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Business knowledge for smart retailers
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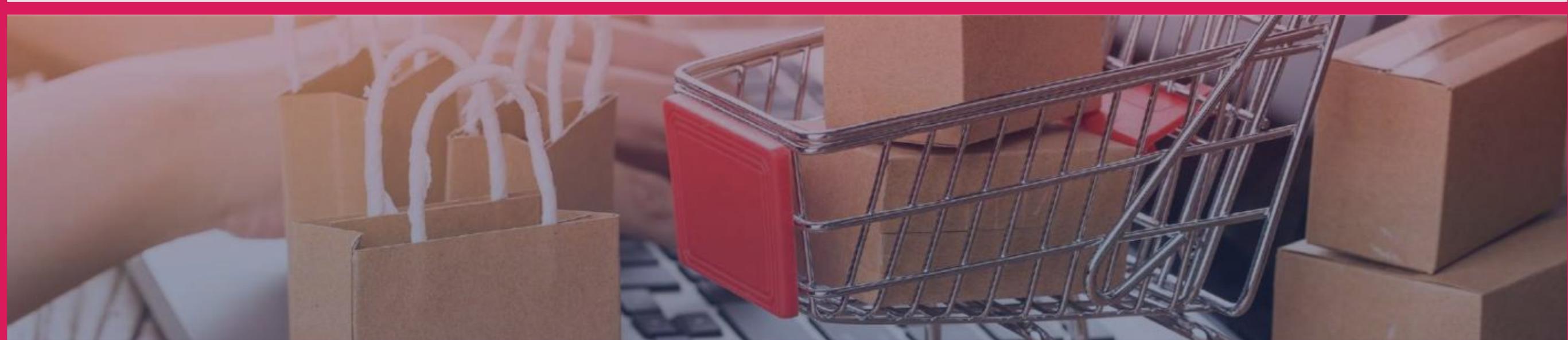


**Dairy, Ice cream
& Cheese**

**Is Dairy
still the big
cheese?**

**Butchery & braai
Meaty matters**

**Stationery
The South African
market hits the sweet
spot between high tech
and old school**



ENSURING FAIR PLAY BETWEEN SUPPLIERS AND CONSUMERS

Did you know? That If you manufacture, distribute, market or sell goods & services that are covered by the Consumer Protection Act, you are required to comply with the Consumer Goods and Services Industry Code of conduct. In terms of this code it is mandatory to register with CGSO and avoid reputational damage that arises from not addressing consumer complaints.

WHO WE ARE?

The Consumer Goods and Services Ombud is an impartial, independent dispute resolution scheme established in 2013 in terms of section 82(6) of the Consumer Protection Act(CPA) to mediate dispute and ensure that industry players abide by the Consumer Goods and Services Industry Code of Conduct.

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FEATURES

Dairy, ice cream & cheese

The principles of innovation and quality are alive and well within the South African dairy industry. But, it hasn't all been smooth sailing. Small, artisanal, and emerging milk and dairy producers have been leaving the market and the rising price of milk is hard to ignore. Raw or unprocessed milk sales have fallen, and so have consumer sales due to growing economic hardship and consumer constraint.

Butchery & braai



As prices continue to rise, South African consumers are showing surprising resilience.

We are, after all, the braai nation, and meat forms an important part of traditional, celebratory, and staple meals across the country. However,

Contents



for retailers and wholesalers, staying on top of changing market conditions, evolving consumer needs and an overall challenging environment is no easy task. An in-store butchery requires the ability to quickly adapt, innovate and constantly strive to understand their customers as time moves on.

Health & safety compliance

Health and safety are critical concerns for FMCG retail and wholesale stores, particularly when it comes to food preparation, packaging, storage, and maintaining an unbroken cold chain. While these processes are essential components of delivering fresh and safe products to consumers, they also pose specific challenges that demand innovative solutions.

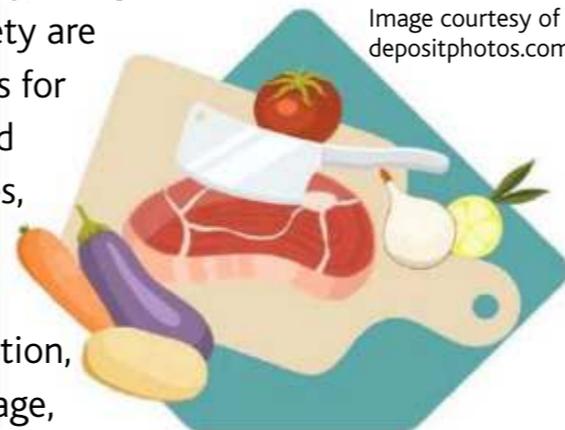


Image courtesy of depositphotos.com/

Stationery



Stationery is cool again. Fashion stationery, to be exact. Stationery that stands out, with a bit of extra glitz and glamour or the raddest comic, game, and cinematic characters emblazoned across every surface, is hot property.

Business Finance & Insurance

Access finance for their business is an essential for SA's FMCG retailers and wholesalers. Money has become more expensive to borrow.

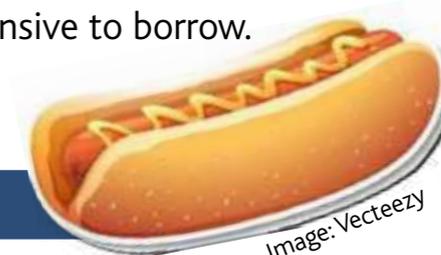


Image: Vecteezy

COLUMNS

Delight your customers

Who gets the biggest kick? Aki Kalliatakis discusses the peak-end rule which states that when we look back at an event or experience, our recollections and opinions are heavily influenced by what happened at its peak intensity and at its end rather than based on the total sum or average of every moment of the experience.

STOREWATCH

Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper

Located on the outskirts of Daveyton on the East Rand, this store is steadily carving a niche for itself as the community retail store that delivers the best value at affordable prices.

Colruyt: Belgium, France & Luxembourg

Pricing, private label craftsmanship and environmental responsibility are the challenging areas in which this European mass distribution giant is deepening its strategic vision. With 33 000 employees, it has a diversified portfolio.

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The Winds of Change



Helen Maister

In the pages of history, the monumental fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 stands as a timeless symbol of humanity's yearning to break free from the chains of oppressive rule. As the wall tumbled, a song was released – the Scorpions' 'Wind of Change' – its melody a beacon of hope that touched my heart and kindled a bright optimism for a future

of freedom, liberty and flourishing economies. Watching East Berlin and East Germany evolve into lively hubs of life and progress, I witnessed the winds of change.

Now, as the sun sets over a parched Johannesburg, we find ourselves at the crossroads of history once more. The 15th BRICS summit, spanning three days, has woven promises through agreements with our BRICS partners in agriculture, energy and more. These promises hold the potential for a brighter future, where collaboration yields prosperity and shared dreams foster advancement.

BRICS, formerly a group of five, now extends its hand to embrace new members: Ethiopia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran and Argentina. As these nations converge, the promise of unity amidst diversity becomes ever stronger, reminding us of the resilience of the human spirit.

Our features ...

Meaty matters – Butchery and Braai

As prices continue to rise, South African consumers are showing surprising resilience. We are, after all, the braai nation – and meat forms an important part of traditional, celebratory and staple meals across the country. However, for retailers and wholesalers, staying on top of changing market conditions, evolving consumer needs and an overall challenging environment is no easy task. An in-store butchery requires the ability to quickly adapt, innovate and constantly strive to understand their customers as time moves on.

Is Dairy still the big cheese?

Local producers really impressed at this year's SA Dairy Championships. Featuring local and international judges, South Africa's best put on a delectable display. It's safe to say that the principles of innovation and quality are alive and well within the dairy industry and, with 929 products entered from 71 producers, one could even say they're thriving. With a healthy dose of competition, and an excellent showing from both big producers and smaller entrepreneurs, the Championships showcased some truly exceptional products.

Take Note: Stationery

In good news for retailers, stationery is cool again. Fashion stationery, to be exact. Stationery that stands out, with a bit of extra glitz and glamour or the raddest comic, game and cinematic characters emblazoned across every surface, is hot property. And it's not just Gen Z leading the charge. Although with The Guardian reporting that the TikTok hashtag #stationeryhauls pulling in well over 300 million views, they're certainly a big part of the drive. Bespoke, personalised, and aesthetically pleasing stationery has also found a home with millennials, and they are embracing everything from comfort and nostalgia to vintage-inspired themes, botanicals and old masters' paintings.

Helen Maister

Helen Maister



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Who gets the biggest kick?

This is the next article in a series on how behavioural economics and 'being human' affects your business.

Aki Kalliatakis

aki@leadershiplaunchpad.co.za

But if you think it's about the food only, you'd be wrong, because the real allure is about more than just edible delights. It's about the whole experience.

One fine day the owner, noticing his waiters were under some pressure, decided to give them a break and joined in the plate-clearing. Amid the clinks of glasses and plates and knives and forks, he stumbled

upon a table of four. These adventurous tourists had embarked on a culinary crusade, conquering the city's finest eateries before landing in the lap of luxury at 11 Madison Park.

The twist? They were about to leave New York for the airport right after their meal to face the hell of airplane food and, amid the discussion of past culinary conquests, someone drops the bombshell: they've never had a genuine New York hotdog. Like a food ninja on a mission, the owner dashed off to find

a hotdog cart, bought the ultimate symbol of New York street food, and returned in triumph to the restaurant's kitchen. His next challenge was to convince the chef to give it the royal treatment.

The peak-end rule

The **peak-end rule** states that when we look back at an event or experience, our recollections and opinions are heavily influenced by what happened at its peak intensity and its end rather than based on the total sum or average of every moment of the experience.

The effect occurs regardless of whether the experience is pleasant or unpleasant.

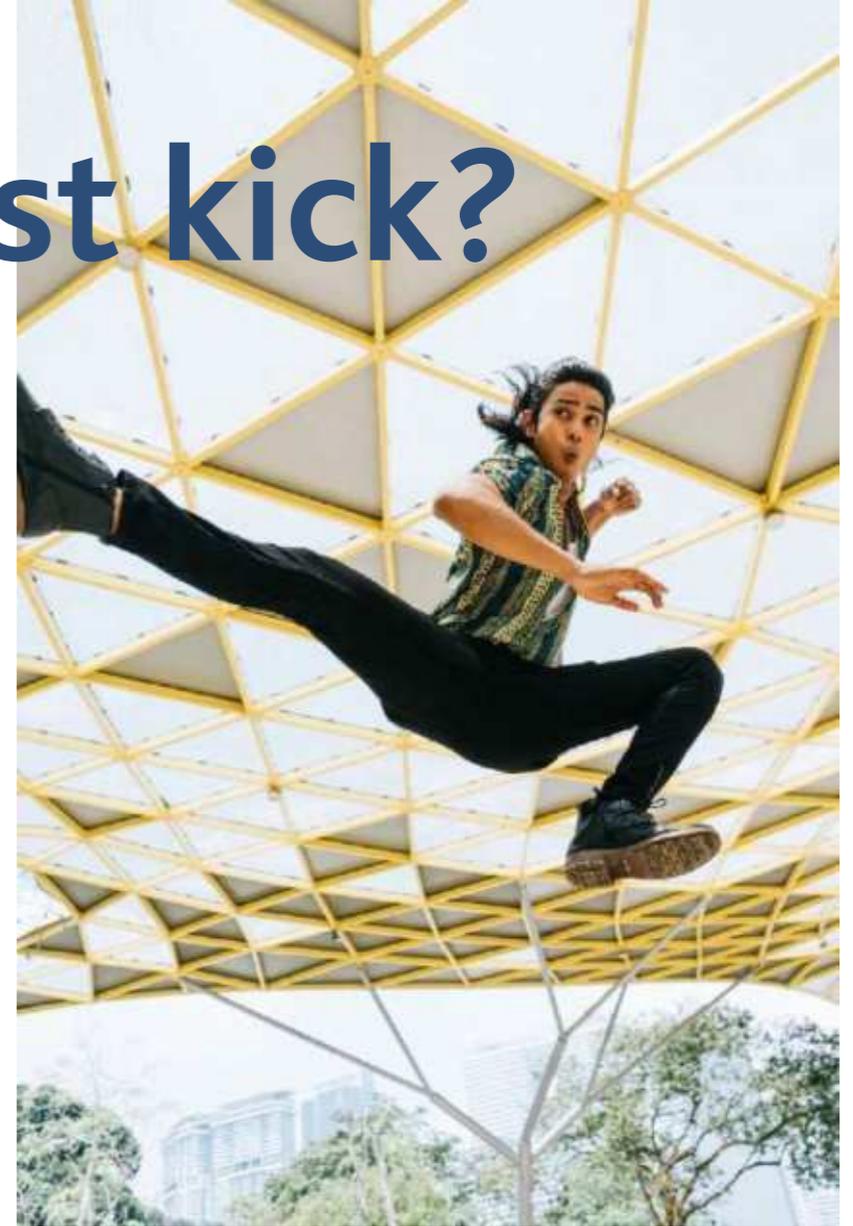


Image courtesy of Azyan Syazwani Rozik, Pexels

The hotdog, cut neatly into four small pieces, was plated like a masterpiece – as one of the diners wrote, “a symphony of sauerkraut quenelles and relish swirls,” ready to be devoured.

But it gets better. Following the principle of the Peak-End Rule (which states that what people remember most about their customer experiences is the best (or worst) part of the experience, the final thing that happened – the pièce de résistance of their meal – was an exquisitely crafted, honey-lavender-glazed duck dish that had been refined over years of culinary alchemy.



Image courtesy of 11 Madison Park

In the bustling maze of Manhattan, there exists a dining oasis known as 11 Madison Park. This place doesn't just casually hang out on the list of world's greatest restaurants, it's probably the king. With their 15-course tasting extravaganzas, they take your taste buds on a rollercoaster through deliciousness. These culinary magicians whip up innovative dishes that make you question whether you're actually eating food or experiencing some kind of gastronomic magic trick.

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Image courtesy of Vecteezy

Yet, guess what hogged the spotlight in the afterglow of this eating symphony? Yes, you guessed it ... the humble hotdog. It seemed as if the duck's efforts went down the drain, overshadowed by this surprise guest appearance.

You see, sometimes in the world of customers, it's not always the carefully crafted and beautifully designed products and services that steal the show; it's the cheeky little surprises that make an unscheduled entrance. It's like going to a theatre for a Shakespearean masterpiece and raving about the popcorn instead.

And the 64-million-dollar question ... Who do you think had the most fun in this circus of culinary capers? Was it the exploring foodie foursome, frolicking through flavour wonderland? Perhaps, and I'm sure they told their story to many others, otherwise I would never have read it anywhere.

But it's also a trick question, because it's actually the people in the restaurant who were also having a wonderful time. They weren't just serving food, they were making memories, creating stories and sprinkling joy. Sure, the hotdog

was a showstopper, but the real star of the show was the sheer delight and friendship that spilled from every corner of the restaurant. I bet everyone who works there sleeps better at night, knowing that they brought a smile to the faces of their customers.

In a previous episode in this series (see S&R January 2023 issue about what we can learn from ants), I wrote about how the SCARF Model, first introduced by David Rock, influences our decisions. (SCARF stands for status, certainty, autonomy, relationships and fairness.)

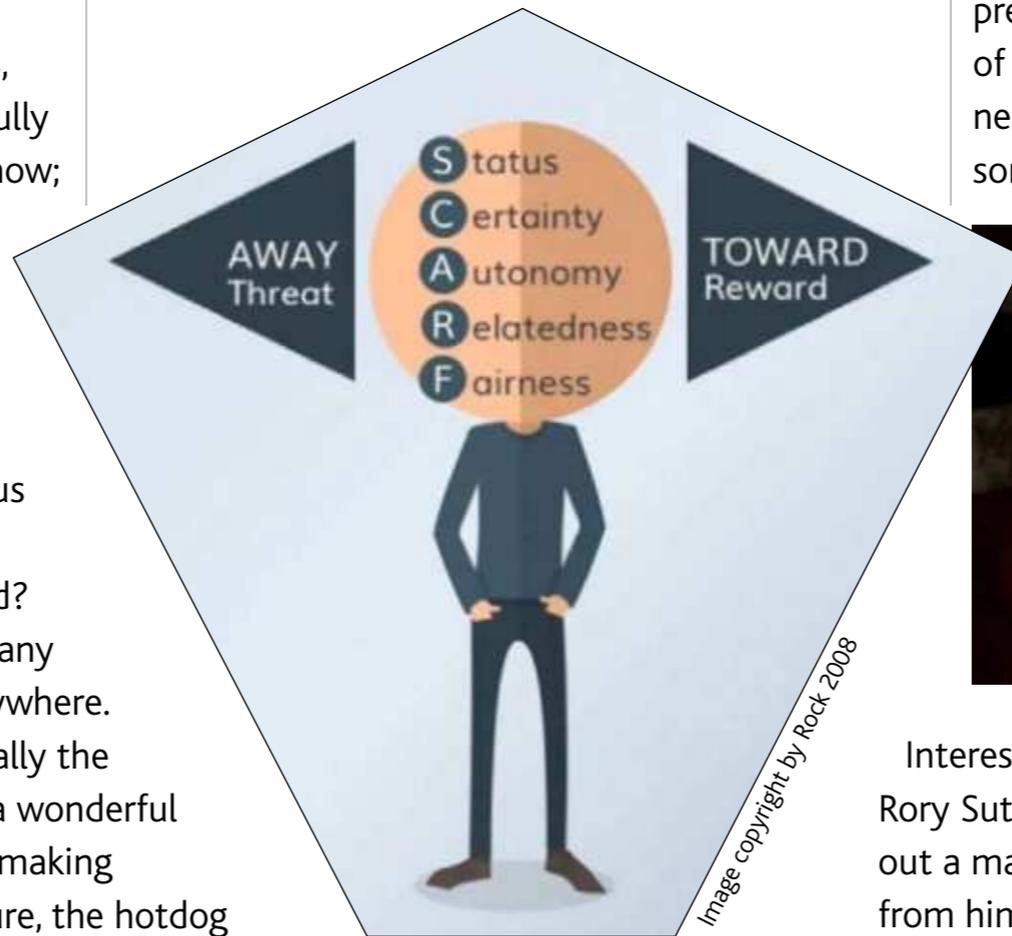


Image copyright by Rock 2008

SCARF model of social threats and rewards.

