



Boosting Sales of Healthy
Food & Drink Products By

Tailoring Products to Suit Specific Markets

 **Interreg**
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 **CAHFES**

Module Contents

1.

Targeting Sales Using Your Market & Consumer Knowledge
Why Tailor Your Products ?

2.

Current Customers
New Occasions
Seasonal Opportunities
Events Based Opportunities
Support Retailer CSR Initiatives

3.

New Customers
Convincing New Customers
Remove A Customer Barrier
Solve A Customer Dilemma
Embrace the Healthy Snacking Trend
Adapt to New Health Agendas
Support Healthy Choices
Capitalise Upon Public Health Campaigns

4.

New Markets
Societal Trends Can Open New Market Opportunities
Exporting To International Markets Events Based Opportunities
Understand Cultural & Religious Considerations In Export Markets
Be Aware of Legal Restrictions In Export Markets

Targeting Sales Using Your Market & Consumer Knowledge

Throughout the training modules in the AHFES Consumer Insight & Market Understanding programme, you will have been building a pool of knowledge to help you decide how best to approach and win consumers in your market sector.

Your market research will have revealed how your particular market sector operates, its size, context and dynamics, the key players within it, how the sector is growing & evolving and what trends are driving change.

By exploring consumer behaviours, identifying their pains & gains and what would delight them, you now have a better understanding of how to ensure your products appeal to your target customers.

You have learnt how to generate and select your “Sparkle Ideas”, defined the brand values that will underpin your brand and product offer, and benchmarked your offer against that of your competitors.

You are also now aware that there are various legal implications of your brand, product, operating procedures and responsibilities. Armed with all this information you can now consider if tailoring products to specific markets will boost your sales.

Why Tailor Your Products ?

CURRENT CUSTOMERS

As you build a deeper insight into your current customer needs, you may realise there are ways that you could fine tune your product to encourage them to purchase more frequently or in larger quantities.

NEW CUSTOMERS

Your market research might have revealed that with some changes in format or usage methods, your products could appeal to consumers who haven't considered your product yet.

NEW MARKETS

New opportunities might exist in markets that you had not previously considered; with some adaptations your products could find new routes to market, sales channels and growth opportunities.

Current Customers

What do you know about your current customers ?

Could you use the insight you have into your current customers to fine tune your products in ways that meet their needs and desires even better ?

This could boost your sales by encouraging them to purchase your products more frequently or in larger quantities.

Current Customers – New Occasions ...

Consider how you might make your product even more popular with current customers by demonstrating new, relevant usage occasions to them ...

For example

Could you adapt a product associated with lunch or evening meals so it could be served for breakfast ?

Or shift a snack item into a lunchtime offer ?

Or allow the customer to use your product on the go or during outdoor leisure & sports activities ?



Leading preserves manufacturer, Hero, have created a range of vegetable based “jam” style products for the Spanish market as alternatives for use on bread or in recipes which are designed to combat falling sales of sugary products.

Traditionally eaten as a salad item, by demonstrating that avocado is delicious served with eggs or on toast, avocado producers have driven incremental sales from the new breakfast eating occasion.



By creating “Porridge To Go” in bars similar to a flapjack, breakfast brand Quaker Oats have shifted their market from one which was a “hot breakfast with a spoon” occasion, to cold, handheld, portable and ideal for on the go or outdoor activities.

Seasonal Opportunities ...

Putting an appealing seasonal twist – think Christmas, Hallowe'en or Summer - on your mainstream product can stimulate increased sales from not only from existing customers, but also by appealing to new consumers.

Be careful though

- Planning volumes correctly is critical – stock left after the event may end up being sold at reduced prices or as food waste.
- Or you may be left with redundant packaging which will have to be written off.
- Ensuring that you hit the correct timings is also vital – if you don't have your products defined, tested, produced and distributed by the critical dates you will miss the whole event !



Marks & Spencer's, a premium food retailer in the UK, always feature a wide range of Hallowe'en food products during October

Positioning your products to appeal to BBQ's and outdoor meal occasions can keep you front of mind in the Summer months



These fun Carlota's biscuits from El Corte Inglés in Spain are just one of numerous food products designed to attract sales over the Christmas period

Events Based Opportunities ...

