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Bottling NFC Juice  52
A Brazilian fruit juice producer conquered the local market within just two years, with the help of Krones technology.

Niagara Bottling  54
A highly efficient complete line from Sidel helps Niagara Bottling achieve an increase of two million cases per year.

Kombucha  44
Lifestyle magazines, influencer blogs, TV talk shows and other communications channels are alive with talk about kombucha. Kelvin King takes a look at this modern phenomenon based on an age-old drink.

Innovating  48
With consumers becoming increasingly label-savvy, it is up to beverage manufacturers to incorporate alternative natural ingredients, comments Johan Corstiaens.

Maximum Quality  50
The possible effects of poor quality carbon dioxide used in carbonation of the beverage is of growing interest and concern to the beverage industry, according to Parker.
Crossovers strengthen soft drinks

As our sector moves solidly onwards in a healthy present and towards an even healthier future through sugar reduction, more innovative use of fruit and an increasingly diversified portfolio which has allowed several bottlers around the world to talk credibly about being a total beverage company (or at least close to it), the opportunities for crossover commerce are broadening.

Crossovers involving soft drinks stretch back a century or more as aspiring brands reached out to – or accepted the approaches of – merchants and manufacturers with goods or services suitable for ‘marriage’ through a form of licensing or simply cooperative agreement.

Apparel, toys, confectionery, lifestyle lines and more chanced their prospects of gaining mutual value. There came a period, perhaps from the early 70s or maybe earlier, when this all became just a little over-the-top and tired, perhaps because the world had become more cynical and less readily persuaded. Came the millennium and a re-set was evident, characterised by a new sophistication.

Soft drinks brands showed interest, for example, in associating with fashion, art, furniture and other designers to underline evolving premiumisation. In some cases this has manifested itself in using soft drink logos or other iconology but there have been subtler associations, too, along the lines of creative sponsorships which reflect well on all concerned.

The healthier beverage trend has seen crossovers into the culinary sector and even fruit/vegetable supply. Condiments and sauces have evolved from some soft drink brand cut-through and widening acceptance of fruit-based drinks has encouraged research investment by several bottlers.

Functional drinks have their own crossover potential, such as into supplements, power snacks and even cosmetics. Equally, some functional and energy beverages owe their creation to the research work of groups whose traditional trade is more pharmaceutical than bottling – Japan has three or four prime examples. Not only is there in retrospect a sense of inevitability to such portfolio broadening but it also harks back to the drugstore beginnings of some major brands.

Interestingly, the crossover between soft drinks and alcohol beverages, once contemplated with some horror by commentators who feared youngsters would be drawn into hard liquor via brand familiarity, has not transpired other than in a few isolated cases.

The boom in top-end mixers has been positioned well clear of mainstream CSD and the ‘hard’ versions of some soft drink types are not only branded quite separately but also clearly labelled and sold only in channels accessible to adults. The less than admirable era of RTD spirits masquerading as soft drinks is long gone – again with a few exceptions – and the RTDs linked with well-known spirits brands do not carry similar soft drink branding, that component being purposefully generic.

Expect to see more crossovers evolving, such as the recent move by a few soft drinks producers into RTD healthy soups which could in time become a soft drink category in their own right.

– Kelvin King
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More brands for Royal Unibrew

ROYAL Unibrew www.royalunibrew.com has continued its growth strategy by negotiating purchase of France-based Geyer Fréres, which owns LORINA craft lemonade, PureThé and InFreshhh brands.

If confirmed, as seems likely, acquisition of the privately owned Etablissements Geyer Fréres would give Royal Unibrew enhanced access to the French soft drink market and strengthen its export portfolio further.

Etablissements Geyer Fréres has production facilities in Munster in the north-east of France and also has a significant presence in specific regulatory demands or approval the USA.

Royal Unibrew is a major regional beverage provider with an extensive own-brand and franchised portfolio across soft drinks, beer, malt beverages and cider categories.

Principal markets are Denmark, Finland, Italy and Germany as well as Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. It also has a growing presence in the Americas region and in several emerging markets, notably in Africa.

No to discrimination

WHEN football player Jimmy Durmaz was subject to a wave of racial hatred and threats on his Instagram after Sweden’s loss to Germany in the 2018 FIFA World Cup the comments caused an uproar. Support for Durmaz poured in from thousands of fans.

Shanga Aziz, founder of Locker Room Talk, observed the comments online. Locker Room Talk is an organisation that aims to change sexist and racist comments among teens in locker rooms. Durmaz has been an ambassador for the organisation since the start.

Aziz contacted the police and got approval to arrange a ‘support manifestation’. He started to contact everybody he knew with connection to Durmaz, including some famous Swedish artists and politicians.

In preparation of the FIFA World Cup Coca-Cola in Sweden, a sponsor of the Swedish Football Association, launched a special-edition Coca-Cola cans featuring six players from the national team, including Durmaz.

Shanga noticed the campaign and got an idea: could Coca-Cola support the manifestation with Durmaz cans?

Of course. Without a doubt. The manifestation shares the same values as Coca-Cola.

The Coca-Cola www.ccep.com team acted fast. During the #backadurmaz campaign, one fan got creative and replaced “zero sugar” with “zero racism”. The Coca-Cola team loved it and decided to make a digital campaign with the “zero racism” on the cans.

Since Coca-Cola has a great relationship with the Swedish Football Association, the brand got almost immediate approval.

“We are so happy that Coca-Cola quickly decided to support the demonstration. What a great way for people who attended to show their support for Durmaz by drinking a Coke that has his face on it,” said Aziz.

Clearly Drinks expands

SUNDERLAND-based Clearly Drinks www.clearlydrinks.co.uk has secured the intellectual property of functional drinks producer The Powerful Water Company, along with distribution rights for its energy drinks. The deal also includes PWC founder Ed Woolner joining Clearly Drinks as commercial director.

The fast-growing Clearly Drinks uses an on-site spring in the production of brands such as Perfectly Clear, 1870 Mixers and Northumbria Spring.

“It specialises in sugar-free beverages. “The acquisition of The Powerful Water Company is a fantastic opportunity and reflects the growth we have achieved as a business over the past year,” said Finn O’Driscoll, chief executive of Clearly Drinks.

“We have expanded our team with a number of new appointments, invested heavily in our site, and confirmed a contract with one of the UK’s largest supermarkets.

“We are particularly pleased that this acquisition welcomes Ed to our senior team to help build on the momentum we have generated, and we look forward to working with him to strengthen our offer and continue our commitment to providing high-quality flavoured water products to our customers.”

Woolner has a solid background in the soft drinks industry. Prior to founding PWC he was associated with Monster Energy and Capri Sun.

Sports nutrition congress

THE NutraIngredients Sports Nutrition Congress 2018, hosted in partnership with the European Specialist Sports Nutrition Alliance, aims to bridge the gaps between cutting edge science, business strategy and key regulatory developments.

Say the organisers: “From insights on elite level sports nutrition for teams and individuals, to those looking to use a new wave of innovative and convenient products to get active and healthy, the congress brings together global leaders in business, regulation and academia to shine a light on the future of the industry.” The event was held at Brussels Marriott Hotel Grand Place from September 25-26.
Warehouse expansion

CCEP France www.ccep.com is investing €7 million in a further 4900m² logistics platform at its Castanet-Tolosan plant in the Haute-Garonne department of the Occitanie region in the south of the country.

This project builds on a major transformation of the plant between 2009 and 2017, at a cost of around €30 million.

That included installation of a second PET production line for Coca-Cola, Fanta and Sprite variants, in bottles ranging from 500ml to 2-litres.

Other areas of the plant were also thoroughly modernised, allowing the plant to expand output and meet the growing demand for Coca-Cola and associated brands in the area around Toulouse as well as across southern France more widely and other markets such as Monaco.

The logistic platform will double on-site storage capacity, freeing up space in the manufacturing areas and reducing inefficient double shipments to external warehouses.

Robinsons help green Wimbledon

BRITISH tennis legend Tim Henman may not have had his name engraved on a trophy at Wimbledon, but he is the first to see his name inscribed on the new Robinsons reusable drink bottle, available at this year’s Championships.

In a light-hearted video released by Robinsons www.robinssquash.co.uk, the official soft drink of The Championships, Tim poked fun at his unlucky track record at Wimbledon, whilst landing a more serious environmental message.

To help reduce the amount of waste at The Championships, which serves close to a million drinks each year, Robinsons introduced new personalised, reusable drink bottles.

“Wimbledon is thirsty work, for both players and spectators, so it’s great that this year tennis fans will be able to stay hydrated in a more sustainable way, whilst doing their bit to reduce the amount of plastic that is used during the fortnight,” said Henman.

Visitors to The All England Lawn Tennis Club were able to purchase the personalised bottle for £7, or just £5 if they returned an empty bottle of Refresh’d for recycling to Robinsons’ Play Tennis Café.*

To help them stay hydrated court-side, Robinsons encouraged visitors to fill their reusable bottles for free with the brand-new Fruit Creations range.

Robinsons has a rich heritage with Wimbledon dating back to 1935 when Lemon Barley Water was first created at The Championships.
**Close to you production**

UNITED Caps [www.unitedcaps.com](http://www.unitedcaps.com) is to build a new UK manufacturing plant in Dinnington, Rotherham, as part of its ‘Close to You’ production strategy.

The initial facility will be 5000 square metres, with an option to expand this up to four times the capacity as business growth dictates.

Production is expected to begin at the end of 2019 and will initially focus on beverage and dairy closures, with scope to add additional segments as needed. This project represents an estimated €20 million investment including the first phase of machinery and is expected to increase group turnover by 15% in phase one. It will initially employ 20 staff.

“This expansion to the United Kingdom is in response to increasing demand there for our products,” said Benoit Henckes, chief executive of United Caps. “We chose Rotherham because of its central location along the M1, available technical skilled people and the reasonable cost of land in that area.

“This will be our first plant in the United Kingdom, and we are looking forward to working closely with the Rotherham Council as the project proceeds.”

Rotherham Council leader Chris Read said the council was very pleased to have a company of United Caps’ stature joining the community.

“We look forward to working with them to ensure a timely completion of the new factory, as well as future expansions as their business needs dictate. The beginning of operations means 20 new jobs almost immediately, and the welcome news that we can be hopeful there will be many more jobs to come for dedicated local people in the future.”

United Caps conducted a number of market studies leading up to the selection of the Dinnington site, explained Henckes. “Our studies reflected that demand was highest for beverage and dairy closures. More specifically, we will focus on the production of plastic closures for flat and medium carbonated drinks as well as fruit juices and dairy products in PET bottles.

“Of course, our customers in the United Kingdom will have access to our full portfolio of caps and closures, as well as to the expert resources in our Messia R&D facility.”

Following the success of United Caps’ Irish plant in Greystones, plant director Paul Gorry will oversee the Rotherham plant as well.

**Pepsi MAX + Tomorrowland**

PEPSICO West Europe Beverages [www.pepsico.eu](http://www.pepsico.eu) has signed a four-year European partnership via its Pepsi MAX brand with [Tomorrowland](http://www.tomorrowland.com) which is claimed to be one of the biggest and fastest growing music festivals in the world.

The recent 2018 summer edition attracted more than one million pre-ticket registrations and drew people from some 200 countries to its Belgian venue.

For decades music has been a key part of the Pepsi DNA and Tomorrowland fits well with Pepsi MAX brand strengths, as well as allowing Pepsi to flex its digital entertainment muscles.

“Tomorrowland is not only one of greatest festivals in the world, but has one of the largest global fan bases, lending its potential to be one of our most exciting and engaging activations,” said Mark Kirkham, head of marketing and innovation for PepsiCo West Europe Beverages.

**Quality mark launched**

PACK2GO Europe, the association of food and beverage service and convenience packaging manufacturers in Europe, is today launching a quality trade mark for use directly on products along with an associated logo and label.

The trademark has been registered in Europe and around the world. The scheme is detailed on a dedicated multi-lingual website [www.p2g-e.com](http://www.p2g-e.com) and promoted under the slogan ‘really good products, by really good companies’.

Claimed to be the first of its kind for the food & beverage service packaging sector; the quality mark is available to companies that commit to abiding by the ‘Pack2Go Europe Guiding Principles’, meet demanding minimum performance requirements that cover the quality of both product and operations; commit to meeting all EU and national legislative requirements on product quality; and report annually their performance against a range of indicators covering environmental performance, social commitments, ethics and supply chain integrity.

The first trademark licences are expected in autumn this year; meaning the quality mark and label will start appearing on products and in marketing materials soon after. Authorised users of the trade mark and labels will be listed on the [p2g-e.com](http://www.p2g-e.com) website.

“We are setting the bar high to protect European consumers. Through this quality mark and logo we’ll be reminding the market about this every day,” said Mike Turner of Graphic Packaging International Foodservice Europe and president of Pack2Go Europe.

“Not all companies out there match up to these levels of quality and performance. So we call on distributors and users of service packaging to take this scheme as the point of reference for sourcing really good products by really good companies.”

In October last year, Pack2Go Europe announced that it was cooperating with EcoVadis to provide each of its companies with an independently assessed sustainability rating and generate an average Pack2Go Europe score.
Sotemapack joins Robopac

THE new partnership in the Italian packaging machinery industry between Robopac www.robopac.com and Sotemapack represents a further step forward for the group run by the Aureli family. In addition to broadening the range of solutions available to international customers, the alliance also consolidates the group’s reputation in Italy’s ‘Packaging Valley’.

Sotemapack www.sotemapack.com brings with it thirty years of experience and business history, built on sound technical skills and constant R & D activity – which has led to it offering the market numerous specialised technology solutions aimed at various areas of industry.

It has a modern, efficient production facility located in the town of Anzola dell’Emilia, in the province of Bologna.

“Once again, with the arrival of Sotemapack, two families have come together on the basis of shared values,” commented Enrico and Valentina Aureli, managing directors of Robopac.

“Without common values, a joint venture is impossible. We have gained control through the acquisition of majority shares in the company, but we will be counting on our new partner company, whose members will remain with us and whose contribution will be vital in terms of technology and commercial innovation.”

Red Bull prominent

TEAM Kamaz, sponsored by energy beverage brand Red Bull, dominated the truck category of this year’s Silk Way Rally which was raced across a gruelling course entirely within Russia. They took the first five places.

The grunty Russian-made Kamaz heavies showed their many attributes yet again, on home territory.

Andrey Karginov added the Silk Way title to his Dakar Rally win in 2014. Team mates Ayrat Mardeev, Anton Shibalov, Sergey Kupiyanov and Eduard Nikolaev followed him in.

The 2018 race-raid route stretched from the Caspian Sea to a finish line in Moscow’s Red Square.

Seven timed stages faced the car, buggy and truck competitors as they crossed the Takyr and Kalmykia deserts.

In the car category, Saudi Arabia’s Yazeed Al-Rajhi kept his Mini up the front after claiming top spot at the midway point.

Nasser Al-Attiyah, who is also closely associated with Red Bull, won the penultimate stage of the race and rose to second overall. Along with co-pilot Mathieu Baumel, they battled back from adversity when the rear differential on their Toyota Hilux suffered problems early in the race and effectively ended the Qatari’s chance of winning the rally.
Africa

Coke’s 90 years in Africa

The Coca-Cola Company is this year celebrating 90 years of operation on the African continent. The first Coke was sold in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1928.

As well as the South African milestone, other African markets are celebrating anniversaries this year and next, notably 70 years of Coke in Kenya.

“For 90 years in Africa we’ve been part of our customer’s lives – we’ve been there with them on their first date, to celebrate their first job offer and refresh their first football game,” said Maserame Mouyeme, Coca-Cola Southern & East Africa’s director of public affairs, communications and sustainability.

“We have built taps and toilets for mothers and fathers and taught their sons and daughters how to recycle. We have empowered their aunts and sisters to build their own businesses.”

Mouyeme said that over the next 90 years, Coca-Cola would accelerate its evolution to innovate its portfolio, packs and channels throughout Africa. It would be more ambitious and bold in being a partner for inclusive development and seek to help address some of the continent’s most pressing problems.

“We have been refreshing our customers’ memories, growing their enterprises and stewarding their environment for 90 years. We will continue to do so, but not just as Coca-Cola. For the next 90 years, we will be refreshing Africa forward as a ‘total beverage company’, so we can be part of more occasions and more memories.

“We will do more to safeguard the environment, provide more jobs and empower more women. We are accelerating our business into one that is a partner in Africa’s prosperity.”

In Kenya, Coca-Cola started out in 1948 selling imported stock from a base along Addis Ababa Road in the industrial area of Nairobi, before commencing local production.

“We take great pride in being a part of Kenya’s fibre for over 70 years, and being a part of celebrations by families and individuals who enjoy an ice-cold refreshment on a sunny day,” said Coca-Cola’s Ahmed Rady who noted that the brand has “also been a part of national celebrations, including the events to mark the attainment of the country’s independence in 1963 among other milestone events”.

Rady said Coca-Cola’s “key focus in the coming years is innovation leading to new products. However, in addition to offering refreshment, we are firmly committed to Kenya’s socio-economic advancement through investments in the communities we operate in.”

High interest in fdt Africa

This year’s food & drink technology Africa www.fdt-africa.com will be held in Johannesburg from September 4-6.

Usually referred to as simply fdt Africa, the trade fair is a hugely successful spin-off from Messe München’s drinktec www.drinktec.com

As well as being a major exhibition of relevance to beverage producers across Africa and further afield, fdt Africa will feature a forum with a strong line-up of speakers and ample opportunities for networking.

fdt Africa 2018 has attracted solid interest from both exhibitors and buyers planning to attend.

We will have a report on fdt Africa 2018 in our October issue.

The next edition of fdt Africa will take place in 2019, outside the established regular cycle of the series. This is due to the new co-location of the fair with analytica Lab Africa and IFAT Africa.

Hibiscus, moringa from new bottler

Ethiopian bottler Zebym Trading has begun production of an innovative range of soft drinks at a new plant in Legetafo, on the outskirts of Ethiopia’s capital Addis Ababa.

The plant uses modern technology sourced mainly from Germany.

Ethiopia has seen extensive investment in soft drink production over the past few years, rejuvenating what had been an ageing infrastructure. The country’s large population and high temperatures help make it a strong market for soft drinks with local people turning increasingly to branded beverages as income improves.

A sugar shortage has inhibited production growth but Zebym says it has adequate sources and is also looking to reduce sugar usage in the near future.

The company also plans to boost output by around 50% by adding a new bottling line and hiring further staff, taking the permanent workforce to 100 or more, as well as casuals for peak periods.

The plant is producing bottled artisan mineral water, a range of CSDs and what is known locally as ‘smoked water’. Juices and fruit drinks are to be added. Flavours include hibiscus and moringa, with the moringa drinks marketed as having functional benefits.

From the outset, plans were to maximise use of natural ingredients and this is set to be expanded. Zebym Trading is owned largely by Zelalem Muluken.
Over 46 billion bottles have been sterilised using Sidel Aseptic Combi with dry preform sterilisation saving our customers 7 billion liters of water and over 57,000 tons of PET.

Sidel, when aseptic matters.
KwaZuluNatal booster

SAPPI www.sappi.com, which is a global producer of biomaterials, dissolving wood pulp, papers and packaging headquartered in South Africa, is investing heavily in its Saiccor Mill in Umkomaas, south of Durban.

The investment programme includes immediate expansion work followed by five years of continuous upgrading.

Among Sappi’s biorefinery operations are the production of second generation hemicellulose sugars, extracted from wood during the pulping process. The company is looking towards partnerships to develop this area, including glycols used in the production of PET for bottle forming.

The company is also a major contributor to fruit packaging. Its South African production accounts for some 1% of the country’s total foreign revenue, as well as supporting its burgeoning fruit export trade.

“In addition to expanding capacity, Sappi is planning to invest R5 billion over the next five years through maintenance and upgrade projects to decrease production costs, introduce new technology, optimise processes and future-proof manufacturing systems at Saiccor Mill,” explained Alex Thiel, chief executive of Sappi Southern Africa.

“These investments will secure the mill’s future by increasing its global cost competitiveness and significant reducing its environmental footprint.”

Agrana buys into Elafruits

THE Agrana group www.agrana.com has acquired 49% of Elafruits www.elafruits.com, the Algerian producer of fruit preparations, including bases for the beverage industry.

Agrana is one of the European leaders in fruit preparations with a large output of fruit juice concentrates. It is also a major sugar and starch producer, including bioethanol. It has 29 production sites in 21 countries.

Elafruits is located in Akbou, around 200km east of Algiers.

“This acquisition is another move to consolidate our leading global position in fruit preparations,” said Johann Manhart, Agrana’s chief executive.

“The existing product portfolio and the option of expanding our production capacity close to major customers will accelerate Agrana’s growth in North Africa.”

Lipton works with WE

LIPTON and the WE charitable and community support group are working together to empower 80,000 women in tea farming communities across Kenya by providing them access to financial and business skills training.

Programme participants will learn financial fundamentals from budgeting and cost-pricing to creating business plans and applying for loans, in addition to leadership fundamentals, entrepreneurship and health management.

Powered by WE’s “Track Your Impact” promise, tea drinkers can help support the programme by purchasing a Lipton product with a Track Your Impact sticker. Each sticker has a code that consumers can enter on we.org/Lipton to see exactly where and how every purchase has made an impact on women tea farming communities.

“We are proud to have the opportunity to support the women tea farmers in Kenya, and are keen to let people know that their Lipton purchase makes a difference in these women’s lives,” said George Hamilton, tea director at Unilever.

“Our goal is to help them build a cycle of learning, sharing and empowerment within their communities that will help future generations of Kenyan families.”

Roxanne Joyal, chief executive of ME to WE, said “the impact of the partnership between Lipton and WE is monumental.

“It will empower tens of thousands of women in tea farming communities, providing them with the opportunity and knowledge to access financial tools and support their families and communities.”

With more than 125 years of experience, Thiel also pointed to the environmental strengths of the investment programme. “CO₂ emissions will be cut in half and waste to landfill will reduce by 48%. In addition, SO₂ emissions will reduce by 35% and water use efficiency will increase by 17%.

“All of this while earning more revenue for the province and country and providing a secure future to our workforce, their families and the communities where they live.”

www.softdrinksinternational.com
Mazoe revives original

In the face of a public outcry about reformulation of Mazoe orange crush and other flavours in the Mazoe range, Schweppes Zimbabwe www.schweppes.co.zw responded with a firm statement it was reinstating the original formula immediately.

