

## Relevance: It's not enough to be nice, it has to fit with lifestyle

**V**egetable foods have been the talk of 2018 so far, with the much publicised Veganuary followed by a series of meat safety scandals adding fuel to the view that a meat-free, or at least a meat-reduced life, is the way forward. A double win: save the planet and your waistline (although vegetarian processed foods aren't necessarily any lower in fat/calories). Half the population now eats meat three times or less each week, so the flow of new meat-free launches is growing, including Sainsbury's Vegan-friendly Mushroom Mince, Cauldron Vegan Indian Bites and this month's Showcase from Morrisons. There's another benefit too, in that cutting down on meat consumption can also trim the food bill. Data released in the month indicates that consumer spending hit a five-year low and that consumer confidence is shaky, creating ideal conditions for further growth by the Discounters. Tesco certainly thinks so, as speculation continues that they are considering a new format of discount stores amongst a range of possible options arising out of their now agreed take-over of the Booker Group. While value for money continues to be important for new products tested this month, innovations can still do well, even if they are considered expensive. This is particularly true for well-known brands such as McVitie's and Kellogg's (their No Added Sugar Granola matched the norm despite being rated well below average for Value) and there is a similar case for M&S, (whose premium priced Coconut & Cocoa Nib Breakfast Bars remained a tempting buy, but only because they tasted so "luxurious"). The key is quality *and* relevance. We weight the Foodfax Overall Score by Value for Money and Purchase Intention: a reality check to identify those new launches that are likely to become part of the consumer repertoire. Combining Innovation and Relevance is the holy grail for food manufacturers and retailers. Get that right, as this month's Showcase demonstrates, and you're onto a winner.

**Brand or Own Label: think innovation, think NPDP, think Cambridge MR for the best advice and value for money.**

### SHOWCASE PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



A new category maximum was set by **Morrisons'** well executed **Melting Mature Cheddar and Rice Stuffed Mushrooms** (46/50). (Review: 180208)

A high scoring month with around 40% of products rated in the top 25% of their peer group category:



**Mushroom Mince** from **Sainsbury's**: 'a great alternative to traditional mince' and bang on trend. (Review: 180204)



Over half were moved to recommend **Yeo Valley's** new **Baobab & Vanilla Yogurt** even though many still asked the question: 'What is baobab?' (Review: 180209)



**Sainsbury's Roasted Cauliflower Steaks** had an added marinade to help justify the £2.00 price point (Review: 180226)



**McVitie's** capitalise on their healthy **Go Ahead** credentials with the introduction of **Pretzel Bites**. (Review: 180221)



A squeeze was all that was needed to crack the chocolate shell in **Magnum's White Vanilla Ice Cream** – great fun and highly indulgent. (Review: 180222)



Less relevant from the outset was **Sandow's Cold Brew Coffee** (Ref 180236) & **Tuk Tuk's Chai** (Review: 180223). Both drinks had few converts after trial.