

**Out of the frying pan, into the fire**  
 Rob Amar, managing director, writes:



From 20 March to 6 April 2010, I was on babymoon in Mexico with my wife who was six-months pregnant. To show solidarity with her, I decided to abstain from alcohol (despite spending the first week in a free-flowing all-inclusive resort!). Exactly 10 years on, I have strangely found myself again abstaining under blue skies, but this time avoiding Corona of a very different kind.

As you will read elsewhere in this edition, this should have been the story about us kicking off our 75th anniversary celebrations with a flurry of activity planned for the summer months. Instead, we find ourselves part of the national effort to keep Britain's food supply chain moving amid the Covid-19 crisis. Overnight we went from purveyor of fine foods and premium brands, to simply supplier of foods.

Brand marketing, exit stage left. Supply chain, enter centre stage.

As one colleague described it recently, "I've gone from boring box shifter, to helping provide a basic human need" – in part prompted by his involvement in organising food donations to our local foodbank, Wycombe Hospital, and Project Wingman among others.

And so our demand planners and brand managers have been busy working with our brand partners to secure as much stock as possible for our customers – helping the likes of Del Monte, Mutti and Brown & Polson

## NEW BRAND

### Belazu – the brand to buy

We are happy to announce that we can now offer Belazu pastes, pestos and tapenades to the wholesale, speciality and convenience channels.

Using only the best sourced ingredients and produced in the UK, this multi award-winning brand is endorsed by celebrity chefs and loyal consumers.

Nielsen data shows Belazu as the No.1 brand for tapenade<sup>1</sup>, and the No.2 brand for pesto<sup>2</sup>. This is not surprising given that the quality and flavour of the products guarantee repeat purchases.



<sup>1</sup>Nielsen w/e 28.03.20  
<sup>2</sup>Nielsen w/e 23/03/2020

achieve record months in March and then again in April.

It's just one of the ways our team has responded to the crisis in a way that makes me feel immensely proud. Before the enforced lockdown, we had already instructed those who could to work from home – this was new for many, and quickly it became apparent our team spirit and investments in technology would make this a smooth transition. For those still in the office and warehouse – our frontline colleagues – we implemented hygiene and distancing measures early on which has contributed to low absence, high productivity, and high morale.

While retail has enjoyed big uplifts in volume in many categories, the negative impact on foodservice has been even greater. Brand partners like Macphie and McCormick are most impacted. For us there is a cloud to the retail silver lining – we normally hold high stocks to achieve our great service level, and high stocks now

means foodservice over-stocks and some inevitable write-offs.

But I count ourselves fortunate. Our exposure to foodservice is sizeable but not business threatening. I have not had to consider reducing headcount – indeed, we have had a small army of temps helping in the warehouse, and as you will read elsewhere, we have recently welcomed new colleagues. Our long-term view and prudence contribute to a strong balance sheet, and we will make it to our next anniversary (and many more after that). I fear others won't. Even when restaurants, bars and hotels are allowed to re-open, how many actually will? What rules will apply? Who will want to eat out? Who will be travelling? Recovery for this sector will be slow and painful. And these types of question can be replicated across many other industries besides food.

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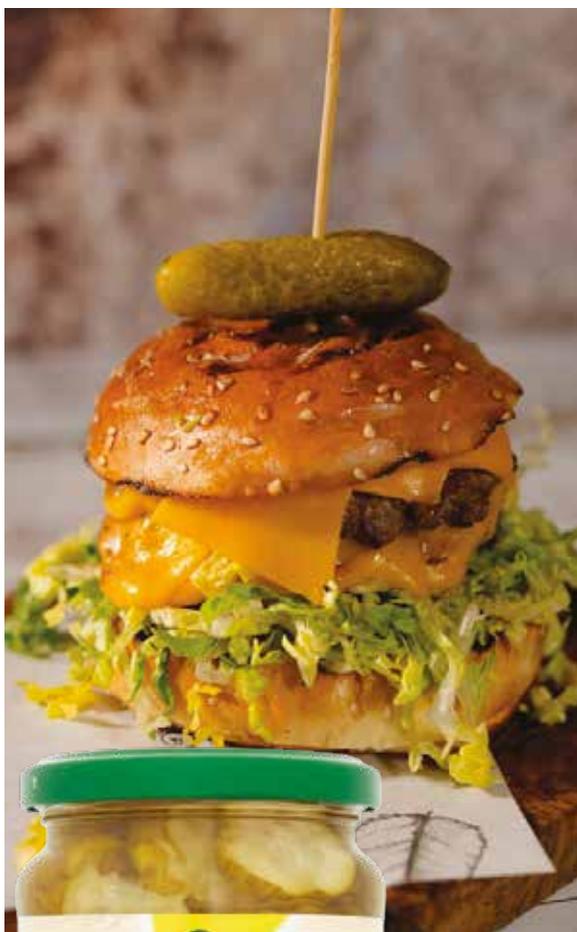
## Out of the frying pan, into the fire