Schweppes Zimbabwe is a Coca-Cola company and the reformulation was presented as being in keeping with TCCC’s global move towards lower sugar content in beverages.

While the original Mazoe has been revived, the reduced sugar version will also stay on sale. The outcry included an ad hoc social media campaign. Some people were threatening to boycott Mazoe while others were making inaccurate claims about the new formula.

Mazoe is a major brand for Schweppes Zimbabwe and something of a national icon with near-universal recognition in Zimbabwe.

Read the statement: ‘The Coca-Cola Company and Schweppes Zimbabwe Limited are announcing that the Original Mazoe recipes for all flavours will be back on shelves in the near future.

'We have listened to consumer demand and appreciate all the feedback that has been received. In order to meet those desires but still provide choice, both the original recipes of Mazoe and the reduced sugar recipes will be offered.

'We stand by the safety of all ingredients used in our products and we’re committed to offering choice to help people reduce added-sugar in their diets. Both variants will be clearly labelled, actively encouraging and enabling consumers to enjoy our added-sugar beverages responsibly.'

This was picked up by most of Zimbabwe’s mainstream media and also covered by South African, Zambian (Mazoe is sold in Zambia) and other African media outlets.

Schweppes Zimbabwe also posted a personal online video by managing director Charles Msipa explaining the return to Mazoe’s original formulation.

Bottler sale finalised

It had been in the wind for some time but South Africa’s Bowler Metcalf is only now exiting from its soft drinks production role and focusing on its burgeoning plastics packaging business.

In April, Bowler Metcalf www.bowlermetcalf.co.za sold its 41.3% stake in SoftBev www.softbev.com to The Beverage Company, which owns the Little Green Beverages www.refreshhh.co.za stable of soft drinks.

The deal is just now wrapping up because the final price was dependent on SoftBev profits in the year to June 30.

Little Green Beverages, formed in 2006 and based in Johannesburg, is renowned throughout South Africa – and elsewhere in southern Africa – for its Refreshhh brand. It has spread geographically through the establishment of extra production and distribution centres, including in the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal.

SoftBev’s leading brands include Jive, Cooee and Pepsi.

As we have reported over the years, SoftBev was formed some five years ago by the merger of Quality Beverages and Shoreline, both respected soft drinks producers with a strong presence in the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal.

However, it struggled to gain momentum in the Gauteng market where success was vital if it was to become a truly national supplier. This will now be helped significantly by Little Green Beverages’ sales strength and standing in the Gauteng region.

Bowler Metcalf began to get uneasy about the impact on its core business and signalled it wanted out of bottling.

It will use funds from the SoftBev sale to expand packaging operations, pay down debt and look to other possibilities.
Big investment planned

SAUDI dairy and juice giant Almarai www.almarai.com is planning a major 5-year capital investment programme which will run to around US$2.8 billion.

The company says the project will be funded by a combination of operating cash flow, local and international sukuk arrangements, the Saudi Industrial Development Fund and the Agricultural Development Fund.

‘Given the persistent challenging economic conditions across the region, the focus on efficiency and cost optimisation measures will continue throughout the plan period to ensure continuous competitive advantage,’ Almarai said in a statement.

The investment will range across a number of tasks including replacement of existing assets, improvement of production within farms and production facilities, improving distribution and transport capabilities, widening Almarai’s geographic footprint and further product innovation.

Pepsi + Emirates Foundation

PEPSICO has formed a partnership with the Emirates Foundation, a national organisation set up by the Abu Dhabi Government to facilitate public-private funded initiatives for the empowerment of youth.

The PepsiCo Middle East business unit will offer young and talented Emiratis the opportunity to take up internships at the company as well as provide mentorships and job shadowing opportunities at different departments within the organisation.

PepsiCo will be actively involved in the foundation’s three signature projects: Kafa’at, Think Science, and Volunteer.ae.

“The support of the private sector is essential to empower Emiratis to become the driving force of the UAE’s knowledge economy,” said Maytha Al Habsi, the foundation’s chief executive.

Omar Farid, PepsiCo’s president for Middle East and North Africa, said the company was “proud to support and nurture Emirati youth through several of the foundation’s key initiatives”.

Pepsi Smart Cart

PEPSICO’S futuristic Smart Cart has been attracting considerable attention in the Middle East over the past six months, including from those keen to foster the evolution of alternative beverage sales channels.

The autonomous snack cart uses real-time data to track the location of larger crowds before rolling up to provide on-demand drinks and snacks with a convenient cashless transaction.

It was a very popular feature earlier this year of the STEP2018 experiential tech festival in Dubai, an event supported by PepsiCo www.pepsico.com

The 2018 event, sixth in the series, showcased more than 200 start-ups and exhibitors, also featuring an impressive 250-strong speaker line-up.

It was the first time the conference programme was delivered across four industry-focused stages, allowing attendees to dive deeper into the trending topics of future tech, fintech, digital media and start-up concerns.

The Pepsi Smart Cart can take orders via a Facebook Messenger app, move to areas where the most potential customers are gathering, and feed back to an “intelligence centre” when stocks are getting low – the cart returns to base for restocking, a task that does require human input.
Egyptian partnership formed

TIBA Trading & Distribution Company www.tiba-egypt.com and the Egyptian Saudi Company for Water and Food Industries www.floegypt.net – which is usually known simply as FLO – have signed a partnership agreement which will give FLO Water much-enhanced access to retail outlets across the country.

Tiba is the distribution arm of Juhayna www.juhayna.com whose portfolio includes a wide selection of juices, drinking yoghurts and other dairy products.

It operates 28 distribution centres, from which a fleet of around 1000 trucks deliver to customers in 27 governorates.

Saf Thabet, chief executive of Juhayna, commented that “the distribution contract is an extension of the success achieved by Tiba in the Egyptian market since its inception in 2005”.

Its distribution capabilities had been successfully utilised by Arla International as well as the Juhayna portfolio.

“The partnership will strengthen local confidence in the company’s capabilities, especially in terms of trade and distribution, through cooperation with FLO, and we hope this will be a new cornerstone for both companies in their respective fields to provide a quality health product to our customers.”

Mahmoud Daood, FLO’s chairman and chief executive, explained that when FLO went looking for a tactical partner to handle its distribution as efficiently as possible, Tiba stood out for a number of reasons.

These included having the largest appropriate network in Egypt, a proven track record of meeting international product handling standards, and it was backed by the might of Juhayna which allowed it to achieve its visions and strategic operational capabilities.

FLO was launched in the Egyptian market in July 2017 and FLO said it had been very well received. Daood claimed it was one of the highest quality bottled waters on the market, suiting Egyptian tastes.

Careem trials carton water

TETRA Pak Arabia www.tetrapak.com/sa has been working with ride hailing app Careem www.careem.com and Al Rabie www.alrabie.com to offer water in cartons to Careem’s business and first class customers in Saudi Arabia.

Careem is a major operator in the MENA region, Pakistan and Turkey.

“Water in cartons is an innovative initiative which will enable us, as a company, to be more flexible and diverse,” said Ziyad Al Jadid, operational marketing director for Tetra Pak Arabia. “Drinking water from a carton package is a new experience for our consumers.

“Careem’s executive service passengers will be welcomed aboard with a refreshing water drink that will make their journey memorable and healthy.”

The six-layered packaging is specifically engineered to protect the water from the KSA’s harsh weather conditions.

With customer satisfaction the key to this trial, Careem’s executive clients have been requested to scan a QR code which then invites their participation on a brief feedback survey.

Al Rawabi sustainability

DUBAI’S Al Rawabi Dairy Company is investing heavily in equipment, production practices and environmental initiatives to achieve significant sustainability goals in accordance with UAE Vision 2021.

This strategy was underlined by a visit to Al Rawabi's plant by HE Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, the UAE’s minister for climate change and environment.

Al Rawabi www.alrawabidairy.com is one of Dubai’s biggest dairy producers. Its extensive product portfolio includes a variety of dairy beverages, juices and functional drinks.

As well as the production facility, the minister toured Al Rawabi’s farm and the environmental unit.

“Sustainability, which is a key target of the UAE Vision 2021, can only be achieved through an enhanced public-private partnership and engaging the business community in the government’s plans and initiatives. This will expedite the achievement of our sustainable targets and promote innovation as a main pillar in the process,” said Al Zeyoudi.

“UAE livestock and dairy companies are actively cooperating with the ministry to ensure sustainability and add more innovation to their operations.”

Abdulla Sultan Al Owais, Al Rawabi’s chairman, said the company was “committed to supporting the government’s mission of preserving the environment for our future generations”.


“Al Rawabi prides itself on receiving certification for our best practices in quality management, food safety and environmental management,” said chief executive Ahmed El Tipani.

“We also have our own standards for product quality to make sure we are producing healthy, fresh and good tasting products for all our customers.

“We are always updating our knowledge and the team is constantly learning to keep abreast of the latest technology that will produce healthy and safe products.”
Backing for start-ups

TENMOU www.tenmou.me, which is described as Bahrain’s first ‘business angels’ company, is collaborating with vertical accelerator Savour Ventures www.savourventures to help Bahraini start-up ventures in the beverage and food sector.

The initiative is also supported by Tamkeen www.tamkeen.bh, a public authority established in 2006 to help position the kingdom’s private sector as the key driver of economic growth and development.

Tamkeen also helps companies improve productivity and workforce training.

“The food and beverage industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the Middle East, and is heavily dependent on imports,” commented Nawaf Al Kooheji, Tenmou’s chief executive.

“This increasingly dynamic sector is witnessing a steady growth in demand. Our efforts are sharply focused on continuing to encourage creativity in the food sector, in addition to helping start-ups expand by supplying entrepreneurs with the necessary tools and support.

“We are looking forward to more Bahrainis applying to Savour’s programme which has witnessed a truly amazing track record, often achieving better results within two months compared to what other founders take years to accomplish.” Nawaf Al Kooheji thanked the Tamkeen agency for its “unparalleled support throughout this journey, providing much needed support to local entrepreneurs contributing to the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Bahrain”.

The programme works by helping entrepreneurs find the right product or niche in the market, and working closely with them to scale the business. The final two weeks of the programme engage the enlisted entrepreneurs, providing them with the opportunity to pitch their business to Savour’s co-investor network.

40,000 visitors to show

THE 25th iran food + bev tec www.iran-foodbevtec.com has been judged an enormous success.

It was part of the iran agrofood event which occupied the entire Tehran International Fairgrounds, attracting 1225 exhibitors from 29 countries – including several grouped in 25 official country pavilions – and more than 40,000 visitors from all over Iran and other countries in the region.

Exhibitor feedback suggested that buyer quality was better than the previous year, pointing to good work by the organisers in identifying and drawing the most appropriate buyers.

Other specialist sections of the overall event included iran bakery + confectionery, iran food ingredients, iran agro and iran food + hospitality.

iran food + bev tec 2018 featured many major players in the beverage sector, including KHS and Krones.

Amir Ghaffari, area sales manager Middle East for KHS, said their stand was visited by representatives of large international producers as well as Iranian companies.

Thomas Treindl, head of sales Middle East for Krones AG, said the company had been active in Iran for 15 years and the Iranian market was of high potential for Krones.

“Here at iran food + bev tec 2018 we meet existing and new customers.”

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JV to boost dairy sales in India

GLOBAL dairy giant Fonterra www.fonterra.com has set up a joint venture partnership with Indian consumer products company Future Consumer www.futuregroup.in To be called Fonterra Future Dairy Partners, it is aimed at helping meet the buoyant demand for high quality dairy nutrition in India.

“It will allow us to prepare the groundwork and make the most of our expertise as we enter the world’s largest and fastest growing dairy industry. Consumer demand for dairy in India over the past seven years is set to increase by 82 billion litres – seven times the forecasted growth for China,” said Lukas Paravicini, Fonterra’s chief operating officer global consumer and foodservice.

“The partnership will be driven by growth through profitability. The initial stages of the partnership will focus on product development, and marketing with the right capital investment made during this period.”

Paravicini explained the first consumer products will be launched by the middle of 2019, using both locally sourced milk and dairy products from New Zealand.

“We will also use this time to settle in the partnership infrastructure, learn the market and prioritise geographies.”

Paravicini noted that the joint venture came at a time when the Indian dairy industry was transforming itself.

“This has resulted in a big shift away from more traditional locally-based dairy businesses with limited product and brand differentiation, to a new era where more value-added and innovative dairy products are in high demand across the country.”

Future Consumer Ltd is part of the Future Group which is developing a new retail experience for consumers, with plans to launch 1100 stores this year. The outlets feature a complete digital experience both in-store and through a virtual market place.

The new retail experience will add to Future Group’s existing footprint. Future Group which is developing a new retail and more traditional locally-based dairy business models with limited product and brand differentiation, to a new era where more value-added and innovative dairy products are in high demand across the country.”

Mango marvel Manpasand undaunted

MANPASAND Beverages www.manpasand.co.in says that increased production capacity was one of the highlights of its 2017-18 financial year. It has plans to add further production capabilities, looking both to the domestic and export markets. And it will be adding further beverages to its portfolio.

Its Vadodara plant became operational in the latter part of the financial year, while work at the Varanasi and Sri City facilities was nearing completion.

As we reported earlier, Manpasand has finalised the location of a further plant in Khurda, Odisha, its first in the eastern region.

The 2018-19 financial year got off to a slow start, with only marginal net profit despite revenue growth of over 9%.

“Issues unrelated to operations caused some spillover and impacted our business in the month of June,” said Dhirenendra Singh, Manpasand’s chairman and managing director.

“Despite this challenge, we managed to perform relatively well and kept ourselves focused on expansion and product development. Operations are now back to normal, and we continue to be confident about our growth plans.”

Singh stressed that Manpasand intended to advance distribution during the next fiscal year. “Augmenting our presence through quick service restaurants, food chains and retailers to develop stronger branding, and to develop stronger brand recognition for our products among consumers will continue to be the main driver of the company’s growth.”

A “symbiotic growth approach” will be in place, he explained. “Product innovation and enhancing the distribution network will be the primary focus areas in our endeavour to create a point of differentiation amongst our local and global competitors.”

Training for micro retailers

THE Coca-Cola system globally – both The Coca-Cola Company and bottlers – has a widely praised reputation for supporting small retailers with training programmes and other support, as we report from time to time.

A programme in India known as Parivartan recently drew accolades from a number of its graduates, operators of micro or small retail outlets in various parts of the country.

Many of them have attended more than one course over the years.

In March 2017, Coca-Cola India www.coca-cola-india.com signed a memorandum of understanding with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to develop a joint curriculum specifically for small food establishments. As the first company to partner with FSSAI, Coca-Cola set itself an initial target of training 50,000 small food vendors in food safety and hygiene.

The Parivartan (which translates to ‘change’) programme uses a mix of training methodologies such as inventory, working capital and customer relationship management to upskill small retailers.

A three-hour presentation in vernacular languages is carried out through FSSAI-certified trainers.

These are held in classrooms as well as aboard a bus that has been converted into a mobile classroom, which travels across the country. Each ‘classroom on wheels’ can carry out up to three sessions in a day for nearly 25 students.

Since 2008, when Coca-Cola started its effort to upskill micro-entrepreneurs, Parivartan has impacted over 346,000 small grocery retailers, including over 48,000 women retailers.

Anurag Anand, who heads franchise capability services for Coca-Cola in India, says the programme has had “encouraging results, which has encouraged us further”.

“From here...

...to here.”

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Dairy milk + coconut

NESPRAY Coco-Up, launched in Sri Lanka earlier this year by Nestlé www.nestle.lk, is providing to be a solid market success, helped by a marketing campaign which points to its innovative formula, local ingredients and healthy attributes.

The RTD is made with both Sri Lankan milk and coconut. It is the first product of its kind for Nestlé worldwide.

“With its innovative recipe of fresh milk and coconut, Nespray Coco-Up joins our strong portfolio with a unique consumption experience, making drinking milk more fun, adventurous and refreshing for kids,” said Ruwan Welikala, VP dairy for Nestlé in Sri Lanka.

Nespray Coco-Up was developed by the Nestlé’s R&D team specifically for Sri Lankan tastes, although it could be adapted for other markets.

“Innovation is in our DNA, ever since our company was founded more than 150 years ago. Today we continue to provide innovative, science-based products and services that enhance quality of life,” said managing director Shivani Hegde.

“We’re proud to offer our local consumers a variety of products made from local fresh milk, with the latest being Nespray Coco-Up with the unique infusion of coconut. This innovation perfectly reflects Nestlé in Sri Lanka: combining cutting-edge global technology and R&D with local innovation - using local ingredients and strong local consumer insights - to develop superior products.”

Nestlé has been producing coconut milk powder at its factory in Kurunegala since the 1980s and supplies group production facilities worldwide. It works with over 6000 local growers.

Sri Lanka labs get India’s OK

THREE Sri Lankan testing laboratories have been authorised by India’s Food Safety and Standards Authority to certify food and beverage products being exported to India. This will avoid difficulties where food and beverage imports have been refused or delayed during Indian border checks.

FSSAI www.fssai.gov.in – whose motto is ‘inspiring trust, assuring safe and nutritious food’ – is an agency of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Authorisation of the labs followed a visit to Colombo by a team from FSSAI and the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories.

The Export Development Board of Sri Lanka (EDB) www.srilankabusiness.com has put a lot of work into gaining the authorisation, submitting names of both state-owned and private labs for consideration.

As we have reported in the past – including a series of special feature reports from Sri Lanka – the EDB is very keen to develop export markets for Sri Lankan beverages and food products, not only in neighbouring India but also in the Middle East, Europe, Southeast Asia, Australasia and elsewhere.

FHIn to debut

THE first Food and Hotel India Expo www.foodandhotelindia.com is being organised by UBM India. It will be held at the Sahara Star Hotel in Mumbai from September 5-7.

In the time-honoured tradition of acronyms, the event is being billed by UBM as FHIn.

“The Indian food and hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key industries driving the growth of the food and beverage sector. Driven by the insatiable consumption of its 1.3 billion strong population, India’s rising middle class and increasing disposable incomes, the sector continues to grow,” said Yogesh Mudras, managing director of UBM India.

“India also offers tremendous business opportunities for international brands to flourish in its fertile markets. The industry is looking forward to this show considering the expertise we have gathered and the activities we have lined up for it.”

Over 90 exhibitors are expected at the inaugural FHIn.

Event features include elite workshops, the India International Culinary Classic, ProWein India and the Hospitality Strategy Summit organised in association with Odd Box.

More flavours, shops

PRABHAT Dairy www.prabhatdairyin is building further on its successful development of the dairy beverage category which has seen it offer chaas, lassi and milkshakes in Tetra Paks. One of its latest moves is to add kesar badam and mango lassis, along with a vanilla blueberry milkshake.

The group is also expanding Prabhat Goodness Zone, a retail chain operating on a franchise model.

The company indicated recently that it had plans for expansion across the vast India national market in the second phase of its current strategic plan. Phase I will focus much of the expansion on the state of Maharashtra.

“At Prabhat, we constantly strive to provide consumers the ultimate product experience,” said Vivek Nirmal, Prabhat Dairy’s joint managing director and chief executive.

“But, we consistently keep on researching and churning out new products, which help us in growing our presence in the marketplace.

“Our retail chains would be catering as a counter sale and local distribution point for Prabhat’s milk and milk-based products. We are excited about the Goodness Zone, which would provide us direct access to newer markets, through which we can reach millions of customers in a short span.”

He noted that Prabhat Dairy was receiving many enquiries from both Maharashtra and other states as potential franchise holders assessed the profit potential of the Goodness Zone model.
Showcase in the largest functional and health ingredients exhibition in Asia!

With a reputation for serving the health ingredients industry for 27 years, Hi Japan is opening the doors to this growing market in 2017.

An outstanding opportunity to meet 600+ supplement and functional food manufacturers and 40,000+ visitors seeking ingredients in a market at the epicentre of innovation.

With a consumer demand for healthy and nutritious foods and a willingness to pay high prices for quality and convenience, it’s no wonder Japan has the world’s largest functional food and supplements market, valued at 28 billion USD in 2015.

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50 years for Pepsi Guam

PEPSI Guam Bottling www.facebook.com/Pepsguam is this year celebrating 50 years of successful operation with an operational shift. It has moved from being under the umbrella of PepsiCo International to PepsiCo USA.

Jon Denight, PGB’s general manager, said this would allow “better access to more US products and promotions.”

For most of its half century, PGB has been part of the Calvo Enterprises Inc conglomerate which also has extensive interests in insurance, real estate, construction, media, banking, retail, wholesale and distribution.

It is unusual in that two of the Calvo family – Paul and his son Eddie – have both been governors of Guam as well as managing PGB, albeit at different times. Eddie Calvo served two terms as governor up to January this year.

The Calvos put a lot of work into not only producing and marketing the core Pepsi brands on Guam but also gaining other franchises and developing their own local brands, including the popular Chamorro variants.

In 2010 they invested in expanding and modernising their bottling plant, giving them further flexibility in broadening the portfolio.

Koy fronts Pocari Sweat makeover

OTSUKA Nutraceutical (Thailand) www.thaiootsuka.com is presenting its packaging makeover of Pocari Sweat through one of Thailand’s best known actresses, Ratchawin Wongviriya.

Known widely as Koy, the 34-year-old has an impressive filmography of mega-audience TV series, big screen movies and commercials, as well as a reputation in the top-end DJ market. She has appeared on hundreds of Thai magazine covers.

Takayuki Kushida, managing director of Otsuka Nutraceutical (Thailand) said the company was determined to make Pocari Sweat more familiar to Thai consumers while promoting their health concern through the use of online and offline marketing strategies as well as various marketing activities to reach target consumers more effectively.

He described the new bottle as having “an added sense of modernity and practicality, making it convenient for consumers to drink and to bring along.

“The wave pattern unique to Pocari Sweat and the redesigned packaging bottle that proves more durable make Pocari Sweat even more outstandingly appealing.”

Thailand is the first country to launch this new packaging, with other markets following the Thai lead.

Koy Ratchawin Wongviriya features in a TV commercial which shows that, to achieve one’s goal, sometimes involves a lot of obstacles and losses. Although it is not easy, the result can always be appreciated. Whatever the challenge, Pocari Sweat is ready to stay beside the consumers to refresh their spirit.