While the issue of certainty – our need to avoid catastrophe – only plays a peripheral role in this experience, you can see how, consciously or unconsciously, the owner of the restaurant was able to use the other to create a personal, memorable, and unbelievable experience for his guests.

He boosted their status by making them feel important enough to go out of his way to do something special, to allow them to increase their relative importance to others, and to give them the message that they were more important than the pre-prepared programme. Related to this is also the principle of fairness – he turned it on its head by giving them something that other diners, rather unfairly, didn't get – he further enhanced their premium status. He used autonomy and our sense of control over events, to show them that their needs, and the expression of those needs, led to some positive consequences for them.



Rory Sutherland

Interestingly, giving people choices is very powerful. Rory Sutherland describes an experiment where they sent out a mailshot to customers of British Telecoms. I'll quote from him directly ...

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“ When we did an experiment with BT, we discovered that if you sold a product for a certain price and you allowed people to respond by phone, you got a 2% response rate. If you allowed them to reply by post only, you got a 5% response rate. But – and here’s the really weird thing – if you gave them the choice of responding by phone or by post, you got near as dammit a 7% response rate. Which, when you think about it, is quite strange, because it suggests that the biggest determinant of whether someone buys this product or not, isn’t in fact, whether they want it, or how much it costs, but the medium which they get to choose or not choose to use in actually requesting the product in the first place. ”



He used relatedness and building good relationships to connect meaningfully with the tourists whose sole purpose was to eat the finest foods, to make them feel safe with his restaurant and, most importantly, to demonstrate that he had truly listened and responded to them.

In the end, whether you’re munching on a high-brow masterpiece or a down-to-earth hotdog, it’s the shared experiences, the unexpected surprises, and the contagious joy that truly season the dish of life. And that is what makes hospitality the heartwarming adventure of human connection in this world of customer experience.

You may think you are in the ‘retail business’, but actually we are all in the hospitality business. **SR**



Aki Kalliatakis is the managing partner of The Leadership LaunchPad, a company dedicated to helping clients become more customer driven. He can be contacted at +27 (0) 83 379 3466, or via the website at www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za

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Is Dairy still the big cheese?

Dairy, ice cream & cheese ... A South African overview 2023

Local producers really impressed at this year's SA Dairy Championships. Featuring local and international judges, South Africa's best put on a delectable display. It's safe to say that the principles of innovation and quality are alive and well within the dairy industry, and with 929 products entered from 71 producers, one could even say they're thriving. With a healthy dose of competition, and an excellent showing from both big producers and smaller entrepreneurs, the Championships showcased some truly exceptional products.

Innovation and quality in Dairy

Shoprite and Checkers' private label products won first place in nine categories at the awards, including best Mild Cheddar Cheese, Buffalo Milk Mozzarella, Chunky Cottage Cheese and Dairy Dessert. A total of 52 products were submitted under seven of Shoprite and Checkers' private labels: Housebrand, Ritebrand, Crystal Valley, Royale, Simple Truth, Oh My Goodness, and Forage & Feast. Several products won their categories, and four achieved the coveted *Qualité Award*.

The overall winner was an Ayrshire Mozzarella, made especially for Woolworths by RFG Foods, which was named the Dairy Product of the Year. "The 600 g Woolworths Ayrshire Mozzarella is an



Woolworths Ayrshire Mozzarella SA-Dairy-Championships-2023

Image courtesy of <https://cheesesa.co.za>

exceptional pizza mozzarella and worthy of this accolade. It is a firm and smooth cheese with a slightly creamy appearance that grates well and melts perfectly. Its creamy, soft, and caramelised flavour is out of the books." – Dairy expert and chief judge Alan Fourie (www.cheesesa.co.za).

In an article on www.harvestsa.co.za (8 June 2023), Breyton Milford, general manager of Agri-Expo, highlights the importance of the dairy industry as a pillar of Agri-Expo since its inception in 1831 as the Cape of Good Hope Agricultural Society. He says ...

“We are fortunate to have been the host of the SA Dairy Championships since 1834. However, it is important to acknowledge the effective collaboration within the dairy industry in South Africa. We appreciate the input and guidance from industry leaders to maintain a high standard and continuously adapt to the needs of the industry.”

Dairy faces multiple challenges and shopper behaviour is changing

But, it hasn't all been smooth sailing. Small, artisanal, and emerging milk and dairy producers have been leaving the market and the rising price of milk is hard to ignore. Raw or unprocessed



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milk sales have fallen, and so have consumer sales. This is due to growing economic hardship and consumer constraint. A knock-on effect is that in order to maintain supply, prices have increased significantly. In addition to this, farmers are bracing for the continued effects of load shedding to be felt, as well as the predicted return of the El Nino weather pattern which can wreak havoc on agriculture.

Grahame Osler, Managing Director of Sales and Distribution for Denmar Estates, a privately-owned family business that processes and distributes top quality dairy products [as well as grain, juice and spring water products], believes the dairy market in South Africa is in a surprisingly good place, given the current challenges facing the industry. He says ...

“Being in a basic commodity food product market, such as fresh milk and maas, we have seen flat sales, with slight up-turns in comparison to previous years.”

The same cannot be said for more luxury products, however, as Osler points out ...

“With more expensive products such as cheese and yoghurt, we have picked up on resistance amongst consumers to the numerous price increases that have come through in the last 18 months.”

Load-shedding is having an undeniable impact on the perishables category, and dairy is no different. Osler remarks that one of the biggest changes they

Image courtesy of <https://denmarestates.co.za/>



have seen is in the returns of fresh milk, and the increase of sales of long-life milk with a concurrent decrease in sales of fresh milk. He says, “We have seen a massive spike in fresh milk returns, mostly due to load-shedding and some traders not having the appropriate facilities to trade through load shedding. This in turn is eroding margins.”

Another notable change has been in the yoghurt category. Osler explains, “This category seems to be split between two distinct product offerings for either higher LSM or lower LSM markets, with

Double Cream-type products being favoured by higher LSM consumers and Dairy Snack offerings by lower LSM shoppers.”

Price increases have been steep and are unlikely to slow down any time soon, so how affordable is dairy for regular consumers? Price is undeniably affecting product sales and consumer choices. Osler says,

“Commodity items seem to be trading well for the lower LSM market, who I think are shopping for value. We are seeing luxury items such as yoghurt and cheese being replaced with more basics, for example maas and products such as drinking yoghurt.”

Because of these challenges, buyer behaviour is changing, Osler says, “Bigger pack sizes in maas and fresh milk are offering value to consumers, and at the same time consumers seem to be purchasing down in the luxury items categories, so smaller pack sizes for products such as cheese are becoming more popular. Our grain-based products are selling well as these healthy and filling meal replacement options offer good value for money – particularly our Magogo’s Motoho 1 litre in the Mageu category.”



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Retailers do need to remain aware of shifting consumer needs and behaviours, that much is clear. But despite recent changes, the South African consumer's appetite for high-quality dairy produce remains strong amongst those that can afford it, and their expectations remain lofty. With innovation, new product development, catering for price-sensitive consumers and an ever-growing taste for new and exciting flavours across the board, the Dairy category should remain poised for new trends to appear and new players to enter the field.

Magnum ice cream remains one of South Africa's favourite little scoops of luxury



Indulge in a decadent Cookies & Cream Ice Cream Sandwich from Paul's Homemade Ice Cream



Indulgent Dairymaid Gelata Roma by Froneri



Luxury brand Ferrero Rocher has launched a trio of ice creams



Ice-cream trends to watch

South Africans love their ice cream fix, and it's a category that caters for both comfort and nostalgia, as well as innovation and 'the next best thing'. Retailers should keep an eye out for these big trends...

Luxury. Decadent, rich, creamy, delicious – luxe ice cream is not a new concept, but it is an enduring one. From Magnum and Häagen-Dazs to Dairymaid's Gelata Roma and Paul's Homemade Ice Cream, South African consumers are no strangers to top of the range convenience ice cream. And now local shoppers are anticipating the possible arrival of the newly-launched Ferrero Rocher Classic, Ferrero Rocher Dark, and Raffaello ice creams.



Local is lekker. Consumers want to know exactly what went into their dairy products, and they are increasingly supportive of local producers, ingredients, and products. This is especially true at Tapiwa Guzha's Cape Town-based Tapi Tapi bar, deli, and ice creamery. Blending African flavours such as pumpkin and rooibos, sweet potato, popped maize, and samp – to name a few – Tapi Tapi ice creams is known for offering consumers a little taste of home. The success of Kristen's Kick-Ass Ice Cream

is another testament to the power of local.



Birthday Cake is a firm favourite from Paul's Homemade Ice Cream



Kristen's kick-ass roasted cherry and dark chocolate ice cream



Tapi Tapi serves up a taste of home with African-inspired flavours



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100% Natural Smores ice cream from Las Paletas



A taste of home – Apple Crumble ice cream from Las Paletas



All natural. Locally-based Las Paletas have been going strong for several years now, and they have recently added a 100% Natural Ingredients range of ice cream to their existing stable. As consumers become more aware of the provenance of the products they are consuming, and as they become increasingly health-conscious, so the rise of local, organic, natural ingredients gains momentum.

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Wall's Twister Peek-a-Blue features reduced calories and real fruit ingredients

Flavour revolution. Consumers want a taste of nostalgia – the success of Dairymaid's chocolate-inspired range that includes Cadbury Milk, Flake and Crunchie ice creams as an example is a testament to this. But they also want new favourites and exciting mash-ups such as beetroot, chocolate, and ginger, or avocado, green apple, and lime sorbet courtesy of Unframed Ice Cream in Cape Town. The lesson here? Be bold, be very, very bold.



Unframed Ice Cream Avocado, apple, and lime sorbet. Image credit Claire+Gunn



Unframed Ice Cream Beetroot, chocolate, and ginger

Plant-based milk alternatives: growing in popularity

According to Pro-Veg International, the popularity of plant milks has skyrocketed over the past decade, for a variety of reasons. Nutritional value, animal welfare, lower environmental impact, to avoid lactose or dairy milk allergens, or out of preference, there are many options to try, including almond milk, soya milk, oat milk, coconut milk, rice milk, macadamia milk, cashew milk, barista blends and flavoured options. In South Africa, the retail price points of these milks, preference to dairy and lack of knowledge means that dairy milk is still by far the preferred choice, although we can expect to see further growth in plant-based milk alternatives as consumers become more familiar with these products. **SR**



Kristen's vegan chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream

The history of chocolate



It all started in Latin America

Chocolate's 4 000-year history began in ancient Mesoamerica, present day Mexico. It's here that the first cacao plants were found. The Olmec, one of the earliest civilizations in Latin America, were the first to turn the cacao plant into chocolate. They drank their chocolate during rituals and used it as medicine.

Centuries later, the Mayans praised chocolate as the drink of the gods. Mayan chocolate was a revered brew made of roasted and ground cacao seeds mixed with chillies, water and cornmeal. Mayans poured this mixture from one pot to another, creating a thick foamy beverage called 'xocolatl', meaning 'bitter water'.

By the 15th century, the Aztecs used cocoa beans as currency. They believed that chocolate was a gift from the god Quetzalcoatl, and drank it as a refreshing beverage, an aphrodisiac, and even to prepare for war.

To follow further, go to: <https://www.magnumicecream.com/uk/stories/food/the-history-of-chocolate.html>

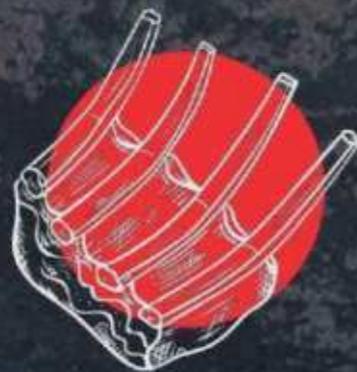


Ann Baker-Keulemans writes on topics related to business, lifestyle, technology, and health, with extensive knowledge on the SA retail and wholesale landscape. Contact annbk@wilkinsross.co.za | www.wilkinsrossglobal.com



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Meaty matters

As prices continue to rise, South African consumers are showing surprising resilience. We are, after all, the braai nation, and meat forms an important part of traditional, celebratory, and staple meals across the country. However, for retailers and wholesalers, staying on top of changing market conditions, evolving consumer needs and an overall challenging environment is no easy task. An in-store butchery requires the ability to quickly adapt, innovate and constantly strive to understand their customers as time moves on.



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A global perspective

United Kingdom. According to FoodManufacture, a UK-based resource for the food manufacturing industry, local experts are expecting the meat processing industry to have both ups and downs. As challenges continue to affect the market, at a local and a global level, so too are consumers increasingly impacted by economic hardships.

Europe. In Europe, beef and pork are expected to see a decline, whereas chicken is expected to grow.

United States. In America, however, a drop in unemployment and more favourable market conditions mean retailers can expect to see growth across several meat-based sectors.



China. China is the world's largest meat consumer, with 53 million tons of pork and 10 million tons of beef and veal consumed in 2022. China's meat consumption has increased as the population has become more affluent, but due to environmental and health concerns, there is a small but growing interest in plant-based protein.

Globally, it has been a topsy turvy year in respect of animal diseases, the impact of climate change, import and export challenges, grain feed price increases and transport obstacles, power-supply crises, and higher fuel prices.



<https://www.sciencephoto.com/>



Serves: 8 - 10
Preparation time: 20 minutes plus 30 minutes marinating
Cooking time: 25 minutes

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INGREDIENTS

Chicken:

250ml atchar, blended
1kg Chicken Kebabs/Breast Fillets
or Thighs (Deboned)
30ml oil

Umfino:

500ml water
400g maize meal
1tsp salt
200g spinach or umbayu

ATCHA MARINATED CHICKEN KEBABS WITH UMFINO

More than just a condiment, this atcha marinade imparts sweet and spicy notes onto the chicken

Method:

Blend the atcha to a paste, if you do not have a blender use a pestle and mortar to grind atcha. Remove kebabs from packaging, transfer to a baking tray and pat dry. Add your atcha marinade to the kebabs, use your hands to spread marinade all over the chicken. Let marinade for up to 2 hours but no less than 30 minutes. While the chicken is marinating, prepare the Umfino.

In a medium pot, bring water and salt to a boil.

Once boiling, reduce heat and slowly whisk in the maize meal. Add your spinach or umbayu cover and cook for 20 - 25 minutes.

To cook kebabs, place over medium heat coals, cook for 10 - 15 minutes, rotating frequently (every 4 minutes) to prevent drying out. If you have marinade left over in the tray you can marinate the kebabs

Tip: you want to cook your meat over coals that have gone greyish black with tins glows in the centre in the centre. Serve your kebabs on top of your umfino.



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Serves: 6
Preparation time: 10 minutes plus 2 hours marinating
Cooking time: 30 minutes

GOLDI, COUNTY FAIR, FESTIVE or MOUNTAIN VALLEY Whole Bird

INGREDIENTS

Chicken:

1 Lemon, zested and sliced
1 Tbsp Herbs
30 ml oil

Classic Green Bean Salad

A handful of green beans
30ml oil
15ml lemon juice or vinegar
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp salt
1 Tin baked beans
250ml butter beans, cooked

LEMON AND HERB CHICKEN FLATTIE WITH A CHARRED GREEN BEAN SALAD

This is a great technique for braaing chicken in half the time.

Method:

Turn chicken upside down (breasts facing down) with the legs facing towards you. Using sharp scissors cut down either side of the 'pope's nose'. Flip the chicken over and flatten it down with both hands. Zest or grate the lemon skin.

Add lemon zest, herbs and two tablespoons of oil to a bowl and mix to form a paste. Pat chicken dry and place the herb and zest mixture under and over the chicken skin. Gentle salt the chicken skin and place a few lemon slices along the breast. Over medium coals cook the chicken bone side first for 40 - 45 minutes flipping after 30 minutes. Arrange the coals around the chicken so that it cooks via indirect heat not burning the skin before cooking the chicken.