In a similar way to annual seasonal sales, regular or ad hoc events may offer you opportunities to adapt your products & marketing to achieve additional sales

Examples might include

Highlighting your healthy credentials in January, when consumers are in a mindset to follow healthy eating regimes or have a new interest in fitness

Linking to national or international sporting events – but be careful not to infringe licencing rights which are only permit logos and other marketing assets to be used by contracted sponsors

Regional or local festivals or events which may attract visitors or stimulate new eating occasions in your area

Again great care and extensive planning are needed to ensure appropriate stock levels and timings are met.

The international promotion of Veganuary each January has helped stimulate consumer interest in Vegan products both during that month and throughout the year

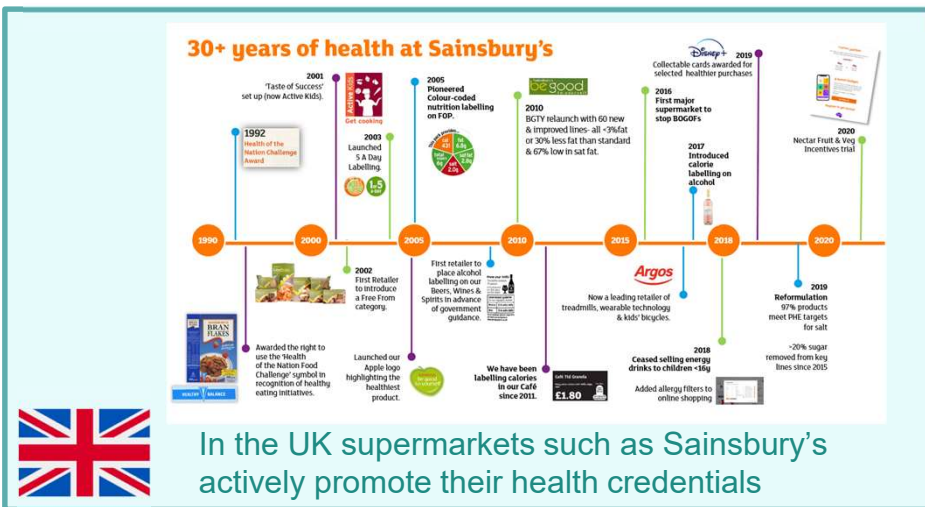


Events such as World Cup football can generate sales opportunities amongst enthusiastic fans within countries who's teams have qualified to take part

Each year the "Ironman" event attracts thousands of extremely health & fitness conscious competitors and their supporters to Pembrokeshire, boosting the local economy.



Support Retailer CSR Initiatives ...



- Many major food retailers have responded to public health campaigns and consumer desires to provide more healthy food and drink choices with nutritional improvement programmes for their own brands of products as part of their corporate social responsibility strategies.
- This has created opportunities for any food & drink manufacturing businesses who have become skilled in reformulating or creating products to hit very specific nutritional targets to supply new innovative private label products .
- The challenge is to combine the culinary skills of your Development Chef with a good knowledge of human nutrition.
- You will need an understanding of the food science behind the interactions of raw materials and ingredients, both new and traditional, as well as how these evolve over shelf life and change during cooking .

New Customers

What has your market research has revealed to you about people who don't buy your product ?

Are there some changes in the packaging format, the way you present the product or suggestions you could make as to how and when new groups of consumers could use your products that could make them appeal to people who haven't considered buying your products yet ?

Convincing New Customers ...

Understanding what may have stopped consumers from buying your product can be a key to adapting a product to meet their needs

There could be a variety of reasons

- Not understanding how the product fits in their lifestyle
- Flavours not appealing
- Pack size too large or too small
- Uncertain about the quality
- Too expensive
- Feel it's too time consuming to prepare
- Not confident to cook the product
- Contains ingredients they can't eat or don't like
- Already have a favourite alternative

Have you identified a group of potential new customers for whom you might need to take a different approach with your products ?



Remove a Customer Barrier ...

- For example, Keohane's of Bantry in Ireland conducted consumer research which revealed that consumers didn't like handling raw fish which put them off buying fish to cook at home, even though fish is a healthy diet choice.
- So in 2014 Keohane's launched a innovative range of ready to cook fish fillets in microwaveable packaging – the first in Europe.
- This resulting in them securing listings with major retailers and led to sales growth reported to be €11m over a 4 year period.