Outdoor media have also been added to achieve the target most effectively.

Other marketing initiatives include line stickers featuring the Pocari-Chan character, product sampling and Pocari-Chan fare cards for the Bangkok Mass Transit System, doubling as collector items.

While the Thai sports beverage category has been sluggish in the past year, Pocari Sweat sales climbed by some 80%. Takayuki Kushida said Otsuka Nutraceutical was confident it would enjoy further growth throughout 2018.

Meeting PepsiCo boss Indra Nooyi in New York last year are PBG executives Eduardo Calvo and John Calvo, along with Denight (right).

PGB also imports a variety of beverages and snacks, including Devondale milk from Australia.

“Whatever the category – carbonated soft drink, water; enhanced water; juice, juice drink, tea, coffee, milk and others – PGB’s continuing goal is to have, within every beverage category, a variety of all the right choices always available,” said Denight.

Half-century celebrations have included painting delivery trucks in commemorative livery and offering retro Pepsi merchandise in retail promotions.

Super GT racing support

BEVERAGE companies have been heavily involved in bringing a round of Japan’s Super GT racing to Thailand for the fifth time.

The Chang Super GT Race was sponsored by the Thai Beverage www.thaibev.com brand which, while long associated with beer – Chang is one of the country’s major beers – has in the past five years become increasingly aligned with water.

Chang drinking water is nowadays one of Thailand’s mainstream players while in May 2017 Thai Beverage also introduced Chang Mineral Water as it moved towards enhancing the brand’s premium image in the water’s category.

Thai Beverage wants Chang to be one of the three major suppliers in the bottled mineral water market and is also looking to export markets, especially in Southeast Asia but potentially worldwide as Thailand ups its leverage of Thai cuisine as a tourism and trade promotion tool.

Chang also sponsors the Chang International Circuit in Buriram, venue for the Super GT series.

Buriram, which is around 400km to the northeast of Bangkok, is promoting itself as ‘the city of sports’ and the motor racing circuit plays a key role in this, to the advantage of the Chang brand. Buriram is accessible from Bangkok by highway, railway or scheduled airlines.

Furthering the soft drink industry involvement in Super GT, one of the top teams in the series – est Cola by AAS – is sponsored by est which, as we have reported, is diversifying its beverage portfolio, building further on the core cola it developed in a bid to counter Pepsi and Coca-Cola.

est Cola www.estcolathai.com has won a significant share of the big cola market in Thailand and is also exported elsewhere in Asia.
Emerging possibilities

COCA-COLA Amatil www.ccamatil.com is spreading its wings further as Amatil X gains momentum. This is described as ‘a new platform for emerging possibilities to power growth beyond Coca-Cola Amatil’s core business’.

CCA’s core beverage business operates in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.

Managing director Alison Watkins said Amatil X would support the development of concepts, start-ups and early stage businesses that anticipate and address customer needs.

“Customers’ worlds are changing quickly, with increasing expectations driven by technology. At the same time, beverage trends and drinking occasions are evolving fast,” said Watkins. “While remaining focused on our core is critical, we need to find new avenues of growth.

“We want to continue to challenge ourselves to provide our customers with ‘Only at Amatil’ experiences.”

At the centre of Amatil X is AX Ventures, a multimillion dollar corporate venturing program, set up to invest in future revenue growth opportunities.

These will be identified via Xcelerate and Xponential.

Xcelerate is a corporate accelerator programme to operate in Australia and New Zealand. Xponential is an employee venturing programme.

Importantly, the programs within Amatil X are not open to proposals for new beverages, and do not compete with existing innovation pipelines provided by brand partners including The Coca-Cola Company.

Instead, there are three broad themes: ‘Millions of moments of impact’ – concepts for creating a sustainable future; ‘One step ahead’ – concepts for redefining the customer experience; and ‘Route to me’ – concepts for exploring alternative ways of getting customers what they want, when and where they want it.

Explained Watkins: “Our aspiration is for Amatil X to set the benchmark for how to bridge the gap between large established corporations and the agility and innovation of start-up businesses, so that we leverage entrepreneurs to help fuel our growth agenda.

“We are investing today for tomorrow’s growth.”

China + Russia talk probiotics

CONSENSUS on the importance of consumer education in active probiotic dairy drinks was a key result of a pioneering China-Russia Nutrition Forum held in cooperation with the Mengniu Danone JV.

The Chinese Nutrition Society (CNS) and Russia’s Federal Research Centre of Nutrition, Biotechnology and Food Safety (FRC) signed a memorandum of understanding which committed them to ongoing strategic cooperation.

They acknowledged a common goal to jointly enhance collaboration in the field of nutrition and health, and to boost talent sourcing in dairy technology.

To achieve this, they will facilitate bilateral trade processes and dairy industry development by providing guidance and support for laws and regulations for seamless trade in dairy products in both countries.

As society’s overall consumption upgrades, health education matters more than material gains said Yang Yuexin, CNS director. “Chinese people are having sub-standard daily intake of dairy, especially active probiotic drinks. To educate the public the health benefits of active probiotic is very important.”

There is a similar situation in regard to active probiotic drinks in Russia. “The dietary structure of Europe is mainly made up of meat, egg and dairy. Russians have dairy consumption meeting guiding criterion, but low awareness of the function of active probiotic drinks which need to be greatly improved,” noted FRC’s Sheveleva Svetlana.

CC Japan’s ‘Dream of Dairy’

A SHORTAGE of young people – especially young women – entering the dairy industry, has motivated Coca-Cola Japan www.coca-cola.co.jp to undertake aspirational briefings for high school students under a ‘Dream of Dairy’ banner.

Undertaken in association with the National Agricultural Cooperative, government agencies and others, this initiative is part of the Coca-Cola global ‘5 by 20’ strategy which is providing learning opportunities for women to improve business skills as well as networking with peers. The strategy’s goal is to support five million women worldwide by 2010.

The ‘Dream of Dairy’ sees female dairy farmers visiting schools to talk about their life, covering education, job seeking, tertiary training, family matters, challenges and successes.

While oriented primarily to would-be dairywomen, the programme is also open to male participation and the presentations cover the need to work constructively with men as well as fostering family relationships and having children.

There is a positive element of feminism but certainly no anti-male aspects.
Americas

More outlets for Jones Soda

JONES Soda Co www.jonessoda.com has added another 1,000-plus 7-Eleven outlets in northern California and Canada carrying its regional Big Gulp flavours. Jones offers a wide range of soda flavours, many of them with zany names and tastes, in glass bottles, cans and on fountain.

In recent times it has also been developing Lemoncocco www.drinklemoncocco.com, a premium non-carbonated drink made with lemon and coconut flavours and produced by a Jones Soda subsidiary.

Jones has also gained further financing for strategic growth and has been working on an enhanced investor relations programme to support this.

In the 7-Eleven dispensers, flavours vary from one region to another, including Blueberry Lemonade, Blue Bubblegum and Berry Lemonade.

“Introducing more JONES cane sugar beverage options sets 7-Eleven apart in its ambition to showcase craft beverages,” said Jennifer Cue, chief executive of Jones Soda. “Thanks to 7-Eleven, our craft sodas are now available in bottles, on the fountain and as everyone’s favourite frozen drink. Having launched Jones in Vancouver, Canada, over 20 years ago, we are especially excited to be able to finally answer our fans’ call to bring Jones to soft drink fountains across Canada.”

The world’s largest convenience retailer and the Seattle-based soda company first collaborated to create bottled 7-Select brand premium sodas crafted by Jones. Five flavours of 7-Select’s first premium, private brand carbonated beverage launched nationally in 2016. The following year, Jones-created flavours landed on Slurpee and Big Gulp machines in the Pacific Northwest.

Jones Soda has engaged Liolios Group to lead a new strategic investor relations and financial communications programme.

“Over the last couple of years, we’ve positioned our product portfolio for broad demographic appeal via several initiatives, including our fountain and Lemoncocco opportunities,” said Cue. “Recently we strengthened our balance sheet with a $2.9 million financing that allows us to fuel our growth plan and deliver shareholder value. “Given our momentum, we have engaged Liolios to help us strengthen our investor communications, provide greater transparency to our performance, and increase awareness in the financial markets.”

New Barn expanding

ALMONDMILK producer New Barn www.newbarnorganics.com is planning to boost production of its current dairy alternative range and add new lines as it builds on continuing growth since its inception in 2015.

The company makes and markets organic almondmilks, as well as a non-dairy frozen dessert line-up called Almond-Crème. Its Barista Almondmilk is a current breakout item, available for home use as well as in cafés and specialty coffee shops; it has achieved strong on-premise pick-up.

“We have experienced tremendous growth since we launched in 2015,” said Robb. “Customers are falling in love with our brand and our steadfast commitment to making clean, delicious organic products. With more households across the US and abroad switching to organic, we believe our brand speaks to a core desire of our customers.”

“There were plans to launch “a pipeline of innovative plant-based products in multiple categories”.

“We have a fantastic team, exciting ideas, and will be stepping out in a big way. We also have an incredible group of committed investors, who share our values. I am thrilled that this investment will allow us to continue building momentum in the coming year.”

Bottler growth leader

A STUDY released by market research group IRI and the Boston Consulting Group, measuring growth across consumer packaging goods (CPG) companies in the US, identifies The Wonderful Company www.wonderful.com as one of the overall leaders and also growth leader in produce.

Headquartered in Los Angeles, The Wonderful Company is a privately held $4 billion global company employing 9,000 employees across several countries.

It has a major stake in the beverages sector, notably with FIJI Water and POM Wonderful 100% pomegranate juice as well as JUSTIN and Landmark Wine. Other key brands include Wonderful Pistachio and Telena.

“More than half of U.S. households already buy a Wonderful product each year and IRI data in concert with this study clearly demonstrates that our healthy offerings are resonating with consumers,” said Adam Cooper, vice president of marketing for The Wonderful Company.

“The Wonderful Company is relentlessly focused on driving healthier eating options. Over the past 10 years we’ve invested more than $3 billion in capital and $1 billion in marketing and brand building. With these investments, and consumers increasingly seeking nutritious choices, Wonderful is poised for even more growth in the future.”

The report’s findings were based on the growth performance of more than 400 CPG companies with annual U.S. retail sales exceeding $100 million. The analysis, which covered both public and private companies, focused on what consumers actually buy in measured channels, as opposed to what factories ship.

Companies were ranked on a combination of three metrics: dollar sales growth, volume sales growth, and market share gains. The study also analysed trends that drove performance in the sector.

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Inaugural US event success

FEEDBACK from participants in the first PETnology Americas conference, held in Atlanta, Georgia, has been overwhelmingly positive.

The event www.petnologyamericas.com will be an annual affair, with the next to be held in May 2019. PETnology Europe is scheduled for Paris in late November this year.


Topics on the first conference day were focused on digitisation, processes, quality and optimisation. On the second day the overall focus shifted to the highly topical subject of demand and supply of raw material in times of dwindling resources.

While John Maddox from SBAcci made it clear that the PET industry needs strong survival tactics for living until 2020 with regards to material supply, D.D. Cornell drew attention to the circular economy and the risk of losing achievements through ‘virtue-signalling’ by global players and brand-owners.

Further presentations showed that the industry is aware of its several risks and has to continuously remind itself to identify and use the opportunities.

Jon Larson from Krones described the PET bottle situation as being at a crossroad and called for a clear strategy: action and tact changes. Anna Horecica-Csiki from SIPA explained how preform production meets the requirements of the circular economy. Is eCommerce about to reset packaging to zero? – Thierry Fabozzi from PTI presented interesting solutions.

The agenda was successfully completed by technology-oriented presentations on materials and colour additives, closures, preform and bottle production, barrier and aseptic.

PETnology Americas was organised by PETnology and The Packaging Conference.

www.petnologyamericas.com

SAVE THE DATES

BevTech Europe
September 10th to 11th, 2018
Paris, France

BevTech Latin America
October 18th, 2018
Mexico City, Mexico

BevTech ‘19
April 29th to May 1st, 2019
Concord, North Carolina, USA

BevTech Canada
June 5th, 2019
Guelph, Ontario, Canada

Visit our website at www.bevtech.org for more information.
PET producer joins biotech group

BIOTECH specialist Cannabis Science www.cannabisscience.com has acquired Bottle It, a major PET injection-mould and blow-mould manufacturer servicing the beverage and food sector.

Both companies are based in California. Cannabis Science, which is primarily involved in the development of cannabinoid-based medicines, has been looking to diversify its operations, including in the beverage sector.

It recently announced its partnership with Crown Baus Capital Corp to distribute a non-alcoholic version of CBCA’s newly-acquired Cannabia, billed as ‘the world’s first cannabis beer’.

“Cannabis Science’s acquisition of Bottle It contributes significantly to our company’s growth strategy and solidifies our capabilities as a manufacturer,” said Raymond Dabney, Cannabis Science’s president and chief executive.

“Cannabis Science now has the in-house capacity to manufacture PET bottles and containers for Cannabis Science’s consumer products, as well as to manufacture bottles and containers for other manufacturers of beverages, specialty waters, foods, cosmetics, and other products globally.

“This creates an important new revenue stream.”

Additionally, plastic bottles and containers will realise growth with demand for unit-dose packaging for pharmaceutical products, which is a high-growth end market for plastic packaging. “The acquisition of Bottle It gives Cannabis Science a foothold in this important market segment with existing products, as well as the ability to add many of our own products.”

Jamba Juice renews OnDemand


“ArrowStream is our strategic partner and has enhanced our supply chain operations to ensure the freshest products and ingredients arrive at our restaurants on-time,” said Doug O’Brien, Jamba Juice’s VP of supply chain.

“The decision to renew our contract is completely value-driven. ArrowStream continuously drives innovation with their technology advancements and their deep understanding of supply chain operations. This past year when we relocated our entire corporate headquarters, we had to bring on new staff. ArrowStream’s system allowed us to continue operations without interruption and provide a seamless transition to the new team.”

ArrowStream is used by several major restaurant chains in the US.

Uruguay bottler to CC FEMSA

THE big Uruguayan bottler Montevideo Refrescos www.montevideorefrescos.com has become part of the Coca-Cola FEMSA www.coca-colafemsa.com group which is the largest Coca-Cola franchise operator in the world by sales volume.

Coca-Cola FEMSA is based in Mexico City and has extensive soft drink production interests in Central and South America. It recently announced its intention to sell – via a put option – its majority holding in Coca-Cola FEMSA Philippines which will then see it focus operations in the Americas.

Montevideo Refrescos, which is usually known as MONRESA, is the exclusive Coca-Cola distributor and manufacturer of the Coca-Cola portfolio in Uruguay, as well as producing local brands in tandem with licensed ranges.

It was formed in 1943 and has until now been owned fully by The Coca-Cola Corporation.

“As part of our strategic framework and the consolidation of leadership in the global beverage market, the integration of MONRESA reaffirms our commitment to generating economic and social value for our shareholders and stakeholders,” said John Santa Maria, chief executive of Coca-Cola FEMSA.

Southern Caribbean consolidation

BANKS Holdings Ltd has sold its soft drinks production subsidiary Barbados Bottling Co to KOSCAB Distribution (Barbados), part of the KOSCAB Holdings group.

Barbados Bottling Co, which is known in Barbados by the initials it shares with the broadcaster, will continue to produce Coca-Cola and related brands.

In addition to franchised brands, BBC also offers some of its own drinks such as BBC Soda Water.

The move is largely because The Coca-Cola Company has been restructuring its business model in Central America, working closely with KOSCAB which also handles TCCC brands in Grenada, St Kitts, St Vincent and Antigua.

KOSCAB managing director Carlos Diaz said that the result was bottler consolidation in the southern Caribbean.

The BBC legacy would be retained, he pointed out, and KOSCAB was aiming to strengthen bottling operations in Barbados as it worked on marketing initiatives in the region. Most BBC staff have remained with the unit.
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Dietary fibre thumbs-up

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has confirmed that PROMITOR Soluble Fiber – a resistant maltodextrin – and STA-LITE Polydextrose from Tate & Lyle have been included under its ‘new’ definition of dietary fibre.

In May 2016 the FDA announced an amended regulatory definition for dietary fibre. This stated that to be considered a source of fibre, isolated or synthetic nondigestible carbohydrates must have a demonstrated physiological health benefit.

Tate & Lyle’s full fibre portfolio is now accepted under the FDA fibre definition. “Tate & Lyle continues to make significant investments in innovation and research to develop healthier and tastier solutions for food and beverage manufacturers and their consumers,” said Andrew Taylor, Tate & Lyle’s president ICD.

“Due to extensive clinical research on our fibres of their proven physiological benefits, we were confident that our fibres would meet the new requirements and are delighted that this has now been confirmed by the FDA.”

Tate & Lyle created soluble corn fibre over a decade ago and has continued to be one of the science leaders in the field. The company actually provided major input to FDA by submitting the strong scientific evidence necessary to demonstrate the physiological health benefits of soluble corn fibre.

US patent for WakeUp!

TEL Aviv-based InnoBev has received a US patent for WakeUp! – its plant-based alertness formula. The patent describes a method for providing an ‘awakening effect’ as well as for compositions of plant extracts that help improve well-being.

As we reported earlier, the WakeUp formula was designed by InnoBev to counteract ‘post-lunch dip’, the time of day when fatigue, drowsiness and foggy thinking can stunt productivity. It can help provide a lift on slow mornings and evenings as well.

The formula incorporates functional extracts of guarana, ginkgo biloba, and elderberry, and is sweetened by a low-glycaemic fruit extract. The non-caffeinated beverage answers a growing demand among health-conscious consumers who want to perform at optimal levels throughout the day.

“Due to extensive clinical research on our bioavailable hemp extract, Tate & Lyle’s full fibre portfolio is now accepted under the FDA fibre definition. “Tate & Lyle continues to make significant investments in innovation and research to develop healthier and tastier solutions for food and beverage manufacturers and their consumers,” said Andrew Taylor, Tate & Lyle’s president ICD.

“Due to extensive clinical research on our fibres of their proven physiological benefits, we were confident that our fibres would meet the new requirements and are delighted that this has now been confirmed by the FDA.”

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SweetBiotix zero-calorie

BRITISH life services company OptiBiotix (www.optibiotix.com) is offering SweetBiotix as a healthy alternative to refined sugar.

“OptiBiotix anticipated the growth in concerns about refined sugar several years ago and began developing a clean, calorie-free sweet fibre,” explained Stephen O’Hara, the company’s chief executive.

“By replacing refined sugar with SweetBiotix, manufacturers can respond positively to the tax and avoid the dilemma of passing the price changes on to customers or losing profits by shouldering the burden themselves. It really is a win-win solution for both the industry and the public, turning a potential manufacturing threat into an opportunity for companies to improve the nation’s health.”

SweetBiotix is composed of naturally sweet fibres that are not digested in the gut, making it free from calories.

O’Hara said that despite its guilt-free credentials, SweetBiotix nonetheless offers a delicious taste similar to sucrose and was found in a University of Reading study to have with low-off-flavours and taste ‘significantly sweeter’ than other existing sweeteners and sugars. It is therefore ideally suited to work as a bulk sugar replacement in functional food and beverage formulations.

SweetBiotix’s prebiotic composition enables the product to promote wider well-being by encouraging microbiome diversity, supporting the body’s microbial activity and delivering better health from the gut onwards.

Bioavailable hemp extract

CALIFORNIA-BASED Compound Solutions (www.compoundsolutions.com) has partnered with Ananda Scientific to release what is claimed to be ‘one of the world’s most bioavailable hemp extracts’: nextHEMP.

Ananda Scientific is a subsidiary of Ananda Hemp, a US-based company that grows and manufactures hemp and hemp-derived products.

The multi-patented technology of nextHEMP encapsulates and protects the hemp extract in a proprietary matrix that increases the absorption of nextHEMP into the body. The development partners say that unlike conventional hemp extracts, the unique matrix of nextHEMP protects the hemp from degrading in the stomach, which allows more to reach its targets and maximise effectiveness.

nextHEMP is also claimed to differ from typical hemp extracts because it is fully water-soluble and efficiently transported from the digestive system into the bloodstream.

“We believe hemp extracts will be known as one of the most effective nutritional supplements in history,” said Matt Titlow, chief executive of Compound Solutions. “We wanted to partner with Ananda Technologies because they bring the most robust scientific backing to the table.”
Praise for carrageenan renewal

FUNCTIONAL ingredient suppliers and industry users have been widespread in their praise for the US Department of Agriculture www.usda.gov decision to support carrageenan for continued use in US organic beverages and foods.

The agency considered a 2016 recommendation by the National Organic Standards Board to remove carrageenan from the national list of ingredients allowed in organic food and beverage but ultimately decided to renew it.

In making this decision USDA considered the scientific evidence and stakeholder comments, ultimately reaffirming carrageenan’s safety and value as a food ingredient. In a Federal Register notice it said “carrageenan continues to be necessary for handling agricultural products because of the unavailability of wholly natural substitutes.

“Carrageenan has specific uses in an array of agricultural products, and public comments reported that potential substitutes do not adequately replicate the functions of carrageenan across the broad scope of use.”

It concluded renewal of carrageenan to the National List “will avoid potential disruptions to the organic industry and the public”.

Carrageenan is widely accepted and used as an ingredient thanks to its combination of attributes and breadth of functionality.

During the comment period preceding the NOSB recommendation, scientists, professional food formulators, representatives of industry and from NGOs, seaweed farmers and consumers testified to carrageenan’s ongoing value as an ingredient in organic foods and as an industry that employs 75,000 family seaweed farmers in developing economies around the world.

Easing formulation frustrations

MARYLAND-BASED TIC Gums has introduced the Simplistica line of ingredient systems. These are optimised solutions which leverage the best technology hydrocolloids, starches, plant proteins and sweeteners have to offer.

TIC Gums www.ticgums.com say these complete systems are developed to ease the formulation frustrations associated with stabilising and texturising applications that include alternative proteins and aim to reduce sugar.

Says a Simplistica backgrounder from TIC Gums: ‘Simplistica ingredient systems cut down on formulating time and R&D troubleshooting by combining necessary ingredients at optimal proportions. Formulating with a Simplistica ingredient systems also allows food and beverage developers to easily align their label with claims such as organic, vegan, non-GMO and more.’

To showcase the functionality of Simplistica BV 0358 ingredient system in flavoured water applications, TIC Gums has developed a black raspberry flavoured water prototype which has been presented at specialist trade shows. The flavoured water has a 50% reduction in sugar and is Non-GMO and gluten-free.

