

HEALTH FOOD BUSINESS

MARCH 2025

healthfoodbusiness.co.uk

The UK and Ireland's
top trade magazine
for the independent
retailer

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



The heroes of the health food trade

Health Food Business was delighted to present deserving health store employees with their Health Store Heroes accolades.

PAGE 26.



Target turns 25

It's been 25 years since Target Publishing was founded with the acquisition of Health Food Business magazine, and so we take a trip down memory lane.

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Summit season is upon us

The finishing touches are being put to the first NHT Summit of 2025 with a sold-out show in Manchester. Will you be attending?

PAGE 20.

Vick Hope
Broadcaster



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² According to health care professionals in the U.S., among brands surveyed, Nutritional Business Journal© 2016, 2020,2023; Kaiser Associates 2014



EDITOR'S NOTE

Independent heritage

This magazine has always been dedicated to the independent health food store, and all we do across our pages is designed to support retailers in their business. It is what the ethos of this magazine was when it was founded by the late Brian McLoughlin many decades ago, and it remains the same today.

We were delighted to reaffirm this commitment and once again partner with our friends at Health Stores Ireland to bestow deserving accolades on people working within health stores across the country. Whether it's for providing great leadership, excellence in social media and e-commerce, or when it comes to merchandising in-store, we were delighted to be able to present the Health Store Heroes awards at the recent trade gathering held in Shannon, so ably organised by Health Stores Ireland – we congratulate all our winners, and you can read more about them on page 26.

Adding to our commitment to the trade, we have the NHT Summit, a series of events that are designed for health food store retailers and held in partnership with Health Stores UK. Our first event of 2025 is just around the corner, taking place in Manchester on March 16, before we head to Dublin on September 21 for our first Irish event, before closing the summit year in Bristol on October 5. We look forward to meeting with industry in March, and if you are a retailer who wants to visit, you can register at www.nhtsummit.co.uk

And a final note from me, and a slight moment of indulgence if you will, as we at Target Publishing – the publisher of this magazine – marks 25 years in business this February. Founded by David Cann after he acquired *Health Food Business* from Brian, Target has long been a committed and passionate friend of the natural health industry, indeed,

it is where our roots are, and we are proud to bring a range of market leading magazines and events to the trade.

It's a special year for us here at Target as we continue to work on new initiatives to help support the market. You can find out more about Target and how we came to be created on page 28 of this issue. – happy birthday to us!

Rachel Symonds, Editor



Visit the website www.healthfoodbusiness.co.uk



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Lindsay Powers



Health Food Business is sent free of charge to all named retailer buyers of health foods who register for readership

EDITOR Rachel Symonds e: rachel.symonds@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 810088 | **SALES DIRECTOR** Ruth Gilmour e: ruth.gilmour@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 810084 | **KEY ACCOUNTS DIRECTOR** Abigail Hays e: abigail.hays@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 810093 | **SENIOR SALES EXECUTIVE** James Lloyd e: james.lloyd@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 810091 | **DESIGN** Emma Shuffield e: emma.shuffield@targetpublishing.com | **PRODUCTION** Leann Boreham e: leann.boreham@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 810075 | **ADMINISTRATION/DISTRIBUTION** Donna Wenham e: donna.wenham@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 810064 | **ACCOUNTS** Alison Barnes e: alison.barnes@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 810066 | **MANAGING DIRECTOR** David Cann e: info@targetpublishing.com t: 01279 816300

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Concern expressed at risk to small retailers as Defra announces plans for deposit return scheme for bottles and cans

Defra's announcement that a deposit return scheme (DRS) will be introduced in England and Northern Ireland has been met with caution by an independent retail group.

When the scheme launches in October 2027, consumers will have a financial incentive to return empty containers to a collection point so the bottle or can will be recycled. The scheme applies to single-use drinks containers made from aluminium, steel, or PET plastic with a capacity between 150 millilitres and three litres.

Countries such as Germany, Sweden and the Republic of Ireland have implemented similar schemes. The average return rate for European countries with a DRS is 90 per cent, according to global eNGO ReLoop, with Germany showing the best results at 98 per cent.

However, the news has been met with concern from the British Independent Retailers Association (Bira), which has warned it could disadvantage smaller high street retailers.

Under the regulations, retailers selling single-use containers



will be required to host return points, unless they qualify for an exemption. While shops under 100m² in urban areas will be exempt, independent retailers still need to accommodate return facilities and storage areas for collected containers.

Andrew Goodacre, CEO of Bira, commented: "While we support environmental initiatives, we have significant concerns about how the Deposit Return Scheme will impact independent retailers. This scheme will add more costs to running a shop at a time when retailers are already facing unprecedented

pressures. Smaller shops will find it particularly challenging to accommodate the self-return machines, and storage of returns could become a significant problem. Most recycling will likely take place in large supermarkets on retail parks, potentially driving even more footfall away from our town centres as consumers combine bottle returns with their shopping trips."

Meanwhile, David Morrin, Commercial Director at Wholefoods Wholesale, in Ireland, told *Health Food Business*: "The DRS scheme in Ireland was daunting to all

shareholders on the lead-up to its launch. As a distributor in the middle of many UK brands trying to navigate the Irish DRS scheme, the initial phase was daunting, and it involved a lot of communication with brands as to the varying levels of responsibility.

"Looking back a year later, the returning of cans and bottles has become second nature to consumers and the process of setting products up and discussing deposit fees has become as easy as conversations on VAT. The core idea was to ensure that as a nation we are properly managing recyclable materials and personally I hope the scheme continues to thrive for the good of the country and planet."

New legislation for England and Northern Ireland has come into force, enabling the appointment of the scheme administrator – the Deposit Management Organisation. This will be a not-for-profit, industry-led body responsible for the administration and day-to-day running of the scheme. Scotland's own regulations are also progressing.

Weleda welcomes MP to new UK logistics centre

Weleda has welcomed the local MP to its new logistics centre.

The sustainable health and beauty pioneer was delighted to welcome Erewash MP, Adam Thompson, to its new Derbyshire logistics centre at Etiquette Park, in Ilkeston.

The new premises opened last year to house Weleda's customer care team and state of the art high-bay warehouse. The new facility, which totals 23,793sq ft, has capacity to store more than 4.75 million stock items and handle over 75,000 dispatches a year. The facility also processes orders for the many Derbyshire-manufactured products to other Weleda companies and distributors around the world.

The second development phase for

Weleda's site has begun, designing and building a new production facility for the health and beauty products that are manufactured in Derbyshire.

Weleda's Managing Director, Jayn Sterland, commented: "It was good to meet our new local MP, Adam Thompson, and introduce him to Weleda, perhaps one of the most unique companies in his constituency! We enjoyed showing him the differing aspects of the business, from our lifestyle shop on the Heanor Road and our pharmaceutical manufacturing site, to our brand-new warehouse and customer care centre at Etiquette Park, where we will be re-homing our production unit later this summer."





Health Stores UK launches campaign calling on entrepreneurs to open health stores

A leading retail organisation says the UK's health crisis needs more health stores and so is calling on aspiring 'healthpreneurs' to open a shop.

Health Stores UK explains that the UK is suffering a triple-epidemic of cardiovascular disease, obesity and mental poor health. And so the Let Us Help You Open Your Own Health Store campaign is calling on aspiring 'healthpreneurs' – entrepreneurs with a passion for health and wellness – to consider opening a health store to help address these life-threatening conditions. The campaign launched with a series of reels fronted by Health Stores UK committee member and health store owner, Cheryl Thallon, and Health Stores UK's Head of Business Development, Dave Christie, which are running across social media.

The campaign is part of a wider mission to increase access to healthier food and nutrition choices in an environment that is caring and supportive. It is being targeted at towns and regions currently underserved with health stores; research carried out by the association revealed 450 towns with a 15,000+ population without an independent health store.

Cheryl explained: "We want to see a thriving independent health store in every town in the UK to bring greater health and happiness to High Streets where there is little or no access to lifestyle advice and support. Opening a health store is an important service to your community and is also an opportunity to own your own business in this growing sector."

To help aspiring health store owners, Health Stores UK has published *How to Open & Run a Successful Health Store*. Authored by Cheryl, the book draws on her experience and incorporates insights and practical tips from 12 other successful health store business owners.

Health Stores UK Chair, Len Glenville, added: "Health Stores UK is an established trade association representing the views, and meeting the needs, of our members. We have a wealth of knowledge and a team of experienced retailers waiting to advise potential new recruits to join the army of health store owners in the UK."

Health Stores UK patron, Viridian Nutrition, is the sponsor of the current campaign.

Dr. Bronner's accuses B Corp of weak standards as it drops certification

Dr. Bronner's is dropping the B Corp certification, blaming weak standards that allow for greenwashing and purpose washing by multinationals.

Dr. Bronner's says after years of lobbying B Lab to improve the B Corp Standard, it will drop its Certification and not renew with B Lab. The company said it believes B Lab has failed to fulfil its promise to implement new standards to prevent the dilution of the B Corp mission and protect certification from being used by companies who seek to use B Corp for marketing purposes to portray themselves as more ethical.

David and Michael Bronner, CEO and President of Dr. Bronner's, commented: "The integrity of the B Corp Certification has become compromised and remaining certified now contradicts our mission. The increasing certification of multinationals including Unilever Australia and Nespresso in 2022 followed by Nestle Health Sciences in 2023 demonstrated that B Lab is not committed to protecting the integrity of the B Corp Certification and movement, nor ensuring that the certification won't be used to mislead consumers. Sharing the same logo and messaging regarding being of 'benefit' to the world with large multinational CPG companies with a history of serious ecological and labour issues, and no comprehensive or credible eco-social certification of supply chains, is unacceptable to us.

"Dr. Bronner's has long advocated to B Lab that certified companies, especially large multinationals, should be required to certify all major supply chains to credible eco-social certifications in order to be part of the Certified B Corp community. This requirement would prevent companies,

who have the resources and ability to certify all their major supply chains yet choose not to do so at all or only in part, from pursuing B Corp Certification for marketing purposes. Requiring credible third party eco-social certification of all major multinational supply chains would protect against the B Corp Certification being misused by companies to hide these unsustainable and unjust corporate practices. We have not seen adequate, transparent, and timely action from B Lab to update the standards or certification process to address our concerns. Now, our only recourse is to drop our certification. We hope our exit will prompt necessary and overdue action, and that allies who remain B Corp Certified will push to improve the standard from the inside."

A B Lab Spokesperson told *Health Food Business*: "B Lab's mission is about shifting capitalism to work for all people, communities and planet to enable economic system change. We have been actively engaging with our global community – including purpose-driven businesses, independent experts, advocacy organisations and stakeholders – to strengthen the B Corp standards. We remain focused on ensuring that our certification remains a meaningful and ambitious framework for responsible business.

"As a next step, B Lab will publish the new standards for B Corp Certification. These address today's most urgent social and environmental challenges, providing clear, impactful requirements that companies must meet in order to deliver leadership and systemic change, in alignment with B Lab's mission to shift capitalism to work for all people, communities and the planet."





Dietary inequalities worsen as healthy food becomes more expensive, report finds

A new report from The Food Foundation has revealed dietary inequalities have worsened in the UK as healthier foods grow more expensive at twice the rate of less healthy options.

The Food Foundation published its annual *Broken Plate* report, funded by The Nuffield Foundation, which found that healthier foods are more than twice as expensive per calorie as less healthy foods, with healthier food increasing in price at twice the rate in the past two years. The most deprived fifth of the population would need to spend 45 per cent of their disposable income on food to afford the government-recommended healthy diet, rising to 70 per cent for households with children. The overall figure has decreased from the peak of the cost-of-living crisis (50 per cent in 2021-22) but remains higher than the previous year's figure (43 per cent in 2020-21).

Worryingly, 37 per cent of supermarket promotions on food and non-alcoholic drinks are for unhealthy items, while 36 per cent of food and soft drink advertising is on confectionery, snacks, deserts and soft drinks, compared to two per cent for fruit and veg, and has increased from 33 per cent in 2022. The food environment is having a negative impact on health outcomes, with children from deprived backgrounds suffering the most. While children

across all income groups are consuming significantly less healthy foods, and significantly more unhealthy than recommended for good health, children from the most deprived income quintile consume 20 per cent less fruit and vegetables than the least deprived income quintile (2.1 portions/day compared to 2.6 portions/day respectively).

Children in the most deprived fifth of the population were found to be nearly twice as likely to be living with obesity as those in the least deprived fifth by their first year of school. Deprived groups are much more likely to be affected by type 2 diabetes. Similarly, children in their last year of primary school in the most deprived areas are more than twice as likely to have tooth decay in their adult teeth (23 per cent) compared to those in the least deprived areas (10 per cent).

Anna Taylor, Executive Director of The Food Foundation, commented: "The *Broken Plate* report sadly shows that our food system is failing to provide large swathes of the population with the basic nutrition needed for them to stay healthy and thrive. There is a tragic imbalance in the UK between the food that is marketed, available and affordable, and foods that are healthy and sustainable. Often, it is the most vulnerable children in our society who suffer the worst consequences of this."

Retailers face troubled times, despite interest rate cut, Bira warns

A leading retail group has warned that retailers in the UK face troubled times, despite the recent interest rate cut.

The British Independent Retailers Association (Bira) warned of difficult times, despite the Bank of England interest rate cut to 4.5 per cent, as the Bank halves its growth forecast for 2025 to 0.75 per cent.

Andrew Goodacre, CEO of Bira, commented: "The reduction in interest rates was expected and is welcome news for the retail sector. We have consistently maintained that rates have unnecessarily remained high for longer than required, and we anticipate this reduction will help boost consumer confidence."

"Long-term projects like the third runway at Heathrow will do little to address the immediate challenges facing high street retailers this year. We need to see concrete government plans that will deliver immediate support to our sector."

SHOPPERS SPEND MORE ON SUSTAINABLY SOURCED SUPPLEMENTS, DATA FINDS

Consumers in the UK and Ireland spent 17 per cent more on sustainably sourced supplements last year.

New data revealed shoppers spent £5.87 million on Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)-labelled supplements last year, marking a 17 per cent increase on the previous year.

The *MSC UK & Ireland Market Report 2024* found the region has emerged as the third-largest market for MSC certified supplements globally, behind the USA and China.

Rowan Williams, MSC UK & Ireland Commercial Officer, commented: "The 17 per cent rise in spending on MSC-labelled supplements reflects a deepening awareness among shoppers about the importance of protecting our oceans."

MSC-certified supplements were sold under 11 brands in the UK and Ireland last year. Wiley's Finest led the market with its range of fish oils sustainably sourced from Alaska. Healthspan and Cleanmarine provided MSC-labelled krill oil products for the 14th consecutive year and American brand, Dr. Mercola, diversified the market with a herring caviar oil supplement.

The MSC added that many small pelagic fisheries that supply the supplements industry are under threat from climate change and management issues. Therefore, this rising demand underscores the importance of sustainable fishery management in ensuring long-term market growth and ocean health.

The report added that while omega 3 fish oils have dominated the marine supplements market, the emerging marine collagen sector is rapidly gaining attention. Marine collagen is derived from fish by-products, such as skin, which would otherwise go to waste, supporting the circular economy within the food sector. In 2022, Planet Paleo became the first British brand to launch MSC-labelled marine collagen.

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Viridian founder honoured for commitment to Irish health food trade

The founder of Viridian Nutrition has been recognised for her services to the industry with a special award from Health Stores Ireland (HSI).

Cheryl Thallon (pictured), was presented with a wooden plaque at HSI's annual retailer 2025 awards presentation in Shannon.

Her dedication to the industry spans over 40 years. The award pays tribute to her unwavering commitment to supporting the health food trade and fellow retailers.

Cheryl commented: "I am very privileged to serve the health and wellness industry. The support from the Irish health stores has been phenomenal – we have learnt so much from everyone, we couldn't ask for more. We should all be very proud in playing our part to a legacy that keeps the country fit and healthy."

Cheryl fell in love with the natural products movement while working in health food stores and became interested in nutrition and food supplements, launching Viridian in 1999. She is founder of Sheaf Street Health Store, in her hometown of Daventry. Cheryl also sits on number of trade associations and boards.



Fewer than half of European consumers make sustainable food choices

A new study has found less than half of European consumers are making sustainable food choices.

It found that the share of European consumers who take sustainability into account when making food choices has declined since 2020, with budget constraints and a difficulty breaking existing habits being the main barriers to behaviour change.

Consumer trust in food manufacturers, retailers and food safety authorities presents an opportunity for growth, with around half of consumers expressing trust in these groups. The *EIT Food Trust Report* also found that since 2020, the number of consumers taking sustainability into account in their diets has declined from 51 per cent to 46 per cent.

When asked what they would like to change in their diet, 51 per cent say that eating more healthily is their first priority, whilst less than one in 10 (nine per cent) want to prioritise eating more sustainably. Changes consumers would like to make include eating less fat (57 per cent), less sugar (61 per cent) and less processed food (59 per cent). Meanwhile, under one in five (18 per cent) avoid animal-based products, 25 per cent saying they would like to reduce further their intake of animal-based products.

The study also focused on assessing the level of

trust that consumers have in food systems actors. While two thirds (67 per cent) continue to have trust in farmers (the same proportion as in 2020), trust in retailers, manufacturers and food safety authorities remains limited; 51 per cent and 47 per cent trust retailers and manufacturers respectively (compared to 53 per cent and 46 per cent in 2020), while an even lower proportion (46 per cent) trust food safety authorities (compared to 47 per cent in 2020).

Sofia Kuhn, Director of Public Insights and Engagement at EIT Food, commented: "While we can see a desire by consumers to eat more healthily, we're not seeing the same desire to prioritise sustainability through dietary changes. But linked to this, we're also seeing consumers struggle with gauging reliability of information about food.

"Across the board, we're seeing a lack of trust in food systems actors to put consumers' best interests at heart, and provide accurate information about food, health and sustainability. As food systems professionals, we have a major opportunity to transform the way consumers perceive the bodies that produce, process, market and regulate the food they eat. Collaboration will be key as we move towards greater transparency and accountability."

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ESN launches to UK market

Sports nutrition brand, ESN, has announced its launch to the UK in response to growing customer demand.

The German brand has launched in the UK amidst record €683m turnover for its parent company, The Quality Group. The launch sees ESN open UK offices and warehouse.

ESN was founded in 2007 by athletes actively engaged in Germany's growing fitness community. Noticing a gap in the market for premium protein powders and supplements, they began crafting their own sports nutrition products based on their personal health and fitness needs and those of the athletes around them.

In the UK, ESN is working with some of the country's most esteemed athletes, including HYROX World Record holder and 2024 HYROX World Championships Runner-Up, Michael Sandbach, and the youngest ever International Fitness and Bodybuilding Federation (IFBB) winner, Jack Eagles.

Philipp Markmann, General Manager of ESN, commented: "It's a landmark moment for us as a brand and we are primed and ready to serve the UK gym and fitness community, overdelivering on customer expectations through innovative, high quality products and seamless customer experience."

Organic survey reveals UK demand for Swedish fare

A project to increase sales of Swedish organic food in the UK has seen new research reveal strong demand.

UK ORGANIC has connected with Organic Sweden, which has launched the Organic Export UK initiative. This EU-funded, three-year project is designed to increase sales of Swedish organic food through targeted export promotion activities in the UK.

Organic Sweden, in collaboration with Verian, conducted a survey of London-based conscious consumers to understand attitudes towards organic food. The results reaffirm findings from the UK ORGANIC research in collaboration with ORC: barriers such as price and availability remain challenges for increasing organic purchases, while health and wellbeing are the top motivators. However, the survey also provided insights into consumer perceptions of Swedish organic food, with over half (73 per cent) holding a positive view of these products. Additionally, 80 per cent reported having good or extensive knowledge of organic production.

Anton Järild, Communication Strategist at Organic Sweden, commented: "This health-conscious mindset, combined with the positive perception of Swedish organic products, presents a significant opportunity for Swedish producers to expand their reach in the UK market."

STUDY OF DIETARY INTAKES AMONG SCOTTISH CHILDREN REVEALS ALARMING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

A new study has revealed alarming health inequalities among children in Scotland when it comes to their dietary intakes.

Dietary Intake in Scotland's Children (DISH) paints a concerning picture of the dietary habits of children and young people aged two to 15 in Scotland, with children in the most deprived areas experiencing the highest levels of food insecurity and struggling the most to meet dietary goals compared to those in the least-deprived areas.

The survey, which involved 1,700 participants across Scotland, was carried out by the Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Systems at the University of Edinburgh and Taylor McKenzie Research and Marketing on behalf of Food Standards Scotland (FSS).

Other key findings included that socioeconomic disparities are evident, with children in the most deprived areas consuming less fruit and vegetables and less likely to meet fibre goals than those in the least deprived. Food insecurity impacts nearly one in five families, with rates much higher in Scotland's most deprived areas. Only eight per cent of children meet the recommended Scottish Dietary Goal for free sugars. Adolescents aged 11-15 consume diets significantly higher in free sugars and lower in fibre compared to younger children.

Heather Kelman, Chair of FSS, commented: "The findings from this report are extremely concerning, yet sadly not surprising. They serve as yet another reminder of our nation's poor diet, with the very real consequences being felt now. A key question now is how many wake up calls do we need before we start to seriously address this and take immediate action to improve our food environment and make it easier for families to access affordable, healthy food.

