

On the Boil

DECEMBER 2023

Helping you buy better

Fresh ideas

to help you make good buying decisions

In this issue...

Tips to stay hydrated

Garlic - versatile and delicious too

Top tips for going green

From food safaris to supplier forums -
the MPP added value revealed



MY
PURCHASING
PARTNER

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DECEMBER 2023

Fresh ideas

to help you make good buying decisions

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Call your MPP contact for some very special prices...

My Purchasing Partner has clients in over 1,300 locations across the UK. This makes us one of the leading companies in our sector and able to negotiate national terms for our local clients, delivering unbeatable prices.

If you want great products at even better prices, feel free to contact us on:

info@mypurchasingpartner.co.uk
or 0800 1216440

Thank you for your continued support.

Market News

Summary

Inflation continues to fall, with CPI sat at 4.6% in October, whilst interest rates have remained at 5.25% since August. The outlook feels slightly more positive for many, although the spectre of business rate hikes is haunting our hospitality friends.

Food

Global conflicts and irregular weather patterns continue to impact food production and some produce remains in short supply. In better news, food inflation continues to fall from record highs of 19.2% in March and currently sits at 10.1%. This should help hospitality, schools and care homes which have all struggled to absorb rising prices over the summer.

Packaging

The UK plastic packaging ban is now in effect, meaning businesses can no longer sell or supply single-use plastic cutlery, polystyrene containers, or cups. Whilst this is good for the environment it's a decision that will likely increase costs and pose initial challenges for many food-focused businesses.

Utilities

The fuel and energy markets remain volatile, and the reduction in the energy price cap will be short lived, as increases have been announced for January 2024. April's price cap will be announced in late February when households and businesses will be hoping for more positive news.

Freight

Diesel costs have surged in the past two months as OPEC limits production. An approximate 2% cost increase is being passed onto via increased freight costs.

Staff

Although staffing challenges have eased, there are still considerable vacancies remaining unfilled across the sector. An issue is in the changing expectations of staff, which will need to be addressed and new entrants to this sector encouraged. Record increases in the national minimum wage from 1 April 2024, and the age threshold for those eligible to the highest rates lowered from 23 to 21 will pose further challenges for employers.



Did you know...

WE HAVE
1300

sites in the UK from large groups to independent sites.

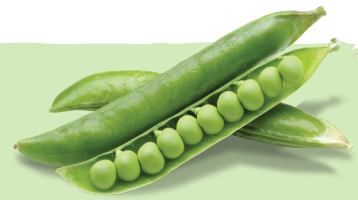
WE HAVE SAVED OVER
£32m

for our clients since our inception in 2011.

THE AVERAGE SAVING PER SITE IS
10.3%

based upon a range of products and services across all sectors.

Meet your Team...



How long have you worked in the industry?

I worked for Nestle for 3 years, then Brakes Foodservice for 10 years. I have been with MPP for 18 months.

Which sectors do you specialise in?

Care and assisted living, contract catering and hospitality.

What is your favourite cuisine?

Classic British cuisine cooked well!

What is your favourite dish?

Fish & chips closely followed by a Chinese takeaway with the family.

What is your favourite drink?

Gin & tonic

How do you spend your free time?

With my family, wife and two sons aged 3 and 6, occasionally I escape to play golf.

Best place in the world is?

Isle of Arran, West Coast of Scotland.

One thing that people may not know about you?

I once met Mike Tyson at LAX airport.

Favourite film?

Goodfellas

GO-GREEN

GO GREEN: WHERE DOES YOUR FOOD COME FROM?

As schools start planning activities for the new year, we encourage them to 'grow their own' fruit and vegetables. Not only is it eco-friendly, helping to reduce food miles and wastage, it teaches children how to garden and care for crops - an invaluable life skill.

We hear about lots of 'grow your own' projects from our school partners. From planting easy-to-grow and quick-to-harvest salad crops to investing in fruit trees that may take several years to flourish.

It's also great to learn how schools are reusing waste. One idea is to create an on-site composting system using food scraps from the kitchens and school lunch boxes. This will help ensure that the soil is well nourished, perfect for growing.

If you would like more ideas - and potentially a donation from one of our wonderful suppliers - please get in touch with the MPP team.

GO GREEN: HAVE YOU DISCOVERED 'ONE PIECE' RECYCLABLE PACKAGING YET?

