

What did
300,000
prospective
customers do
last week?

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BPC Retail Report

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Potato Statistics

Highlights

Overall, total frozen value shows a year on year increase of 8.6% and a small increase of 0.7% by volume

In value terms, all categories show an increase except canned potatoes – down 2.8%. The largest increase is seen by chilled potatoes up 12.7% followed by frozen chips up 9.8%

In volume terms, recon. & convenience potatoes and chilled potatoes show an increase, up 8.9% and 6.7% respectively, while canned potatoes are down 11.7%

POTATO PRODUCTS 52 wks to 27 Jan 2008	VALUE (£000s)	VALUE CHANGE % Yr on Yr	VOLUME (Tonnes)	VOLUME CHANGE % Yr on Yr	AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE (£ per kilo)
Frozen Chips	307,900	9.8	308,126	1.0	1.00
Frozen Potato Products	183,089	6.6	130,171	0.1	1.41
TOTAL FROZEN	490,988	8.6	438,296	0.7	1.12
Recon. & Conven. Potato	27,736	1.3	14,127	8.9	1.96
Chilled Potatoes	19,473	12.7	6,216	6.7	3.13
Canned Potatoes	14,319	-2.8	20,967	-11.7	0.68
Crisps	620,396	6.4	120,661	2.5	5.14

Highlights

Total fresh potatoes show growth of 12.6% by value and 2.1% by volume. Within this, total pre-packed shows a value increase of 13.9% and a volume increase of 3.8%, while total loose shows a value increase of 6.8% but a volume decrease of 9.9%

In terms of value growth, all categories show an increase but with pre-packed maincrop showing the highest growth of 15%, followed by organic with 14.3%

Pre-packed new is the category showing the highest volume growth of 10.4%, with organic at 8.9%. Loose new and maincrop show the highest rate of decrease – 13.5% and 12.4% respectively

POTATOES by PACK TYPE 52 wks to 27 Jan 2008	VALUE (£000s)	VALUE CHANGE % Yr on Yr	VOLUME (Tonnes)	VOLUME CHANGE % Yr on Yr	AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE (£ per kilo)
Pre-packed New	268,389	13.4	344,316	10.4	0.78
Pre-packed Maincrop	431,675	15.0	900,391	0.8	0.48
Pre-packed Baking	114,659	11.1	175,475	7.9	0.65
TOTAL PREPACKED	814,739	13.9	1,420,189	3.8	0.57
Loose New	66,484	N/C	75,853	-13.5	0.88
Loose Maincrop	24,538	3.4	31,831	-12.4	0.77
Loose Baking	86,537	13.8	73,052	-4.4	1.18
TOTAL LOOSE	177,559	6.8	180,736	-9.9	0.98
Organic	28,922	14.3	33,690	8.9	0.86
Conventional	963,376	12.5	1,567,235	1.9	0.61
TOTAL FRESH (Retail)	992,298	12.6	1,600,925	2.1	0.62

DATA SOURCE—TNS

All potatoes—GB & Imports

Retail Detail



RETAILER SHARE OF FRESH POTATO MARKET 52wks to 27 Jan 2008	VALUE %			VOLUME %		
	Total Potatoes	Prepack Potatoes	Loose Potatoes	Total Potatoes	Prepack Potatoes	Loose Potatoes
Tesco	28.4	29.7	22.3	30.1	31.3	20.7
Sainsbury	16.1	16.2	15.6	14.3	14.3	14.6
Morrisons	12.0	12.1	11.1	12.7	12.9	11.6
Asda	13.7	14.6	9.4	16.1	17.0	9.4
Somerfield	4.4	4.0	6.1	3.7	3.6	4.7
Co-Op Grocers	4.7	4.9	3.6	4.4	4.5	3.2
Marks & Spencer	3.5	3.7	2.6	1.5	1.5	1.5
Waitrose	4.1	3.5	6.9	2.7	2.3	5.6
Aldi	2.2	2.7	0.1	3.1	3.5	0.1
Lidl	1.9	2.1	0.9	2.7	2.9	1.1
All others	9.0	6.5	21.4	8.7	6.2	27.5
TOTAL MARKET	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

DATA SOURCE—TNS

Retail News

'sales of £1bn of local products by 2011'

Tesco to increase local produce

Tesco is planning a big increase in the volume of local fresh produce it sells under its local sourcing initiative. Emily Shamma, the company's head of local sourcing recently revealed that in certain areas such as East Anglia and the south east, fresh produce could account for the majority of regionally branded sales in the future. "The amount will vary by region," she said, "But we know that when people talk about local produce they think about fresh, so fresh produce is bound to gain."

The fresh produce drive follows last month's announcement of a major expansion of the local sourcing initiative in a bid to sell more than £1bn of local products by 2011 compared with the current £400m.

"If suppliers are good and have a product consumers want, we will consider it," said Shamma. In terms of fresh produce suppliers, Tesco was interested in talking to any potential regional producer, provided it could supply at least one store, she said.