"Foods and drinks high in fats, sugar and salt account for an unhealthy amount of our children's diets. Urgent action is needed by industry and government to shift the dial if we are to make real progress towards the Scottish Government's ambition to halve childhood obesity by 2030. Without this, we risk jeopardising the health of future generations growing up in Scotland."

The report emphasises the need for a collective effort by policymakers, the food industry, schools, and communities to support healthier diets by improving the food environment. It also underscores the importance of addressing food insecurity, particularly among the most vulnerable families.



THE IMPORTANCE OF HFI TRAINING

In a new series, we hear from retailers about why training with the HFI is so crucial to business. Here, **Josie Smith**, owner/partner at Mulberry Bush Wholefoods, in Lampeter, tells the store's training journey.

The Health Food Institute has been supporting our industry for decades. When we opened Mulberry Bush Wholefoods in the '70s, it was the HFI I turned to for advice and training. I completed the retailer certificate and the diploma and have been a Fellow of the institute for over 40 years. During that time, around 30 of our staff have learned how to support customers in their quest for a healthier way of life. The skills and confidence the training gives far outweighs the investment in time and money.

I think it is important for our industry to have recognisable standards, and the HFI creates and upholds these. When an independent store is a member of the HFI, it gives customers confidence staff are well-trained, willing and able to assist them. When the person behind our shop counter has good knowledge of the products we sell, an understanding of the legal responsibilities of giving health advice, a genuine desire to help people and to support a clean and safe shop environment, our customers sense their commitment, listen to their advice and leave feeling heard and assisted. And they will tell their friends and revisit.

Two of our staff completed HFI training in the past 12 months, Amanda Davies and Karen Hills. Amanda told me: "The HFI course taught me things I had little knowledge about, built on things I did know, and the result is increased awareness of the business and most importantly the ability to advise and recommend products to our customers in a confident manner. Customer service is at the forefront of my job, and I use what I learned on the course every working day."

Karen also found it useful. As someone new to health food retailing, she now feels far more confident behind the counter. Karen told me the HFI website was easy to navigate and the training very supportive.

We encourage staff to take training by offering a bonus on completion. I would definitely encourage owners and managers to invest in this training, which engages and inspires staff to develop a genuine interest in the products they sell and benefits our businesses and team.



HFI PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA PART ONE

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Introduction to the Natural Products Industry

MODULE 2 -

Effective and Legal Selling

MODULE 3 -

Product Awareness and Quality Issues

MODULE 4 -

Health and Safety

MODULE 5 -

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Part One Final Assessment

HFI PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA PART TWO

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MODULE 3 -

Sports Nutrition

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Homoeopathic Medicine

MODULE 5 -

Alternative/Complementary Therapies

MODULE 6 -

Food Supplements

MODULE 7 -

Non-Food Products

Appendix 1 - A Code of Practice

Appendix 2 - Legalities of Selling

Part Two Final Assessment

enquiries@healthfoodinstitute.org.uk

Product WATCH

Health Food Business takes a look at the latest launches for your store.



BetterYou evolves magnesium range with powder drinks

A new range of magnesium drink formulations has been added to the range at BetterYou.

The triple blend drink formulations are designed to deliver fast, effective nutrient absorption for better performance, recovery and sleep.

BetterYou Magnesium Max powders contain a triple blend of magnesium citrate, magnesium bisglycinate and magnesium malate to maximise absorption and effectiveness in the body.

Magnesium Max Original is an unflavoured powder to add to your drink of choice, which contains 375mg elemental magnesium, per dose, while Magnesium Max Sleep, also containing 375mg elemental magnesium per dose (100 per cent of your NRV), is in a hot chocolate form with an effective combination of cocoa, magnesium and passionflower. It is designed to reduce tiredness and fatigue, support muscle function, and contributes to the normal functioning of the nervous system and aids relaxation and promote restful sleep. Both are vegan and free from palm oil.

NOOTROPIC BRAND LAUNCHES TO UK MARKET

R.Y.M. Nutrition has announced its launch to the UK market to support five key pillars of brain health.

The brand is launching to the UK with a range of nootropic supplements designed to improve mental wellness, brain health, sleep, focus and resilience to stress.

Products include KSM-66 **ASHWAGANDA**, a mega-strength supplement that provides a 600mg dose of full-spectrum ashwagandha root. R.Y.M. has used herbal extractions instead of powder form for potency and it has more than five per cent concentration of withanolides, the most active compound of ashwagandha.

SLEEP – Rest & Restore contains vitamin B6, magnesium bisglycinate, 5HTP, lemon balm, rhodiola, Montmorency cherry powder and KSM-Ashwagandha to support and reduce stress, relax muscles, and support your body by producing natural melatonin. Also in the range is **FOCUS & MEMORY** – Recharge & Alert, **DE-STRESS** – Relax & Calm, and **BRAIN FORMULA** – Refresh & Energise.

R.Y.M. Nutrition is led by a team of nutritionists, a homoeopathic doctor, and brain health experts, with the products free from unnecessary additives and designed to support long-term brain health.



Oaty additions as Clearspring moves into sweet snacks

Clearspring has ventured into sweet snacking on the go with a three-strong range of oat biscuits.

The Japanese and organic fine foods specialist has unveiled Organic Oat Biscuits in Miso Maple, Matcha, and Sweet Date flavours, made by fourth generation artisanal family craft bakers in the Scottish Highlands.

The biscuits are made using the finest organic Scottish wholegrain oats and premium organic ingredients to create a biscuit dough, which, once ready, is baked in small batches to ensure taste and texture. Palm oil free, they are made using organic coconut oil and olive oil. They are also refined sugar free, high in

fibre and plant-based.

Organic Miso Maple Oat Biscuits features Japanese white miso and authentic Canadian maple syrup, while Organic Matcha Oat Biscuits are made in small batches with organic Scottish wholegrain oats and premium quality, authentic organic Japanese matcha. Finally, Organic Sweet Date Oat Biscuits feature wholegrain organic Scottish oats complemented with the natural sweetness of premium organic dates.

Clearspring Managing Director, Maria Dawson, commented: "These sweet biscuits are a first for Clearspring and we wanted to launch something special. We

have been working with our producer for nearly two years to perfect these flavours, which are unique, sweet and internationally inspired. The range has something for everyone, with each offering its own delicious flavour profile. We are also proud that we are offering a sweet treat range that is made using wholegrain oats, is organic, is minimally processed whilst being refined sugar free, high in fibre and plant-based. Our new Organic Oat Biscuits are also a delicious and convenient way for us to take consumers on a journey of discovery, especially those who are new to authentic Japanese miso and matcha."



Terranova unveils new probiotics range

Three targeted products have been launched as part of a new probiotics range developed by Terranova.

Terranova has launched the Digestive Synergy range, which combines scientifically backed microflora strains, precision-targeted enzymes, and powerful botanicals, all enhanced with innovative Magnifood ingredients.

Terranova has partnered with probiotic ingredient supplier, Probionova, which is at the forefront of probiotic research. To further guarantee quality, Probionova employs advanced fermentation technologies, ensuring consistent production standards and enabling them to offer vegan, dairy-free formulations.

Microbiome Challenge is specifically designed to support the more complex dysbiotic imbalances which underlie many conditions and symptoms related to gastrointestinal health. It combines several of the most researched microbiota strains from Probionova, with a bespoke Magnifood Complex featuring natural theanine extracted from green tea leaves, as well as magnesium bisglycinate chelate as TRAACS.

Microbiome Travel is a comprehensive microflora formulation for prevention and management of traveller's diarrhoea, featuring clinically proven strains, *S. boulardii* and *L. rhamnosus*, with a bespoke MAGNIFOOD complex. And Microbiome Woman features a customised selection of microflora strains, including *L. crispatus*, *L. gasseri*, and *L. jensenii*, which are dominant *lactobacilli* present in the vaginal environment of healthy women. They are also combined with a bespoke MAGNIFOOD complex. Also in the range is Digest Challenge and Digest PBD, both digestive enzyme-focused products.



COLLAGEN INNOVATION FROM TIDE

TIDE has launched a new sparkling raspberry collagen water.

The brand says it sets itself apart from other collagen drinks by focusing on skincare benefits rather than performance enhancement, and has developed a lightly sparkling collagen water, infused with refreshing raspberry.

Each can contains 3.5g of premium, sustainably sourced hydrolysed collagen peptides, sourced from wild-caught North Atlantic and Pacific Ocean fish, and is both MSC and ASC certified. Free from artificial sweeteners and additives, advanced collagen peptides ensure optimal bioavailability.

Easter creations from Gnow

Gnow Chocolate has unveiled its new creations for Easter trade.

Gnow says it is proud to introduce its new range of "reassuringly chunky flat eggs", taking a proud stance against hollow eggs.

The range of chunky flat eggs come in Rocky Road, Totally Nuts, Chocolate Curls and Eggs-travaganza offerings, which uses Columbian chocolate to assemble 40 per cent cocoa milk chocolate to not only create a thickness that ensures a suitably satisfying snap but provides the all-important density that can accommodate all the tasty inclusions.



More importantly of all, a flat egg requires less packaging than a rotund 'image over substance' hollow egg, which is very important when you take pride in your stance as an artisanal chocolate producer with strong sustainable values, the brand says.

Camu bottled in health shot

Rebel Kitchen has launched what it calls the first camu berry shot.

They are available in 60ml health shots and 420ml dosing bottles, with a choice of two variants, Immunity, and Immunity + Natural Energy derived from vitamin B.

Following a trip to the Ucayali region of Peru, Rebel Kitchen founder, Ben Arbib, unearthed camu, growing in the marshlands of the Amazon Rainforest. Ben learned and felt the benefits from the berry's incredible nutrients in their most natural form and decided to introduce it to the UK market in a drinkable shot supplement. Just one berry has 30 times more vitamin C than an orange (per ml).

Rebel Kitchen uses freshly frozen berries to lock in the nutrients, which are then mixed with other natural fruits to create a health shot that is naturally pink in colour.



Product showcases

HFB's guide to the essential products for your store

AMANDALUS Ltd introduces high-quality fish oil capsules



- High levels of EPA and DHA: 1000mg capsules – EPA 50% - DHA 20%
- Speed of delivery: Bulk stock available from UK for immediate delivery
- Value for money: Please contact us for pricing

Fish oil is the best way to get one's omega-3 fatty acids which may help with: • Heart health • Eye issues, such as dry eyes syndrome • Brain/mental health, including dementia, depression etc.

Email info@amandalus.com or call 07469233633 for more details.

Total Digestive Wellness



GI Nutra Total Digestive Wellness Fast-Acting Powder features the nutritional support of 4000mg of L-Glutamine, the recommended level for optimal results. It also contains highly active microflora, whole food enzymes, proteolytic enzymes, prebiotic fibre and also supplies soothing ginger and turmeric. This revolutionary formula is designed to target the

whole digestive system in a balanced way and delivers powerful synergistic activity to ensure total digestive wellness. £33.95.

www.naturesplus.co.uk

Pregnacare Max



Pregnacare Max from Vitabiotics Pregnacare, the UK's No1 Pregnancy Supplement Brand, has been specially formulated by experts to safeguard nutritional requirements during all of pregnancy, and be our most optimal and comprehensive pregnancy supplement. It offers an advanced and carefully balanced range of nutrients such as L-methylfolate (a more advanced form of folic acid), vitamin D, calcium to help maintain normal

bones and teeth, iron and vitamins B6 and B12 which contribute to normal red blood cell formation and an Omega-3 DHA capsule which contributes to normal foetal brain and eye development. RRP £20.25.

www.pregnacare.com

Suma Speciality Coffee



Coffee is more than a beverage; it embodies a journey from dedicated farmers to your cup. To reflect this, we've revamped our coffee range, enhancing both its visual identity and commitment to transparency, quality, and

ethics. Suma's speciality coffee, certified Fairtrade, ensures farmers receive fair compensation, empowering them and their communities. Many growers are part of co-operatives, fostering economic and social growth. The new packaging narrates the story of each blend, showcasing the growers, altitude, and processing methods that shape the coffee's rich, complex flavours, while simplifying flavour profiles for clearer consumer understanding. Available now.

www.wholesale.suma.coop

Natural Option for IBS Symptoms



Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is estimated to affect up to 20% of the population. Evidence suggests that multi-strain live bacteria supplements are particularly helpful against IBS-symptoms, compared to single-strains. Bio-Kult Everyday contains 14 different strains of live bacteria, proven to reach the gut alive. The versatile dosing of up to 4 capsules daily, allows the strength to be tailored to suit you. Gradually building up to 4 capsules may be helpful for IBS-symptoms. Bio-Kult does not contain any fermentable fibre, so perfectly developed for those with sensitive digestive systems.

www.bio-kult.com



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*Brontosaurus Vegan Lifestyle Store
Swansea*



For more information about stocking *Natural Lifestyle* in your store - or advertising - email sales@targetpublishing.com.

Part of Target Publishing's natural health family



PRODUCT SHOWCASES

All-Natural Ionic Mineral Drops



ConcenTrace® Trace Mineral Drops contains the most powerful, all-natural, pH-balancing trace minerals in the world. Harvested from the waters of the Great Salt Lake in Utah, containing a full spectrum of naturally occurring ionic trace minerals including - Magnesium: to support over 300 biochemical reactions in the body; Chloride: important for maintaining proper fluid balance, aids in digestion, and supports the function of muscles and nerves in the body; Sodium: essential for maintaining fluid balance, nerve function, and healthy muscle contraction in the body; Potassium: crucial for maintaining healthy blood pressure. Gluten-free, certified

vegan, cGMP, Non-GMO, third-party tested.
www.kinetic4health.co.uk

Scientific Approach: Terranova's Holy Basil – A Potent Botanical



Maximize the benefits of your product line with Terranova's Holy Basil, a powerful adaptogenic herb native to India. Known for its numerous health-promoting properties, Holy Basil supports cognitive function, mental clarity, and nervous system health while reducing cortisol levels. Collaborate with Terranova to introduce your customers to the science-backed power of Holy Basil and offer a potent addition to their wellness regimen.

www.terranovalhealth.com

Relieve Hay Fever Naturally with Helios

Award winning Helios Hay Fever contains three homeopathic remedies Allium cepa, Euphrasia and Sabadilla. This combination has a long tried and tested history of traditional use to relieve typical symptoms of sore, irritated, itchy eyes, sneezing, a runny nose and a tickly cough. Being natural Hay Fever has no known side effects, does not cause drowsiness and is suitable for all the family including young children. Hay Fever comes in lactose free, organic sucrose pill form, in our single dose dispenser.

www.helios.co.uk



A taste of Italy



Suma Wholefoods' tomato range has a fresh new look, featuring stunning photography that highlights the authenticity of our Italian-grown tomatoes. Sourced from small-scale, organic farms in the sun-drenched fields of Italy, these tomatoes are

picked at peak ripeness for rich, full-bodied flavour. The updated packaging reflects the quality and integrity behind every tin—ideal for retailers and chefs who value traceable, ethically sourced ingredients. With vibrant imagery that tells the story of their origins, Suma's new-look tomato cans bring a taste of real Italian tradition to every kitchen. Stock up today and offer your customers quality they can trust.

www.wholesale.suma.coop

SeaMAG: Premium Topical Magnesium

From the makers of MAG365 and PrizMAG comes SeaMAG—a range of 100% pure topical magnesium products, crafted in small batches for superior quality. Available as bath flakes, gel, and spray, it provides an effective, skin-friendly way to absorb magnesium, ideal for soothing sore muscles, promoting relaxation, and nourishing the skin. SeaMAG can be used alongside magnesium supplements for enhanced support or as a standalone option when needed. Easy to use and fast-absorbing, it's a valuable addition for retailers catering to health-conscious consumers seeking natural, high-quality wellness solutions.

www.itlhealth.co.uk



Regenerative Omegas Ahiflower® Plant-Based Omega 3-6-9



Game Changer in plant-based omegas. Regenerative Omegas offers a plant-based, eco-friendly solution for essential omega fatty acids. Grown through regenerative agriculture, this vegan-friendly formula supports optimal wellness while promoting a healthier planet. Embrace optimal health as you support your heart, brain, immune system, skin, joints, and gut with Regenerative Omegas Ahiflower® Plant-Based Omega 3-6-9. Look well, move

well, and feel well with Regenerative Omegas Ahiflower® Plant-Based Omega 3-6-9 – an indispensable addition to your daily routine.
www.bionature.uk.com

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Quality beyond compare



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It's NHT SUMMIT season

The NHT Summit series of events kicks off for 2025 with our ever-popular show in Manchester.

The natural health industry is gearing up to descend on Manchester for our first NHT Summit of 2025.

The event takes place in Manchester, our original NHT Summit location, on March 16, and is organised by Target Publishing, and held in close partnership with Health Stores UK.

Designed for independent health food stores, the NHT Summit will be held at The Kimpton Clocktower and includes a sold-out exhibition, featuring more than 100 brands, along with a collection of informative and educational roundtable events and a host of networking opportunities.

Retail registration is open for independent health food stores; entry to the event is free but must be done in advance by visiting www.nhtsummit.co.uk

Ruth Gilmour, Sales Director at Target Publishing, which also publishes this magazine, commented: "We are delighted to be hosting our first NHT Summit of 2025 with a sold-out exhibition, featuring a wide variety of companies, from much-loved industry brands to new entrants to the market. We hope this offers our retail visitors all they need for a productive day of business and networking. Don't forget to register your place to visit and we look forward to seeing our special industry come together in a positive environment."

An industry-wide event

We are delighted to have a whole host of confirmed exhibitors representing all health store categories, from supplements and herbs to food and drink, beauty,



personal care, eco-friendly items and more.

For the Manchester event, we are delighted to have Viridian Nutrition, Lamberts, Good Health Naturally, Infinity Foods and Minami as our show partners and we thank them for their support of the event.

Also exhibiting is A.Vogel, Quest Vitamins, Bio-nature with brands including Terranova, Lemon Myrtle and Alteya, Living Planet, Modern Herbs, WFBM Healthcare, Bristol Fungarium, DRVEGAN, Higher Nature, MyOva, Pharma Nord, and Sweet Cures. The food and drink side is well catered for with the likes of Suma, Bonsoy, Euno Drinks, Conscious Bites, NutraTea, Organico, Windmill Organics, and Chia Charge, while beauty and personal care is covered with Natracare, Nature's Dream, Dr Organic, Salcura, and MooGoo Skincare.

The team from *Health Food Business* will also be there on the day, as will the team from Health Stores UK.





Education and networking

The event is also a good time to meet with industry, including other like-minded retailers, to network, do business and pick up new ideas.

In terms of networking, it starts the evening before the show with our welcome drinks reception, being held at The Kimpton Clocktower and open for retailers and suppliers.

On the event day, there are free refreshments through the day, along with a free three-course buffet lunch, allowing plenty of time to catch up with friends.

We also want to ensure retailers take away useful information and ideas from the event, which is why we host our roundtable events; designed to be educational and covering a range of key topics affecting retailers today, the sessions are small and informal, allowing the chance to ask questions and talk through ideas.

There will be a range of sessions for the Manchester event, including

an exciting panel discussion, sponsored by Health Stores UK and chaired by Dave Christie, which takes on the theme 'What are we missing?', and will aim to highlight potential new revenue opportunities to grow your business, as well as examine if there are other measures you could take to drive your store. No booking is required, just turn up at the session.

ESSENTIAL INFO

Where: The Kimpton Clocktower, Manchester.

When: March 16, between 10am-4pm.

Register: Book your place at www.nhtsummit.co.uk

Stay: If you would like to stay in Manchester for the show weekend, you can book through our agency, www.reservation-highway.co.uk/nht25

Benefits: As well as a free three-course buffet lunch and refreshments, retailers will also receive a free goodie bag.

Product showcases



Come and see us at the Natural Health Trade Summit, Manchester



Ionic Magnesium Unbound & Ready to React

Viridian Ionic Magnesium Liquid is sourced from the pristine Northern shore of Great Salt Lake, in Utah, which ensures a clean and natural environment for the water rich magnesium and electrolyte content to be harvested. It is left untouched for a further two years to allow natural evaporation of sodium, leaving a concentrated form of liquid magnesium. The term ionic confirms the magnesium is unbound, and therefore has higher bioavailability, making it more effective for promoting normal psychological function, energy metabolism, and reducing fatigue.

Contains 100% active ingredients, no artificial fillers or nasties, vegan friendly and ethically sourced.

www.viridian-nutrition.com

Spring Beauty with Camu Camu – Natural Vitamin C



As the seasons change, support your skin from the inside out with Camu Camu—nature's richest source of whole-food vitamin C. This Amazonian superfruit provides powerful antioxidants, bioflavonoids, and anthocyanins to aid collagen production for radiant, youthful skin. With ORAC-tested stability and a unique raw extraction process, our Camu Camu ensures maximum potency—free from heat, binders, or fillers. As a natural antihistamine, it may also help ease seasonal allergies. Plus, vitamin C plays a key role in skin regeneration

and protection against oxidative stress, including the effects of sun exposure—making it an ideal supplement for springtime skin health and immune resilience.

www.goodhealthwholesale.com

Botanicals For Life Agnus Castus

Botanicals For Life has formulated this pure Agnus Castus extract to support female balance through every life stage. Agnus Castus is a traditional herb that has been used since Ancient Greek times and valued for its active compounds, including vitexicarpin, for hormonal health. Our Agnus Castus is organically certified and sourced from ethical, partner farms dedicated to purity and sustainability. Gently extracted and suspended in glycerine rather than alcohol, this formula is a natural way to support hormonal harmony, and may be particularly helpful for the relief of premenstrual and menopausal symptoms. For more information, email sales@livingplanetdistribution.com

www.livingplanetdistribution.com



NutraReflux – Digestive Support Tea

NutraReflux® by Nutra Tea® is 1 of 30 award-winning functional herbal teas. Developed by pharmacists and nutritionists, NutraReflux supports gastro-intestinal complaints and digestion.

