

The Grocer

Focus On: Barbecue by Rob Brown (rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com) and Natalie Brown (natalie_brown@live.co.uk)

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The Story

Welcome to the clean eating barbecue. Burgers may still be the mainstay of the barbie, but UK consumers are increasingly turning to healthier options such as lamb and fish. Indeed, an extra 11 million servings were chosen for health reasons last year, according to Kantar. And that means a steer towards options that are perceived as more natural and less processed. On the one hand, it's good news. Because these options tend to be pricier than a bargain burger, it could help to counteract the impact of unreliable weather, which resulted in 20 million fewer barbecue occasions last year. At the same time, the desire for unprocessed food doesn't look good for traditional barbecue meats – or even plant-based meat substitutes. So what is driving the desire for clean eating barbecues? Just how big is this trend? And what does this mean for the future of the barbie?

Key themes:

Clean eating: Which retailers and brands are capitalising on growing demand for clean eating BBQ food, and how? What is driving demand for unprocessed, natural food for the grill, where are there gaps in the market to be filled, and what has the trend meant for the more processed BBQ products?

Meat: Which meats are playing into the clean eating trend? And what are sales looking like for those that don't, such as burgers and sausages?

Vegetarian and plant based meats: Vegan-friendly products have been consistently firing up barbecues. Can that level of growth continue? Or does this move towards less processed options threaten their future?

BBQ additions: Traditional accompaniments to the barbie like vegetables and table sauce are in decline. What are the products replacing them? Are Brits switching to new BBQ sides, or are they ditching them altogether?

Weekday BBQs: For the first time in three years, Brits are whacking on the BBQ on more during the week than on the weekend. How does the midweek BBQ differ from the weekend, and how has the decline in weekend BBQs impacted sector sales?

Weather: After a scorching 2018, summer last year left a lot to be desired. How did the weather in 2019 impact BBQ occasions and sales, and what can brands and retailers do to weather proof their offer this year?

Kantar data: Using Kantar commentary, we explain the reasons behind the rise and fall of certain sub-categories.

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Innovations: We identify four new products that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including launch date and RSP, and a picture of each.