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F O I L E D

ISSUE 2

Traceability matters

Legislation & traceability

Christmas all wrapped up

How to make sure no product is left on the shelf

Cooking around the world

Ovens vs microwaves

What the fad

Catering for the dieting market



EDITOR'S LETTER

Remember the headlines? The horsemeat scandal of 2013 highlighted a colossal error in traceability for the food industry. Lessons learned, today's industry leaders take far greater responsibility — not only in relation to supplier traceability, but also in maintaining a level of trust between themselves and the public.

Earlier this year, attendees at the Food Fraud conference discussed methods to protect the consumer from future food contamination and recall errors, like the infamous horsemeat scandal. One of the suggestions? A spread of responsibility across the food supply chain.

The conference called for tighter regulations across the whole food pipeline, from farming and processing, right through to packaging and logistics. In fact, we are beginning to see

a paradigm shift in the causes the industry — and its suppliers — care about.

No longer is processing just about profit. Today, a greater onus for environmental issues is seeing manufacturers move away from unsustainable packaging materials. What's more, increased numbers of manufacturers, processors and suppliers are joining associations and trade bodies to demonstrate their dedication to causes like sustainability, traceability and compliance.

In issue 2 of *Foiled*, we explain how processors and suppliers can work together to take responsibility for the wider issues our operations have an impact on.

Miguel Campos

Miguel Campos

A WORD FROM... JOHN THRELFALL Finance director of Advanta



There are plenty of reasons for Advanta's excellent reputation in the food industry. For more than a decade, reliability has been an integral value. In fact, Advanta's entire workforce is dedicated to delivering high quality products at competitive costs.

What's more, our commitment to quality is recognised as a benchmark in industry — we are the first foil container manufacturer in Europe to be accredited by the British Retail Consortium for ensuring quality through every stage of the product lifecycle. Put simply, we refuse to prioritise profit over quality.

To find out more about Advanta's commitments to quality, hygiene and the environment. Visit www.advantapack.com.

CONTENTS

4

Traceability matters
Legislation & traceability

6

The retailers view:
Sustainable packaging

7

Advantages of associations
Demonstrating dedication to
the cause

8

Christmas all wrapped up
How to make sure no product is
left on the shelf

10

Cooking around the world
Ovens vs microwaves

11

What the fad
Catering for the dieting market



TRACEABILITY MATTERS

Supermarket food recalls have increased by 44 per cent in the last three years, that's according to reports from January 2018. Widely publicised stories, like the horsemeat scandal of 2013, have raised consumer awareness of traceability and today, the food industry has never been under closer scrutiny.

Remember the headlines? Traces of horsemeat were discovered in frozen burgers and ready meals on the shelves in several of the UK's leading supermarkets, including Tesco and Aldi. Until this point, the public was almost clueless to the concept of food crime or the importance of traceability.

Professor Chris Elliott, a long-time food safety specialist, headed the initial investigation into the scandal at the time. When *The Guardian* looked back at how the industry had changed as a result, Elliott explained that the big

problem when the scandal broke was that no one was quite sure who was responsible.

"It was a battle between different police forces and government departments and it took two to three months for the responsibility to get assigned, and if you give criminals two to three months to get away, you're not going to catch too many of them."

Today, the responsibility has been put firmly into the hands of the Food Standards Agency and its Food Crime Unit. This unit works with police forces across of the country, with Europol, and with the Food Fraud Network, which links food safety authorities across Europe.

Following the horsemeat investigation, Elliott explained that major supermarkets are now mapping out their supply chains to assess the risk, but managing this process it is an

enormous project. For smaller supermarkets and independent food and retail outlets in particular, the resources required are huge, so, for them, warns Elliott, the risk has not necessarily been diminished.

As a potential solution, Elliott suggests that larger companies should support smaller supermarkets and that trade groups should collect and distribute information on fraud to others in the food industry.

