and will be made to the Office of Fair Trading arguing breaches of consumer protection laws."

Often that would be that. The EU laws are notoriously ambiguous and challenging the big food companies can be extremely expensive. Also, the likes of Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall can only do so much. So instead Thornton and his team began a process of industry engagement in an ambitious bid to find a solution. And, almost four years on, they have got one.

In September, two new voluntary codes of conduct were published by the Sustainable Seafood Coalition, a group that evolved from ClientEarth's original investigation. The labelling code is designed to give consumers certainty about what environmental claims on fish and seafood mean, while the sourcing will ensure coalition members source their fish and seafood products responsibly.

The big change, says the coalition's co-ordinator, Katie Miller, is the move to eliminate all the ambiguous claims and leave just two: sustainable and responsible. These then have to be endorsed by an independent third party. The likes of Morrisons, Tesco, Young's Seafood and M&J Seafood have all signed up to both codes.

For foodservice businesses, the sourcing code is likely to be the more relevant (members can't actually sign up to the labelling code without having also committed to the sourcing one). It isn't a certification standard, however, or another label. In fact, there will be no label. "This is about improving stocks," says Miller.

Of course, to audit sourcing procedures does require staff time and it's no surprise that the bigger businesses are the initial signatories. Still, that's no mean feat. Thornton explains: "When we launched the Sustainable Seafood Coalition three years ago, some thought getting so many businesses to agree to codes like this was impossible. The members deserve a lot of credit for showing it can be done."

Indeed, by this time next year there should be far fewer dodgy claims on seafood packs and, perhaps, a few more fish in the sea.

Details of the new codes can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/o7t26yl>

More MSC fish

THE MARINE Conservation Society (MCS) and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC – not to be confused – have both published updates recently offering good news and bad.

Although 29% of the world's oceans are overfished, 10% of all wild-caught seafood now comes from fisheries certified by the MSC. The number of MSC-labelled products has doubled in the past five years – it's now worth \$4.8bn (£3bn). Indeed, recent studies in the *Journal of Agricultural Economics* showed that the certification can draw a price premium.

Meanwhile, the MCS has noted "continuing problems" for wild-caught Atlantic salmon, for instance, while cod from both the east and west Baltic have a "cautionary" rating in the sustainable seafood guide. North Sea cod



More certified fish. The MSC says it now certifies fisheries accounting for 10% of all wild-caught seafood.

remains a "fish to avoid" as do some whiting – which are often seen as a replacement for cod and plaice – depending on the method of production and location.

There is better news for herring from the western Baltic, which has moved away from the "avoid" end of the spectrum, but should be eaten sparingly. North-east Arctic haddock and mackerel from the EU and Norway are all now on the "fish to eat" list.

What does sustainable packaging mean to innocent drinks?

PACKAGING IS essential for our juices and smoothies at innocent. Not only does it transport our drinks to wherever they're headed whilst keeping them at their very best, but it also communicates our values and important information to all our customers. As a brand committed to leaving things a bit better than we find them, this means we're on a long and never ending journey to find ways to continuously improve the sustainability of our packaging portfolio.

It all starts with using only what is needed. We are continuously working to lightweight our packaging. Amongst other successes, our 900ml juice carafes went on a diet last year and managed to decrease their weight by 10%, saving over 1000 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

We also think about what material we use. All of our cartons are FSC® (Forest Stewardship Council®) certified which means that all the fibers used to make our paper cartons comes from sustainably managed forests. We think this is a simple and effective way for us to play a part in protecting the world's forests.

Our journey with plastic has been a little less smooth. About a decade ago we introduced 25% recycled plastic into our bottles and then by 2007 we had managed to make all of our plastic bottles from 100% recycled plastic. Unfortunately due to quality issues with the recycled plastic at that time, we had to scale the proportion of recycled plastic right back to 35%, but we now have between 35-50% recycled plastic in all of our bottles. Interestingly WRAP, a UK organisation helping people recycle more

and waste less, suggests that all drinks manufacturers should aim to use 35% recycled plastic in their bottles in order to maintain the quality of recycled plastics. However, since only a small percentage of companies are supplying packaging with even 25% recycled plastic, innocent has decided to blend more than the recommended amount of recycled material for the time being.

We've just finished a comprehensive review to understand the best ways to continue to improve the sustainability of our packaging portfolio in the future. Unsurprisingly, our research reemphasised that the most important role of packaging is that it protects the product we're transporting – there's no point in improving the sustainability of packaging itself if it results in product spoilage and waste. In fact, in the food and beverage sector, inadequate protection in transportation and storage has been shown to be one of the most prominent causes of food loss and waste, and we aren't interested in simply burden-shifting environmental issues from one area to another.

A large part of our work focused on whether we can start using the Circular Economy concept – the idea of moving away from linear "take-make-waste" business models towards production methods which involve utilising waste as a resource in a cyclical process – to inform our future packaging strategy. This research showed that infrastructure and technology is currently limiting the ability of companies to implement more circular models – in the UK alone there are



currently over 433 different authorities each with varying recycling schemes and limited logistics networks available for packaging reuse. Shifting towards a circular economy model for packaging would require significantly more collaboration between the packaging producers, brands, retailers, re-processors and local councils. To try and encourage a move in this direction, innocent is part of industry forums such as WRAP and we encourage our strategic packaging partners to be more proactively involved in the development of new sustainable packaging alternatives.

Whilst we try to work on some of the wider systemic issues, the good news from our review is that we're still focussing on the right areas to improve the sustainability of our packaging. We'll therefore continue to work with our current approach:

- 1. Use less:**
using as little material as we can
 - 2. Don't use up new stuff:**
using recycled or renewable materials wherever possible
 - 3. Close the loop:**
packaging materials and formats which are simple and easy to recycle
 - 4. Lower its impact:**
deliberately avoiding high carbon materials
- Still, we're always on the look-out for new and innovative packaging ideas like flexible films or plastic made from waste plant material, and thinking ahead to what packaging might look like in 5, 10 or 20 years. We're not fortune tellers, but we're working on it!

My viewpoint

A new sustainability rating scheme for cafés could work, says **Wolfgang Weinmann**, but it needs to be scrutinised.



“THE UK LOVES coffee. By the end of 2013 there were 16,501 coffee shops – an annual increase of 6.2% – and by 2018 we could hit 20,500. Alongside increasing consumption levels and expectations of better quality, there has also been a rise in awareness of social and environmental issues.

Nowadays we can't escape the plethora of sustainability labels associated with coffee. However, all of them focus on the product side. To complicate matters, cafés do not just serve black coffee: more often than not other ingredients are added to coffee and other products. These might have completely different sustainability labels attached.

This is all progress, of course. But let's face it: how do we combine all these different

labels to offer a clear sense of the overall sustainability of the product? I'd strongly argue that product sustainability labels can't do justice to what should be expected from a café in terms of its overall sustainability credentials.

The initiative just launched by the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) and Costa, involving a rating scheme that judges a café's entire operations in terms of social and environmental performance, is a step in the right direction. We should care about a café's waste and energy footprint, employee wellbeing and local community engagement on top of the provenance of the coffee itself.

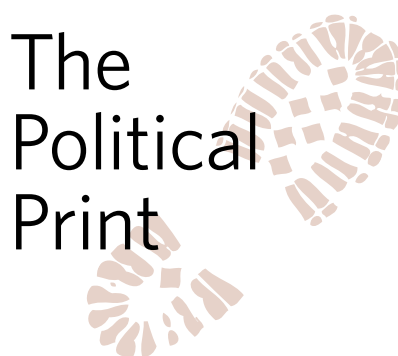
There are two crucial things that will see it succeed or fail. First, there needs to be absolute transparency about the rating

scheme and how the sustainability key performance indicators were chosen and will be rated, and who the judges are. Will there be any third-party accreditation of the scheme to ensure it meets minimal existing standards? This is vital to ensure full credibility and avoid any sense of greenwash.

Second, the scheme should be opened up to public engagement and scrutiny. Everyone could post their ratings alongside the SRA's. So you ask the café staff questions about the sustainability issues you care most about and then give your favourite coffee shop the thumbs up – not only for the quality of coffee and service provided but also their sustainability credentials.”

Wolfgang Weinmann is an independent sustainability consultant

The Political Print



IT'S ALWAYS easier to promise when you're in opposition: just ask Nick Clegg, or for that matter David Cameron. The latter used his four minutes at the UN climate summit in New York in September to assert that he had kept the promise to run the greenest government ever.

A cynic might ask how so, given his patience with Owen Paterson as environment secretary, the U-turns on green levies, the

results of the environmental audit committee's recent scorecard showing less than satisfactory progress in all 10 environmental areas assessed and his reluctance to even speak on the topic of the environment for the first four years of his tenure.

Some NGOs have been cooing on the back of Miliband's warm words, much like they were four years ago when Cameron was the green champion elect

How things have changed from those heady days of husky-hugging in 2010. Clegg, at last year's Liberal Democrat party conference, said he had had to fight "tooth and nail" with his coalition partners to retain a trickle of the promised green policies.

So should we believe Ed Miliband – the man striving to take the keys to Number 10, and quite possibly in another coalition – when he told his party's conference in September that he will "take all the carbon

out of our electricity by 2030" and create a million new green jobs?