To make the bean salad, on the fire cook your green beans till vibrant green and slightly charred, about 5 minutes. Mix oil, vinegar, salt and sugar until sugar and salt has dissolved. Combine baked beans, with liquid, butter beans and charred green beans. Drizzle with dressing and serve alongside chicken flattie.

Tip: Use the cut off spine for making stock.



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Traditional South African Skilpadjies. Image Irene Muller

The South African meat market

The challenges South Africa is facing are no different and as local consumers know all too well, load-shedding, adverse weather, the rising cost of grain, and disease outbreaks have all impacted the cost of meat. The price of feed, such as grain and soybeans, remains high due to import supply constraints and unfavourable growing conditions.

“For those on the breadline, many animal-based proteins are falling out of reach and lower-income consumers are looking for affordable meat options or other alternatives to meet their protein needs and feed their families.”

It’s not all bad news, however, as many South Africans are proving surprisingly resilient and reluctant to give up all meat. Statista.com reports that SA revenue in the meat market is expected to amount to R86.31 million (US\$4.58 million) in 2023. The market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 9.32% between

2023 and 2028 while, volume is expected to exceed 800 million kg by 2028.

Business Tech on 23 May 2023 [Luke Fraser] reports that, “The Household Affordability Index for May by the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity group (PMBEJD) shows that food prices still remain high in the country – but meat prices are starting to turn.” Roelie van Reenen, supply chain executive at Beefmaster Group, warned that despite this turn, price pressure is likely to stick around for longer due to other factors at play, and that any significant reduction in price is unlikely to reach the consumer any time soon.

Van Reenen says, “Increasingly, consumers have less money to spend. With financial budgets under pressure, they are making significant trade-offs in their shopping choices. This is impacting the agricultural and beef value chains.”

Van Reenen adds that producers are operating under extremely difficult circumstances, and the situation will likely remain challenging for the remainder of the year. He says ...

“I anticipate at least six to eight months of tough times ahead. However, we must remain optimistic and focus on producing cheaper, smarter, and more market-oriented products to protect our industry.”



Image: iriworldwide.com

Image: <https://www.foodmanufacture.co.uk/>



In a report for IOL, Dominic Naidoo writes that despite overall higher costs, and while plant-based meat substitutes are growing at 6.5% per annum, South Africa still remains a meat-eating nation, ranking 9th overall in global per capita consumption of beef in 2022. However, ethical considerations are increasingly influencing meat choices, as consumers want to know the origins of their meat purchases.

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The Agri News Net Farming Portal reports that poultry will start making inroads into the beef and other meat markets. The report says, “The expected increase in chicken meat consumption is being driven by the increasing price of other proteins, like beef and lamb. In the wake of this, consumers will divert their attention to chicken to meet their protein needs. The increasing prices of beef and lamb are expected to increase the consumption of chicken meat to higher levels. Chicken is by far the most popular meat in South Africa. It is more affordable compared to other meats, which may push middle-class consumers towards this protein source.”

The report goes on to note that, “Although pork can compete with chicken in terms of affordability, it is not consumed by a large part of the population for religious reasons. Traditionally, pork has been consumed by more affluent consumers in South Africa, with a substantial share in processed form. A significant share of pork consumption is attributed to the food service sector with sales of ribs and bacon.”

When it comes to buyer behaviour, the main drivers for consumers are culture, social norms, nutrition, price and convenience. Other factors ...

- Looking beyond your typical beef, pork, or lamb ranges is also worth considering, as game meats, ostrich, and venison grow in popularity.
- Pack and portion sizes continue to be important factors in purchase decisions – whether this be bulk buys, single portions, or family-size options.
- Cheaper, budget-friendly cuts are also a main staple for millions of South Africans.



Image courtesy of <https://businesstech.co.za/>

- With coal and gas braais both popular choices, the accompanying tools and accessories, from braai tongs, potjie pots, and rib racks to coal and firelighters are a must-have for any good in-store butchery.

The South African braai

Whether they call it a braai or a Shisa Nyama, South Africans are deeply committed to this national pastime. Part of most celebrations, sporting events, weekend socialising, family get-togethers and regular meals, the braai is part and parcel of South African culture. For retail and wholesale in-store butcheries and meat counters, catering for the braai is a must.

- Braai accessories and accompaniments are an integral part of butchery and braai – with cost, quality, innovation, and novelty value all playing their part.
- Marinades, condiments, sauces, spices, and other flavour enhancers form part of the pre-braai preparation.
- Salt rocks, wood chips for smoking meats, and even table-top rotisseries or smokers have serious novelty drawing power for at-home cooks and aspiring braai masters.

Convenience plays an important role for the braai. Providing spiced, seasoned and marinated ready-to-braai alternatives will give your customers convenient choices, with accompaniments such as garlic bread, and biltong and droewors for snacks. However, retailers and wholesalers should keep in mind that a variety of price points is necessary to cater for different consumers. Younger consumers are looking for more experiences, bolder flavours, and interesting twists on old favourites. Shaking up your braai offerings and investing in some innovation and product development will pay off.

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Factors driving consumer behaviour

For many consumers, promotional pricing is more important than ever before when making a meat purchase. Conversely, certain consumers are willing to pay more for ethical, sustainable, and environmentally friendly products. Religious requirements are also a driving factor for a large number of consumers.

Innovative in-store butcheries become destination shopping points when the range is endearing to the customer base, and they can find good promotions on quality products. Cleanliness and hygiene, customer-centric services, and an attractive display are critical to this department. Targeted, personalised communication regarding sales, promotions, and vouchers is effective when used correctly, but most research notes that a dynamic, informative, and interactive use of social media platforms is equally if not more effective. On the other hand, older generations still rely on physical adverts to determine where the best deals can be had. This means a multi-channel approach is a must.

Today's consumer is more likely to shop around for price, quality, or experience and is less likely to stay loyal to specific brands or retailers. This means timeous, relevant, effective communication is the lifeblood of any retailer or wholesaler looking to attract and retain customers. Building your brand equity means offering the best bang for your customer's buck, ensuring convenience is always a priority, and upholding a reputation for quality, honesty, and integrity.



Master Butcher Dorothy Labuschagne is based in the butchery training department at Checkers Hyper Edenvale, Gauteng. She joined the Shoprite Group 28 years ago gaining extensive knowledge and expertise in the meat industry over the years.

Shoprite Group gives retailers a masterclass in Master Butchers

The Shoprite Group recently announced an African first when 62 butchery managers and trainers – including 13 women – joined the global club of certified Master Butchers after graduating from the Shoprite Group's Master Meat Artisan Programme.

This is the only highly specialised butchery learning programme on the continent and it is underwritten by the United Kingdom's Institute of Meat. According to the Group's release it provides participants with extensive knowledge in meat processing practices from farm to fork. To qualify, "Butchers are required to build a substantial portfolio of evidence that includes modules on butchery expertise, food hygiene and safety, and business acumen, among others."



Elizabeth Moloji from Alberton in Gauteng graduated from the Group's Master Meat Artisan Programme in July 2023 and says she that seeing a skilled blockman cutting primal meat cuts into retail cuts years ago drew her into the industry.



Lydia Thithi, master butcher from Shoprite Boitumelo, Welkom in the Free State. Lydia joined Shoprite Boitumelo Junction in 2011 through the Group's Meat Market learnership programme. She held various positions before being promoted to Meat Market Manager.

The Group also announced that it expects to enrol approximately 150 more qualifying butchery managers over the next five years, providing scarce and sought-after butchery skills and ensuring

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the Group's Meat Market employees can access sustainable career path opportunities.

Johan Hunter, General Manager of Shoprite's Meat Markets says ...

“ The fact that this programme requires ten years' experience, with at least five as a Meat Market manager, just to enrol, reflects our commitment to supporting our butchers on their long-term vocational journeys, equipping them with the necessary tools and knowledge to excel in the butchery profession. ”



Image courtesy of <https://www.choice.com.au/>

Braai, butchery, and meat-based trends

Meat alternatives

It may seem counter-intuitive for in-store butcheries and meat counters to stock meat alternatives, but there is method to the madness. According to the Butcher's Trends 2023 Report, most meat alternative purchases were made by meat eaters looking to diversify their protein



Image courtesy of Malidate-van, Pexels

intake. Meat eaters will also purchase non-meat options for friends and family who prefer these alternatives. Meat eaters with a taste for adventure and those looking to make increasingly sustainable choices are also interested in high-quality, great tasting meat alternatives, so it makes sense for retailers to make this easy for them. Interestingly, this included plant-based as well as lab-grown meat alternatives, with the younger generation proving far more inclined to try lab-grown meats than their older counterparts.



Convenience

Convenience at the butchery comes in many forms. At-home cooks confident in their skills are looking for premium cuts and ingredients that remove some of the more arduous or time-consuming steps of meal preparation. This can include pre-marinated meats, deboned and pre-cut options, bone-in portioned pieces, and partially cooked meats.

For those with a bare-minimum of time on their hands, added-value products such as easy-cook meals and convenience combos are highly attractive options. Snacking falls into this category too, as many shoppers – in particular millennials and Gen Z – are snacking more frequently and either skipping or replacing meals with snacks. Healthy high-protein offerings should be a butchery staple.

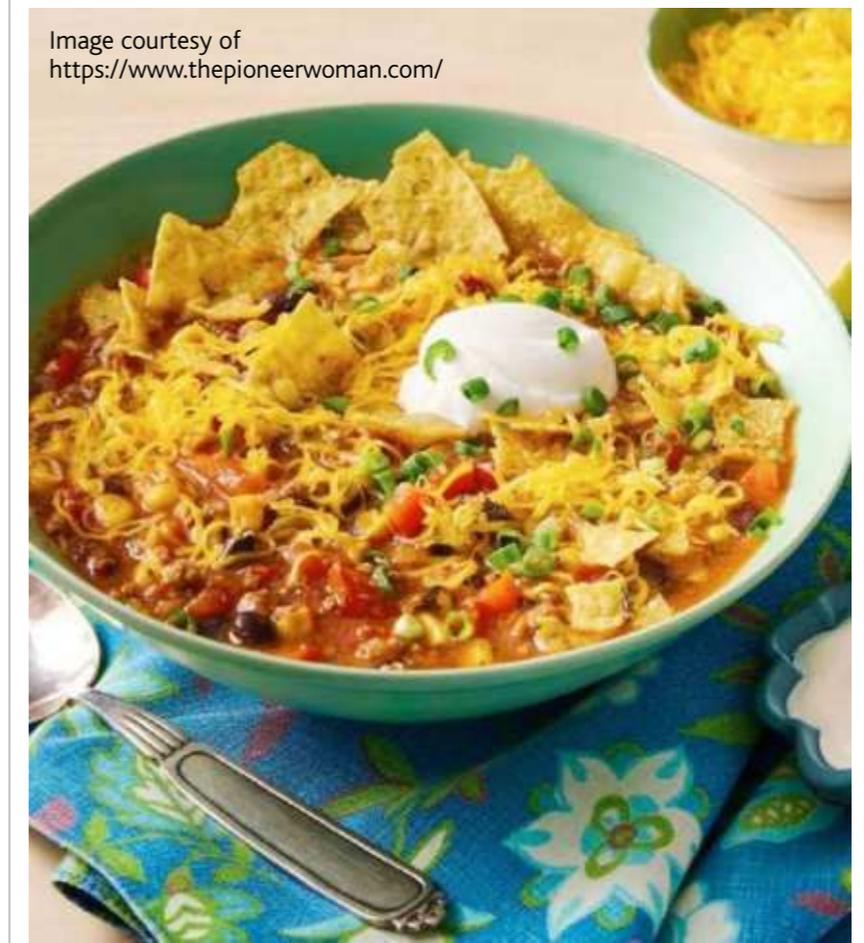


Image courtesy of <https://www.thepioneerwoman.com/>



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Image courtesy of <https://wickedfood.co.za/>

Sustainable, ethical and humane

Consumers are looking to make choices that are better for them, better for their families, and better for the environment. This means free-range pasture-raised meat that is free from routine antibiotics, that was slaughtered humanely, and which is packaged in eco-friendly materials. These consumers expect to know the provenance of their meat and respond well to transparency and ‘farm-to-fork’ narratives that allow them to make more informed decisions.

Value for money

Much like convenience, this can take many forms depending on the consumer and the economic pressures they may be facing. For some, value for money means getting the best deals on prime cuts, perhaps limiting their meat

consumption slightly but without compromising on quality. For others, value for money comes from promotional activities, economic savings, and perhaps choosing cheaper cuts or a different protein in order to stretch the budget as far as possible – while still achieving balanced, nutritious, and healthy meals.

E-commerce

Online shopping and delivery or in-store pick up is a convenient easy shopping method that is increasingly favoured by consumers looking to reduce their time spent in-store, avoid the pitfalls of impulse buying, and maximise efficiency during the day. A user-friendly, well-designed and built e-commerce site with reliable delivery times and a good selection of stock is absolutely crucial to online success.

A word of caution: out of stocks are as annoying and off-putting online as they are in-store. It’s an area that could do with some improvement, based on anecdotal evidence. Shoppers planning a braai who can’t get the meat product or vegetable accompaniment advertised on your site are not going to be happy.

Value adds

Offering prepared dishes, easy-cook meals, pre-cooked deli options, and family-friendly ranges are all butchery value-adds that attract shoppers and influence purchase decisions. In addition to this, retailers can add even more value with information on different cuts of meat and how to prepare and cook them, advice regarding protein sources and choices, recipes, and cutting, slicing,

and trimming services. Snapscan and online recipes are easy to access and easy to update.

Something as simple as offering bulk as well as single-serving portions, or offering Halaal or Kosher meat, can be the deciding factor when it comes to making a purchase or not. **SR**



Image courtesy of Nicolas Postiglioni, Pexels

Sources:

- [www.meatpoultry.com/articles/Parker, J. \(2022\). Making the Most of Meat Growth in 2022,](http://www.meatpoultry.com/articles/Parker, J. (2022). Making the Most of Meat Growth in 2022,)
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- <https://businesstech.co.za/news/finance>
- www.news24.com/news24/



Ann Baker-Keulemans writes on topics related to business, lifestyle, technology, and health, with extensive knowledge on the SA retail and wholesale landscape. Contact annbk@wilkinsross.co.za | www.wilkinsrossglobal.com



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Solutions for food preparation, packaging, storage & cold chain

Health and safety are critical concerns for FMCG retail and wholesale stores, particularly when it comes to food preparation, packaging, storage, and maintaining an unbroken cold chain. While these processes are essential components of delivering fresh and safe products to consumers, they also pose specific challenges that demand innovative solutions.

No matter the economic and infrastructural challenges in South Africa, the well-being of both employees and shoppers must continue to take centre stage.

Food preparation: A delicate balance

Food preparation is the heart of any supermarket and wholesaler's daily routine, and ensuring safety here is paramount.

Employees engaged in chopping, slicing, and cooking face a heightened risk of cuts, burns, and other injuries. Proper training, strict adherence to standardised procedures, and the use of protective gear such as gloves and aprons, all play a pivotal role in minimising these risks.

Regular safety audits identify potential hazards and ensure compliance with safety protocols. Each individual store will also have its own specific risks that need to be evaluated and managed.

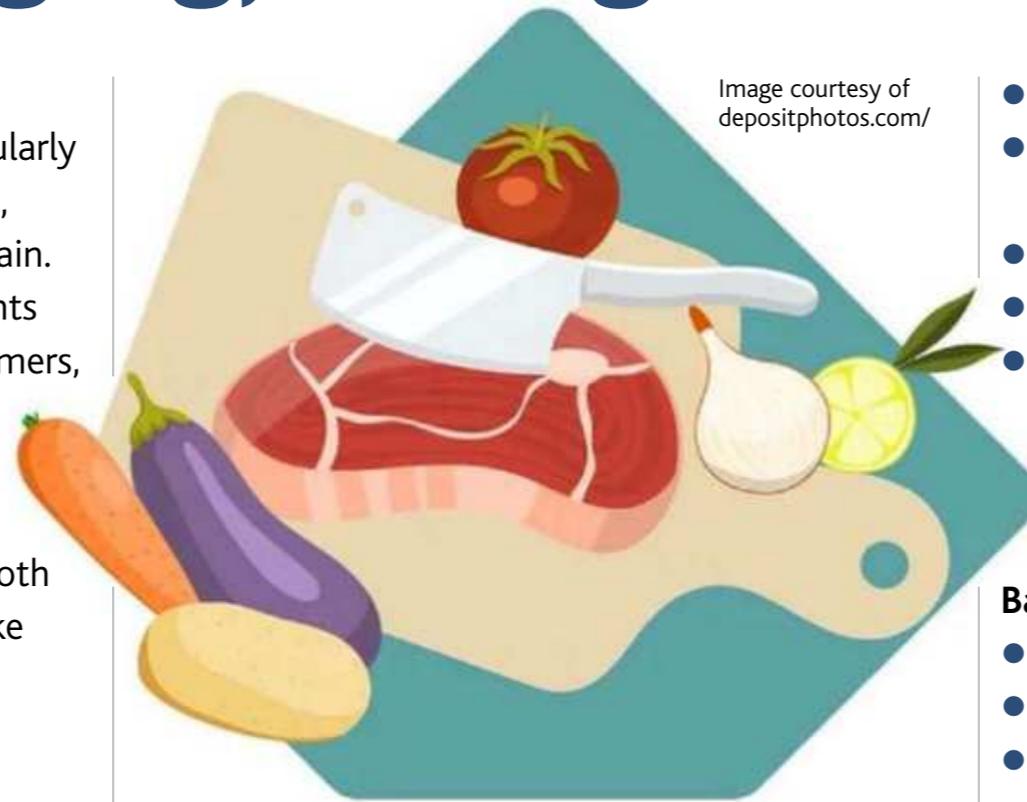


Image courtesy of depositphotos.com/

Safety in the butchery and bakery

Butcheries and bakeries have many potential safety risks for your staff. Lack of training or inadequate safety and protective gear and eye protection increases the risk of accidents or worsens injuries. Staff should wear close fitting clothing, hair nets and safety gloves to prevent injury.

