Lockdown saw Brits indulging in comfort food for brekkie – and lots of it. Now a shift to healthier eating looks to be on the agenda.

Rob Brown

Britain’s breakfast tables are in danger of buckling. Because since lockdown began, they have been carrying the weight of far more food than normal. According to Kantar figures, Brits have tucked into bacon and/or eggs for breakfast on an extra 82 million occasions compared to last year (up by 25% and 68% respectively). Chocolate spread featured in an extra 21 million breakfasts, a rise of 40%. Morning goods such as pastries and croissants have featured in 25% more occasions – an extra 77 million.

An increase in morning feasts was understandable: people had largely more time to spare in the kitchen during lockdown, and no longer had to rush to the office. But it’s also cause for concern – because, like its prime minister, the nation is “too fat”. That’s how Boris Johnson described himself last week. He blamed his weight for why he had to spend three nights in intensive care with Covid-19 in April.

It’s not just Johnson making the connection – the link between Covid-19 mortality and obesity is confirmed. According to NHS England, if your BMI is between 35 and 40, the risk of dying from Covid-19 rises by 40% compared with those who have a healthy BMI; more than 40 and the risk is 90% greater. Hence the prime minister announcing a comprehensive obesity strategy last week, including a ban on pre-watershed ads and deals for HFSS foods. It comes as Kantar reports a renewed interest in healthy breakfasts, following the initial indulgence.

So has bacon had its day? And what kind of healthier options will consumers choose as lockdown eases?

It’s important to note that Kantar’s aforementioned data is for the 12 weeks to 14 June 2020, which covers the first days of lockdown. That may go some way to explaining the rise of indulgences such as chocolate spread and bacon, the latter of which had been suffering from an ongoing decline.

Because when the shock of the pandemic first hit, healthy eating was the last thing on Britain’s agenda. “Research conducted over the lockdown period found that many consumers were struggling to maintain a balanced diet during the pandemic with 51% admitting to finding it hard to stay healthy,” says Toby Baker, marketing director UK for Nestlé Cereals.

Kantar category analyst Katie Spry noticed a similar picture as lockdown hit. “Health appeared to take a back seat as consumers looked for pick-me-ups in a time of uncertainty,” she says.

Indeed, food chosen because it’s lower
GREAT STARTS WITH WHOLE GRAIN!

- **100% Shredded Wheat**: Just good stuff!
- **Cheerios**: Fibre 5 Whole Grains
- **The Original Shreddies**: No artificial colours or flavours

- High in fibre
- No artificial colours or flavours

*Nestlé, Trademark of Société des Produits Nestlé S.A. Subject to availability. Selected Stores only. Shreddies is a source of iron which contributes to normal energy-yielding metabolism. Shredded Wheat is low in saturated fat. Reducing intake of saturated fat contributes to maintaining normal blood cholesterol levels.

Multigrain Cheerios is a source of calcium which is needed for maintaining normal bones. It’s important to have a varied, balanced diet and healthy lifestyle.
**focus on... breakfast**

**Breakfast timing: when did Brits eat during lockdown?**

![Graph showing breakfast timing]

Source: Kantar 12 w/e 14 June 2020

- Britain ate breakfast on 5.4 billion occasions during lockdown. The vast majority (89.3%) were eaten at home, with such occasions rising by 7.9%. Breakfasts bought and eaten outside the home were down by 74%.
- No surprise there. But other stats might raise eyebrows. “Growth of breakfast eaten at home in lockdown is considerably less than the growth of total meal occasions (eaten at home or prepared and then carried out), which is up 26% in the latest 12 weeks versus last year,” says Kantar analyst Katie Spry.
- Indeed, lunch at home saw an increase of 61% and evening meals grew by 19%. Brits skipped breakfast on 437.9 million occasions in the past 12 weeks to 14 June – a rise of 16%.
- “Lockdown has provided individuals an opportunity to have later starts in the day, with the need to beat the early morning rush no longer there,” says Spry. “This has meant that 31% of breakfasts are now consumed before 8am, where previously 50% of breakfast occasions were before 8am.”
- During the week, Brits spend an average of 7½ minutes preparing brekkie, Spry adds.