"The environment isn't that fashionable any more in politics, as you may have noticed with David Cameron. But it matters," Miliband said. "And there is no more important issue for me, when I think about my children's generation and what I can do in politics, than tackling global climate change." China, India and the US might also have a say on that front (page 6).

Yet such grand policy ambitions – which always emerge as the manifestos are built and a general election approaches – can blind even the most green-leaning of NGOs. Some have been cooing on the back of Miliband's warm words, much like they were four years ago when Cameron was, in opposition, the green champion elect. The fact that the environment remains a credible vote-winner and not "the green crap" is at least reason for optimism.

Food for thought

The Health and Vitality Awards season is once again underway, making it the perfect time for the foodservice industry to consider what more can be done to help promote and encourage healthy eating.

Susan Gregory, head of food at Nestlé Professional®, reveals how the food industry can play a major role in supporting school caterers to foster an enjoyment of nutritious food among children...

“As the new school year began, much media coverage was devoted to the government’s new Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme, entitling all children at state schools between the ages of four and seven years’ old to a free hot lunch every day, regardless of parental income.

Whilst many caterers felt the pressure to deliver these extra meals without compromising on quality or nutrition, it is also a great step forward and there is undoubtedly a real opportunity for the food industry to help to encourage healthy eating habits in children.

Rising to the challenge

Fruit and veg! Not always children’s favourites, but as the new School Food Standards require that daily menus include one or more portions of vegetables or salad as an accompaniment and one or more portions of fruit, the need to ensure children are eating healthily has never been stronger.

This is why we’ve developed Maggi® Crunchy Bake crumb coating specifically with education caterers and local authorities in mind. In the past, ‘disguising’ less popular ingredients with a fried breadcrumb coating has been a common fall-back to encourage children to enjoy eating them, but frying compromises the nutritional content of a meal.

Maggi® Crunchy Bake is already seasoned, requires no oil to cook and



Susan Gregory, head of food at Nestlé Professional®

oven bakes for an extra tasty crunch, so caterers can recreate children’s favourites without the need for deep frying. It’s an easy to use, cost effective product that can be used in a variety of ways to make great tasting meals – from coating meat and fish to a crunchy topping for pasta bakes and roasted vegetables. On top of this, it also meets the government’s 2012 Responsibility Deal salt targets, making it perfect for use in schools, and fits into the 75% ‘made from scratch’ sector within the ‘Food for Life Catering Mark’.

Foundations for the future

The benefits of a healthy, nutritious diet

are of course well known and developing positive eating habits at this age stands to help children live longer and healthier lives. Barely a week goes by without a news report on the deteriorating health of the nation and this new scheme presents a major opportunity for school caterers – and the food industry that supports them – to help turn the tide by encouraging a new generation to enjoy healthier lifestyles.

Simple, cost effective innovations like Maggi® Crunchy Bake can save caterers time and money, allowing them to focus on making their meals as appealing as possible to their young diners.”

Minister's viewpoint

“IN THE PAST year, barely a week has gone by without lively public debate over the potential impact that salt, fat, and in particular sugar can have on our bodies. As public health minister, I welcome the fact that many businesses are responding to the challenges we face and that constructive partnerships are being forged between public health and industry.

There are no silver bullets to these challenges, but having spent 23 years in retail before becoming an MP, I know how important it is for the food and drink industry to step up to the challenge and respond to the demand from their customers for clearer information on products and menus, as well as greater choice to help them lead healthier lives.

Through the Responsibility Deal we have seen good progress in reducing salt, sugar, calories, and providing clearer labelling.

Voluntary action has produced real results. But we must maintain the momentum and ensure that all businesses, large and small, are playing a role in helping consumers. I am keen that those in the industry share their views on how the partnership could work better.

We are building from a good base. Thanks to your pledges, leading names in the industry now clearly show the number of calories in their products. We have seen big supermarkets, pubs, caterers and manufacturers of household-name brands taking action to help people eat and drink fewer calories. We have seen companies innovating by reformulating their products to make them healthier, without compromising on taste.

The UK is among the world leaders in reducing salt. More than 70% of the retail market and 65% of big high-street



restaurants and contract caterers have committed to cutting levels, and we have seen average daily salt intake cut by 15% over the last decade.

That achievement on salt is a reminder of what we are all working for – fewer of my constituents and your customers and employees will have a stroke as a result. I look forward to seeing the next steps that industry takes, working together with us to build on these achievements and help people live healthier lives.”

Jane Ellison is parliamentary undersecretary of state at the Department of Health



The little interview

Tom Pickerell, technical director of Seafish, explains how a new online tool will give companies peace of mind when it comes to seafood procurement.

Q: What is the Risk Assessment for Sourcing Seafood platform?

A: RASS is an online tool that allows commercial buyers of seafood to determine the risk of purchasing seafood from a particular wild-caught fishery in the UK and internationally. It provides risk assessments separately for four fishery components: stock status, management, bycatch and habitat.

Q: Will it advise on what to buy and what not to buy?

A: RASS doesn’t combine risk scores, make recommendations or say that a fishery is

good or bad; there is enough transparency in the online tool for buyers to make up their own mind. The tool also aims to incentivise responsible fishing by reducing the risk score of fisheries that are raising standards to reduce their environmental impact.

Q: Who has helped you develop it?

A: Seafish developed the tool internally. Our methodology was reviewed by external experts whose feedback was incorporated.

Q: Why has it been done?

A: There was a need for a tool that would provide the seafood industry with comprehensive and up-to-date information

on the environmental impacts of different fisheries. It is anticipated that the tool will be used by seafood buyers to manage risks to their reputation.

Q: How does it differ from the MCS fish guides that some small foodservice firms use?

A: The primary difference is that RASS doesn’t provide recommendations. The onus is on the buyer to make up their own mind based on their own tolerance to risk associated with each factor and the evidence provided.

Q: You say that the tool allows food buyers to take into account their own corporate philosophies. Can you elaborate on this?

A: A more risk-averse company may wish to only source very low-risk fisheries while another may have a higher tolerance to risk. We provide the evidence they need to justify their purchases, whether low-risk or higher, to their customers.

Have you used the RASS tool? How did you find it? Share your views on Twitter with @footprintmedia and @seafishUK.

City living under threat

THE SIGHT recently of athletes running the Beijing marathon wearing gasmasks in an attempt to protect themselves from hazardous smog is a startling reminder of the effects of carbon emissions on cities.

China's high air pollution levels, caused by the burning of coal, are making a major contribution to rising carbon emissions that the world's cities need to curb to prevent climate change. This is a scene that sustainability experts gathered at the latest Footprint Forum want to avoid being the future of city living.

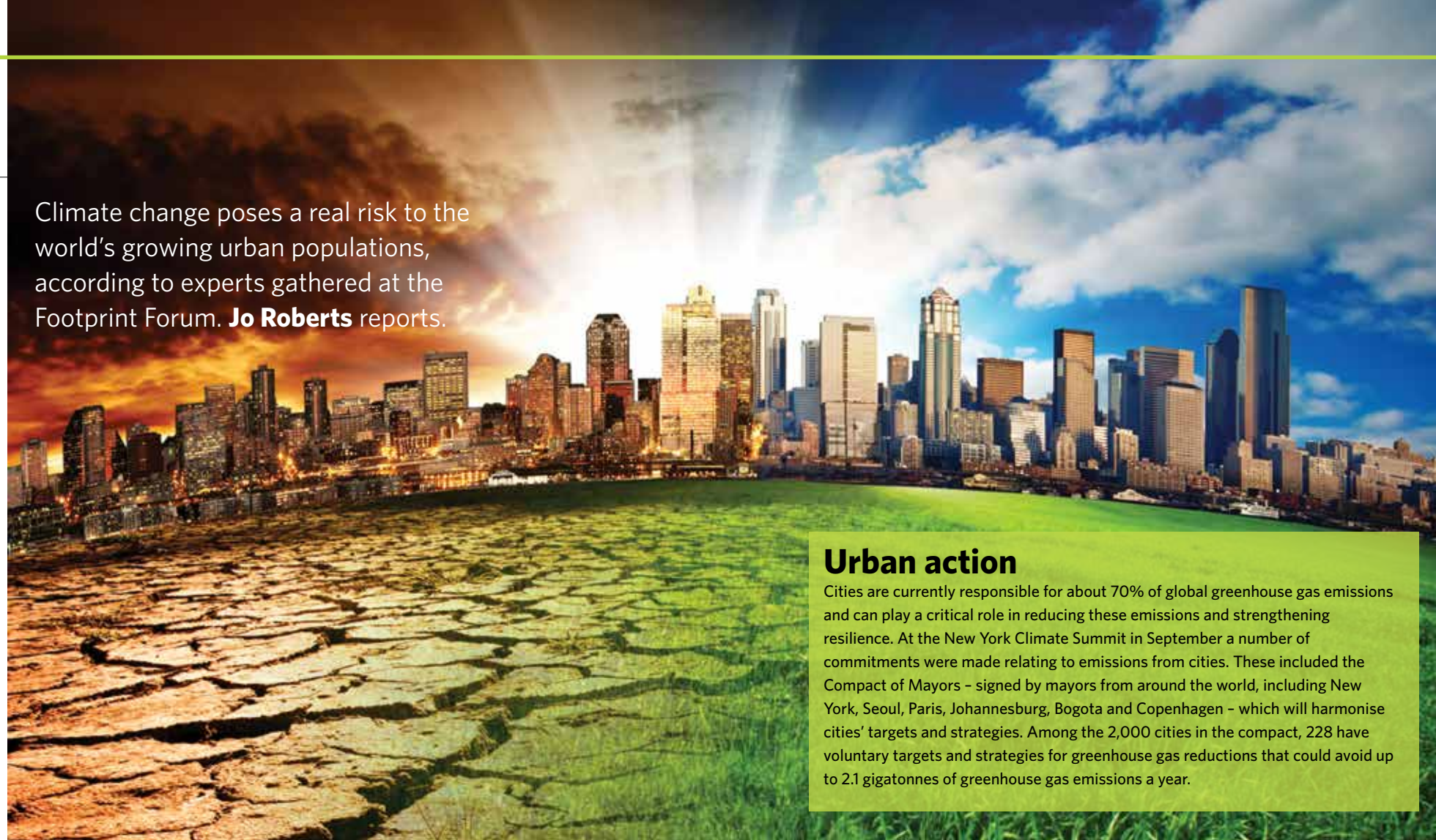
However, speakers at Footprint Forum: Future Cities – A Sustainable Future, held at London's Guildhall in association with the City of London Corporation, shared some startling statistics that could put the future of city living in jeopardy.

