



Australia looking to future trends to grow market share in UK

With UK consumers demanding more from their food and wine, Australian suppliers are using the launch of a new initiative called G'dayUK to tap into key UK food and drink trends such as health and convenience.

Planned for 24 June – 30 June 2009, G'dayUK is a series of Australian events and promotions in the UK that form part of a broader strategy by Australia to strengthen relations with the 'motherland' and one of Australia's key export and investment markets.

Commenting on the growth of Australian food and beverage products now available in the UK, Kylie Hargreaves, Senior Trade Commissioner for Australia, based in London, commented:

"UK consumers are sophisticated, well-travelled, health-conscious and positive about Australia. By tapping into key UK food and beverage trends, Australian suppliers can harness that level of sophistication to design and develop innovative product that can compete anywhere on the global stage."

The predicted trend in 'free-from' foods has already been realised in the Australian domestic market. Gluten-free pasta and sausages, dairy-free drinks and wheat-free baked goods are all available alongside 'standard' variants, unlike in the UK, where free-from products are typically found in a stand-alone 'health food' section, even in the major multiples.

Despite this niche status, the UK is showing signs of becoming a highly profitable market for free-from producers, going from a modest starting point to record double-digit value and volume sales growth in recent years. According to market analysts Mintel, over the past five years, the UK free-from foods market has grown dramatically, by more than 300% and gluten-free and other healthful food sales remain resilient in the face of slower sales in some other food categories.

Products that provide health benefits as well as convenience are also predicted to become more prevalent as consumers demand more from convenience food in the UK. Time pressures emerging from longer working hours, more active lifestyles and lengthier commutes to and from work are driving sales of convenience food and drink. By 2015, the UK takeaway and convenience food sector is predicted to experience double-digit growth to reach a value of £12.3bn¹.

¹ The 2015 Convenience Food Report from the independent think-tank - The Future Foundation - was commissioned by Domino's Pizza in the UK and published in 2006.

A number of Australian products designed to target this audience are now being offered to the UK market. Examples include Carmen's Muesli Bars that offer the nutritional benefits of a bowl of muesli on-the-go (www.carmansfinefoods.com.au) whilst Passage Foods simmer sauces in both Thai and Indian varieties (www.passagefoods.com.au) provide a simple and convenient read-to-use restaurant quality alternative to which consumers just add meat, seafood, tofu or vegetables. The sauces are gluten free, have no MSG, use all natural ingredients and are Halal certified.

Commenting on the growth in choice offered by Australian suppliers to UK consumers, Kylie Hargreaves from Austrade said: *"There is now a huge range of premium, innovative Australian products available in both gourmet stores and supermarkets in the UK and demand simply seems to keep growing!"*

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Notes to editors:

About G'dayUK:

G'dayUK 2009 is supported by the New South Wales, Queensland, Victorian, South Australian and Western Australian State Governments, Austrade, Qantas and Tourism Australia in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Wine Australia, Australian Business and key private sector sponsors.

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About the Australian Trade Commission:

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