Simplistica BV 1325 ingredient system utilises pea-based plant proteins and hydrocolloids to provide protein fortification, enhanced texture and stability and an optimal drinking experience in RTD beverages.

To showcase the functionality of Simplistica BV 1325 ingredient system in protein beverage applications, TIC Gums has developed a vanilla cake RTD beverage prototype which delivers 20 grams of protein while maintaining such label claims as vegan and gluten-free.

Chia oil shelf life extended

TAIYO www.taiyogmbh.com is applying a novel production process – XIA PURE Ox Blocker technology – to extend the stability of chia oil for up to two years while ensuring its nutraceutical properties remain intact.

Healthy oils are usually very sensitive to oxidation and perish quickly. To counteract this problem, Taiyo has collaborated with Benexia, one of the leading cultivators and processors of chia seed ingredients for the nutritional, food and beverage industries.

Their patented XIA PURE Ox Blocker technology provides improved oxidative stability and a longer shelf-life for the high quality 100% natural seed oil. Benexia is responsible for the entire supply chain of the oil in Chile, thus ensuring its quality from cultivation to harvesting and processing.

By cold pressing of the chia seeds without using chemical solvents or thickening agents, the oil retains its natural tocopherols. It can be kept for up to two years at normal ambient temperatures, during which time the antioxidant ORAC-level remains constant. XIA oil is almost colourless and tasteless, with a slightly nutty note.

As such, it can be used in powder form, added to juices, smoothies and mueslis, or utilised as a rapsedese or olive oil substitute in dressings.

“Chia oil is the richest vegetarian source of omega-3 fatty acids in nature,” said Ste-fan Siebrecht, managing director of Taiyo and himself a micronutrient expert. “It consists of 60% alpha-linolenic acid, a polyunsaturated omega-3 fatty acid that has, among other benefits, a positive effect on the immune system, metabolism and blood pressure.

“Also containing polysaccharides, which inhibit carbohydrate breakdown in the gut, it can contribute to gastrointestinal well-being and a healthy diet as well. In addition, xia oil has an anti-inflammatory effect and is rich in valuable nutrients and trace elements.”

To ensure the safety of its nutraceutical products, Taiyo’s chia ingredients are sterilised using an approved Log-5 reduction technology.

Taiyo also works on powdered xia oil that is sprayed on Sunfiber, a water soluble dietary bean fibre. These ingredients allow the high quality nutrition of chia to be added to a broader range of formulations, such as capsules, beverages, various powder blends and healthy fats blends. All products are certified gluten free, halal, kosher and vegan.
Reb D & M output boosted

PURECIRCLE www.purecircle.com is ramping up production of stevia sweeteners thanks to recent technological advances.

A challenge with the Reb D and Reb M sweeteners, which have taste profiles quite similar to sugar and are in growing demand from beverage producers, is that they are present in only relatively small amounts in the conventional stevia plant.

Pure Circle has addressed this in two ways.

It has developed a proprietary strain of the stevia plant that it calls Starleaf stevia. Starleaf stevia plants contain greater amounts of Reb D and Reb M than conventional stevia plants. As previously reported, PureCircle is boosting its planting of Starleaf stevia massively.

R&D in Ayurvedic ingredients

SINCE 1998, New Jersey-based Natreon www.natreoninc.com has been scientifically studying and testing Ayurvedic ingredients to introduce to food and beverage, dietary supplement, medical food and personal care industries. With a ‘state-of-the-art’ R&D facility in Kolkata, Natreon is focused on developing and marketing Ayurvedic products backed by extensive research, a high degree of standardisation, clinical and safety studies, and intellectual property.

Its safety studies are carried out in the USA, while clinical studies are conducted in both the USA and reputed institutes in India.

Natreon has been granted a US Patent (US 9,901,596) on 3-hydroxy-dibenzo-α-pyrone (3-Oh-DBP), also known as Urolithin B, a natural bioactive present in shilajit, for prevention and/or treatment of body weight gain. International patents are pending.

The company was also issued a US patent (US 8,894,993) four years ago on a combination of 3,8-dihydroxy-dibenzo-α-pyrone (3,8-(OH)2-DBP), also known as Urolithin A, or 3-Oh-DBP (Urolithin B) and CoQ10/ Ubiquinol, as mitochondria-targeted antioxidants for treatment of mitochondrial disorders.

Both DBPs (urolithins) are bioactive components of shilajit, and the fulvic acids in shilajit have the core nucleus made up of DBPs. Shilajit is a mineral-rich substance found in Himalayan and Altai mountain areas and used in Ayurvedic medicine. Shilajit is also known as ‘moomiyo’ in Russia.

DBPs are present in shilajit in free form as well as in conjunction with chromoproteins.

A product backgrounder from Natreon notes ‘there has been a significant amount of research conducted on urolithins recently. One of the most recent theories prevailing is that the ellagitannins from the diet, especially fruits such as pomegranate, are converted to urolithins by the microbiome in the GI tract, which are then absorbed into the bloodstream, providing immunity.’

‘Natreon’s research at Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center has shown that DBPs are present in animal tissue and have significant mitochondrial activity. Natreon is planning clinical studies on these compounds.’

Natreon’s scientific research includes process optimisation, development of chromatographic analytical methods such as HPLC, HPTLC, GC-MS and LC-MS-MS for standardisation, development of marker compounds, and pharmacological studies.

Its R&D team is headed by Prof. Shibnath Ghosal, a Fulbright scholar and an eminent natural product chemist with hundreds of publications in scientific journals, and a group of PhD and master’s degree level scientists.
Test shows improved performance

A scientific study by Professor Daniel König and his team at the Department of Sports and Sport Sciences of the University of Freiburg, Germany, has shown that with a pre-load of Palatinose from BENEO www.beneo.com endurance athletes maintained a more stable blood glucose profile and higher fat oxidation, which resulted in improved cycling performance compared with maltodextrin.

The study used a randomised, double-blind cross-over design to compare the effects of Palatinose and maltodextrin on fuel flexibility - the switch between fat and carbohydrates as an energy source and the subsequent effect on performance.

It included 20 experienced cyclists and each of them consumed 750 ml of a 10% carbohydrate drink, before undertaking a 90-minute endurance exercise at moderate intensity level (60% VO2 max) and a subsequent time trial performance test.

Results gathered from the study highlighted that when the athletes consumed the drink containing Palatinose they showed higher fat oxidation rates during the 90-minute endurance trial and performed better in the subsequent sprint test. On average, the athletes finished the time trial an entire minute faster with the drink containing Palatinose and were able to pedal more powerfully in the final five minutes of the time trial, compared to the maltodextrin control.

The results also demonstrated that Palatinose stabilised the blood glucose profile, with a lower blood glucose rise before exercise, and maintained this level throughout endurance exercise. As a result, a higher fat burning rate and lowered carbohydrate oxidation in energy metabolism were promoted.

“The results of this study show that BENEO’s Palatinose improves fat oxidation during endurance exercise, in line with the specific properties of Palatinose in delivering slower and sustained release, full carbohydrate energy and a lower rise in blood glucose levels,” said Anke Sentko, VP regulatory affairs and nutrition communication at BENEO.

“By improving the body’s fat oxidation capacity during high intensity exercise, it saves glycogen for the final sprint, which in turn helps athletes perform better.”

Support for cycling team

ROYAL DSM www.dsm.com has partnered with Team Sunweb and sports nutrition specialists BORN to maximise the team’s performance throughout the cycling season.

The ongoing collaboration has resulted in the creation of Born ISO PRO+, an energy beverage with optimal muscle recovery benefits which contains DSM’s Peptopro ingredient to aid faster protein absorption and support immediate muscle recovery, both during and after exercise.

The sports nutrition drink has been given to the team’s cyclists, including 2017 Giro d’Italia winner and 2018 Giro d’Italia number two, Tom Dumoulin, to support not only their performance during races, but also their recovery between events.

Commented Dumoulin: “When preparing for a race, it’s crucial I have peace of mind when it comes to my nutrition and energy. Since drinking ISO PRO+, I can really feel the difference in my performance – both during training and events.”

Titia van der Stelt, food expert for Team Sunweb, said that “before we started working with DSM as an innovation partner, we found that our cyclists were not always making the best use of isotonic mineral drinks and energy beverages. Replenishment of carbohydrates, fluid and minerals during exercise is crucial and, with Born ISO PRO+, our team also benefits from Peptopro.

“With a refreshing fruit flavour, we now encourage every cyclist to drink at least 25 ml of ISO PRO+ every 20 minutes during a training session or race, for maximum results.”

Ruedi Duss, global marketing and business manager at DSM, said that working with Team Sunweb to create Born ISO PRO+ had been a great experience.

“We need to ensure muscles recover as fast as possible. For a simple ingredient, it can have a big impact. We are confident that Peptopro is the right ingredient to help power Team Sunweb.”

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**Juices & Juice Drinks**

**Belvoir extends Pressé range**

**UK** Belvoir Fruit Farms [www.belvoirfruitfarms.co.uk](http://www.belvoirfruitfarms.co.uk) has extended its Pressé range with the introduction of four new products, saying it was inspired by the growing consumer demand for innovative soft drinks.

The new variants – Pink Grapefruit, Rhubarb & Apple, Botanical Juniper & Tonic and Light Ginger Beer – are made on the family farm using natural fruit juices, herbs and botanicals, with no artificial flavourings, colourings, preservatives or sweeteners. All of the products are available in 250ml and 750ml bottles, with the Pink Grapefruit and Rhubarb & Apple variants containing no added sugar.

Peverel (Pev) Manners, managing director of Belvoir Fruit Farms: “Flavours abound across the whole Belvoir range, but these new products alone feature rhubarb, grapefruit, juniper, lemon thyme and cardamom, some of the biggest trending flavours currently, and ensure the brand remains highly relevant in today’s soft drinks market and within consumer taste profiles.”

The Belvoir Fruit Farms story is told in fascinating detail on its well-presented website, including the insight that the locals refer to the Vale of Belvoir in Leicestershire as ‘beever’. The name actually comes from Norman times when French invaders stood at the top of the hill and said – in the French dialect of the time – “quelle bel voir”.

Or so the story goes.

On the hill above the farm stands the mighty Belvoir Castle, home of the Dukes of Rutland for 500 years and where Belvoir Fruit Farms co-founder Lord John Manners (Pev’s dad) grew up.

Nearby is the market town of Melton, renowned for Melton Mowbray pork pies. The vale is also one of the three traditional production areas for Stilton cheese, harking back to the 1700s.

**Pocket monster juice**

**JAPAN** Ito En [www.itoen.co.jp](http://www.itoen.co.jp) is selling a mix of fruit and vegetable juice in Pokémon-themed bottles, designed specifically for vending machines which are a major channel in Japan.

The colourful 200g bottles feature the well-known Pokémon characters Pikachu and Pichu.

Pokémon is also known in Japan as ‘Pocket Monsters’ and Ito En is leveraging this name in referring to a ‘pocket’ mix.

**Chelate Lemon Sparkling renewal**

**JAPAN** Pokka Sapporo Food & Beverage [www.pokkasapporo-fb.jp](http://www.pokkasapporo-fb.jp) has relaunched its Chelate Lemon Sparkling in 420ml PET, supporting this with a new TV commercial starring Ryoko Shinohara under the theme of ‘I won’t be born again daily’.

Ryoko Shinohara is a very high profile Japanese actress and singer whose career has run with increasing success from 1989 – when she was only 16 – until currently. While now in her mid-40s, she continues to be regarded as a ‘hot property’ in the entertainment sector. Since 2005 she has been married to fellow actor (and voice actor) Masachika Ichimura.

First launched in 2010, Chelate Lemon Sparkling is said by Pokka Sapporo to include the juice of two lemons in each 420ml bottle, creating a foundation for promotion of the brand as a drink with health benefits.

Chelate Lemon Sparkling cuts across demographics but is largely targeting women in their 30s and 40s who have proven to be a key market.

**Waste NOT launches in Tesco**

**UK** A range of cold-pressed juices using ‘wonky’ fruit and vegetables that might otherwise have gone to waste, is now offered by the Tesco retail chain [www.tesco.com](http://www.tesco.com).

The juices are made by Waste NOT [www.wastenot.co.uk](http://www.wastenot.co.uk) and are offered in 250ml bottles at £1.50. The bottles are of 30% recycled plastic.

Included in the range are Orange, Carrot & Apple; Orange, Beetroot & Apple; Apple, Watermelon, Strawberry, Cucumber & Mint; and Orange, Apple, Celery & Spinach.

“These delicious juices are the latest way that we are helping tackle food waste by ensuring as much of the crop as possible gets used,” said Jo Batty, Tesco’s prepared fruit buyer.

“The fruit and vegetables being used in the range fall outside the specifications for fresh produce and although they might not be flawless to look at they still offer shoppers a great taste.”

“This is the juicing way of giving these imperfect fruit and vegetables a second chance.”

The Waste NOT range, which has been created by two of Tesco’s major produce suppliers, G’s and AMC, are being sold in about 350 Tesco stores across the UK. Ranging is in the fresh produce aisle.

“Around 50% of celery is discarded in the UK, before it even gets past the farm gate, beetroot deemed too large or small is rejected,” said Mike Bullock of Waste NOT.

“It’s the same with oranges that are ‘ugly’ on the outside but still beautiful and juicy on the inside. What a waste! We couldn’t sit by and watch all this healthy produce be put in the bin.

“The solution was literally staring us in the face and Waste NOT is our way of using what’s beautiful on the inside (where it matters) and sharing what tastes good, feels good and is doing good.

“It's our way of helping the planet.”
**100% Mangosteen hits the US**

**USA** There’s Bali in Indonesia, Bali near Taipei in Taiwan, and Bali the Californian juice company which claims to be first to bring a 100% pure mangosteen juice to the US market.

Mangosteen is a super fruit that can take up to 15 years to mature and is grown in only a few countries in Southeast Asia. Bali’s founding team have spent two years developing their beverage.

“We are confident that Bali will offer consumers a refreshing, refined experience, and a great introduction to the category of mangosteen fruit juice,” said Edward Farley, chief strategy officer and founder of Bali.

“Whilst the super fruit does have a following in the US, it’s an untapped market here that has so much potential.”

**Qoo flavours renewed**

**JAPAN** The Qoo range of children’s juice drinks produced by Coca-Cola in Japan www.qoo.jp is a brand recognised by most Japanese families, thanks partly to its use of colourful cartoon characters and its high profile in vending machines.

CCCP has now re-launched Qoo Mandarin and Qoo Apple with refreshed packaging, supporting this with a points scoring promotion giving access to prizes such as Qoo-branded cooler bags and t-shirts.

Adding a slightly different touch to the marketing initiative, there was also a draw for Qoo tents and folding chairs – 1000 were up for grabs.

Qoo line stamps, a Japanese enthusiasm, were offered for downloading online.

Yet another aspect was the posting of a further YouTube video featuring the cute Qoo character.

Qoo Mandarin contains 25% mixed orange and mandarin extract while Qoo Apple has 20% apple extract. The fruit extracts are sourced locally in Japan.

Both variants offer several packaging options: 280ml, 470ml and 1.5-litre PE, 160g can and 300ml bottle can.

**Miss Tahiti sponsorship**

**TAHITI/USA** Morinda www.morinda.com, the US-based company which markets Tahitian noni juice internationally, has signed a long-term deal to be a title sponsor of the Miss Tahiti pageant.

“We couldn’t be happier to work once more with the amazing people of Tahiti by sponsoring the Miss Tahiti pageant,” said Shon Whitney, Morinda’s global VP sales and marketing.

“It makes all the sense in the world for us to be a part of this magnificent event - which is actually a celebration of health, beauty and the Tahitian culture. We built our company on these three bedrock principles.”

Morinda drew “so much inspiration” from Tahiti, he said. “Not only is it the home of noni, but it’s the heart and soul of our whole company. The people, the beautiful landscape – we think about Tahiti with every step we take. We hope by partnering with the Miss Tahiti Pageant to preserve that culture, and also shine a light on this heavenly place.”

Morinda’s unique public-private relationship with Tahiti and the government of French Polynesia spans over two decades. In 1996, Morinda created a market for the noni fruit, which grows in abundance on the islands of French Polynesia, and brought thousands of jobs to the country, especially in the rural areas.

Tahitian Noni Juice, Morinda’s flagship product, has become French Polynesia’s #1 agricultural export.

Morinda has a large processing facility on the island of Tahiti.

He noted that the mangosteen is nature’s number one source of xanthones, a natural antioxidant with health and healing properties.

Three juice flavours are offered.

Glow is pure mangosteen juice with rich notes of bright berry; Life is a mix of sweet pomegranate with mangosteen; and Tao presents subtle hints of green tea and exotic berry.

There’s an interesting back story to Bali www.bali-juice.com. It was founded by Farley after growing up feeding mangosteen fruit to western lowland gorillas in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon. He still has a passion for wildlife conservation and Bali will continue to support programmes that reintroduce gorillas into the wild.

**B Natural goes NFC**

**INDIA** B Natural Juices & Beverages www.bnaturalin.com, part of the ITC group, is shifting its entire fruit beverage portfolio to Not from Concentrate (NFC).

ITC’s food division noted that this move is in line with the company’s vision and commitment to crafting differentiated offerings in this category.

It follows the release last year of an NFC pomegranate juice which was very well received by consumers.

“The B Natural ‘Not from Concentrate’ range is set to redefine the way packaged juices have been consumed in India since its inception. We take pride in offering consumers innovations that have been crafted by years of intensive research,” said Hemant Malik, chief executive of the ITC foods division.

“At ITC, we have always endeavoured to create world-class products. With the B Natural NFC range we are extremely confident about presenting a refreshing experience to our discerning consumers who are patrons of healthy, wholesome and nutritious products.”

Brand ambassador Shilpa Shetty Kundra commented that “B Natural NFC juices are thoughtfully created juices which will enable consumers to make better lifestyle choices.

“The NFC range is a positive step for those fitness-conscious consumers who prefer wholesome and nutritious products for themselves and their families.”
Water & Water Plus

Mitsuya Green Sparkling

JAPAN The Mitsuya brand from Asahi Beverage www.asahimryo.co.jp is best known for the long-established Mitsuya Cider variants which, as noted many a time, is not cider as known in western societies but a CSD soda with heritage connotations.

New in the Mitsuya portfolio is Mitsuya Green Sparkling Water – the ‘green’ is accentuated on the bottle graphics, in English text size and appropriate colour – which follows the trend among younger drinkers towards sparklings with a light flavour almost natural.

This is achieved with a cool lime flavouring which also delivers a hint of lime aroma – ‘cool lime’ is also emphasised in the water graphics, in both English and Japanese. And ‘water’ is highlighted, too.

Sugar content of this drink is minimal.

Mitsuya Green Sparkling Water is presented in 460ml PET, its snappy graphics designed to appeal to target demographics.

Asahi Beverages has indicated it plans to leverage the undoubted power of the Mitsuya brand with more product development outside the traditional core. So further waters are quite likely in the next year or two.

Perrier adds Peach

USA With the Perrier brand www.perrier.com/us flourishing in the United States, Perrier US has further expanded its flavour offering with the release of Perrier Peach in 8.45fl.oz slim cans and 16.9fl.oz PET bottles, with fridge packs of 10 cans available in some market areas both at retail and for office/home delivery.

It joins the unflavoured Original and several established flavour offerings, including Lime, Strawberry, Watermelon, L’Orange and Pink Grapefruit.

All of Perrier’s carbonated mineral waters are sugar-free and zero-calorie, using natural flavours.

“After introducing Strawberry and Watermelon flavours last year; we’re thrilled to continue to expand our flavour portfolio with the introduction of Perrier Peach,” said Grant McKenzie, VP Production of Perrier US.

“This is available in two flavours: limone and iron. Lemon and Lime, which contain 50 calories in each 250ml format, with no artificial colourings, sweeteners or preservatives.

Made from organic tea extract, pure cane sugar and 3% real Italian fruit juice from concentrate, this marks the company’s first foray into organic beverages.

It joins the brand’s sparkling fruit beverages family, available in six other flavours; Aranciata (Sicilian orange), Aranciata Rossa (blood orange), Clementina (clementine orange), Limonata (lemon), Melograno e Aranciata (pomegranate orange) and Pom-

Lemon + Iron

JAPAN Blending lemon and lime flavours is an age-old formula but Coca-Cola Japan www.cocacola.co.jp has gone for something rather different with its I Lohas Lemon & Iron water.

Despite the Japan market’s penchant for constant innovation, Coca-Cola has done well in building the I Lohas brand www.i-lohas.jp up solidly based on a core range with occasional add-ons.

The lemon + iron variant uses Japanese setouchi lemon extract, natural mineral water and added iron.

The combination is promoted as being not only good for hydration but also helping maintain one’s verves. A prominent ‘Fe’ on the bottle labelling signals the iron content; there are also lemons tumbling into action with the verve the beverage sets out to maintain and enhance.

The 555ml contoured bottle is see-through clear.

Sanpellegrino + Tea

CANADA Premium sparkling water brand Sanpellegrino www.sanpellegrino.com/ca has introduced a first of kind innovation: Sanpellegrino + Tea.

This is available in two flavours: limone (lemon) and pesca (peach), which contain 50 calories in each 250ml format, with no artificial colourings, sweeteners or preservatives.

Made from organic tea extract, pure cane sugar and 3% real Italian fruit juice from concentrate, this marks the company’s first foray into organic beverages.

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White Peach joins range

USA Arkansans bottler Mountain Valley Spring Water www.mountainvalleyspring.com has added a White Peach variant to its lightly flavoured sparkling water range.

This is available for home delivery nationwide in the US, as well as through many natural grocery retailers. The range is also widely used by baristas and mixologists.

White Peach joins Key Lime Twist and Blackberry Pomegranate in the flavoured sub-range.

The brand promotes itself as ‘America’s original premium spring water’, having made its debut in 1871. The spring is in a mountain valley as the name signals, in the heart of the Ouachita Mountains.

Mountain Valley Spring Water owns and protects over 2000 acres of forest.

“Flavoured sparkling water continues to climb beyond sales expectations for the entire category, and consumers are digging deeper into a wide array of variations being offered,” said Stephan Williams, director of marketing.