Butchery health and safety risks

- Injuries from the incorrect use of knives, cleavers and handsaws
- Puncture wounds from hooks and needles
- Skin irritations and burns from cleaning chemicals

- Falls, trips and slips from wet floors or debris
- Electric shock from mishandling of or faulty electrical equipment
- Ongoing exposure to noisy machinery
- Chemical hazards from cleaning agents
- Bacterial outbreaks and food poisoning from contaminated meat
 - Machine entanglement in meat grinders and other equipment

Bakery health and safety risks

- Burns and scalds from hot ovens
- Trips and slips from slippery floors
- Injuries from lifting heavy equipment
- Cutting injuries
- Entanglement in machinery such as dough mixers, dough rollers, conveyor belts, bread slicers, pastry cutters, rotary ovens, packaging machinery, whipping machines, electric hand tools and food processors.
- Acute reactions and chronic respiratory problems from food allergens and flour dust
- Chemical irritants
- Repetitive motion injuries
- Fire or electric shock from poorly maintained electrical equipment

Source: <https://acss.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/butchers-haccp.pdf>



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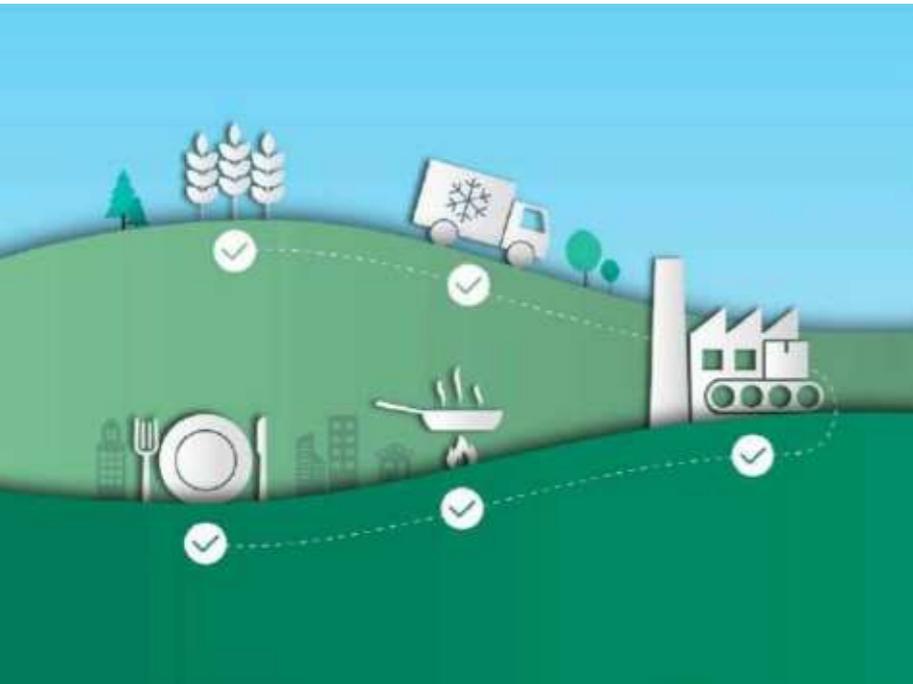


Image courtesy of www.testo.com/

HACCP

HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) includes 7 steps to assist retailers and wholesalers in how you look at food safety and to introduce procedures to make sure the food you prepare and sell is safe to eat. These 7 steps include:

1. What could go wrong (hazards)
2. At what point it could go wrong (the CCP or critical control point)
3. Setting critical limits at CCPs (for example, cooking temperatures);
4. Implementing checks at each CCP to prevent problems (monitoring);
5. Knowing what to do when something does go wrong (correction);
6. Proving that your HACCP Plan works (verification)
7. Keeping records of your Plan (documentation).

Sources: <https://www.workplace-rm.com/health-safety-fire-safety-for-retail-stores/>

Packaging safety for retail and wholesale stores

Packaging serves a dual purpose in supermarkets and wholesale stores – maintaining the quality and freshness of products while ensuring the safety of consumers

The improper handling of packaging materials can lead to physical injuries. Employees involved in tasks like packing fragile items or lifting heavy cartons face risks of strain, cuts, and falling objects.

Providing training on proper lifting techniques, using mechanical aids, and ensuring workspace ergonomics can significantly mitigate these risks. Moreover, supermarkets are increasingly opting for sustainable packaging materials, which often require different handling procedures. Proper training in the handling of these materials and the use of necessary protective gear are essential to prevent potential accidents. Make sure your suppliers use environmentally friendly packaging that minimises waste and impact on the environment and ensure that they have sustainability programmes in place.

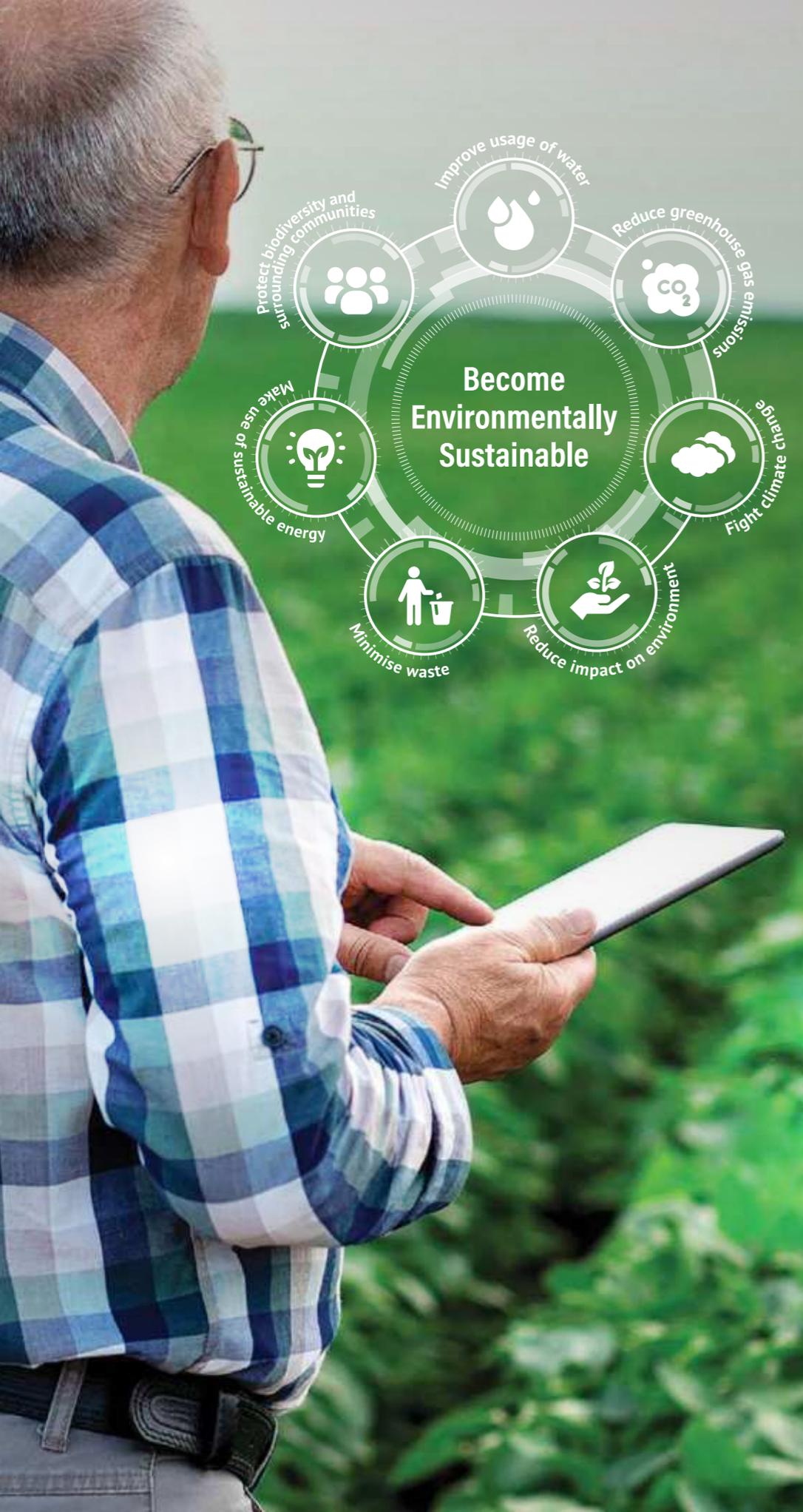
Regular equipment maintenance and checks also play a role in preventing packaging machinery mishaps.



Image courtesy of www.food-safety.com/

Packaging safety for retailers and wholesalers

- Packaging materials must comply with local and international standards
- Tamper evident packaging provides extra food safety
- Labelling should include ingredients, instructions and safety warnings
- Packaged goods should be stacked safely to avoid tipping and falling.
- Take into account the safety aspects of large containers and pallets, including how they are to be lifted and moved.
- Material handling equipment such as forklifts and pallet jacks must be regularly maintained and operated only by qualified and trained staff.
- All staff in goods receiving, warehousing or distribution centres must wear and use safety gear such as ...
 - Appropriate gloves for cold, heavy or sharp objects
 - Wrist supports, elbow pads
 - Back supports and harnesses
 - Hard hats
 - Face masks, safety glasses or goggles, ear muffs or earplugs
 - High visibility vests, aprons & overalls
- Your sustainability programme should include correct disposal of packaging materials, recycling and a commitment to reducing your environmental impact.



SIZA Digital Recordkeeping

Source, Track, and Trace Sustainably with Confidence



The success of an agri-business is measured in its ability to keep track of the effectiveness of business management practices and proactively implement changes to improve areas of concern. The SIZA Digital Recordkeeping Programme will eliminate redundant and time-consuming processes that usually involve paperwork by streamlining business procedures, thereby allowing producers to:



Track real-time data



Stay effortlessly organised



Enjoy maximum data security



Take care of the planet



Prepare for carbon tax



Provide data visibility to buyers and retailers

Track Real-Time Data

The SIZA Digital Recordkeeping Programme was implemented to provide South African agriculture and retailers with a monitoring programme allowing access to production data throughout their supply chain at the click of a button. The functionality of the programme includes digital dashboards where buyers can track data such as production yields, water use, electricity use, waste information, and more input by their suppliers as well as automatically generated annual reports summarising the data for a full year. These reports and dashboards will provide the agri-business and buyers with an overview of their production cycle along with insight into the progress made towards sustainability targets over time. The benefits include visibility on producers' Carbon Footprint information which can be tracked by monitoring and comparing changes made to determine sustainability and the progress made to reducing their Carbon Footprint over time.

SIZA is on the forefront of innovation, providing a platform where evaluation and monitoring can be done while also providing visibility on impact data and your value chain, thereby becoming a one-stop-shop for markets and buyers requiring visibility on centralised producer data.

The SIZA Digital Recordkeeping Programme is integrated as part of the MySIZA platform, and is available to all businesses and all commodities both locally and internationally, and does not require a SIZA Social or SIZA Environmental membership or audit.

Find out more:

www.siza.co.za

To learn more about this programme and how it can be used throughout your supply chain, please contact the SIZA office on 021 852 8184 or send an email to admin@siza.co.za to enquire about webinars and videos we offer to assist you with this journey.



Top five DO and DON'T tips for supermarkets and wholesalers to maintain health and safety throughout their stores

DO **Employee training:** Train all staff involved in food preparation, packaging, and storage about proper hygiene, safe handling practices, and the correct use of equipment. Regularly update their knowledge about food safety protocols and health and safety guidelines.

Sanitation: Maintain a rigorous cleaning schedule for all areas where food is handled or stored. Regularly sanitise surfaces, equipment, and utensils to prevent cross-contamination and the growth of harmful microorganisms.

Temperature control: Monitor and control temperature conditions for perishable items during storage and display. Ensure that refrigeration units are functioning correctly, and regularly check and record temperature logs to prevent spoilage and bacterial growth.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Mandate the use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for employees engaged in food handling. This reduces the risk of contamination and enhances hygiene standards.

Allergen management: Clearly label products containing common allergens and ensure that employees are aware of allergen-related risks. Implement procedures to prevent cross-contact between allergenic and non-allergenic products.

DON'T **Cross-contamination:** Do not allow cross-contamination between raw and ready-to-eat foods. Keep separate cutting boards, utensils, and work areas for different types of products to prevent the transfer of harmful pathogens.

Improper storage: Avoid overcrowding of shelves and refrigerators, as this can hinder proper air circulation and temperature control. Never store raw meats or seafood above ready-to-eat items to prevent potential drips and contamination.

Expired products: Never display or sell products that have passed their expiration dates. Regularly inspect shelves and storage areas to remove any expired items promptly.

Bare-hand contact: No employees should be touching or serving ready-to-eat foods with their bare hands. This reduces the risk of transmitting bacteria from hands to food items.

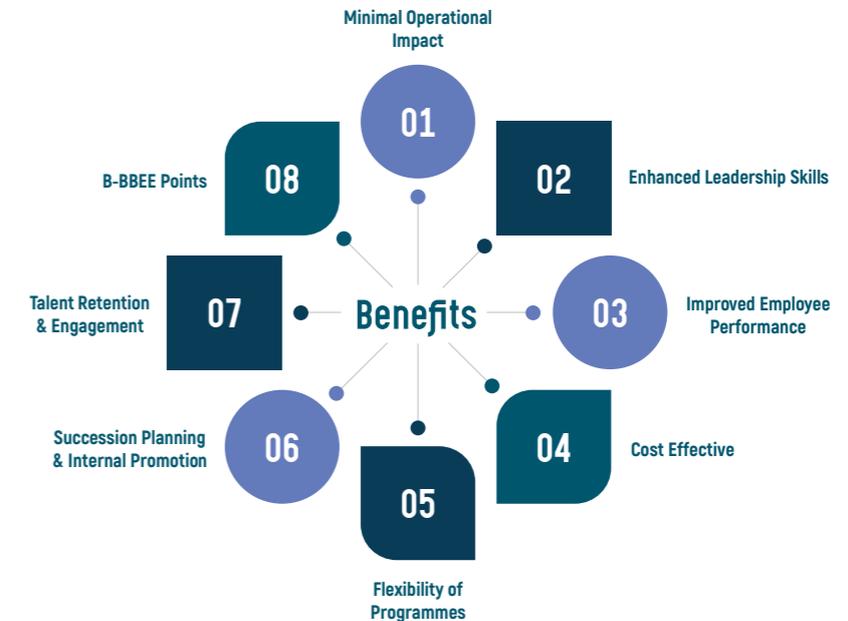
Inadequate communication: Do not overlook the importance of clear communication to your staff regarding safety protocols and updates. Neglecting to communicate changes in procedures or potential hazards can lead to mistakes and compromise food safety.



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CHAMPIONING CONSUMER PROTECTION FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS. #10YEARSFAIRPLAY

“ The ruling by the North Gauteng High Court proved to be a turning point for the organization as it freed us up to focus on our primary mandate, which is the provision of a free, functional, independent, accessible, and fair industry dispute resolution scheme. It also allows us to legally compel delinquent suppliers to pay membership fees, thereby spreading the burden of funding the Scheme among all players. ”



Ten years ago, the Consumer Goods & Services Ombud (CGSO) opened for business, ushering in a new era of access to redress for South African consumers. This was after the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa proposed an industry Code to the National Consumer Commission, that for the first time, would allow consumers to turn to an independent industry body to help them resolve disputes with suppliers in the consumer goods and services sector. The legitimacy of the CGSO was later confirmed by the Minister of Trade, Industry, and Competition when he promulgated the Industry Code of Good Practice on 30 March 2015, making it compulsory for qualifying suppliers to register with the CGSO and pay participation fees in accordance with the funding model approved by the CGSO Board. Since inception, the number of participants has grown from 24 founding companies to 1,356 as of the end of February 2023. Participants include most of the major retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers, and distributors with retailers representing more than 23 517 stores across the country.

CEO, Queen Munyai said over the last ten years, the CGSO has handled more than 66,438 complaints and responded to 170,344 calls, saving both consumers and suppliers millions of rands in legal fees and ensuring that justice and fair play

prevails through providing viable and trusted alternative dispute resolution mechanism as envisaged in section 70 of the Consumer Protection Act. The service is provided free of charge to consumers and is governed by a service-level agreement to ensure that complaints are dealt with expeditiously.