### KANTAR

Kantar’s Worldpanel PLIES service monitors consumer behaviour across Great Britain. Its primary panel tracks take-home purchases of 20,000 demographically representative households. Data on consumption habits, nutrition and out of home sales is collected through subsidiary panels. Visit kantarworldpanel.com for details.

- In fat, sugar or salt was present in 65.3 million (5%) fewer breakfast occasions during this time [Kantar]. The number of meals chosen to control calorie intake or portion size fell by 55.4 million (28%) occasions. Conversely, taste was a reason for 789.9 million (8%) more breakfasts and items chosen “for a treat” were up by 31.7 million (3%).
- This shift has been reflected at the tills, notes Victoria Southern, marketing & category director at Kerry Foods.

“During the lockdown period we’ve seen a huge resurgence in sales of sausages, with value sales of the category up 6.6% compared to last year, equating to growth of £640.5m,” she says. “This is being driven by the number of cooked breakfasts served in households growing from 11 million to 20 million during this period.”

Andre Burger, VP for foods & refreshments at Unilever, says lockdown dramatically changed the way consumers ate.

“Breakfast is one meal that’s seen a massive step change in behaviour, with fry-ups back on the menu,” he explains. “The number of cooked breakfasts served at home almost doubled during lockdown. For many, breakfast was a meal that we had on-the-go or sat at a desk. We only really dedicated time to make it more of an occasion at a weekend.”

### On-the-go decline

That last point is a pertinent one. Because very few people eat a big cooked breakfast at their desks. When offices closed their doors in March, Brits suddenly found they could make more of a meal of it during the week.

The shift towards in-home occasions prompted the “movement towards more enjoyable and indulgent breakfast occasions,” says Kantar’s Spry.

Kantar data shows just how dramatic that shift has been. Breakfasts outside the home fell by 38.4 million occasions (73%), while breakfast at home grew 8%. That means at-home breakfasts accounted for 89% of the 5.4 billion occasions in the past 12 weeks, up from 83% a year ago. By the same virtue, food picked because it can be eaten on the move saw a fall of 46.3 million (58%) occasions in that period.

So it’s not only what we’re eating that has changed. The formats have also shifted to the needs of a nation that is largely eating in their homes, rather than outdoors.

### Bigger packs

“We’ve seen a considerable amount of growth on big boxes of cereal,” says Weetabix marketing director Francesca Theoliki, who points to a 30% rise in average basket size as shoppers sought to minimise store visits in response to the pandemic.

“On the flipside: things like breakfast drinks and bars, those on-the-go things, were down by 74%.”

Get the full story at thegrocer.co.uk
STOCK UP NOW!

KIND BREAKFAST
Blueberry Almond

FROM THE UK’S #1 SNACK BAR SINGLES BRAND

HIGH FIBRE | WHOLE & NATURAL INGREDIENTS | GLUTEN FREE

check out the full range of bars
focus on... breakfast

Mango and Blackcurrant Kefir
Launch date: May 2020
Manufacturer: Biotiful Dairy

Biotiful says demand for gut health products has never been higher, with sales of its fermented milks climbing almost a third in the past year. To sustain this growth, it added two flavours in May: Mango (rsp: £2.25/500ml) and Blackcurrant (rsp: £1.45/250ml). Both are high in protein, calcium, minerals and vitamin B12.

Quaker Porridge to Go Filled Bars
Launch date: September 2020
Manufacturer: PepsiCo

These are Quaker’s first filled bars for its Porridge to Go lineup, available in Cocoa & Hazelnut and Red Berries variants (rsp: £2/2x65g). Despite the pandemic putting a dampener on on-the-go options, Quaker has high hopes for its latest SKU, pointing out that its Porridge to Go range achieved 74% growth in 2019.

Roberts Breakfast Snacking Range
Launch date: September 2020
Manufacturer: Roberts Bakery

Roberts is mixing things up for breakfast. Its new range comprises a trio of hybrids: Porridge Loaves, Pangels and Brookies (rsp: £1.25). The first promises the power of porridge in a snacking loaf; the second is a pancake-cum-bagel; and the third is a fusion of brioche and cookie. Each new product will come in two variants.