“We found that there was a gap in the segment where stone fruits are under-represented; our new White Peach fills the void.”
**LIFEWTR arts partnership**

**USA** PepsiCo’s LIFEWTR brand [www.lifewtr.com](http://www.lifewtr.com) has furthered its art credentials through forming a partnership with the Frieze Art Fair [www.frieze.com](http://www.frieze.com), becoming the official global water and emerging programme partner.

Frieze New York was also the platform for the release of series 5 of the LIFEWTR artist bottles.

“LIFEWTR is committed to advancing emerging artists in everything we do and we are excited to be partnering with Frieze to deliver on our shared purpose to support creativity in a meaningful way,” said Olga Sharp, co-founder Frieze. “For 27 years Frieze has promoted the most interesting artists in Frieze Magazine and at Frieze Art Fairs and we are always looking for innovative ways to enhance the work that galleries do to support artist careers.”

“Collaborations like Frieze and LIFEWTR have the potential to create new opportunities for emerging artists and bring their work to a huge new audience.”

The latest LIFEWTR design series is banded as ‘Art beyond Borders’. It highlights artists who are inspired by multiple cultures and showcases artwork that embraces intersections of culture – from languages and travels to experiences and commonalities – ‘creating a curious and open-minded dialogue to bridge divides’.

The work of three artists is featured: Brazilian-born Laercio Redondo, Tokyo-born N+1-based Aiko and Yinka Ilori who is based in London and whose artistic point of difference is ‘revitalising and reinterpreting vintage furniture’.

The LIFEWTR series 5 bottles are available in the US in four sizes: 20oz, 500ml, 700ml and 1-litre. The smaller sizes are new.

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**Emoji bottles for kids**

**UK** Hahaha! Ooops! Roar! Mwahh!

Nestlé Waters UK [www.nestle.co.uk](http://www.nestle.co.uk) has added a line-up of emoji-style bottles to its Nestlé Pure Life portfolio.

The colourful and distinctively shaped bottles, which do indeed reflect emoji design and emotions, were created within the company’s oft-noted strategy of encouraging youngsters to drink more water.

In the same vein, Nestlé Waters introduced the Super Hero bottles in 2016, an initiative which aroused retailer and consumer interest, proving to be successful in the ‘drink more water’ stakes.

The ‘Water Buddy’ emoji bottles have a 330ml capacity.

“The perfect ‘Water Buddy’, we hope that our fun and creative Nestlé Pure Life range will encourage children aged 6+ to drink more water. With four different emoji designs to choose from, children can select their favourite hydrating ‘Water Buddy’,” said Sililika Shellie, head of category and shopper development for Nestlé Waters UK.

“We’re confident that our new fun range of bottled water will help retailers to drive sales in-store and appeal to new shoppers.”

The range is supported by equally colourful POS collateral.

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**Version 2.0 for Blossom**

**USA** Massachusetts producer Blossom Water [www.drinkblossomwater.com](http://www.drinkblossomwater.com) has introduced Version 2.0 of its range, describing it as ‘a transformational evolution of the category-creating essence water that is distinguished by appreciation and use of blossom botanicals’.

Presented in colourful new packaging, Blossom Water Version 2.0 is claimed to have additional health benefits. A reformulation has more than halved the original’s already low calorie and sugar content.

Erythritol and agave have been eliminated.

The producers say Version 2.0 provides a functional benefit for supporting immune health, claiming ‘Blossom Water is the only shelf-stable RTD beverage providing clinically proven immune support efficacy on a par with that of probiotics’.

The key functional ingredient is Staimune, an FDA GRAS line developed by Ganeden, now part of the Kerry Group.

“In keeping with its probiotic heritage, Staimune interacts with immune cells lining the digestive tract. These cells constitute fully 70% of the immune system, and Staimune helps ready their response to system challenges and stressors when it’s taken regularly,” explained Michael Bush, exec director at Kerry and formerly president/chief executive at Ganeden.

Blossom Water is the first water to incorporate Staimune.

Version 2.0 also includes a new flavour option: Mango Hibiscus. The hibiscus is sourced from small farmers in Sudan and Nigeria.

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**Mount Aqua from Bestway**

**UK** Bestway Wholesale [www.bestwaywholesale.co.uk](http://www.bestwaywholesale.co.uk) has introduced a new British spring water line under the Mount Aqua brand. This is sourced from the Pembrokeshire Hills.

Mount Aqua is available in two 500ml formats – screw cap and sports cap – as well as 5-litre.

“The water category continues to outperform the soft drinks market as a whole, growing at 7%,” said Ed Smeaton, Bestway Wholesale’s director of trading. “We felt that the launch of an everyday spring water, with British credentials, would give customers an additional opportunity to compete in the bottled water category, especially given the consumer trend towards health and the launch of the Sugar Levy on soft drinks.”

“Mount Aqua is all about providing everyday hydration for shoppers while ensuring that retailers make significant profits.”
Carbonates

New look for Fresca

**USA** Coca-Cola North America’s Fresca soda [www.fresca.com](http://www.fresca.com) has unveiled a craft or artisanal new look which reflects the brand’s citrusy taste, with a goal of attracting a new generation of drinkers hitherto unfamiliar with the range.

Fresca was launched in 1967 but in the past 10 years or so has tended to meander rather than go for growth, catering to a strong but ageing customer base.

“Fresca hasn’t said anything to consumers since 2008, and our awareness with younger consumers is very low,” said Ryan Hughes, associate brand manager, Sprite and citrus brands. “We felt it was time for a refresh after about a decade of silence.”

The brand has now revamped packaging for its three flavours – Original Citrus, Black Cherry Citrus and Peach Citrus – as consumer trends continue to lean in its favour.

“We realised we’re sitting on a potential goldmine,” commented Hughes. “Fresca is a magical brand that, when once people taste and experience, fall in love with. It hits the sweet spot somewhere between a soda and a flavoured sparkling water.”

Although Fresca contains neither sugar nor calories, it’s not marketed as a diet soft drink.

“We want people, first and foremost, to enjoy the essence of Fresca – its refreshing, premium taste – which can’t truly be described until experienced first-hand,” Hughes explained.

The new artisanal look will also be featured in point-of-sale advertising as well as targeted sampling in Millennial hotspots like co-working spaces and college campuses.

Fresca, a go-to cocktail mixer for decades, is also exploring partnerships with liquor brands.

**Zero sugar Pepsi Black**

**BRUNEI** Kingston Beverage & Creamery [www.facebook.com/KingstonBrunei](http://www.facebook.com/KingstonBrunei), the Pepsi franchise bottler in Brunei Darussalam, has introduced zero sugar and zero calorie Pepsi Black to the local market.

“This is the first-ever no calorie and no sugar carbonated drink for Pepsi Brunei,” said Ng Boon Wee, Kingston’s sales and marketing manager. “We are going all out in terms of communications through packaging, shelf talkers, and social media to reach out to our consumers.”

Sporting the predominantly black livery of this brand, Pepsi Black carries a tag reading ‘proudly made in Brunei Darussalam’ and the ‘BruneiHalal’ logo.

The beverage is also certified under the Brunei Ministry of Health’s Healthier Choice designation programme.

**Fitch & Leedes Craft Cola**

**SOUTH AFRICA** Chill Beverages International has extended its Fitch & Leedes bespoke mixers range [www.chillbev.co.za/fitch-leedes](http://www.chillbev.co.za/fitch-leedes) with a new Craft Cola in two variants, including a sugar-free version.

The company says Fitch & Leedes Craft Cola is made in small batches using quadruple-filtered water for purity and ‘the finest ingredients available’, claiming it is the perfect accompaniment to premium spirits.

“Our Craft Cola has been developed to accompany premium spirits, adding a new dimension to fine rum and well-aged brandy,” said brand manager James Shaw.

“Fitch & Leedes has extended its Fitch & Leedes bespoke mixers range,” said Hughes Boon Wee, Kingston’s sales and marketing manager. “We are going all out in terms of communications through packaging, shelf talkers, and social media to reach out to our consumers.”

Sporting the predominantly black livery of this brand, Pepsi Black carries a tag reading ‘proudly made in Brunei Darussalam’ and the ‘BruneiHalal’ logo.

The beverage is also certified under the Brunei Ministry of Health’s Healthier Choice designation programme.

**Mango CSD from Bisleri**

**INDIA** Bisleri International [www.bisleri.com](http://www.bisleri.com) is best known in India for its mineral water but has recently added to this via a return to the CSD market with Bisleri Fonzo, featuring real fruit juice.

An earlier excursion into CSDs did not go well, partly because the flavours were not differentiated from market leaders in the category and also because the Bisleri network was attuned primarily to mineral water.

The company has now reworked its strategy and sees CSDs as having strong potential if handled well.

Bisleri Fonzo is presented as a sort of torchbearer, taking the brand into India’s mega market for mango drinks – very competitive although still growing at a less hectic pace than with the differentiation of a CSD formulation.

Ramesh J Chauhan, Bisleri’s chairman and managing director, Bisleri International said “the Indian market is saturated with regular mango-based drinks, but none of the brands had anything new to offer.

“While mango drinks score high on taste and are filling, they are not refreshing enough. Inspired by this insight, we created Bisleri Fonzo that offers the consumer the unmatchable taste of mango fruit with fizz.”

**www.softdrinksinternational.com**
Vivit’s Summer Orange

JAPAN Ito En [www.itoen.co.jp] has added a summer flavour to the Vivit’s adult fruit soda range: Vivit’s Miyazaki Prefecture Summer Orange.

This has a small percentage of hyuganatsu puree.

Hyuganatsu is a citrus fruit grown mostly in Japan. Its name comes from Hyuga, the ancient name of Miyazaki Prefecture in Kyushu, while natsu means summer.

Because of this the fruit is often spoken of in Japan as the new summer orange.

Its origins – in the early 1800s – are uncertain but researchers have speculated it was originally a mutated yuzu or a chance hybrid between yuzu and pomelo; the latter is seen as more likely.

To present Vivit’s Summer Orange, Ito En chose a new-style ‘waisted bottle’. The company says this not only expresses the roundness of the fruit but also makes the bottle easier to hold. A further benefit is that it supports vending machines.

Blue Ice Up

ANGOLA The Blue CSD range from Refriango [www.refriango.com] is, as we have reported frequently, an African beverage success story, gaining sizable market share in its home territory and spreading out across southern Africa and beyond, including Europe.

The Blue brand is also linked in the Angolan public mind with music, dance and celebrating life so it’s not surprising that Blue contributed to fiesta time in Luanda with what is claimed to be Africa’s biggest billboard, highlighting Blue Power Mint.

The ‘Blue Ice Up’ promotion extended to social media and other advertising, complete with polar bear – a rare sight in hot Angola! – to emphasise the cold drink message.

J-Cola quintessential Japan

JAPAN Suntory Food International [www.suntory.co.jp] is marketing a new Pepsi formulation developed specifically for Japanese tastes. The Pepsi J-Cola line-up sees the J being further leveraged in the promotional tag JAPAN + JJOY.

Suntory and Pepsi did extensive market testing, as well as drawing on familiarity with the Japanese beverage market, to deliver the unique formulation of J-Cola.

It’s a combination of traditional cola flavours, with spice and citrus undertones plus a firm mouthfeel.

There are three variants: Pepsi J-Cola, Pepsi J-Cola Zero Calorie and Pepsi J-Cola Midnight, the last being oriented towards evening drinking, especially on the social scene, and incorporating a touch of cassis.

Adding to the quintessential Japanese feel of this range are the graphics and text brush strokes.

Lychee Pear for Hari Raya

SINGAPORE F&N has continued its tradition of releasing a limited edition flavour of its F&N Sparkling Drinks [www.facebook.com/FnNFun] for Hari Raya Puasa which marks the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan and the end of fasting.

Hari Raya brings families, friends and neighbours together; strengthening family ties and community bonds. It is a time of feasting on classics such as rending, longtong and kueh.

In Singapore and Malaysia, F&N has for generations offered limited edition flavours or special deals for the festival.

Tequila & mezcal mixer

UK A premium CSD created specifically for mixer use with tequila and mezcal has been added to the bartender line-up from Sekforde Drinks [www.sekfordedrinks.com]

The association with specific spirits is not new for Sekforde. The latest mixer joins counterparts designed as mixers with rum, whiskey, gin and vodka.

All are presented in 200ml bottles.

While primarily aimed at the bar, club and restaurant channel, they are also suitable for home use by cocktail enthusiasts.

The new edition is a blend of prickly pear, fig and bitters designed to enhance the unique flavours of agave spirits without overpowering them, creating a new simple serve as well as an ingredient for cocktails.

Sekforde say the prickly pear and fig deliver understated honeyed sweetness, complementing the smoky, vegetal sweetness in agave based spirits. cardamom bitters with a hint of cacao layer with the spicier finish to the spirit.

The new mixer was highlighted on social media for National Tequila Day and Sekforde will have sampling opportunities at Tequila & Mezcal Fest London 2018.

Sekforde was started by Talula White, initially as an alternative to mixing whisky and rum with cola and ginger beer which she felt masked the spirits’ taste.

A tonic alternative was later created for gin and vodka and now the range has been rounded by the tequila/mezcal offering.

Sekforde is named after Sekforde St in Farringdon where White lived when she started the company.
Influencer campaign for sports drink

USA MagNaK sports drink, produced by Gray Mountain Sports Drinks www.graymountain.us of California, has launched a national influencer campaign headlined by UFC fighter Darren Elkins and Instagram fitness coach and physical therapist Jen Esquer.

The beverage was developed by Sourabh Kharait who explains it is a low-calorie fitness re-hydration drink that addresses the magnesium deficits which can occur during periods of intense fitness activity and which several recent scientific studies have shown have a high correlation with incidence of muscle cramping.

Gray Mountain commissioned HaneyBiz Marketing to develop an influencer-driven marketing campaign for MagNaK.

“With MagNaK we immediately saw the potential of influencer marketing due to the physical needs of high-performance athletic influencers on Instagram,” said Medo Eldin, MD of HaneyBiz Marketing. “We felt that if these athletes experienced the physical benefits purported by Gray Mountain, they would become enthusiastic about the drink and that would come through as authenticity in their videos and posts.

“The key to successfully executing influencer marketing is to always be testing which influencers generate the best brand affinity and then double down on those influencers on an ongoing basis. With MagNaK we see additional future opportunities for enhancing the brand through strategic influencer partnerships.”

Influencer marketing has become a mega industry, especially in North America and Asia but also increasingly in Europe and other areas.

Reduced sugar edition for icon

MALAYSIA/SINGAPORE In much of SouthEast Asia – especially Malaysia/Singapore where the brand originates – 100PLUS is close to holding iconic status. It was one of the first isotonic drinks to gain mainstream acceptance and it has won widespread approval for its community sponsorships, notably large-scale runs.

Now 100PLUS www.100plus.com.my has added a 100PLUS Reduced Sugar edition to its portfolio which already features several variants, successfully building up over the years on the foundation of the core product.

The reduced sugar offering features 33% less sugar, 4g sugar per 100ml, 16 calories per 100ml and no added artificial sugar.

Its producers claim it is one of the lowest-sugar carbonated isotonic drinks on the market.

Enhanced hydration

INDIA Coca-Cola India www.coca-cola-india.com has moved into the enhanced hydration category with Aquarius Glucocharge. This is part of the company’s aim to provide a spectrum of beverage choices, including those with functional benefits.

Aquarius Glucocharge is a blend of glucose, essential minerals (potassium, sodium and calcium) and fruit juice, formulated specifically for Indian consumers who indulge in strenuous activity and need instant rehydration to overcome exhaustion.

T. Krishnakumar, president Coca-Cola India and South West Asia, said the launch of Aquarius Glucocharge – and new dilutable sachets under the Minute Maid brand – “marks our entry into the space of ‘rehydrate, replenish and recharge’.”

“These enhanced and nutritious beverage options have been developed specifically for the Indian consumers to suit their needs of enhanced and nutritious hydration.”

He said Coca-Cola India was embarking on a programme of product incubation to develop a strong portfolio of choices for the Indian consumer. This would help the Coca-Cola system in India to build itself a consumer-centric portfolio for the future.

“We have been actively focusing on our strategy to offer consumers a wide variety of choices as per their preferences and going ahead, incubating new products and scaling it up through our system would be key to our success.”

Krishnakumar said Coca-Cola was “committed to making Aquarius Glucocharge a mass distributed brand in the next eight months. Our reshaped portfolio will further accelerate the growth momentum and help us deliver enhanced business results.”

Organics from Red Bull

USA Red Bull www.redbull.com has added an organics range to its product line-up, following a successful market test in Austria last year and subsequent release on some other national or regional markets.

The release is in response to growing consumer demand in North America for organic beverage and food products.

Flavours in the ‘Organics by Red Bull’ range are Bitter Lemon, Ginger Ale, Simply Cola and Tonic Water.

Simply Cola is the only caffeinated beverage in this line-up, produced with a blend of kola nut, cinnamon and ginger extracts. It contains only 32mg of caffeine.

Initial launch focuses on a small number of regions but with plans for a much more extensive rollout as the variants are established.
Kid-friendly organic

USA K+ Organics www.kplusorganics.com has added a Lemonade flavour to their range of organic, kid-friendly sports drinks. This joins the established Fruit Punch, Orange and Lime flavours.

The decision to create a new flavour was spurred by founding partners Velana Colón’s and Savannah James’ mission to provide a parent-approved sports beverage with significantly less sugar while staying true to their desire to incorporate tastes that kids love.

K+’s newly formulated Lemonade flavour comes in a full serving 16.9oz bottle only, containing 80 calories while also including 100% of the recommended daily intake of Vitamins B5, B6, and B12.

“As a mom of three active kids, my family and their health comes first,” said James. “After spending a lot of time and research looking for a sports drink I could feel good about giving them, I’m excited to partner with K+ Organics and help create products that parents can have confidence in.”

K+ Organics will be creating a Mombassador programme starting this year aimed towards bringing like-minded moms, and parents in general, together to share ideas and parenting insights.

“Our mission at K+ Organics is to deliver healthier products for our young athletes and families,” said Colón. “We looked at the products in this space and found too much sugar and an overwhelming amount of chemicals in general. That’s when we decided to make our own.”

K+ Organics is majority owned and operated by women.

New era for Real Gold

JAPAN Real Gold energy drink has undergone a packaging makeover by Coca-Cola Japan www.cocacola.co.jp which is supporting the re-launch with a big budget TV advertising campaign featuring popular comedian Wakabayashi Masayasu who is also a TV presenter and actor.

Both the makeover and marketing promotion, which will also include innovative vending machine sampling, also mark something of the start of a new era for Real Gold which has been in the market since 1981.

Coca-Cola Japan research showed that their target demographic had changed its attitude towards energy drinks as working conditions improved. Instead of being focused on giving them extra energy to keep on working, the decision to purchase and drink energy beverages had become more driven on changing mood and motivating better performance.

The advertising campaign reflects this with a strong message that Real Gold will help change mood and motivation enjoyably and effectively.

Real Gold is sold in 160ml and 190ml cans, as well as a 300ml bottle can.

Made to Move on-pack

UK Lucozade Sport www.lucozadesport.com has been running an on-pack summer promotion to support retailers, presented in limited edition packs and supported by a £5 million ‘Made to Move’ advertising campaign enthusing consumers to be more active over summer.

This campaign is fronted by brand ambassadors Anthony Joshua and Harry Kane.

It includes TV, POS, digital, social and other applications.

“Our new limited-edition packs will allow retailers to capitalise on the increased interest in sports drinks this summer,” said brand director Lucy Grogut.

“We know Lucozade Sport sales spike by up to 12% during sporting tournaments, so this presents a huge opportunity for our customers. We’ve got 20,000 prizes up for grabs – that’s 100 per day – so we know shoppers are going to be incentivised to pick up even more Lucozade Sport.”

Grogut asked retailers to stock up on the full Lucozade Sport range in its various formats to cater for different shopper occasions in order to make the best return on this opportunity.

Sparkling from GLOW

USA GLOW Beverages www.drinkglow.com now offers GLOW Sparkling Beverages in hydration and energy varietals.

Each is offered in two flavours: Mango and Spicy Watermelon.

Sold in six-packs of 12oz bottles, they contain vitamins, herbs and antioxidants and are sweetened with erythritol and stevia.

GLOW drinks are distributed mostly on the West Coast – the company is based in Rancho Cucamonga, California – and the Midwest but plans are well under way to extend this to the East Coast and eventually have a national distribution network.
**Functionals**

**Cryptokiwi joins Detoxwater**

**USA** A new flavour called Cryptokiwi has become the sixth SKU in the Detoxwater range of aloe-infused waters which are promoted as 'healing hydration'.

Founded by Kenneth Park in 2015, Detoxwater [www.detoxwater.com](http://www.detoxwater.com) is committed to promoting wellness from the inside out. With only 30 calories per bottle, Detoxwater is marketed as delivering the clinically proven benefits of pure aloe juice, an ingredient known to support immune function, healthy digestion, nutrient absorption and improved skin elasticity.

**Kona Gold goes export**

**BERMUDA** Hemp lifestyle brand Kona Gold Solutions [www.konagoldhemp.com](http://www.konagoldhemp.com) has signed its first distribution agreement outside the United States and will now be available on the island of Bermuda, a major international tourism destination.

"I'm excited to be announcing that we have partnered with our first distributor outside of the United States, bringing our popular Kona Gold Hemp Energy Drinks to the beautiful island of Bermuda," said Robert Clark, chief executive of Kona Gold Solutions.

"Along with our new distribution partner in Bermuda, we entered into a distribution agreement with a New York company that will also be opening a retail location in upstate New York, selling and distributing our hemp energy drinks and CBD energy waters."

Kona Gold Solutions recently moved to a new corporate headquarters in Melbourne, Florida, with adequate warehouse space to cope with growing demands for its drinks, including HighDrate CBD energy waters.

**Morning Recovery funding**

**USA** Los Angeles detox shot producer 82 Labs has introduced an improved version of its Morning Recovery [www.morningrecovery-drink.com](http://www.morningrecovery-drink.com) following a successful funding round which raised $8 million, primarily from venture capital firms but also private investors.

Morning Recovery has accelerated sales in recent months, discovering that its prime marketplace is among professionals rather than the college students initially seen as having the most potential.

This appears to be because the brand has been very effective in communication of its ‘do more next day’ marketing tag.

The additional funds will allow further research work and also expand distribution networks.

