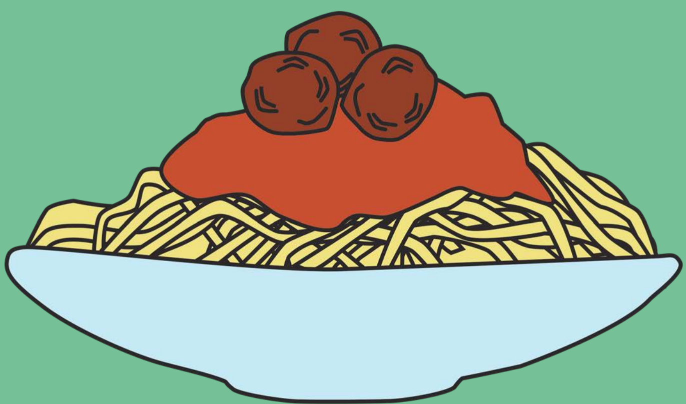
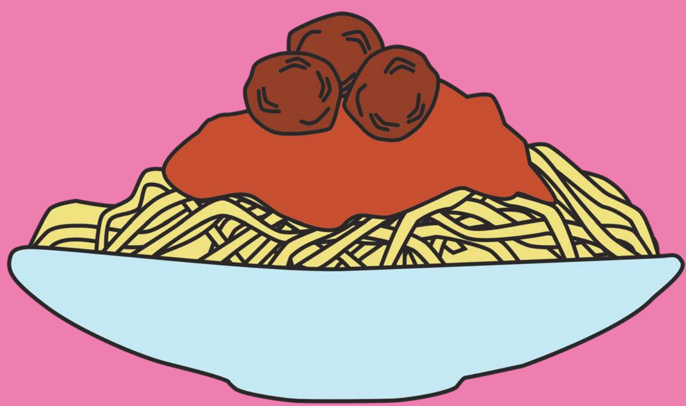
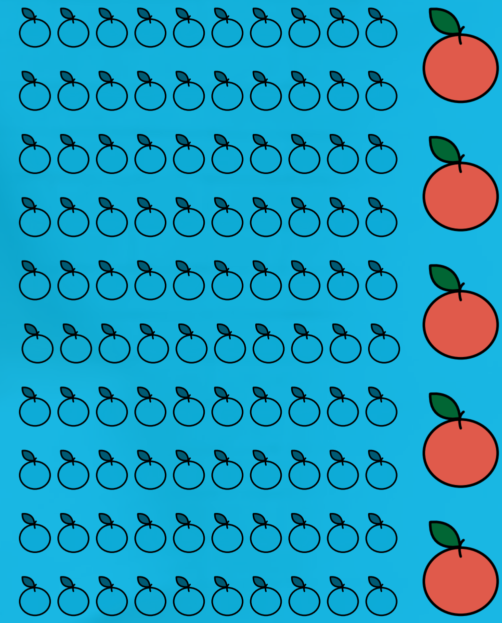
# Convenience Report 2015

The co-operative food
Here for you for life







# 5.1%

In the last 12 months, to April 2015, the convenience market generated £37.7bn in sales with a YoY increase of 5.1%*

## INTRODUCTION

The UK convenience sector is changing – shifting from emergency purchases, to becoming a regular part of consumers' grocery shopping habits.

Social and economic changes appear to be driving more and more people to little and often convenience shopping. The number of single households has seen a five per cent rise over the last 10 years[+]. Developments such as this, along with people seeing their lives as increasingly busy, time pressured and stressful, as well as the desire to reduce food waste† are playing to the strengths of the convenience sector, as shoppers look to shop 'for tonight' or for the next couple of days, rather than for a week.

The idea of planning and eating three square meals a day is a thing of the past. Today many people who live very busy lives decide what to eat just a few hours in advance and will visit their local store looking for inspiration and easy to prepare food.