Since the horsemeat scandal, food fraud has remained a hot topic. In fact, New Food magazine launched the Food Fraud conference in 2017. The second edition of the conference, held on March 01, 2018 in London, brought together leaders in the food industry to discuss how to identify food fraud, what is being done to prevent future incidents across the supply chain and to examine enforcement of regulations.



Accidentally on purpose

The horsemeat scandal may have caused public outrage, but most food recalls are connected to accidental contamination, rather than food crime. While this is much less sinister, it is just as dangerous to consumers. According to the Food Safety Magazine, there were 42 large scale recalls in the US alone for contamination with extraneous materials in 2017. McCain Foods USA recalled some of its Roundy's brand and Harris Teeter brand frozen hash browns due to reports of "extraneous golf ball materials" — yes, you read that correctly.

McCain believes the contamination occurred during the potato harvesting period, where golf balls must have inadvertently made it to the farm.

Topping the reasons for recalls in 2017, however, was not appropriately declaring allergens on food labels. Tyson

Foods, Inc. recalled 2.4 million pounds of ready-to-eat breaded chicken products as they may have contained milk, but this was not declared on the label.

However, this mistake did not originate with the poultry company, but an ingredient a supplier had provided, which included breadcrumbs that contained milk. Including the other food companies that were affected by this mistake, 3.7 million pounds of food was recalled.

Recalls like this erode the confidence of consumers, so the financial hit that food manufacturers take is much deeper than the physical cost of the recall and wasted product. Brand loyalty is a delicate thing, and it is easily won or lost on press coverage of product success or failure.

Manufacturers must select suppliers they know will reliably adhere to any

traceability requirements, no matter how small a contribution they appear to be making to bringing a product to market.

For example, the Food Standards Agency has General Food Law Regulations that cover every aspect of the food manufacturing pipeline, from ingredient production to packaging. When selecting suppliers, manufacturers must make sure you can trust that they adhere to every article of these regulations.

The spike in recalls in recent years could be interpreted as a positive, demonstrating that the industry is paying closer attention and protecting the public from harm. However, if we don't come together and reduce the number of necessary recalls, we risk alienating the public completely. Make traceability a priority now.

THE RETAILERS VIEW: SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING



packaging fully recyclable or compostable by this time.

Asda is taking the collaborative approach, joining forces with the UK's leading academic knowledge base on packaging, The Retail Institute at Leeds Beckett University. Like Tesco, Asda plans to make all its own brand packaging 100 per cent recyclable by 2025 as part of its Plastic Unwrapped initiative.

One million tonnes of plastic waste are generated by supermarkets in the UK each year. Now, large retailers are standing up and taking charge of this issue.

Iceland gained huge media exposure at the beginning of 2018, when it announced its plans to be plastic-free across its own label products. The company has challenged itself to complete this mission in just five years and if successful, will become the first major retailer to do this.

"The onus is on retailers, as leading contributors to plastic packaging pollution and waste, to take a stand and deliver meaningful change," explained Iceland's managing director, Richard Walker. "Other supermarkets, and the retail industry as a whole, should follow suit and offer similar commitments during 2018. This is a time for collaboration."

Other supermarkets have followed suit rapidly. Tesco set its deadline to 2025, aiming to make all its

"In Plastic Unwrapped – our pledge to use less and recycle more," explained Asda's CEO, Roger Burnley. "We've detailed what we've already done, what more we'll do in the next 12 months, and how we're going to keep working to reduce avoidable plastic and improve the recyclability of our products even further.

"It's a balance between avoiding plastic where we can but recognising that, currently, there are instances where some plastic is necessary to make sure our products reach our customers in the best condition, to avoid waste and have a smaller environmental footprint than the alternatives."

Burnley makes the important point that some plastic packaging plays an important role in protecting food and extending shelf life, and if this was to be completely removed, it could lead to an increase in food waste —another problem may retailers are contending with.

Sainbury's CEO, John Rogers has also joined the conversation,

"It's very important that we take responsibility for how we manage the impact that we have on the environment. Not just on a national level, but also on a global basis. We have thousands of suppliers around the globe and we care about the effects that those suppliers have on their local environments as well as our own."

