

The Grocer

Focus On: Bread and baked goods by Rob Brown (rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Publishing: 5 May
Advertising deadline: 26 April
Submissions deadline: 19 April

The Story

Brits are going continental. We may be departing from the EU but in the case of breakfast, we're more than happy to take the lead from our European neighbours. 'Treat' breakfasts are the fastest growing category in bread, as Brits dig into pastries, waffles and pain au chocolats for a morning hit of sweetness. So why are shoppers plumping for pastry? And how is the rest of bread performing?

Key Themes

Sweet bread: We're devouring croissants for breakfast and scones for tea. Both 'treat breakfasts' and 'tea break' sub-categories are growing in value and volume. What is behind this? Own label seems to have driven these increases, so what have retailers done?

Traditional bread: Despite all the talk of Brits opting for carb replacements, there is no sign of us turning away from traditional bread. Volumes are only up marginally but what we did buy was more expensive. To what extent are more premium innovations such as reduced carb/seeded loaves behind this growth? And to what extent is it inflation of the price of standard loaves?

Health: Among all this appetite for sweet and carb-heavy options, there is still some room for the healthy stuff. Strong growth is coming from formats that are considered 'healthier' such as flatbreads and pittas.

Brand war: It's tough out there for brands. Shopper moves towards own label have pushed down volumes by 4.6%. So how are brands responding? And what is behind the massive gap in fortunes?

Fall of the in-store bakery: What has happened to our love of the supermarket bakery? In-store bakery bread and rolls are both down – why? Is this down to pre-packed products upping their game?

Innovations: We identify twelve new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including image, launch date and RSP. Plus we look at some of the more wacky innovations around pastries over the past year – we've had a mince pie croissant, the English breakfast croissant and now the taco.

Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- What consumer trends have impacted the category over the past year?
- How have promotional strategies (both in terms of price and marketing) evolved?
- How have individual retailers' strategies impacted the market?
- How has merchandising changed in the market?
- What impact has own-label had on branded players?
- What's next for the category?