In 2050, the majority of the world's population – estimated to reach 9 billion by then – will live in cities. With 1.5m people being added to the population of cities every year, governments and businesses are going to need to change the way cities are planned, built and lived in to ensure that they are sustainable.

The statistics, shared by Adrian Gault, speaking as the acting chief executive of the Committee on Climate Change, were uncomfortable to listen to. If the world doesn't reduce its carbon emissions, the temperature will rise by an estimated four to five degrees, making parts of the world uninhabitable. In the UK, extreme weather events such as flooding and heatwaves are going to become the norm.

In order to achieve the committee's target

Climate change poses a real risk to the world's growing urban populations, according to experts gathered at the Footprint Forum. **Jo Roberts** reports.



Urban action

Cities are currently responsible for about 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions and can play a critical role in reducing these emissions and strengthening resilience. At the New York Climate Summit in September a number of commitments were made relating to emissions from cities. These included the Compact of Mayors – signed by mayors from around the world, including New York, Seoul, Paris, Johannesburg, Bogota and Copenhagen – which will harmonise cities' targets and strategies. Among the 2,000 cities in the compact, 228 have voluntary targets and strategies for greenhouse gas reductions that could avoid up to 2.1 gigatonnes of greenhouse gas emissions a year.

questions were asked during the discussion panel regarding how much policymakers really know or care about climate change. Can politicians think beyond the five-year general election cycle to tackle carbon emissions?

Owen Paterson, the former environment secretary, recently called for the UK's Climate Change Act to be scrapped. The prime minister has also done little to dispel the reports that he wants to "cut the green crap", while the EU was last month criticised for its commitment to cut emissions by at least 40% by 2030. Environmental NGOs described it as far too unambitious.

Perhaps the icy reception of politicians, economists and environmentalists to Paterson's proposal demonstrates that there is an understanding at the very top levels of the action that needs to be taken to tackle global warming. The key to tackling climate change is co-ordinated action by global leaders in conjunction with joined-up thinking across sectors and supply chains.

There has certainly been a move in the right direction with China's pledge to take action against climate change, announced at the UN Climate Change Summit in New York in September (see page 6). In March, countries are expected to submit their intended nationally determined contributions towards reducing greenhouse gases. "Only then can we judge whether [New York] was a success or not," said a senior policy adviser on climate change for Oxfam recently.

China's commitment comes too late for this year's Beijing marathon runners. There needs to be a change of pace at a national, European and global level to have any chance of a binding agreement in Paris next year to reduce emissions substantially.

And action needs to be taken quickly in order to fundamentally change the world's infrastructure so that cities to operate sustainably, for the future health and prosperity of the growing number of city dwellers around the world.

FOOTPRINT
FORUM



of a temperature rise within two degrees (anything above that and climate change reaches dangerous levels) emissions will need to fall dramatically. Energy-related emissions will have to fall by 90-95% to meet this temperature target, said Gault, and the energy system will need to be de-carbonised by 2050.

But there was a ray of light among the onslaught of alarming statistics. The Climate Change Act 2008 makes it the government's duty to reduce carbon levels below the 1990 baseline by 2050. This, said the chair of the forum, the politician, writer and environmentalist Stanley Johnson, is something to be proud of and shows an unprecedented commitment at government level to address climate change.

However, the UK will have to make progress much faster in order to meet targets, said Gault. The way transport and buildings are built and run will have to change completely.

Greg Lowe, the executive director of sustainability, science and policy practice at insurance broker Willis, shared some examples of innovative sustainable city thinking, such as the construction of an earthquake-resistant highway built in Tokyo. Smart building such as this is going to have to become the norm rather than the exception in order for cities to survive under changing weather conditions.

But individual smart thinking is not going to be enough. Tough action will need to be taken at government level. However,

Who said that?

"At the manufacturing level, what we've discovered is, we have the same [food security] issues. In order for our manufacturing to work, we have to build resilience in there too. Of the 17 manufacturing sites in the UK, we've come up with over 200 action points that we have to address."

Inder Poonaji, Nestlé head of sustainability

"Cities are growing at a rapid rate and becoming an inescapable part of our society. If you look globally, 1.5m people are added to cities every single year. Shouldn't we be finding ways of making people's lives in the countryside worthwhile and valuable, so that they would stay there?"

Tom Beagent, PWC sustainability and climate change team director

"The fundamental problem within the food industry is the concern with regards to food security. I'm normally an optimistic guy, but I'm finding it hard to be optimistic about this. The growing population is putting a huge strain on food security. We've not increased wheat yield in this country for the best part of a decade."

David Clarke, Assured Food Standards chief executive

"We need to build our cities much more intelligently than we're doing today. This starts with building in better places. Some of this is about building smarter."

Greg Lowe, Willis executive director of sustainability, science and policy practice

"My own organisation has an annual energy bill of £15.8m. We brought in a firm of energy analysts to look at where prices were going. By 2020, they forecast that we are going to be looking at a 35% increase in our energy bills if we continue with the same level of use. That's a lot of money so in terms of cutting emissions, we are talking about cutting the amount of energy we use and therefore cutting the amount of money that we spend. You can separate out the moral case from the economic case and the economic case shines out. It's the sensible thing to do."

Simon Mills, City of London Corporation head of sustainability

From the horse's mouth

The long-awaited review into the horse-meat scandal has made a series of recommendations that foodservice businesses ignore at their peril.



THE HORSE-MEAT scandal may be nearly two years old but the fallout from the affair continues. In September the long-awaited Elliott review into the “integrity and assurance of food supply chains” was published. In it, Professor Chris Elliott of Queen’s University Belfast set out a strategy for a national food crime prevention framework that requires both government and industry to put in place measures to prevent a repeat of Horsegate.

But will anything change? The most eye-catching recommendation – not least for what it says about the vulnerability of the food system to organised crime – is for the creation of a national food crime unit that would be charged with identifying and policing food crime in the UK. Despite government scepticism about the presence of organised crime in the food chain, the recommendation was immediately accepted and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has already begun the task of assembling the unit. But scrutiny of whether the unit meets the detailed

model set out in Elliott’s report is needed. At its recent board meeting the FSA revealed that between the start of the horse-meat scandal and the end of the 2015/16 financial year its budget will have been chopped by £22m. With a food crime unit estimated to cost £2m-£4m to set up it raises the question: where will the FSA redistribute funds from its existing budget to pay for the unit?

The concern must be that without investment in skilled investigators the new food crime unit will fail to justify its existence and be quietly canned at the first available opportunity

The FSA says it has already filled 40 posts by reallocating current employees but it remains to be seen whether it is prepared to buy in the investigative and intelligence capabilities that Elliott says will be key to the success of the unit. The concern must be that without these skills the unit will not identify levels of crime that would justify its long-term existence and will be quietly canned at the first opportunity. Elliott directs a number of

recommendations to the food industry in areas such as auditing, testing and information gathering, but it is his commentary on the way in which food is purchased that should be essential reading for any business operating in the sector. In a hard-hitting section entitled “Procurement Policies” he states that the culture of adversarial procurement has not changed since he published his interim report in December and in some cases has got worse. He refers to the re-emergence of a price war between the big retailers and notes that the food industry needs to realise the extent of its exposure should another horse-meat scandal occur, both in terms of the loss of revenue and the potential to endanger the lives of consumers.

He also suggests that businesses shown to have profited from criminal activity and which have failed to carry out due diligence on their supply chain would be culpable under the Proceeds of Crime Act. No businesses were prosecuted after the horse-meat scandal but with Elliott’s warning inked in black and white the authorities are unlikely to be so charitable in the case of another widespread fraud.

This rebuke may have been addressed primarily at retailers but foodservice operators should not treat it lightly. With cost still a key driver for many operators and their clients, businesses would do well to heed Elliott’s warning about the reputational risk to those exposed as selling fraudulent food. Consumers may have largely forgiven businesses caught up in the horse-meat scandal but they surely will not be so benevolent a second time around.