The successes of the last ten years have been hard-won though. Despite the obvious advantages for both suppliers and customers to have access to a fair and impartial alternate dispute resolution service, it has not been without its challenges. These included a five-year legal challenge to the constitutional validity of the industry Code of Conduct, including the CGSO's powers to levy annual participation fees on qualifying companies, prompting the organization to seek a declaratory order from the High Court. The challenge was finally settled in December 2022 when an appeal against an earlier High Court decision declaring the Consumer Goods and Services Industry Code of Conduct valid, was withdrawn.

According to Queen Munyai, “The ruling by the North Gauteng High Court proved to be a turning point for the organization as it freed us up to focus on our primary mandate, which is the provision of a free, functional, independent, accessible, and fair industry dispute resolution scheme. It also allows us to

legally compel delinquent suppliers to pay membership fees, thereby spreading the burden of funding the Scheme among all players.” In a victory for consumers, the court ruled that not only must all qualifying businesses in South Africa subscribe to the Code by registering with the CGSO, declaring their annual turnover, and paying the annual participation fees, but that the CGSO is entitled to approach a court or the National Consumer Commission (NCC) to report any contraventions of the Code.

New mobile complaints app set to make lodging complaints easier for consumers.

Queen Munyai added that (CGSO) has launched a mobile application to enable consumers to lodge, track the progress of their complaints, and interact with the CGSO office via their handheld devices. Consumers who wish to lodge a complaint can now do so by downloading the CGSO mobile complaints app from the google or App Store. It's free and allows users to upload and track the status of complaints, as well as submit supporting documentation, such as photos and invoices. Alternatively, they are welcome to call us at 0860 000 272, send an email to info@cgso.org.za, or visit our website www.cgso.org.za to submit a claim.

A culture of safety

Open communication and encouraging the reporting of potential hazards will lead to faster resolutions.

Incorporating automation in certain tasks can not only expedite processes but also reduce the need for manual intervention, subsequently decreasing the associated risks.

Health and safety responsibilities for retailers and wholesalers are laid out in the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Act 85 of 1993.

Safe storage

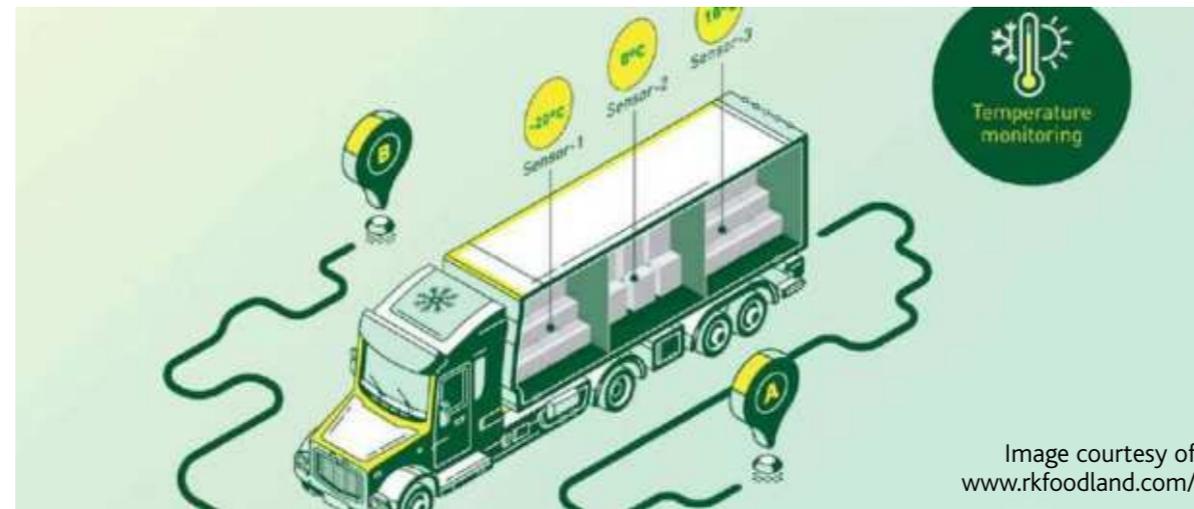
Effective storage practices are crucial to maintaining the quality and safety of products before they reach the consumer.

Improperly stored items can lead to spoilage, contamination, and accidents. One of the primary challenges in storage is organising inventory to prevent overcrowding and ensure accessibility. Overstacking shelves can also lead to items falling on employees or customers, causing injuries.

Implementing clear storage guidelines and routinely training employees in proper stacking and organisation techniques is essential.

Regular inspections of storage areas for potential hazards helps to prevent accidents and allows your staff to note potential safety hazards such as clutter, poor stacking or damaged shelving.

Adequate lighting and clear signage are essential for a safer storage environment.



Cold chain integrity

Maintaining the cold chain, which ensures products remain at the appropriate temperature from production to consumption, is vital for preserving freshness and preventing contamination.

South African supermarkets and wholesalers are under tremendous pressure to overcome challenges like temperature fluctuations, equipment failures and compliance with health regulations given the country's ongoing power crisis. As such, investing in solar power up and backup generators is a reality of retailing in South Africa.

Regular maintenance checks and temperature monitoring systems can promptly identify issues and prevent food spoilage. Moreover, training staff in proper cold chain management techniques ensures that everyone understands the significance of their role in preserving product quality and safety.

Turning to technology

As the landscape of retailing evolves, so too do the solutions available to enhance health and safety across food preparation, packaging, storage and the cold chain.

Technology has opened new avenues for improving safety in supermarkets and wholesale stores. For instance, wearable devices can track employees' movements, reminding them to maintain proper posture and take breaks to prevent fatigue-related accidents.

IoT (Internet of Things) sensors can monitor temperature and humidity in storage areas, alerting staff to potential deviations.

For more advanced applications, using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) in training programmes can provide employees with immersive experiences that simulate real-world scenarios. This helps them develop the skills needed to respond effectively to emergencies and handle everyday tasks safely.

Closing thoughts

Occupational health and safety is a continuous commitment that demands constant vigilance and adaptation. For supermarkets and wholesalers, the challenges in food preparation, packaging, storage, and maintaining the cold chain are nuanced and diverse.

However, with a combination of proper training, innovative technologies, a robust safety culture, and a commitment to regular inspections, every store can create an environment where employees are enabled to work safely and confidently, and customers can shop without worry. **SR**

The plastics industry taking action

More than **80%** of marine litter originates from inland sources and the plastics Industry in SA has identified river catchment projects to mitigate environmental pollution.

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16 September 2023

The success of these projects is due to the dedicated support of and collaboration with our Industry partners such as the raw material producers, converters, recyclers, Producer Responsibility Organisations, brand owners, retailers, the packaging industry, Government, Non-Government Organisations and volunteers.



How to boost your retail business with smart finance & insurance

If you believe the doom and gloom merchants, the current outlook for South African retailers is challenging. The latest figures from Statistics South Africa suggest that retail sales declined by 1.6% year-on-year in April 2023, the fifth contraction following a similar contraction in March.

South Africa's weak economy over the past 12 months has seen inflation – and interest rates – outpace the South African Reserve Bank's inflation target of 3% to 6%, which means money has become more expensive to borrow.

The ability to access finance for their business is an essential component for FMCG retailers and wholesalers, for multiple reasons:

- **Cash flow stability.** Business loans and lines of credit enable FMCG businesses to maintain operations during slow periods, allowing you to restock, pay employees and cover other essential expenses without interruption.
- **Inventory management.** With many FMCG products having short shelf lives, there is constant turnover – credit enables retailers and wholesalers to purchase inventory in anticipation of demand.
- **Flexibility.** Your business can draw down on the funds as required, giving your business flexibility and agility to respond to changing market conditions.

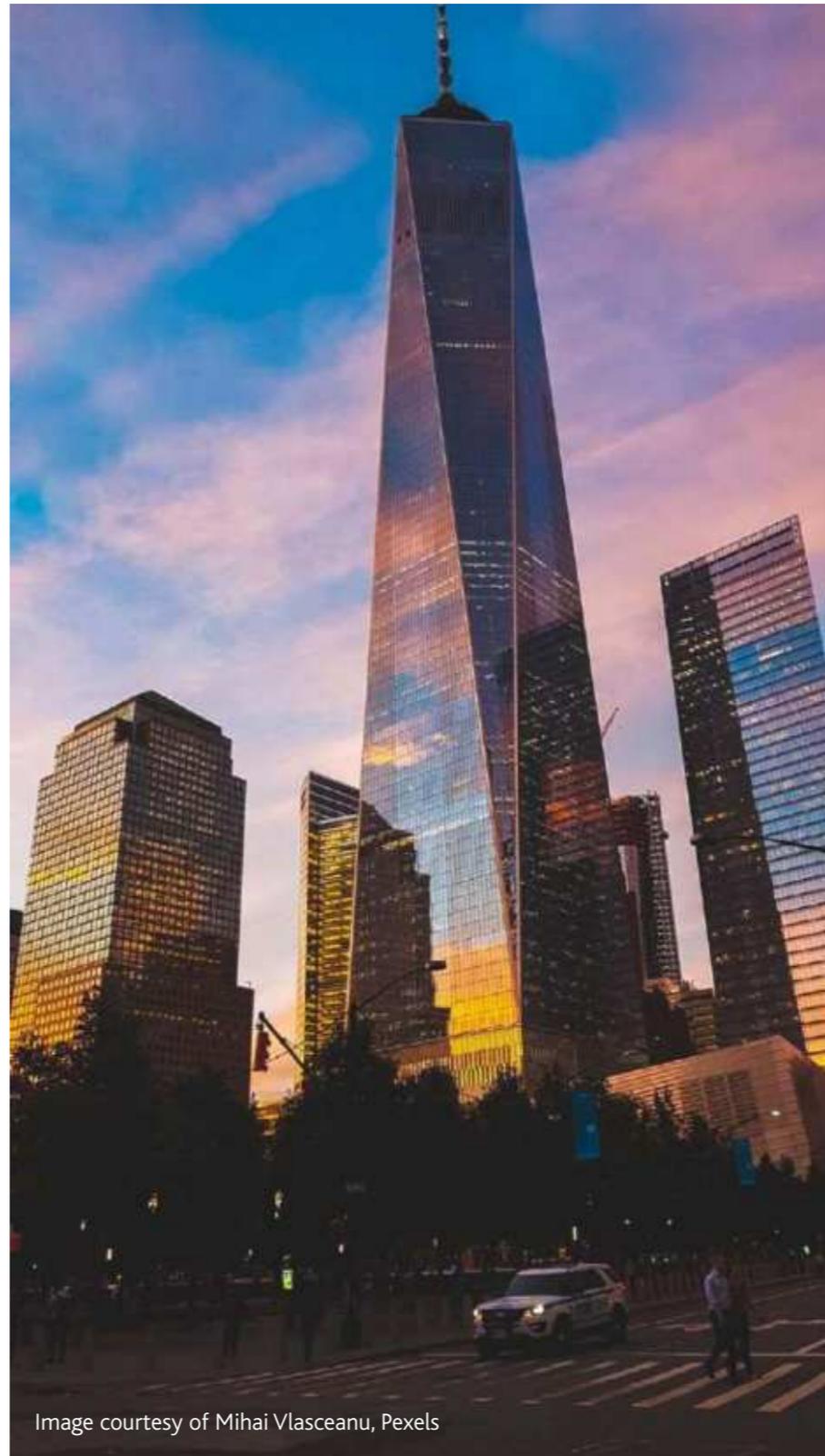


Image courtesy of Mihai Vlasceanu, Pexels

- **Expansion and growth.** A loan or line of credit allows your business with new store launches, revamps and other new market opportunities.
- **A safety net.** A line of credit can be accessed during emergencies.
- **Negotiation leverage.** It's easier to negotiate bulk purchase discounts and favourable terms with suppliers with ready access to funds.
- **Credit profile.** Regularly using and repaying credit increases the credit worthiness of your business, building a strong credit profile that can be used for securing larger loans or better terms.
- **Operational expenses.** Payroll, utilities, rent and marketing can continue, even if sales revenues and income fluctuate.
- **Risk management.** A loan or access to credit provides a buffer, giving your business space to strategise and adapt with immediate financial strain.
- **Capital expenditure.** Capital expenses like technology, infrastructure and operational improvements can be funded should you not wish to seek external investors.



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The right finance for your business

One of the most confusing aspects for retailers and wholesalers is the sheer number of finance options available. From bank loans, lines of credit, credit cards, equipment financing and equity financing, many retailers struggle to know where to start, let alone which one or more of these options is best for them.

According to Gerhard le Roux, Head of Capital Growth at Capital Connect, retailers should match the right financing to the right business need.

“One of the critical factors to consider is how quickly the financing is available,” says Le Roux. “In today’s fast-paced environment, retailers want to be able to move immediately to capitalise on

an opportunity, like the chance to snap up bulk inventory at a lower price than usual. The speed of access to credit is one of the big benefits of some of the newer fintech options on the market.”

Cost of financing and impact on cashflow are other factors to consider. Retailers must take into account the overall expenses related to financing and the interest charges throughout the entire loan duration.

Frequently, opting for a shorter-term loan with a higher interest rate could be a more economically sound choice, compared to committing to a three or five-year loan with an interest rate slightly above the prime rate. Opting for shorter-term financing also generally proves to be more

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financially advantageous. However, if not employed effectively to generate adequate returns, it could potentially put the retailer in a tight cash flow situation.

On the other hand, choosing longer-term financing alternatives might offer some relief in terms of cash flow management, but the associated fees gradually diminish the value of the loan over its lifespan. Notably, flexible repayment schedules stand out as a prominent feature in fintech-driven loans.

Le Roux points out that there are offerings that give merchants access to as much as R5 million

in just 24 hours by applying via an app. Moreover, retailers can then pay that loan off in affordable daily instalments, rather than in one large monthly deduction, minimising cash flow impact.

“Cash flow is the lifeblood of the retail fraternity, therefore small daily instalments or repayments will hardly be noticeable in the business,” he says. “Daily repayments can be made via the retailer’s bank account, however if they have an intelligent cash vault, they can opt to repay their loans directly from cash deposited into their onsite vaults.”



A changing environment

Coming out of the pandemic, the retail environment was shaken to its core. Experts tell us to expect upheaval as the 'new normal' becomes a way of life, but also promise plenty of room to grow.

This seems to be borne out by some of the trends we’re seeing, as retailers adjust. Amid the pandemic, certain businesses failed, but proactive retailers

swiftly capitalised on untapped opportunities, and some took the opportunity to acquire struggling firms, revitalising their portfolio across industries for reduced risk.

Le Roux concurs: “One trend I’m seeing is experienced retailers buying and revamping strip malls in high-potential areas,” he says. “They are often franchises for major supermarket chains and become the anchor tenant in these properties, renting out space in the mall to other businesses, and growing profits by being landlords as well as retailers.”

Consumer behaviour also shifted during the pandemic, especially due to increased fuel costs. As such, many individuals and households continue to favour online shopping, with innovative click and collect and delivery options such as Checkers Sixty60, Pick n Pay ASAP; and Woolworths Dash pioneering a new normal way of shopping for many South Africans.

Key trends in South African retail finance

Financing alternative energy solutions.

Amid ongoing power cuts and predictions of a twofold increase in electricity costs from 2022 to 2027, enhancing energy efficiency stands as a strategic approach for retailers to ensure sustainable operational savings.

Creative fintech finance.

Many retailers grapple with expensive diesel costs and explore solar alternatives. They seek inventive solutions overlooked by traditional lenders, such as installing glass doors on fridges to cut electricity expenses by up to 40%.

Diversification.

Retailers seek growth in a tough economy, exploring options like supermarkets adding coffee shops or laundromats to provide a valuable service to counter the effects of load shedding, and fuel stations expanding with more takeaway choices.

Flexible alternative solutions.

The rise of pop-up shops has sparked interest in convenient options like shipping containers for retail. With prices in the tens of thousands of Rands, these container coffee shops or takeaways offer an affordable and swift means for retailers to expand or diversify, often without traditional lender support.

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Where online shopping isn't an option, convenience now often takes precedence, with more people opting for frequent small shopping trips rather than monthly hauls. For retailers, this means extended business hours and appropriate stocking are pivotal for boosting wallet share.



Image by brgfx
<https://www.freepik.com/>

The one area that hasn't fully recovered, according to Le Roux, is fuel retail. He notes ...

“Fuel pump takings are still down 20% to 30% from pre-pandemic levels. This is most likely because many people are still working from home some of the time and shopping closer to home.”

“Fuel stations are thus diversifying and focusing more heavily on their retail and value-added offerings to benefit from the trend towards convenience shopping.”



Image courtesy of Mikhail Nilov, Pexels

Good debt vs bad debt

As always when it comes to finance, we have to talk about the elephant in the room: Debt. After all, getting into debt is the basic premise of any finance arrangement, but not all debt is bad ... on the contrary.

“Just like knowing what type of finance is best suited to your business, whether the debt you take on is good or bad can be quite subjective, and really depends on the type of business you're running,” says Lulalend's Chief Marketing Officer, Tom Stuart.