"All the key retailers are making bold plans to reduce non-recyclable food packaging"

Sainbury's has committed to reducing and optimising own-brand packaging, much like Asda and Tesco. The company has already removed an impressive 55 tonnes of plastic from production, simply by making its cotton buds fully biodegradable and plastic-free. The company is working very closely with its suppliers to redesign packaging and reduce overall weight.

All the key retailers are making bold plans to reduce non-recyclable food packaging, and now, it is time for packaging suppliers to be flexible and capable enough to react.

One million tonnes of waste of plastic may be generated annually by supermarkets currently, but this figure is set to reduce drastically due to impressive collaboration taking place across local authorities, retailers and suppliers.

ADVANTAGES OF ASSOCIATIONS

Demonstrating dedication to the cause

There's an association for almost everything. Pylon appreciation? There's a group for you. Karate enthusiast with a penchant for medieval costumes? Don't fret. The Association for Renaissance Martial Arts has got you covered. But, what associations are relevant for those operating in the food manufacturing industry?

Firstly, what exactly is a trade association? Generally speaking, they are industry specific groups, formed by a governing body made up of elected representatives. They are often non-profit associations, with a goal to promote best practice in a specific industry field. Put simply, trade associations are the good guys, giving smaller organisations and individuals the opportunity to act as a co-ordinated voice for their industry.

Take aluminium recycling as an example. Advanta is a proud and active member of ALUPRO, an aluminium packaging recycling organisation that's responsible for several recycling initiatives. As a manufacturer of aluminium food

packaging, Advanta relies on ALUPRO to provide unbiased advice on aspects of aluminium collecting, sorting and handling. The organisation is working to meet industry obligations to meet and exceed recycling targets for aluminium — not to make a profit, but to make a difference.

But, how does trade association membership benefit the customer? Essentially, it proves a business is committed to a specific cause. It also has measures ensures that they are operating in accordance to external industry standards — whether that is for aluminium recycling targets, meeting food hygiene standards or reducing food waste.

However, trade association membership isn't the only way to demonstrate a level of commitment beyond making profit. Collaboration with charities can also determine how dedicated a company is to a specific cause.

Waste reduction charity, WRAP, works with businesses to inform them of ways to improve resource

efficiency. As a registered charity, 14 per cent of WRAP's total income came from donations from businesses, trusts and foundations. In return, WRAP provides businesses with, 'a safe, non-competitive space where businesses can share best practice and collaborate to deliver change.'

There is a clear advantage of opting for suppliers that are trade association members — whether the association is for material recycling initiatives or schemes for the reduction of food waste. Membership is often the sign of a reputable and trustworthy organisation, so when you are selecting suppliers for your operation, ask about their association memberships and charity work.

That said, there really is an association for almost everything. If all else fails, you might find yourself an unusual new hobby, Medieval nun chucks at the ready.



CHRISTMAS ALL WRAPPED UP

How to make sure no product is left on the shelf

How soon is too soon to start playing Christmas music? We all heatedly debate this point every year. However, whether you're all for blasting Wizard and Wham from the start of September or prefer to confine the festivities to the end of December, those of us in the food sector have to think about Christmas all year round.

The Guardian reported that, in the final weeks before Christmas 2017, the UK public spent a phenomenal £4.2bn on food and drink. According to the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) \$19bn was spent in the same period in Australia, and in the US 22 million turkeys were consumed across the country on the big day.

There's no doubt that Christmas holds massive potential for profit. Even large corporations rely on the festive season, with John Lewis claiming it generates 80 per cent of its annual profit on the run up to Christmas. Knowing this, it's hardly surprising that the company puts so much thought into their seasonal advertising.

Knowing how important it is for your business' success to stand out from the crowd, you can't afford to get it wrong when adding new Christmas lines to your product line up. That's why you need to start planning now.

