

CASE STUDY

Helping food businesses

REFORMULATE
for a healthier future



SCOBIES DIRECT

“With government promoting healthier lifestyles and tackling obesity, we expect rising consumer interest in low-salt and low-fat food. We will help our customers tap into this.”

Jonathan Cannovan & Anna Wilson

Low-salt ingredients offer good sales potential for butchers



Scobie & Junor serves the meat industry across the UK, Ireland and continental Europe, working with major meat processors and retailers. Our Scobies Direct arm supplies butchers, delis and farm shops across the country.

Business benefits from post-Covid health trends

With a number of low-salt and gluten-free products in our range, we are supporting butchers to reformulate products such as burgers, sausages, pies and ready meals.

We are doing this through Food and Drink Federation (FDF) Scotland's Reformulation for Health programme, and see strong business potential from linking to interest in healthier lifestyles.

Business research by FDF Scotland and Levercliff shows that over half (55%) of businesses that

reformulate products attract new consumers; and over a third (35%) win new business.

Through our own work with the Reformulation for Health, we hope to:

-)] help our customers cater for consumer concerns about diet and healthy eating
-)] attract new customers who want to reformulate their products
-)] differentiate our product range from competitors

Reducing salt content by almost two-thirds

We offer a lower-salt range, including burger and steak pie mixes, and a gluten-free range using rusk made from high-fibre pea protein. Our low-salt steak burger mix has just 0.5g of salt per 100g of finished product, whereas the standard steak burger mix has 1.4g per 100g. In other words, we've brought the salt down by almost two-thirds, without any detriment to the flavour.

Before now, the low-salt mixes have been listed on our website, but not promoted to customers. Even so, we are already selling **six low-salt burger mixes for every 10 standard burger mixes**.

Now that we are working with the Reformulation for Health programme, we are raising the profile of our healthier ingredients, putting a direct link on our website home page. It will be interesting to see how customers / sales pick up when we promote low-salt more actively.

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Developing our range of healthier ingredients

In addition to the existing low-salt and gluten-free products, our development and marketing teams are working on:

-) low-fat burger and sausage mixes using inulin, a fat replacer made from chicory root which provides the succulence, flavour and texture of more traditional products
-) kibbled mushrooms, another option for providing texture and taste in low-fat mixes and also a source of vitamin D
-) longer-term, we are looking at flavourings such as seaweed to cater for interest in foods linked to health and immunity benefits
-) Working towards the new UK salt targets for 2024

Challenges and solutions

A major reformulation challenge in our business comes from misconceptions that taste or texture will be diminished if salt or fat is reduced. Wary of upsetting customers, butchers often hesitate to switch to healthier recipes.

But through the efforts of our development team, our healthier-eating ranges easily match our traditional ranges for taste and texture. The challenge is therefore to win over the customer. From talking with butchers and other shops, we know there are effective ways to do this:

Encourage people to try for themselves

Through FDF Scotland, we give samples to butchers so they can prepare test batches. We also encourage them to offer taste tests and samples to their own customers.

Ask the customers

Some butchers tell us low-salt products or gluten-free sell better if they are promoted as such; others prefer to make the change under the radar. The key is for butchers to chat with their own customers and understand what will work best for them.

Use the trickledown effect

When supermarkets promote healthier ranges to their customers, we often see butchers wanting to sell their own healthier alternatives a few weeks down the line. We're offering them the ingredients to do that, and we're excited to see what will happen next.

Food and Drink Federation Scotland's Reformulation for Health programme offers support to small to medium-sized companies, both FDF members and non-members.

For more details, contact

reformulation@fdfscotland.org.uk or visit www.fdfscotland.org.uk

Did you know?

73% of people felt that they would buy the same amount or more from a company that reformulated products to improve their health.

<https://www.scobiesdirect.com>