This report, the second in our series, highlights how social and lifestyle developments have changed consumers' attitudes towards weekly meal planning, and how a shift in purchasing behaviours has led to the development of products in response to this consumer trend. It's clear that the convenience channel is evolving and that new formats are appearing to ensure retailers and suppliers are meeting shoppers' needs and inspiring them with innovative ideas.

Across the convenience sector we are seeing more and more focus on shopper needs and by thinking about why consumers are using the store, we are able to provide a sense of value beyond price. For example, by focusing on simple ideas, all merchandised in one location, we are making it easier for people to pick up all the ingredients they may require to cook a meal.

Our understanding of shoppers' behaviour is enabling us to challenge the traditional store layout in order to make it easier for shoppers to find what they are looking for and help frame meal solutions.

STEVE MURRELLS,
RETAIL CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
THE CO-OPERATIVE GROUP

## MEAL PLANNING

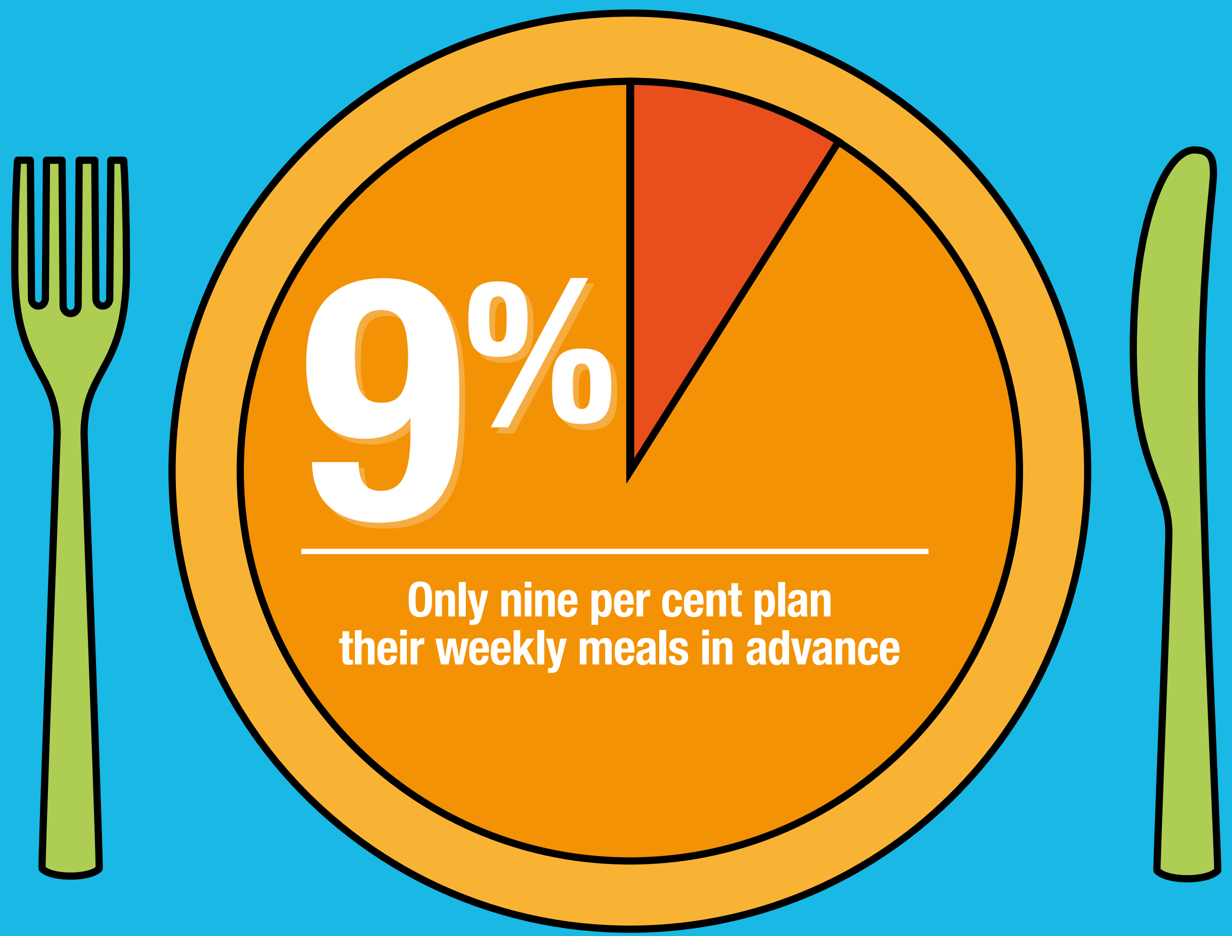
The idea of entering a store with a shopping list is in decline, as more shoppers head into a store without a clear idea of what they are purchasing - 16 per cent of consumers surveyed*** never use a shopping list and 60 per cent only write down the key products they require. A shift towards impulse dining solutions has emerged, against the traditional big shop and planned weekly meals.