A common barrier to recycling is that packaging is manufactured from different materials, so have to be broken apart in order to recycle them. However, by using packaging made from the same material - such as the board and film of a sandwich box - the entire thing can be recycled as one piece. Talk to us about this very simple way to increase your recycling and we can tell you about fully compostable options too.

Where possible we offer UK-manufactured products, which reduces the carbon footprint too.



GO GREEN: ALTERNATIVES TO PLASTIC TABLEWEAR

From October 2023, various plastic tableware items have been banned in England. This includes single-use plastic plates, trays, bowls, cutlery, and certain types of polystyrene cups and food containers.

According to estimates, England uses 2.7 billion items of single-use cutlery and 721 million single-use plates per year, but only 10% are recycled.

There are many eco-friendly alternatives available including bamboo, paper and edible cutlery (yes, really!). Please speak to us and we'll happily help you discover new options that work for you.



PROMOTIONAL WEEKS DECEMBER 2023/JANUARY 2024

December

12TH DAY OF PHO (VIETNAM)

21ST KIWI FRUITS DAY

24TH NATIONAL EGG NOG DAY

January

ALL MONTH SLOW COOKING MONTH 6TH NATIONAL SHORTBREAD DAY

12-15TH GREAT WINTER GET TOGETHER

23RD INTERNATIONAL STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING DAY

Great British *seasonal produce*

BEST TO BUY OR HARVEST

Vegetables



Beetroot



Brussel Sprouts



Celery



Parsnip



Bramley Apple



Clementines



Pear

Fruit

There's added value in buying local!

Naming the provenance of your ingredients adds a perceived quality to your dishes, and it's a sure fire way to create distinctive food that will be talked about. Consider using as local suppliers as possible for fruit, vegetable and cheeses, and always state on your menu the farm or area where they were produced.

Not only will diners enjoy actively choosing food created from regional ingredients, in the knowledge that they are supporting the local economy, you will reduce food miles and freight costs, all whilst supporting sustainable farming.



The MPP team have fantastic partnerships with many local businesses, give us a call to discuss your needs and how these can be supplied, locally.



MY
PURCHASING
PARTNER

What else can we do for you?

We're big enough to help and small enough to care. That's why we offer much more than sourcing the very best products at amazing prices. From development days to food safaris, here's just a taste of the additional benefits that we bring to you and your business.

Development Days

Creative chefs
developing tasty new
recipes

Creating new recipe ideas to help busy in-house chefs and kitchen teams with planning and innovation.

We help you cater for all food preferences and are specialists at designing recipes for those with medical conditions such as such as diabetes



Food Safaris

A fun way to
discover
new ingredients

On our latest food safari we visited the markets of London.

We discovered lots of tasty ingredients and forged some positive relationships. We are big on sustainability so love working with smaller, local businesses to reduce food miles and support the local economy.



Supplier Visits

Ensuring the very
best products
and services

Visiting our suppliers is a fantastic time to build relationships, review product ranges, and confirming that all documentation and processes comply with our rigorous standards. Our clients know we are all for their benefit - and this shows in our fantastic testimonials about service levels and ingredient quality.



Supplier Forums

A time to bring
clients and suppliers
together

Inviting suppliers into client sites is a great opportunity for all parties to meet and have open and honest conversations. MPP team members Sam and Johanne were part of a supplier forum at an Essex care home managed by one of our clients.

Our client spent time explaining the importance of sustainability across their estate, and shared their beliefs, plans and expectations.

All parties agreed that sustainability would remain at the forefront of conversions going forwards and valuable relationships were built.

Garlic is one of the oldest cultivated plants in the world and it's part of the same family as onions, leeks, chives and shallots. It has infused itself into the culinary tradition of many civilizations across the world, starting in central Asia, before spreading to the Middle East and Africa and onto Europe. Did you know well-preserved garlic cloves were found in the tomb of King Tutankhamen.

Garlic has a pungent aroma and distinctive taste with the flavour being at its most intense just after mincing. This is due to a chemical reaction that occurs when its cells are ruptured. It is believed that drinking lemon juice can help alleviate "garlic breath."

Our top tip

Garlic is a flavour powerhouse if stored and used correctly. Try roasting it whole: chop off the top of the bulb, season then drizzle with olive oil before baking for 30-40 minutes.