**Immune health water**

**USA** Pervida [www.pervida.com](http://www.pervida.com), a beverage company which develops functional drinks with health benefits and has received a number of awards for its work, has added two further flavours to its Pervida Immune functional range. These are Berry Acai and Hawaiian Blue Ginger.

Pervida Immune is described by the company as providing ‘unique benefits for gut and immune health from its featured patented ingredients: cold-pressed pomegranate seed oil (PSO), a rich source of unique fatty acids, and puninic acid (PUA), a potent natural anti-inflammatory.

‘The health benefits of Pervida’s scientifically proven proprietary formulations have been investigated for over a decade, and patents have been issued for the ability of PUA to improve gut and immune health and the blood sugar-controlling properties of abscisic acid (ABA).’

‘The patent numbers are listed clearly on each Pervida.’

‘Pervida Immune is designed specifically to support gut health and immune function. In this way, we are here to pioneer personalised nutrition and, in the process, have become category innovators.’ said Josep Bassaganya-Riera, Pervida’s chairman and chief executive.
Sokenbicha renewal

JAPAN Coca-Cola Japan www.cocacola.co.jp has redesigned the packaging for its Sokenbicha Beauty Tea and Sokenbicha Healthy Barley Tea.

The company is supporting the brand renewal with a TV advertising campaign, again featuring movie and TV actress Tao Tsuchiya. The 24-year-old enjoys a very high profile because of her screen work since 2005, along with winning several prime awards.

Unlike some celebrities tapped to do soft drink promotion, Tao Tsuchiya ‘walks the talk’ – she is a dedicated enthusiast of Sokenbicha.

The brand re-launch is also being promoted on social media channels.

Coca-Cola Japan first released Sokenbicha in 1994, basing it on a ‘fresh, healthy, beautiful’ concept. In 2017 it was reintroduced as a beauty tea, with formulation overhaul and especially removal of allergen-specific ingredients.

It was also joined by the Healthy Barley Tea variant.

Sokenbicha Beauty Tea is offered in several PET variants from 280ml upwards, ensuring it can meet all channel requirements including vending machines. The 600ml offering appears to be one of the most popular choices. The barley tea also comes in several PET options.

Green Energy Functional Vinegar

USA Vermont Village has added a Green Energy Functional Vinegar to its product line-up. A small-batch producer of premium apple sauce, apple butter, apple cider vinegar and apple cider vinegar beverages, Vermont Village www.vermontvillage.com is located in Barre, a small city in the heartland of Vermont’s Green Mountains.

Crafted from organic matcha and blended with organic honey and raw and organic apple cider vinegar, Green Energy can be enjoyed in multiple ways, according to Vermont Village. Possibilities are fruit smoothies, in a bottle of water at the gym, or in hot or iced tea.

‘The functional vinegar provides users with a boost of energy and balanced alertness, as it boosts L-theanine, an amino acid which simultaneously works to foster a sense of calm,’ says a company statement. ‘The matcha in Green Energy has many health benefits including being high in antioxidants.’

‘When selecting ingredients for our new functional vinegar, we thought of green tea and its many positive attributes such as boosting metabolism and detoxifying the body,’ said Andrew Lawrence, VP marketing and sales.

‘We found that adding matcha to our vinegar results in a tasteful combination. The apple cider vinegar and matcha duo is refreshing and versatile for those on-the-go.’

Other flavoured vinegars from Vermont Village include Cranberries & Honey and Ginger & Honey.

All of Vermont Village’s products are fully natural, organic, and kosher certified, using a variety of apples grown locally by organic farmers.

At the root of the matter

USA The functional herbal teas produced by YOOT www.yoottea.com really get to the root of the matter: that’s what they are partly derived from and named for.

The current line-up has three variants: Dandelion Root, Licorice Root and Prickly Ash.

Dandelion Root is the biggest seller and YOOT founder Nansee Kim-Parker is putting more and more emphasis on this as she develops the brand.

Kim-Parker was inspired by the herbal remedy drinks her parents made when she was a youngster; memories that came to the fore when she began concocting similar drinks to support her husband who had lost his spleen in a motor accident.

Those herbal drinks worked well and Kim-Parker later looked at developing a commercial range. While she soon discovered that FDA and other regulations governed what ingredients she could work with, there was sufficient scope for semi-replication of old recipes.

The functional root teas are sweetened with monkfruit, an ingredient attracting increased attention from beverage producers worldwide.

YOOT donates a percentage of profits to San Francisco’s TeenForce and is aiming to hire teens via TeenForce when the business grows.

Protein plant drinks

USA With plant-based foods experiencing over an 8% growth in the past year, 1915 Organic debuts a new protein line of plant-forward beverages made with pea protein, and adds two new cold-pressed juices to its existing portfolio of ultra-premium beverages.

1915 Organic www.1915organic.com is a brand of C-Fresh, producers of the Bolt-house Farms range and a division of the Campbell Soup Co.

The full line of new and existing 1915 Organic beverages will also debut a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly bottle that uses nearly 25% less plastic.

Non-dairy 1915 Organic Protein drinks were created to meet consumer preferences for more protein, less sugar and fewer calories. They contain 12 grams of plant-based pea protein, nine grams of sugar; do not contain soy and have no more than 160 calories per bottle.

Flavours: 1915 Organic Protein Vanilla (‘a touch of vanilla sweetness with a smooth taste’), 1915 Organic Protein Chocolate (‘an indulgent flavour made with real cocoa’) and 1915 Organic Protein Coffee (‘a rich and creamy blend made with cold brew coffee’).

The two new cold-pressed juices are 1915 Organic Cucumber (‘a light and refreshing green juice made with leafy green vegetables and unique ingredients like ginger and moringa’) and 1915 Organic Watermelon (‘a delicious blend of two simple ingredients, watermelon and lemon’).
RTD Teas & Coffees

Boss Latte renewal

**JAPAN** Popularity of the Boss RTD range in Japan, where variants have been created to match almost every adult demographic after an early skew to males in their 20s and 30s evolved as others sampled the coffees, was extended – as we reported at the time – by the introduction of a Boss Latte Base dilutables category.

Suntory Foods International [www.suntory.co.jp](http://www.suntory.co.jp) has re-launched the Boss Latte Base line-up with new packaging, supporting the renewal in a tastily different manner by collaborating with a baked foods producer to create a sweet bun with Boss latte jelly.

Boss loyalists were invited to enter a draw for 300 bun Toasters by submitting receipts for Boss purchases.

The Boss Latte Base bottles now show a strengthened image of latte made with milk, emphasising the number of drinks that can be made and the authentic coffee ingredients.

Signature Chocolate cocoa RTD

**UK** Starbucks UK [www.starbucks.co.uk](http://www.starbucks.co.uk) has extended its Chilled Classic RTD range with the addition of a Signature Chocolate flavour.

As the name suggests, this is inspired by one of the coffee house favourites: Signature Hot Chocolate.

A blend of rich Fairtrade cocoa and creamy milk, it is the first flavour in the Starbucks Chilled Classic range not to contain espresso coffee.

The new drink features a melted chocolate-patterned pack design and black lid, helping it stand out on product-crowded supermarket shelves.

“We’re known for our coffee, but we’re also known for our delicious Signature Hot Chocolate, which has been one of the top ten best-selling drinks in our stores since launch,” commented Rebecca Kemp, senior marketing manager for Starbucks EMEA.

“Since launching our Chilled Classic range in the UK, the European ready-to-drink sector has gone from strength to strength, and we’ve seen growing customer demand. Signature Chocolate will appeal to more customers who are not looking for chilled coffee in the aisle and can enjoy an indulgent alternative to regular chocolate milk.”

Iced Coffee Edge

**AUSTRALIA** The Farmers Union brand is pretty much a household name in much of Australia, especially in its home territory of South Australia. Introduced in 1977, it has evolved through two generations, adding several variants.

The latest is Iced Coffee Edge, a blend which the bottle graphics banner as offering protein + fibre.

It comes in Original and Mocha flavours. Iced Coffee Edge is initially retailing in South Australia (where its release merited a lot of consumer media attention), the Northern Territory and Victoria – both neighbour South Australia and NT, once part of SA, has long held Farmers Union high in popularity.

The Farmers Union range is made in Salisbury, SA, by Lion Dairy & Drinks [www.lionco.com](http://www.lionco.com) whose marketing and innovation director Darryn Wallace said development of Edge had been motivated by the brand’s die-hard fans.

Adelaide Crows AFL star Rory Sloane features in an advertising campaign to launch Edge, assuring it of even more public attention – he is one of SA’s favourite players. The campaign has been complemented by a sampling programme.

Farmers Union has a long tradition of zany advertising in the true ‘Ocker’ style.

“And in the days when SA was a major car manufacturer, at least two models were made with holders not only for traditional drinks but also for Farmers Union bottles.

Shizuoka tea heritage

**THAILAND** Japan’s Shizuoka Prefecture, renowned throughout Asia for its premium tea, has joined with Ichitan Group Thailand [www.ichtangroup.com](http://www.ichtangroup.com) to bring two flavours of Shizuoka RTD tea to the Thai market.

Original (no sugar) and Mildly Sweet, both in 440ml PET bottles.

The teas were brewed according to a recipe from Satoru Fujimoto, a top tea master of Shizuoka. The product is the first with the right to use the ‘Fujipo’, the symbol of Shizuoka, and is certified by the Shizuoka Tea Export Association.

“Thailand is a tropical country and its people prefer refreshing tea. I wish to also introduce the rich flavour and the mellow sweet flavour of Shizuoka tea adapted to the Thai consumers’ preference,” said tea master Fujimoto.

“The hardest part in developing this product is tea selection.

“We have selected the best quality tea leaves to get the highest quality tea. Only the first and second flush teas, or spring winter tea as known by Japanese, are used in brewing this product. Ichitan has produced the tea to my recipe and process and sent back the product for me to test. I tried it and still felt the freshness.

“The sweet flavour remains. The undesirable bitterness is gone. It is just the same perfect blend that I brewed myself. It is a really good product.”

Ichitan Thailand has high hopes for the new product, according to company president Tan Passakornnatee, and is budgeting for high sales following a good response to the soft launch.
Royal Cup embraces RTD

**USA** Yet another respected American coffee brand – Royal Cup – has taken the step into RTD, seen as an inevitable move after Royal Cup’s 2017 purchase of Richgood Gourmet and its Icebox Coffee brand.

Alabama-based Royal Cup [www.royalcup-coffee.com](http://www.royalcup-coffee.com) is a top-end importer, roaster and distributor of premium and speciality coffees and teas.

Its new cold brew line, an addition to Royal Cup’s Signature Brand, features three flavours: French Roast, French Roast Lightly Sweetened and Rain Forest Bold, this last being certified by the Rainforest Alliance.

Bill Smith, Royal Cup’s chief executive, said the RTD was “the result of many months of hard work, impressive collaboration and timely execution.

“As an organisation, we are committed to innovation and to identifying new ways to produce, market and sell the coffee and specialty beverages our customers have come to know and love.”

In the Richgood Gourmet purchase Bebe Goodrich, founder and former president of Icebox Coffee, joined Royal Cup as director of liquid product innovation where she now leads the company’s liquid-manufacturing team of experts, spearheaded the development of the new cold brew line.

“2017 was an exciting and pivotal year as Richgood Gourmet joined forces with Royal Cup to create and deliver the highest quality ready-to-drink cold brewed coffees and specialty beverages,” said Goodrich.

“The future has never been brighter, and we will continue to pioneer high-demand products that enhance Royal Cup’s ability to create exceptional customer experiences – something on which it has intensely focused since its inception more than 120 years ago.”

Royal Cup is also intending to introduce a new line of shelf-stable, ready-to-drink teas, available in sweetened, unsweetened and peach flavours.

SlimFast introduces SlimCafé

**USA** SlimFast, the Florida-based group known internationally for its meal-replacement lines and other weight loss products, has launched a new range of coffee RTDs under the SlimCafé brand. This has made its debut with two flavours: Mocha Macchiato and Caramel Cappuccino.

SlimCafé cans highlight the product’s ZERO added sugar, proclaiming the drinks to be ‘natural energy’.

The creamy beverages have 10g of protein and only 120 calories. They are marketed for general use but with a special hat-tip to those following the SlimFast Plan.

“Whether you’re simply watching your calories or trying to lose weight, one thing we know for sure is people never want to give up their coffee,” said SlimFast chief executive Chris Tisi. “We set out to find a way to give people that delicious, decadent flavour they expect from a latte, without all of the sugar and calories.”

Founded in 1977 and based in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, SlimFast [www.slimfast.com](http://www.slimfast.com) was formerly held by Unilever, until being acquired by Kainos Capital in July 2014. Under its current ownership, SlimFast has developed the Advanced Nutrition, Advanced Energy, Boosters, Bake Shop, and Snacks ranges.

Self chilling coffees

**USA** 7-Eleven has launched Fizzics Sparkling Cold Brew Coffee in what are claimed to be the first self-chilling cans available on a large scale to the public in the United States.

Chill-Can technology [www.chillcan.com](http://www.chillcan.com) was created by the Joseph Company International of Irvine, California.

The Joseph Company intends to rapidly commercialise the self-chilling beverage can and associated self-chilling beverage packaging containers through private labels and the licensing of the technology to the beverage world. The Joseph Company is currently constructing a production and technology complex in Youngstown, Ohio.

Fizzics Sparkling Cold Brew Coffee drinks are available in three flavours – Regular; French Vanilla and Caramel. Made with 100% Arabica beans and all-natural flavours, each 8oz can of the fizzy brew contains only 50 calories, 10g sugar and less than 80mg caffeine.

The Chill-Can containers are purchased at ambient temperature and chilled when ready to consume. When activated, the patented technology utilises reclaimed CO2 and the process automatically chills the can and the sparkling coffee beverage inside.

“Because the self-chilling can technology is so ground-breaking, we wanted to introduce it with a super innovative beverage,” said Tim Cogill, 7-Eleven director of private brands.

“Sparkling coffee sodas met all the criteria. Previously available in some coffee shops, a handful of exclusive canned carbonated brews began showing up last summer. Fizzics will be the first that can be chilled on demand, bringing a new level of convenience to customers who want to enjoy a chilled drink whenever and wherever they are.”

Milo Kaw RTD returns

**MALAYSIA** Nestlé Malaysia [www.nestle.com.my](http://www.nestle.com.my) has re-released the Milo Kaw RTD to the market.

Milo Kaw was first introduced as a powder beverage in 2017 and was briefly available in RTD format. This variant is thinner than the usual Milo – ‘kaw’ is used in Malaysia to refer to thickened beverages – and the latest edition of the RTD contains 6.8g sugar/100ml serve – 3g sucrose, 2.6g lactose, 1.2g maltose.

The Milo brand enjoys almost universal recognition in Malaysia.
Dairy & Alternatives

**Walnut soya milk**

**VIETNAM** Vinamilk [www.vinamilk.com.vn](http://www.vinamilk.com.vn) has been running an online promotion to highlight its walnut soya milk. Participants were required to identify benefits of the drink, with movie tickets on offer as prizes.

While Vinamilk – the Vietnam Dairy Products Joint Stock Company – continues to derive much of its revenue from fresh milk and milk powder, the company has been expanding into alternatives such as the walnut soya milk as well as specialist dairy beverages including organic milk and low-sugar variants.

In the financial year to March 31 2018, Vinamilk achieved a revenue increase of 8.5% on the previous year while post-tax profit grew by 4.6%. This was a slight improvement on earlier estimates. Mai Kiêu Lien, Vinamilk’s general director, said the company’s market share in Vietnam was now around 58%, up one per cent on the previous year when it grew by two per cent.

**Movie packs for kids**

**MEXICO** Big Mexican dairy producer Grupo Lala [www.lala.com.mx](http://www.lala.com.mx) has licensed its Yomi brand to feature colourful characters from Los Increíbles 2, the Spanish-language version of the second movie in The Incredibles series.

This Pixar Animation Studios superhero property has been a huge merchandising revenue-earner since the original movie appeared in 2004. Writer-director Brad Bird had long been encouraged to work on a sequel but had hesitated until he was certain he had a storyline and overall package equal to the original, wishing to avoid any erosion of the characters.

Grupo Lala, which is unusual amongst Mexican dairy producers in being fully national – the majority are regional – has applied the superheroes to flavoured milk packs for youngsters.

Reaction has been very pleasing, the company reported.

**Yoghurt drink makeover**

**USA** [DAHlicious](https://www.DAHlicious.com) has rebranded its lassi yoghurt drinks and other yoghurt as it moves towards expanding its distribution network substantially. The producer has also been strengthened by KEEN Growth Capital acquiring a financial interest.

“DAHlicious’ slow-cultured process delivers extraordinary probiotic counts, flavour and texture, setting this brand apart from in the dairy category,” said Jerry Bello, managing partner at KEEN Growth Capital.

“KEEN is dedicated to making India-style lassi a household word.”

KEEN Growth Capital invests in early stage food and beverage related companies that generate meaningful social impact in addition to above-market financial returns.

DAHlicious yoghurts are probiotic-dense, rich and creamy in texture and smooth in taste – never with any bitterness, stresses chief executive Tom Burns.

Products include India-style organic grass-fed whole milk lassi yoghurt drink and India-style almond milk lassi. Both are claimed to contain 60 billion probiotics per bottle.

The DAHlicious re-branding features a new logo, brand icon, tagline and packaging. Burns said the branding was designed to be more energetic and colourful, appealing across broad demographics.

The new tagline is ‘Live DAHliciously’ and the ‘painted elephant’ brand icon symbolises ancient wisdom and time-honoured Indian traditions.

**Wild Blueberry Milk**

**USA** Maine’s Oakhurst Dairy [www.oakhurst-dairy.com](http://www.oakhurst-dairy.com) has introduced a wild blueberry milk.

The Portland producer notes there is quite a difference between wild blueberries (also known as low-bush blueberries) and the cultivated (high bush) fruit. ‘They have a higher skin to pulp ratio which gives them a more intense flavour, twice the antioxidants and more fibre.

‘You can find them growing out in the wild in various spots across the country, but they are only harvested commercially in Maine and parts of Canada.’

Oakhurst is sourcing its wild blueberries from Wyman’s of Maine to create the wild blueberry flavour. A one-cup serving of blueberry milk contains 210 calories, 8 grams of fat, 25 grams of sugar (13 are added) and 8 grams of protein.

The wild blueberry milk is available throughout Northern New England. Oakhurst’s #1-selling flavoured milk is its ‘super premium’ chocolate milk which leads flavoured whole milk sales in both Maine and New Hampshire.

**Weetabix on the go Kids**

**UK** Weetabix on the go [www.weetabixon-the-go.co.uk](http://www.weetabixon-the-go.co.uk) has introduced a new Kids range, aimed at 5-10 year olds. It has made its debut with three flavours: Strawberry, Banana and Chocolate.

Weetabix on the go Kids provide the equivalent energy, fibre and protein of one Weetabix Original and milk. They are a source of vitamin D, calcium, fibre and protein.

“We know that parents want to deliver a good breakfast to their children, but fussy eating habits and our busy lives can sometimes get in the way,” said brand manager Beth Reeve. “The new Weetabix on the go Kids range is great as part of a nutritious and balanced breakfast or morning top up – ideal for hectic mornings and snacking while on the move.

“We have worked hard to ensure we keep sugar levels to a minimum without compromising on taste and we’re proud of the fact Weetabix on the go Kids has the same sugar content as a glass of semi-skimmed milk.”
Flaxmilk Omega-3 + Protein

**USA** Plant-based milk and yoghurt alternative producer Good Karma Foods [www.goodkarmafoods.com](http://www.goodkarmafoods.com) has launched Flaxmilk Omega-3 Protein RTDs which the Boulder, Colorado-based company claims to deliver ‘an unmatched mighty nutritional bundle of vitamin a, vitamin d, calcium and as much plant-based protein, with up to half the sugar of dairy-based offerings per serving, plus a daily dose of Omega-3 healthy fats’. The drinks have a creamy texture and are free of all major allergens.

“Our new plant-based beverages were designed to offer the whole family highly-nutritious, low-sugar options they can conveniently enjoy on-the-go,” said Doug Radi, chief executive of Good Karma Foods.

“We’re thrilled the new line will allow us to expand into new channels, including the launch of our first-ever offering on Amazon, making it even easier for families across the US to purchase Good Karma products.”

The line is also available in natural food stores and mainstream supermarkets.

Flaxmilk Omega-3 + Protein Lunchbox 6.75oz cartons – sold in six-pack format – come in Vanilla Lightly Sweetened (claimed to have 20% less sugar than white dairy milk) and Chocolate, which is claimed to have 50% less sugar than most competing chocolate dairy milks.

A 10oz ‘grab-and-go’ bottle line comes in three options: Unsweetened + Protein, Lightly Sweetened Vanilla + Protein, and Chocolate + Protein. Flaxmilk Omega-3 + Protein also comes in shelf-stable quart multi-serve packaging. This variant has launched with Unsweetened + Protein and Lightly Sweetened Vanilla + Protein flavours.

Good Karma was formed in 2012. It was among the pioneers in flax-based dairy alternatives.

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**Low-sugar milk**

**ITALY** Bologna-based dairy producer Granarolo Group [www.granarologroup.com](http://www.granarologroup.com) has collaborated with ENEA to create a new low-sugar, lactose-free milk branded as G+.

ENEA [www.enea.it](http://www.enea.it) is Italy’s government-sponsored research and development agency which has an impressive track record for successful advances.

G+ Milk is claimed to have 30% less sugar than whole milk and to be easier to digest than most conventional milk products.

It is based on a filtration process which breaks down lactose into glucose and galactose.

ENEA and Granarolo have taken G+ into production at a new production line in Gioia del Colle, in the Apulia region of southern Italy (part of the Bari metro area).

“In order to provide milk with high digestibility and low sugar content, we employed membrane filtration technologies, innovative mechanical processes without the need for solvents or reagents, which allow the preservation of the active substances of milk,” explained Roberto Baldocchi, head of ENEA’s bioproducts and bioprocesses laboratory.

“These technologies are in fact also called ‘mild technologies’ because, when used for food preservation and transformation, they don’t affect their nutritional value.”

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**Actimel 0% fat**

**UK/IRELAND** The Actimel [www.actimel.co.uk](http://www.actimel.co.uk) yoghurt drinks brand from Danone has reformulated its whole 0% range, containing only natural occurring sugars. The re-launch includes the addition of Multifruit to the 0% line-up.

