

# The Grocer

**Focus On: lunchbox by Emma Sturgess (emma-sturgess@hotmail.co.uk)**

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## The Story

**Brits are packing their lunchboxes again! Following the fall in packed lunch occasions prompted by the introduction of free school meals for kids aged five to nine we reported a year ago, the past year has witnessed a spike in packed lunches. What's driving this? With parents still making the most of free school meals (our research shows the decline in kids packed lunches has continued in the past year), which demographics are driving the growth? And what products are Brits deciding to pack in their lunch boxes?**

## Key themes:

**Demographics:** Which are the most important demographics for the lunchbox market now and how are manufacturers and retailers looking to attract them? This feature will also explore what impact of the introduction of free school meals for kids aged five to nine in 2014 has had on this market. How have brands – everyone from snack and drinks to cheese and yoghurt players – that rely on the kids' lunchboxes market been affected? How have they adapted in light of this?

**Pack lunch components:** This feature will explore in detail the choices consumers are making when it comes to packing their lunches and how these choices are changing. We will be looking at all the staple packed lunch components – fruit; sandwiches; crisps; etc – to newer, more unusual products that are trying to win greater share of the Great British lunchbox. How are trends such as health affecting this?

**Breakfast:** Of course lunchboxes aren't necessarily only for lunch; and the number of occasions in which Brits have packed their own breakfast to be consumed out of the home has actually increased over the past year. Why? Which brands have helped drive this growth? What are we choosing to pack up for breakfast on the go?

**Convenience retail and meal deals:** This feature will explore in detail the impact of convenience retailers and multiples offering £3 lunch deals and alike is having on Britain's willingness to pack a lunchbox of a morning.

**Price & promotions:** This will be paid particularly close attention in this feature. How important are deals for player looking to win share of our packed lunches? How vital is it for brands to hit certain price points in the current climate? And how is the use of meal deals by retailers affecting whether or not we will pack our own lunch?

**Innovation:** This will be key to this feature. We will be investigating how new product development has shaped the category over the past year and what is in store for shoppers in 2016. We will be profiling 12 of the most interesting launches in a separate innovation panel, featuring everyone from cheese to chocolate brands, crisps, nuts and snacks to savoury pastries, drinks and so on...

**Formats:** This feature will explore in detail how much of an opportunity there is for brands looking to get inside our lunchboxes to do so by innovating in terms of formats. Who's leading the way? Are there any good example of innovative formats from abroad?

**Advertising and marketing:** This feature will also investigate how the marketing and advertising strategies of the category's biggest brands have evolved over the past year and how they will develop in the coming year to sustain growth or return brands to growth.

**Kids products:** We speak to the major kids players about the impact of free kids meals and explore how they have been forced to adapt. How are lunchbox orientated products being made more 'healthy' to satisfy health conscious parents?

**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?