By the time you read this, a few more weeks will have passed, and maybe we will be able to start answering some of these difficult questions about the future. At least we should know if lockdown has been extended for a further period or if there is some easing of restrictions. One thing is certain – some things won't be the same again for a long time, if ever.

# MARKETI

## Kühne's news

February was an exciting month for Kühne. Not only did it sponsor the National Burger Awards for the second year running, it also launched its social media campaign and a new product.



The National Burger Awards were held on February 19th at the Islington Metal Works in London. The day saw 16 finalists competing in three rounds: Signature Burger, Meatless Burger and Technical Burger – each incorporating products from the event sponsors. The contestants made good use of many Kühne products, but the favourites were Gherkins, Red Cabbage, Sauerkraut, and Crispy Fried Onions. The contestants were an impressive line-up from both popular high street restaurants, independents, and street food outlets – and between them they created some sensational burgers.



February 19th was also the day Kühne launched its UK social media platforms with the objective of increasing brand awareness. Consumers are shown all the delicious ways to use the range and most importantly where to find Kühne products in UK stores. It is proving popular already – at the time of writing the Kühne UK Facebook site has more than 1400 followers.

There are so many ways to use Kühne products, but burgers will always be a firm favourite. This is true all year round but particularly during the BBQ season. And with consumers all staying home and staying safe what better accompaniment can there be to burgers than the delicious new crinkle cut Burger Gherkins - conveniently sliced and ready to be used.



I have commented on Brexit in Fine Food News frequently since 2016, and with Covid-19 it certainly does feel like “out the deep fat fryer, into the blast furnace” (to pimp up the popular proverb). Brexit was a national and regional issue, while Covid-19 is as global as they come. Shorter term let’s hope Covid-19 doesn’t have to dominate the news anywhere near as long as Brexit did. Longer-term, time will tell which event will have had the bigger and longer-lasting social and economic impact on the UK.

# ING NEWS

## Cooks&Co's #AppetiteForAdventure



It has been a very busy quarter for Cooks&Co. It started with a new campaign - #AppetiteForAdventure - across the brand’s social media channels. The aim is to galvanise support from current Facebook fans and build a new tribe of loyal foodies through Instagram, influencer, and media activity.

Following the launch of a new Instagram account earlier this year, the brand has been collaborating with top foodie influencers to create inspiring recipes. From flavour-packed ramen bowls, to tasty homemade pasta sauces and hand-made risotto arancini, these recipes help to showcase the ingredients in tantalising and appetising new ways.



In addition, Cooks&Co has also been surprising and delighting other high-reaching foodies with personalised boxes of ingredients and a Cooks&Co apron. This has encouraged them to get cooking and has resulted in plenty of positive social noise.

Cooks&Co's latest product news, updates, recipe and serving suggestions can be found on Instagram - @cooksandcouk.



## Best Companies update

Having already secured 3\* accreditation for the first time, we found out, at the Best Companies Awards in February, that we had made The Sunday Times Best 100 Small Companies list for the second time. We climbed from 91st last year to 78th this time round. We also featured 29th in the list of 75 Best Companies to Work for in The South East.

