

NEW YEAR, FRESH INNOVATION

January, a time to look ahead, set new resolutions and reassess the diet after the excess of the festive season. A time of clear challenge for retailers and suppliers as consumers cut back on their spending, but also an opportunity as food and drink plays a pivotal role in any lifestyle changes: food to fuel increased exercise regimes, to enrich mind and body and to kick start any specialist diets. With the well-publicised Veganuary in full swing, we’ve tested a number of meat free options on the market as well as a small, but growing, number of vegan foods, including Fry’s Vegan Sausage Roll (34), which fooled many by tasting “*exactly like meat*”. There has also been the customary glut of low fat/calorie foods on the market – something that we witness every year. While we predict a growing Health market in 2018, we feel there could be a backlash against diets that restrict whole food groups (unless for clear medical reasons) and a growth in the number of healthy convenience food. We are increasingly a nation eating on the hoof. When we asked our consumer panel¹ about how often they sat down at a table to eat a meal with their family, only around half did so every day, 1 in 5 did so ‘once or twice a week’ and 16% only at weekends. 13% never sat down at a table at all and that’s for any meal at any time of the week. Despite the continuing trend towards healthy eating, we clearly still love our comfort food – 3 out of the top 10 scoring lines of 2017 were chips. Look out for our Top 100 Review and our Predictions for 2018 by visiting our website www.cambridgemr.com.

This month’s new product reviews contain plenty of indulgent treats to offset the more health-oriented launches as well as the movement of many familiar names into new categories:

SHOWCASE PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



No tea in sight: It was the distinctive taste of berries as well as the Vitamin B6 content that made Tetley’s Super Squash such a hit with consumers. 45/50
(Review: 180111)



Another healthy drink: this time Sugar Free. The refreshing Watermelon Water from Volvic **(Review: 180136)**



Longstanding vegetarian food producer Cauldron Foods offers consumers a new bean option: Aduki Bean Melts **(Review: 180118)**



Nature’s Path ticked all the boxes with its Organic and Gluten Free Superflakes. **(Review: 180126)**



Walkers moves its Sunbites brand into the nut category. Especially appealing was the high protein and fibre content in this Crunchy Whole Nuts Mix **(Review: 180132)**



The Müller name on Frijj’s new Milkshake was a quality endorsement. Not for those on dry January, this Irish Coffee flavour “*tasted like Baileys*” **(Review: 180135)**



Jacob’s Ciabatta Caramelised Onion Crackers – bringing a touch of Italian magic to the cracker aisle. **(Review: 180106)**

¹ Find out more about our Consumer i Panel of carefully selected ‘foodie’ members. 69 responded to our Quick Poll on frequency of sitting down at the table to eat with the family each week.