The hope from the Elliott review is that the horse-meat scandal, on reflection, will be considered as a turning point in the fight against fraud. The scandal brought to the surface a murky underbelly to the industry that has long been known about but largely ignored.

As it transpired the adulteration of beef with horse did not pose a risk to public health, but this was more down to luck than judgment. If Elliott’s recommendations go unheeded and another such scandal erupts the industry will have only itself to blame.

Green shoots in the tech sector

Sales of catering equipment increased again in 2013 and a new focus on energy efficiency and waste is a major reason why, says **Andrew Capstick**.

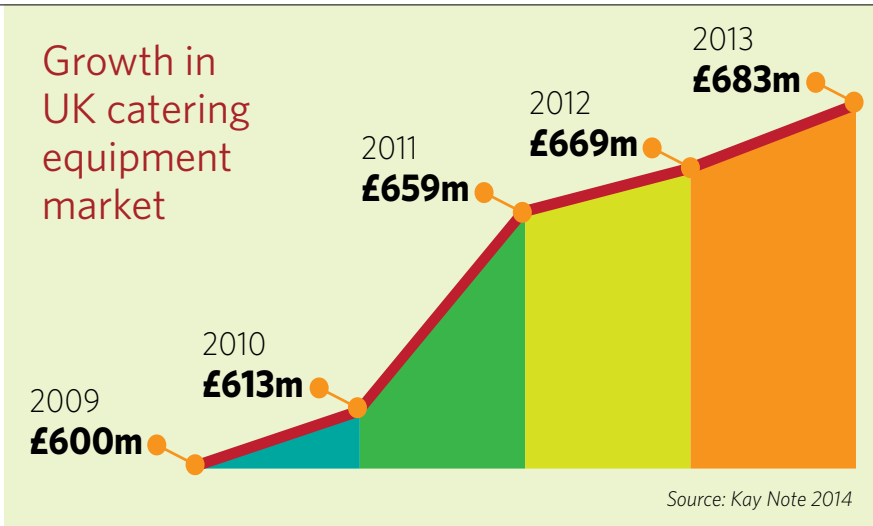
DEMAND FOR equipment across the hospitality and foodservice sectors has been much improved recently, with total manufacturers’ sales rising every year from 2010. Last year sales were up 2.1% to £683m, following a 1.5% rise in 2012.

Some of this is down to a recovery from the severely depressed levels during the recession. Prices have also increased on the back of increases in material costs and inflationary pressures.

The sector is evolving too: new fast-food concepts are emerging all the time, coffee-shop food sales are booming and so are sales of street food. But there’s also been renewed focus on energy efficiency and waste and this is now a major trend.

Tax breaks, fuel savings, minimum standards and the phasing out of “harmful” technologies have all played a part. Take refrigeration equipment. According to Key Note’s recent Catering Equipment Market Report this has been the “stand-out sector” over the past five years, with sales rising by just over a fifth between 2009 and 2013.

This performance has been fuelled by demand for greater energy efficiency in



new equipment. And this shows no signs of letting up, not least because of increasing government scrutiny of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from this type of equipment.

Measures to tackle the environmental performance of commercial refrigeration were announced last summer at the annual Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) Refrigeration Summit, with the launch of a taskforce designed to accelerate the rollout of “natural” refrigeration systems.

At the summit, the CGF – a collective of about 400 businesses, including a number of the big supermarkets and food and drink manufacturers – signed a resolution committing themselves to start phasing out hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerants from 2015 in favour of natural refrigeration technologies that use gases such as ammonia or carbon dioxide which have been shown to have significantly less impact and are often more efficient.

Such systems are costly to deploy and many in the industry have raised concerns about their effectiveness in particularly hot climates. Nevertheless, the supermarkets have led the way in natural refrigeration deployment over the past few years as they seek to reduce energy costs and improve their corporate social responsibility policies. The result? The cost of the systems is in decline.

From 2015 the CGF’s efforts in phasing out HFC refrigerants will begin in earnest. As this progresses, equipment and deployment costs of natural refrigeration systems are likely to tumble further. This trend could prompt

small and medium-sized businesses – a sector traditionally slow in adopting green technologies due to budget limitations – to look towards the technology, particularly if the energy savings are significant.

This expansion of sustainable product lines will happen in other areas too, with “smarter” and more efficient equipment (for example smart cookers that provide more real-time feedback and functions to streamline the cooking process) expected to be the main drivers.

There are significant opportunities for the development and marketing of more energy-efficient, water-efficient or space-saving equipment. Uptake has, until recently, been sluggish thanks to the downturn. A report by the energy-efficient refrigeration supplier Gram this year indicated that 55% of foodservice firms said the main barrier to uptake of green catering equipment was cost; this was followed by confusion (43%) and availability (30%).

As more and more equipment is released, price competition will accelerate and the sector will become more comfortable with the new tech. Alongside the expected ongoing economic recovery this will ensure



strong annual growth in the green equipment segment in the coming years. **Andrew Capstick is an analyst at Key Note**

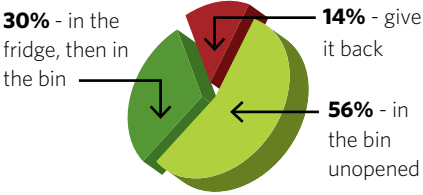
Salad dodgers

86% of takeaway salads chucked in the bin; a revolution in use-by dates and another in booking services that could both dramatically cut waste.



ALMOST EVERY bagged salad offered by takeaway outlets is thrown straight in the bin. According to the waste management company BusinessWaste.co.uk, 99% of the limp lettuce leaves given to customers as they collect curries, kebabs and a variety of other street food are never eaten. "We tried to find out who eats these salads, and we found literally nobody prepared to confess that they did," said the company's spokesman Mark Hall. Why? Hygiene and quality come into it (perhaps slightly ironic for those frequenting "streetmeat" vans at 2am). But the most popular reason is: "Who wants a salad at closing time? Nobody, that's who." The solution? Don't offer salads.

Where salad ends up



To zero waste

THE FIRST zero-waste restaurant in England will open this month in Brighton. Run by the chef Douglas McMaster, Silo will produce

no waste and use no food that requires packaging. Milk will come in reusable esky coolers, vinegar and oil in jerry cans and dry goods in jam jars, according to local newspaper the *Argus*.

Show up the no-shows

IN THE UK up to a fifth of diners never turn up to the restaurant they have booked. This can be a minor irritant or a major problem depending on the size of the business and the type of fare. After all, an idea of who is coming and when allows owners to assess everything from staffing requirements to food procurement. So some high-end restaurants in the US have started to hit back at the no-shows. Next in Chicago, Trois Mec in Los Angeles and Coi in San Francisco now have a ticketing system whereby diners pay for a seat upfront and the cost is subtracted from their bill if they turn up. "People pay for tickets for entertainment," Trois Mec's director of marketing, Krissy Lefebvre, told the *Los Angeles Times*. "This just happens to be entertainment in the form of dinner." Others see it as "irritating 95% of people because 5% aren't showing up". Could it also cut waste though?

Bioreactive bumps

FOOD LABELS have attracted their fair share of attention, not least the "best-before" and "use-by" confusion that is thought to fuel food waste. Indeed, supermarket chiefs interviewed in the *Times* this summer admitted to ignoring the dates on the food in their kitchen cupboards. "A sell-by date for lots of cheese is ridiculous – they get better with age," said Dalton Philips, the CEO of Morrisons. Some countries in Europe are trying to push through legislation to axe best-before, starting with long-life products such as pasta, rice and coffee. However, a new label could change all that. The Bump Mark, designed by a 23-year-old graduate of Brunel University, features a bioreactive "bump" filled with gelatine. The gelatine starts solid, so bumps under the label can't be felt, but as it decays the bumps are revealed. Its inventor, Solveiga Pakstaite, who has won the James Dyson award for her efforts, explains: "The label simply copies what the food in the package is doing, so the expiry information is going to be far more accurate than a printed date." Of the 7m tonnes of food jettisoned by UK households, 4.2m could have been eaten.

A clued-up eater is a healthy eater

Public health minister **Jane Ellison** says research showing that diners rarely think about the healthiness of their food when eating out highlights the importance of clear information.

IN THE SUMMER Mintel produced its Eating Out Review. This showed that a third of the public ordered a takeaway once a week or more in the past three months, and 31% are in a restaurant at least once a week over the same period. Despite this regularity of eating out, the researchers discovered that 37% of diners say they rarely think about the healthiness of the food, rising to 44% of those aged over 65.

The research highlights the importance of consumers having the best possible information. So I am delighted that we have now almost 50 companies committed to our out-of-home calories labelling pledge, as part of the Responsibility Deal, and we hope that more will follow suit.

Currently, 70% of fast food and takeaway meals and one-third of all the meals sold on the high street have calories clearly labelled, and about 9,000 high-street outlets, including 5,000 fast-food and takeaway outlets, are displaying calories. These include some of the biggest high-street names such as KFC, McDonald's and Pizza Hut.