“Broadly speaking, when we look at a business and why they're applying for funding, we define good debt as something that's taken on to drive investment in the business and deliver a positive return in the short- to medium-term,” he says.

“For example, this can be debt that's taken on to invest in more stock, perhaps buying in bulk to achieve larger discounts that can then be turned into larger profits, to invest in a marketing campaign that will drive new customer acquisition, or an investment in new premises that will drive business expansion.”

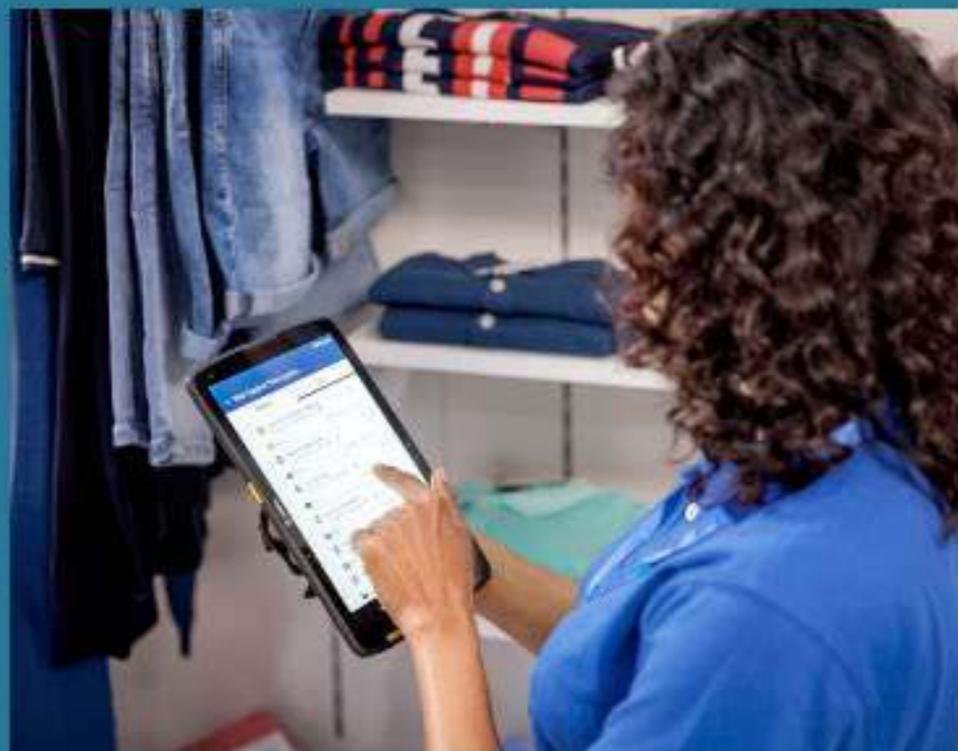
While debt brings funds to a business to help it invest for growth, these investments come at a cost, so your business needs to project a positive return on that cost to qualify the debt as good. In other words, it is based on a long-term positive business model with the understanding of how the funds will drive long-term growth in the business.

“Bad debt, on the other hand, is funds taken in to plug short-term holes in the finances, used to fund things that aren't going to directly drive growth in the business or deliver positive returns, or even worse, to pay off other debts,” adds Stuart. “It's often used to replace cost saving metrics or trying to instill efficiencies in the business.”

During the pandemic, many retailers leaned on overdrafts for survival, continuing their reliance for salaries and rent. When overdrafts shift from bridging short-term gaps to a permanent credit line, they transform into bad debt, trapping businesses in loss spirals due to rising financing costs and ongoing debt repayment challenges.

From Zero to Hero: Transform Operations with Task Management

Equip your teams with a task management system that enhances efficiency and simplifies work processes, enabling them to accomplish more with ease. Provide the upcoming generation of colleagues with the user interface necessary for optimising communication and swiftly executing tasks with efficiency.



Task Management enhances and optimises on-site implementation and correspondence by offering a comprehensive, up-to-the-minute, prioritised outlook of tasks awaiting completion at your branch premises. This empowers associates to concentrate on the most critical projects.



Simplify work for on-site associates

- Equip managers and associates with a unified, mobile-centric perspective of tasks, notifications, and essential data.
- Simplify communication with on-site colleagues by offering a centralised platform for accessing all assignments.
- Guarantee that managers and associates are consistently present where and when needed, engaged in pertinent tasks to optimise customer interaction.
- Deliver timely notifications to on-site team members, along with actionable instructions to promptly resolve unexpected matters.

Enable Intelligent Task Management Processes

01

Prioritise the most impactful corporate-generated and real time system-generated tasks.

02

Optimise workflows to intelligently direct tasks evenly and equitably across available associates.

03

Improve field management's live-of-sight into store-level execution, giving the ability to manage by exception.



In a volatile economy like South Africa's, where business costs are affected by volatile metrics like currency fluctuations, inflation and supply chains, it is prudent to shop in bulk and have the stock when you need it. "Having stock on hand is a good example of why businesses need fast access to funds to deal with the bumps in the road," adds Le Roux. "This also allows them to take advantage of sudden, fleeting opportunities."

Partnering with a funding provider or lender allows retailers and wholesalers fast and easy access to capital, as the businesses that tend to survive unpredictable periods are those that can best take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

Managing cashflow and risk

A common trait in successful small businesses and retailers in particular is having speed of access and flexibility to funding when needed.

"Access to fast fintech finance gives retailers the agility to respond to real-time trends in the business, as well as the ability to make better decisions about growing their revenues," says Capital Connect's Le Roux. "There are online tools retailers can use to opt for opportunity capital, to choose a loan amount and repayment period so that they can see if the business can afford the instalment."



Image courtesy of Pixabay, Pexels

Insuring a brighter future

In today's volatile economic landscape, supermarkets and wholesalers face unique challenges that necessitate strategic insurance planning. Protecting your business from uncertainties requires a comprehensive approach. Here are the top ten insurance tips to safeguard your supermarket or wholesale store:

Evaluate coverage needs. Conduct a thorough risk assessment to identify potential vulnerabilities and coverage gaps. Tailor insurance policies to address specific risks, such as property damage, theft, liability, and business interruption.

Business interruption insurance. In unpredictable times, business interruptions can be more common. Business interruption coverage helps to mitigate losses due to events such as forced closures, supply chain disruptions, the impact of loadshedding or other unforeseen events.

Property protection. Safeguard your physical assets with property insurance that covers damages from natural disasters, fires, vandalism, and other incidents that can be exacerbated by economic volatility.

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Designed to deliver eye-catching imagery and videos for retail, the Polaris ID Series with its exquisite Full HD experience, provides immersive, impressive messaging to attract customers wherever needed.

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The eye-catching nature of the Polaris ID Series is ideal for retailers to leverage it as a media and advertisement medium to interact with customers.

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UP TO

8 GB DDR3L

OS

Win 7

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Win 10 IoT



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of Pixabay, Pexels



Liability coverage. Retail environments can lead to accidents and injuries. General liability insurance offers protection against legal claims arising

customer slips, falls, or other mishaps within your premises.

Supply chain contingency. Economic instability may disrupt supply chains. Consider supply chain insurance to address the financial impact of delays, disruptions, or failures of suppliers or distributors.

Cybersecurity insurance. The digital landscape is not immune to economic fluctuations. Invest in cyber insurance to shield your business from data breaches, hacking, and other cyber threats that can occur during economic turbulence.

Employee well-being. Employee health and safety are paramount. Workers' compensation insurance helps cover medical expenses and lost wages for employees injured on the job.

Review and update. Regularly assess your insurance policies to ensure they align with your evolving business needs and the economic climate. Contingency planning. Develop a comprehensive contingency plan that outlines steps to take in case of emergencies. This can minimise disruption and aid in the claims process.

Professional advice. Consult with an experienced insurance professional who understands your industry's unique challenges and can recommend tailored coverage solutions.



Navigating the complexities of a volatile economy requires proactive insurance strategies. By taking these business insurance tips to heart, supermarkets and wholesalers can fortify their operations against the unpredictable and safeguard their financial stability.

Innovation, adaptability and sound financial strategies win the day

In the face of discouraging statistics and economic challenges, South African retailers and wholesalers are embarking on a journey of adaptation and innovation. Despite a year-on-year decline in retail sales, retailers and wholesalers are confronting the evolving landscape with determination.

- The quest for suitable financing options has led to a growing emphasis on fintech solutions, enabling quicker access to capital and flexible repayment structures. As the retail and wholesale sector redefines itself, trends such as renewable

energy adoption, creative fintech financing, diversification, and convenience-focused strategies are emerging.

- Amid changing consumer behaviours and a shift towards online shopping, retailers are creatively reinventing their business models.
- Successful navigation of these dynamics requires a nuanced understanding of good versus bad debt, coupled with agile cashflow management.
- Strategic insurance planning is equally crucial in safeguarding retail ventures from uncertainties. **SR**



Guy Lerner, a highly experienced writer and photographer, writes across diverse topics in business, technology, and retail – working with multinational companies in South Africa and Australia. Guy holds a B.Sc. Honours degree from the University of Witwatersrand. Contact Wilkins Ross Communications (www.wilkinsrossglobal.com) or email communications@wilkinsross.co.za.





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A retail jewel in Daveyton

Consolidated Store Holdings' Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper



The entrance to Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper is welcoming, with strong branding to connect customers to the store.



The prettiest store in Daveyton! With over 10 000 SKUs, it's not just a pretty face.

Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper, located on the outskirts of Daveyton on the East Rand, is steadily carving a niche for itself as the community retail store that delivers the best value at affordable prices in the area since its major revamp in 2022.

Save-A-Lot Majutene is a Food Town Hyper store in Consolidated Store Holdings' (CSH) stable, which consists of Food Town Hypers (retail format stores), Powertrade (wholesale stores), Price Rite (large-scale wholesale distribution centres), and Big Deal stores (banner group stores). The Save-A-Lot Food Town Hyper brand includes seven stores located around the country –Khayelitsha and Athlone in the Western Cape; two stores in Rustenburg and one in Vryburg in the North West; one store in Kwatema (Brakpan) and one in Daveyton, on the East Rand in Gauteng.

“The CSH Save-a-Lot stores are community focused, with an in-depth knowledge of the communities they serve and relevant consumer behaviour patterns.”

Total store revamp

Going back, the store had been trading as an independent Powertrade cash & carry since early 2020 when Consolidated Store Holdings (CSH) acquired it, with the objective to convert the business into a retail destination and begin a revamp soon after. However, all plans for the store upgrade came to a halt with the onset of the pandemic. When lockdown restrictions eased, the revamp was back on track, resulting in a fully upgraded spacious supermarket that incorporated



Air Shield Glass Doors

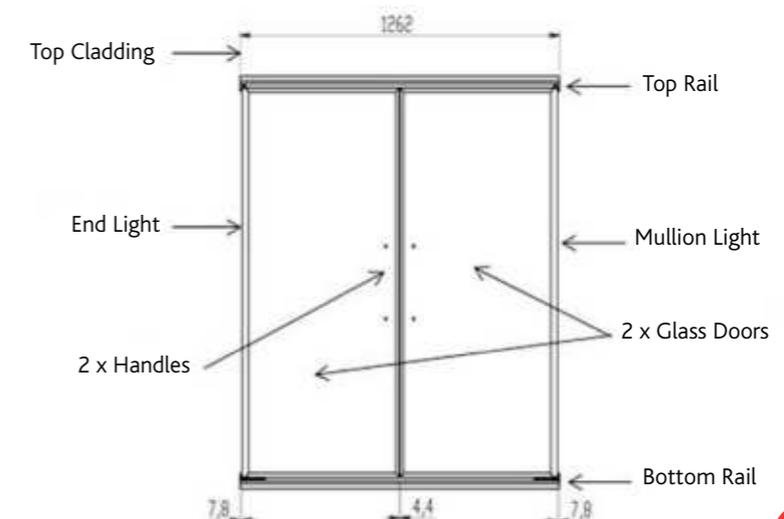
Close The Case

Designed as a retrofit solution for existing Supermarket display cases, the Glacier Air Shield Glass Doors offer up to a 40% energy saving in an ever-increasing energy cost environment as well as improved cabinet temperatures and product benefits.



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- Integrated (full length) handle option.



Infinity / Infinity Integrate Glass Doors

The new Infinity Glass Door is designed with edge-to-edge glass and screen print border. This door offers increased visibility and a more modernised look and feel. Glacier has also launched their new Integrated Glass Door which incorporates a full length profiled handle.

Low Temp Eco Leaf (Energy Saving) Doors Aluminium Frames:

- Heated Door and Architrave
- Natural 15 micron anodized or black textured powder coating (Coating to SABS standards).

Glass

- Safety toughened 4mm glass inside and outside standard on all doors. (Toughened to SABS standards).
- All Glass Doors are Argon Gas filled for superior insulation.
- Low temperature doors are fitted with a heated front glass and a clear rear glass, both safety toughened.

Normal Temp Doors Aluminium Frames:

- Door and heated Architrave
- Natural 15 micron anodized or black textured powder coating (Coating to SABS standards)
- There is a thermal break on the inside of the door frame.
- All architraves are fitted with anti-sweat heaters.

Glass

- Safety toughened 4mm glass inside and outside standard on all doors. (Toughened to SABS standards)
- All Glass Doors are Argon Gas filled for superior insulation.
- Normal temperature doors are fitted with Low emission front glass and a clear rear glass, both safety toughened.

Lights (LED)

Energy Saving LED 22W, 6000K, LED Light fitted on the inside of the architrave in a closed polycarbonate light diffuser.

Lights (LED)

Energy Saving LED 22W, 6000K, LED Light fitted on the inside of the architrave in a closed polycarbonate light diffuser.





External signage on a trailer shows the way to Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper.

the original cash and carry, as well as a Butchery outlet that was acquired during early stages of the revamp and incorporated into the business model. The fruit and vegetables department was also converted from being a predominately wholesale focus to a retail look and feel.

The newly refurbished Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper is designed to cater for the grocery retailing and the bulk-buying (Hybrid) needs of the Daveyton community. The store is managed by a highly competent and dedicated team making a difference.

Lourens Kriel, CSH Regional General Manager, who managed the store upgrade together with Chris Steenkamp, Managing Director, Save-A-Lot, says that the decision to invest in a store on the outskirts of Daveyton was based on a proposed new offramp from the N12 highway heading east from Johannesburg onto Alliance Road in Daveyton, which will run directly past the store, offering a valuable stop-off point for shoppers on their way home, and for taxis. At the time of writing, the new offramp had not been opened, but work on the road has been continuing for a couple of years and hopes were high for an imminent opening.

The store sponsors a community care clinic that provides valuable health services and assessments to the community.

An upgrade for the community

Lourens Kriel explains the upgrade: "The store increased in size from about 1 800 m² to 3 500 m², and from approximately 3 000 SKUs to 10 000 SKUs, which is all in line with our aim to give the Daveyton community a better shopping experience. We're big believers in being part of the communities where we operate and investing back into the community.

This is a store that meets the needs of LSMs from 1 to 3 primarily, but also up to LSM 6, as well as small traders, hawkers, spazas, local schools, and stokvels, which are an important part of our business." He adds that many of the bulk buyers are hybrid shoppers, buying for their family and household needs as well as for their businesses.





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The focus on more than tripling the number of SKUs in the store has enabled an increased product range for the store's suppliers, giving the suppliers more sales and market share, and boosting their footprint in this vibrant, volume-driven market. In addition, Save-a-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper now has more than 20 000 customers on digital platforms and suppliers can tap into this market through the store's targeted promotions and campaigns.

A massive marketing drive

To promote and generate excitement for the launch of the new store, CSH went all out to attract a whole new target market and to reassure their existing customers that the store is now bigger and better than ever. A massive marketing drive that included billboards, street pole advertising, cars with loudspeakers driving around the community, knock and drops, pamphlets, newspaper campaigns, and more, was designed to attract new people to the store – and it worked. There was an excellent influx of new retail shoppers, enjoying the brand-new shopping experience, the range, and the highly competitive pricing.

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<p>Pharmaceutical Hygienic Pallet</p>  <p>1200mm x 1000mm x 150mm</p>		<p>Aluminium Pallet</p>  <p>1200mm x 1000mm x 150mm</p>							



Above: Prepacked fruit and vegetables provide added convenience for time-strapped shoppers. Below: The 3 500 m² store has metres of refrigeration, with the wide range of fresh produce being a big drawcard.

Walking the store

Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper stocks a wide range of brands and SKUs across multiple categories. Shelf space is carefully allocated, and the range is constantly monitored to ensure the needs of all shoppers are met.

Groceries and commodities. The grocery department covers the full range of commodities and other items to meet household needs, as well as a separate area for bulk products for small traders and other bulk buyers.

Sweets, treats and beverages. The increase in the range at the time of the store revamp also saw an increase in the sale of sweets, treats, snacks, drinks, and other luxury items.

Perishables. The store was able to dramatically increase its stock of perishable goods with the installation of new refrigeration cabinets, and a far larger number of perishable products were listed, including cold meats, yoghurts, cheeses, butters and spreads, which are moving well and providing a significant increase in sales for the participating suppliers.