This unique blend contains 100% active botanicals that have been sustainably sourced including Shatavari Root, Ginger and Fennel Fennel to help maintain balance and comfort in the digestive systems. Each biodegradable tea bag contains 2 grams of pure active herbs, free-from additives and oils, perfect for multiple brews throughout the day. NutraThroat is a convenient way to help maintain digestive health and digestive juice flow.

www.nutratea.co.uk



Vegan Black Maca + Organic Ashwagandha KSM-66

Black Maca is known to boost energy levels without any side effects or herb dependency. It increases libido and promotes endurance along with performance. KSM-66 Ashwagandha has the highest concentration of root-only extract. Its production is based on the principle of “GreenChemistry” principles, which avoid the use of any alcohol or chemical solvent. Ashwagandha, commonly known as Indian ginseng has been widely used as a Rasayana (tonic). These Rasayana herbs are known to enhance a healthy immune system and rejuvenate the body at the cellular level. Because of its adaptogenic properties, Ashwagandha also provides a well-balanced response to stress and anxiety.

www.thegoodguru.com



Bonsoy Introduces ...



Bonsoy - known for their premium Japanese soya drink - has recently launched a new range of sparkling coconut waters to the UK: Organic Original, Coconut & Passionfruit and Coconut & Watermelon. Produced from organic Vietnamese coconuts that are left to mature on the trees, allows

the fruit to ripen naturally and produce a sweeter water. Harvested and canned at source to capture their delicious fresh flavour, with the fruit options mixed with freshly squeezed, locally sourced fruit. With minimum ingredients, these refreshing tropical drinks are suitable for all ages and can be enjoyed on its own over ice or as a mixer. Ambient storage but best served chilled. GM free, vegan, sugar free
www.communityfoods.co.uk

Planet Paleo Active Collagen



Active Collagen is a grass-fed collagen blend with a special coactive nutrient formula to support active healthy lifestyles. It contains Planet Paleo's signature clean collagen peptides from grass-fed cows grazing year round on natural pasture and is rich in bioavailable protein and amino acids to support fitness and tissue repair. With added vitamin C to aid collagen formation and healthy cartilage, Celadrin's patented blend of fatty acids to promote flexibility and mobility, bioactive MSM, and additional therapeutic herbs to support a healthy response to inflammation, this formula provides a great foundation for healthy fitness and fast recovery. For more information, email sales@livingplanetdistribution.com
www.livingplanetdistribution.com

HuxQ10: Coenzyme Q10 for Heart & Energy

Boost your heart health and energy levels with HuxQ10, a premium Coenzyme Q10 supplement. Available in 30 and 150 capsules, HuxQ10 is vegan, kosher, halal, and approved plant-based by the Vegetarian Society. Each soft plant-based capsule contains Q10 in oil form for better absorption, ensuring maximum benefits. As one of the pioneering vitamin companies, HuxQ10 is proud to be among the first to receive Plant-Based approval from the Vegetarian Society, guaranteeing high-quality formulations for optimal wellness. Available now from CLF Distribution, Thyme Marketing, Jumla Nutrition, Blukoo, or order direct for convenience.
www.huxley-europe.co.uk



Discover the power of nature with Absolute Aromas

We have 30 years of expertise in sourcing the best Essential Oils nature can offer, and blending these into incredible, 100% natural products to support your wellness, body and mind. Come and meet our team and sample some of our newest products, and best-selling favourites at the NHT Summit this month. Goody bags and seasonal gifts will be available on our stand, plus our gorgeous Mothers Day and Spring collection featuring Roses in all their forms! All orders over £150 placed at the show will receive a full set of complimentary testers. See you there!
www.absolute-aromas.com



Tackling intolerances quickly

Gas, bloating or discomfort after intolerance foods exposure can now be solved with Cura Nutrition's specialist plant-based enzyme blend CuraZyme Tolerance™. This fast acting, extra strong formula features a specialised blend of 14 pharmaceutical-grade, vegan enzymes which are specially blended to tackle food intolerances quickly and effectively, particularly gluten, lactose, casein, phenols, beans, soy, legumes and lentils. Take 1-2 capsules with every meal. Available in 30 and 90 capsule bottles.
www.curanutrition.com



Lion's Mane Focus Powder & Capsules

Lion's Mane is celebrated as a natural nootropic for its ability to support brain health and mental performance. Mushrooms For Life Lion's Mane Focus is ideally suited for the modern-day lifestyle. It is a combination of mushroom parts to provide a full-spectrum profile of nutrients to aid cognition, focus, and nerve health. Grown on organic farms under nature-identical conditions, it is third-party tested for purity and free from contaminants. These convenient capsules and powders are free of fillers, ensuring superior quality and potency to naturally support your focus and cognitive performance every day. Perfect for those seeking an easy, effective brain health boost.



Lion's Mane Focus Coffee

A customer favourite, lion's mane is a powerful and uplifting mushroom for mental energy, focus and cognition, and noted for its special compounds and polysaccharides that support nervous system health. This functional mushroom coffee blends organic pure grade lion's mane extract with organic roasted arabica coffee, aromatic cardamom, and sweet vanilla for a silky smooth flavour profile. A great choice to support focus and alertness throughout the day, the nootropic properties of lion's mane work in harmony with coffee to keep you focused and productive all day long.



Myco Synergy – The All-Rounder

With their long history of use in Eastern cultures, we have brought together six key functional mushrooms in this synergistic formula to offer time-tested benefits to support your daily routine. Organic Myco Synergy is a blend of lion's mane, cordyceps, reishi, maitake, tremella and shiitake, cultivated by expert growers in dedicated regions of China where they have grown in the wild for thousands



of years. Organic Myco Synergy is rich in active polysaccharides, triterpenes, and adaptogenic compounds to support a balanced lifestyle. It's a great way to get your daily 'mushroom multi' in one unique supplement.

Reishi, The Mushroom For Royalty

Known as the 'mushroom of immortality' and the king of tonic herbs, reishi is a popular and revered medicinal mushroom. It is particularly high in beta glucans, an active polysaccharide with studied health benefits, as well as triterpenes that have been researched for their potent anti-inflammatory properties, making it a useful choice for immune and allergy support, as well as relaxation. It is considered an adaptogen with the ability to balance different systems in the body during stressful periods. We use only pure grade reishi, the highest therapeutic grade, grown organically in its natural home on duanwood and dual extracted for full-spectrum compounds.



Lion's Mane Matcha Latte



Made with premium-grade matcha tea, this matcha latte is a combination of functional superfoods with powerfully uplifting properties. Unlike other brands that use drinks-grade mushroom powders, this matcha blend contains pure grade lion's mane extract, which is the highest quality and delivers a therapeutic 1g dose of organic lion's mane per serving. Lion's Mane fruiting body is a rich source of nootropic compounds including hericenones for cognitive and nerve support. Blended with coconut milk powder, coconut sugar and cinnamon for a touch of sweetness to balance matcha's qualities, this matcha blend is perfect for your daily boost of mental alertness.

Myco Beauty With Tremella & Chaga

This innovative beauty formula is a unique blend of tremella and chaga mushroom which bring their unique gifts to skin renewal and repair. Chaga is traditionally known as 'Diamond of the Forest' and considered one of the most potent superfoods in the world due to its high levels of antioxidants. Tremella or Snow Fungus is sometimes called the 'Beauty Mushroom' because of its incredible ability to hold moisture and support glowing skin. Organic Myco Beauty has been blended to capture the full spectrum of bioactive compounds including betulin, beta glucans and other polysaccharides. Together this formula offers a natural way to support your skin's health.



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RESTORE HARMONY WITH THE POWER OF ALCOHOL-FREE LIQUID HERBALS



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For further details, or to place your order contact our sales team.
+44 (0) 203 176 9982 or email: sales@livingplanetdistribution.com

Our health food STORE HEROES

We are delighted to announce the winners of the annual Health Store Heroes accolades, hosted by *Health Food Business* in partnership with Health Stores Ireland.



From left: Ciaron McLoughlin, Aideen Hurley collecting on behalf of Sara, Oliver McCabe collecting on behalf of Mark, and Edel Kelly

OUR WINNING LINE-UP

✦ SOCIAL STAR

– Matt and Nuala Ronan, Evolv, Enniscorthy

✦ WEB WIZARD

– Edel Kelly, Horans Health Stores

✦ LEADER OF THE PACK

– Ciaron McLoughlin, The Wellness Shop, Sligo

✦ MERCHANDISING MAESTRO

– Sara Pezzati, Evergreen, Knocknacarra

✦ RISING STAR

– Mark Tierney, The Olive Branch, Clonakilty

Health stores are unique in comparison to other retail outlets in that staff working in them go above and beyond when it comes to supporting customers to better health. And each year, we are delighted to team up with Health Stores Ireland to offer dedicated and passionate health store staff the recognition they deserve.

The Health Store Heroes accolades honour people working in our independent trade, across a host of categories. We were delighted to be in attendance at the recent trade gathering in Shannon, hosted by Health Stores Ireland, where we handed out our awards.

Alan McGrath, National Organiser at Health Stores Ireland, commented: “Our conference and awards weekend in Shannon has now established itself as a firm date on the health food sector calendar for collaboration and a celebration of the industry. It’s vital that we celebrate what we do and highlight exceptional people within our sector. Health Store Heroes recognises those dedicated individuals who step up to meet the expectations of both brands and customers. Their collective acknowledgement showcases what is unique about the health food trade, whilst the conference helps highlight innovation and sets the sector up with a positive outlook for the year ahead.”

Rachel Symonds, Editor of *Health Food Business*,

who handed out the awards, added: “We are proud to host the Health Store Heroes awards in partnership with Health Stores Ireland as they recognise and honour independent health food stores, which is the heartland of this magazine. We see time and time again how important health stores are to the health and wellbeing of their local communities and this couldn’t occur without the knowledge, care and commitment shown by staff. We congratulate our winners and thank them for their efforts.”

Among our winners, Ciaron McLoughlin was nominated for his work at The Wellness Shop, in Sligo, and after picking up his accolade, he commented: “I’m delighted to win the award for Leader of the Pack – my experience in health food shops has come on leaps and bounds since I started many years ago.”

Meanwhile, Sara Pezzati won Merchandising Maestro, recognised by the judging panel as an example of the best in merchandising; bright, straight lines, easy to navigate, room for promotions and sampling, without interfering with customer flow.



Ciaron McLoughlin with Editor, Rachel

Social success



Matt and Nuala Ronan were the deserving recipients of the Social Star accolade for their work at Evolv, in Enniscorthy.

Matt enthused: "It has been really wonderful to receive this recognition from our industry and it certainly encourages us to keep it going and hopefully keep it interesting. I suspect our nomination for this award was based on the consistency of our output and the commitment to showing up every week with some substantial content, whether it suits or not!"

"Thankfully, we get great commitment from our staff, all of whom are willing to step in front of the camera and give it their best shot and we really appreciate this as we fully understand how intimidating it can feel in the early days of going on camera."

Nuala joined Evolv after leaving a highly stressed job.

Matt recalled: "Immediately she got completely pulled into the fascinating area of alternative health and as she had experienced the power of changing her diet and using natural remedies in order to correct her IBS. This meant she already had an insight to the area, which made it extremely attractive when the opportunity to purchase the store came about."

Matt later left his work in farming and is now fully involved in the store.

Social media is an area that has had much effort, with Matt explaining: "We have been focused on our social media connection to our customers for a good number of years now and are very pleased to

find that lots of our regulars comment on the usefulness of the weekly videos which we produce. Normally, it is anywhere from 10 to 15 minutes of a chat between Nuala and myself about various health issues or products.

"Facebook is by far our strongest area as we are approaching 10K followers, with Instagram still needing a good deal of work to bring in the younger demographic which is attached with it. Those are our only two platforms at present, though a start on TikTok is long overdue! Reels are definitely worthwhile, and I use opus pro in order to extract bits of content out of larger videos in order to get them looking a little bit more professional. These are also ideal for TikTok and Instagram and you can link them to the long form source video in order to bring extra attention to it through the short bite-sized clip."

And how beneficial has it been to Evolv as a business?

"We do feel almost a sense of duty to keep our followers and fans updated on what's going on in the shop and have definitely got a consistency in that regard, which means that we settle down to producing something of substance every week, whether we feel inspired or not," Matt added.

"Social media always seemed a bit difficult to quantify its impact but when somebody comments on an idea you express in content, it shows it is worthwhile to put a bit of effort into producing it, no matter what it is and simply keep it true to who you are and how you feel about a particular subject. You don't have to be a world expert to express a genuine opinion and this is the first hurdle to overcome to habituate yourself to producing an opinion piece regularly. If you see it as speaking to one of your favourite customers on a one-to-one basis, it becomes much more natural and then it starts to really work properly."

EXCELLING IN E-COMMERCE



Horans is a well-established chain of health stores, numbering 19 bricks and mortar shops, but another important part of the business is its online offering – and Edel Kelly is the person behind its success, making her very deserving of the Web Wizard accolade.

She commented: "I was so thrilled to be nominated for this award and I would

like to think I was nominated by my peers as they may have seen the growth of our online presence and know how passionate I am about it. The award means so much, it is an acknowledgement that we are on the right path and our hard work is paying off. It was an honour to win this award personally as I know everyone in the sector works extremely hard and all deserve to be acknowledged.

"As the industry continues to grow and expand, I hope my knowledge does also. I will continue to ask questions and continue studying in order to further develop my career in this amazing industry that I am proud to work in. As technology advancements are made, we as a company adjust too digitally. We can't stand still."

Edel is Marketing & eCommerce Manager, joining the business in 2018: "On joining, the website was there but working mainly as a portfolio site and selling very few products. After speaking with Sandra, the CEO, we agreed there was huge potential in further developing and restructuring the online presence. A new website was built, and we began the e-commerce journey. The website has grown and gone from strength to strength and looking at web analytics regularly to see what products are selling, trending and where the orders are going really interests me. I look at returning customer rates and conversion rates and how we can always improve on these.

"No day is really the same, but a somewhat normal day would be working closely with the Rock Street, Tralee store on the website, checking online orders with them, adjusting stock levels, adding new products, updating images or creating blog content. I also answer online queries or direct messages to specific stores, check on Google ads, update and add additional assets, as well as creating and scheduling social media posts for all stores, along with liaising with store managers on any upcoming events or in store sampling sessions.

"We may also have a number of online meetings with brand managers and marketing executives to learn about new product launches. I also design posters/PoS for stores as a group or individually depending on a campaign that may be running. Every day goes by so quickly but I feel I get the most out of it. I might speak with three of the store managers in a single day to 10 store managers."

Edel came to work at Horans from a pharmacy and recalled: "I had an interest in natural health and wellness so joining Horans really appealed to me. As I was moving from a single business unit to a group, this also appealed, along with the fact it was an Irish owned business which I was familiar with and had been a customer of for many years prior to joining. I had shopped at my local Horans since my teenage years purchasing natural skincare, bodycare and cosmetics initially, then moving on to supplements too as I got older. My family always shopped at Horans and still do to this day.

"Horans is a wonderful place to work, and I work with wonderful people. When I started, I found myself asking many questions – what is this for? Why do you use that? I was and am still amazed by everyone's knowledge. No one has to go looking in a book or Googling, they just know about the product, which I find fascinating. I also like the variety of work on a day-to-day basis. Now with 19 stores in the group, I find myself working on a number of projects with different stores every week." **hfb**



It's been 25 years since Target Publishing was founded with the acquisition of *Health Food Business* magazine. Here, we talk to founder and Managing Director, David Cann, who reflects on his vision and the motivations for the future.



David Cann (left), and the evolution of *Health Food Business* from the first issue under Target (above) to its current look (right)

Celebrating 25 years of Target

Here at *Health Food Business*, the magazine is synonymous with the independent health food trade, and for 25 years, it has been one of the flagship titles of Target Publishing, a company that was founded with a vision to create products that benefited people's lives.

And 25 years on, Target Publishing remains committed to that vision, with a wider portfolio to achieve it; not long after *Health Food Business* was acquired from the late Brian McLoughlin, David Cann, founder and MD, launched the trade title, *Organic & Natural Business*, followed by *CAM*, the leading title for nutritional therapists, which was later renamed *IHCAN*. Consumer magazines were later added to the portfolio, with *Natural Lifestyle* first as a loyalty magazine given free to health stores, along with its Irish sister title, *Naturally Good Health*. Also in the portfolio is *Natural Pharmacy Business*, *Nutrition I-Mag*, the digital title for student nutritional therapists, and the in-clinic magazine, *True Health*.

In addition to its flagship titles, the company organises major annual events, including the NHT Summit, which unites the independent health food industry, and the IHCAN

“From the beginning, I wanted to build a business with real purpose, one that could make a difference in people's lives.”

Summit, offering high-quality, CPD-accredited education.

David commented: “From the beginning, I wanted to build a business with real purpose, one that could make a difference in people's lives. The health sector was a natural choice, as I was deeply inspired by the power of health, nutrition, and wellbeing to improve quality of life.

“Over the past 25 years, we have stayed true to that mission, launching magazines in the health food and organic sectors. Our content has informed, educated, and empowered individuals to make better choices for their wellbeing. Reaching 25 years in business is a tremendous milestone. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our incredible team, the trust of our loyal readers and delegates, and the ongoing support of our advertisers and exhibitors. Together, we have created a legacy we

are truly proud of.”

And why does David think Target has not just survived over the years but thrived?

He added: “It's through opportunity that you grow. But you cannot do it without a good team. We have a team that can do it, and the opportunities that existed. For us, it was about reacting to the market, and providing something unique, to produce high quality, industry leading content for niche markets, which inspires, educates and informs in person, in print and online.”

MEDIA EXPERIENCE

David's media career started after a spell as a tax officer for the Inland Revenue, noting he wanted to find a job where he “wasn't hated!”

His father was in media advertising and put him in touch with *The Express* newspaper group, but due to

his inexperience and young age, he was told to go away and gain some experience.

“So I went to work for the Kent Messenger Group and six months later, I went back to *The Express* and I was taken on as a sale rep,” David recalled. “I saw so many changes while I was there, it was a really interesting time.”

He left to work for Robert Maxwell’s *Mirror* Group on a new launch.

David added: “I was Commercial Manager by this time, but I decided to sell my house and go off to Australia and New Zealand and travel. I was re-employed by *Express Newspapers* and became the youngest Commercial Manager at the time.”

A spell with his own PR and ad agency followed before he saw a sales job at a company, Market Link in Essex, where he was living at the time, rising to become Board Director and Shareholder, where he formed a management buyout team and raised several million from city institutions and investors and launched the business on the UK alternative investment market (AIM). This role proved instrumental in guiding the vision that would become Target Publishing.

David recalled: “There were five people when I started, and we grew to 120 in a few years. I formed a management buyout with two other people, and we bought the business. The company published niche magazines in different areas, such as horse riding, diving and photography, all in the area of leisure, and we also had consumer and trade events.”

When the company was sold to Eastern Counties Newspapers, known today as Archant, which wanted to establish a magazine division, the sale gave David the opportunity to start his own publishing company.

GOING IT ALONE

In founding Target, David knew the time was right to set up on his own.

“From a young age, I wanted to do my own thing,” he recalled. “What that was, I didn’t know but I did know I wanted to create something that I cared about.”

Target was created in February 2000, and got off the ground thanks to David’s tenacity in finding a magazine he could acquire.

He explained: “We didn’t have anything, any magazine or any premises. I wrote 250 letters to other

publishers to see if they would be interested in selling their magazines, and one that responded with interest was Brian McLoughlin, who created *Health Food Business*.”

The magazine was of particular interest as David had not long become a father to his oldest daughter, Georgia, and found his priorities had changed.

“I didn’t want to publish something that didn’t align with my own life and values – my vision with Target was to buy magazines which could affect people’s lives in a positive way.”

In finding Target’s premises, David drove around the local area trying to find a place he could house the offices. He fell upon The Old Dairy, in the village of Ugley Green, based on a working farm. The company remains based at The Old Dairy, and over time, more of the building has been converted for use by Target.

Once *Health Food Business* was acquired, Brian and his daughter, Tracy, joined the team, along with Jennifer Britt, who edited *Organic*

& *Natural Business*, along with Alistair Forrest, who was Editor until Rachel Symonds took over in 2005.

David added: “*Organic & Natural*

Business was launched four months later, and not long after, we launched *CAM*, which was targeted at practitioners; I talked to Brian about why there weren’t any magazines for practitioners. He had been publisher of *Here’s Health*, and introduced me to Simon Martin, who was the Editor and who became the Editor of *CAM*. That is still going strong as *IHCAN*.”

David adds that he had a set vision that he has not deviated from: “The philosophy of the magazines has always been to be distributed to the point of purchase, whether that’s consumers shopping in health food stores, or to the retailers themselves. There is so much competition on newsstands, and I wanted to be much more targeted with our distribution. Data has been the driver of our business. It enables us to track our readers and ensure our products are delivering. Data is key and along with technology, is something we have always invested in as this helps to grow the business – and this will continue for the future.”

Target then launched Brighton and Harrogate.Natural Trade Shows.