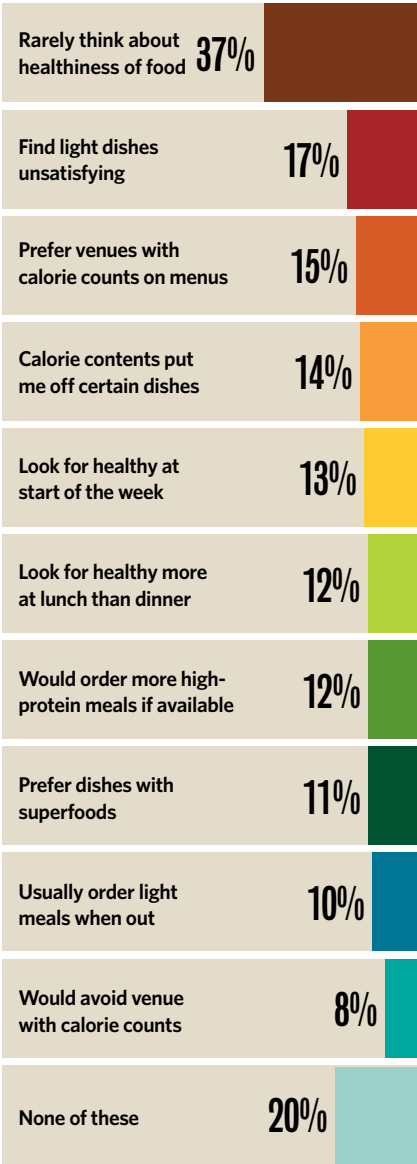
The out-of-home sector has also committed to reduce calories. Currently, 15 out-of-home businesses, including

Starbucks, Subway, JD Wetherspoon and Beefeater, are supporting and enabling their customers to consume fewer calories through measures such as reformulation, developing lower-calorie options and encouraging the choice of healthier options.

Through the calorie reduction pledge, PepsiCo, Britvic, Odeon, Empire and Reel cinemas have committed to work in partnership to encourage more people to lower their calorie intake and choose low-calorie drinks by training their employees to prompt cinema-goers to try sugar-free Pepsi Max and to offer it as the default cola option.

Over a third of the companies pledged to reduce calories are contract caterers (Compass, Sodexo, Aramark, CH&Co, Dine Ltd and Lexington catering) and do include many of the largest companies. It is good to see so many of them committed to improving the health of their customers. Aramark, for example, has launched a new health and wellbeing programme across its business, and Dine Ltd have reformulated all recipes to reduce calories and increased the number of options in their lower-calorie range.

Although over a third of the signatories to calorie reduction are from out-of-home



Source: Mintel, 2014

companies, I still think there is further to go. Let's keep up the momentum to ensure that everyone has the information they need to make healthy choices in and out of home.

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Weighty problems

Consumers are confused about what makes them fat so it's no surprise a third don't consider health when they're eating out. That means businesses have to, but is the Responsibility Deal enough to make a difference?

IN THE PAST decade sugar consumption has fallen 12%. In that time, the average weight of an English adult has risen by about two kilos. And yet sugar appears to have become the demon ingredient, replacing fat. Meanwhile, cutting salt consumption continues apace in some countries (new research published recently suggests a "chaotic" approach to reformulation among some international foodservice companies with "huge differences" in salt levels around the world within the same products).

Welcome to the complex world of healthy eating. In the past few months there has been little respite as politicians, academics, the media, big business and now the head of the NHS all weigh into the debate. Simon Stevens, the CEO of NHS England, claimed in September that if left unchecked, obesity could bankrupt the health service (see page 5). Type two diabetes already costs the NHS around £9 billion, according to Diabetes UK.

The World Health Organisation is considering a controversial revision of its recommended guidelines on sugar intake from 10% of daily caloric intake to 5%. Given that there's more than that in many single-serving chocolate bars the likes of Mars and Mondelez are unimpressed. The Association of Chocolate, Biscuits and Confectionery Industries of Europe says that "this complex matter requires further scientific substantiation.

What the scientific opinion tells us is that there's not enough scientific evidence to set a level of recommended intake for sugars."

And herein lies the problem. "Confusion or mixed messages is the bane of my life," says Tam Fry, a spokesman for the National Obesity Forum. There is a battle brewing not just between health campaigners and big businesses, but between sugar and fat – and it's anything but sweet.

The big businesses that have a vested interest in our continued "addiction" to junk foods are making similar noises regarding confusion. AB Sugar took the bold step recently of launching a new campaign. Making Sense of Sugar was launched in response to the "heightened attention on sugar" and the

"misinformation" the company feels the mainstream media is lapping up far too eagerly.

A focus of the accompanying website will be reformulation in an attempt to put right misconceptions which are "a real problem", according to AB Sugar's head of food sciences, Julian Cooper. "People think that reformulation is the answer to a maiden's prayer," says Cooper. "However, it's not a straightforward solution to creating lower-calorie products."

There's a battle brewing not just between health campaigners and big businesses, but between sugar and fat – and it's anything but sweet

Reformulation is an area in which manufacturers, retailers and foodservice have all invested. There have been murmurings from manufacturers that they are reaching the limits of what they can do, but caterers see it as a continuing challenge. "There's plenty of innovation still to come," says Sodexo's head of nutrition, Wan Mak.

The sectors also differ in their approach to choice editing – or "health by stealth". The supermarkets have been notoriously reluctant to offer shoppers fewer options, but Sodexo is one of a number of catering firms that are trying to tackle

obesity on all fronts. "We believe in the whole package," says Mak, referring to both the hard line of choice editing as well as the softer nudge approach involving communication.

A recent study by Mintel revealed that half of diners eat out for a special treat. Convincing them to make it a healthy one isn't going to be easy. But what about the other half? Takeaways are eaten at least once a week by a third of Brits while 31% eat in a restaurant once a week or more. This casualisation of the market is good news for businesses, but potentially bad news for obesity.

Helena Childe, a senior foodservice analyst at Mintel, says: "Although government initiatives such as the Responsibility Deal are pushing eating-out operators to think more about their healthy eating proposition, there is little widespread demand from consumers themselves, with nearly four in 10 stating that they rarely think about healthy eating concerns when eating out."

So if consumers aren't thinking about it, businesses need to. However, a check through the pledges made in the Public Health Responsibility Deal reveals a split within the foodservice sector when it comes to progress on reformulation and the offer of healthier options. Take calories: four of the five companies to have signed up to both the pledges to label calories and reduce them are contract caterers (Aramark, Compass, Dine Contract Catering and Sodexo).

The coalition government has, of course, pinned its hopes on this flagship voluntary deal. Keen to reduce regulation and red tape it entered Downing Street with a desire to work with business rather than against it. The health minister, Jane Ellison, is clearly 100% behind it, and industry loves it too. But is it working?

Policy sweetener

Footprint has asked a number of experts to suggest policy changes they believe will curb rising levels of obesity. Mel Wakeman, a lecturer in nutrition at Birmingham City University, suggests four ways to cut sugar intake:

- 1 Lower the labelling thresholds for added sugars. Currently only products containing at least 22.5% of added sugars are labelled as high-sugar. Products with no more than 5% added sugar are labelled as low. By adjusting thresholds to match current recommendations (free sugar should make up 5% of energy intake) the traffic light system can be used to identify high-sugar foods more effectively. 10% would be the new threshold for high-sugar and 2.5% the maximum for low-sugar.
- 2 Ban marketing and advertisement of sugary products containing more than 10% added sugar.
- 3 Food and drink labelling must be more explicit in stating the free sugar and naturally occurring sugar content along with a suitable health warning explaining the risks of excess intake.
- 4 Energy drinks should be banned for under-16s.



Judging by the number of business signed up, possibly not. But Mak feels that some of the criticism has been unfair. "People want to see results overnight," she says, but reducing the waistline of a nation takes time.

Fry, on the other hand, believes food companies have had more than enough time. He now wants to see government impose much stricter deadlines, suggesting that firms have had "years and years" to reformulate.

"Jane Ellison needs to sharpen up very quickly indeed," he says. "Billions are being spent cleaning up the mess the industry is responsible for." A tax on sugary drinks is

"absolutely necessary", he claims, adding that it's not an impossible dream for "any food sold in the UK to be as healthy as it could be".

The new school food policy has tightened up nutrition requirements and there is hope that similar progress will be made in hospitals (see page 5). But this will only scratch the surface, say campaigners. The "good news story" that has seen the food industry help to get a grip on salt intake over the past decade is, it seems, not translating into sugar and fat.

With obesity levels rising and pressure on the NHS at tipping point, the question for this government and whoever is next will be: can it afford to wait another decade?



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The fat keeps flowing

Campaigners say that politicians' fear of the big food companies is clogging up efforts to curb obesity. Is it time for a more radical approach?

IF THE OPINIONS of our experts opposite prove anything it's that there is precious little agreement on how to solve the problem of obesity. The policy options put forward range from soft measures that encourage businesses to act more responsibly to more draconian actions to curb the sale of foods high in salt, fat and sugar.

In the UK, the soft approach currently holds sway. The government's flagship Responsibility Deal puts the onus on industry to voluntarily improve the health profile of its products. This has undoubtedly produced some positive results, particularly in portion control, with the likes of Mars and Cadbury committing to meeting a 250kcal limit for their single-serve portion confectionery. However, the criticism often aimed at voluntary action is that the industry-agreed targets are not ambitious enough and fail to engage the entire business community.

