

Spring in the air

Rob Amar, Managing Director, writes:



It's over a year since our world was turned upside down. In February 2020, I was skiing in Austria, and I remember thinking it was a good thing we hadn't booked an Italian resort. Little did we know the scale of what was to follow. It's been interesting looking back at my internal communications from March 2020 to see how quickly things moved in those early days of the pandemic.

Thankfully, patiently, Step 2 of Lockdown 3 has been introduced (in England at least – I believe colleagues and friends in the devolved nations must wait a little longer). As I write, we're nearing the end of day one (12 April). It was great to see people getting out on day one to support the businesses that have been closed these past 3½ months. Luckily, I didn't have to worry about queuing for a haircut, so could focus my thoughts on our beleaguered hospitality industry. It would have been nice to have been greeted with slightly warmer weather (is it possible to get sunburn and frostbite in the same sitting?!), but seemingly the prevalence of new patio heaters and gazebos will ensure diners and drinkers are comfortable. Hopefully recovery in this sector will be swift and sustained.

(continued on P2)

Introducing Boostcha Kombucha Vinegars

RH Amar is very excited to announce the launch of a brand-new speciality vinegar, Boostcha, from vinegar experts, Acetum.

One of the primary trends amongst consumers is a desire for healthier, natural offerings, including organic, plant-based, and fermented foods such as Kombucha. Kombucha tea is a fermented drink made with tea, sugar, bacteria and yeast.

Acetum's extensive research within the vinegars category has led to the development of Boostcha Organic Kombucha Vinegars, using a simple, natural process that keeps the product wholesome:

- Organic tea leaves are infused in a giant teapot
- Kombucha cultures and organic sugar are added and the fermentation process starts. A second fermentation produces the Kombucha vinegar
- The product is then packaged in glass bottles with paper labels and a cork stopper – no plastic!

The resulting Kombucha vinegar is a versatile, modern ingredient that can be used in two key ways:

- It can be splashed on salad – a Kombucha dressing will bring fruit and vegetables to life
- 30ml of Boostcha can be added to 50ml water for a refreshing tonic

Boostcha Organic Kombucha Vinegar is available in two variants, Green Tea and Black Tea 250ml, each with an RSP of £4.99.

The launch will be supported by a strong consumer communication programme to help build awareness. It will target "conscious health seekers" and a younger audience and will celebrate tasty, wholesome food, emphasising the passion for all things Kombucha and a healthy lifestyle.



boost your sales with **KOMBUCHA VINEGAR!**

(continued from P1)

Spring in the air

For RH Amar, it's been an exciting start to the year. We're seeing some stellar performance from some of our existing brands, notably Mutti and Kikkoman which both go from strength to strength; we have an active pipeline of new brands, with several interesting approaches – watch this space; we have welcomed several new colleagues; and to cap it all off, we have retained our Best Companies 3* accreditation, something that gives me a lot of pride and satisfaction. The past year has been challenging for so many reasons – having a team of fantastic, highly-engaged colleagues makes a huge difference, and makes my job a lot easier.

So there is plenty to put a spring in our step. And we have plenty to celebrate – which we look forward to doing as soon as we can!

Pete's double celebration

February was a big month for Warehouse Manager, Pete Collins. Not only did he celebrate his 50th birthday in that month, but he was also congratulated for having been at RH Amar for 32 years – our longest-serving colleague (apart from Henry, of course)!



New from French's and Frank's

RH Amar is excited to announce the launch of sachets to add to the range of the high quality and popular French's Mustard and Frank's Hot Sauce brands. American cuisine continues to be a favourite and coupled with the increased focus on hygiene, these sachets are perfectly suited to help caterers re-open their businesses. Both the Mustard and the Hot Sauce sachets are suitable for vegans and vegetarians and both are free from artificial colour and preservatives.



Old – but very useful!

Old Bay Seasoning was invented in 1939 and is made from 18 spices, including cayenne pepper, paprika, celery salt, ginger and cinnamon. Its versatility has accounted for its growth in popularity: it can be added to chicken, fish or seafood, chips, roasted potatoes, vegetables, popcorn, and toast – and also to Bloody Marys!