“I had always wanted to do trade shows because it was about us increasing our offering to readers. They could not only read through us but also come to our events, which meant we could extend our reach away from just print,” David added. “We continue that today with our hugely popular NHT Summits and IHCAN Summits.”

Some of the Target team at the NHT Summit, in Manchester



TARGET TODAY

With a wide range of titles, in print and online, a range of digital offerings, such as the IHCAN webinars and podcasts, and an expanding events calendar, Target today is thriving.

One of the biggest developments for the company was in 2020, when, as a thank-you to staff for their dedication during the pandemic and their contributions to the company’s continued growth, Target Publishing became a Gold Standard four-day week employer, paying employees 100 per cent of their salary while reducing the workweek to 80 per cent. This benefit continues to this day.

David explained: “The motivation for me was giving something back to our team – Covid was a tough time and we wanted to take something positive out of it, and to ensure we were enabling the team to have a work-life balance. The big thing is that people enjoy more family and friend time, which is so important when lives are so busy.”

Looking ahead, Target Publishing remains

committed to growth, innovation, and making a positive impact. Plans are underway for a new NHT Summit in Ireland in September.

“The NHT Summit in Ireland is a growth area for us and we see this as an exciting opportunity to help our existing customers expand their reach in Ireland,” David advised.

To commemorate the 25th anniversary, Target Publishing will celebrate with a series of events and initiatives throughout the year, including a special staff celebration and exclusive offers for key customers who have played an integral role in its success.

“We’re incredibly grateful to everyone who has been part of our journey so far,” commented Director, Suzanne Cann. “Here’s to the next 25 years of success, innovation, and collaboration.”

David added: “I’m 61 now but there is still more I want to do with the business – I’m just as passionate today as I was then and I enjoy it thoroughly – it is in my blood.”

Researchers find supplement use was prevalent during Covid-19

A new study has suggested that supplement consumption increased during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic for those testing positive with the virus.

Researchers writing in the *Journal of Dietary Supplements* investigated the relationship between dietary supplement usage and Covid-19 symptoms among 27,181 adults tested for the virus.

Using data from surveys following Covid-19 testing, conducted by the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, associations between dietary supplement usage, symptomatology, and Covid-19 status were explored. It was found that

the prevalence of supplement consumption among symptomatic individuals was significant, with non-Hispanic (NH) White individuals showing higher usage rates. Among those testing positive for Covid-19, mainly asymptomatic cases, dietary supplement usage was increased (7.8 per cent), suggesting a proactive approach to supplementation. Symptomatic individuals with confirmed Covid-19 also showed heightened dietary supplement usage

(37.9 per cent), indicating a response to perceived therapeutic benefits. Respiratory symptoms such as cough (46.2 per cent), fever (31.4 per cent), and shortness of breath (8.9 per cent) correlated consistently with increased dietary supplement usage across different time points.

“Despite limitations such as varying test sensitivities and potential selection biases, this study offers valuable insights into individual health-seeking behaviours

during the pandemic,” the researchers commented. “Findings emphasise the importance of targeted public health interventions and education to address disparities in dietary supplement usage and promote evidence-based approaches to dietary supplementation. Further research is warranted to understand better the motivations and implications of dietary supplement usage in the context of the pandemic.”



Study suggests tailored vitamin D supplementation optimises bone and immune health

Researchers have confirmed the benefits of vitamin D for skeletal and immune health, even in small doses.

The new study, published in the *Nutrients* journal, explained that calcitriol, beyond its well-established role in calcium and phosphate homeostasis, contributes to immunological processes. No known vitamin D dosage regimen effectively corrects the deficiency while accounting for immunoregulatory effects. And so, the researchers set out to determine whether regular

administration of low doses of vitamin D might correct deficiency and have immunoregulatory effects.

A total of 35 healthy volunteers were asked to supplement with vitamin D daily at a dosage of 500 or 1000IU, depending on the degree of deficiency, for 12 months. At the beginning of the study and after the end of the supplementation period, concentrations of 25(OH)D, PTH, total calcium, inorganic phosphorus, and the inflammatory cytokines IL-17, IL-10, TGF- β , and IFN- γ were determined in all

participants.

The results revealed that correction of vitamin D deficiency was achieved with accompanying decreases in PTH and pro-inflammatory cytokine concentrations, while the concentration of anti-inflammatory cytokines remained stable.

In conclusion, they said: “Therefore, regular vitamin D supplementation, even in small doses, effectively corrected the deficiency and had immunomodulatory effects.”

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Inspiring at Elixir

After experiencing ill health, Debbie Gregory discovered natural health. So inspired by the results, she ended up acquiring Elixir Health in the Cornish town of Wadebridge to help inspire others to better health. She tells her story to *Health Food Business*.

The independent health store network is built on passion for natural health and a commitment to helping others to better health. For many who become retailers, it is far from a get-rich quick plan and much more because they themselves have experienced the transformative benefits of natural health solutions.

This was certainly true for Debbie Gregory, the proud owner of Elixir Health, in Wadebridge, Cornwall, who experienced ill health. She came across Elixir Health, which supported her recovery with products and advice, and, in time, she became its new owner with her

“We wanted to share what we learned with as many people as possible, saw that Elixir had gone up for sale and just knew this was the place for us.”

husband, Neil (pictured below).

Debbie explained: “During 2017/2018, I became very unwell with a perfect storm of fibromyalgia, perimenopause and an inflamed trigeminal nerve. This combination gave me days where I couldn’t lift my head from the pillow due to intense migraines that would last for days and chronic fatigue so bad I could not walk. I had always been interested in complementary therapies so I popped into Elixir Health, which has been on Wadebridge High Street since 2000, and spoke to the lovely Ellie, who gave me advice on CBD and how I could

manage my pain naturally. This then started Neil and I on a voyage of discovery, looking at how our bodies can heal themselves given the right tools and environments. We learned that getting our bodies back into balance with nutrition, movement, sleep, self-care and community, we really could heal ourselves.

“We started putting everything we learned into practice, and slowly and surely, not only did I recover, I became the healthiest I had ever been. We wanted to share what we learned with as many people as possible, saw that Elixir had gone up for sale and just knew this was the place for us. We took over the store in May 2019 and have never looked back.”

The Elixir ethos

Debbie explained that the store ethos is to provide tools and resources to heal, nourish and inspire mind, body and soul. It is a one-stop shop for all things holistic health as Elixir also boasts a complementary therapy side of the business.

Debbie advised: “Jason and Randi, who owned the store before us, created the Therapy Centre and we were very happy to continue with it once we became owners. We currently offer homeopathy, Bowen therapy, reflexology, nutritional advice, hypnotherapy, and natural beauty therapies, including all sorts of massage. As well as room rental, the therapy side introduces new people to our store who might not have stepped foot in a health food shop before. It also gives us another string to our bow in being able to help people manage their own health and wellbeing.”

Debbie keeps the store name in the local community in a variety of ways.

She explained: “We get involved in local events and talk to local community leaders, including social





prescribers. We also literally market our store by taking part in a monthly market on our high street from May until November. We also send out newsletters and actively engage on social media.”

The team is a passionate and supportive one, and numbers 11 part time staff.

Debbie added: “Training is an essential part of our team onboarding and we have refresher sessions, as well as specific training depending on what conditions we are highlighting every couple of weeks. Our training is done by our lovely suppliers either face to face or via Zoom, during and after work.”

Elixir Health is also a proud member of Health Stores UK.

She advised: “My membership is very important to me as it helps me feel connected to other people and businesses that know far more than I ever will about our industry. When I first started the business six years ago, I was a total newbie to the industry, and I really felt looked after and supported by the team at Health Stores UK. I look forward to the monthly zoom training sessions and I think my business benefits from me being supported and putting into action some of the learnings that I pick up on the training calls. I also feel part of a wonderful community of like-minded people which, as we know, community is important for overall wellbeing.”



TRADING CONDITIONS

Elixir Health can be found in Wadebridge, a bustling market town filled with independent shops and cafés.

Debbie commented: “Our typical demographic would be health conscious, middle to upper income households from around 40 upwards, although we are seeing a rise in younger families looking for a way to eat healthier in a more environmentally-friendly, ethical way. We also benefit from tourism from Easter to September as Cornwall is an ever-popular place to visit.”

And despite being five years since Covid-19 emerged, we know retailers have still been feeling the effects in terms of bringing customers back to the high street. So, what is trade like for Elixir?

“Trade has quietened off over the last couple of weeks, which follows the trend from the past couple of years, however, overall, it has been really good, with last year being our busiest year to date,” Debbie enthused. “Mushrooms are still very popular, as is anything with the term ‘nootropic’, especially teas, coffees or anything that can be added to smoothies. Shilajit is also having its moment

thanks in part to TikTok and Instagram influencers.”

And then to the issues Debbie is finding people come through the doors of Elixir for.

She advised: “Stress and anxiety are still big areas of concern and there seems to be a big rise in teenagers and children suffering with it. Along with chronic stress, we are now seeing more people with burn out, who are not sleeping and have lost energy and motivation. Menopause too is still discussed daily and thanks to high profile celebrities, women are having the courage to come in and talk about symptoms they would have been too embarrassed to discuss before or not realised could be linked with menopause.”

Now to the brands stocked on the shelves of Elixir, and why they make it to the store.

“Our top brands are Viridian, AVogel, Naked Biotics and a newcomer in Hello Wellness. The training and support we have received from these brands is exceptional and most importantly, they make products that work,” Debbie explained. “I like to look for something that is a bit different to what I am already selling. So, for instance, what sets that product apart from what

I am already selling? Is it a chewable or a spray perhaps?

How clean are the ingredients? What are the company’s ethics or environmental credentials? What support will the brand give me in terms of training staff, PoS and samples for my team and customers alike. The more support that I get the easier it is for me to introduce.

“Hello Wellness is a good example of this. I met the lovely Sonia at NOPE last year and really liked the look of her products that are packaged in plastic free containers. Sonia sent testers for me and the team to try and more to hand to customers. She came and spent a day with my team and customers and gave great training on what is in each product and how it works.”

So, what plans does this passionate retailer have for the future?

“This year for us is all about strengthening our brand. We want to be known as the go to store for everything health and wellbeing. We would like to hold more community events, including wellbeing days and possibly a weekend retreat, as well as celebrating 25 years of Elixir on our high street. And who knows maybe a podcast or two,” Debbie commented. **hfb**

Wholesale TRENDS

on the panel



DAVID MORRIN
Commercial Director,
Wholefoods Wholesale



LEE NOTTLE
Essential Trading



SOPHIE ZIEGLER-JONES
Suma Wholefoods



ELIS KAPSALOS
Senior Business
Development Manager,
Dundeis UK



Wholefoods

This year started off very strong with good sales, despite supply challenges. Each year seems to give a new set of challenges and this year will be known for the delays through the Holyhead port and shipments arriving much later than expected. One of the main events on the trade event agenda each year is the Health Stores Ireland Conference, where a large selection of health store retailers and supplier/brands come together to exchange ideas and launch the year ahead. It is a great event to showcase new brands as well as highlight new products from existing brands. Wholefoods is always lucky to be invited to these events by Alan McGrath and the HSI committee. This year, there were amazing conversations around the relevance of health stores in the modern retail environment and the points of difference these unique stores can give to consumers looking to embark on their health journey. One area discussed was the concept of utilising shelf space to showcase more that conventional retailers can give. The journey around a grocery store is designed to be efficient and effective – self-selecting products in all the right places so that a consumer can get in and out quickly but with an optimum spend. A health store can also be laid out similarly, but I don't think that's why consumers go into these outlets. I always enjoy visiting health stores around the country as each and every one can have their own identity, the layout is often like an Aladdin's cave of product discovery and the journey is generally longer for all the right reasons. Some of the best stores I have seen are a treasure trove of products with broader ranges of product than the grocers. Every shelf and space is generally filled with products and the more time you take, the more you can discover. The longer you retain your customer in a health store will lead to a larger sale and a loyalty that other outlets cannot provide.

BEST SELLERS

- **VMS:** fabU SHROOMS MENO & PERI, ITL Health PrizMag Magnesium Bisglycinate, OptiBac Every Day, A.Vogel Milk Thistle Complex Tabs, Eskimo Oil Brain 3-6-9, OptiBac For Those On Antibiotics
- **SKINCARE:** Rosalique 3in1 Anti Redness Miracle Formula, Kinvara Rosehip Face Serum, Nelson Arnicare Arnica Cream, Fushi Organic Castor Oil
- **FOOD AND DRINK:** Minor Figures Organic Oat Drink Barista Style Foamable Vegan, Braggs Apple Cider Vinegar Mother, Deliciously Ella Nutty Granola G/F Vegan, Deliciously Ella Peanut Butter Oat Bar G/F Vegan, Pukka Tea Three Mint Tea



The UK's wholefoods wholesale market is booming, and it's no surprise why! More and more people are looking for healthier, more sustainable choices, and plant-based eating is at the heart of this shift. In fact, recent research featured in *FMCG* magazine shared that the plant-based sector is on track to be worth nearly £1bn by 2026 – a massive 74 per cent jump in just four years! One of the biggest drivers of this trend? Flexitarians. These are people who aren't ditching meat entirely but are consciously cutting back. Right now, a huge 43.7 per cent of UK shoppers identify as flexitarian, compared to just two per cent following a vegan diet and 5.2 per cent sticking to vegetarianism. This shift is opening up huge opportunities for retailers and restaurants to expand their plant-based options and keep up with what customers really want. Another key trend shaping the market is the growing interest in food as medicine – the idea that what we eat plays a crucial role in our overall health and wellbeing. Consumers are becoming more aware of the link between diet and long-term health,

driving demand for nutrient-dense, functional foods packed with natural benefits. Ingredients like turmeric for its anti-inflammatory properties, fermented foods for gut health, and plant-based proteins for energy and recovery are becoming kitchen staples. At Suma, we're proud to support this movement by offering a wide range of wholesome, minimally processed foods that help retailers and restaurants cater to health-conscious customers looking to

BEST SELLERS

- **AMBIENT:** Suma Chopped Tomatoes, Oatly Barista Style, Suma Baked Beans and Vegan Sausages, Suma Chickpeas, Minor Figures Oat Milk Barista
- **CHILLED:** Naturli Vegan Block, Tofu Wiener Sausages, Clear Spot Tofu, Sojade Vanilla Yoghurt
- **FROZEN:** Booja Booja Vanilla Ice Cream, Clive's Mushroom and Leek Pie, Fry's Burgers and Sausages, Linda McCartney Vegemince, Natural Cool Frozen Fruits
- **HOUSEHOLD:** Ecoleaf by Suma Toilet Tissue, Ecoleaf by Suma Kitchen Roll, Ecoleaf by Suma Laundry Liquid Bulk, Ecoleaf by Suma Dishwasher Tablets, Ecoleaf by Suma Washing Up Liquid Bulk

nourish their bodies as well as their taste buds. As a worker-owned co-operative, we've been leading the way since 1977, supplying top-quality, sustainable products to businesses across the UK. We're all about ethical sourcing and offer a huge range of vegetarian, vegan, organic, and gluten-free goodies. Whether it's essential store cupboard ingredients for cooking from scratch or convenient plant-based canned meals, we've got you covered. For wholefoods retailers and restaurants, teaming up with a supplier like Suma means staying ahead of the game. We're here to help businesses meet the growing demand for plant-based, ethical, and sustainable products – because good food should be available for all!



As we joyfully welcome the arrival of spring, the days grow longer, and we gradually step out of our winter hibernation. This season of renewal inspires us to refresh our homes, making way for the brighter months ahead. With that in mind, we are thrilled to introduce our Spring Clean Event, designed to help customers find the best eco-friendly and household essentials while driving in-store sales. Our Spring Clean Event brings together a fantastic selection of renowned brands, including Bio-D, Miniml, Ecover, Eco-Living, Ocean Saver, Eco Max, and Splosh. These trusted names offer exceptional products that support a cleaner, greener lifestyle. Adding to the excitement, we are delighted to welcome several new brands

making their debut at Dundeis. Look out for innovative and high-quality products from SuperKeen, CNDY, and Fruitful Vitamins, as well as exciting new additions to beloved existing ranges like Mrs Darlington's and Vitabiotics. We are especially excited to launch our latest exclusive brand – Cloud 23! This premium range of hot sauces from the U.S., created by Brooklyn Peltz Beckham, has already taken the market by storm. With bold flavours and high-quality ingredients, Cloud 23 is quickly becoming a customer favourite. We are thrilled to be exhibiting at the NHT Summit, taking place at The Kimpton Clocktower in Manchester on Sunday, March 16. This is a fantastic opportunity to connect, explore our latest offerings, and take advantage of exclusive show-day deals. Be sure to visit our stand. In addition to our presence at the NHT Summit in Manchester, we are thrilled to announce that Dundeis will also be exhibiting at the Food and Drink Expo at the NEC in Birmingham from April 7-9. This prestigious event is one of the UK's largest gatherings of

food and drink professionals, providing an incredible platform to showcase our latest offerings, connect with industry leaders, and explore exciting new trends. We are especially excited to be joined by a number of our trusted suppliers, who will be on hand to introduce their products, and share their expertise. Whether you're looking for innovative new brands, sustainable food and drink options, or simply want to see what's trending in the industry, our stand will have something for everyone. If you're attending Food and Drink Expo, be sure to stop by our exhibit – we'd love to meet you and discuss new opportunities. We look forward to seeing you there!

BEST SELLERS

FOOD & DRINK: Clearspring, Bob's Red Mill, Fish 4 Ever

VMS: Symprove, Together Health, DR.VEGAN

BODYCARE: Natracare, Fushi, Faith In Nature

HOUSEHOLD: Bio-D, Ecover, Ocean Saver



March has arrived, bringing longer days, warmer temperatures, and the first signs of spring in full bloom. After the chilly winter months, it's a welcome change to enjoy more sunshine, fresh air, and the beauty of nature awakening around us. With Easter arriving early this year, now is the perfect time to consider how customers will be looking to restock their pantries, refresh their household essentials, and embrace the renewed energy of the season. Our latest catalogue is packed with exciting new arrivals to inspire springtime shopping. Whether it's delicious

pantry staples, sustainable household products, or plant-based treats, we offer a diverse range to suit every lifestyle. From indulgent spreads and wholesome snacks to eco-friendly cleaning essentials, our thoughtfully sourced, high-quality products make it easy to meet customer demand for fresh, ethical, and sustainable choices. Spring is also a time of renewal, making it the perfect opportunity to introduce new habits and offerings. Whether it's expanding your plant-based selections, prioritising sustainably made products, or curating special seasonal gifts, even small changes can make a big

impact. Our range of organic and ethically sourced products ensures that both retailers and customers can shop with confidence, knowing they are making responsible choices. As the days grow longer and brighter, we hope you find time to embrace the season – whether that means refreshing your product selections, exploring new opportunities, or simply enjoying the uplifting energy that spring brings. We're excited to support you with products that are as fresh and vibrant as the season itself. Here's to new beginnings and all the possibilities that spring has to offer!

BEST SELLERS

■ **BRANDED:** Minor Figures Oat Milk, Naturli Vegan Block, Oatly Barista, Frutina Fruit Snack Variety Pack, Montezuma's Chocolate Giant Dark Chocolate Buttons, Marigold Engevita Yeast Flakes

■ **ESSENTIAL:** Chopped Tomatoes, Tinned Coconut Milk, Tinned Butter Beans, Tomato Purée Concentrate, Tinned Cannellini Beans, Passata, Toilet Tissue, Tinned Black Beans

We're excited to support you with products that are as fresh and vibrant as the season itself. Here's to new beginnings and all the possibilities that spring has to offer!



Around the stores

retail panel



KATE SEGAL
Inside Out Health,
Reigate



VICKY PERKS
Beanbreaks,
Cardiff



MARIE PARRISH
Peak Health Food,
Rugeley



JOANNE HILL
Amaranth,
Bramhall, Cheshire



URSULA GOTHARD
The Eighth Day,
Manchester



CLAIR WHITTY
Natural Health Store,
Wexford and Kilkenny



MARK HAMILTON
The Little Supplements
Company, Paignton



HANNAH DARE
Organica, Bantry,
Co Cork

VICKY PERKS, Beanbreaks, Cardiff

Cynfarch o Gymru, Shwmae, greetings from Wales in this very Welsh of months. Let's just say we hope our trading figures continue to be much better than our Welsh rugby team score! March for us is all about St David's Day and rugby, making sure our windows reflect the Welsh produce we stock, and are eye-catching for the thousands of extra potential customers flocking to Cardiff. Match days can be dire, but often during the match, partners who tag along with their rugby fan other half often come out to play and seize an opportunity to discuss their health, or look for a present to take home, so we are match ready, offering tins of Welsh tea, Welsh honey, and Monty Bojangles cats! I commented Christmas time that our sports products are having a resurgence with training fashions focusing on strength and agility and new customers seeking products such as creatine, and proteins blends, and we are certainly looking at products to fill that niche. The sports side is definitely an area I would love to cultivate further, as it's so important to properly fuel our up-and-coming athletes. Digestive problems and overtraining can often hamper a young athlete's career. Don't be scared of sports people, always ask them about their diet, their

water intake, how their digestion functions, and what they take. In general, customers are always happy to chat about their obsessions and find new ways to tweak and improve. Anyone who is training five times per week is an elite athlete in my book, so it's important to discuss if they are taking a good multi as an insurance policy to cover the bases; if they say they are, don't be afraid to ask which one. Many a sports enthusiast is taking a nutrient that doesn't quite meet their needs. It's Nutrition and Hydration Awareness Week from March 17-23 – you don't need to look like an athlete to offer great advice! Talking of health awareness weeks, it's International Women's Day on March 8 combined with March being Endometriosis Awareness Month, so an area of information on endometriosis and oestrogen dominance, and its links to gut ecology are always useful. Did you realise how much research has gone into taking milled flaxseeds? Milled flaxseed are useful for both oestrogen dominance in women, as well as helping to bind with free testosterone in men, helping to support both men and women with hormone related issues. Food for thought, a treasure trove of support at our fingertips! Hwyl Fawr, Cariad!