"We need a carrot and stick approach," says Tam Fry, a spokesman for the National Obesity Forum and a keen advocate of legislation. "The industry needs to be set a timeframe for reformulation and the incoming government [in 2015] has got to legislate" if the targets are not met.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recently endorsed carrots rather than sticks, with its latest guidance on maintaining a healthy weight consisting of lots of advice for consumers such as reducing TV viewing and following the principles of a Mediterranean diet. There was very little in the way of bold, potentially paradigm-shifting actions that the likes of Fry say are now absolutely necessary.

What isn't on the table, in the UK at least, is the use of fiscal measures to change behaviour – as advocated by Fry: "We need to tax junk food to the hilt" – which would be at odds with the UK government's pledge to reduce burdens on businesses.

It's hard to see that changing any time soon. Although a change of government in 2015 could bring a shift in policy, any moves to tax junk foods or drinks are likely to meet fierce resistance from the private sector and to be deeply unpopular with the public.

Left-leaning policy professionals will be keeping a close eye on Mexico, where a tax on soft drinks was enacted in January to curb the alarming rise in obesity there. Should the tax prove successful it may provide the evidence needed to justify fiscal measures

in other countries, but it will be a brave government that acts to raise the price of food at a time when, as Martin Caraher from City University notes, more and more people are using food banks.

One area that receives less focus, but could have long-term potential, is addressing the social and environmental conditions that shape people's food choices. This could mean a more progressive planning framework so that low-income people living in food "deserts" have access to cheap and varied food; ensuring that those living in social housing have access to adequate cooking facilities and utensils; or requiring that all children are taught cookery skills as part of the national curriculum.

Sean Beer, a senior lecturer at Bournemouth University, advocates raising the age at which children go to school from four to seven so that the young children could attend pre-schools where the emphasis would be on active learning physically and socially. This may seem like a radical proposal but with conventional policy responses showing little sign of reversing the rise in obesity, maybe a radical approach is just what the doctor ordered?

What one food or health policy would you change or introduce in order to curb the rise in obesity, and why?

The campaigner: Fines for failure to reformulate

"THE MOST outstanding omission in food policy since obesity became an issue is the failure of successive governments to regulate the food and beverage industries and ensure that no food product available in the UK contains dangerous and excessive amounts of fat, sugar and salt. Companies who currently lace their products with unacceptably high levels of such ingredients should be required to reformulate within an agreed time or face taxes/fines if they wilfully fail to comply. Removing the excesses would not only dramatically reduce UK obesity levels but also simultaneously lower the potentially more dangerous, and expensive to treat, comorbidities triggered by obesity. A few companies have voluntarily reformulated and have demonstrated that it can be achieved. The majority however have not. Without being this radical, 60% of UK men and 50% of

women may well be obese by 2050 as predicted by the 2007 Foresight Report."

Tam Fry is spokesman for the National Obesity Forum



The caterer: No need for change

"THERE IS NO one thing we would necessarily amend or introduce. We truly believe that as an industry we have a responsibility to help all our customers make informed choices when it comes to diet and lifestyle; in particular in the schools where we operate we recognise the part we can play in educating children from an early age about the importance of a healthy balanced diet. We work closely with our supply partners and government through initiatives such as the Responsibility Deal on public health to do this. Through the deal we need to leverage the partnership we have developed and promote what our industry can do and the impact our services have on the day-to-day wellbeing of the British people. It is also an opportunity for us to let the government know what we can't do, as not everyone



outside of it truly understands the complexities of our industry."

Wan Mak is head of nutrition and dietetics at Sodexo UK and Ireland

The policy expert: Tackle food poverty

"THE KEY to improving health at this time of financial austerity is to help those most in need, which means extending state provision of food aid through means such as free school meals to more people including the working poor and not referring people to charitable outlets such as food banks. In 1939 Le Gros Clark and Titmuss [in their book *Our Food Problem: A study of national security*] said there were two ways of tackling the food crisis: 'The first is to lower the prices of foodstuffs upon the retail market; the second is to provide food to certain sections of the community through the medium of social

services.' There is no reason, of course, why these methods should be mutually exclusive. Their message remains as pertinent today as it was then. This would stop the growth of food banks as the means of delivering emergency food aid and the continuing roll-back of the welfare state



and the rise in philanthropy."

Martin Caraher is professor of food & health policy at City University, London

The nutritionist: Shrink the servings

"TO HAVE A swift and practical impact on cutting calories, I would take the draconian step of developing a policy that created a range of standard portion sizes across the food industry. This would be for everything from chips served in fast-food outlets to sizes of croissants in coffee shops, takeaway pizzas, ready meals, biscuits, cakes, packs of chocolate and bottles and cans of sugary drinks. Clearly this would trigger emotional uproar from those dead set against such nanny-state interference as well as huge one-off financial investment required for repackaging and policing once legislation was in place. But this would need to be set against the potential savings in the long term that a reduced calorie intake and its potential effect on individuals' weight would have in costs to the health service. Anyone who wanted more could buy more portions. And would do so knowing they



are consuming more than the recommended serving size."

Amanda Ursell is an independent nutritional consultant

Future's bright for sustainable eating

Sustainable diets and the notion that meat consumption should be reduced are controversial topics, so Footprint asked former NFU president and current chair of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board **Peter Kendall** his thoughts.

David Burrows (DB): How would you define a sustainable diet? Does it involve eating less meat?

Peter Kendall (PK): I believe a sustainable diet is a good varied balanced diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables and moderate meat consumption from production sources that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

We are already fairly modest meat-eaters in the UK – we don't even rank in the world top 20 meat-eating countries. Our average daily consumption is 96g for men and 57g for women – 80g is equivalent to three slices of roast lamb or a cooked fresh quarter-pound burger. So the amount of red meat most of us eat is about right and is in line with the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition guidelines.

DB: Progress towards defining sustainable diets has been slow. Why is this the case?

PK: The relationship between diet and health is a highly complex puzzle which the scientific community hasn't yet resolved. What we think we know about healthy and unhealthy foods keeps being turned on its head with foods once demonised as bad guys returning to grace as the good guys, such as butter and whole milk.

What we need is a joined-up vision of what "good" might look like across social, environmental and economic long-term interests to give a shared sense of purpose and focus. It will be important to identify and be transparent about the trade-offs between

the different aspects of sustainability and relative priorities. With gaps in the science and so many organisations with vested interests or single-issue focus, this will never be a simple task for government policymakers.

DB: In an interview with us in 2012 you suggested the government needs to get serious about the food it procures (all £2bn worth of it). What signs have you seen that this is the case since then?

PK: I am more optimistic with progress than I was in 2012. I am in no doubt that successive governments have recognised the central role that good food can play in the wellbeing and health of those being fed from the public purse. A number of initiatives have been tried over the years but these have tended to fall by the wayside, either as a result of a lack of will on the part of procurement managers to incorporate what is a voluntary scheme into their purchasing or due to pressure from budget holders to always purchase the cheapest option.

The opportunity to prove what could be achieved when there is willingness on the part of all links in the supply chain came with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This showcased this country to the world and more importantly showcased farm-assured British produce to the catering industry tasked with the largest peacetime feeding exercise in our history.

DB: Were all the guidelines and specifications a reason for this success?



PK: The London 2012 Food Vision provided a specification and audit process which has now been taken forward by the team at DEFRA into a new legacy-based set of mandatory standards for food served in Whitehall and central government departments. Additionally, the standards are open for use by the NHS, school meals and social services, as well as contract caterers providing services for the public sector.

We have also seen the launch of "A Plan for Public Procurement: Food and Catering Services". Why this new initiative may work where others have failed is that it removes the emphasis from being on the cost of the food purchased and instead, through a balanced scorecard approach, requires procurement managers to attribute weighting to a list of considerations based on quality and value.

DB: You definitely seem more upbeat than when we met in 2012.

PK: I am optimistic that we are on the cusp of some real progress – and I firmly believe that we, in British agriculture, can prove ourselves to be the best supply partner for our troops, schoolchildren, hospital patients, inmates and our civil servants.

Ahead of the field

UK food retail is arguably one of the toughest markets to enter in the world. But shopping habits are changing and new models are bypassing the big supermarkets to bring farmers and consumers much closer together.

FARMDROP WORKS like a "click-to-harvest" farmers' market. The website allows buyers and sellers of local food to find each other and trade directly via local hubs (or "FarmDrops") that are run by community members called "keepers". Each week customers order and pay online and following a weekly deadline all the orders are sent to the producers, who deliver the produce three days later to a local venue.

There are five FarmDrops operating in south-east England, but the plan is to have 400 throughout the UK by 2017, says its founder, Ben Pugh. "Having just completed an equity crowdfunding round in which more than 350 people invested a total of £750,000 this feels more achievable than ever before."

Before starting FarmDrop in 2012, Pugh spent a lot of time analysing the country's biggest food retailers. IGD data shows that almost £4 in every £5 goes through the five main supermarkets, so they must be doing something right. However, during his research Pugh discovered that it's a rather bizarre setup.

He explains: "Take the example of an organic grower in Kent who sold butternut squash to a supermarket for £1 each, who then sold them to customers for £3 each. In other words, he was receiving just 33% of the retail value."



Sales up for FarmDrop. Online shopping, convenient fulfilment services and interest in provenance have helped smaller retailers find space in a crowded marketplace.

