



FOOD-TO-GO

KEY TRENDS & INSIGHTS 2020 & BEYOND

Prior to the arrival of Covid-19 we had been working on deciphering various reports and research to bring our foodservice customers some insights on trends that would be relevant to their businesses. Post Covid-19 we think that some of these trends will still be very much applicable throughout 2020 and into the coming years. This booklet explores 5 major trends that may relate to your food to go operation. Separately, we have listed 10 trends that have sprung up or been brought to the fore due to Covid-19; these macro trends were identified by foodservice research firm Technomic (as part of Bord Bia's recent study on the impact of Covid-19 on the Irish foodservice industry).

We hope you find this document useful in planning your future strategy. If you have any questions on any of the data or if you think we can help your business in any other way, please get in touch with Donnacha or any of the sales & marketing team at Ballymaloe Foods.

*Our foodservice product range is growing all the time and going forward we plan to share updates regarding our NPD with you periodically. We've also recently launched our new website, please visit **www.ballymaloefoods.ie** to have a look at our dedicated foodservice section, which features a selection of inspiring recipes, including our seasonal recipe booklets.*

*All the best,
Donnacha*

Ballymaloe Foods



PACKAGING

Packaging is a key concern for today's conscious consumer and sustainable packaging will return to the fore post Covid-19. With the emphasis more on packaged than loose foods due to Covid-19 related hygiene and food safety fears, consumers will be looking to businesses who are focused on investing in more environmentally friendly packaging options. The conscious consumer is looking for quality, tasty food + sustainable packaging + provenance.

The NPD Group suggests that producers wanting to win in the packaged foodservice channel *"...will either use more renewable, compostable or recyclable packaging materials, or reduce packaging overall – or ideally manage both."*



SNACKING

More Snacking, less Meals: Healthy Snacking is a key growth area and FTG producers who want to be part of this segment will need to invest in NPD around snacking concepts rather than simply concentrating on meal solutions. Recent Mintel research noted that one fifth of Irish consumers snack more than 3 times per day.

The continuing blurring of lines between retail and foodservice means there is more opportunity for producers to get involved in this space, supplying healthy, hand-held snacking options to retailers and casual foodservice outlets.

According to Innovate Solutions online surveys conducted since March 2020, Irish consumers have increased their snacking during lockdown and are now looking for healthier snacking options. 50% of those surveyed have increased their fruit consumption since Covid-19 hit and they see fruit as a key component of mid-day snacking as well as breakfast smoothies and juices.



MEAT FREE

Meat Free continues to grow: Data from the NPD Group shows that in the last three months to October 2019, almost 3% of British eating out visits were influenced by whether or not a foodservice operator had vegetarian or vegan options on the menu. Over the course of a year, 3% represents over 300 million visits, and it is likely that this figure will grow rapidly in future.

We have recently seen classic Irish meat brand Denny launch their meat free range of burgers, sausages and mince. Kepak are looking to expand distribution of their range of 'blended burgers' – Beefroot and Moo-shroom – a mix of grass-fed Irish beef and plant proteins. Successful foodservice businesses will serve up food that makes everybody happy – meat eaters, flexitarians, vegetarians, and vegans.

It's worth noting though that some commentators feel there could be a backlash against highly processed meat substitutes due to lack of clarity about how they are produced – it's clear that any substitute seeking to be around long term will need to be transparent with consumers.



DELIVERY

Delivered Food-To-Go continues to grow at pace, with Covid-19 lockdowns only pushing this trend further into the mainstream. FTG producers must be conscious that their product could end up travelling to the end consumer on the back of a bike rather than being picked off a shelf. Recently Caffè Nero have partnered with Uber Eats in the UK to offer delivery of hot drinks and food from over 40* of their sites across the country (*as of end of May 2020 – may since have increased).



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Health & Wellness continues to be a key trend influencing consumer's purchasing decisions. Functional food is a buzz word for younger consumers especially; while Global Data found that 73% of consumers find products with added nutrients appealing.

Since the arrival of Covid-19 there has been a boom in sales of immunity boosting products, especially in the earlier stages of the pandemic. It is yet to be seen whether this will become a more permanent trend. Products wanting to succeed in this space must be sure to call out the health and immunity benefits of their products on pack. (E.g. Veggie wraps with Irish grown beetroot should shout out the nutritional benefits of the beetroot as well as its local provenance).

Additionally, Bord Bia have noted that the trends of Health & Wellness and Sustainable Living are overlapping, with consumers increasingly looking for products that are good for the planet as well as good for them. Local and seasonal produce has a part to play here, with recent research from Innovate Solutions finding that for over 65% of Irish consumers it is important to support Irish suppliers.



COVID-19 GLOBAL MACROTRENDS

As identified by Technomic in Bord Bia's Irish Foodservice Industry Whitepaper, May 2020

1. Less Customisation – more pre-made and pre-pack items.
2. Further off-premise investment – ramping up of delivery options.
3. Acceleration of channel blurring between Retail & FS (e.g. meal kits, burger boxes etc.).
4. Removal of Self-service options (e.g. buffets & hot counters).
5. Ghost Kitchens will become more common – linked to increased demand for home delivery.
6. Renewed interest in single use packaging (sustainability expected to be back on agenda once coronavirus risk has abated).
7. Streamlined menus – far smaller and less complicated.
8. Labour challenges – people laid off may move to other industries, it may become harder to attract talent to the foodservice sector over the next few years.
9. Drinks challenge – wet led pubs and bars will suffer more – possible opportunity for Food to Go suppliers to create a simple heat and serve menu for pubs with limited kitchen facilities/staff.
10. More consolidation throughout the supply chain.

Sources:

- The NPD Group, 'Will the British Foodservice put less waste, packaging, carbon and meat on the menu in 2020?', Dec. 2019
 - The NPD Group, EU Foodservice – Covid-19 Foodservice Sentiment Study, Mar. 2020
 - Innovate Solutions, Consumer Research & Sensory Assessment, May 2020
 - DFV Media Group, Foodservice Europe & Middle East 2020, Jan 2020
 - Bord Bia, Dietary Lifestyle Report UK, Mar. 2020
 - Bord Bia, Future Proofing Covid-19, May 2020
 - Bord Bia & Technomic, Irish Foodservice Industry Whitepaper, May 2020
 - IGD, 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): UK foodservice today and tomorrow', Mar. 2020
 - Mintel, Meat Alternative Products UK, Mar. 2020
 - Bord Bia / Kam City / The Caterer – Daily Media Updates
-