CLAIR WHITTY, Natural Health Store, Wexford

Here we are at the end of January already, it is crazy how fast this month has gone. It has been a good month, despite the weather. We have had snow, wind, rain and ice, but overall, the month seemed to have balanced out well sales wise. It's a great time of year to do a clear out and a clean-up, so we got those jobs done early in the year and then got busy planning. We want to organise lots of training, make plans for in-stores and tastings, and maybe even get back to doing events in-store. The events always created excitement and there was always a great vibe. So, we are thinking about all of this and getting it all organised. It is interesting to see the difference in sales of products over the years; once upon a time, we would have sold loads of detox product, now detox is a bad word. Instead, we now have dry January and going vegan for January is a more popular option these days. As a result of these trends, we do see a rise in sales in some of the cordials and drinks that we sell at this time of the year. There is also a rise in the sale of vegan foods, not so much with vegan supplements. We had lots of trending products last year led by social media; it will be interesting to see what influencers will influence in 2025!

KATE SEGAL Inside Out Health, Reigate

January has been an excellent month for us, despite the dark, wet and gloomy days. We have made good use of our newsletter reach and have sent not only a start of month newsletter, but a follow-up halfway through. This seems to have worked well for customers and our interactions and sales have increased from it. Newsletters I read are having a resurgence and as we pay a premium for the service with MailChimp, I want to make the most of this opportunity to engage with our customers. It is a fine balance, as no one wants to be inundated with emails but by keeping them on point, it seems to have been well received. We have had a successful in-store event and are running the One Week No Sugar Challenge with Viridian. This again has been well received, and a week is manageable it seems and has helped customers focus on this one key area. Thank you to Viridian for the booklets and excellent PoS that make it an easy sell. We have two new brands in store in Skin:Genius and Bare Biology. We have had great support from Julia at Skin:Genius and because of that sales are going well. Bare Biology I have wanted to get in store for a very long time. Again, great support provided, including online training. One month done of 2025. I wish you all the best for the rest of this year.

MARK HAMILTON, The Little Supplements Company, Paignton

As we bid farewell to winter and welcome the refreshing promise of spring, it's the perfect time to reflect on the trends that shaped the early months of this year. At The Little Supplement Company, we've experienced an incredible start to the New Year, with a noticeable shift in customer preferences and product sales following the post-holiday season. As always, health-conscious consumers are keeping an eye on their fitness goals and immune health, driving demand for specific supplements that align with seasonal needs. It's no surprise that fat-burning products and sports nutrition supplements have been top-sellers this January. The new year is often synonymous with resolutions to improve fitness and shed any post-holiday weight, and our customers have been quick to invest in the tools they need to reach their goals. Micronized creatine, amino acids, and protein powders continue to be essential staples for anyone looking to optimise their workout performance and recovery. Whether customers are looking to build muscle, boost endurance, or enhance post-workout recovery, these tried-and-tested products are as popular as ever. As athletes and fitness enthusiasts dive into their routines, it's clear that these products remain foundational to their supplement regimens. One trend that stood out this year has been the dramatic increase in demand for immune-boosting supplements. In a time when immune health is top of mind for many, we've seen a clear shift towards products designed to support the body's natural defences. Our own-brand Immune Boost – a carefully crafted blend of zinc, vitamin C, and vitamin D3 – has been flying off the shelves. This powerhouse combination supports immune function, promotes healthy skin, and helps the body cope with seasonal changes, making it an ideal choice for customers looking to strengthen their immune system during the colder months. But it's not just our own label that's been seeing success. Our best-selling Terranova Immune-Boosting Complex has been another standout. Customers are increasingly turning to natural, plant-based solutions to boost their immune health, and this product has proven to be a favourite for those seeking holistic support. As we transition into spring, we anticipate some shifts in consumer interest. With warmer weather on the horizon, people will likely start turning their attention to products that support energy, vitality, and joint health. The focus will shift from immune support to enhancing physical performance and preparing the body for outdoor activities. Collagen supplements, joint support formulas, and plant-based proteins could see a surge in popularity as individuals ramp up their fitness routines. Springtime often inspires people to get outside, whether for hiking, cycling, or other outdoor sports, making joint and muscle recovery a key focus in the next phase of supplement demand. At The Little Supplement Company, we've had an exciting start to the year, with a clear trend toward sports nutrition, fat-burning, and immune-boosting products. As we move into spring, we're excited to see what's next for our customers and the health and wellness industry as a whole. One thing's for sure: our commitment to offering high-quality, effective supplements remain at the heart of everything we do. Keep an eye on the season ahead – spring is a time for renewal, and we're ready to support their journey toward optimal health with the best products available.

HANNAH DARE, Organico, Bantry, Cork

January was a very challenging month for us. I think it's the first time in over 12 months we've not exceeded last year's sales when we look at month on month growth. The main challenges were weather wise – we had the snow and ice week, which really hit us hard. That was followed by a flu week (nearly two weeks actually), and then by a storm, just a day this time, but it was a Friday, which is usually our busiest day. So, we were pretty much coping for the whole month. Reduced staff, issues with online parcels getting lost by the Postal Service (hundreds of them!) and general chaos meant that not much really happened in terms of promotions or in-stores during the month. We promoted the Viridian No Sugar Challenge right at the end of January/start of February, which was great this year – we made a few reels and got through the first 50 very quickly (unfortunately, you have to watch for customers just taking the leaflet and not buying the pack, depending on how you lay it out). So, more are on their way. This is actually our quiet time of year because we are in a tourist town. So, in these months, we get our upskilling done, we schedule lots of staff training and housekeeping. We outsourced our stock check this year, which was good and challenging at the same time. The team that did it did make mistakes which are significant as we used their report to update our system. However, if we hadn't used them, we would have had major issues staff wise (it fell right in the middle of the flu week!).

MARIE PARRISH, Peak Health Food, Rugeley

January has been an evenly paced month for us in terms of sales and a little slower than the previous year, although there has been plenty of interest in our No Sugar promotion and general proactivity in terms of improving health. Towards the end of the month, we had one particular extremely busy day, taking us pleasantly by surprise. I think this was probably due to credit cards having been paid off and pay day having come around again. There have still been such a lot of people affected by the awful virus that was going around over the Christmas period and sales of cough and mucus related products have been high, especially Herbetom and Pro-peptase, and recovery supplements too, such as Strath. Also, great testimonials from our recommendations, which is always pleasing and makes our job feel so worthwhile. A few positive words of appreciation are so welcome and make such a difference to us. Digestive problems have also been an issue this month with good sales of our two Lepicol

supplements, along with probiotics and digestive enzymes too. I do think that the recent excesses of Christmas may have contributed to this, with customers having eaten food and snacks that they usually don't eat. It's been really good to hear of so many recommendations to our lovely store, particularly over this month. People coming in because they have been advised by friends and family to come and speak to us regarding health issues that they just can't resolve without a little help, or issues that they feel their GP is not addressing. This morning has been a perfect example, where one lady who was new to us popped her head around the door to say that she had never felt better and that we had resolved a situation that had been going on for some time. Another lady had sought our help after what she saw as a pointless visit to the doctor. It is so good that word seems to be spreading to use the local health store as the first port of call, and such positive feedback is the tonic for us that is most welcome.

JOANNE HILL Amaranth, Bramhall, Cheshire

I'm writing this at the end of January. We have made it through some cold, dark days, the odd storm and a bit of flooding, but other than that it's been a good month. Both shop and online sales have been strong, with a good increase on last year. January is largely dominated by supplement sales as people refocus on their health. We haven't really seen a new health trend as such this year, but people are certainly looking at their overall wellbeing and products to support specific health concerns. Collagen, omega 3, adaptogens, probiotics and turmeric/curcumin are still the biggest sellers. We also had a record month for treatments which was fuelled by strong gift voucher sales at Christmas. Most of the activity in January has been happening behind the scenes. I have been getting very excited and making plans for pretty much everything – marketing, products, events, systems and training. We've had team and one to one meetings, and gathered so many ideas, we just now need to crack on with them. Alongside this, I attended a brilliant, inspiring conference in Dublin hosted by our salon software company, Phorest. It covered sessions on customer experience, team training, rewards and customer loyalty, along with networking and some bonkers bingo. Following that, last night, myself and the team attended a women's health event with speakers including medical specialists, Emma Neville from This is Me, a skin expert, a nutritionist and a psychologist/happiness expert. We had an Amaranth stall with our Nutritional Therapists on hand to give advice and products to sell. Onto the new few weeks ahead. We have a couple of new ranges to launch, including Natroceutics and SKN-RG Lifestage. The team have been training in these and will be promoted in-store and on newsletters and socials. We also have some treatment offers and packages for Valentine's day with a Love Yourself theme. I'm sure the rest of the month will fly by and then we can look forward to some longer and hopefully brighter days.

URSULA GOTHARD, Eighth Day, Manchester

Sales in January are generally quietish for the first few weeks as the universities and colleges in our area are closed and most of the staff and students are still on holiday, then it all gets very busy towards the end of the month. We do have a core of customers who live in the area and our regular, year-round customers were in as soon as we re-opened to stock up on the usual eggs, coffee, honey and olive oil. Mummy Meegz vegan cream eggs are always a hit with our customers as soon as they are available, and it certainly looks like this year is no exception. There was a lot of demand for products related to coughs and colds, stress and sleep among our herbal department and vitamin D and magnesium seemed to dominate the sales figures for our supplements department.

BESTSELLERS

VMS



AMARANTH NaturesPlus Collagen Peptides Powder, Bare Biology Life and Soul Daily, Viridian High Potency Magnesium, Ener-C Raspberry, Planet Paleo Pure Collagen, Viridian Magnesium Bisglycinate, Udo's Choice Super 8 Hi-potency Probiotic, YourGut Restore, BioCare BioAcidophilus, Viridian Vitamin D3 2000IU

BEANFREAKS Viridian High Potency Magnesium, Viridian D& K2, Wiley's Peak EPA, Terranova Magnesium 100mg, Viridian High 5 Multi Nutrient, Natures Aid Bio 360 Probiotic, Udo's Super 8 Probiotic, Viridian High Twelve Complex, BioCare Methyl Multi Nutrient, Natures Aid Vitamin D 4000iu, Viridian Vitamin K2

EIGHTH DAY Living Nutrition Fermented Symbiotic, NaturesPlus Source Of Life Gold Liquid, Bare Biology Beam & Balance Vitamin D3 & K2 Peppermint Spray, NaturesPlus Magnesium Glycinate, Nature's Answer Vitamin D3 Drops, Bare Biology Vim & Vigour Omega 3 & Astaxanthin, Viridian Magnesium High Potency 300mg, Nature's Answer Vitamin D3 & K2 Drops, Floradix Floravital Liquid Iron Yeast-Free, BioCare Methyl Multinutrient, Omvits Omega 3 DHA + EPA, Algae Oil, Viridian Magnesium Bisglycinate

INSIDE OUT HEALTH Terranova Magnesium 100mg, Lamberts Omega 3 Ultra 1300mg, BioCare Immune Intensive, BetterYou DLux 3000 Oral Spray, NaturesPlus Mag Kidz Chews

NATURAL HEALTH STORE Udo's Choice Super 8, Floradix Liquid Iron, BetterYou Vitamin D Oral Spray

ORGANICO NaturesPlus Source of Life Gold Multivitamin Liquid, NaturesPlus Collagen Peptides, Wiley's Finest Wild Alaskan Fish Oil Peak E, MAG365 PrizMag Magnesium Bisglycinate, Nordic Naturals Ultimate Omega 3, Patrick Holford ImmuneC, Wild Atlantic Ocean Pure 2000mg Omega 3, Optiyou Berry 30 Day, MAG365 PrizMag Plus 90, Optiyou Orange 30 Day, Udo's Choice Super 8

PEAK HEALTH FOOD Viridian Magnesium, Quest Super Once a Day, Quest D3 2500iu

THE LITTLE SUPPLEMENT COMPANY The Little Supplement Company Immune Boost

BODYCARE



AMARANTH Oliva Olive Oil Soap, Dr Hauschka Cleansing Milk, BetterYou Magnesium Flakes, Green People Intensive Repair Shampoo, BetterYou Magnesium Oil Original Spray

EIGHTH DAY Faith In Nature Soap Loose, Amour Naturals Castor Oil Organic, Dr Bronner's Castille Liquid Soap Refill, Hope's Relief Intensive Dry Skin Rescue Cream, Weleda Skin Food Nourishing Day Cream, REN V-Cense Revitalising Night Cream, Weleda Revitalising Hair Tonic, Amour Naturals Argan Oil, Kingfisher Mint with Fluoride Toothpaste, Alternative by Suma Shampoo, Kingfisher Mint Fluoride Free Toothpaste, Amour Naturals Revival Winter Blend Oil, Eden Perfume N°083, Eden Perfume N°168, Amour Naturals Rose Flower Water Organic

INSIDE OUT HEALTH Faith In Nature unwrapped soap bars, Soakin Magnesium Flakes, Kingfisher Fennel Fluoride Free Toothpaste, Benecos Lip Balm (various flavours), Kingfisher Mint Fluoride Free Toothpaste

NATURAL HEALTH STORE Holos Facial Oil, Trilogy Body Oil, Dublin Herbalist Baby Balm

ORGANICO Weleda Calendula Nappy Change, Fushi Castor Oil, Dr Hauschka Rose Day Cream, Bragan Skincare Atopic Cream, Olae Anti-Aging Oil, Kinvara Rosehip Face Serum, Dr Hauschka SPF 30 Tinted Face Cream, MorocOil Argan Oil, ULTRAPURE Labs Organic Castor Oil, Trilogy Firming Serum

PEAK HEALTH FOOD MooGoo Milk Wash, Dr Konopkas Anti Hair Loss Shampoo, Kingfisher Fluoride Free Shampoo

FOOD & DRINK



AMARANTH Pulsin Choc Fudge Peanut Keto Bar, Hu Salty Dark Chocolate Bar, Hu Almond Butter & Crispy Quinoa Dark Chocolate Bar, Pulsin Caramel Choc and Peanut Protein Bar, Linwoods Organic Milled Flaxseed, Pip & Nut Dark Choc Peanut Butter Cups

BEANFREAKS Welsh honey, organic eggs, manuka honey 525mg, Gusto Real Cherry Cola, organic figs, manuka honey 100mg, organic porridge oats, organic cashews, Tortex Mushroom Pate, Sojade Natural Soya Yoghurt

EIGHTH DAY The Lakes Free Range Eggs Medium Organic, Dark Woods Under Milk Wood Espresso Blend Coffee Beans, Mayflower Apiaries Cheshire Honey Set, Mummy Meegz Chuckie Egg Creme Egg, Arcadia Olive Oil Organic, Olivi Greek Olive Oil Organic, Ombar Chocolate Pistachio Cream Filled Bar Organic, Mummy Meegz Chuckie Egg Creme Eggs, Marigold Engevita Yeast Flakes with Vitamin B12, Club-Mate Soft Drink with Caffeine, Natural Cool Sour Cherries Organic, Zaytoun Palestinian Dates

INSIDE OUT HEALTH Nourish Oat Cookies, Foods of Athenry Starry Mince Pies, Nourish Christmas Cake, Booja Salted Caramel Truffles (duo), Sojade Soya Yoghurt

NATURAL HEALTH STORE Sublime Seaweed Gel, Surreal Cereal, Booja-Booja Wonder Hazelnut, Biona Cider Vinegar

ORGANICO Vermont Mape Syrup Organic, Clipper Everyday Tea Organic, organic Irish eggs, Oliva Greek Olive Oil Organic, Oatly Foamable Barista, Phyterberry Aronia Tonic Super Food Box, La Bio Idea Organic Greek Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Yvonne's Eggs, True Natural Goodness Cacao Powder, Sonnentor Viennese Melange Beans

PEAK HEALTH FOOD St Dalfour Assorted Fruit Spreads, Rob's Local Honey, Nelson Manuka Honey 300+

HERBAL



AMARANTH Mushrooms For Life Lion's Mane, Viridian Beta Glucan, Wild Nutrition KSM-66 Ashwagandha, DRVEGAN Peri-Menofriend, Balanced Curcumin (Turmeric Extract)

BEANFREAKS AVogel Echinaforce, Viridian Ashwagandha Capsules, Aloe Pura Aloe Vera Juice, Kiki Health Lion's Mane, Floradix Floravital, Terranova Astragalus Elderberry Complex, Feel Supreme Shilajit Resin, Taka Organic Turmeric Capsules, Terranova Life Drink, AVogel Dormeasan

EIGHTH DAY NaturesPlus Magnesium NightTime, Biona Tart Cherry Pure Superjuice Organic, Hybrid Herbs Shilajit Mineral Pitch, AllicinMax, Mushrooms For Life Lion's Mane Focus, Ayurvediq Wellness Ashwagandha with Black Pepper Extract, Living Nutrition Fermented Myco Blend, Nature's Answer MulleinX Cough Syrup Multi-System, Nature's Answer Oil Of Oregon, NaturesPlus BioAdvanced Stress Support, Living Nutrition Fermented Reishi Spores, Viridian Black Seed Oil Organic, NaturesPlus Pro Longvida Curcumin

INSIDE OUT HEALTH Viridian L-Theanine & Lemon Balm, BioCare Children's Elderberry Complex, Nature's Answer Sambucas Black Elderberry, NaturesPlus Source of Life Gold Liquid, BioNutri Junior Elderberry Complex

NATURAL HEALTH STORE One Nutrition Ashwagandha, AVogel Echinaforce

ORGANICO NaturesPlus Pro Berberine 750, One Nutrition Ashwagandha, Kiki Himalayan Shilajit Resin, Lignosus Tiger Milk Mushroom Powder, Active Edge CherryActive Concentrate, Solgar Full Spectrum Curcumin 185x, Ballyhoura Mountain Mushrooms Lion's Mane Powder, North American Herb & Spice Oregonol P73, Ballyhoura Mountain Mushrooms Lion's Mane Extract, Macanta Nutrition Berberine 500mg

PEAK HEALTH FOOD: Herbetom, Lepicol, Quest Platinum Biotin

THE LITTLE SUPPLEMENT COMPANY: Terranova Immune-Boosting Complex

SPORTS NUTRITION



AMARANTH Supernova Protein Women OI

EIGHTH DAY The Organic Protein Company Madagascar Vanilla Whey Protein, Trek Protein Flapjack Smooth Lemon, Raw Sport Mass Gainer Vanilla, Raw Sport Testo+, Raw Sport Collagen Building Protein Banana, Raw Sport Plant Protein & BCAA Blend Toffee Fudge, Raw Sport Pure Creatine, Ener-C Sport Electrolyte Drink Mix Mixed Berry, The Organic Protein Company Cacao Maca Whey Protein, Pulsin' Rice Protein Unflavoured

INSIDE OUT HEALTH Ossa Chicken Bone Broth, Active Edge CherryActive Concentrate, Terranova Sport Complex, Hunter Gather Electrolytes single sachets (various flavours), Viridian Electrolyte Fix

NATURAL HEALTH STORE Eskimo Oil, Zinuffex, Solo Turmeric, Cleanmarine Magnesium, BetterYou Magnesium Water Hydrate

ORGANICO PEAK HEALTH FOOD Nutrisport 90+ Vegan, High 5 Electrolytes, GorillaAlpha Ibiza Juice

THE LITTLE SUPPLEMENT COMPANY Micronized creatine, amino acids, and protein powders

Growing your MUSHROOM SALES

Medicinal mushrooms rank as one of the biggest growth categories in the natural health market. But as consumer awareness grows, so too does the need for education around their use, not mention how to source quality products.

Health store shelves look rather different today than even a year ago, thanks to the huge rise we have seen in demand for medicinal mushrooms. Where once a supplement containing a mushroom product would have been few and far between, today, we have not only seen brands dedicated to mushroom supplements, but we have also seen a huge rise in a range of functional products utilising the health benefits of mushrooms.

In fact, Coherent Market Insights reports that the global medicinal mushroom market is set to be worth \$59.4bn by 2031, growing at a CAGR of 8.2 per cent. But such heightened demand and growth has also seen vast numbers of products arrive on the market that don't perhaps match up to the quality expected by health store retailers, and there is certainly an important education piece for customers around how to choose a product made to the right standards and with the right raw materials.

Looking in closer detail at the mushroom category and why we have seen such growth, Danielle Kyriakides, Naturopathic Herbalist with Mushrooms for Life, commented: "The rise in awareness of medicinal mushrooms can be attributed to several factors:

- **Scientific validation:** Growing research supports their adaptogenic, immune-modulating, and anti-inflammatory properties, increasing consumer trust.
- **Holistic wellness trends:** As people seek natural alternatives for

improving health, mushrooms align with the broader trend of functional foods and supplements.

- **Cultural integration:** Traditional medicinal practices, especially from East Asia, have gained global traction, spotlighting mushrooms like reishi, shiitake, and lion's mane.