According to the National Farmers Union, the picture is even more bleak: just 11% of all the money spent on food in the UK goes to UK producers. Figures released in August for Scotland showed a fifth consecutive increase in farm debt. Almost one in four farmers (23%) can't pay themselves the national minimum wage. "The numbers sound crazy, but they're real," says Pugh.

Now compare FarmDrop. "For every bag of local food sold through us, the producers take 80%, keepers take 10% and we take the final 10%. And because producers are sent precise bulk orders and have three days to fulfil them, it's a zero-waste system. So, if no one's bought the carrots they stay in the soil."

"For every bag of local food sold through us, the producers take 80%, keepers take 10% and we take the final 10%."

Pugh is adamant this model is a "quantum leap forward" in producer profitability, and one in which "everyone involved is better off". He adds: "The key point is this: we need to provide more efficient and profitable routes to market for the independent producers so that they can become more price competitive with the larger industrial producers whose methods are worse for the environment and whose food is worse for our health. That's what we're trying to do, and that's why we will compete with the supermarkets this Christmas."

There are some powerful tailwinds in his favour. Online grocery sales in the UK are expected to rise from 2% to 8% of the overall market between 2011 and 2017 (IGD, June 2014), with sales worth £17 billion. Click-and-

collect is the fastest growing format behind this trend. Meanwhile, current industry data show Tesco and Morrisons not just trying to stem a fall in market share but declines in actual sales (Kantar, May 2014). Pugh says this is "unprecedented" and suggests a structural shift may be under way.

Besides the trend towards online and convenience, there is also provenance and nutrition – interest in which has spiked in the past 12 months in the face of the horse-meat scandal and obesity crisis. "I've heard more than a few people comment that if a food product is advertised on television it's probably not wise to eat it," says Pugh. "We allow consumers to get away from massive food brands and back to real food produced by actual people. It's not technology for technology's sake. It's technology that brings us back to the environment and the people making our food."

FarmDrop has 360 independent producers on its books, and with Pugh's ambitious expansion plans there are opportunities for many more. As the big supermarkets struggle and the relationship between people and food continues to evolve, it will be up to the challenger retailers like FarmDrop to fulfil people's needs.



FarmDrop's founder, Ben Pugh, says his company's model is a "quantum leap forward" in producer profitability.



Unlimited holidays

RICHARD BRANSON is an intelligent man. Few would doubt his business sense. But has that one, and all the others, taken leave of him? Blogging about a change in policy regarding holiday leave for his staff recently, he wrote: "It is left to the employee alone to decide if and when he or she feels like taking a few hours, a day, a week or a month off." In other words: unlimited holidays.

Cue plenty of positive PR (Branson's got a new book out) and an easy few weeks for business and newspaper commentators. Look a little deeper and the scheme is not without its flaws. "Richard Branson's 'unlimited holiday' sounds great – until you think about it" was the *Guardian's* take.

So let's do that.

The concept came from Netflix, the online TV company, via Branson's daughter, who had seen an article in the *Daily Telegraph* back in 2010. The piece described the "audaciously simple and simply audacious" vacation policy in place: that is, there wasn't one. "Salaried employees can take as much time off as they'd like, whenever they want to take it. Nobody – not employees themselves, not managers – tracks vacation days."

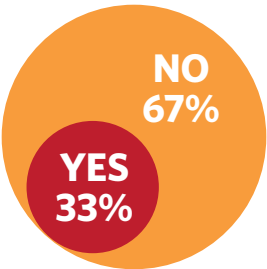
The theory goes a bit like this: Netflix wasn't tracking the hours its staff were working, so why should it track the holidays either? Freedom would feed responsibility. Staff feel motivated, trusted and valued: wellbeing is restored.

Given that Netflix was launched in 1999 and is now worth nearly £4.5bn, it's hard to argue against it. Likewise Branson. But there is a darker side to this so-called "enlightened" management style. The autonomy will also encourage commitment, and this is where the balance could tip. For

under this non-policy the assumption is that workers will only take time off "when they feel 100% comfortable that they and their team are up to date on every project and that their absence will not in any way damage the business – or, for that matter, their careers," Branson explained. Oh. Wouldn't that turn unlimited holidays into no holidays at all?

FOOTPRINT POLL

Is your business prepared for possible winter blackouts?



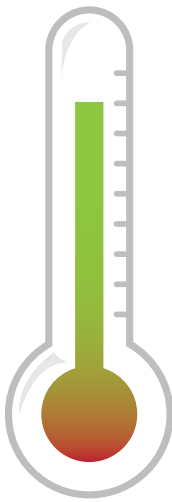
From the web

GREENER

- Organic growth – sales of organic food increased 3.2% in the four weeks to August 16th, according to Nielsen
- Seafood choices – M&J Seafood has launched a "safely sourced seafood" list alongside the MCS and MSC.
- Less salt – 35 companies have now signed up to the government's salt reduction 2017 pledge under the Responsibility Deal

GROSSER

- Blackouts - National Grid has warned that generator closures and breakdowns have reduced its capacity to supply electricity to a seven year low.
- Staffing issues – Convini research suggests a fifth of office-based workers regard food provision on site as "extremely poor"
- Climate doubts – NGOs line up to pan the incoming European Commission president, Jean-Claude Juncker, and likely environment and fisheries commissioner, Karmenu Vella



Who said that?



"As a responsible major country, a major developing country, China will make even greater effort to address climate change."

China's vice-premier, Zhang Gaoli, speaking at the UN climate summit in New York, offers hope. It is the first time the country has suggested it is ready to take firm action to cut emissions. Zhang said China wanted to have emissions peak "as early as possible".

London Linen Group 80th Anniversary



The London Linen Group are celebrating their 80th Anniversary next year. They have a long history in the hospitality laundry industry and a proven track record for providing their customers with a high quality and cost effective service. They are proud of their achievement of being the sector market leading national linen hire and laundry service, with 3 specialist divisions each catering for a specific section of the hospitality market – restaurants, casual dining, and contract and event caterers. Managing Director Roger Oliver declared "This is certainly quite a milestone for us! We are very pleased to reach our 80th year, to have built up such an experienced team and superb customers. This is an excellent time to recognise and thank our dedicated staff and loyal customers, always remembering that the foundation of this business is our delivery of customer service and continuously enhancing it."

The group believe in partnering with their customers to identify their needs, which they understand are continuously evolving. Experienced staff discuss their clients' requirements in detail, work together on this and offer them cost effective practical solutions.

Throughout their years and still to this day the group focus on providing customers with the very best products accompanied by excellent customer service. They have also worked hard to become the UK's most environmentally friendly laundry service and have built up a number of important sustainability credentials.

Always doing everything they can to be innovative, their 80th year will be no exception and they have many plans and

ideas in place to evolve and progress even further. Roger explained "We are constantly looking at new improved ways to serve our customers. We look at everything – products, technology, processes, procedures etc. We continuously focus on innovation, sustainability and, above all, the best service for our customers."

One of their major developments for 2015 is their investment in a new additional laundry establishing another sizeable unit alongside their current premises in West London, thus creating greater capacity and efficiency. This will also be another environmentally conscious building filled with machinery and technology all geared to operate with the needs of the environment in mind. The laundry processing will also benefit from the increased space, new equipment and some new even more effective procedures. It will also assist with the increase in volume that the group are experiencing and enable further planned growth. They have invested in this to ensure that customers receive the very best service possible.

Investments in new machinery and technology are occurring all the time, helping to deliver greater efficiency and improvements in environmental credentials.

An exciting new piece of ground-breaking technology that The London Linen Group are pleased to announce is their washing facility that uses polymer beads within the washing process. This results in a major reduction in water usage, as beads reduce the need for excess water. Energy is also saved and there is a reduction in required detergents. It additionally creates a more effective and gentler washing environment – garments therefore look better and last



Hospitality Action Bike Tour

Managing Director of The London Linen Group, Roger Oliver, was a member of the team who recently took part in the York to London Cycle Challenge in aid of Hospitality Action, following the Tour de France route. He managed to make it home with the rest of the peloton in good time and without injury! Group division The Caterers Linen Supply were also very proud to sponsor the cycling shirts for the fundraiser too. The event raised in excess of £30,000 for this very worthwhile cause.

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longer. The beads clean and remove stains so well that the process delivers higher cleaning standards than traditional water-based machinery. The polymer beads can be used hundreds of times without losing any effectiveness and are fully recyclable at the end of their laundry life. This will help to build on initiatives the group already have in place to further combat the dual challenges that laundries have of considerable water usage, detergent usage and product life. Roger stated "We are very pleased with this new piece of machinery. It ticks all the boxes that we strive for – greater efficiency, environmentally friendly and improves our service".

The London Linen Group may be remembered for their pioneering innovation of their EkoChef Range – Chefs Jackets, Chefs Trousers and Aprons made from recycled plastic bottles and waste polyester fibre. This initiative was hugely popular

when it was launched; the industry had not seen anything like this before. Chefs found the garments both comfortable and fit for purpose, and difficult to distinguish from standard poly-cotton garments. The benefits of the items were welcomed and well received. These included aspects such as a huge reduction in energy usage in production, a vast saving of CO2 and considerable saving of landfill space. The EkoChef Range has retained its popularity since its launch and the group continue to receive excellent feedback on its performance.