Fresh produce and butchery. The fresh produce and butchery departments together contribute approximately 24% to overall turnover currently, and the Majutene team is pulling out all the stops to increase the service departments to 30% of total store turnover.

- Fresh produce now includes a wide range of fruit and vegetables in convenient pack sizes for home use, as well as bulk items for hawkers and other small traders. Management says they have a good number of traders buying bulk fruit and veg, and the team is aiming to grow this market. To do that, they are looking at increasing promotions and combo deals to ensure regular buying, getting the prices right, and increasing the basket sizes.
- The Meat Market is set up to be one of the drawcards, says the store's management team with an evident sense of achievement for everyone involved. This department is state-of-the-art, with modern equipment, experienced butchers, and a range to suit the community. The store is working hard to retain the butchery's client base from when it was a stand-alone store, and also to bring in new butchery customers. They do this by giving personal service and detailed attention to their customers and what they want. As a drawcard, butchery hampers are given away in a lucky draw system on most weekends.



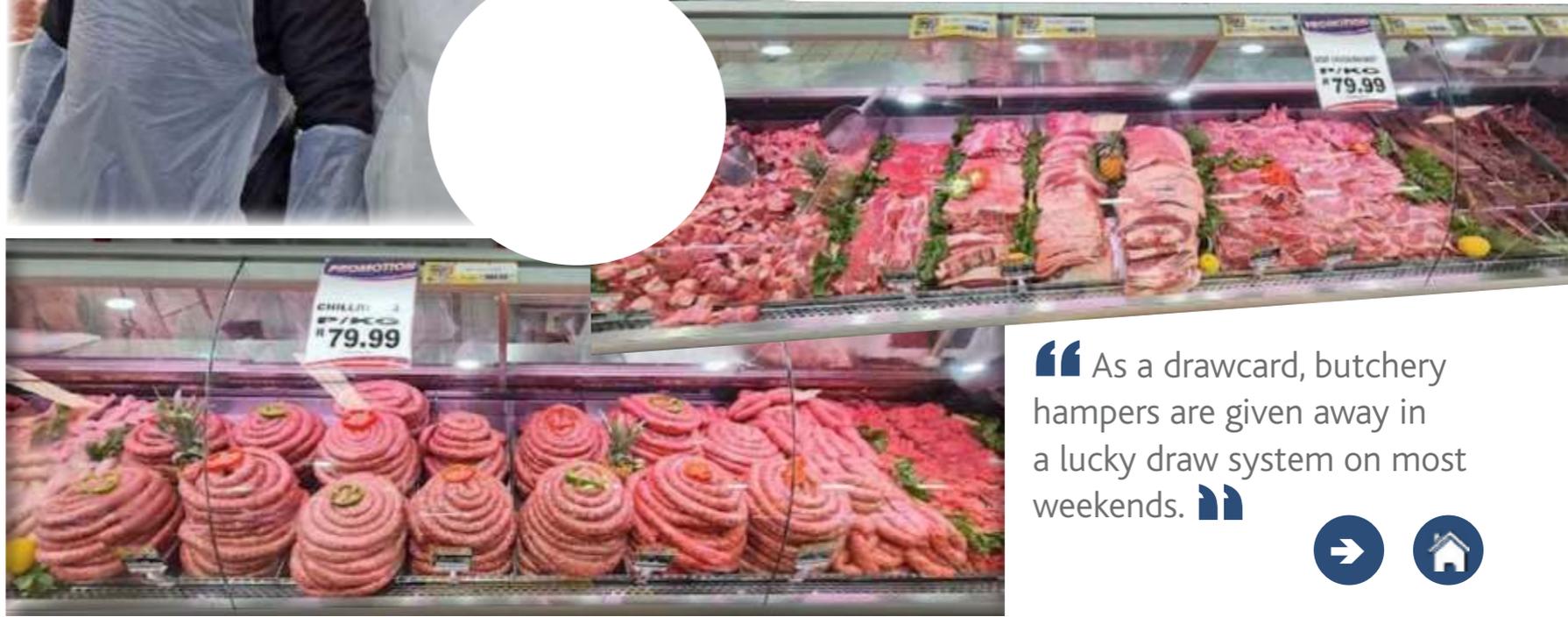
The power of stokvels

Stokvels are a big part of Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper's customer base. "The stokvels that shop at our stores are very important to us. And although the clubs generally buy in December, we accommodate them at other times of the year too. We look after our stokvel customers very carefully, making sure we have the stock they want and providing the service they need. Here again, we work at building up our stokvel customer numbers. We plan to host a stokvel indaba in October, inviting 800 local stokvel members, particularly the chairpersons, to discuss how we can improve their shopping experience with us," says the Management team.



Top left: Big refrigeration for a big-hearted store. Cold meats have become popular. Mineral water in 5 litre bottles has become an everyday shopping item.

Above right: One of the flagship departments of the store, the butchery has state-of-the-art equipment, experienced butchers, and a range to suit the customer base.



“ As a drawcard, butchery hampers are given away in a lucky draw system on most weekends. ”



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Building the Save-A-Lot Majutene brand

The marketing initiatives implemented by Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper do more than alert customers to the specials, discounts and deals on offer. Their campaigns play an important role in connecting the store with customers, both regular and bulk buyers, in a way that makes them feel part of the brand. Both social media and traditional media are used, together with community activations. The store's marketing campaigns have a direct benefit for participating suppliers, enabling their brands to directly connect with the community.

Advertisements are shared via the store's WhatsApp, social media and SMS platforms to a growing database of customers, daily, weekly, and monthly. The online marketing efforts are paying dividends, and the store has achieved a 4-star rating on Google. The popular Facebook page has 5 200 followers and growing, and also features excellent reviews. Customer Karabelo Skhosana says, "Affordable prices and great quality. Great customer service, and not forgetting a friendly shopping environment," while Thembi Mpanza says, "Convenient location. Knowledgeable staff. Fresh food." The store's WhatsApp group has 5 500 subscribers who are sent marketing messages three times a week.

Save-A-Lot Majutene also prints 16 000 4-page and 30 000 2-page promotional leaflets monthly, which are dropped in residential areas, taxi ranks, busy intersections, 11 local schools, and inserted into newspapers. Dropping off leaflets at schools means special deals get directly into the hands of parents. This is a way the store gives back to their community



This store is a pleasure to visit – clean, warm and friendly, bright and polished. It makes excellent use of strong signage and beautiful displays to give supplier brands very good exposure to loyal shoppers, while point of sale elements and bunting create a festive atmosphere all year round.

and supports their schools, as those that participate are rewarded accordingly.

To ensure customers keep the store top of mind, there is a highly visible trailer near the main road giving directions to the store. By agreement, there are also wall adverts on several houses in and around Daveyton.

In some instances, transportation is provided for customers, which also builds strong relationships and goes a long way to creating loyalty.

Competitions and giveaways

Weekly hamper giveaways in store from the key departments – fruit and vegetables, and butchery – give customers who spend a minimum of R300 to be part of the lucky draw on Saturdays.

One of the main marketing events run at the store is an annual car giveaway run by Save-a-Lot for their Food Town Stores, with the prize of a car per store. This massive campaign always generates huge excitement at Save-A-Lot Majutene, especially with the prize vehicle parked inside the store for the duration of the competition, making it very real and appealing to shoppers.

Giving back to the community

Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper's community involvement includes charitable support, community clean-ups and a health services clinic.

The store through its suppliers sponsors soup kitchens at several taxi ranks, with staff hosting and cooking the meals for underprivileged community members.



Competitions build loyalty, and energy – and shoppers love winning!



Partnership programmes with the store and running competitions provides suppliers with effective ways to connect their brands with shoppers.



Save-A-Lot Majutene also supports three major local charities on a monthly basis. In addition, on Mandela Day and Heritage Day every year, the store identifies a charity in need and offers assistance, according to their most urgent requirements.

Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper in numbers

- 3 500m² floor space
- 10 000+ SKUs
- 4 departments: Grocery, Perishables (fresh & frozen), Fruit & Vegetables, Meat Market (butchery)
- 30% of retail floor allocated to bulk traders section

Hours of operation:

8am-5.30pm on Mondays to Fridays
8am to 5pm on Saturdays
8am to 1pm on Sundays and public holidays. Closed on Good Friday and Christmas Day

Monthly clean-up campaigns (Sweep the Street) of the main roads, traffic circle and local park further entrench the store's presence and role in the community that supports them. Save-A-Lot Majutene allows local unemployed people to participate in the clean ups and rewards those who assist.

The store also has a clinic situated on its premises, offering various health care service and partnering with 'Hospice East Rand'. This is a service that the store provides free of charge to their local community.



The role of technology

In a store of this size and customer count, technology plays a strategic role in profitability, and includes:

- 'Shopper Net Wi-Fi', which gives customers free wi-fi while in-store. This valuable service is an added drawcard for shoppers, is convenient for the store for its own business operations and helps to grow the database.
- Technological advancements that feature in various sections of the store, with world-class equipment in the butchery and other key departments.



One of the store's innovations is affordable purified water where shoppers can fill up their reusable bottles.



Well-stocked shelves and clear signage let the store's customers know about their specials and range.



The 14 checkout points for the general public manage queues effectively.



Another view of the store showing its wide range of dairy products and extensive refrigeration.

- Wi-Fi scanners to check in stock & monitor sales.
- Sassa payment and cash back solutions.
- Airtime available at till points.
- Advanced security systems.
- Shop2Shop device for cashless shopping for traders.

What makes it special?

In discussing what makes Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper special and enjoyable for its customers, the store's management is passionate and unequivocal.

"We are a retail business offering wholesale prices and bulk shopping. Our meat market and fruit and vegetable departments are world-class in the East

terms of quality and price, and we strive to support local farmers. We are competitively priced within our community and the most affordable store in Daveyton. Our customers benefit from our commitment to service and our passion for serving our community.

"Our store is well-designed and spacious, catering to both traders and regular retail customers, and we feature plenty of till points to manage queues efficiently. We also offer banking services and of course the free Wi-Fi.

"On Saturdays, we host a fun-filled market with freebies, a jumping castle, face painting for the kids, and a play area outside."

Save-A-Lot Majutene Food Town Hyper is benefitting from its revamp, and so are their customers. They strive to make weekend visits to the store a fun, family day out, and every day a wonderful shopping experience. **SR**

Janice Hunt is an Accredited Text Editor (English) who has been a freelance writer, editor, proofreader, and communications consultant since February 2002. Prior to that, she was editor of various trade magazines. Janice's extensive writing and editing experience has covered sectors such as trade magazines, internal communications, annual reports, brochures, newsletters, website copy, and speeches, as well as communications strategy development. She is a full member of the Professional Editors' Guild (www.editors.org.za). Email Janice Hunt, Senior Writer and Editor, Wilkins Ross Communications at janice@wilkinsross.co.za.

Take Note

The pen may be mightier than the sword, but can it take on the Notebook?

In good news for retailers, stationery is cool again. Fashion stationery, to be exact. Stationery that stands out, with a bit of extra glitz and glamour or the raddest comic, game, and cinematic characters emblazoned across every surface, is hot property. And it's not just Gen Z leading the charge. Although with The Guardian reporting that the TikTok hashtag #stationeryhauls pulling in well over 300 million views, they're certainly a big part of the drive. Bespoke, personalised, and aesthetically pleasing stationery has also found a home with millennials, and they are embracing everything from comfort and nostalgia to vintage-inspired themes, botanicals, and old masters' paintings.

The South African market – An overview

Freedom Stationery's Mervin Govindan, BIC's Amy Whittam, and Bostik SA's Heidi Masters share their insights into the South African stationery market. They share a reassuringly positive outlook on this increasingly innovative and exciting category.

Mervin Govindan, National Sales Manager at Freedom Stationery, has a titbit of good news on the paper price after last year's astronomical price increases, product shortages, and supply challenges. He says, "Paper pricing is now stable, and the pipeline looks secure across all trading segments." It has not been plain sailing, but overall, the industry has a "marginally better-than-last-year scenario."



Image courtesy of Rdne Stock Project, Pexels

When it comes to traditional office stationery, stationery suppliers report a decline in sales across certain categories. This is most likely due to long-term repercussions from the Covid pandemic as many workers learnt to work on alternative mediums or from home, a fact that has altered traditional workspaces. Amy Whittam, Marketing Manager for Stationery at BIC South Africa, says "The post-Covid

landscape has witnessed a noticeable surge in the demand for home office supplies. With many individuals transitioning to remote work or establishing home offices, the need for efficient and organised workspaces remains important. Stationery essentials, including pens, notebooks, and markers, continue to play a vital role in facilitating productive and well-managed tasks within the home office environment."

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Changing work models impact at-home and traditional office requirements

The digital transformation has also ushered in new avenues for growth and innovation. Whittam says, "Customisation, the rise of online marketplaces, and the adoption of hybrid sales approaches that blend technology with traditional retail strategies have opened up promising opportunities for the stationery industry."

"We are seeing less copy paper and more digital filing and easy sign software, as well as portal driven systems to exchange critical contractual or transactional admin workloads – which results in a reduction in physical documents," adds Govindan. "This market has grown overall, but the growth rate has also slowed significantly," Many consumers are now back at the office full time, but others have adopted a hybrid model or gone completely remote, leading to an increased market share for home office supplies that seems to have found some stability now.

A love letter to nostalgia, an ode to the written word

On the home front, stationery is attracting a raft of new fans who are seeking the comfort of nostalgia, the freedom found in expressing oneself on paper or other traditional mediums, and a way to reduce their dependency on the digital world. With so much time spent online – either working, in scholarly endeavours, or on social media – consumers are eager to return to more traditional pursuits.



Sacred Lion by Youssef Boubekour. BIC Cristal Original. Youssef is an illustrator and artist who lives in Paris. He almost exclusively draws in blue, with a ball-point pen. Youssef enjoys that particular tool because, "Once you've made a mistake with a ball-point pen, you cannot erase it. You cannot undo it. It's all part of your drawing: you got to use your mistake and create from it."

"Fashion stationery is a global trend at the moment," says Govindan. He adds ...

“ Consumers enjoy the personalised touch of having something different that also speaks to their personality and energy. ”

Whittam agrees, saying, "There is a noticeable resurgence of interest and excitement surrounding stationery products in the market. Consumers are now presented with a broader spectrum of choices,

both in terms of enhancing existing products, and the introduction of an array of new and unique items."

She adds, "BIC is very much aligned with these trends, as can be seen by our recent launch of the new 4 Colours pens." Featuring colours that include pink, purple, turquoise and lime green, these multifunction pens cater perfectly for doodling enthusiasts, personalised colour-coding and for adding a touch of artistic flair to work and school notes.

While cheaper imports may tick the cute or kitsch box, they often do not offer consistent quality or availability of style and design. Govindan says, "Cheap imports cannot align themselves with a brand with purpose or promotional activities with cause." From supporting reading and learning programmes to engaging in social media campaigns, creating and supporting brand equity is crucial.

BIC is one of the brands that exemplifies this with their 'Buy a Pen, Donate a Pen' campaign. Through this initiative, BIC has successfully donated over 14 million writing tools. Whittam explains, "Our collaboration with the Zero School Dropout initiative is central to our Major Back to School campaign. In a country where dropout rates have reached 41%, we have taken proactive steps to raise awareness and drive positive change. By providing learners with the essential resources they require, we strive to contribute to a future where education is a catalyst for transformation and progress."



Back to School still driving sales

In the non-food category, back to school is fast becoming one of the biggest promotions in many retailer and supplier calendars. Cross-marketing is an important aspect of this promotional activity, however, as products that tie in with the school year are diverse and run across multiple categories. And as school calendars start to normalise again, so too is the promotional time frame for back-to-school activity stabilising.

That said, Govindan notes that earlier shopping is becoming popular as stationery transitions into an exciting stocking filler or festive season gift. Additionally, some shoppers are prioritising back to school requirements and fulfilling these shopping needs before their festive season

shopping. Avoiding pre-school term crowds in January is another driver here, as buyer behaviours continue to be altered post-pandemic.

Schooling in South Africa is wholly or mostly affected or largely unaffected by the digital transformation, depending on the school and other socio-economic factors. However most students in South Africa are still moving through a traditional schooling channel with traditional stationery requirements.

Heidi Masters, Marketing Director at Bostik SA, notes that traditionally over the Back-to-School

period, sales are driven by school stationery lists as well as pester power – where something becomes a need, not a want. She adds that parents are moving away from stationery distributed through school channels as they search for quality or brands of their choice and make use of promotional activities to find the best prices.

The South African market hits the sweet spot between high tech and old school

Refining your offering based on consumer needs and economic challenges

Reduced SKUs. Retailers and wholesalers have to make very specific choices about their stationery ranges, to ensure they are meeting the needs and economic realities of their shoppers. Bostik SA's Masters explains, "Stationers are reducing their offering on shelf – in the past, there was a choice between three or four different brands of wax twisters, for example, where these items are now reduced to two or three on offer, or less."



Online sales. Masters says there is an increase of online stationery sales through retailers, although of course there are still customers who shop in-store. “We do expect to see an even greater increase in online sales going forward,” she says.