- **Innovative products:** Advances in supplement formulations, such as powders, capsules and instant drinks, have made mushrooms more accessible and easier to integrate into daily life."

Alice Bradshaw, Head of Nutrition Education and Information at Terranova, added: "The increased awareness and availability of medicinal mushrooms stem from a combination of modern scientific validation and a growing interest in natural health remedies. As research highlights their wide-ranging benefits, including immune support, stress management, and antioxidant properties, more people are turning to these fungi as part of a preventative health approach. Additionally, the global wellness movement, coupled with an interest in plant-based and adaptogenic solutions, has made medicinal mushrooms highly appealing. Advances in cultivation and extraction techniques have made it easier to produce high-quality supplements, driving their accessibility and popularity in both health food stores and mainstream markets."

And Sophie Barrett, Medical Herbalist and Mycotherapy Adviser





at Hifas da Terra, went on: “The rise in awareness and availability of medicinal mushrooms can be attributed to a growing interest in holistic and preventative health approaches. People are increasingly looking for natural ways to enhance their wellbeing, especially in the wake of global health challenges that have amplified the importance of immune resilience. Advances in scientific research have also validated the traditional uses of mushrooms, creating a bridge between ancient wisdom and modern medicine.”

Guru Dev Seth, Director of Good Guru, also commented: “I think the rise in both awareness and availability of medicinal mushrooms can be attributed to a few key factors. One major driver is the growing interest in natural and holistic health solutions. People are increasingly seeking alternatives to pharmaceuticals and turning to plant-based remedies that have a long history of use in traditional medicine. Another factor is the expansion of the wellness industry. As more consumers demand functional foods, supplements, and adaptogens, companies have been quick to meet that demand, leading to an increase in availability. Furthermore, research into the health benefits has increased over the past decade. More studies are highlighting their potential therapeutic uses, and this scientific backing has helped validate their status as beneficial, rather than just a trendy health fad.”

Mushroom benefits

Health stores will know the many health areas medicinal mushrooms can be supportive of, and there are a range of specific recommendations you could be making.

Barrett explained: “Medicinal mushrooms are often referred to as nature’s adaptogens, meaning they help the body adapt to physical, emotional, and environmental stress. They are packed with bioactive compounds like beta-glucans, polysaccharides, antioxidants, and prebiotics that support the immune system, gut health, and cognitive function. Additionally, many medicinal mushrooms possess anti-inflammatory and antiviral properties, promote energy production, and support longevity. Their unique ability to regulate and balance body systems makes them an invaluable tool for

maintaining overall health.”

Bradshaw, meanwhile, advised: “Medicinal mushrooms owe their health benefits to a rich array of bioactive compounds, including polysaccharides, triterpenes, lignins, and phytosterols. These compounds have been shown to play vital roles in supporting immune function, reducing oxidative stress, and promoting mental and physical resilience. Many mushrooms, such as reishi and cordyceps, are adaptogens, meaning they help the body cope with stress more effectively. Others, like chaga and maitake, are packed with antioxidants that protect cells from damage while supporting cardiovascular and metabolic health. The diversity of these compounds makes medicinal mushrooms uniquely suited to supporting overall wellbeing in a holistic way.”

Guru Dev Seth added: “Medicinal mushrooms are beneficial to health for several reasons, mainly due to their unique bioactive compounds. These compounds interact with our body in ways that can support health, from immune function to cognitive performance. Many medicinal mushrooms, like reishi and shiitake, contain polysaccharides (such as beta-glucans) that help modulate the immune system. These compounds can boost immune response, making the body more efficient at fighting off infections and illnesses. They can also help regulate inflammation, which is linked to many chronic diseases.

“Mushrooms like cordyceps and reishi are considered adaptogens, meaning they help the body adapt to stress. They may regulate the stress response, balancing cortisol levels and enhancing overall resilience. This can promote better energy levels, mood, and general wellbeing, especially during times of high stress. Certain mushrooms, such as lion’s mane, have compounds that support brain health by stimulating the production of nerve growth factor (NGF), a protein that promotes the growth and maintenance of neurons. This has been linked to improved memory, focus, and cognitive function, making them popular for supporting mental clarity and neuroprotection.

“Many medicinal mushrooms are rich in antioxidants, which protect cells from damage caused by free radicals, and anti-inflammatory compounds, which help reduce chronic

inflammation. Chronic inflammation is associated with a wide range of health problems, including cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and even neurodegenerative conditions. Some medicinal mushrooms, like turkey tail, contain prebiotics that support gut health by nourishing beneficial gut bacteria. A healthy gut is linked to improved digestion, better absorption of nutrients, and a strong immune system. And the antioxidant-rich nature of medicinal mushrooms may also contribute to anti-ageing, helping protect the skin from oxidative stress and promoting collagen production.”

Looking in greater detail at what could be recommended, what mushrooms do the experts pinpoint as being key to stock in your range?

“Reishi is a favourite for its calming and adaptogenic properties, which make it highly effective for managing stress and promoting relaxation. Its polysaccharides and triterpenes also support immune health and regulate blood sugar,” Bradshaw commented. “Maitake is another excellent option due to its high levels of beta-glucans, which enhance immune function and provide cardiovascular benefits. Chaga stands out for its unparalleled antioxidant content, protecting the body from free radicals and supporting endurance and cellular health. Cordyceps is particularly appealing for its ability to boost energy, improve athletic performance, and support cardiovascular function.”

Kyriakides also suggested: “Beta-glucans in mushrooms like reishi and maitake help regulate and strengthen the immune response and lion’s mane supports cognitive function, memory, and nerve regeneration by stimulating NGF. Cordyceps enhances oxygen utilisation and supports energy production, making it popular among athletes. Many mushrooms have prebiotic properties that nourish the gut microbiome, supporting digestion and overall health. Chaga is packed with antioxidants, it’s excellent for combating oxidative stress and promoting skin health, and maitake is fantastic for blood sugar balance and immune support, especially during seasonal challenges.”

Barrett went on: “Known as the mushroom of immortality, reishi is a powerful adaptogen that supports stress relief, improves sleep, and strengthens the immune

“Reishi is a favourite for its calming and adaptogenic properties, which make it highly effective for managing stress and promoting relaxation.”



system. Its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties make it a great ally for healthy ageing. Lion’s mane is renowned for its ability to support brain health, promote nerve regeneration and cognitive function, making it a favourite for improving memory, focus, and even emotional wellbeing. Cordyceps is ideal for energy and endurance, it enhances oxygen utilisation, ATP production, and overall vitality. It’s particularly beneficial for athletes or anyone seeking to improve stamina and recovery.”

Guru Dev Seth added: “I love lion’s mane because of its neuroprotective properties. It’s a powerhouse for brain health! It contains compounds that stimulate the production of NGF, which helps support the growth, maintenance, and survival of neurons. This makes it a great choice for improving cognitive function, memory, and focus. Plus, research suggests it could even support the prevention of neurodegenerative conditions like Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s. It’s also pretty safe to use daily for mental clarity, which is why it’s one of the most popular functional mushrooms for cognitive health.”

In-store advice

Mushroom products are now widely available in many retail outlets these days, meaning consumers are spoilt for choice. And so, educating your customers about what to look for in a quality product, and some of the issues that can arise if they choose substandard products, is a useful way of setting your offering apart and ensuring they see your health store as the reputable place to buy such products.

In terms of the issues, Barrett advised: “Low-quality mushroom supplements often use inferior raw materials, such as mushrooms grown quickly and cheaply on grain, which means you end up with a starchier product that can potentially bloat, feed dysbiosis and will be lacking the active compounds to bring about a therapeutic effect. These products may lack proper standardisation, meaning the bioactive components (like beta-glucans) are either insufficient or inconsistent. Poor-quality brands may also use inadequate extraction methods, leading to reduced potency. Additionally, contamination with

heavy metals, pesticides, or fillers is a risk if proper quality controls aren’t in place and there is not organic certification.”

Kyriakides went on: “Lower-quality mushroom supplements can present several issues:

- **Low potency:** Some products may rely on fruiting body powders rather than concentrated extracts, which can result in lower levels of bioactive compounds like beta-glucans.
- **Contamination risks:** Poorly sourced mushrooms can be contaminated with heavy metals, pesticides, or mould.
- **Ineffective processing:** Inadequate extraction methods may fail to release the full spectrum of bioactive compounds, reducing efficacy.
- **Additives:** Some brands may include fillers, synthetic additives, or non-functional ingredients.”

Bradshaw added: “Lower quality mushroom supplements often fail to provide the full range of health benefits due to incomplete use of the mushroom or poor manufacturing practices. Many products are made from only a single part of the mushroom, such as the mycelium. This approach neglects the full spectrum of bioactive compounds found in the whole mushroom, such as polysaccharides, triterpenes, and antioxidants present in the primordia, fruiting bodies, and extracellular compounds. Lower-quality brands may include unnecessary excipients, fillers, or artificial additives that can compromise purity and effectiveness. Poor sourcing and inadequate quality control can lead to contamination with heavy metals or pesticides, emphasising the importance of selecting a trusted brand.”

Meanwhile, Guru Dev Seth advised: “Some lower-quality brands may not include enough of the active compounds that are responsible for the health benefits of the mushrooms. For example, therapeutic compounds like beta-glucans (immune support) or triterpenes (anti-inflammatory effects) need to be present in sufficient quantities to make a noticeable difference. If the supplement is made from low-potency mushrooms or diluted with fillers, you might not get the full benefit you’re hoping for.

“Mushrooms can absorb toxins and heavy metals from the environment, especially if they’re grown in contaminated soil. Low-quality brands may not rigorously test their products

Product showcases

HFB's guide to the essential products for your store

150g of Raw, Dried, Organic Lion's Mane Per Bottle

Lion's Mane Mushroom extract by Rå Hygge is a premium, alcohol-free supplement designed to harness the full spectrum of benefits from the Lion's Mane mushroom, *Hericium erinaceus*. Made from sustainably harvested Lion's Mane spore heads (not mycelium) and pure spring water. This innovative product uses a double extraction process, combining hot water and alcohol extraction methods to draw out the valuable water- and fat-soluble compounds. The alcohol is entirely removed from the final product, ensuring it remains alcohol-free while retaining the health benefits of the Lion's Mane mushroom. There is the equivalent of 150g of raw, dried, certified organic Lion's Mane in every bottle. www.kinetic4health.co.uk



Terranova Mushroom Synergy

Terranova's Mushroom Synergy contains six species of medicinal fungi: Reishi, Cordyceps, Maitake, Shiitake, Chaga and Royal Sun Agaricus. Mushroom Synergy is an especially unique formulation in that it provides all fungi in a full-spectrum form (including the primordia, mycelium, fruiting body, and extracellular compounds) – one of only a small number of brands in the world to use this unique grade of raw material. Also, worth noting is the fact that these fungi are also fresh freeze dried and certified organic. This formulation also includes organic, fresh freeze-dried ginger in order to facilitate bioavailability of the fungal compounds in the mushrooms. Available in 50 capsule size & 40g powder size.

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for contaminants, which means you could be ingesting unsafe levels of substances like lead, arsenic, or cadmium. Reputable brands should provide third-party testing to verify that their mushrooms are free from harmful contaminants. And some companies may use ineffective or improper extraction methods, which can lead to a lower concentration of active compounds in the final product. High-quality mushroom supplements should be made using hot water or alcohol extraction, which helps break down the tough cell walls of the mushrooms and ensures the bioactive compounds are fully accessible for your body to absorb. Low-quality supplements might not use these methods, which could result in a less effective product.

“Some lower-quality mushroom supplements contain unnecessary fillers, additives, or artificial ingredients to cut costs or bulk up the product. These can include things like starch, rice flour, or preservatives, which might reduce the overall quality of the supplement and potentially cause adverse reactions for some people. Ideally, a good mushroom supplement should have as few ingredients as possible – just the mushroom extract and maybe a small amount of a carrier like vegetable capsules.”

And what do you as retailers need to know when it comes to sourcing new brands for your store, in terms of the quality standards that you should look out for and the recommendations you can make to customers?

“High-quality mushrooms should be grown in their native environment free from pollution or chemicals, or under carefully controlled organic conditions to ensure purity and potency,” Kyriakides explained. “If extracted, mushrooms should be processed using hot-water extraction, or a combination of hot-water and alcohol extraction (dual extraction), depending on the specific type of mushroom and its active compounds. And rigorous testing for heavy metals and microbial contamination. Organic certification ensures no synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or GMOs. Transparent information on sourcing, extraction methods, and active compounds. Ethical sourcing and environmentally friendly production processes are essential.”

Barrett continued: “Mushrooms should ideally be sourced from clean,

controlled environments with strict monitoring for contamination. Wild-harvested mushrooms can also be excellent but require careful testing to ensure purity. Processing is crucial: double or triple extraction methods (using water and alcohol) ensure the full spectrum of bioactive compounds, including polysaccharides and triterpenes, are bioavailable. Standardization guarantees consistent potency in every batch; check the label for standardised amounts of bioavailable compounds per capsule. When choosing a medicinal mushroom supplement, look for certified organic, which ensures mushrooms are free from harmful pesticides and other contaminants, and fruiting body extracts; avoid MOG products, mushroom grown on grain and avoid biomass. Instead, opt for supplements made from the actual mushroom fruiting body grown on wood or wood chips.”

She also advised third party testing and GMP certification, adding: “Scientific research, independent gold standard trials with the product. High-quality medicinal mushroom supplements can offer profound health benefits, but ensuring their sourcing, processing, and testing

meets these criteria is key to maximising their potential.”

Guru Dev Seth went on: “The sourcing and processing of medicinal mushrooms are critical factors in ensuring that a supplement is both effective and safe. The best medicinal mushrooms often come from regions where they have been traditionally cultivated and used for centuries. For example, many high-quality mushrooms are grown in East Asia (particularly China and Japan), where they have a long history in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). However, North American and European brands are also increasingly producing high-quality mushrooms, especially with good certifications and sourcing practices.

“Wild-harvested mushrooms may have a richer concentration of bioactive compounds, but they are also harder to obtain and subject to environmental conditions that may not be consistent. Cultivated mushrooms, especially those grown on controlled, organic farms, are more common in supplements and can still offer high-quality results, as long as they’re grown under the right conditions.

“The way mushrooms are processed is just as important as where they’re grown. Proper processing ensures that the beneficial compounds are preserved and made bioavailable in the finished product. Hot-water extraction is one of the most common and effective methods for extracting the bioactive compounds from medicinal mushrooms, particularly the polysaccharides (like beta-glucans) that support immune health. Since mushrooms have tough, indigestible cell walls made of chitin, hot-water extraction breaks down the walls, allowing the beneficial compounds to be released into the extract. This method is especially important for mushrooms like reishi, shiitake, and turkey tail.”

He went on: “Alcohol extraction is used to extract compounds that are more soluble in alcohol than in water, such as triterpenes (found in reishi) and other fat-soluble compounds. Often, a high-quality supplement will use a dual extraction method, combining both hot water and alcohol extraction. This ensures the product has a full spectrum of compounds, which is important for maximising the health benefits of the mushroom.” **hfb**





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Seasonal BEAUTY SWITCH-UP

When we emerge from the harsh winter weather, beauty shoppers are often in need of a shift when it comes to their skincare needs – from the inside and out. This makes spring the perfect time to really drive your natural beauty sales.

There are a range of reasons why skin needs change with the seasons, and as we head out of winter and into spring, our skin generally needs some extra nourishment after the harsh, drying effects of the colder weather, involving both topical products and key nutrients.

Alice Bradshaw, Head of Nutrition Education and Information at Terranova, explained: “Skin continuously adapts to seasonal variations, each presenting unique challenges. During winter, exposure to cold temperatures and indoor heating can strip moisture from the skin, often leading to dryness, irritation, and a lack of radiance. As spring approaches, many experience dullness and congestion due to the accumulation of dead skin cells and the lingering effects of winter dehydration.”

Eleanor Faulkner, Nutrition Advisor at Viridian Nutrition, added: “When the weather starts coming to springtime, humidity increases, and skin issues might occur. The skin starts to produce more oil, and the chances of developing acne are higher. More perspiration can clog pores, leading to spots. UV damage is more common in the spring and summer, when people spend more time outside. UV damage can increase the chances of developing dry skin, age spots, fine lines and wrinkles.”

Elizabeth King, Weleda Skincare Expert, also advised: “Spring is a transitional season, leading us from the cool into the warmer months.

“As spring approaches, many experience dullness and congestion due to the accumulation of dead skin cells and the lingering effects of winter dehydration.”

During spring, skin constantly needs to adapt and adjust to the fluctuating temperatures outside. For those with healthy skin, this may require a simple revisiting of one’s skincare routine, with less layering and keeping your facial oil on hand for the chilly mornings. For others, skin may feel noticeably more sensitive and overly reactive to the temperature changes, or otherwise remain in a wintery slumber, lacking vitality and radiance.”

Catherine Gorman, Nutritional Therapist at Good Health Naturally, continued: “Whether it’s high or low temperatures, cold winds, humidity or sun exposure, they can all have a detrimental impact on skin health. Cold weather and low humidity can mean our skin struggles to retain moisture. For some, this means dry and flaky skin, chapped lips or painful cracked skin on their hands and feet. Swapping cold outdoor air for warm central heating can exacerbate problems. Blood vessels constrict in the cold and are forced to expand quickly when we go into heated homes or offices, which can lead to redness and inflammation. Central heating can strip moisture out of indoor air, which can further dry out the skin.”

Seasonal symptoms

There are signs your skin may need a boost as we move out of winter.

“Seasonal changes in spring can significantly impact skin health, often increasing sensitivity, breakouts, and redness” Bradshaw explained. “Rising pollen levels act as allergens, leading to inflammation, clogged pores, and



heightened sensitivity, particularly for those with eczema or rosacea. The body’s immune response to allergens can release histamines, resulting in redness, swelling, or rashes. These changes make skin more reactive, requiring extra care and hydration to maintain a healthy balance.

“When skin is not in its optimal state, it often presents as dryness, uneven texture, excessive oil production, or inflammation. Other indicators include dullness, redness, breakouts, and premature ageing, such as fine lines or loss of elasticity. Persistent irritation or reactivity may suggest an inability to effectively cope with environmental stressors, nutrient deficiencies, or imbalances in gut health.”

Emma Bullock-Lynch, Efamol Nutritionist, advised: “If skin isn’t in its best condition, you may experience:

- **Dryness and flaking** – lack of



moisture and impaired skin barrier.

- **Redness or irritation** – sensitivity or inflammation.
- **Breakouts and acne** – hormonal imbalances, clogged pores, or excess oil.
- **Dullness** – lack of exfoliation or poor circulation.
- **Dark circles and puffiness** – fatigue, dehydration, or poor circulation.
- **Slow healing** – nutrient deficiencies or poor immune function.
- **Premature ageing (fine lines, sagging)** – collagen breakdown from sun damage, stress, or poor diet.”

And Faulkner pointed out: “Thinner and exposed areas on the face are more vulnerable to flare-ups, particularly around the eyes and cheeks. Warmer weather can increase the rate and amount of sebum production in the skin and increased humidity leads to lower rates of trans-epidermal water loss. This might keep

the skin more hydrated and there are increased levels of beneficial lipids and water in the stratum corneum, the most outer layer of the skin, as we emerge from the winter months.

“Studies have shown dramatic changes in stratum corneum lipids from seasonal variation; in the winter, there was a decline in skin surface lipids. Essential fatty acids in stratum corneum are crucial to optimal skin function. The reduction of epidermal lipids in the winter might be an explanation for dry skin, and dermatitis conditions.”

Nutrients for the skin

Shoppers may feel or see a skincare issue and opt for a topical product to help so education is needed around the role of nutrition.

Bullock-Lynch advised: “Nutrient deficiencies play a significant role in

skin health, affecting everything from hydration to elasticity and healing. Vitamin C is essential for collagen production and antioxidant support: deficiency leads to dullness and slow healing. Vitamin A is crucial for cell turnover; deficiency can cause dry, rough skin and acne, and biotin supports healthy hair, skin, and nails.”

Faulkner added: “If we are deficient in zinc, we may be more prone to eczema. Trace minerals like selenium can also help towards healthy skin. Without optimal amounts, the skin can be prone to damage from oxidative stress as its antioxidant properties help to protect against free radicals. Vitamin C deficiency can impact skin by hindering collagen production and leading to slow wound healing and dry skin. In severe cases, deficiency can cause scurvy, which can manifest as visible skin lesions.

“Protein deficiency can massively impact skin health by causing dryness and impaired wound healing due to the reduced production of collagen. Not eating enough protein reduces the ability for the body to repair and maintain skin tissue, leading to visible signs of damage and aging. Omega 3 deficiency can also show up as dry skin conditions such as dermatitis and dry scalp.”

And Bradshaw advised: “Nutrient deficiencies play a critical role in overall skin health, affecting hydration, repair, and protection against environmental damage. A lack of essential vitamins and minerals can impair the skin’s ability to regenerate and maintain its structural integrity. Vitamin C deficiency can lead to reduced collagen production, resulting in premature ageing and a loss of firmness. B vitamins support an even skin tone and promote healthy cell turnover, while poor gut health, often linked to low nutrient absorption, can further compromise skin condition. Ensuring a nutrient-rich diet is essential for maintaining a radiant, resilient complexion.”