The group is also still benefiting from the establishment of their 'steamless' laundry. They were the first laundry in the UK to develop this, which involved an investment of over £3 million and resulted in many sustainable benefits including major reductions in wasted energy and reduced water usage leading to lower costs.

Sustainability continues to be very high on The London Linen Group's agenda.

They have made some great innovations and continue to plan more in the future. In addition to previous sustainability awards, they were further recognised this year by winning two Footprint Awards when the group won the Footprint Sustainable Supplier Award 2014 and their specialist division The Caterers Linen Supply won the Footprint Sustainable Use of Natural Resources Award 2014.

There are several other new initiatives in the planning stage to hopefully be launched soon, including one innovative project trial to improve the recycling of the end of line product.

The London Linen Group continues to focus on national customer service through its specialist division's laundries dedicated to the restaurant, casual dining, and contract and event catering sectors. It is investing ambitiously to service these exciting markets throughout the UK and is setting out to do more and pedal harder than ever in their 80th year with no slowdown ahead.

the chefs found them comfortable and durable and were really happy with them. We hadn't originally told them that they were made from plastic and everyone was surprised when we made that reveal. They were also pleased; our staff want to work for Geronimo Inns because of our environmental ethos so everyone was really on board with this change. We've since rolled them out across the entire business and are pleased to be part of a movement that is having an impact on the wider environment. It takes 25 two litre PET bottles to make one EkoChef Jacket, which saves 2.5 tonnes of CO2 per 1,000 jackets compared with standard polyester. There is also the consideration that it takes 80% less energy to produce EkoChef Jackets from materials already available – that's a real impact saving! We hope that our use of EkoChef Jackets will have a positive impact on the public's understanding around what the hospitality industry is doing to drive green policies, and also encourage other companies to think about the small changes they can make, that can make a huge difference.



One of the small changes we made – which has had a real impact – is to approach our linen supplier for an assessment of what we could be doing in this area, as we were aware that the constant washing and replacing of chef whites, for example, has a pretty big carbon footprint.

We were pretty amazed (and slightly sceptical) when we were first shown the EkoChef range by London Workwear and were told they were made from recycled plastic bottles. They looked and felt like good quality chef whites to us, but the real test was how would the chefs – a notoriously hard bunch to get anything past – feel about them. After a four pub trial the proof really was in the pudding;

Geronimo Inns case study

We love London Workwear Rental's environmentally friendly attitude, it ties in really well with ours. We started using their EkoChef products as part of our 'small changes make big impacts' approach to the environment – it's the entire sector's responsibility to try to do one thing greener and they'll see that just a step in the right direction is positive for the environment as a whole.

Over the past four years Geronimo Inns have made it its business to start building its green credentials. Our approach has been to make small steps in bringing the green elements of our business to the forefront, all of which have added up to some big changes and we're really in our stride now.

Q&A session

with **Roger Oliver**, managing director, The London Linen Group



Q: The business was founded on innovation nearly 80 years ago. How was this true then as much as it is today?

Yes the business was founded by my grandfather in 1935; we have a long history of innovation including being the first to offer linen for rental to restaurants, however throughout this time two aspects have been constant – the need to provide excellent customer service and the requirement to be innovative. Recent innovations include developing three specialist laundry divisions to meet the specific requirements of the restaurant, casual dining, and contract and event catering sectors. It is true that innovation has been vital throughout our history and certainly no less so today.

Q: 2015 is your official 80th year. Run me through some of the innovations you are planning.

We have a number of planned innovations – we are investing in extending our laundries to be more environmentally efficient and provide improved processing for our customers, we are developing our product lines and also looking to further improve our recycling of end of line product. We are continuing to innovate and improve to keep in step with the dynamism of our customers, whilst maintaining the tradition of service.

Q: Is next year all about a back to basics approach then?

We continue to build on our long standing core commitment to customer service, whilst responding to customer

needs for new products and sustainable solutions. Facilitating this we are also investing in new laundry facilities. We are looking to go forward with our customers to provide a continued improved laundry service at a competitive price.

Q: How important is technology for you?

Hugely important. We continuously look for new innovative up to date machinery, production processes and products in order to help us serve our clients more effectively and more sustainably. We have skilled operations staff, with many years experience in the industry, who are regularly in touch with those in the market place discussing the latest technological advances and developments. For example we are trialling washing using polymer beads in the washing machine to reduce water usage and also create a more effective washing environment.

Q: Sustainability plays a huge part in your business ethics, do you see tangible benefit from lowering your impact and operating as responsibly as possible?

Yes. We have seen this in two main ways, lower costs including lower gas, electricity, diesel and water bills from our reduced use of energy and water. We have also benefitted from an increase in customers – those who have been prompted to use us due to our sustainability credentials.

Q: Some might argue that sustainability is of less importance in the sector now. Do you see evidence in support or to the contrary of this?

Our experience is that sustainability continues to be very important to our customers and their customers. There are very few who do not place a high emphasis on sustainability, but generally the vast majority of customers are placing an increasingly high importance on sustainability.

Q: Are you a responsible business solution to your customers?

Yes, this is our aim. Indeed we have been recognised by the industry with awards for sustainability. Examples of our responsibility in action include where we have built the first steamless laundry in the UK saving on water, gas and electricity or where we have introduced the EkoChef brand of chefswear products made from recycled plastic. We continue to invest in improving laundry processes to be more environmentally efficient and sustainable, which underpins our ability to be a responsible business solution for customers.

Q: Linen is one of those channels overlooked. Yet cotton is a natural material, you're using natural resource, generating heat, using chemicals and operating logistics. Is a lighthouse effect on the overall industry important to you?

As said earlier we are keen to service our customers better. To do this we need to work in partnership with them effectively; a major element of this is working on sustainability. We see sustainability

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being part of the implications of being committed throughout our history to improving customer service. If we do impact our peers in delivering our sustainability activities all well and good, but it is a secondary goal to our core aim to improve our customer service.

Q: You employ a considerable workforce. Is social sustainability rising on the industry's agenda?

Yes we think so. Companies have a huge responsibility to their employees; we wouldn't have a business without them and it is a high priority for us not only to look after them, but to also develop them. We provide support to our staff from physio, to independent medical advice, to flu vaccines to assist their physical requirements. We also undertake training courses for staff to help them develop their skills. Social sustainability, although of rising interest publicly, has always been part of the way the London Linen Group has aimed to operate with its staff helping their engagement and commitment to the business and thus supporting our customer service aims.

Q: Last but not least, what responsible business trends and innovations do you predict for 2015?

I expect the hospitality sector to continue to require more from its suppliers on sustainability. I anticipate more responsible business solutions from experienced specialists in the particular hospitality area. I expect the trend to continue towards more sustainable product development e.g. our EkoChef products, saving on CO2 and landfill. Finally, I predict more in depth partnerships with customers to provide their customers with exciting and innovative solutions. The hospitality sector is going to continue to drive forward the sustainability agenda in 2015, that is certain. And of course 2015 will be more of the same core commitment to continually improving customer service, part of which is driven by applying responsible business solutions.

Bartlett Mitchell case study



Established in 2000, Bartlett Mitchell is an award winning contract catering service for business, industry, education and government. We have grown steadily and attribute our success to delivering on our promises. We're proud our service focuses on the innovative and bespoke; time is taken to develop ideas tailored to the individual client. We recognise the importance of delivering value for money, working as a tight and agile team to develop solutions that reduce costs or use resources more smartly.

The Caterers Linen Supply service a large number of Bartlett Mitchell sites and additionally our events company Inn or Out Events Ltd.

The service we receive from Caterers Linen is excellent. We never hear any complaints or concerns regarding them from our sites, which is almost unheard of after you have changed a supplier. We switched to Caterers Linen nearly a year and a half ago as we were looking for better standards of service.

We share the same ethos on sustainability; it was Caterers Linen's environmental stance and credentials that first attracted us to them. We wanted to improve our supply chain and be where we thought we should be. We wanted to gain Sustainable Restaurant Association accreditation and Caterers Linen helped us with this - they were already listed suppliers with them and had great environmental credentials. We

are now delighted to hold the SRA Three Star Champion Status and were one of the first contract caterers to achieve this. We are also the SRA Sustainable Caterer of the Year 2014. Caterers Linen give us complete peace of mind that we don't have to worry about the sustainability of our laundry - we know everything is carried out to the highest standard possible.

We are also putting plans in place to hopefully work together in the future on several sustainable initiatives.

We were also drawn to Caterers Linen due to their competitive prices - we were delighted that we could receive an improved environmentally conscious service at a lower cost! People assume you have to pay more for sustainability - this is not the case with Caterers Linen.

We have a great relationship with Caterers Linen and are in constant contact with them. We consider that our suppliers are 'partners' - we share core values, mutual support and loyalty - we can depend on each other.

Another thing we love about Caterers Linen is that they really understand contract catering - they are specialists in our field. That is invaluable.



Wendy Bartlett,
Managing
Director, Bartlett
Mitchell

HEALTH AND WELLBEING MATTERS

Healthwise is Sodexo's nutrition, well-being and lifestyle philosophy. It is our commitment to promoting healthy living amongst our employees, clients and customers.

In the UK and Ireland, we provide food services to consumers in the corporate, education, healthcare, leisure and defence sectors. In fact, in a typical day, we feed more than 1% of the UK population at offices, factories, schools, hospitals and barracks.

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