## Ella's Kitchen – new lines available



Ella's Kitchen has recently launched two new products to add to its comprehensive portfolio of baby food pouches and snacks.

The brand has extended its baby snacking offering in the UK with the launch of its popular Oaty Finger Bars in a single serve format. Already in the market as a multipack, Ella's Kitchen Strawberry & Apple Oaty Fingers are now available as individual bars in a convenient countertop format.

Each case consists of 18 bars, ideal for mothers looking for a tasty on-the-go snack for their toddlers. Suitable for those over 12 months old, this popular snack line contains no palm oil and has an RSP of £0.75 per bar (including VAT).

To add variety to its First Tastes range, Ella's Kitchen has launched a Sweetcorn flavour variant which is suitable for babies from four months old. This new flavour focuses on Ella's Kitchen's mission to get more babies weaning on vegetables.

In addition, RH Amar now offers the Ella's Kitchen range of toddler ready meals. Four flavours are available in a convenient 200g tray, with an RSP of £2.50:



**Veggie Moussaka**



**Bolognese Bake**



**Chicken Paella**



**Beef Stew**

## Buiteman boxes

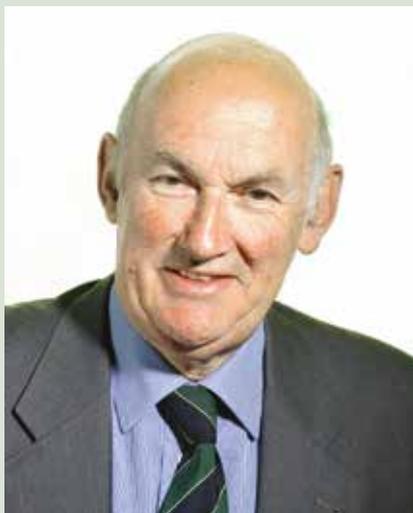
Buiteman's award-winning Cheese Biscuits are now available in a 750g assortment sharing box. The assortment consists of individual bags of Gouda, Gouda & Chive and Sun-dried Tomato biscuits.

Buiteman also has a hamper range, with various designs and colours, making it perfect for hampers throughout the year. We would also highlight the red gable box of Cheddar Biscuits and the black gable box of Sun-dried Tomato Biscuits.

Buiteman's savoury biscuits are made using the highest quality ingredients, family recipes and traditional preparation methods which deliver on taste and quality with every bite.



## After six decades Henry Amar, chairman, writes:



This is the article I should not be writing. In this issue of Fine Food News I was planning to write about the projects and celebrations that would mark RH Amar's 75th anniversary. Covid-19 has unfortunately caused all these events to be postponed.

But even the Coronavirus will not prevent me from popping a cork on Saturday 4th July, because that day

marks the 60th anniversary of my joining RH Amar.

One April day in 1960 I was sitting in a library in London frantically revising for the university finals I was due to sit in June. I knew that within weeks of completing these exams I would start two years of National Service in the army. The world

of work still seemed a long way off, but when I left the library that evening a newspaper headline suddenly changed everything – the government had announced the immediate ending of National Service.

Suddenly I had about eight weeks to find myself a job. My father took me out to lunch and we solemnly discussed all sorts of possible careers. Even as we talked, I think we both knew that I would decide to join the family firm. I had worked in our Holborn Viaduct office during school and university vacations. I was intrigued by the cut and thrust of business, enjoyed the pleasant atmosphere in the office, and felt a natural attraction to the food industry.

So it was that on Monday 4th July 1960 I started my career with RH Amar as a rookie salesman. In a subsequent issue of Fine Food News I hope, if I'm spared, to reflect on some of the highlights of the past six decades. For now suffice it to say that, as in any job, there have been good days and bad, but I have never for one moment regretted my decision to join the family firm. I have so much enjoyed working with many wonderful colleagues and business partners, watching the business grow, and seeing my sons follow me as I followed my father. And today, in the midst of the Covid-19 crisis, I realise that the food business is a wonderful place to be.