Kabuto's new flavours



Kabuto Noodles launched its brand of authentic premium noodles back in 2011. This year it has introduced three new flavours: Singapore Noodles, Yellow Chicken and Katsu Curry (Wagamama's bestselling dish).

Like all Kabuto snack pots, the new variants are genuine Asian-inspired flavours, free from additives and preservatives and made with quality ingredients. Yellow Chicken is gluten free, and Katsu Curry and Singapore Noodles are both suitable for vegetarians.

Cooks&Co – Dried Morels join the range

This year, with the continued growth of the Cooks&Co Dried Mushroom range, Dried Morels are joining the line-up. With their earthy and nutty flavour, they are a perfect addition to sauces and risottos. They are ready for use after rehydrating for just 30 minutes.

As with the rest of the Cooks&Co Dried Mushroom range, the Dried Morels come in PET pots that are 100% recyclable. The product is also Vegan Approved.



Cafédirect back on TV

Cafédirect was back on TV with its “Truly Spectacular” campaign featuring the best-selling Machu Picchu range of products.

The advert, an optimised version of the one that ran in August 2020, aired on national terrestrial TV (Channel 4), VoD and digital from 8th February to 14th March. It was shown during popular programmes such as Sunday Brunch and Grand Designs.

During this time, the campaign achieved 49% of ABC1 adults reached versus 43% planned, with 175 TVRs delivered versus 136 planned, and 3.6 opportunities to see.

The Machu Picchu franchise is worth £7.9m from four SKUs and has grown +52% in the last 52 wks. Maccha Picchu Ground Coffee is the fourth bestselling branded Roast and Ground SKU in grocery*.



* Nielsen Scantrak,
52 we 03/10/2020

Mutti's "Mille Querce" – Thousand Oaks

We are very proud of the initiative taken by Mutti, our Italian supplier of tomato products. The company has begun planting 1,100 trees (yes, more than a thousand!) in four areas near its site in Montechiarugolo in the province of Parma. The aim is to improve the local landscape and the environment - by increasing the trapping of carbon dioxide, biodiversity will be encouraged.

This Mille Querce project, was launched on World Wildlife Day on 3rd March by Mutti together with the towns of Montechiarugolo, Sissa Trecasali and Traversetolo. It will entail an investment of over €200,000 for a greener local area spanning 50,000 square metres.



In the Spotlight – Mark Crompton

Mark joined RH Amar in 1995 and has throughout been a key member of the Customer Service team.



What job would you have liked to do had you not been in the food business?

Possibly hotel management. I actually started out as an export manager, albeit in the “rag trade”. I enjoyed this at the time, and it enabled me to see the world.

What is your favourite leisure time activity?

Now it's watching Rugby on TV - rather than playing socially as in earlier years.

Which film have you most enjoyed?

The Day of the Jackal.

Describe your perfect meal.

Where does one start?! Perhaps smoked salmon, fillet of beef, and fresh raspberries and cream. (I know - it's very traditional!)

What luxury would you take to a desert island?

My wife – if this is allowed!

How have you responded to the coronavirus epidemic?

I have felt very fortunate for living where we do, and grateful for being able to work throughout for RH Amar. My main concern has been for our sons' well-being, but luckily they have both remained well.

What advice would you give to a young person starting out in the world of work?

Believe in and push your talents, and ensure you chose a vocation that you enjoy. Treat all colleagues and contacts as you wish to be treated yourself.

Welcome to our new colleagues

From 1st February, RH Amar has had an external HR resource providing us with on-going HR support. Sophie Haylock is part of HR2Help, a service provided by our solicitors, BP Collins.



In March, we welcomed Warren Harris to the Sales team. He joins us as National Account Manager Business Development and End Users. Previously he has held management positions with De Vere Hotels and Whitbread Pubs. Following a period of travel and a settling and working in Sydney and Auckland for a while, he returned to spend 22 years working for Brakes, most recently as Food Business Development Manager for the Hospitality sector.



Annie Bloomer joined RH Amar at the end of March as Area Account Manager and will have responsibility for the South West and Wales. Annie joins us from Fresh Direct where she worked in the Foodservice channel.



Finally, we welcome Edita Paceviciene who is working in Finance as Accounts Payable Manager. Edita is a certified Accounting Technician and has worked in both Accounts Payable and Credit Control and has experience in bank reconciliation and expense management.