Solve a Customer Dilemma ...

- Yoplait realised that French parents would like to put pots of Petit Filous into their children's lunchboxes, but were worried that the yogurts would not be safe to eat having been out of refrigeration for several hours.
- So on their website in France, along with providing nutritional information, Yoplait reassure parents that their products are suitable to be stored for a maximum of 8 hours in an isothermal cooler bag whilst still maintaining food safety.
- Such claims obviously have to be supported with appropriate & rigorous food safety testing but bring lunchbox eating occasions into scope thus increasing sales opportunities.

Les Petits Filous Tub's contiennent du calcium et de la Vitamine D pour la croissance des os^{**}: 2 Tub's représentent **15% des AQR* en Calcium et 50% des AQR* en Vitamine D** ! Ils se conservent jusqu'à 8h hors du frigo^{***}.

**Le calcium et la vitamine D sont nécessaires à une croissance et à un développement osseux normaux des enfants.

*** Pour une consommation hors domicile, placer le produit dans un sac isotherme. Au-delà de 8h hors du frigo, le produit doit être jeté.



Embrace the Healthy Snacking Trend ...

- French brand N.A. Nature Addicts offers a range of savoury and sweet snacks marketed on a healthy, “better for you” ingredients & recipe composition platform.
- The brand uses raw material bases such as peas, beans, rice and fruits and innovative blends of dried fruits, nuts and seeds and presents them in pocket sized snacking bags.
- Their contemporary design is carried on opaque packaging which is stated to allow the products to be preservative free.
- They also offer a complementary healthy drinks range in also on the go packaging.
- Attractively printed SRP (Shelf Ready Packaging) is available to support retail display in “impulse purchase” positions.
- Marketing includes targeting seasonal occasions where traditionally less healthy confectionery products would dominate consumer’s attention.





Adapt to New Health Agendas ...

Welsh soft drinks firm Radnor Hills were quick to adapt to new official requirements that only drinks meeting strict nutritional guidelines could be drunk on school premises.

They created new, innovative blends and advise which products are compliant with requirements in the various regions of the UK.

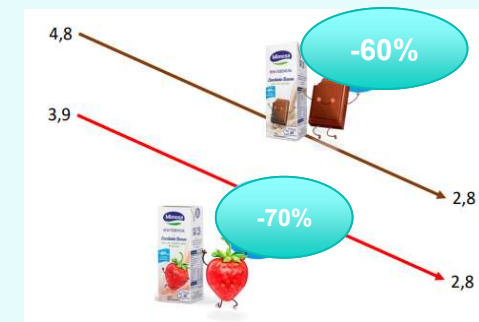
Their ranges offer school children a variety of interesting flavours with which to stay healthily hydrated during the school day.

Support Healthy Choices ...



- In Portugal milk and yogurt specialist, Mimosa, has undertaken a strategic programme of product reformulation to address various nutritional concerns including sugar levels.
- They have been sensitive to the fact that consumers have become accustomed to and enjoy current recipes, so making radical changes in sweetness would be unpopular.
- By taking an approach of making small incremental changes to recipes, the brand has shifted consumer's expectations over a period of time without damaging sales.
- In response to concerns about infant obesity and sugar consumption, they now offer a range of infant milk for different ages of children with no added sugar.

Yogurt drinks added sugar reductions (g/100 ml)



Strawberry
yogurt

8.2 g added
sugar per 100g

5.5 g added
sugar per 100g



Create New Usage Occasions ...



- French fresh salad specialist Florette has created a visually appealing product in a convenient, ready to serve packaging format which aims to open up a new usage occasion for salad items.
- By positioning the product as a healthy appetiser option, new sales opportunities have been created.
- Consumers are able to enjoy a selection of salad, presented in bite-sized portions without the need to prepare them or buy larger quantities of each vegetable which might create food waste.
- The product demonstrates knowledge of consumer pains & gains in their desires to find new ways to easily include the health benefits of salad in their diets.

Capitalise Upon Public Health Campaigns ...



EIPAS is an integrated strategy promoting healthy eating for Portuguese citizen with intervention measures which encourage adequate food consumption and the consequent improvement in the nutritional well-being aiming to have a direct impact on the prevention & control of chronic diseases.