## PRODUCT NEWS



### Crespo – all approved!

Crespo, the UK's No.1 brand of olives<sup>1</sup> is proud to announce that the Vegetarian Society has approved the vegetarian and vegan status of all of the brand's olive and caper products, with the exception of the Anchovy Stuffed Olives.

With plant based, flexitarian and vegan diets growing in popularity, Crespo olives and capers are perfect for those consumers looking for great tasting ingredients and snacking products that meet their dietary requirements.

In addition to being vegetarian and vegan friendly, Crespo olives offer a range of health benefits – they are high in vitamin E and other antioxidants, packed with fibre, and low in calories. The products are available in a range of pack formats – jars, pouches (perfect for snacking) and tins.

<sup>1</sup>IRI 52 w/e 29.02.20

## New fans for Kings

New World Foods brand, Kings is recruiting a generation of new fans with its Veggie Jerky offering, as it taps into the fast-growing plant-based movement.

Kings Veggie Jerky is 100% vegan, contains over 20% protein and 0.4g saturated fat per pack. It is the perfect snack for vegans, vegetarians - and indeed anyone in need of a delicious protein snack.

It comes as research shows that 65% of UK shoppers now regularly buy plant-based food and drink, irrespective of following a vegan diet<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Mintel: Meat-Free Foods, Nov 2019 exec. summary



## Cooks&Co's latest additions

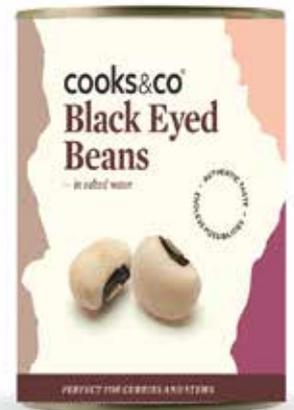
This year there are a further three new and exciting products joining the Cooks&Co range, all of which have been accredited by the Vegan Society:

**Porcini Mushroom Risotto** – This uses premium Italian Carnaroli rice giving the risotto a subtle flavour. It is perfect served on its own or as a side to any meat or fish dishes. A sprinkling of freshly grated parmesan cheese gives the risotto an extra finishing touch.

**Five Bean Mix** – This is a mix of white, red kidney, butter, borlotti beans and chick peas. It is ideal for creating hearty soups and stews, with no additional preparation required. The beans can also be used straight from the tin as part of a summer salad.

**Black Eyed Beans** – With their creamy flavour, they are the perfect addition to African and American cooking. No additional preparation is necessary as the beans can be used straight from the can.

The Cooks&Co Instagram page, @cooksandcouk, provides the latest updates and recipe ideas.



## Mary Berry's for summer inspiration

We wish to remind our readers of the versatility of the Mary Berry's Dressings range and how it can be used to create delicious summer dishes. #DressedToImpress is the brand's latest campaign and more tips can be found @maryberrys\_foods. Here are some examples:

- Classic Salad Dressing – Drizzle over roasted Mediterranean vegetables or stir through a pasta salad
- Light Salad Dressing – Pour over crushed herby potatoes or create a creamy pasta sauce
- Special Mustard Dressing – Glaze sausages before cooking or create salmon skewers
- Honey & Balsamic Vinaigrette – Create a shallot tarte tatin or a simple but tasty tomato and mozzarella caprese salad
- Mango, Lime & Chilli Dressing – Make fruit ice lollies or use as a topping for ice cream
- Blue Cheese Dressing – Create cheesy Portobello mushrooms or use as a dip for crudités



## Doing our bit

Our colleagues at RH Amar are feeling pleased and proud that we have been able to help out with food donations for those who are vulnerable at this time of crisis.

During April, we provided the local NHS Trust at Wycombe Hospital with 40 cases of mixed products and some cases of Ella's Kitchen products. These were for distribution to the Trust's staff and to the nursery run by the Trust for the children of its staff.

## Perfect picnic essentials



Whilst consumers may not be able to venture further than their gardens to enjoy an alfresco lunch this summer, there is no reason why they can't liven up these occasions with some of our flavourful Cooks&Co products.