There has also been a shift in cooking behaviours, which has seen increasing numbers of consumers choosing to cook assisted meals using pasta sauces and prepared salad boxes, due to its ease and convenience, rather than cooking dishes entirely from scratch. This is reflected in the performance of the meal inspirations sector which is consistently ahead of the total food and drink market over the past two years, suggesting that consumers aren't shopping for completely raw ingredients.

Assisted cooking is a growth area with consumers selecting products to be used to speed up the cooking process or for ease instead of cooking everything from scratch using basic ingredients e.g. spaghetti Bolognese made using mince, dry pasta and a manufactured pasta sauce.

**27%**

**27 per cent decide their meals on the day**

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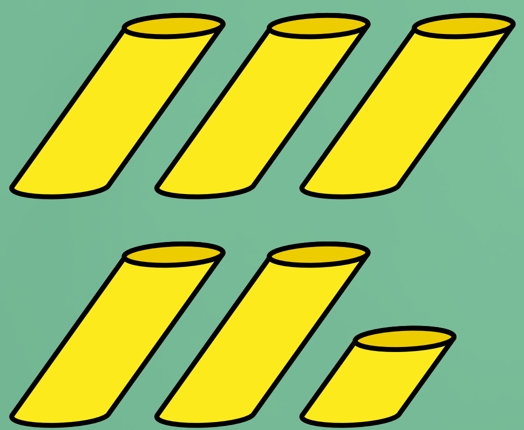
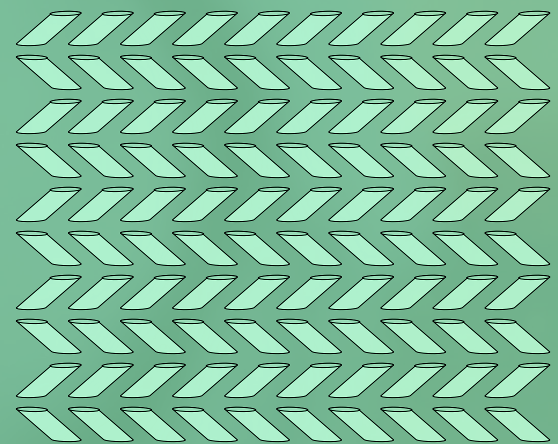
# 41%

41 per cent are choosing to plan ahead for just a few days

# 5.5%

The performance of meal deals or meal bundles is performing ahead of Total Food and Drink by 5.5 per cent**, suggesting that consumers are picking up a series of products to create a full dining solution, rather than cooking from scratch.





## THE NEW FACE OF COOKING

As consumers are becoming savvier with home cooking, there is still a fine line between cooking from scratch and semi-homemade. Busy working lives and lifestyle changes have played a part in the changing definition of cooking from scratch. The image of mothers across the country spending their time cooking over a hot stove to deliver a freshly cooked meal is quickly becoming an image of the past. The meaning of cooking from scratch is less about baking the bread roll to accompany your soup or creating a smooth gravy from the juices from the meat and sways, instead, towards heating up a readymade pasta sauce or scattering a packet of Mexican seasoning over your chicken.

