

In uncertain times, look for value, or excuses...

Poor Value perceptions proved a big problem for many new branded products this month and with food prices rising by average of 1.4% in June and political uncertainty continuing to erode consumer confidence, this doesn't bode well for future innovation. But, there is also evidence that consumers are prepared to pay if a product is worth it for them; they may simply buy less often, or instead of eating out. Crush Food's Super Hero Granola illustrates: almost irresistible with its "good mix of ingredients" and "lovely cinnamon flavour" but at £4.45 for a 500g pouch, viewed as an occasional breakfast indulgence. £3.99 for a 300g bag of crisps was wildly out of court for weekend snacking but Savoursmith's Champers & Serrano Chilli Crisps in its "glitzy" packaging was ideal to share with friends for special occasions, as was M&S's equally innovative Chocolate Fruit & Nut Salami.

Meanwhile, according to a survey by Diabete's UK¹, 3/5ths of consumers want to eat more vegetables, but claimed they are 'too expensive' or complained they had a tendency to go off, took too long to prepare, or were too messy to eat. A litany of reasons why the average consumer just can't quite eat enough fruit and veg that goes back to Adam and Eve, although that apple caused a few problems! We constantly see high ratings for new fresh fruit and veg, virtue signalling perhaps, but how often do they enter the average shopping basket? Take Morrison's Blush Pears, there were no complaints about the pristine appearance of the "well protected" fruit with a top quartile rating. Or Dragon Potatoes from Lidl welcomed for their fun and novelty, 9 in 10 agreed these black potatoes brought something 'new and different' to the category, but will over 50% who see them actually buy and try them even at 59p?

Here is just a selection of the many new interesting products we have tested this month:

SHOWCASE PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



Like a "posh Pot Noodle", these Soba Classic Noodles were thought to offer a more authentic oriental snack (Review 170606).



Another authentic product was Joe DeLuca's Gelato which "tasted like real strawberries and cream".
Review 170611)



Morrisons' Argentinian Blush Pears: "sweet" and perfectly ripe (Review 170613)



No matter how good the health benefits, the fact this Alpro Provamel Macadamia drink looked "curdled" immediately proved off-putting (Review 170612)



More successful was Alpro's Hazelnut Chocolate Ice Cream. A healthy, dairy free treat that appealed the mainstream.
(Review 170635)



Bang on the beetroot trend, Tesco's Beetroot Burgers were a healthy treat for the BBQ (Review 170617)



Lidl's Dragon Egg Potatoes: bringing some fun to the potato fixture.
(Review 170616)

¹ reported in The Times, 12/17