It really is Christmas every day

Consumers' expectations on how and where they spend their Christmas cash has changed in recent years, fuelling much of the need to treat preparation for the season like a military operation. Amanda Cogan, operational manager at Rick Bestwick North, explained to the Food Storage & Distribution Federation that a surge in online shopping has resulted in the customer food to order (CFTO) trend growing exponentially.

She said, "CFTO is growing at a rate of knots and directly affecting food manufacturers. Manufacturing capabilities have led to products having to be frozen and then date coded and

up tempered. These can often be complicated operations with critical timings, requiring the need for onsite facilities."

Because of this changing consumer behaviour, Cogan advises that food manufacturers should start planning Christmas much earlier in the year.

"Planning the supply chain, logistics and delivery to supermarkets and consumers simply cannot be handled at the last minute"

Planning the supply chain, logistics and delivery to supermarkets and consumers simply cannot be handled at the last minute. To ensure success, you should meet with your suppliers as early as possible in the planning phase to share timeline and projected deadlines. The sooner you can book space to have ingredients delivered, packaging manufactured



and storage and delivery times secured, the easier the whole process becomes.

Remember, you are up against hundreds of other manufacturers preparing for the end of the year. So, you want to make sure you work with suppliers that have the capacity to undertake the volume of work required no matter the timescales on the table.

Think of the wrapping

The festive season poses challenges for food manufacturers in relation to trends, recipes and increased demand. However, manufacturers cannot forget about packaging requirements for these seasonal products.

When splashing cash for festive foods, consumers expect food packaging to live up to the same high standards as the foods contained within it. When charging a premium for festive food products, manufacturers should also expect to spend more on packaging to achieve a high-quality standard across every aspect of the product.

“Manufacturers should consider choosing packaging that can withstand freezing temperatures”

What’s more, manufacturers should consider choosing packaging that can withstand freezing temperatures. Most of us have experienced over-purchasing of food during the Christmas period. Consumers have the option to bin this surplus of food or put it in the freezer for use later. Manufacturers should take this into consideration when producing Christmas food and ensure packaging is suitable for home freezing.

Whether you wish it could be Christmas every day or prefer refraining from festive jingles until the night before — food manufacturers must get their festive food plans in place well in advance.

Top tips

Timing:

Plan well ahead and make sure you and your supply chain adhere to schedules.

Capacity:

Work with suppliers that can accommodate your time lines and the volume required, and who can support you if sales exceed expectations and you need to produce more product at short notice.

Packaging:

Don’t make the mistake of choosing standard packaging. Consider your customers’ needs during this period and their expectations of the products they are purchasing.



COOKING AROUND THE WORLD

The microwave oven was invented by accident during World War II. Physicist Percy Spencer noticed his microwave radar transmitter melted a candy bar in his pocket, leading him to develop the microwave. Here, we compare the cultural impact on why people may or may not choose to cook in a microwave.

The home microwave was created in 1955 and retailed at \$1,295. This is the equivalent of \$12,000 in 2018, so it was a luxury few could afford. Percy Spencer died in 1970, at which point only one per cent of US households owned a microwave. These days, however, approximately 90 per cent of Americans have one.

A comprehensive study published in the Nutrition Journal in 2013 showed that compared with the 1960s, people in the US now spend much less time preparing meals, with lack of time cited as a major barrier to lengthy meal preparation. This has led to a huge demand for ready-cooked meals to meet the demand of daily life, as well as fuelling the popularity of the microwave oven.

However, regional and cultural preferences have a massive impact on choice of cooking medium.

South Africa

In South Africa, a country with a population of 50 million, cooking habits and food preferences vary greatly across racial and economic lines. More than 10.1 million

people in this country use solid fuels for cooking, using biomass-fuelled cook stoves and open fires powered by wood, coal or paraffin.

The braai is the South African take on the barbeque, using a wood fire to cook flavoursome meats outside. A braai is acceptable for any occasion; birthday, housewarming or just for a weekend meal. The hosts will often buy pre-packaged meals that can be used directly on the braai. Aluminium packaging is perfect for this, as it doesn't melt and it maintains the beautiful, barbeque flavour.