Yaar Bar
Launch date: August 2020
Manufacturer: Yaar Bar

The UK’s first quark-filled snack bar was actually launched last year. But the spread of Covid-19 prompted Yaar to rethink its recipe, adding gut-friendly kefir cultures. It rolled out the newly formulated snack (rsp: £1/40g) this month. Yaar says gut health and its role in the immune system is of growing interest to shoppers as a result of the pandemic. A Double Chocolate variant was added in June, while Yaar Strawberry will hit chillers in September.

Home baking boom
Interestingly, this trend has presented further opportunities for oats and other traditional breakfast products. “We’re really interested to see what happens with baking because oats are used in 7% of baking occasions,” says Quaker’s Grant. “We’ve seen a massive increase in home baking with 37 million extra baking occasions. That’s a very big shift, which we capitalised on with a big push on recipe inspirations.”

Indeed, Quaker’s social media feeds are filled with photography of goodies that require a bit more time in the kitchen, such as oat muffins, pancakes and overnight oats. Marmite, meanwhile, has been using #TheGreatMarmiteExperiment for a

© we have seen decline. That’s obviously about people working from home more, leaning more towards stuff that the whole family can consume.”

So it’s bad news for products such as the Weetabix On The Go range of breakfast drinks, as well as on-the-go staples such as instant porridge pots.

Quaker MD Corinne Chant concedes there has been a decline in its convenience formats. “But they are still very relevant,” she insists. “You have to bear in mind that when you think about pots, 70% of people were having them at home before lockdown anyway. What we are seeing now is a blurring between breakfast and in-home snacking. We expect to see that coming back up towards the end of the year.”

For now, though, Quaker’s hero product is its boxed oats, which have grown 14% year on year due to demand for larger formats.

James Flahavan, international business development manager at Flahavan’s Porridge, reports a similar trend in his business. In March, sales of the brand’s 1kg bulk packs were up by nearly three quarters on last year.

There is another reason why these oats, which are typically cooked in a pan, are prevailing over its convenience-led formats. “Another consequence of lockdown, with many working from home, has been an increase in the amount of time consumers have for breakfast,” he adds. “With this extra time, many consumers have experimented and expanded their breakfast repertoire. We’ve seen a 276% year-on-year increase in UK users to our website, researching recipes and discovering more about the brand.”

Indeed, consumers have been using lockdown to get better acquainted with their kitchens – and not just at breakfast time. The boom in baking has seen sales of essential items such as flour and eggs rise 49% in the four weeks to 14 June [Kantar]. A Streetbees poll for The Grocer found that 86% of Brits baked at least one cake during lockdown.

© Get the full story at thegrocer.co.uk
Driving category growth through our leading brands worth over £133m*

Offering healthy breakfast solutions with our range of products and brands.

*Nielsen total grocery retail sales value 52 w/e 11th July 2020.
CASH PRIZES TO BE WON EVERY MONDAY*
OFFERING CONSUMERS A GREAT START TO THEIR WEEK
Win sales with the No.1 Breakfast Biscuit**

*subject to terms and conditions. See www.belvita.com for full terms and conditions. **Promotion open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the end of each week. No cash alternative. Only one prize per household. The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. **The promotion is open to residents of the UK & Ireland only. No purchase necessary. Win a £10,000 cash prize. Prizes are awarded in the form of a cheque. Total prize fund: £10,000. Prizes will be awarded at the
focus on... breakfast

“We’re really interested to see what happens because oats are used in 7% of baking occasions”

© campaign that encourages its more than 36,000 Instagram followers to use the spread as a cooking ingredient. The recipes on show are as likely to divide opinion as the spread itself: they include cheddar & chive savoury flapjacks and coconut cookies with Marmite caramel centres.

“Creativity in the kitchen has been at an all-time high during lockdown,” says Burger of Unilever, which owns the Marmite brand.

“Our fans have been sharing some weird and wonderful breakfast and brunch creations with us via social, from Marmite Peanut Butter pancakes to Marmite and cheese muffins, or even Marmite sausage rolls.”

Plus, the 2019 launch of Marmite Peanut Butter and the addition of a smooth variant in January 2020 – while not specifically aimed at breakfast – have no doubt helped bolster the brand’s presence at the first meal of the day.