BPC research supports shopper interest in local/British produce

'26m people shopped online in the UK in 2007 spending £1,719 each'

Online sales soar 54% in 2007

Online retail sales jumped 54% in the UK last year, proving more consumers are choosing to change from traditional shopping habits for convenience. Figures revealed at a recent industry conference in London show a total spend of £46.4bn for 2007. The jump in sales means that 15p in every £1 spent in the UK retail sector is online, the data from the IMRG Capgemini e-retail Sales Index showed.

The number of online shoppers in the UK stood at 26m in 2007 with an average spend of £1,719 each. Sainsbury's, the UK's second largest online grocery business, saw year-on-year growth of 40% in online grocery sales with 90,000 orders a week.

Adam Gould, retail director of Teleperformance commented. "Online shopping will definitely continue to grow but centred around urban centres. Tesco is the number one for online shopping but they have been in the market the longest and have the maturing model and also cover a larger area. Sainsbury's are concentrating on quality and good service, and this will help them gain a good market share in the future."

Three cheers for the potato!

Thanks to 2008 being the International Year of the Potato, there has been a succession of articles on potatoes in the media, not least of which is a recent article in the businessman's bible - The Economist.

The Economist reminded us just how important the potato has been in our history over the past 200 years.

It is the world's fourth most important food group, after corn, wheat and rice. The potato is intertwined with economic development, trade liberalisation and globalisation.

Unlikely as it may seem, the potato promoted economic development by underpinning the industrial revolution in this country in the 19th century. It provided a cheap source of calories and was easy to cultivate, liberating workers from the land.

Potatoes became popular in the north of England, where people specialized in livestock farming and domestic industry, while farmers in the south (where the soil was more suitable) concentrated on wheat production.

By a happy accident, this concentrated industrial activity in the regions where coal was readily available, and a potato-driven population boom provided ample workers for the new factories. Friedrich Engels even declared that the potato was the equal of iron for its "historically revolutionary role."

The potato promoted free trade by contributing to the abolition of Britain's Corn Laws - the cause that prompted the founding of The Economist in 1843. The Corn Laws restricted imports of grain into the United Kingdom in order to protect domestic wheat producers.

Landowners supported the laws, because cheap imported grain would reduce their income, but industrialists opposed



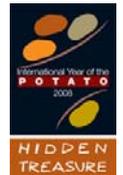
them because imports would drive down the cost of food, allowing people to spend more on manufactured goods.

Ultimately, it was not the eloquence of the arguments against the Corn Laws that led to their abolition -- and more's the pity. It was the tragedy of the Irish potato famine of 1845, in which 1 million Irish perished when the crop on which they subsisted succumbed to blight. The need to import grain to relieve the situation in Ireland forced the government, dominated by landowners who backed the Corn Laws, to reverse its position. That paved the way for liberalization in other areas, and free trade became British policy. In the form of French fries, served with burgers and Coca-Cola, potatoes have become an icon of globalization. This is quite a turnaround, given the scepticism that greeted them on their arrival in the Old World in the 16th century.

They took hold in 18th-century Europe only when war and famine meant there was nothing else to eat; people then realised just how versatile and reliable they were.

As Adam Smith, one of the potato's many admirers, observed at the time, "The very general use which is made of potatoes in these kingdoms as food for man is a convincing proof that the prejudices of a nation, with regard to diet, however deeply rooted, are by no means unconquerable."

The British Potato Council (BPC) has pledged its support for this year long event. Resources available include – international recipes, children's worksheets for schools, world map game, promotional vehicle and web to print. Visit www.britishpotatoes.co.uk/year-of-the-potato to find out more.



On the menu today - immunity

The New York Times recently carried a story from their Los Angeles correspondent.

Los Angeles:- First there was vegetarianism, which gave birth to veganism macrobiotic adherents, raw foodists and something simply known as 'the cleanse.' Now make way for immunity-enhancement, via your chopped salad and salmon tartar.

California has long led America in the creation and fortification of urban food ways. The state was on the forefront of restaurants devoted to raw food and was the birthplace of the organic produce movement. In Los Angeles, vegan restaurants are nearly as prevalent as hamburger joints.

Now, restaurant menus here are marrying the broader commercial movement of 'functional' foods – those stuffed with heavy doses of vitamins and antioxidants – and a fixation on immunity boosting.

In Beverly Hills, Crustacean, a modern Vietnamese restaurant, has attached an icon to the left side of several menu items letting diners know that those dishes supposedly boost immunity. At Café de Chaya in Hollywood, a macrobiotic restaurant that often attracts celebrities, the chef, Shigefumi Tachibe, has 'items that offer both immune boosting and healthful benefits for everybody,' said his spokesman.

Down the street is Dr. Tea's Tea Garden and Herbal Emporium, where immunity enhancement is always part of the menu said Dr Tea. "We work a lot with cancer patients to bring their immunity up, and lots of people come in to get our tonics to get rid of the flu." He said.