Gorman added: “Vitamin E is an antioxidant that can help protect the skin from oxidative stress, particularly in harsh winter. It also supports the lipid barrier, helping to maintain skin hydration. If people are not consuming enough, they can end up with dry and easily damaged skin. Selenium is another potent antioxidant that helps protect the skin from oxidative stress and supports healing. Low levels have been associated with premature ageing and acne.”

In terms of a healthy skin diet, there are key components to recommend.

Bullock-Lynch suggested: “A nutrient-rich, anti-inflammatory diet helps maintain clear, hydrated, and youthful skin. Include antioxidant-rich foods, such as berries, leafy greens, and citrus fruits for skin protection, healthy fats, such as avocados, nuts, seeds, and olive oil for moisture retention, and hydrating foods like cucumber, watermelon, celery, and herbal teas for skin hydration.”

Faulkner added: “Fat is one of the biggest components in healthy skin. Consuming plenty of nourishing healthy fats including fish, avocado, olive oil, nuts, seeds and grass-fed beef will help to increase omega 3 and omega 6, which can have anti-inflammatory impacts on the skin.

“Collagen peptides boost skin elasticity and hydration, reducing wrinkles. Zinc reduces inflammation and supports wound healing.”



This is often what gives skin its healthy glow and a moist, firm and flexible complexion. Fermented foods like sauerkraut, kimchi and kefir all help to support a healthy gut microbiome which in turn helps the skin health as they are intricately linked.

“Foods high in vitamin A also help to protect the upper and lower layers of the skin. Rich sources include butter, eggs and oily fish. It can also be found in the form of beta-carotene in vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes, which the body converts to vitamin A. A low glycaemic index (GI) diet can help reduce symptoms of acne and increase the quality of the skin. Avoid high GI foods like white bread, cakes, cookies and sweets and instead include low GI foods like green vegetables, nuts and seeds to help prevent spikes in insulin.”

And Alice suggested: “Vitamin C-rich foods, such as berries, citrus fruits, bell peppers, and leafy greens, play a crucial role in stimulating collagen synthesis and shielding the skin from free radical damage. Zinc-rich foods, including pumpkin seeds, lentils, meat, and eggs, aid in skin repair and help regulate oil production, reducing the likelihood of breakouts. Collagen production can be naturally enhanced by incorporating silica-rich foods such as oats, cucumbers, bananas, and bell peppers, alongside vitamin C foods, to promote skin firmness and elasticity.”

Gorman continued: “It is important to include adequate protein, which will support collagen production, which helps keep skin firm and elastic. Good sources are grass-fed meat, fish, bone broths, tofu, beans,

legumes, nuts, seeds and eggs. Phyto-oestrogens could be useful, especially for post-menopausal women. These are natural compounds found in plants with a similar structure to oestrogen. Oestrogen plays an important role in skin health, especially in supporting skin structure and minimising skin damage. Foods rich in phytoestrogens, like soy and flaxseeds, can help support skin structure and minimise damage. Hydration is key too. Even mild dehydration may leave your skin looking dry. Drink plenty of water or herbal teas to stay hydrated, and incorporate water-rich foods like cucumbers, watermelon, and celery to support your skin’s moisture levels.”

Skin supplements

As part of your recommendations, supplements are an important part.

Faulkner suggested: “Taking fish oil may reduce symptoms of dry skin and irritation as the essential omega 3s, EPA and DHA, are crucial for skin function. Omega 3 polyunsaturated fatty acids, a type of nutrient that the body cannot produce on its own, are abundant in fish oil. They help to optimise the function of the skin barrier, reduce inflammation, and more. Strong antioxidants like pine bark and grape seed extracts are beneficial as they are a source of natural polyphenols and oligomeric proanthocyanidins (OPCs).”

Bullock-Lynch continued: “Collagen peptides boost skin elasticity and hydration, reducing wrinkles. Zinc reduces inflammation and supports wound healing.”

Meanwhile, Gorman recommended: “Camu camu, a small, sour fruit native

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to the Amazon rainforest, is becoming an increasingly popular supplement. It is known for its exceptionally high vitamin C content, which can help protect skin from oxidative stress caused by free radicals, which can damage skin cells and accelerate aging. Astaxanthin is a naturally occurring red carotenoid pigment found in salmon, shrimp, and lobster, as well as in microalgae. It has powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Research suggests it can protect the skin from UV damage, improve elasticity, and enhance overall skin texture. It may also help with moisture retention, keeping your skin plump and radiant. Vitamin D is believed to support skin cell growth and repair, and deficiency has been linked to eczema and psoriasis.”

Natural demand

The good news is, more shoppers are tuning into the importance of cleaning up their skincare.

Laura Rudoe, founder of Evolve Organic Beauty, commented: “We have found demand for natural beauty products has continued to rise and this is driven by several key factors. The pandemic heightened consumer awareness of health and hygiene, which led to increased demand for products perceived as safer and healthier, including natural cosmetics. It’s also down to the clean beauty movement gaining momentum and consumers becoming increasingly aware of the benefits to the health of their skin, mind and body of choosing natural beauty.”

Nicola Truswell, Weleda Head of Trade Marketing & Category Insight, continued: “Seventy two per cent of Gen Zs in the US point to natural or organic ingredients as a key attribute of a beauty brand or product, while 66 per cent look for brands that use environmentally-friendly ingredients. Revenue in the natural cosmetics segment of the beauty and personal care market in the UK was forecast to increase between 2024 and 2029 by £60.6 million (+29.02 per cent). After the seventh consecutive increasing year, revenue is estimated to reach £269.44 million and a new peak in 2029.

“Scalp health cropped up as a trend post-Covid, and there was a sudden rosemary hair oil trend on TikTok. Google searches for ‘scalp serums’ in 2024 were +99 per cent

(30k/month). Interest in preventative or protective treatments are on the increase – searches for spray SPF increased 138 per cent in 2024, while searches for vitamin C sunscreen increased 53 per cent. Google searches for ‘lip balm’ were +38 per cent in 2024 (240k/month). Another huge trend is the emergence of viral trends like ‘skin flooding’ (216m views on Tiktok in 2024). Hyaluronic acid continues to have huge appeal.”

When considering stock offering, what are the trends?

Truswell advised: “Sustainability continues to trend, but it is becoming more of an expectation rather than an added extra. Younger shoppers especially are looking for not just recyclable packaging and products with provenance, but also want to buy from brands who stand for something. Shoppers are researching and wanting clarity from brands. According to Mintel’s 2024 *Global Beauty & Personal Care Trends* report, consumers are increasingly demanding greater transparency from beauty brands when it comes to what actually goes in their products.

Dr Pauline Hili, founder of Nourish London organic and vegan skincare, added: “In amongst the credentials that are displayed on packaging, there is still a lot of confusion for the customer. Soil Association organic, vegan and cruelty free, however, are among the credentials most sought out by our consumers. Also, there is a big ‘feel good’ factor related to conscious purchasing.”

Rudoe added: “Customers are increasingly looking for ingredient transparency, more are looking for natural and botanical ingredients and even more want eco-friendly packaging, with 81 per cent believing brands should actively work to reduce plastic packaging.”

Stela Radeva, from Althea, went on: “Consumers increasingly seek transparency and credibility from beauty brands. More and more people prioritise clean ingredients, as well as labels concerning product origin as cruelty-free, vegan or product safety as dermatologist-approved. However, price and efficacy still play a significant role in purchase decisions.” **hfb**

Focus on skincare

There many beauty and skincare products you could recommend to customers, but as the market has moved on and more products come to market, what are shoppers seeking?

Rudoe advised: “During spring, we don’t need such heavy, nourishing, wintery moisturisers that cocoon our skin, but our skin still needs optimal hydration. For spring, choose lighter creams and serums that nourish without feeling heavy. Spring is also a great time to gently increase exfoliation to slough away dead winter cells.”

King added: “For skin showing sensitivity, I would recommend reaching for facial care with almond. The delicate blossoms on the almond tree can appear as early as January, showing us just how much inner warmth they carry to bloom while temperatures are still frosty. This warmth and inner strength serve as a great support to the skin. In addition, almond’s composition is much like the skin’s outer layers, which means it can provide a protective, soothing function, while the skin regains its balance. Unveiling at this year’s Chelsea Flower Show is Wild Rose & White Tea Smoothing Facial Care to protect against environmental skin ageing, intensively boost hydration and promote elasticity.”

Bradshaw added: “Rosehip oil, abundant in vitamin A and essential fatty acids, promotes skin regeneration and helps reduce fine lines. Jojoba oil ensures balanced hydration without

clogging pores. Calendula extract, known for its anti-inflammatory and soothing properties, is beneficial for sensitive or reactive skin, helping to calm irritation and restore balance.”

Hili went on: “During the spring as the days get longer, our exposure to daylight and the outdoor environment increases. More exposure to outdoor pollutants, pollen and sunlight means our skin can feel drier and prone to irritations. Applying protective products, such as daily SPFs and rich facial oils, can ensure we restore and maintain the skin’s natural hydration level and keep the skin looking healthy. A healthy skincare routine for the springtime begins in mid-February by using a really good balm to protect from the effects of pollution and to build up the skin’s resilience. For an AM routine, we recommend a moisturiser with daily SPF and applying an antioxidant-rich serum to protect and preserve the hydration of the skin. For a PM routine, the addition of a vitamin-C rich oil or serum can really help boost the antioxidant reservoir on the skin.”

And Radeva suggested: “As temperatures rise and humidity increases, the heavy, protective layers we rely on during winter may feel too rich. At this time of year, skin needs more lightweight hydration that balances moisture without overweighing skin. Spring is also the ideal time to shed dull, dry winter skin and focus on exfoliation and cell renewal. This helps revive a radiant, even-toned complexion.”

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Sukh Gill

Securing Ireland's Future – industry is ready, willing and able to help

The Irish Health Trade Association (IHTA) Secretary General, **Sukh Gill**, discusses health policy.

In the previous election in Ireland, a coalition emerged after five months – in this one, it's emerged in just two! Again, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael are the key partners, with support from Independents, (following a disastrous election for the Green Party, which was key in the previous coalition). Michéal Martin of Fianna Fáil returns as Taoiseach (Irish PM) for the first half of this coalition's term, with Tánaiste (Deputy PM), Simon Harris, of Fine Gael, due to complete the term in the top role.

The coalition has already published a draft programme entitled Securing Ireland's Future with an ambitious plan to tackle Ireland's challenges and opportunities. On the challenges front, there is a potential headwind from the threat of tariffs from the US to

the EU, that would, of course, threaten Ireland's significant trade surplus with the US (exports to the US in 2024 exceeded imports by over €47bn!), but also local jobs.

According to *The Irish Times*, Simon Harris (who has responsibility for trade in his new brief in the Department of Foreign Affairs) has warned against increased protectionism, saying it "would not benefit the EU, Ireland or the US" and the EU has promised "firm action" if President Trump makes a move against the bloc. It is understood that Mr Harris is convening a strategic economic advisory panel to review risks and opportunities in the US-Ireland relationship.

Among many commitments made under the draft programme is enhancing Ireland's position and influence

in international affairs and ensuring that Ireland is a positive and active contributor to the European Union. Ireland's membership of the European Union has, I'm sure, already benefitted its influence in international affairs, however, I can perceive that there will be limits on how it can protect its own trade with the US, except through a negotiation led by the EU, which will need to be seen as equitable to all Member States.

The draft programme recognises that a strong economy is essential to a healthy and thriving Ireland and that building and protecting economic prosperity is central to social cohesion. In healthcare terms, our sector may be small, but it has a huge potential to grow to meet societal needs that can underpin economic prosperity. Primarily, our sector

can support healthy diets, growth and development and movement through all life stages to maximise healthy populations, economic activity and happiness.

There is increasing recognition (not just in Ireland, but globally,) that ageing populations require investment in preventative health to keep them well for longer. Our sector is a clear contender to support healthy diets, movement, bone health and exercise and to take some strain away from health systems. For example, from the scientific interest, public research investment and risks facing society, it seems preventative health related to the gut microbiome is an urgent and highly important issue of individual and societal health, especially given the rising risk of antimicrobial resistance, in the



COOKBOOK AUTHOR,
NUTRITIONAL THERAPIST
AND RETAIL ADVISOR

Oliver McCabe

Local food brands on the rise

In a bi-monthly column, chef and experienced retailer, **Oliver McCabe** will bring his insights into modern retailing. This issue, he turns the focus on the trend towards supporting local.

I always journeyed to farmers markets in the local area to buy from small, artisan food businesses to buy organic produce, breads, eggs, preserves, cured meats/fish, soaps, candles, herbal tonics, the list went on for the house. I also discussed with the creators and founders of these ethical foods if they were willing to sell to our independent health store, invoicing me weekly and I would collect the fresh goods whilst I visited the market.

I made this journey every week and built new customers for these small food businesses. New customers became dependent on their goodness and fare. It became the 'local foods' section within the shop. It became bigger and word of mouth travelled to other areas. I met with more and more small local food businesses, and would promote to other independent retailers. It was wonderful and brought so much local food creativity, foodie chats and

optimum nourishment for our health.

In general, small Irish food brands are worth over €1bn in sales in Ireland each year, growing about 20 per cent each year. These sales account for 50 per cent of all money spent on Irish food shopping, year on year. The contribution of small Irish food brands to the local and national economy is vital and immense with independent health stores educating consumers so they recognise

these brands. Buying more of the products helps these small businesses survive and protects jobs and the local economy with maintenance, repair and recovery.

At the recent Health Stores Ireland show in Shannon, one Irish food and drink brand exhibiting was Oir Tonics, founded by Edel Breslin from Co. Clare, where the show was located. She created Irish sea moss tonics, harnessing the power of Carrageen moss from

wake of further pandemic risks, and given the rising economic burden on healthcare systems of preventable chronic disease.

Poorly functioning microbiomes compound over time and generations and are linked to development of preventable chronic diseases. Long-term nutrition solutions are required to support stable microbial communities over a lifetime to promote a healthier host. While the science is complex and emerging, it does not hinder the use of diet to recover beneficial gut microbiomes. Establishing or recovering functional gut microbiomes involves being able to acquire and retain microorganisms, which necessitates commitments to diet or lifestyle changes, and importantly, the means and resources to engage in changes.

Alongside strategies for microbial-based intervention, society needs to support microbial-promoting lifestyles. That entails access to fresh, high-fibre and nutritious foods but also facilitating informed choice by identifying and removing other barriers such as EU guidance that has been disproportionately restrictive.

the stunning West Coast of Ireland, selling at independent health stores. Part of Edel's journey was working at a local independent health store, The Health Connection, in Ennis. Oir Tonics was highlighted and featured in the February edition of *British Vogue*.

Independent health stores are unique, both in location, and the choice of local food and drink products stocked. This is what makes them unique and desirable. With stores that have the space holding talks, demos and

Barriers that have hindered or delayed increased utilisation of dietary-based beneficial microorganisms (or their promotion through use of prebiotics) have and will continue to store up problems for society that can lead to untold preventable suffering and financial and human costs.

If Governments can be open to new approaches, the IHTA and industry are ready, willing and able to help.

SUKH GILL is Secretary General of the IHTA, a Fellow of the Institute of Food Science and Technology, a Business Law graduate, and Chartered Trading Standards Practitioner. He plays an executive role with several bodies: the Executive of the Society of Food Hygiene & Technology, the Council of the Food Law Group of the Law Society, the Board of Proportionality, the Executive of the Business Member's Group of the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and as Vice Chair of the UK Business Expert Group on Food Standards and Labelling. His career has spanned over three decades in government, industry and trade and research associations, most recently working for the Government of Jersey. Sukh was Holland & Barrett's first Director of Regulatory Affairs (2018-22) and Technical Advisor to the HFMA (2015-18).

in-stores launching new brands to their communities and visitors alike. It also generates interesting social media discussions, stories and reels showcasing new artisan producers learning about their inspirational journey. You may even inspire the next generation of budding local foodies to create a new food product for wellbeing with locally grown ingredients. Support local and you're supporting your local community and economy.

OLIVER MCCABE is an author, nutritional therapist and wholefood chef. He has worked in the independent health and wellness sector for more than 20 years and was instrumental in transforming his family's business, Select Stores, in Dalkey, into a popular independent health store, grocer and cafe, with the journey summarised in his bestselling book, *The Fuel Food Cookbook*. This led to Oliver setting up his consultancy, Hubble Health, working with independent health stores, retailers, wholesalers and brands with sales and marketing campaigns in Ireland and overseas. Oliver released his second cookbook, *Kids Kitchen Takeover*, to great praise (published by Viridian Nutrition).



HEALTH STORES IRELAND UPDATE

Alan McGrath

The annual Easter dilemma

Alan McGrath, National Organiser at Health Stores Ireland, highlights the challenge of balancing shopper expectations.

As the retail landscape evolves, our members face increasingly difficult decisions about seasonal product stocking. This has been highlighted recently as retailers grapple with the demand – or lack thereof – for specialty Easter eggs. The challenge of balancing customer expectations with inventory risk has become more pronounced as major retailers expand their special dietary offerings and dig deeper into the traditional wholefood sector.

Recent Bord Bia research indicates Irish demand for alternative dietary options continues to grow, with emphasis on locally produced and ethically sourced products. Despite this trend, independent health food retailers are carefully considering their approach to seasonal offerings, as the investment in Easter products presents both opportunities and risks. The traditional retail calendar pushes stores to transition quickly from Valentine's Day to Easter and summer, but our members question whether this model serves their business interests.

Industry experts point to changing Irish shopping patterns, with multiples increasingly catering to dietary requirements and what were health food staples. This was highlighted at our conference and awards in Shannon, where 'supermarket swap-outs' panel discussion evolved into a broader conversation about wider adaptation and greater resilience.

Irish consumer expectations have also transformed, with customers now seeking more than just products; they desire experiences and personalised service. This presents an opportunity for independent retailers to differentiate through expert knowledge and customised offerings, rather than competing directly with larger chains on seasonal items.

The financial implications of seasonal stock decisions are particularly relevant, as specialty Easter eggs typically carry high price points and short shelf lives. Irish retailers must navigate cash flow, display space and risk of unsold inventory when making purchasing decisions. Data from industry sources suggests that while demand for specialty chocolate grows year-round, seasonal peaks create consumer expectations, stock and cash-flow challenges. Independent retailers may find maintaining year-round specialty chocolate, including premium Irish or fair trade brands, is more sustainable than investing in seasonal items. Nobody wants to be left with dozens of unsold Easter eggs – it's not healthy for business, the waist or the bottom line.

Irish independents might benefit from focusing on their core strengths – personalised service, expert knowledge and carefully curated product selections – while taking a more measured approach to seasonal merchandise. This strategy allows stores to maintain their specialty market position while minimising risks associated with seasonal stock. As the retail landscape evolves, the key to success may not lie in competing with major supermarket chains on seasonal offerings, but in creating unique value propositions that set independents apart throughout the year. Emphasising connections with Ireland's growing artisanal food sector, highlighting training and expertise while offering a more personalised service are areas where multiples cannot compete. When it comes to Easter, perhaps it's better to have too few eggs than to watch your profits get scrambled.

HFMA UPDATE

Martin Last, Director General



The power of media

The first quarter of 2025 has seen attention given to the work schedules of our UK Government and those overseas. The objectives are growth and economic prosperity and present challenges along that path. We are seeing global events impact any change and appear from a variety of sources.

The HFMA has been campaigning since the 1970s to further the education of women of childbearing age to the benefits of supplementing 400mcg of folic acid for at least a month prior to possible conception until 12 weeks of pregnancy to reduce the risk of neural tube defects (NTDs). The HFMA is fully supportive of the proposed measure to add 250mcg folic acid per 100g non-wholemeal wheat flour from autumn 2026 so long as this education message continues to be communicated.

It is often said the best public education occurs via soap opera storylines. In January, the press picked up on the latest episode of *Call the Midwife*, currently set in the 1970s, which covered the story of a baby born with Spina bifida. This resulted in a massive surge of visits to the NHS website, which covers the condition and contains information regarding folic acid. Resulting press coverage included positive quotes from Baroness Merron, Minister for Patient Safety, Women's Health and Mental Health, and whom HFMA has spoken with on this topic. This has been a positive boost to this

campaign to improve women's health.

On the downside, we had disappointing news from the European Ombudsman on labelling of foodstuffs that contains probiotics as health claims. The Ombudsman's decision ruled that the term probiotics could only be used if supported by a scientifically assessed health claim by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Since EFSA has not yet approved any claims for probiotics due to their concern to the absence of sufficient scientific data, it means the term continues to not be allowed to be used. The ruling also found there was no malpractice with regards to the Commission's interpretation of EU food legislation, and that they are ensuring a high level of consumer protection.

Before the ruling, there had been a developing easing of interpretation by around 11 EU member states, which continued to use the term probiotics. One of the outcomes of the case is that it suggests the Commission should take further steps to bring member states into line with this ruling. This legal case was brought by a trade association, which described themselves as representing the interests of the European probiotic industry but unfortunately who had little consultation with the rest of industry on it. There is no discussion as to whether or how this may impact in practice, but the HFMA will continue to monitor and are now seeking a new approach

to help manage this set back.

In politics, Kier Starmer has now laid out policies for 'Britain Reconnected'. This lays out policies to make Britain strong on the world stage, enable pursuit of GB national interest, and to act progressively by re-engaging with Europe. This seeks to reset EU relationships to improve the UK's trade and investment by removing trade barriers. It does not mean a return to the single market, customs union, or freedom of movement but related to food issues, it will seek to negotiate veterinary agreements to prevent unnecessary border checks and help tackle the cost of food. Recent Government meetings have indicated the authorities are looking closely at how this may develop and to assess possible impacts on other areas of EU legislation. There appears to be a common theme that convergence of EU law with UK law is desired wherever possible, although in practice this may not always be practical. Through our political advisors, Cavendish, the HFMA has a programme of ministerial engagement that is being rolled out throughout 2025 and is monitoring developments as they emerge.