In percentage terms, peanut butter saw the second-greatest rise in appearances at the breakfast table after yoghurt drinks during lockdown, growing by 66% or 53 million occasions. That marks an acceleration of the long-term growth of peanut butter as the spread of choice. Supermarket sales rose to £98.9m in the 52 weeks to 25 April 2020 [IRI], overtaking jam at £96.9m.

Brands have clearly taken these figures to heart. Because there’s been no shortage of big names moving into peanut butter of late. KP, Kellogg’s Crunchy Nut (see left), Snickers and M&M’s are all looking for a slice of the market with the launch of new lines.

On announcing the launch of the Snickers and M&M’s products last month, Mars Confectionery GM Michelle Frost said peanut butter was no longer viewed as “just the perfect topping for toast” but “also a key ingredient in home baking, smoothies and the ideal accompaniment for an apple slice”.

Bread and butter

Not that toast has been doing badly of late. Because even if Brits are getting adventurous in the kitchen, it hasn’t stopped them lapping up the basics. Bread – toasted or otherwise – was served up for breakfast on 1,183 million occasions in the 12 weeks to 14 June [Kantar], a rise of 8%.

That bodes well for sales of butters and spreads. “Many consumers are now eating all three meals at home, and since sales of bread have risen, shoppers are making use of versatile products such as Flora for spreading”

The rise of innovative brunches in lockdown

Brunch has boomed during lockdown. Since the pandemic hit, Brits have cooked up weekend brunches on an extra 60 million occasions. That’s a year-on-year rise of 36% [Kantar 12 w/e 14 June 2020].

The meal’s not been as drawn out as it used to be, however. People used to take an average of 10 minutes to prepare brunch, says Kantar analyst Ali Malik. Now, they are favouring quicker options.

“In lockdown, consumers aren’t spending as much time preparing weekend brunch,” he says “We’ve seen an 11% decline.”

The usual fare is still popular, though. “Egg sales went through the roof during lockdown, a trend that has continued past the initial stockpiling period, with consistent levels exceeding 158 million eggs a week,” says Matt Davies, marketing controller at Noble Foods, owner of Happy Egg Co. “There was consistent uplift across March, April and May, with egg sales still growing at an impressive 29.9%.”

Indeed, Kantar notes an extra 53 million breakfasts and brunches featuring eggs, a rise of 25%. And bacon was rustled up on an extra 29 million occasions, a rise of 68%. Ground and liquid coffee also saw a significant spike: an extra 82 million occasions. That’s an increase of 32%.

That said, younger Brits demand more than bacon ‘n’ eggs for brunch these days. A survey commissioned by Tabasco found 20% of 18 to 35-year-olds used restaurant DIY meal kits during lockdown.

“Many have ordered specifically for the breakfast or lunch occasion,” says Paul Watmore, marketing director at Tabasco’s UK distributor, AB World Foods. “Some of the best innovations we have seen have taken classic items and given them a new lease of life,” he adds, citing as an example Le Swine’s bacon butty kit featuring milk & onion buns, mushrooms, bacon butter and chipotle ketchup.

In Tabasco’s poll, 23% of under-35s said they were looking forward to eating brunch out with friends as the hospitality sector begins reopening.

This is telling. Kantar’s analysis noted a 50k decline in brunch occasions shared for ‘together time’ among people in the same household during lockdown.

After months of being stuck indoors together, it’s no surprise Brits are now looking elsewhere for that together time.

© Get the full story at thegrocer.co.uk
focus on... breakfast

The Grocer | 8 August 2020

Get the full story at thegrocer.co.uk

Try their morning toast and bagels,” according to Catherine Lloyd, marketing director at Flora owner Upfield.

Plus, it is also well positioned to benefit from the baking trend. Lloyd says banana bread (something that’s become synonymous with lockdown) has become one of the most popular recipes on the Flora website. She adds that Upfield’s own research points to 43% of consumers cooking from scratch more during lockdown.

That same research suggests 12% have been opting for more plant-based alternatives. It may seem to contradict the aforementioned rise of sausages and bacon for brekkie.

But sources say appetite for plant-based products has continued to gather pace during the pandemic.

“Meat-free breakfasts are really popular right now, and we can attribute this to the fact that more people are adopting a flexitarian diet,” says Unilever’s Burger.