Or even use it raw in coleslaw or salsa for an extra zing! Have you ever added garlic to your rice? It pairs well with basmati or jasmine rice. Or take a look at this month's feature recipe: winter stew with garlic and lentils. Cost effective, filling, delicious and vegan too!

Winter stew with garlic and lentils Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 onion (diced)
- 4 carrots (chopped in half rounds)
- 4 stalks of celery (diced)
- 4 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 2lb potatoes (peeled and cubed into 2 - 3cm pieces)
- 200g brown lentils
- 1 tsp dried rosemary
- ½ tsp dried thyme
- 2 tbsps Dijon mustard
- 1 ½ tbsps soy sauce
- 1 tbsps brown sugar
- 1.5l vegetable stock
- 150g frozen peas

Method

1. Sauté garlic and onion in a medium stock pot in olive oil over medium heat.
2. Sauté celery, then add carrots and continue cooking.
3. Add cubed potatoes to pot with lentils, rosemary, thyme, Dijon, soy sauce, brown sugar, and stock.
4. Briefly stir to combine, cover with lid, turn heat to high and bring stew to a boil. Once boiled, turn heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. As potatoes soften, mash them a little to thicken the sauce.
6. After 30 minutes, stir in frozen peas and allow them to heat through. Season as required.



Hydration... what is all the fuss about?

By Kathryn Styles
BSc (Hons) RNutr, Nutritionist

Well... our bodies are over 50% water, so it's hardly a surprise that keeping hydrated is so important!

Water from our foods and drinks help us maintain normal bodily and cognitive functions, by carrying nutrients; helping kidneys remove waste; regulating body temperature; lubricating joints and eyes; and helping digest food.

How much do we need?

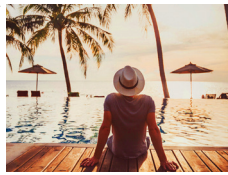
The UK Eatwell Guide recommends 6-8 cups or glasses of fluid a day.
This is around 1.5 - 2 litres. Food can also provide valuable fluids.



AGE
Younger children need less



GENDER
Men need more



CLIMATE
More needed when warm



DIET
Fibre and protein can increase requirements



ACTIVITY LEVELS
More needed to replace sweat loss



ILLNESS
More may be needed

So what does 6-8 cups or glasses of fluid a day look like?



MUG OF COFFEE
300ml



SMALL GLASS OF FRUIT JUICE
150ml



BOWL OF CEREAL WITH MILK
100ml



BOTTLE OF WATER
500ml



2 CUPS OF TEA
2 x 200ml



LARGE GLASS OF SQUASH/WATER
350ml

Dehydration

Drinking less than we need can upset the balance of nutrients in our bodies and cause dehydration.

Signs of mild dehydration:

- thirst
- dry mouth
- headache
- poor concentration
- tiredness
- dark yellow, strong-smelling urine

Further dehydration can lead to:

- constipation
- urinary tract infections
- incontinence
- kidney stones

Check your wee!

Thirst can be unreliable in assessing hydration, urine is often a better indicator due to our kidneys modifying urine concentration to preserve body water content.



Pale straw colour and odourless



Dark and smelly

Sources of fluid

• Water, milk, hot drinks, juices, smoothies, squash



Select drinks with no added sugar

• Jelly, ice cream, custard, yoghurt



Make water accessible and appealing

• Melons, oranges, tomatoes, courgettes, cucumbers



Think about personal preferences especially if poor appetite

• Stews, soups



Drinks with caffeine count



CHILDREN

Children can be less aware of thirst and forget to drink!

Encourage regular fluid intake via foods and drinks throughout the day and be mindful of the extra requirements in hot weather and during exercise to keep hydrated.

Try homemade fruit lollies and smoothies in summer and soups in winter.



THE ELDERLY

We can become more susceptible to dehydration as we age through reduced sensation of thirst, health problems such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease, medication, concerns around incontinence and reliance on others for nourishment.

Identifying and resolving reasons for low fluid intake could minimise confusion, UTIs and constipation.

Afternoon tea parties can be a great social occasion and help with hydration.



HYDRATION IN SPORT

During exercise, we sweat to regulate our body temperature. Water is usually the best choice before, during and after exercise to replace sweat loss. Isotonic drinks are not needed for most people, but can be useful for trained athletes and during endurance sport if exercising for more than an hour.