Public Health Wales have a long-term, wide ranging strategy aimed at promoting good health outcomes for Welsh citizens between now and 2030 which includes encouraging consumers to adopt & maintain healthy diets

- Governments across the world have increasingly engaged in activities and awareness campaigns designed to improve the health of their citizens.
- Obesity levels in the developed world continue to be a focus of calls to action for food & drink providers.
- By researching the recommendations of the public health authorities in the country or region where you are targeting your products, you can ensure that your “health credentials” are in line with their ambitions.
- This will make your sales pitch more meaningful and compelling to potential stockists or in your direct to consumer sales.
- It should also allow you to benefit from the increased consumer awareness of any campaigns to increase consumer awareness of how they can make “dietary swaps” in their everyday lives – and hopefully increase their desire to buy your products !

New Markets

Might new opportunities exist in markets that you have not previously considered ?

What adaptations might you make to your products which could allow them to find new routes to market, open additional sales channels and drive sales growth opportunities ?

Societal Trends Can Open New Market Opportunities ...



Voir toute la gamme

SOJASUN

GALETTE VÉGÉTALE BLÉ & LUPIN AUBERGINES CUISINÉES

Partager sur :  


Spécialité végétale à base de blé et de lupin, aux aubergines grillées et autres légumes, aromatisée, pré-frite et précuite.

NUTRI-SCORE **A** **B** **C** **D** **E**

FABRIQUÉ EN FRANCE AVEC 41% D'INGRÉDIENTS FRANÇAIS

BARQUETTE ÉCO-CONÇUE

In France, Sojasun have reinvented a traditional Galette product to replace meat whilst meeting protein & fibre needs

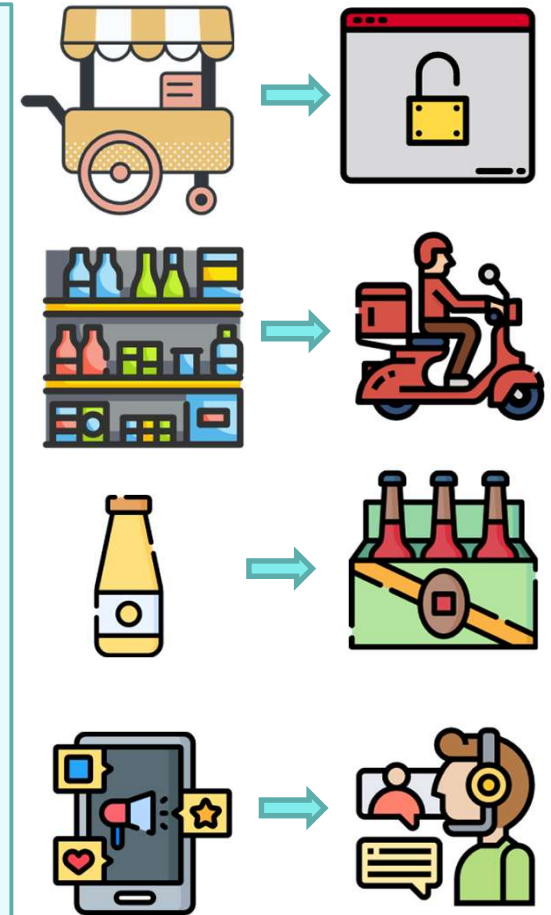


Welsh brand Samosaco, offers a range of vegetarian & vegan options with authentic Indian food credentials

- One notable trend in many developed countries in the past few years has been the rise in demand for plant based foods.
- Consumers are being encouraged to reduce meat consumption by both health and environmental campaigners.
- Some people have responded by switching to fully vegetarian or vegan diets, but larger numbers of consumers have adopted a flexitarian approach and are substituting plant based meals into their weekly diets.
- Ingredients manufacturers have responded to demand in this area with new innovative raw materials to help the formulation of plant-based products.
- Plant-based products have been criticised for being highly processed and the trend is for the next generation of products in development to move towards clean label formulations.

New Sales Channels Can Reach New Consumers ...