“Whether it’s for sustainability, health or animal welfare reasons, what’s clear to us is that most people still enjoy and crave the taste and texture of meat. They want meat-free alternatives to their favourite brunch staples, but they don’t want to compromise on taste, and nor should they have to.”

That all plays into the hands of The Vegetarian Butcher, the Dutch startup and supplier of the plant-based Rebel Whopper to Burger King that Unilever bought in 2018.

“A breakfast staple and perfect in a fry-up or in sandwich, The Vegetarian Butcher’s Little Willies, our vegetarian Lincolnshire-style sausages, are flavoured with sage, rich in protein and most of all don’t feel like a compromise to meat,” adds Burger. “This product is often purchased alongside avocados, baked beans and mushrooms, proving just how popular meat-free breakfasts are.”

Back to normal

Plus, let’s not forget that the meat-free category is strongly correlated with health in the eyes of consumers. And that is one thing that is regaining priority as the world is slowly returns to some kind of normal.

“Although healthy breakfasts dropped down the list of priorities during lockdown, in the latest month, they are making a return,” says Kantar’s Spry.

“Consumers are now picking more breakfast foods for being lower in fat, salt or sugar with 27 million (7%) more servings as well as more generally for health benefits, which are up 77 million (9%) servings.”

So it seems Britain’s big splurge on bacon and eggs might be short-lived. Or just limited to the eggs. Because their associations

**Eatlean Super Porridge**

Launch date: July 2020  Manufacturer: Joseph Heler

This is quite the change of pace for Eatlean, which began as a healthier cheese brand – offering high-protein cheddar with half the calories and 90% less fat than traditional variants. The brand has now ventured into breakfast with Super Porridge (rsp: £6/1kg), which is high in protein and fibre, low in sugar and enriched with vitamins. It launched alongside a range of zero-calorie syrups “for adding even more flavour and variety to breakfast solutions, without having to add sugar.”

**Perkier + Immune Porridge Pot**

Launch date: September 2020  Manufacturer: Perkier

Perkier claims this is a first: a fortified porridge pot designed to give the immune system a boost by providing the recommended daily intake of vitamins C, B12 and D. Original, Golden Syrup and Cranberry & Chia come in fully recyclable packaging (rsp: £1.25). The launch has been timed to coincide with the return of students to university.

**Purition Vegan Protein Powder**

Launch date: July 2020  Manufacturer: Purition

Purition pitches this trio of plant-based protein powders as the “all-natural antithesis of dull, insipid and ultra-processed shakes”. Coconut, Almond and Pistachio (rsps: £2.49/40g & £22.95/500g) arrived after Purition replaced the rice protein in its powders range with golden pea, organic sunflower, pumpkin and hemp seed.

**Kellogg’s Crunchy Nut Peanut Butter**

Launch date: July 2020  Manufacturer: Duerr’s

With peanut butter outselling jam – leading everyone from Mars to Marmite to launch lines – it was only a matter of time before Kellogg’s put its bestselling cereal in a jar. Crunchy Nut Peanut Butter (rsp: £2.50/340g) is the meeting of “two breakfast favourites” says Kellogg’s, which has teamed up with spreads manufacturer Duerr’s.

**Eatlean Super Porridge**

Launch date: July 2020  Manufacturer: Joseph Heler

This is quite the change of pace for Eatlean, which began as a healthier cheese brand – offering high-protein cheddar with half the calories and 90% less fat than traditional variants. The brand has now ventured into breakfast with Super Porridge (rsp: £6/1kg), which is high in protein and fibre, low in sugar and enriched with vitamins. It launched alongside a range of zero-calorie syrups “for adding even more flavour and variety to breakfast solutions, without having to add sugar.”

**Perkier + Immune Porridge Pot**

Launch date: September 2020  Manufacturer: Perkier

Perkier claims this is a first: a fortified porridge pot designed to give the immune system a boost by providing the recommended daily intake of vitamins C, B12 and D. Original, Golden Syrup and Cranberry & Chia come in fully recyclable packaging (rsp: £1.25). The launch has been timed to coincide with the return of students to university.