Tips for staying hydrated



Offer variety



Drink throughout the day



Offer foods with high water content



Provide support if required e.g., special cups



Serve preferred drinks



Discuss barriers to low fluid intake



NUTRITION & HYDRATION WEEK TAKES PLACE 11TH-17TH MARCH 2024

What are your plans to support and encourage good hydration?

nutritionandhydrationweek.co.uk



Kathryn Styles is a registered nutritionist and now available to complement and enhance My Purchasing Partners offering to all clients. Please contact your MPP representative if you would like support in navigating labelling rules and regulations.



Food etc.

making food better and fun!

Any company with 'food' in their name is guaranteed to grab our attention, especially when it's one with charitable aims, that's why Food etc caught our eye.

Food etc. is a social enterprise that is empowering people to make better food choices. It's a relatively new organisation but one that is already creating a buzz in and around its Bedford base.

Food etc works with disadvantaged families and other groups, teaching them how to cook cheap, tasty, and nutritious meals.

This includes students with English as a second language, adults with mental health challenges, young carers, and women who have experienced domestic abuse.

However, most of their work is with parents with young children who come along to cookery workshops to learn how to cook, and then enjoy eating as a group.

The Founder and Director of Food etc, Julie Clay explains. "I am a firm believer in food being the glue that pulls communities together. Whether that community is family, peers or work colleagues, cooking and eating together brings with it a whole range of physical and mental health benefits."



Sweet potato wedges



Chicken nuggets!



Pizza!

Can you help?

In common with most charitable organisations, the main challenge for this enterprise is funding and having enough volunteers to deliver the workshops. That's where you come in!

Would you sponsor a 6-week cookery workshop for disadvantaged people? Can you donate to support the work of

Food etc.? Or offer your time to actually run a course or help in other ways?

This is a perfect opportunity to support your CSR, social value, or ESG efforts.

If you're interested, talk to Julie and maybe consider a bespoke package that is developed just for you.

Check out this valuable enterprise on Facebook or Instagram at Food etc Bedford and if you like what you see get in touch.

www.foodetc.org.uk

What they say...

"We were so impressed by Food etc. that we recently sponsored a course at a primary school. Parents and children cooked together over six weeks, preparing and eating a range of tasty, cheap and healthy meals. Attendees got so much out of the course as well as learning some new techniques and recipes, such as spending time together and trying new foods. Here's a taste of the feedback from the course."

"The classes give me a chance to work together with my two daughters. At home we don't really cook together as we don't have time, as I am often working. When we do it's tense and normally the girls bicker and get distracted easily. In the classes they behave better. I think it's given them more confidence."

"My granddaughter is reluctant to try new foods. She is definitely getting more adventurous and even tried roast beef and gravy at the weekend for the first time - and loved it."



MPP is delighted to have helped these young families and would encourage you to do the same.

SUPPLIER IN

Focus



Nationwide specialists in Passenger Lifts, Stairlifts, Baths, Hoists, Slings, Training, Service, Maintenance and LOLER Inspections

Britton Price are specialist patient moving and handling experts, working with many of the UK's largest care home providers and the wider UK healthcare market. Since 1987, they have provided medical products, training, services, inspections and maintenance: offering expert advice about patient moving, handling, and passenger lifts.

We recommend Britton Price to our clients because they really understand moving and handling challenges and have the ability to provide tailored solutions that make a real difference to people's lives.

A friendly team who is always willing to share advice and best practice

24/7 breakdown service and effective servicing contracts

National Centre for Learning that offers the first nationally-recognised qualification for people handling

Medical Devices

Supply, repair, service and inspections



Britton Price have been keeping customers safe, compliant, and happy since 1997. Whether that be supplying the equipment they need with expert independent advice, LOLER and PUWE inspections or reactive maintenance, they are the partner of choice for many of the UK's largest care providers.

Passenger Lifts

Installation, repair, servicing and inspections



The lift is often the heart of a care home or sheltered housing operation, and Britton Price understand that safety, reliability and compliance is of the upmost importance. Their prime objective is to ensure that the lifts that they service or inspect meet all of the above criteria.

Patient Handling Training

On-site two day training courses



When established in 2016, Britton Price Training set itself a target of being the best, most effective training provider in the sector. Regulated by OFQUAL and accredited by ROSPA qualifications, they provide expert training in safe people handling and risk assessing in the care sector.



Contact My Purchasing Partner to find out more!