This is the era of semi-homemade cooking and a lifestyle we are becoming more familiar with.

**In Great Britain, 70 per cent of women in relationships are mostly responsible for cooking.#**

Men are noticeably less likely than women to have responsibility for cooking and preparing foods in British households, and also cook meals from scratch far less frequently, showing that traditional stereotypes still ring true.

**70%**

## MID-WEEK SHOPPING

Supermarket big shops have been part of family life for decades but this form of shopping is currently in decline. Shoppers are spending more on top-up shopping in 2015 compared to the traditional main shop, playing to the strengths of convenience stores, according to a recent survey which highlights that:

**36% of consumers shop for food items at least once a week**

and a staggering

# 48%

top up food **2-3** times a week

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with **12%** topping up at least once a day

**Mid week shopping is seeing growth.**

**Monday - Wednesday is seeing a 15 per cent increase year on year, whereas Friday and Saturday purchases have seen a decline of three per cent**

**M T W T F S S**

Time pressure and busy schedules have played a significant part in the increase in top up shopping with 56 per cent admitting that shopping throughout the week fits in better with their busy lifestyle.

Spontaneous cooking falls closely behind with 49 per cent admitting that they are impulsive about what they will cook, highlighting that consumers are spending less time planning meals during the week.

The average British worker commutes for a total of 41 minutes each day and has a round trip of just under 17 miles, whilst the number of extreme commuters – those travelling more than 90 minutes each way – has increased by 50 per cent, from just over one in 20 (six per cent), to almost one in 10 (nine per cent).

On average, workers are spending almost an extra 11 hours a year commuting which has thus led to a redistribution of time.

The number of people working 48 hours or more a week has dramatically increased, as almost four million people are perceived as working these long hours, 350,000 more than a decade ago~. Balancing a busy working lifestyle with household chores has significantly pushed consumers towards convenience shopping, offering a quick and easy solution.

As a result, over the last 20 years consumers have entered a store with significantly less time on their hands and due to a redistribution of time, only one in five consumers has the time to eat a family evening meal together. The average time taken to prepare the main family meal has reduced from 60 minutes two decades ago to around 32 minutes. This signifies that many households do not have the time, resources or confidence to devote to home cookery. ##

## PURCHASING SHIFTS

The pre-family age group has grown 11.1 per cent in convenience shopping since 2013 and they are more likely to make purchases from categories that would traditionally have been bought from supermarkets, such as fresh fruit, fresh meat or ready meals.^

**70%**

**of 18-24 year olds tend to top up food shopping throughout the week**

Food-to-go is an important development in attracting younger age groups to convenience stores, along with driving the growth in meals for tonight and food shopping trips for specific products. The younger demographic of shoppers are much more likely than older shoppers to purchase breakfast or lunch from convenience stores and therefore it is important that retailers cater for these shoppers with more fresh foods, complete meal inspirations and food-to-go.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The convenience market is currently worth £37.7bn and is projected to grow by 17 per cent to be worth £44.1bn in 2020. This would increase its share of the total market from 21.2 per cent in 2015 to 22 per cent in 2020.

It's important for retailers to focus on simple meal solutions, all merchandised in one location, inspiring shoppers to pick up all the ingredients required to cook a meal from scratch.

CONTACT

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References
(+)ONS Families and Households 2014
*IGD Research, 2015
** Kantar Worldpanel Usage 52 w/e rolling data to 21st June 2015
^ Mintel
*** Survey of 2,000 people nationwide, conducted by Atomik Research in August
~ TUC Report
# International Trends Report 2014
## Kantar Worldpanel
† Co-op Internal Customer Insight, 2015

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