- Innovative food and drink products often evolve from entrepreneurial start ups or new ventures within existing companies
- As you grow in volume capacity, build your skills and market knowledge you may seek new sales channels to realise your trading potential
- Direct to consumer sales channels might start with food festivals or food events to online via a bespoke website or a shopping platform
- Distribution might start local then expand regionally, nationally and even internationally
- In all these cases you will need to conduct thorough research to understand the implications for your product offering, so you can adapt accordingly and give your products the best chance of success
- This might include
 - your ingredients choices, recipes and flavour profiles
 - the style and robustness of your packaging format
 - your pack size options and units per outer case
 - the shelf life you can offer
 - your marketing messages, imagery and product claims
 - your customer service provision



Exporting To International Markets ...

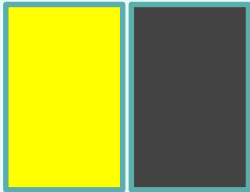


- Seeking new sales opportunities in countries beyond your own can be a viable route to sales growth
- But it does require significant research and investigation to avoid costly mistakes or failing to fulfil your full potential
- Our **International Market Development** training programme will cover this topic in much greater depth
- But we will now look at two key areas where you may need to tailor your products to adapt them for export and international sales

Understand Cultural & Religious Considerations In Export Markets ...



Halal is an Arabic term for “permitted” and relates to the dietary laws of the Islamic faith, equally Haram means “forbidden” and applies to all prohibited products such as alcohol, pork and animal products not conforming to Halal rules.



In Latin America yellow is associated with mourning & death, whilst in China black is considered unlucky and to symbolise mistrust & deception.

Certain images might viewed as innocuous or everyday in European culture might would be completely inappropriate for Muslim countries – check with local advisors before designing your artwork and marketing materials.

**GIFT
PACK**

“Gift” is the German word for “Poison” – a reminder to be careful of leaving English language wording on your pack text or marketing photos!

- You will need to ensure you are aware of the implications of any prevailing cultural and religious norms in that market.
- For example, for Muslim or Jewish markets you may need to ensure your products are Halal or Kosher compliant and appropriately accredited.
- Accreditations needed vary across different countries and the requirements can affect not only an individual product but the whole factory and distribution chain.
- Your packaging design and marketing materials must be sensitive to the cultural taboos, connotations or associations of certain imagery and wording
- Even colours can have different cultural meanings in different countries – what is considered good or bad luck, what equates to purity etc.
- So take advice and undertake some research before you make any decisions on your approach

Be Aware of Legal Restrictions In Export Markets ...

- Many countries impose restrictions on products being imported and food items are some of the most frequently affected.
- Your product may need to be certified to state that it meets the appropriate local standards. In some cases, the product must be tested and certified by an approved organisation in that country.
- You should research whether your product can be sold in your target market at all, or if permitted, whether it will be subject to certain export controls or need a licence.
- Your regional or national government, embassies and government bodies within your target country, along with your trade association or export promotion organisations may be able to offer you export support services and advice.
- Working with a reputable Customs Agents and partnering with a local distributor are also important ways in which you can approach a new market confidently.



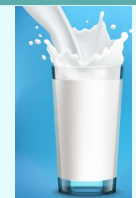
Poppy seeds are common in European foods especially in bakery items, but are illegal in the UAE and being associated with them will taint the good name of your brand & company.

Farm raised salmon is illegal in Australia & New Zealand having been banned for environmental reasons.



Chewing Gum has been illegal in Singapore for many years, a move designed to keep street clean and tidy.

Unpasteurised Milk products cannot be sold across state boundaries in the USA, where it is deemed unsafe for consumption.





We hope that you have found this training module a useful and helpful support to your healthy food and drink innovation.

This training module is one of a number of training opportunities, organised into themed training programmes to support SME's (small & medium sized enterprises) in the participating regions of Wales, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and France to successfully bring new and reformulated healthy food and drink products to market.

The training was created by the partners within the AHFES project which is a quadruple helix Atlantic area healthy food eco-system for the growth of SME's funded by the European Union under the Interreg Atlantic Area Funding Programme.

This programme promotes transnational cooperation among 36 Atlantic regions of 5 European countries and co-finances cooperation projects in the fields of Innovation & Competitiveness, Resource Efficiency, Territorial Risks Management, Biodiversity and Natural & Cultural Assets.

For more information about other training available [please click here](#).



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