**Purition Vegan Protein Powder**

Launch date: July 2020  Manufacturer: Purition

Purition pitches this trio of plant-based protein powders as the “all-natural antithesis of dull, insipid and ultra-processed shakes”. Coconut, Almond and Pistachio (rsps: £2.49/40g & £22.95/500g) arrived after Purition replaced the rice protein in its powders range with golden pea, organic sunflower, pumpkin and hemp seed.

**Kellogg’s Crunchy Nut Peanut Butter**

Launch date: July 2020  Manufacturer: Duerr’s

With peanut butter outselling jam – leading everyone from Mars to Marmite to launch lines – it was only a matter of time before Kellogg’s put its bestselling cereal in a jar. Crunchy Nut Peanut Butter (rsp: £2.50/340g) is the meeting of “two breakfast favourites” says Kellogg’s, which has teamed up with spreads manufacturer Duerr’s.
Creamy Nordic Yogurt Bars wrapped in Belgian Chocolate
Now with Gut-Friendly Kefir Cultures!

NO SPOONING | CHEESECAKE TEXTURE | SOURCE OF PROTEIN | KEEP CHILLED

Get in touch to stock up
info@yaarbar.com | @yaarbars | yaarbar.com
Available at Sainsbury’s

GROW YOUR SALES
WITH HYDRATION FROM A NATURAL SOURCE

Highland Spring is the No.1 plain bottled water brand*

STOCK UP NOW

*Nielsen GB Total Coverage value 52 w/e 13.06.2020
focus on... breakfast

On-the-go brands seek to reduce pack waste

Lockdown proved a tricky time for on-the-go breakfast brands. Because, quite simply, shoppers weren’t going anywhere.

So Brits migrated to larger packs instead. “When lockdown commenced, 72% of UK adults minimised their trips to the shop,” says James Flahavan, international business development manager for Flahavan’s. “This focus saw significant growth for our larger format Organic Porridge Oats (1kg), which experienced a 39% year-on-year increase in March.”

It’s been a temporary win for the environment, as larger packs require less packaging per serving. But as the UK emerges from lockdown, demand for breakfast on the go will return. So, what are suppliers doing to reduce the impact of their products on the planet?

Troofoods, for one, decided to take action after finding that the “millions” of porridge pots sold in foodservice and the mults were largely thrown away, rather than recycled. So the brand launched plastic-free Troo No Pot Porridge+ in November.

The duo of gluten-free, low-sugar and vegan variants – Chocolate & Maca and Flaxseed Omega 3 & Cinnamon – are the UK’s first sustainable single-serve plastic-free porridge pouches, Troo claims. They are fully recyclable and less bulky than conventional porridge pots, meaning more can be transported at a time.

Other brekkie brands are also shouting about lessening about their impact on the environment – particularly the smaller operations. Moma removed the plastic lids from its porridge pots in 2019, claiming it would prevent 8,000 kg of plastic entering the market each year. Fellow breakfast brand Perkier says all of its packaging is fully recyclable.

Giant suppliers, meanwhile, are playing catch-up. “We’re going to make all our packaging compostable, recyclable or biodegradable by 2025,” says Quaker MD Corinne Chant. “We’re already close to 80% recyclable across the whole range.”

Kellogg’s is making similar moves. It is “working towards ensuring our packaging is recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025,” says the company’s packaging & sustainability director Michelle Hammond, adding that Kellogg’s has reduced the thickness of its cereal box inner bags by a third.

© with both big cooked breakfasts and health cereal sales having made them a star of lockdown. Indeed, sales of shell eggs soared 37% to £294m in the 12 weeks to 12 July [Kantar].

The British Egg Industry Council says this is a long-term trend, rather than a flash in the frying pan. After all, the past decade has seen a 28% or 2.5 billion egg increase in UK production to meet demand, to a total of 11.9 billion eggs last year, it points out.

Healthy cereals

Cereals are another potential winner from lockdown, says the brand’s activation brand manager Alice Bream. “Following lockdown, research suggests that personal health will be priority for many in light of the pandemic,” he says.

“Consumers will likely place increased significance on physical activity, nutrition and energy balance, and retailers will need to look for innovations to drive healthier baskets, outside just reformulation and R&D,” he adds.

As such, Nestlé Cereals recently teamed up with the British Nutrition Foundation to communicate the health benefits of wholegrains.