Foods that its makers claim enhance the immune system have become increasingly mainstream over the last several years. There is supplement-infused Sparva coffee, which offers an immunity formulation with rose hips and Echinacea. Green Giant, the food manufacturer has something in the marketplace called Immunity Boost, which are microwaveable frozen vegetables. Yoplait Essence Immunity Boost has 'probiotics with zinc and iron.' Also meant to charge up the system.

Whether the immunity-marking trend grows and whether it makes it across the Atlantic remains to be seen, but given the packed scene at Café de Choya every lunchtime it certainly seems popular.

Potatoes provide a natural immunity boost, because they are a good source of vitamins B1, B6 and Vitamin C – one medium sized jacket potato provides almost half the recommended daily amount (RDA) of Vitamin C.

Nutritional Nugget – Folic acid

'Folic acid - what is it and why do we need it?'

Pick up a potato and you are holding an amazingly nutrient dense food. Calories are low, they are virtually fat free, contain no cholesterol and are bursting

with vitamins and minerals. One such vitamin that potatoes are rich in is folic acid, known as folate in its natural form – but what is it and why is it good for us?

Folate is one of the B group of vitamins found in small quantities in many foods. Apart from potatoes, good sources include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, asparagus and oranges and lemons.

What does it do?

It has a number of important functions the main ones being working with vitamin B₁₂ to form healthy red blood cells, and helping to reduce the risk of neural tube defects such as spina bifida in unborn babies. In addition, recent American research concluded that folates can also help reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease as well as maintaining healthy sperm in males.

How much do we need?

Folate is a water-soluble vitamin, which means you need it in your diet every day because it can't be stored in the

body. Most people should be able to get the amount they need by eating a varied and balanced diet. Adults need 0.2mg a day. Boiled new potatoes in their skins (175g portion) provides 9 per cent of this Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of folate. However, if you are pregnant or thinking of having a baby the RDA should be doubled to 0.4mg.

What happens if you take too much?

If you are not taking enough vitamin B₁₂, taking doses of folic acid higher than 1mg can hide this fact. An early symptom of vitamin B₁₂ deficiency is anaemia, but taking large amounts of folic acid treats the anaemia without treating the B₁₂ deficiency. If B₁₂ deficiency goes untreated, it can eventually lead to damage to the nervous system – neurological damage. This is more of a concern for older people, because as we get older it becomes more difficult to absorb vitamin B₁₂.



Potatoes have a distinct advantage over rice and pasta here. Boiled potatoes have the second highest concentration of folate after bread and an average jacket potato (180g) baked in its skin contains over 30% of the Recommended Daily Allowance of folic acid.

Fantastic take up for the schools Grow Your Own Potatoes project

Last week an amazing 300,000 school children, our future customers, planted seed potatoes as part of the Grow Your Own Potatoes project. Over the coming months they will be learning all about how potatoes grow and fit into a healthy balanced diet.

Can you help bring the project alive by visiting your local school or offering a farm visit? To request a farmer's pack to help you plan your visit or for more information, call Caroline Arblaster at the BPC on 01865 782260 or email carblaster@potato.org.uk

It must be true, it's in the media



Spotted in Food and Drink Innovation Network:-

The recent increased popularity of the green vegetable kale is because more young people are buying the product, new research has suggested. A survey of 1.2million shopping baskets by discoverkale.co.uk has revealed that young families are the most likely to purchase the green vegetable.

Despite its connotations with the older generation, of all repeat kale purchasers in the UK, nearly a quarter (23%) fell into the young families' category with young adults – 20 to 39 year olds – making up an additional 13.9% of repeat kale purchasers. Nutritionalist Fiona Hunter commented, "At a time when obesity and health continue to be key issues for discussion, it is good to see the younger generation taking note of the health message." She added that kale provides vitamin C, folate and beta-carotene.

If kale can find growth amongst this fickle age group, then potatoes with their equally nutritious content and easier taste characteristics should be able to do the same.

Spotted on bbc.co.uk:-

Scientists in the US say they have created a genetically engineered carrot that provides extra calcium. They hope that adding the vegetable to a normal diet could help ward off conditions such as brittle bone disease and osteoporosis. Someone eating the carrot absorbs 41% more calcium than if they ate the old carrot, the Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences study suggests. Scientists, however, are warning that much more research needs to be undertaken before the super carrots are available to consumers.

Spotted in the Guardian:-

Peering into the boot of the car at the back of Debenhams, a trainee plumber thought he was on to a bargain. The top of the range laptop, complete with case, was just what he needed and after a lengthy inspection he decided the £600 price tag was too good to miss. But what the plumber did not realise was that he was being targeted in a classic switch that saw him leave the car park £600 down, with no computer and a laptop bag full of potatoes! *The most expensive potatoes in the UK?*

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