“The trend and desire for more ‘health conscious’ options are as relevant as ever, and the new 0% fat, now with no added sugar, range responds to this,” said Cynthia Finke, brand marketing manager UK, Belgium, Ireland and Netherlands.

“We’re delighted with the results and we worked hard with consumers to ensure we’ve maintained the same delicious taste.”

She said the re-launch was “aimed at maintaining fans of the brand, as well as attracting a new consumer base to the dairy drinks arena. We see this as a real growth opportunity for retailers particularly with the Multifruit NPD, which is one of our biggest selling flavours and has never before been available with low fat and sugar content.”

The re-launch has been supported by a big advertising spend including TV and digital, as well as in-store activities.

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**Plant-based drink, packaging**

**EUROPE** Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Co [www.coca-colaHELLenic.com](http://www.coca-colaHELLenic.com) has expanded its product portfolio into a new category with AdeZ, a plant-based beverage which blends seeds with fruit juices, vitamins and minerals for a rich, smooth taste. The brand has already proved its appeal elsewhere.

The range is offered in re-sealable and 100% recyclable PlantBottle packaging in on-the-go 250ml or at-home 800ml.

“As we move towards our vision to become a total beverage company everywhere in the world, we are making this move in Europe into the exciting category of plant-based nutrition,” said Walter Susini, TCCC’s chief marketing officer for EMEA.

“After a success story in Latin America, AdeZ comes to our continent with new recipes – tailored to the European tastes and with no added sugar as well as new packaging and visual identity aiming to capture the growing appetite for delicious and varied nutrition.”

Naya Kalogeraki, chief customer and commercial officer for Coca Cola HBC, said the company was “energised by the challenges this has brought – new ingredients, new packaging, new labelling, new knowledge and a new customer selling proposition. Our teams have been working with amazing drive to deliver the launch in 13 of our markets in a very short period of time.”

“These efforts have been amplified by our sales teams taking this new product to our customers and demonstrating how we can partner with them to meet consumer and shopper preferences and drive value together”

AdeZ is now available in Poland, Romania, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, Greece, Cyprus, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Ireland and Russia.
In the past seven years Kombucha has soared from being a beverage that was available but certainly not very well known in mass-market terms. Now it’s a definite FMCG line, selling at retail in the mega grocery channel in many markets as well as health food stores; it’s also increasingly to be seen in bars and, more so, cafés. Restaurants, too, although cautiously for the most part.

Kombucha, fermented tea, is an age-old drink. At least several hundred years old and probably a lot more. Some say thousands, albeit with little evidence. It evolved in Manchuria, Mongolia and Russia’s Far East where it was a traditional drink, home-made and varying from one community to the next.

The 21st century commercialised versions of kombucha might skip the dollop of yak butter which some of those old rural concoctions were said to feature but they have developed in line with modern taste trends, embracing both mainstream flavours and innovative variants.

Lifestyle magazines, influencer blogs, TV talk shows and other communications channels are alive with talk about kombucha.

We’ll be a little more down to earth in our coverage but you can expect an update on kombucha product developments every three to four months. Product news (with images) is welcome.

RISE heads south

Canadian-made RISE Kombucha www.risekombucha.com is crossing the border into the United States. First US distribution points are Vermont and New York City.

This brand has presented itself very effectively on the home market as a crafted, authentic, raw and unpasteurised kombucha using high-quality ingredients.

“We’re continuously researching and testing our kombucha to ensure an evolving mastery of this amazing beverage and are excited to continue our mission to democratise authentic kombucha south of the border,” said Julian Giacomelli, president and co-founder.

RISE’s current flavour portfolio includes Ginger, Hibiscus & Rose Hips, Blueberry & Maple, Lemongrass, Mint & Chlorophyll and Rose & Schizandra.

The company has a new production facility which allows significantly increased output. But RISE has promised to continue its crafted approach, with no added foreign probiotic strains, not-from-concentrate and in strict regulatory compliance.

Evolution Fresh

Seattle cold-pressed juice brand Evolution Fresh www.evolutionfresh.com is expanding its functional beverage portfolio by entering the kombucha market, initially targeting grocery and natural retailers in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Seattle and New York City.

Evolution Fresh Organic Kombucha is available in six flavours: Ginger Lemon Honeycrisp, Mango Pineapple, Ginger Greens, Spicy Greens, Pink Grapefruit, and Turmeric Pineapple Coconut.

All feature Evolution Fresh’s cold-pressed juices.

“Evolution Fresh has a long-standing heritage in cold-pressed juice and we are continuing to deliver on our commitment to expand in the functional beverage category with the launch of Evolution Fresh Organic Kombucha,” said company president Ryan Ziegelmann.

Evolution Fresh Organic Kombucha is certified USDA Organic, non-GMO, gluten-free, and Kosher.

Theonista Kombucha

Meghan Werner, founder and brew-mistress at South Africa’s Theonista www.theonista.co.za has gained a lot of media coverage with her philosophy that you should “follow your gut” when it comes to health, immunity and wellbeing.

She describes Theonista as “a gut-loving com-
Like other live fermented foods, kombucha is extremely rich in probiotics and organic acids. There are numerous health benefits associated with kombucha, from improved digestion and increased metabolism to boosted immunity, energy, healthier skin & hair, and detoxification. She claims Kombucha can also help heal candida from overpopulating within the gut by restoring balance to the digestive system, with live probiotic cultures that help the gut to repopulate with good bacteria while crowding out the candida yeast.

“Drinking as little as 100-200ml per day can greatly improve your overall state of health and wellbeing” by starting to create probiotic harmony in your gut.

Theonista offers Raw & Natural Kombucha (330ml, 500ml, 1-litre) and African Botanical Kombucha (330ml), as well as home brew kits; it is also available on tap at the brewery for BYO bottles or reusable glass growlers available from Theonista.

Humm Kombucha
Not given to false modesty, Oregon-based Humm Kombucha [www.hummkombucha.com] markets itself as ‘the world’s most drinkable kombucha’. Humm’s fermentation process does not dilute with water using kombucha concentrates, nor does it require extensive processing, filtration or heat to remove the alcohol. Chief executive and co-founder Jamie Danek says the process ensures that Humm will not lose its delicate flavour, beneficial bacteria and aromatic compounds.

The process is tested both in-house and by an accredited independent laboratory. Both Humm and the independent lab use the AOAC-approved methods for testing alcohol content in kombucha. And Danek says that to combat any inconsistencies with beneficial bacteria, Humm uses the probiotic strain Bacillus Subtilis, so that every 14 oz bottle will contain 2 billion probiotic cultures at the time of bottling.

“When we started Humm, we thought if we could make a product that was delicious and helped people feel better, it would be a game changer,” comments Danek.

“We invested years of research to create a unique way for more people to enjoy real, authentic kombucha with ultimate transparency, safety and taste.”

Humm Kombucha is widely available in the US and Canada and is moving gradually into Europe and Asia markets.

Brothers & Sisters
Polish producer Brothers & Sisters Kombucha [www.brothersandsisters.pl] is stepping up distribution within Poland following initial release in mid-2017.

Flavours currently available include Classic Sencha, Ginger & Lemongrass, and Kefir. Brothers & Sisters was one of the first producers to offer kombucha on the Polish market.

Health-Ade collaboration with Tone It Up
Los Angeles producer Health-Ade [www.health-ade.com] has partnered with wellness duo Katrina Scott and Karen Dawn to launch a co-branded kombucha.

Scott and Dawn are co-founders of Tone It Up [www.toneitup.com], a healthy lifestyle brand and fitness community.

The partners introduced the Bubbly Rose Superfood flavour in August.

Daina Trout, chief executive at Health-Ade Kombucha, said she was very pleased to partner with fellow female entrepreneurs. “These amazing women encourage their tribe to unlock the Continued overleaf
healthiest, happiest version of themselves, and this collaboration celebrates our shared values of optimism and authenticity.”

Trout co-founded Health Ade in 2012 with husband Justin and best friend Vanessa Dew. They now have a fast-growing brewery in Torrance, California.

Part of Health-Ade’s Superfood line, Tone It Up’s Bubbly Rose features hawthorn berry, mangosteen and pink rose paired with Health-Ade’s original base kombucha (a mix of fermented organic black and green teas) for a flavour profile that is subtly fruit-forward and a touch tart.

The new flavour joins Maca-Berry, Reishi-Chocolate and Power Greens, the other core flavours in the Superfood line, which feature functional and botanical ingredients.

Scott said that “when dreaming up this collaboration, we were inspired by the flavours we love like berry and rose. It’s also a play on rosé – a TIU girl fave! This will be the perfect drink to enjoy with girlfriends, on its own or to mix up a cocktail or mocktail!”

**Limited edition Harvest**

Inspired by the bounty of Oregon’s orchards, fields and gardens during autumn, Brew Dr. Kombucha www.brewdrkombucha.com has released a fall season kombucha called Harvest.

The limited-edition Harvest features apricot and tarragon flavours and marks the first fall seasonal for the raw kombucha brand.

“With subtle hints of apricot, tarragon and green tea, this sweet and savoury kombucha reminds us of a crisp fall day in the Pacific Northwest,” said Matt Thomas, founder and chief executive of Brew Dr. Kombucha.

“Using organic, raw ingredients is an important part of the process for all of our flavours, and Harvest conveys the inspiration we find each day in the nature surrounding us.”

Since launching Brew Dr. Kombucha in 2008 from the kitchens of Townshend’s Teahouses, the brand has continued to innovate its kombucha-making process.

In a specially designed distillery, Brew Dr. Kombucha removes the alcohol from the fermented tea without the use of heat, preserving the beverage’s beneficial live and active cultures. All varieties use Townshend’s custom organic tea blends, herbs and botanicals, resulting in a smooth and balanced taste. Harvest is available in 14 oz. and 32 oz. glass bottles from August through October in the US and Canada.
Bringing you the tastes of the world, naturally

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www.kanegrade.com
Some beverage trends come and go, but it seems premium juices and smoothies are here to stay. Part of their success is due to their wide appeal and vast choice of tastes, textures and added value that can help transform drinks from simple refreshments to on-trend favourites. However, with consumer demands more diverse than ever, and the UK joining Ireland, France, Norway, Mexico and some US states in the adoption of ‘sugar taxes’, beverage manufacturers are reconsidering their formulations, turning to fruit and vegetable combinations to fall in line with industry standards, while continuing to maintain consumer interest.

Rethinking reformulation

Long before sugar taxes were imposed, their effects were felt across the industry, due to pressure from advisory bodies and media scrutiny. But reformulation does not have to mean sacrificing appeal. In fact, since legislation is coinciding with the health and wellness trend that has been rapidly growing in recent years, there is an opportunity to capitalise on the interest in drinks with a healthy ‘halo’. With consumers becoming increasingly label-savvy, it is up to beverage manufacturers to incorporate alternative ingredients that consumers recognise for their healthy and natural properties – ensuring they keep them coming back for more.

Fruit and vegetable purees and concentrates are one way manufacturers are turning to clean label and premium ingredients to bridge the gap in this market. Not only do they offer easy-to-understand labels, but they also help improve authenticity in products to meet the desire for transparency and ‘all-natural’ claims. Fruit and vegetable ingredients work particularly well for encouraging consumers to be more receptive to new beverage formulations, thanks to their natural appeal. Added or artificial sweetness is as much in the crosshairs as excessive sugar content. Fruits and vegetables can help lower calories in sweet drinks in a natural way, for example by formulating with combinations such as berries, beetroot or carrot.

In the pursuit of premiumisation

In addition to the interest in clean label, juice and smoothie producers are having to create formulations to meet demand for even more exciting combinations. As consumers become more adventurous in their beverage tastes, the appetite for premium quality products is growing. The category is becoming a hotbed of innovation, as manufacturers look to the next go-to trends for inspiration, in an effort to add a sophisticated and authentic edge to their innovations. Outside of the juice and smoothie segment, manufacturers are also experimenting with berries and cherries in combination with cucumber or mint, matcha, green and rooibos teas to broaden the reach of iced tea even further.

In order to tap into the premiumisation trend, beverage makers must ensure their formulations retain a point of differentiation on the shelves. According to several industry insiders, black is back in 2018, across the whole sector. Dark fruit and vegetables can bring a unique look and novel appeal to up-and-coming beverages. Blackberry and blackcurrant, in particular, have already become firm fixtures in some of the industry’s biggest brands, with an ability to add a natural dark tint to drinks, as well as an extensive range of health benefits. Frequently paired with other ‘super’ ingredients, such as cranberries and beetroot, blackcurrant contains four times as much vitamin C as oranges and double the amount of antioxidants as blueberries – a winning combination for health-conscious consumers.

In addition, flavoured waters are a growing phenomenon that is helping to reinvigorate the premium segment. With recent flavour combinations including grapefruit and rosemary, as well as raspberry and elderflower tonic waters, they present a high-quality option for consumers looking for refreshing alternatives to high-sugar carbonated beverages. Increasingly formulated using
strong fruit flavours and botanicals, they are becoming popular not only as mixers, but sophisticated drinks in their own right. These new innovations allow manufacturers to emphasise more ‘natural’ ingredients, as well as their provenance – an aspect that holds wide appeal for today’s consumers. Flavoured waters using premium fruit and vegetables offer reassurance to consumers that brands are using only the simplest and necessary ingredients.

**Rethinking old favourites**

With increasing competition from own label brands, there is even more pressure for beverage manufacturers to innovate and add value. However, many are finding that there is no need to reinvent the wheel. Fruit flavours remain popular among consumers who are looking to recreate or add a new dimension to childhood favourites. With reformulation often a long and complex process, many manufacturers are therefore turning to the same product to overcome new challenges.

For instance, just as energy drink companies are focusing their marketing efforts on zero-calorie beverages, other manufacturers are concentrating on optimal flavour over a positive nutritional profile. As such, taste continues to be a key driver in the category, with many consumers returning to their tried and tested beverages. Fruit and vegetable ingredients are one way that manufacturers are revitalising classic drinks, helping to re-introduce consumers to their favourite drinks by incorporating nostalgic ingredients such as tomato with twists like strawberry or blueberry.

**Forward thinking**

As consumer tastes become more adventurous, fruit and vegetables can help enhance new product development, appealing to consumers’ growing interest in health and wellness, as well as attract new audiences through the creation of more exotic, authentic, on-trend beverages.

Regulation and changing consumer preferences present a real opportunity for beverage manufacturers to innovate with differentiated, premium ingredients – to not only help overcome formulation challenges, but to offer unique drinking experiences.

Suppliers like SVZ are at the forefront of these developments, producing premium fruit and vegetable purées, juices and concentrates via a transparent supply chain, to meet the evolving formulation needs of manufacturers. In such a fast-moving sector, keeping up with consumer trends and continuous innovation are becoming increasingly necessary to retain premium status on the retail shelves and create brand differentiation.

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**The natural choice, naturally**

— *Ardie van Lankveld*

Few sectors have been impacted as heavily by the clean label/natural trend as much as soft drinks. Remember the ingredients lists on the things we all drank as children? You probably don’t – but the domination of artificial colours, flavours, acidulants, stabilisers, sweeteners and preservatives in those days is unquestionable.

How quickly times are changing. But swapping that number of artificial additives for more consumer-friendly alternatives is a massive task – and that’s before you even think about adding vitamins, minerals, proteins and other functional ingredients.

Daunting as it might be, moving towards more natural formulations is more of a requirement than a choice. Consumers aren’t going back to the “bad old days.”

Deciding where and how to reformulate is a question of priorities as much as possibilities, as every change to an ingredient will of course impact various characteristics.

Collaborating with suppliers holding a long history of reformulation and who specialise in natural ingredients accelerates the process and optimises outcomes. And getting exceptional soft drinks onto the shelf faster is, surely, the most natural choice of all.

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**Deciding where and how to reformulate is a question of priorities as much as possibilities...**

— *Johan Cerstiaens is commercial director at SVZ.*

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*www.svz.com*
Maximum quality
minimum risk

Carbonated soft drinks (CSD) continue to be popular and around the world billions of beverages are sold each year. The carbonation of the beverage is undertaken by forcing carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the liquid and storing under pressure. The presence of this gas creates bubbles and fizzing in the liquid when pressure is reduced. The gas provides the unique taste and gives a sparkling feeling and a reduction in tasted sweetness.

The CO₂ that is injected into the beverage must be free of particles, microorganisms and unwanted chemical compounds. Existence of these contaminants may result in a quality incident. Such an incident may occur where a delivery of out-of-specification CO₂ has been made to the plant or where CO₂ has been contaminated on-site during the production process.

Soft drink manufacturers adhere to a multitude of strict quality standards. These standards are under constant review. During recent years, growing interest and concern has been shown by the beverage industry in the possible effects of poor quality carbon dioxide used in carbonation of the beverage. This has resulted in a greater focus being placed on the purity of the CO₂ used in the canning and bottling plants. Parker provides a guarantee to quality as its team works closely with globally recognised standard development committees.

Minimising risk is paramount and Parker recognises that the effects of a quality incident can challenge consumer safety, damage brand names, company reputations and revenues. Since its launch over two decades ago, thousands of Parker PCO₂ quality incident protection systems are installed throughout the world’s bottling community and Parker are proud to be the industry preferred technology in quality incident protection.

Parker’s unique multi-bed media absorbent technology is constructed from specially selected adsorbents to remove trace contamination from CO₂. It is designed as a quality incident protection device; it will treat ‘out of specification’ CO₂ to return it back to specification within the ISBT/EIGA acceptable safe limits. The installation of a PCO₂ system allows production to continue by processing the contaminated CO₂ whilst the corrective actions are implemented.

Additional Parker domnick hunter specialised filtration is provided at both the inlet and outlet points of the system as standard. Pre filtration ensures protection of the adsorbent beds from non-volatile organic residue (NVOR) that may be present in the gas supply and partic-
ulates down to 0.01 micron. Post filtration ensures no carry-over of Non-Volatile Residue (NVR) from the adsorbent beds to 0.01 micron particle filtration. An optional sterilising grade gas filter may also be supplied where the source of CO₂ is unknown or when it is derived from fermentation.

The use of Parker genuine parts is essential in minimising risk. Genuine Parker elements and cartridges are specially designed and tested to operate to the maximum quality standards of the original design build. Counterfeit parts are typically substandard and manufactured from poor quality non-conforming materials. Failure to use genuine Parker parts may result in:

- Increased contamination in process streams
- Non FDA materials being present in the system
- Spoilage and potential recall
- Compromised consumer safety
- Audit failure
- Voided warranty
- Manufacturing downtime

The risks in using non genuine Parker parts is huge and safe performance is not guaranteed. Parker genuine parts – Essential for assured Quality Incident Protection.

The CO₂ that is injected into the beverage must be free of particles, microorganisms and unwanted chemical compounds.
Ricardo Ermirio de Moraes is a visionary. He can draw upon many years of experience in the orange juice business, was the founding father of Citrovita, and subsequently the long-serving president of Citrosuco. About ten years ago, he set up Natural One, and to begin with bottled ready-mixed vodka-based fruit juice mixtures in PET containers.

In 2012, he then decided to launch fruit juices on the market himself under the Natural One brand. His philosophy and slogan are 'pura verdade', which translates as 'pure truth'. Meaning no concentrate or squash, no added sugar, no preservatives, but 100% juice – and it was the first company in Brazil not to do it in carton packages, but in PET bottles.

For this purpose, Ricardo Ermirio de Moraes had five million new orange trees planted on a farm measuring 2,800 square kilometres. This 'fazenda' is located in the (cooler) south of São Paulo state. For many market observers, this was at first incomprehensible, because down there the sun shines less often and the fruits are correspondingly less sweet when they ripen than in the warmer north.

But: the juice obtained from these oranges scores highly in terms of precisely this lesser sweetness and its vibrant, intensive colour.

“Hitherto, it had been normal, for reasons of cost, to export concentrates. Ricardo Ermirio de Moraes was also the first to export NFC juices from Brazil. This decision, too, was at first ridiculed, but has proved to be visionary and right,” explains Valdenir Soares, who at Natural One is responsible for the new business development department and had been tasked with internationalising the company. His verdict is unequivocal: “Ricardo de Moraes correctly anticipated trends.”

The tim e before Krones and the tim e with Krones

Natural One laid the foundations for one of these trends early in 2014. Back then, the com-
company was the first firm in Brazil to bottle 100% NFC juice in PET containers – in the autumn of the same year this had already sold out. “We were in fact a bit surprised at how high the demand was,” admits Valdenir Soares.

So a decision on expansion had to be taken swiftly. By the first week of January 2015, Krones had already received an order for a new line, and early in 2016 production began on this aseptic line. In Valdenir Soares’ eyes, the company’s success is very significantly attributable to the new Krones line featuring the Contipure A septBloc DA: “We measure time in two epochs: the time before Krones and the time with Krones. Because this technology has enabled us to translate our idea of natural juices into fully functional reality.”

**Fundamental change**

“The aseptic process was the best choice for a company like us that looks to the future. Consumers will be wanting products that are of high quality and maximised purity. Krones wasn’t the cheapest vendor, it’s true, but it did have the best technology. Stretch blow-moulding and filling on a single machine – that’s simply brilliant, especially when – as is the case in the Contipure A septBloc DA – it’s already the preforms that are sterilised,” explains Valdenir Soares.

“Until the end of 2016, we were the only fruit juice producer in Brazil to be using this innovative technology and thus also the only one able to offer fruit juices in the cold chain with a shelf-life of eight months. Mind you, we were very favourably impressed not only by the machines, but also by the technical skills of Krones’ staff, and their habit of continually keeping us up to date with maximised transparency.”

Natural One draws a distinction nowadays between products in the cold chain (with which it also began its production operations) and the newly launched products that are sold at ambient temperature. These are already accounting for around a quarter of total sales.

**High level**

The whole company has learned a lot from the exacting stipulations Krones laid down for the project. The high level of the new technology also had an effect on the outsourced parts, such as preforms or labels. As Valdenir Soares explains: “We decided to meet the world’s most stringent requirements, of the kind taken for granted in Japan, Europe and the USA, for example. This will be a huge help when we’re exporting to these countries.”

But the new line also made things easier for the firm as well: for instance, its fast output meant that night shifts and Sunday working could be dispensed with. The small line rated at around 7,000 containers per hour needed twelve operators, while for the 24,000-bhp line handling 900-millilitre containers four employees suffice. The aseptic line passed its acceptance test with an efficiency of 96%.