Cooks&Co Pulses - update

This year the Cooks&Co Pulses range will be moving to cases of 12. The range of pulses can be used straight out of the can with no additional preparation and are Vegan Approved.



And the winners are....

Our brands have seen some great results over the last year – here are just a few highlights:

Canned Fruit

Del Monte has strengthened its position as the No.1 brand in the Impulse channel, growing market share from 37% to 39.9% in the last 12 months and contributing an additional £1.2m in sales to impulse retailers.¹

Baby Food

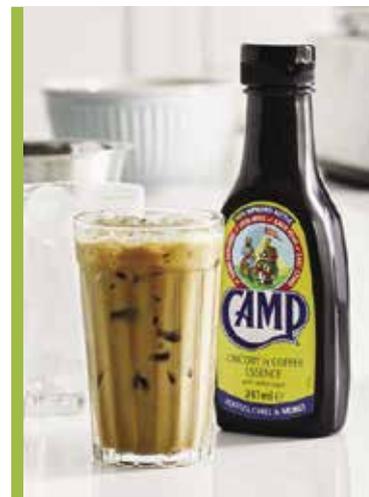
Ella's Kitchen retains its No.1 spot within the Impulse channel, growing

value share from 33.3% to 34.2% over the last 12 months. This was achieved despite a distribution drive from competitor Cow & Gate temporarily knocking Ella's Kitchen off the top spot. Retailers have switched back to Ella's Kitchen, reinforcing the brand's position as the UK's best loved baby food.²

Soy Sauce

Kikkoman has seen outstanding long-term growth, and this has continued over the last 12 months. Buoyant sales have propelled the brand to the No.1 spot: the 52 week MAT

RH Amar's summer offerings



Camp Coffee

Ready to use in drinks and baking, Camp Coffee is a recipe that has remained the same since 1876.

This Chicory and Coffee essence is free from artificial flavours, colours and preservatives and is gluten free and Vegan Approved.

Not only does it make the most delicious hot drinks and coffee bakes, it can also be used to create a refreshing iced coffee which is quick to prepare:



Mary Berry's

Mary Berry's versatile dressings provide the summer months with the following delicious recipe inspirations to enhance flavours:

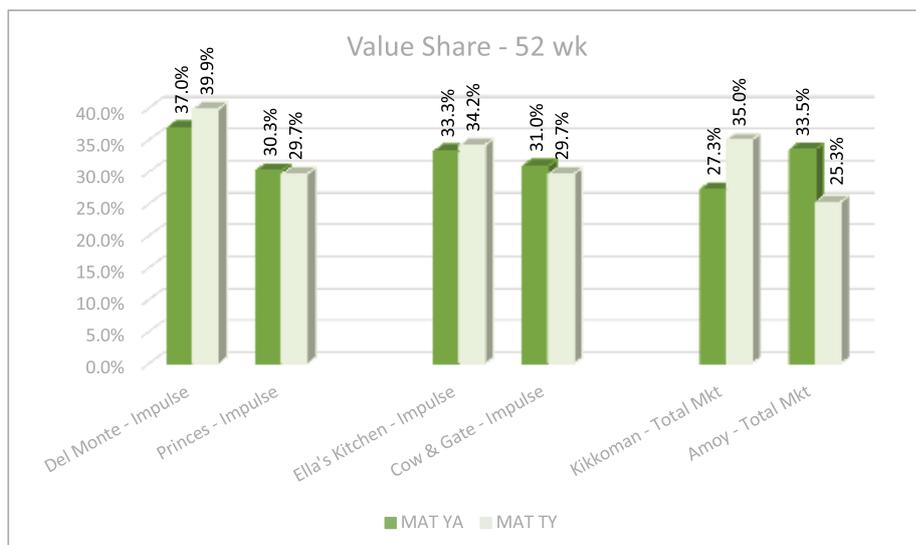
- Classic Salad Dressing – can be drizzled over roasted Mediterranean vegetables or stirred through a pasta salad.
- Light Salad Dressing – this is useful to pour over crushed herby potatoes or to create a creamy pasta sauce.
- Caesar Dressing – finely shredded red cabbage, carrots, fennel, and shallots mixed with the dressing creates a fresh Caesar slaw.