Britain Reconnected is not just a European initiative but affects our relationships with all overseas partners. Starmer refers to our special relationship with the USA and that they remain an indispensable ally. Since taking office, President Trump stated he plans sweeping

reviews of US trade policy and to impose tariffs on products, not just from USA's immediate neighbours, but from countries around the world. So, whereas Keir Starmer's approach is to seek removal of trade barriers, it would seem that Trump intends to impose protectionist policies. At time of writing, it was widely reported this could spark a global trade war. Its effect on EU or UK trading is as yet still to be established.

Furthermore, whilst other previous US administrations have sought to provide confidence and calmness for the economic markets, Trump's approach appears rather unconventional and could be being adopted for reasons other than fiscal. Whatever the implications, I believe we are likely to see a rise in countries seeking to agree trade deals with the USA to secure lower cost and, it could be assumed likely, that many countries will be reviewing their trading policies to find alternative trading partners or reduce their reliance on the USA. To me, this further demonstrates how influential and powerful decisions taken in one place can affect us all, and at all levels. Whatever that may impact, I can assure you the HFMA remain vigilant and engaged to help our industry through potential changes and they are monitored regularly.

If you would like to know more about the benefits of HFMA membership to your company, simply visit our website www.hfma.co.uk to learn more or contact me on 020 8481 7100.

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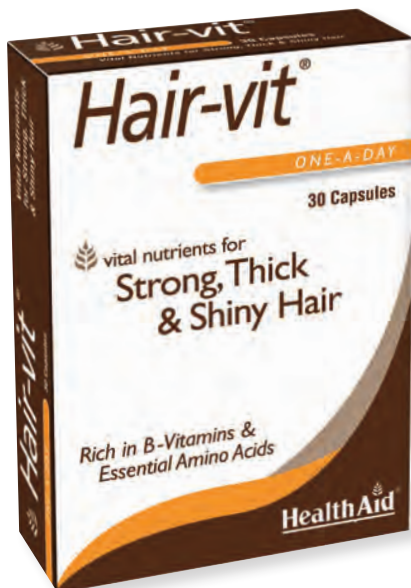


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HEALTH STORES UK

Len Glenville, Chair



Supplementary benefits – research offers new insights on valuable nutrients

A trio of new studies published this year add some fascinating insights into the benefits of popular supplements – and what we know about the people who take them.

A study by researchers at the University of Zürich has bolstered evidence linking omega 3s with slower biological ageing. Previous studies have shown that omega 3s alter the activity of genes, slowing the ageing process. The new study shows that over a three-year period, people who took a daily omega 3 supplement aged around three months less than those who didn't. But it also found that the anti-ageing effects were amplified if omega 3s were taken alongside vitamin D. Add in some strength training and the benefits are even more powerful.

Staying on the subject of strength, while creatine might be best known for muscle building and athletic performance, knowledge about its wider benefits for health is growing rapidly. A new study from Oxford University builds on evidence supporting creatine's potential role in helping treat some forms of depression. When the Oxford team gave a daily dose of creatine to participants in



their study, alongside CBT, they observed a significant reduction in symptoms – sufficient for one leading mental health specialist to call it a “a very, very large effect of creatine”. US scientist, Richard Kreider, believes that creatine – which also acts at the cellular level – could have such broad benefits that certain foods will in future be fortified with it.

A rather different piece of recent research produced its own curious findings. A survey of supplement users found that they are significantly more likely to trust artificial intelligence (AI) than non-users. What's more, a striking 59 per cent of supplement users agreed that AI could be trusted to make decisions about their

diet and nutrition (compared to 28 per cent of non-users). I'm not sure how many of us would have anticipated this slightly counterintuitive finding. Thought-provoking, certainly!

Inspiring Ireland

We're just back from a productive and thoroughly enjoyable visit to Ireland, centred on Health Stores Ireland's inspiring 'Putting Our Best Foot Forward' annual awards and conference. As well as the awards, which include *Health Food Business* magazine's own Health Store Heroes Awards, the event is a wonderful community-focused event, where everyone seems to leave on a high.

As part of our visit, we also

built in a mini road trip to visit as many local health stores as we can, to let them know who we are and what we do but also learn from other retailers and markets to help share best practice in both our communities.

Next stop Manchester!

Our next stop will be the Manchester NHT Summit (Sunday, March 16), where we'll be out in force. We're looking forward to connecting with all our partners and we have lots of meetings scheduled with stores

and potential new partners.

At the show, Health Stores UK be hosting a lively panel discussion centred on using social media to attract new customers, which we're sure will provide valuable new insights for retailers. We hope you can join us.

Supercharge your store in 2025

Did you catch our latest online Shop Talk discussion? Hosted by our Head of Business Development, Dave Christie, it was packed with great ideas and tips for optimising your store's prospects as we push further into 2025. Members can watch the whole episode on demand at www.healthstores.uk



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BIRA

Andrew Goodacre



The High Street crisis – how many more warnings does Government need?

In a regular column for *Health Food Business*, **Andrew Goodacre**, CEO of the British Independent Retailers Association (Bira), discusses the action needed to help safeguard Britain’s High Street.

The start of 2025 has delivered a devastating series of blows to Britain’s high streets; WHSmith considering the sale of all 500 UK stores, Lloyds Banking Group announcing 136 branch closures, Sainsbury’s cutting 3,000 jobs, Morrisons reducing its workforce by 200, and now Tesco eliminating 400 positions. This isn’t just another cycle of retail change – it’s a fundamental collapse of high street infrastructure.

The sheer scale of these

closures should sound alarm bells in Westminster. We’re witnessing the systematic dismantling of services that have supported local communities for generations. When WHSmith, a retailer that has served British communities for over two centuries, considers abandoning the high street, we must recognise this as a watershed moment.

The Government’s response to this crisis has been woefully inadequate. While ministers talk about levelling up and

supporting local communities, their inaction tells a different story. The cost of running physical stores has become nearly impossible to sustain, with business rates, energy costs, and staffing expenses creating an unsustainable burden for retailers.

Banks justify closures by pointing to online banking uptake, but this ignores the vital role branches play in our communities. Since 2015, Britain has lost over 6,000 bank branches. The promised alternatives – banking hubs and Post Office services – are struggling to fill the void, particularly in rural areas. Now, with WHSmith potentially selling its stores, many of which house Post Office counters, we face losing another essential community service.

These closures create a devastating domino effect. When anchor stores and banks close, footfall decreases dramatically. This impacts every business in the area, particularly independent retailers, who rely on the customer traffic generated by these larger establishments. Each closure makes the next one more likely, creating a downward spiral that becomes increasingly difficult to reverse.

The Government must wake up to this crisis. We need meaningful reform of business rates, support for modernisation, and incentives for businesses to maintain physical premises. The current approach of watching from the sidelines while our high streets crumble is not just short-sighted – it’s destructive to the fabric of our communities.

Online shopping will continue to grow, but physical retail remains vital to our economy and society. High streets aren’t just about transactions; they’re about community, employment, and the character of our towns and cities. When we lose these spaces, we lose more than just shops – we lose the heart of our communities. How many more major retailers need to close? How many more jobs must be lost? How many more communities need to see their town centres hollowed out before the government takes meaningful action? The time for half-measures and empty promises has passed. We need decisive action to save what remains of our high streets before it’s too late.





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NPD at New Nordic

With more than 20 new products launched and a focus on future innovation, New Nordic is pushing forward with an exciting plan for 2025, which sees it reinvigorate its health store relationship.

Our industry is built on bringing exciting and genuinely innovative products to market, often before the mainstream. The fact that New Nordic is using 2025 to continue with an ongoing programme of NPD – and with a focus of support on independent health food stores – is exciting news.

New Nordic is already well-established in the market, but 2024 really saw the brand step up not only its presence within health stores but also in driving forward its NPD programme. Working with Thyme Marketing since last year, the brand has big plans to nurture its relationship with health stores.

Country Manager, Karen Gray, commented: “We’ve had a busy two years. Our team expanded, allowing us to develop key business parts. Digital media and a review of all our processes and partnerships were prioritised. We strengthened our external partners and focused on how we service every customer, retailer, and wholesaler, ensuring our support and communication channels remain strong.

“Our other main focus was new product development – we successfully rebuilt our catalogue and launched more than 20 new products. And we entered a new partnership with Thyme Marketing, representing New Nordic in the independent health food trade, re-establishing current connections and welcoming new store listings.”

And what kind of support can we expect from the brand into the health store channel?

Karen, who advised that the brand will be at NOPEX to meet



with retailers, advised: “Our independent trade has changed the landscape over the last three to four years. New Nordic is committed to continuing to support health food stores. In Q4 2024, we partnered with Thyme Marketing to represent New Nordic. This has been highly successful, and we have reintroduced New Nordic to the trade. For 2025, they have a lot to look forward to; we are working hard to produce new

sales points, exclusive new products, training manuals and education videos, and herbal school and newsletters.”

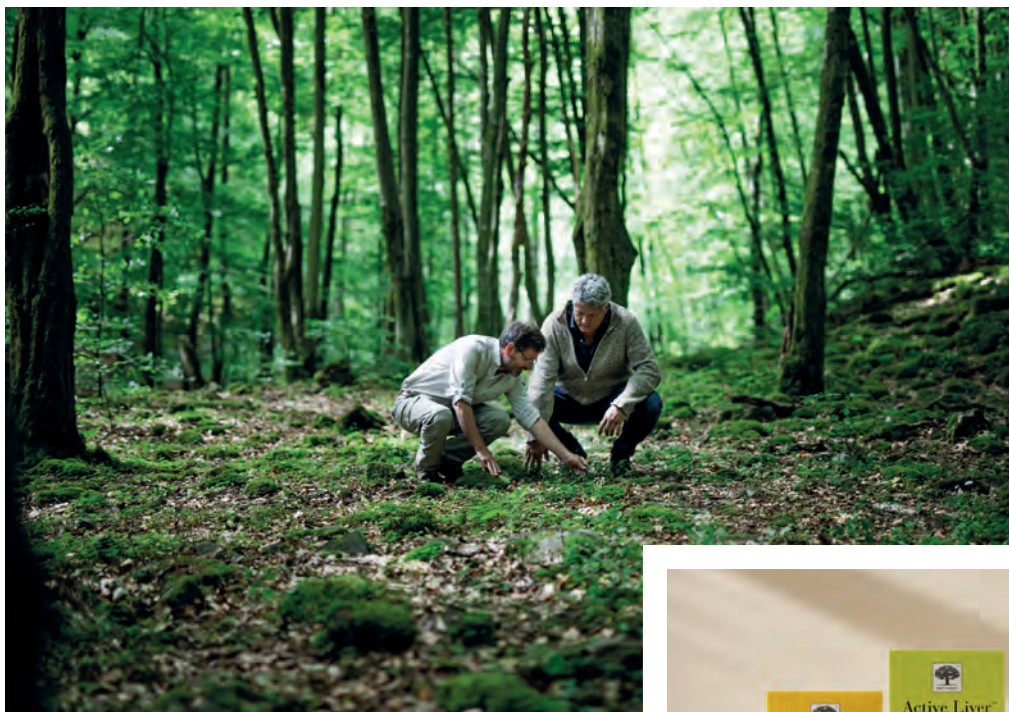
This positive focus will only continue as we move forward, with Karen adding: “In Q1, we are busy with new product development and onboarding an additional creative and graphic designer. This will allow us to produce creative materials and support our customers well. We look to welcome our new mushroom range, line extensions to our magnesium range, and a kid’s range to our already packed catalogue.

“As we enter 2025, we have much more to focus on. Strengthening our marketing opportunities, including TV, plus more new products. We will also focus on further distribution to grocers, department stores, and independent stores.”

Innovation pipeline

New Nordic is already well-established in the UK market, having been founded in 1990 by Karl Kristian Bergman-Jensen. And its early ethos still remains in place to this day.

Karen explained: “New Nordic is a Swedish-based company with a unique know-how in medicinal plants. The New Nordic passion is to help individuals worldwide



live better, healthier lives through developing innovative, effective supplements and cosmetics. New Nordic products have won many awards and accolades from international industry organisations. In recent years, the company has achieved category leader status in the 'beauty from within' category – a rapidly growing sector worldwide.”

And what sets the brand apart in what is a busy marketplace?

“Our heritage and innovation are key to our success,” Karen advised. “We develop and bring new products to market very quickly. We respond to and react to new trends, research, and source our ingredients. Our healing power of herb ethos sets us apart from other companies. Our belief in discovering, sourcing, and manufacturing from ‘seed to heart’ products is our core value.”

And this has driven the exciting NPD programme we are seeing from the company; today, the range stands at 63 products, with Apple Cider, Active Liver, Collagen Shot, Hair Volume Range, Magic Magnesium range, Irish Sea Moss and Melissa Dream being the stand-out best sellers.

And how does New Nordic go about expanding its product range in terms of the process that takes place to develop NPD?

Karen advised: “The development of tablets from the first innovation

“Our healing power of herb ethos sets us apart from other companies. Our belief in discovering, sourcing, and manufacturing from ‘seed to heart’ products is our core value.”



takes 12-14 weeks. Gummies take 16-18 weeks, and liquid shots take 20-22 weeks. All innovations are developed by our CEO, Karl Kristian, and Francois, alongside our regulatory and supply chain team in Denmark. Karl Kristian’s knowledge is incredible. He visits with Francois and sources ingredients that must meet his high standards.”

Focus on magnesium

One of the key launches for New Nordic has been the development of a new magnesium range.

Karen explained: “New Nordic is 34-years-old and has established know-how in producing innovative products that enrich people’s health and wellbeing. This is still our core message today. We have focused on delivering products that represent customer needs and trends. Our most significant success in 2024 was our Magic Magnesium range. The magnesium trend

exploded as we went to market with three products: Magic Magnesium Glycinate, Citrate and Malate tablets.

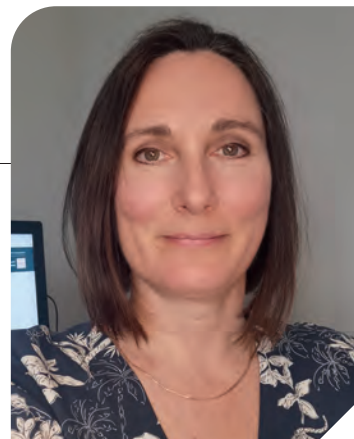
“New Nordic stays close to customer trends and needs, and working with retail partners, we were asked to develop a new range for the magnesium category. Our CEO and development team went to work quickly and produced an outstanding range, Magic Magnesium, using the best-sourced ingredients with high elemental values; our range was born.

“We now manufacture quantities that New Nordic has never previously produced. Significant production quantities shipped throughout the United Kingdom and worldwide. The magnesium range during 2024 had a retail value of £3,500,000. The trend and sales continue so much that we launch three new products in early 2025, including Citrate Gummies, Glycinate Liquid Shot and Taurate.” **hfb**

LINDSAY POWERS

Naturopathic Nutritional Therapist and Head of Nutrition, Good Health Naturally

Each month, the Grafter looks at an individual in the natural health industry. This issue, we find out more about Lindsay Powers and her journey into nutrition, which led her *Good Health Naturally* a decade ago.



Having children proved to be the catalyst for Lindsay Powers to look more deeply into food and, specifically, what she was feeding her two daughters. Until then, she had worked in logistics, in a high-pressured, often stressful environment.

After this interest was sparked, Lindsay signed up to study nutrition. From there, her journey into natural health began.

Lindsay recalled: "After school, I went to study Media and Cultural Studies in Nottingham. After graduation, I wanted to see the world, so I headed to Australia, backpacking and working for a year. When I got back, I fell into a career in transport and logistics, becoming an operations manager for a large transport company. I was responsible for the transport and distribution of some of the UK's biggest food and drink brands. Logistics certainly gave me experience of juggling different things at once, but it was also an incredibly stressful environment!

"When I had my two girls in my early 30s, I was lucky enough to be able to take a career break and leave the stresses of my job behind. I'd generally been interested in healthy eating but didn't know much about natural health. However, during this time, I began researching food for babies and children, which inspired me to develop my interest."

So interested was she that she joined the Natural Healthcare College to study a Diploma in Naturopathic Nutritional Therapeutics.

"I also took courses on naturopathic practices, such as bodywork and hydrotherapy, which I could bring to my client work," Lindsay added.

So, how did she end up joining Good Health Naturally?

Lindsay recalled: "After five years of studying around the family and

part-time office work, I fully qualified and opened up my private practice. With its clinical practice element, the course prepared me well for working with clients, so this was a natural progression. I also built a website and learned about running a nutritional therapy business. Initially, I hadn't considered working for a brand. During my years of studying, I came across Robert Redfern, the late founder and CEO of Good Health Naturally, and his work. After a few years working privately, when I saw they were advertising for a nutritionist and technical advisor, I jumped at the chance! This was 2015, and it gave me the opportunity to work full-time in the nutrition field and move away from private practice, which could be very sporadic in the early days!"

Initially, Lindsay was involved in telephone and email support for customers.

"The ethos of Good Health Naturally has always been to go beyond supplements and to offer holistic support for customers, and this is where I could put my experience into practice," she added.

As time went on, Lindsay's role evolved: "Within a couple of years, we realised Robert's dream of opening online coaching centres, where we could take people through a fully structured plan to improve health outcomes. I supervised a team of health coaches, where we gave telephone sessions to customers, incorporating diet, lifestyle and supplement advice. We achieved some amazing results with this coaching service. As the years went by, we had to make significant structural changes to the business, and I now head up a much smaller team of qualified nutritionists and health advisors. While we no longer offer coaching services, we still

provide support for our customers.

"I'm in my 10th year with Good Health Naturally and still enjoying every minute. During this time, my role has developed significantly. As part of the management team at Good Health Naturally now, I am involved in many aspects of moving the business forward, from marketing to product development.

"On a daily basis, as well as supporting customers, I'm involved in planning and content writing for email marketing, social media, company blogs, PR adverts and contributing articles to industry publications. I also write for and edit our bi-annual natural health magazine. I get out to trade shows and consumer events, which I enjoy as this is an excellent opportunity for face-to-face contact with new and existing customers and other industry professionals. Plus, I look after the practitioner side. This varied role allows me to contribute strategically and stay at the forefront of industry trends and knowledge."

With such interest in nutrition and supporting people to better health, Lindsay explains her motivations.

"Each day, week, and month presents new challenges, and this constant evolution drives me to adapt and keep moving forward. Working as part of a small team also lets me get involved in many aspects, keeping the role engaging and fulfilling," she advised. "One of my biggest achievements is effectively managing multiple priorities in a fast-paced environment. Balancing different projects while maintaining high standards has helped me develop strong organisational and problem-solving skills. It's rewarding to see how this contributes to the brand's success and keeps things moving forward. My logistics background has definitely stood me in good stead!" **hfb**

Quick questions

What is the best thing about your job? The best part is the mix of variety, learning, and collaboration.

What is the worst? Having to share my desk with my cat #wfh.

Describe yourself in three words: Flexible, reliable, committed.

Musical tastes? Anything from reggae to house music.

What's your greatest ambition? To write a book.



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Camu Camu

100% Natural Wholefood Vitamin C with Bioflavonoids for immune health and more.
90 Capsules (approx. 90 servings)

- Handpicked and wildcrafted
- Sustainably sourced
- No heat, binders or fillers
- Stable throughout shelf life

Pregnacare®

UK's
No.1*
PREGNANCY
SUPPLEMENT
BRAND

With you every step of the way Thinking about starting a family?

The Pregnacare® Conception range provides expert nutritional support, including **vitamins D and B12**, plus **400µg folic acid**¹, the level recommended by the UK Department of Health for all women from the start of trying to conceive. Pregnacare Conception Max contains **L-methylfolate**, a more advanced and easily absorbed form of folic acid.

The carefully balanced formulas, including zinc which contributes to normal **fertility and reproduction**, help to safeguard your daily nutrient intake during this important time.

- ✓ More than just folic acid
- ✓ From the start of trying to conceive
- ✓ Most recommended by midwives²

Available from your wholesaler.



Before Conception

Him & Her Conception

Conception Max

Visit [Pregnacare.com/conception](https://www.pregnacare.com/conception)
for tips and advice before conception



Supporting people throughout
the UK trying to conceive. Charity
registered in England (1099960)
and Scotland (SC039511)
[fertilitynetworkuk.org](https://www.fertilitynetworkuk.org)



UK's No.1
VITAMINS*

VITABIOTICS

*Nielsen GB ScanTrack Total Coverage Value and Unit Retail Sales 52 w/e 7 September 2024. To verify contact Vitabiotics Ltd, 1 Apsley Way, London, NW2 7HF. UK's No.1 pregnancy supplement brand.
1. Getting enough folic acid is vital from the start of trying to conceive. Supplemental folic acid increases maternal folate status. Low maternal folate status is a risk factor in the development of neural tube defects in the developing foetus. Folic acid also contributes to maternal tissue growth during pregnancy. 2. Pregnacare is the pregnancy supplement brand that is most recommended by midwives. For more information on this research, please visit www.pregnacare.com/mostrecommended.