A perfect picnic spread can be created by adding Sun-dried Tomatoes to a summer salad, or spicing up a sandwich or baguette with Pepperoncini Chillies. For a simple dish, Halkidiki Olives marinated with Lemon, Garlic & Rosemary can be eaten straight from the pot. These suggestions alone are enough to bring a garden picnic to life.



In addition, via some of our customers, we have supplied stocks of Del Monte, D'Aucy and Cafédirect products for care parcels to the councils in Blackburn, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

We have also supported the initiative of Bidfood and Brakes to provide 120,000 tins of Del Monte fruit for DEFRA food parcels for the vulnerable.



## RH Amar and Daymon join forces

RH Amar is joining forces with global private brand specialist Daymon in a bid to spice up the UK's fine foods offer across several categories.

Both parties will identify those UK private brand categories with the most potential to benefit from a makeover, as well as those that have the most untapped scope for growth.

Daymon will focus on generating innovation and concept development in conjunction with RH Amar, who will then focus on the commercial execution of all private brand launches created by the partnership.

The announcement comes as research from Daymon reveals that 98% of national brand assortments are the same across retailers, and 85% of shoppers now trust the store private brand just as much as national brands.

"In many cases, shoppers are even willing to pay a premium for the right private brand products," explains a spokesperson for Daymon. "The next wave of private brands will be led by diversification and premiumisation, positioned with options that are lacking in the existing offerings, and we strongly believe there is an opportunity to enhance the UK's private brand food offer both now and in the future."

Managing director Rob Amar adds: "Our new partnership with Daymon will allow retailers to benefit from a single point of contact for their private brand development, offering the opportunity to strengthen retailers' current assortments while ensuring their private brands stay competitive."

# Daymon

## Our Hero brands

### Camp



Camp, the world's first instant coffee, was created in 1876 by the Paterson Company of Glasgow. It is believed that the Gordon Highlanders requested Campbell Paterson to produce a coffee drink that could be used easily by the army on field campaigns in India.

The process of grinding the beans and brewing the coffee was too complicated during military campaigning, and the easier instant coffee was given the apt brand name - Camp.

The recipe has stayed the same ever since, and the brand has been a firm favourite in many households.

Today, Camp is an item of British nostalgia because many remember it from their childhood. The coffee and chicory essence makes a perfect ingredient for coffee-flavoured desserts and bakes as well as hot and cold coffee drinks. In recent years it has become very popular for making iced coffee.

Camp has been Vegan Society approved and is also gluten free, therefore making it ideal to suit many differing dietary requirements.

Since buying the brand in 2019, we have developed a number of initiatives to generate consumer interest. The Camp Coffee Club brings people together to exchange baking ideas and seek inspiration. Camp Coffee has now joined Instagram. This platform enables followers to share product updates as well as recipe hints and tips. The latest information about the brand can be followed at @campcoffeeuk.

A #BakerOfTheWeek competition is currently being run across social media channels with members being asked to submit their #StayAtHomeBakes for a chance to win a baking bundle. For every entry £1 is being donated to FareShare to help provide food to those most in need.

The aim of all this activity around the Camp brand is to inspire future generations and continue to create those feelings of nostalgia.



**Dan Richards**

## Welcome to our new colleagues

Daniel Richards joined RH Amar on 11th May in the newly created role of e-commerce manager. This role has been created to build RH Amar's e-commerce capability and to drive faster business growth within this channel.

Dan joins us from Baylis & Harding where he has worked for the last eight years in a variety of commercial roles, most recently as international business development manager e-commerce and North America. In this role he has been responsible for significant growth in Amazon and Walmart and comes to RH Amar with a wealth of experience in the e-commerce channel.

Ramunas Jankauskas and Krzysztof Jastrzebski have joined the warehouse team, Ramunas working on intake and stock control, and Krzysztof on re-pack and order picking.



**A March wedding for Anne-Marie Cannon and husband, Day**

We hope you enjoy reading our Fine Food News publication. If you wish to stop receiving future editions, please email Rebecca De Ascencao at [rdeascencao@rhamar.com](mailto:rdeascencao@rhamar.com), or write to: Fine Food News, RH Amar, Turnpike Way, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP12 3TF.