share now stands at an impressive 35%, overtaking Amoy to be the UK's favourite soy sauce brand. Kikkoman sales grew by £5.6m over the last 12 months, whilst the next three brands combined only managed to achieve £3.6m between them.³

Antipasti

Cooks&Co continues to perform very strongly and is now the fastest growing brand within the antipasti category.⁴ Roasted Red Peppers and Sweet Drop Peppers were the main contributors to this excellent result, now worth over £1m at RSV.⁴



¹ ACNielsen w/e 26.12.20 ² IRI w/e 23.01.21 ³ IRI w/e 27.02.21 ⁴ IRI w/e 02.01.21

1. Place 35ml of Camp Coffee and 350ml of milk into a food blender. Blend on high for about 30 seconds.
2. Place 5 ice cubes into a tall glass mug and pour the coffee over.
3. If desired, sweeten with sugar, sweetener or with coffee flavouring syrups in the blender.

The Camp Coffee Club can be followed on Facebook and Twitter for the latest brand updates: @campcoffeeuk

- Honey & Balsamic Vinaigrette – this is useful to make a shallot Tarte Tatin or a simple but tasty tomato and mozzarella caprese salad.
- Mango, Lime & Chilli Dressing – this is perfect for fruit ice lollies or used as a topping for ice cream.
- Blue Cheese Dressing – an ideal dressing for cheesy Portobello mushrooms or as a dip for crudités.

Instagram has more hint and tips @maryberrys_foods



Cooks&Co

Cooks&Co's range of finest ingredients are perfect as part of an antipasti platter or a Mediterranean mezze.

- Mixed Pitted Greek Olives – a mix of kalamata, green and blond olives, marinated in oregano.
- Whole Kalamata Olives – with their beautiful flavour, they are ideal for adding to salads, pizza and pasta dishes.
- Green Halkidiki Olives stuffed with Sun-Dried Tomatoes – grown under the warmth of the Mediterranean sun, these olives are perfect as part of an antipasti platter or salad.
- Stuffed Vine Leaves – made to a traditional Greek recipe using mint and dill, these vine leaves can be part of a mezze platter or eaten as an impromptu snack.

Don't forget National Vegetarian Week

National Vegetarian Week runs from 10th to 16th May. With many people focused on healthy living as well as becoming more environmentally aware, enjoying vegetarian food has never been easier. Consumers are also tempted by the fact that a vegetarian diet can be cost-effective, packed with protein and very satisfying. Here at RH Amar, we have an extensive range of vegetarian and vegan products to make eating easy, fun and tasty.

Here is one of our favourite recipes:

Honey & Chilli Lotus Root

Ingredients

- 400g can Cooks&Co Lotus root
- Sunflower oil or vegetable oil, for frying
- 2 tbsp corn flour
- 1tsp chilli paste
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed (or garlic paste)
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1tbsp tomato ketchup
- ½ tbsp sesame oil
- 1tsp sesame seeds
- Salt, to season
- Spring onions, thinly sliced

Method

1. Drain the lotus root, dab dry as much as possible, then coat in corn flour.
2. Heat some oil in a pan, then fry the lotus root until crispy, and remove from the oil.
3. Mix the crushed garlic cloves with the chilli paste
4. Heat the sesame oil in a pan, then add the paste and fry for a few minutes until fragrant.
5. Add tomato ketchup and cook for a further minute, then add the honey and a sprinkling of salt.
6. Finally add the lotus root and toss to coat in the sauce.

Remove from the heat and serve with a sprinkling of sesame seeds and spring onions.



When is a deal, not a deal?

Tim Brady, Operations Director, writes:



Now that we are several months into the EU-UK deal, most logisticians working in the UK can give you the answer. The fanfare and headlines when the deal was announced mentioned “tariff free” and “frictionless trade”. The reality is that the deal does not currently deliver either. We always knew there would be more paperwork, but the greatest difficulties relate to deliveries to our customers on the island of Ireland. The delicate and complicated political

situation which exists there has made much of the deal impractical and unworkable.