“We believe that instead of pointing consumers to eat less, and focusing on the negative aspects of our diets, we should be encouraging them to eat more healthy nutrients and ingredients,” adds Baker. “By encouraging people in this way, we believe it can drive a more positive impact and behaviour change.”

Kellogg’s has similarly high hopes for the healthier side of its portfolio. In fact, it has already seen an increased demand for healthy breakfast options since the start of lockdown, says the brand’s activation brand lead Aimee Cowan. “From April to June we saw a 29% increase in sales of our high-fibre cereals compared to the same period last year,” she adds.

“As part of our focus on encouraging healthy breakfast choices, in February this year, we announced we will be doubling our investment in our high-fibre brands and will focus on raising awareness and informing the nation about the benefits of high-fibre foods.”

In the same month, Kellogg’s launched All-Bran Prebiotic Oaty Clusters, a cereal with prebiotic fibre, intended to fuel a healthy gut.

The latter example is particularly on trend. Because the industry has sensed an opportunity in breakfast products that claim to improve gut health.

Those claims were already gaining ground before Covid-19 hit. But the growing body of research on gut health, which suggests a healthy tummy can help boost the immune system, suggests it’s a particularly salient proposition during an era-defining pandemic.

Lizi’s is one brand to have taken a punt on the proposition with last year’s launch of Lizi’s Digestive Health Granola.

“Consumers are now looking for cereals with added value, as well as being low in sugar – we need to show this by adding functional ingredients, such as vitamins and minerals to deliver specific health benefits,” says senior brand manager Alice Bream.

That explains why so many rival brands have gone down the same route. “Gut health is essential for overall health and wellbeing,” claims Heleron Rogers, co-founder of prebiotic granola brand Troo, which last summer...
“Consumers are now looking for cereals with added value, as well as being low in sugar”

Teamed up with Holland & Barrett on five co-branded SKUs with high fibre content. Come lockdown, Troo pivoted to online and began selling bundles of its Granola and Porridge products direct to consumers.

Of course, gut health isn’t the only functional claim in town. Added vitamins have also proven a hit as consumers tried to ward off coronavirus, which prompted Roberts Bakery to launch a four-strong range of health-oriented bread leaves.

The lineup includes True Vitality Good for You Bloomer, made with whole hemp seeds, brown rice flour, malted wheat flakes & immune system-boosting zinc. It’s joined by Vit Hit Loaf, a 50:50 blend of white and wholemeal flour fortified with vitamins and minerals including thiamine B1, vitamin D, vitamin B6, calcium, iron, niacin & folic acid.

“One of the outcomes of Covid-19 is an increased focus on developing immunity to future outbreaks, so shoppers are looking for food that helps boost their immune systems and provides protection,” says Roberts marketing director Megan Harrison. “Consumers are prioritising food and beverage products with health defence benefits, particularly those that improve immunity.”

On the go return

Similar insight as Harrison’s led to the reformulation of the UK’s first and only quark-filled snack bar, Yaar Bar (see p38), to include gut-friendly kefir cultures.

“Covid-19 has pushed us to incorporate gut health and adopt a more mainstream position,” says Yaar Bar CEO Andrei Garbuz. “It has acted as a catalyst for the trend.”

Encouragingly, Garbuz sees demand for on-the-go products such as his already starting to return. “We saw a drop in demand for snacking products as a result of lockdown but a pretty sharp recovery since the release of lockdown,” he says.

Yaar’s not the only brand feeling optimistic. In late June, as the government’s first lockdown-easing measures kicked in, the Great British Porridge Co added its first porridge pots to its repertoire. The brand’s founder Jacqueline Barleycorn says she had received “continual requests” for a single-serve pot, despite it never being something she had planned. Demand for the NPD has already exceeded expectations, she adds.

Days after GB Porridge unveiled its NPD, Real Foodists, the ‘clean label’ startup backed by Müller and Bel Group, made its UK debut with Yo’ridge. Its single-serve pots are billed as a healthy cross between yoghurt and porridge – plant-based, combining bio-live cultures and a blend of oats, lentils, sesame and coconut, as well as fruit and maple syrup.

“It’s the sort of innovation Brits will likely snap up as they look to lose the pounds gained from their big breakfasts. 

Get the full story at thegrocer.co.uk  8 August 2020 | The Grocer | 45