Competition for countertop space

Moving 7000 miles away from South Africa you find yet another story. Typically, far-eastern Asian households rely heavily on microwave cooking due to space limitations in the kitchen. In Hong Kong, for example, every square metre of space is precious in small apartments. Installing a large gas or electric oven is a luxury that many simply don't have the room for.

Another way residents get around this problem is by using a small, counter-top gas stove. You can often find people in Asia placing foil tray ready meals directly onto this flame as a convenient option. Apartments in New York also face similar space limitations. In this instance, most kitchens have a hob and a microwave in the

cooking area, without a full standing oven.

Microwave misconceptions

Wherever you are in the world, people are generally getting pickier about what they put in their body. Over time, food that is cooked in the microwave has picked up a reputation of lacking in nutrients and being highly processed.

On this matter, Howard Telford, an industry analyst at Euromonitor told Quartz magazine, "The health argument has as much, if not more, to do with the actual foods people prepare in the microwave."

Microwave cooking isn't the problem, and with more healthy and nutritious meals on the market than ever before, this misconception should be quashed.

Finally, let's tackle one more misconception. Many people think aluminium foil trays cannot be used in the microwave due to safety issues. Actually, both wrinkle-wall and smooth-wall foil trays are microwavable in a modern style microwave oven. Ultimately, consumers can cook foil-packaged ready meals in the microwave, oven, or even on a braai.

Isn't that what it is all about? Giving the consumer the option to cook food however they like. I'm sure that Percy Spencer would be impressed by the diversity of modern cooking methods.



WHAT THE FAD

Catering for the dieting market

Crowned as the bestselling kitchen gadget of 2015, the spiraliser was embraced by consumers eager to transform vegetables into ribbons and curls to replace pasta. However, to cater for those who didn't want to invest in the machine, demand also rose for pre-prepared spiralised foods. Here, we explain how food developers can collaborate with packaging manufacturers to cater for the ever-changing diet food market.

Low-carb, high-protein, keto, paleo or macrobiotic — just Googling the word 'diet' can generate millions of search results. With so many diet plans out there, each promising their own version of better health and weight loss, it's no surprise that dieters often turn to the most convenient option when looking to lose weight.

In the United States, Americans spend an average of \$2.5 billion on commercial diet plans every year. Weight Watchers, the world's most popular commercial diet program, boasts over 1.1 million active members, many of which rely on the company's pre-packaged ready meals to stay within the programs calorie-restricted 'points' system.

However, these handily packaged diet foods aren't just for those that subscribe to the program. In the United Kingdom alone, around 3.2 million people purchase ready meals from the brand each year. Suggesting that, for modern dieters, it's all about convenience.

When demand rose for spiralised vegetables in 2015, ready meal manufacturers were quick to catch on to the trend, creating new versions of ready meal classics — courgetti bolognese, for example. But, to keep these vegetables fresh after being exposed to the elements, striking a balance between preserving freshness and prolonging their shelf life can pose a challenge.

One of the notorious downfalls of ready meals is their high salt content. When attempting to preserve perishable food, like spiralised vegetables, sodium levels are often increased. However, for diet food manufacturers, this additional salt damages the health merits of the meal.

Instead of contaminating food with additional additives, there are more effective ways to preserve

food, by using the correct packaging. For example, rather than opting for a basic plastic tray and film, choose a smooth wall tray that can be properly sealed. Not only will this protect the perishable food items, it will improve the shelf life of the meal itself.

It is also important that developers consider how the food itself could affect the performance of the packaging. Some fruits and vegetables, like tomatoes, contain levels of acidity that are strong enough to weaken the packaging of ready meals. While this may not eat through the entire container, it can damage the seal, meaning the food will spoil quicker.

The mass uptake of commercial diet plans and an increased consumption of ready meals proves that, for modern dieters, convenience is everything. To satisfy the diet market's appetite for low-calorie convenience, food developers should collaborate with packaging experts to provide healthy, on trend meals, that will deliver the shelf life required for today's busy dieters.