There remain as many unknowns as knowns with the deal and even the rules agreed have been postponed, changed or ignored in places. An example is with heat treated pallets (HTPs), which are designed to prevent the transfer of pesticides and infestation during the exportation process. The new rules



Mazzetti consumer campaign

Following a successful consumer education campaign in 2020, Mazzetti L'Originale, one of Italy's premium brands of Balsamic Vinegar of Modena, will be continuing to talk and engage with consumers through a multi-channel campaign this year. The aim is to educate, inspire and drive purchase of its excellent range of premium Balsamic Vinegars of Modena, Glazes and Condiments.

Highlights of the campaign include:

#MazzettiMasters Digital Campaign

Running across social media platforms Facebook and Instagram, Mazzetti has developed the "MazzettiMasters" campaign. Aimed at providing education and inspiration using seasonal recipe videos and "tips and tricks", there will be two seasonal campaigns – summer (June – August) and winter (December – February).

Print advertorials and features

Educating consumers within relevant food publications, both about the Mazzetti range but also about Balsamic Vinegar of Modena - the different qualities and why it is so special.

Influencer engagement and social media activity

Sharing the magic of Balsamic Vinegar of Modena and "The Italian art of dressing" through all social media platforms.



Sampling at food events

Following on from a successful sampling event at Pub in the Park in 2020, Mazzetti will be planning some more sampling events in 2021.

state that HTPs are now needed for all movements between the EU and UK, but we never needed them while we were in the EU, so why now? In addition, despite the rule, there appear to be no checks at the borders, and we see as many non-HTPs as HTPs being used with no issues. Will somebody start checking for this in the future? Will the rule be "dropped" since it is completely unnecessary? Will it remain on paper and be ignored? Who knows?

Frictionless trade does not exist either. There may not yet be too many tariffs (there are some), but there is a lot more paperwork and cost. There are no seamless electronic data shares (yet). We have reverted to old fashioned paperwork and form-filling. Fortunately, RH Amar has over 75 years of importing experience, so reversing the process and adding the EU into the countries we now import from and export to has been easy, but costly. We also have in-house

expertise thanks to Martynas Klemanas (pictured right) who in the last 6 months has spent much of his time learning what was going to be needed.

Combining our experience, with the skills of Martynas, plus a brilliant Irish hauler and a good UK customs agent, we have been able to ship every single order successfully to Ireland, north and south, with few delays. We have even arranged deliveries on behalf of other companies.

It was nice to hear from one of our customers based in Northern Ireland, that we had been their only supplier to have completed the paperwork 100% accurately.

There will be more bumps ahead with extra layers of bureaucracy and red tape threatened in October. But we are quietly confident we will find a way through it all.



Mutti receives Business Excellence Award

Mutti, No.1 tomato brand in Italy and Europe, has been awarded The British Chamber of Commerce for Italy (BCCI) WPP Corporate Social Responsibility Award. This is in recognition of its 120 years respectful legacy of producing high-level tomato products.

The BCCI Business Excellence Awards were first launched in 2018 and honour businesses which have excelled across five chosen categories as an example and inspiration to others.

Chief Executive Officer, Francesco Mutti, said: "Our sense of respect starts from below, from the land. The land is the birthplace of our raw material and we truly believe that preserving its healthy state is the only way to guarantee our distinctive quality. This give-and-take approach, where what you take is just the natural consequence of what you give, is a virtuous collaboration model that identifies our relationships, starting from the one with the land up to the ones with the people."



Clarification from Cafédirect

Cafédirect has renamed its Cauca Valley coffee to Columbia Reserva to make it easier for consumers to know where it comes from. Columbia Reserva is one of a range of Cafédirect's single origin coffees sourced from unique places around the world. This includes the No.4 bestselling SKU in the Roast and Ground category, Machu Picchu*.

Columbia Reserva is grown by the farmers in the Cauca region of Colombia, where three mountain ranges meet to form the Andes. This medium-bodied coffee is smooth and velvety with a stunning aroma and chocolate finish.

*Source: Nielsen Scantrak,
52 we 03/10/2020



Best Companies

We are delighted to have retained Best Companies 3* accreditation. This is great recognition of the culture we have created, and is especially pleasing after such a challenging year. We improved our score against all eight engagement factors, with My Team, My Manager, and My Company remaining the three highest-scoring factors. As always, the feedback highlights areas where we have an opportunity for further improvement.



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, or write to: Fine Food News, RH Amar, Turnpike Way, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP12 3TF.