Promotions and advertising. Govindan says, “Trading in a volatile market with tough economic conditions requires a balanced marketing mix, so knowing when to offer a bulk purchase and with which products, or to move with a smaller consumer unit is essential. In addition, knowing on which media platforms to reach your target customer base and to correctly place this promotion on the best media platforms will all determine the success of one’s decision. Categories like notebooks and filing seem to work better with bulk deals, as consumers generally need many of each, be they a student, small home office, or traditional office.

BIC knows this all too well. “Our flagship product, the iconic Cristal pen, continues to hold a strong presence within the traditional trade landscape in Africa,” says Whittam. This resilience in demand highlights the enduring appeal of our core offerings, even amidst economic fluctuations.” Recognising the trend towards bulk purchases and a preference for smaller pack sizes, BIC has strategically aligned their product offerings to cater to these evolving preferences. They also recognise the importance of promotions and value-driven options for consumers facing increasing economic pressure.

Fun and functional: trends to watch

Stationery with purpose. Wellness journals became popular during the pandemic, but far from a passing fad, they have proven to be an enduring trend. Stationery giants such as Moleskine (www.moleskine.com) and Papier (www.papier.com), as well as local boutique stationers such as The Papery (thepapery.co.za) have all invested in a wide range of journals and notebooks that cater to different tastes and needs. Journaling is a popular pastime that has reportedly evolved to playing a role in consumers’ mental health and wellbeing.



Moleskine_Year of the Tiger: Limited Edition Collector's Box by Lok Ng

Passion journals, multi-functional journals, gratitude journals – the uses are many but be sure to offer a range that is diverse and attractive as well as affordable.





Kaweco represents tradition, quality and timeless design ... A look at this historic picture shows that craftsmanship has always been an indispensable part of the brand. Here you can see how precisely the grinding and polishing of the nib was done in the past.

Personalised and bespoke. From pencils embossed with your name to designer notepaper printed to exact specifications, it's not just luxe stationery that calls for a unique touch. The Papery offers a 'build your own box' option, as well as a Jam Packed once-off box in a variety of themes. Gifting stationery is also a trend to watch, and providing a good selection of products is critical.

Ultimate luxury. From genuine leatherbound journals to limited edition Montblanc pens, there is a niche market for consumers willing to pay over the odds for exceptional quality and prestige. Scaled down, this means including

Image courtesy of thepapery.co.za/



a small selection of higher-end products in locations that cater for this market.

Make your mark. Writing implements are functional but can also be fun. From Kaweco pens that provide a high-quality writing experience, to Blackwing graphite pencils for those looking to live more mindfully, consumers are looking for more than a writing implement. They want quality, thoughtful design, ease of use, and great marketing. Additionally, more creative and artistic implements such as acrylic paint markers and sublimation pens are in demand. Providing good quality yet affordable basics makes sense for office and back to school needs, but consumers are increasingly searching for tools that are out of the ordinary, interesting, and exciting to use. **SR**



Additional sources:

www.kaweco-pen.com
blackwing602.com

Image courtesy of www.kaweco-pen.com



Colruyt

A success based on low prices and own production

Colruyt, a family business that has grown over three generations to be one of the most important European sales groups, is the employer of 33 000 employees and has a diversified portfolio (of food and non-food formats) operating in Belgium, France and Luxembourg.

Its annual sales reach 10 billion euros (R21 billion) and it dominates the Belgian distribution market (ahead of Delhaize and Carrefour), holding about a third of the total market share. The group manages 774 of its own stores and has affiliation with 576 other stores not owned by the company. Amongst this number, they have developed 321 Collect and Go outlets for online shopping.

Colruyt's core business is based on supermarkets where, over time, it has always consistently maintained the initial promise based on 'low prices every day.'

Meanwhile, the experiences of the original team have gradually been enriched with new values and skills, so varied as to stand out even in the production and in the packaging of meat, coffee, cheese and wine.

Founded in Brussels in 1950 by Franz Colruyt, the brand based in Halle (in the Flanders region), after more than 70 years of intense commercial history, is now the only food retailer to have, in Belgium, its own departments engaged in the production of food on an industrial scale (under the Colruyt Group Fine Food label).

“Pricing, private label craftsmanship and environmental responsibility are the challenging areas in which this European mass distribution giant is deepening its strategic vision.”



'Laagste prijzen' (lowest prices) – the reminder that stands next to the Colruyt symbol on shop buildings. It speaks about the identity of the group.

Here the private label items are conceived, developed, created and packaged, to be then sent to the various sales outlets to produce greater profitability, enhance the income statement and amplify the visibility of the Store Brand.



The Colruyt assortment, especially in the food section, pays great attention to the little ones.





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- Concrete floors are used for flush or step-up entry and in permanent structures. Usually a recess of 150–170mm is used to accommodate the foam slab insulation and the concrete screed.



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Aluminium Chequer Plate

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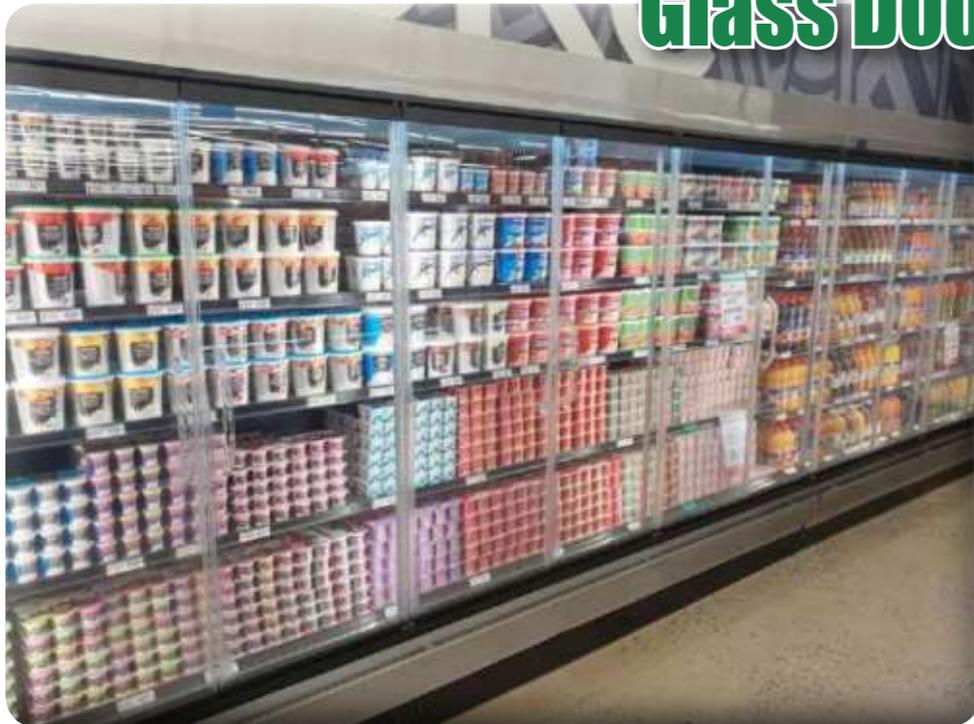


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- Double Glazed Argon filled void for better insulation.
- Optimal Product temperature.
- Glass doors have an option of Mullion lights. Quoted separate.
- Handles included.
- Up to 40% energy saving.
- Solution for new cabinets or retrofitted on existing cabinets.
- Doors are spring loaded.
- Less cold air spillage – warmer aisles.

Airshield Glass Doors



Ways to save

With energy cost rising and food retailers looking to improve the shopping experience environment for customers, Insulated Structures has developed an effective solution to reduce the cost of in-store refrigeration while enhancing the customer experience.

Insulated Structures doors are easy to retrofit on in-store cabinets to reduce the energy required to keep chilled foods at the correct temperature.

Meanwhile, customers are able to clearly see and access the products on offer. Reduced energy requirements means smaller refrigeration plant selection for new stores. These savings will off-set the initial cost of the doors. Up to 40% reduction in refrigeration requirement has been achieved.



Standard Airshield Glass Doors with a Black Frame.
Heated Hybrid also available in this design.
Heated Hybrid Glass Doors are fitted with a heater to reduce condensation on the doors in Coastal areas.
Heated Hybrid is fitted with soft closers.

Premium Airshield Glass Doors.
Frameless Door with Argon Gas filled for better insulation.



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The private label organic line **Boni Selection Bio.**



The three levels of private labels

In Colruyt, low prices and private labels are fundamental aspects: the relevance of the overall proposal is implemented through the use of three levels of assortment, complete and well-integrated.

There are the national brands, sold at the lowest possible price, the private label focused on the family's objectives (associated with excellent levels of quality, convenience and innovation with the 'Boni' and 'Graindor' coffee brands), and a commodity strategy entitled 'First Price', focused on the 'Everyday' brand (basic commodity items with a guarantee of the best price in the relevant product category). On all three levels in question, Colruyt's meticulous attention to maintaining convenience stands out.

The private label is divided into a large number of SKUs, the pillars of which are represented by ...

- the **Boni Selection** range (in the sub-brands Boni Bio, Boni Eco, Boni No Gluten, Boni Veggie and Boni Kids),
- the **Everyday** brand.

- the entirely entrusted coffee, called **Graindor** (whose roasting is carried out in the company laboratories located in Belgium).

Top left: Group of biological line items belonging to the **Boni Selection Bio** sub-brand.

Top centre: Rice and almond drinks, branded **Boni Selection**.

Top right: Organic rice items, from the **Boni Selection Bio** line, displayed on the shelf.

The biological items of the **Boni Selection Bio** line.



Today, Colruyt Group is the only Belgian distributor that still roasts its own coffee – and have been doing so for 80 years, building on a long tradition. In their coffee-roasting plant in Ghislenghien (Hainaut), specialists have full control over the production process, the quality and the flavour.



Food items, such as the First Price and MDD ranges, specially designed for the needs of ordinary families, for those with vegan demands, and those who require biological, ecological and celiac benefits, have now been joined by a small range of non-food items, such as the Kangourou back to school brand.

Central/Western Europeans are discerning consumers who demand great quality, while at the same time, searching for great value for money – Colruyt always delivers.

Retailing and own production

Colruyt's reputation, consolidated on the historical promise of continuously offering low prices, allows the brand industry to strongly push its sales, ensuing a sustainable viability of all its operations.

Furthermore, Colruyt has decided to combine pure distribution activities with those of production. The most successful sectors in the private label sphere are butchery and delicatessen (thanks to the work of Fine Food Meat, a business unit engaged in meat processing).

By embarking on both production and distribution has proven to be a winning move, as it has unveiled a new way of interpreting sustainability. For example, the process allows complete control of costs, quality, and the value chain, but above all it has met specific consumer demands, such as protection of health and well-being, social and environmental responsibilities, and respect for animal well-being.



The reassuring images of smiles exchanged in a familiar environment, with full trolleys and pleasantly busy spaces are the sign of a loyalty built on everyday life, to which Colruyt aspires.



The rationalisation of the spaces has led Colruyt to experiment with the deep-freeze tubs beautifully displaced and easy to fit into a shopping trolley.



Left: Merchandiser in action while working packaged Italian food
Below left: Impeccable uniform and a ready smile at the till points is a company-wide combination of excellent customer service.



The eco-friendly references of the Boni Selection Eco line.



Given that environmental emergencies are raising awareness about sustainability criteria almost everywhere, the Colruyt private label is designed with full traceability and transparency. All products have the clear purpose of stimulating sustainable choices and responsible consumption.

From 2021, the Eco-score was introduced – a label that indicates the environmental impact of the various product items. Within the Boni line, 'Boni Eco' is a range of non-food products, for cleaning and hygiene in the home, capable of fully responding to the strict standards set by the Eco label. Instead, in accordance with the opportunity to enhance local origins, even a totally vegetable hamburger was developed (for Boni Bio), based on soy grown in Belgium.



The workers of Colruyt in the butcher shop are among the most qualified.



About a third of the beef at Colruyt Lowest Prices comes from a unique partnership. Since 2019 they have been working directly with three officially recognised producer organisations, specialising in the Belgian white-blue breed: 'Vlaams Hoevevond', 'En Direct De Mon Elevage' and 'Les Saveurs d'Ardenne'. Together with the breeders the focus is on the well-being of the cows, requiring that they can graze in the field at least six months of the year. Moreover, the animals should spend their entire lives on the farm where they were born.

“ Allowing the chicks to be born directly in the stables, does not require significant additional costs ... the chick costs more, but the healthier adult chicken costs less. ”

Colruyt's aim is to encourage more breeders to adopt the approach whereby chicks are born where they grow up. This has some major advantages ...

- The chicks are spared the transport from the hatchery to the stable, and the associated transport activities, translating into less stress.
- They can immediately start eating and drinking, according to their natural rhythm, which has a positive effect on their intestinal health.
- This improves their general health considerably, which leads to less mortality and less use of antibiotics (up to 50%, or more).



Park systems are bigger and more animal-friendly than traditional cages. An enriched park system offers rabbits more space to show natural behaviour. Rabbits are able to run and socialise with each other, with features such as mats or a comfortable plastic floor, platforms to jump on or hide under, tunnels and gnawing materials.

Seven business units for own production

The strategy for the future will follow the guidelines inspired by this vision. Colruyt Group Fine Food has seven business units: Fine Food Bread, Fine Food Wine, Fine Food Cheese, Fine Food Meat, Fine Food Spreads, Fine Food Coffee and Fine Food Smart Crops. Here are some examples ...

- **Colruyt Group Fine Food**, with the work plans of its seven business units, is consolidating important results in the product categories of bakery-pastry, cheese, coffee, meat, sauces-spreadable creams, flavourings and wines.
 - In **Fine Food Bread**, fresh, pre-cooked and frozen bread and desserts are baked.
 - **Fine Food Cheese** is the largest cheese processing plant in Belgium and processes around 71 different cheeses.
 - **Fine Food Coffee** is the only coffee roasting company in Belgium that roasts, blends and packages nearly 40 coffee varieties.
 - In the meat processing plant in Halle, **Fine Food Meat** cuts, processes and packages beef, veal and pork. The Wommelgem site, on the other hand, is committed to poultry-based products and preparations.
 - At **Fine Food Spreads**, homemade spreads and dips are made.
 - **Fine Food Smart Crops** grows herbs with minimal environmental impact, in the high-tech vertical farm.
 - **Fine Food Wine** bottles wines from all over the world.



- **The Farm of the sea**, in the North Sea, for the breeding of shellfish of Belgian origin, offered under the Boni brand since the autumn of 2022 (first only in limited quantities and then, definitively, in 2023) is among the most emblematic.

All major European chains are following their own path towards sustainability and transparency. Colruyt stands out by combining the “always low price” approach to ethical and healthy values, from farm to fork.



Sustainability has been the recurrent theme running through Colruyt’s activities for more than fifty years. For them, sustainable entrepreneurship means seeking a balance between economic, ecological and social factors. They put this into practice through more than 150 projects – in the short, medium and long term.



Colruyt is promoting growing organic grapes. Colruyt Lowest Prices is testing a digital ‘wine assistant’ in six stores. The assistant has a large touchscreen with software that allows customers to make informed wine choices. The idea is derived from market research which showed that customers need guidance in the wine aisle.



Colruyt Group is committed to circular water management in their stores and at production sites, distribution centres and offices. By collecting rainwater and waste water and treating it, they return it to the cycle and can reuse it.



Colruyt Group, together with MechaTronix, has developed a ground-breaking vertical farming light. The new CoolGrow® VF light is up to 38% more energy-efficient than a classical vertical farming installation.

Colruyt Group designed and built their own vertical indoor farm. Thanks to technology, the light, air humidity, temperature, water supply and composition of the soil are regulated in different layers one above the other in an enclosed space. In this way, the plants receive tailor-made nutrients and the surplus recycled, saving 50%. A vertical farm uses up to 90% less water than conventional cultivation, without needing pesticides. It takes up to 20 times less space for the same amount of plants than traditional cultivation, saving a lot of agricultural and natural land.



Hippo Zourides, serial entrepreneur and corporate leader, has been involved in the food trade for over four decades and consults to corporates, large, medium and small enterprises on a variety of management and restructuring skills, including the latest ESG requirements.



Antonello Vilardi, professional in managing points of sale at numerous commercial signs, editorial collaborator for specialised magazines, consultant and lecturer in university masters. He has written books on large-scale retail trade.



Collect&Go. At the beginning of 2023, an unmanned vehicle delivered orders to a few customers' homes in Londerzeel.



2022 was the year in which the Colruyt Group unpacked three renewable initiatives.

- Together with Too Good To Go they are fighting food waste.
- They opened a Collect&Go walk-in, the first pick-up point where you can do shopping by bike or on foot.
- They sent an unmanned electric vehicle on the public road for Collect&Go. Using a code, customers could take their groceries from the vehicle and return empty boxes or empties. The successful test opens up perspectives for innovative, sustainable ways of delivering groceries in urban areas.



Collibri Foundation is a Colruyt Group initiative with a mission to offer young people in difficult situations, from across the globe, more opportunities for a successful future, both in Belgium and abroad – by connecting with each other and by exchanging ideas and cultures.



A delivery, ready to serve the logistics on the network