**Ready for more**

But Natural One is ready for more. The company is observing a fundamental change in fruit juice consumption habits. It has even come to see this category as a third major soft drink segment alongside water and CSDs, and regards 100% natural purity as the basis for rising consumer demand. Natural One is now aiming to boost this abroad as well: in the neighbouring South American countries, in Japan, South-East Asia, Europe and the USA.

The target involved is an ambitious one: exports of the aseptically bottled NFC juices are to rise very substantially within one year, from their present-day 2% to around a quarter of total output. 2018 has been designated as the year of exports – this vision is also destined to come true.
Niagara Bottling

high speed investment

The private label bottled water supplier, Niagara Bottling LLC, with its many plants throughout the US and Mexico, has recently upgraded its Salt Lake City facility with a Sidel complete PET line.

The line features two Super Combis, equipped with the innovative and compact ground level preform feeder, EasyFEED, along with Gebo Cermex conveying and end-of-line equipment. This investment has enabled the ambitious bottler to significantly increase its productivity through high-speed, efficient manufacturing and high availability rates of the line.

Niagara Bottling, with more than 50 years of business experience, has based its success in the water market on offering customers a high-quality product, which is safe and has a great taste profile. Grounded on the fact that the PET bottled water market in the US is expected to grow by a CAGR of 3% year on year between 2016 and 2020, the company decided to rely on its long-standing business relationship with Sidel and install a new complete PET line to enlarge its production capacity to answer consumers’ demand. This choice is providing the key to deliver higher performance and safety, while increasing cost efficiency.

Greater availability and efficiency to boost productivity

Starting point of the new complete line at Niagara’s plant is Sidel’s EasyFEED, an innovative, compact and safe ground-level preform feeder for PET lines. From the hopper, the preforms are lifted by an elevator column to only 2.5 metres. They are then sorted and vertically driven into the bowl of a rotary unscrambler.

Positioned at the edge of a rotating table and supported by the neck flange, the preforms are moved onto a rail by a filtered airflow. Instead of traditional gravimetric infeed rails, the preforms are driven by two motorised, food-grade brush belts up to the infeed blowing wheel, contributing to keep the level of preform integrity very high. This patented technology ensures operators’ safety and overall easier operations by significantly reducing the footprint and the height for preform infeed.

Bill Hall, executive VP of manufacturing at Niagara Bottling, comments, “By keeping operations at ground level, removing the impact of gravity from the feeding process, and using motorised, food-grade brush belts – to move the
Soft Drinks International – September 2018

Enhancing PET packaging quality through next-generation solutions

While the successful journey of the PET bottle starts with the right preform feeder, the Super Combi is crucial in reducing total costs of ownership (TCO) for the customer and maintaining a very high level of efficiency.

The team at Niagara Bottling recognises that its tightening layout, a better utilisation of the integrated labeller and the redesign of the labeller itself are extremely beneficial for their production targets.

“Talking about availability, the labeller has shown impressive results: it offers great ease of operations, together with efficient and top-quality label application, ensuring high-level performances,” explains Wilson further.

Niagara is one of the first companies running the brand new roll-fed labeller, which can handle lightweight containers and ultra-thin labels, yet allowing for better glue control and distribution, together with reduced consumption. While developing this labelling solution, which uses hot glue to apply wrap-around plastic labels, ease of operations has been high on the Sidel engineers’ agenda.

The vacuum drum is built in light-weight sectors for easy and quick replacement and features newly patented adjustable pads for longer production time and minimal maintenance time. The ergonomics of the solution have been significantly optimised for top productivity and a sustainable footprint, with all main components fully visible and accessible during production or maintenance, without having to disengage the station.

Hall comments, “The product quality secured by Sidel blow moulders and fillers was already well known in Niagara. With the all-in-one Super Combi system, we can handle even ultra-light bottles more easily, yet ensuring higher top loads. Now, with the new labeller in place, we are also getting a truly efficient and reliable solution.”

The Super Combi is the ideal way to maximise production and increase line efficiency while reducing TCO; a fact that Niagara has also noticed. “The all-in-one system has improved our overall packaging quality. Plus the solution comes with a safer environment to fill products in. Also, ergonomically speaking, the Super Combi is both very compact and easy to access. Changeovers are smoother and easier,” remarks Hall.

Talking of Super Combi, Wilsonl notes the difference made by its integrated vision system, controlling the whole solution performance: “This is a high-quality piece within the system. It is able to capture any kind of minor defects on the bottle’s surface, body, and base, while duly checking the correct label application, filling level, and cap positioning. All in all, it ensures a top-quality product for our customers – always.”

For the leading producer of bottled water, which covers more than 40 different brands, the reduction of TCO was the key when they invested in the new piece of equipment. With EasyFEED as the safe and easy-to-operate entry point to the line and Super Combis showing their performance in blowing, filling, labelling, and capping, the end-of-line production needed to be optimised for footprint, efficiency at very high speeds, and overall lower capital expenditure.

This is where engineers at Gebo Cermex, part of the Sidel Group, stepped in. The Gebo Cermex high speed shrink-wrapping system, which is part of the end-of-line at Niagara, delivers high quality packs, and the fully accessible low level palletiser with robotic layer preparation at the infeed always ensure reliable, non-stop production. With these features, the solutions hold performance extremely high, providing the entire line – from start to finish – with unmatched efficiency and flexibility.
Individual mould control, testing

AGR International www.agrintl.com has added individual mould control to its Process Pilot automated blowmoulder management system.

The company is also offering an automated laboratory system.

Process Pilot is designed to help PET bottle manufacturers measure, control and optimise their bottle blowing process in order to produce the highest quality, best performing bottles possible while maximising production efficiency.

The system interfaces with the blowmoulder to provide precise material thickness distribution on a per bottle basis while managing the blowmoulder to eliminate the effect of process and environmental variables that impact bottle material distribution throughout the production cycle.

Process Pilot system offers a simple three-step approach towards PET blowmoulder management: measure material distribution and pearlescence on every bottle; control the blowmoulder to overcome process variation and maintain on-target material distribution; optimise the process to suit the product, application or business objective of the production facility.

Agr International’s automated laboratory system offers a precision pick and place industrial robot to select, handle and transfer PET container and preform samples through multiple thickness and dimensional tests.

Integrated with Agr’s Gawis container measurement system, comprehensive measurements, including thickness and critical dimensional measurements can be performed without operator intervention. The tests are fully optimised and performed quickly and efficiently through the handling process.

The multi-axis robot and the fast throughput of the Gawis measurement device.

Test results are compiled with data correlated by sample and consolidated in a single test report.

The system offers a number of benefits including hands-free, walk-away operation, efficient management of samples, testing operations and documentation of results, and an improvement in testing throughput.

In addition to the Gawis measurement system, the automated laboratory system can be configured to incorporate Agr devices for top load, volume and pressure measurements, providing a complete laboratory automation solution to meet the challenges of over-worked testing labs and the ever increasing demand for testing to manage quality and support ongoing production.

Enhanced tunnel pasteuriser

A HIGH degree of microbiological safety is assured by the Innopas SX tunnel pasteuriser from KHS www.khs.com. Its modular design allows customisation to meet the increasingly diverse requirements of bottlers.

The basic functions of the Innopas SX are initially identical to the tried-and-tested tunnel pasteuriser systems provided by KHS, according to Knut Soltau, product manager for bottle washers and pasteurisers at KHS.

The dynamic pasteurisation unit or PU control system reacts variably to changes in conditions. If, for example, a fault occurs during the pasteurisation process, the process temperatures are kept under control in the hot zones of the tunnel pasteuriser to ensure both maximum product safety and flavour stability.

New features on the KHS Innopas SX include extended functions in the dynamic PU control system which result in greater flexibility and yield savings in energy and media. Much of this is attributable to the optional speed regulation function. The individual zone temperatures are automatically raised or lowered depending on the conveyor speed.

“This allows the pasteuriser to dynamically adjust to match the line behaviour within a range of 50 to 105% of the nominal capacity for most processes without making any drastic changes to the pasteurisation units and maximum product temperature,” said Soltau.

That prevents stops and the corresponding consumption of media and at the same time has a positive impact on the behaviour of the entire line.

With dynamic PU control from KHS the process temperatures are regulated within the hot zones of the tunnel pasteuriser to enable maximum product safety and flavour stability. The customer can independently adapt the pasteurisation unit set-point for a specific container type. Here, the full functionality of the PU control unit is maintained.

“In this way subsequent product changes or new products can be easily made or introduced at any time,” said Soltau. “Bottlers can thus react quickly to changes on the market and product trends.”

KHS has also made several improvements in the design of its Innopas SX, with maximum emphasis placed on easy operation.

Spare part management for the KHS Innopas SX has also been enhanced. The number of components the customer is required to keep in stock has been reduced while the delivery times for spare and wear parts have been shortened.

www.khs.com
Drinking yoghurt rejuvenation

THANKS to its expertise in ambient yoghurt processing, particle heating and a new Tetra Top system, Tetra Pak www.tetrapak.com is helping Chinese dairy manufacturer Yili www.yili.com to produce what is claimed to be the world’s first ambient drinking yoghurt with large fruit and cereal pieces.

Yili launched the product in Tetra Top 200ml with large re-sealable screw caps. It has gained immediate popularity, strengthening the leadership position of the company in the fast-growing ambient yoghurt category.

“We are pleased to be able to support our customer deliver a premium product in a growing category,” said Charles Brand, Tetra Pak’s executive VP for product management and commercial operations. “This has been made possible by our expertise in the entire processing and packaging process: our ambient yoghurt processing capability, the know-how of heating large food particles, and our ability to customise the packaging system.

“The new Tetra Pak TT/3 AD filling system has been designed to allow the particles to pass through seamlessly, and the new Tetra Top package uses a large re-sealable opening that makes it easy for consumers to drink the yoghurt with large fruit pieces.”

Including large fruit pieces within an ambient beverage product is a challenging process, Brand noted. The heating of the product must be done carefully to ensure that the fruit pieces are not damaged or broken down during the process, and the filling and packaging need to ensure even distribution of the fruit particles, keeping the quality and integrity of the final product.

The global market for ambient drinking yoghurt is around 12.5 billion packages currently, according to Tetra Pak, with quick expansion from China to South East Asia and the Middle East. The addition of large fruit pieces and cereal grains will further increase consumer interest with more premium products.

Upgraded ALTB agitator

ALFA Laval www.alfalaval.com has enhanced its ALTB agitator, upgrading it to improve both process efficiency and safety.

The agitator, with bottom support, can be sized for almost any application in both atmospheric and pressurised tanks, providing high flexibility in mechanical design.

Alfa Laval says the bottom support offers a more economical configuration with several key benefits including: lower friction, resulting in reduced wear groove and longer life-time; rotation independent – safe operation with no risk of parts breaking; hygienic design according to EHEDG guidelines; temperature-resistant up to 150°C; less expansion, remaining tight at high temperature differences; improved hygienic design – easier to install, clean, inspect and maintain, with no lifting of shaft.

Besides minimising energy loss, Alfa Laval impellers operate at reduced speeds without reducing pumping capacity. This can bring significant savings in power consumption.

Beverage transfer hoses

SANITARY Fittings www.sanitaryfittings.us has introduced new sanitary beverage transfer hoses.

Tri-clamp connections come standard with all hoses to provide customers with an option to quickly connect and disconnect transfer lines while following best practices for sanitary environments.

All hoses offered by Sanitary Fittings are USDA/FDA approved for use in the beverage, food and pharmaceutical industries.

“These hoses are a natural extension of our fittings business and our customers certainly appreciate the ability to purchase these and many of our other popular products on one website that’s easy to use,” said John Zabkowicz, owner of Sanitary Fittings which is based in Muskego, Wisconsin, part of Metro Milwaukee.

At present, Sanitary Fittings’ hose line includes sizes ranging from ¼-inch to 3-inch with custom lengths up to 40ft. These made-to-order hoses come with some of the biggest and most widely recognised names in the hose industry including Con-TiTech and Novaflex.

Constructed of ASTM A270 and type 316L stainless steel, the tri-clamp connections are 3A certified so suppliers can trust they are following best practices for a sanitary environment, Zabkowicz pointed out.

Sanitary Fittings is a long-established supplier of stainless steel tube fittings for the beverage, food and pharmaceutical industries. Its wide-ranging product portfolio is available for purchase online.

The company’s website features The Ultimate Guide to Tri-Clamp Fittings, explaining that “whether you’re new to the industry or an old pro, this guide has something for everyone.”

Space-friendly storage

GOPLASTICPALLETS.COM has added a space-friendly solution for bulk storage. The GoPalletBox 1060S 4C/4F is a 300-litre, injection-moulded pallet container, made from high density polyethylene.

“We recommend this fully recyclable and easy to clean box for a vast range of applications,” said Jim Hardisty, managing director at GoPlasticPallets.com.

“Sitting at the smaller end of boxes we supply, it is particularly useful in situations where access is regularly needed - such as for storing ingredients – because it can be rolled on castors and can fit easily through doorways and under counters.”

Available through www.GoPlasticPallets.com under sole agreement with manufacturer JCO Plastic, the smooth interior of the box makes it easy to clean and prevents the opportunity for dust, dirt or ingredients to gather in joins or grain.

Each box weighs 150kg and can be stacked up to six high. It measures 1000mm long, 635mm wide and 645mm high (745mm with castors) externally, and 925mm long, 580mm wide, 520mm high internally.

“The GoPalletBox 1060S is a strong and simple solution and it is fully recyclable when it is no longer needed for storage,” said Hardisty.

The company stocks in excess of 160 different styles of plastic pallets suitable for all types of applications, 32 different sizes and styles of plastic pallet boxes and a comprehensive range of small containers, crates and trays.
D4 next generation valves

A ‘NEXT generation’ of D4 Series mix-proof hygienic valves has been introduced by SPX FLOW www.spxflow.com. This is the result of continued development of both APV and Waukesha Cherry-Burrell process technologies.

“The D4 Series offers exceptional performance value and encompasses a wide range of models and all-inclusive standard features to meet our customers’ different processing needs for cleanability, efficiency and reliability,” said Chris Sinutko, global product manager - hygienic valves, food & beverage for SPX FLOW.

“Based on over 60 years of experience in valve design and manufacturing, the next generation D4 Series allows extensive cleaning of product contact surfaces and helps to reduce operational cost overheads by minimising CIP losses.”

The valves are balanced for dependable operation against pressure spikes and flow in any direction. Automated processing is enhanced by the option of a control unit with integrated seat lift detection and no external sensors. Maintenance is optimised as no compressed air or lifting tools are required for removal and service.

The complete D4 range includes the primary D4 model, which meets the basic needs for reliable product separation and seat lift (SL) or non-seat lift (NSL) cleanability, and the DA4 ultrahygienic model for critical applications requiring enhanced cleanability of all product contact surfaces.

For those applications where the current generation DA3+ housing is already in place, the DA4 can easily be inserted and, according to SPX FLOW, provide a very efficient and cost-effective upgrade, future-proofing existing installations with minimal disruption and risk.

The D4 Series is an international valve, with models being produced by SPX FLOW in both the United States and Europe.

Spanish contract for Sidel

SCHWEPPES Suntory España www.schweppessuntory.es has signed a time and material contract with the Sidel Group www.sidel.com to maintain equipment at its plant in Seville. The agreement covers provision of tailored preventive maintenance for the bottler’s aseptic filler along with a capper and cap feeder purchased from Sidel.

The equipment is used to produce six ranges of Sunny Delight soft drink in different flavours and various bottle formats (from 50ml up to 1,500ml), totalling 25 SKUs.

“The time and material contract ensures that a range of pre-determined related site activities are undertaken by Sidel experts on the Schweppes Suntory equipment (time) and a list of agreed-upon spare parts is provided after every 3000 hours of production (material).”

This allows the company to accurately schedule and execute its preventive maintenance according to a predefined operational period and the scope of supply.

In this way, the value of the equipment is maintained throughout its lifecycle, downtime is minimised and the organisation gains full control of maintenance costs over time. All maintenance work is undertaken on-site by a skilled Sidel team under the guidance of a Sidel supervisor, who manages all activities.

Vac-assisted granular filler

NEV from Florida-based JBT Corporation www.jbtc.com is the Vacuum-Assisted Granular Filler, an innovation developed to add sticky fruit particles to premium beverages. JBT says the filler combines high accuracy with gentle product handling and minimum product loss.

It provides processors with a solution that uses a vacuum pocket system to remove unwanted carrying liquid. In addition to measuring pockets, a focused blowout system is used to achieve gentle emptying of the pocket and accurate filling.

According to JBT’s Sven Rogiest, the VAHP has been developed from JBT’s earlier granular filler, adding a unique fill-gate design and vacuum system to handle the sticky fruit particles used in much of the expanding premium beverage market, especially in the Asia Pacific region.

“The JBT Granular Filler has been used to fill solid bits into cans or jars, but more and more, processors of premium beverages are looking to use sticky fruit pieces rather than dried particles,” he explained. “With the VAHP, the bits are placed in liquid and gently moved into filling pockets. The vacuum then removes the carrying liquid leaving only fruit pieces in the pockets.”

“The VAHP is being used in South East Asia where non-carbonated beverages with bits such as mango, grass jelly and coconut beverages with fruit pieces are becoming very popular. To the best of my knowledge, this is a unique product which can achieve a far greater filling accuracy than rival systems.”
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Packaging

SABIC boosts caps & closures

SAUDI industrial giant SABIC www.sabic.com is putting more resources into its caps and closures operations, introducing new materials and additional product designs, with increased attention towards addressing issues in the circular economy.

SABIC, whose full name is Saudi Basic Industries Corporation, is one of the world’s largest petrochemical manufacturers and also has diverse interests in other sectors, operating in 50+ countries. It is 70% owned by the kingdom’s government, with the remaining 30% traded on the Saudi stock exchange.

“With our extensive range of polyethylenes and polypropylenes, SABIC has already built a strong position in caps and closures,” said Hans Pierik, SABIC’s global caps and closures segment leader. “But the caps & closures market is growing and changing all the time, and we are moving quickly to respond to current and future developments.”

SABIC’s goal is to extend its application coverage across beverage and food producer requirements as well as becoming more involved in non-food areas such as detergents, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

“SABIC’s caps & closure portfolio spans all types of polyethylenes and polypropylene, through to engineering plastics like polycarbonate,” Pierik noted. “Many of these have a long track record, but the important thing is to never stand still.

“This year we will be adding more innovative materials, including a new HDPE that makes it possible to cut weight in caps for carbonated soft drinks.”

SABIC has developed a new multi-modal grade of HDPE with premium organoanalytics. It combines a high environmental stress cracking resistance with good flow, allowing production of very lightweight closures.

SABIC HDPE CCX027C polymer exhibits strong shear thinning, which means that even though it has a relatively low MFI (0.8 g/10 min, 2.16 kg) its flow characteristics during injection moulding are similar to those of a unimodal HDPE with an MFI more than three times higher.

“Having a new global segment organisation for caps and closures shows our commitment to a customer-driven strategy and industry focus,” commented Ahmed Al-Musfer, SABIC’s director of global marketing and industry solutions.

“On the development side, it will help us bring innovations to market more quickly, while our improved and dedicated sales and technical support people will be able to respond more effectively to service needs of customers and OEMs.”

SABIC is also looking more to sustainability issues. Improvements to ESCR and physical properties like stiffness and impact strength will enable extra light-weighting reductions in required processing temperatures will help save energy and cut cycle times; and even better organoanalytics will meet needs for caps that have no effect on the taste of packaging contents.

The company is also contributing to a more sustainable packaging industry by partially replacing crude oil with renewable feedstocks in its production of polyethylenes and polypropylenes.

Pro-Lok GL 38mm

INDIANAPOLIS-BASED Closure Systems International www.csiclosures.com has launched a new closure engineered primarily for cold-filled products such as probiotic drinks, energy drinks, kombuchas and CSDs.

The Pro-Lok GL 38mm is compatible with both glass and PET bottle finishes.

CSI claims the new closure ‘provides bottlers with exceptional closure performance, enhanced safety features, excellent consumer satisfaction and total system support’.

Pro-Lok GL has been integrated with CSI’s disc-lined technology, allowing for a more secure seal to protect product integrity, the producer claims.

CSI manufactures an impressive 90+ billion closures annually in plants spread around the world in more than 20 countries. CSI is part of GEC Packaging Technologies, an operating division of the Rank Group.

Digital innovation partnership

SIG www.sig.biz and GE Digital www.ge.com digital have formed a ‘strategic partnership’ to power digital innovation in beverage and food packaging. SIG will deploy GE Digital’s Predix Asset Performance Management (APM) and Predix ServiceMax industrial applications across more than 400 customer factories worldwide to drive new levels of efficiency, create intelligent solutions and enable new possibilities for its customers.

The combination of GE Digital’s APM and ServiceMax applications will enable SIG to build an end-to-end digital platform that will bring a new level of insight and data-driven intelligence to customers worldwide, helping them and SIG transform how they predict, manage and service the entire lifecycle of SIG filling lines.

By automatically collecting and analysing asset data – accessing billions of data points across its operations globally in real time – SIG and customers can move beyond traditional asset monitoring and predictive service models to reimagine their supply chain, enhance quality control technologies and evolve their portfolio mix.

“By tapping into information in new and innovative ways, we will be able to deliver an unmatched level of performance, security, transparency and creativity across the entire food and beverage supply chain – through to the end consumer,” said Rolf Stangl, SIG’s chief executive.

“Digital is reshaping every sector, and industrials know they need to own the productivity of their assets to succeed,” said Bill Ruh, chief executive of GE Digital. “By adopting Predix applications, SIG is establishing itself as a leader in the transformation of food and beverage packaging.

“This partnership brings our teams together to write a new chapter for SIG and for the industry.”
Tetra Pak Artistry

AN additional portfolio of packaging graphics has been developed by Tetra Pak www.tetrapak.com to allow beverage and food producers more scope in product visualisation.

This has the advantage of boosting consumer interest at point of sale without the need for the producer to switch to a new packaging format or invest in additional equipment.

“In a world where almost everything needs to be ‘personalisable’ we want to provide customers with something unique to help their brands rise above the noise and reach the shopper,” says Charles Brand, Tetra Pak’s EVP product management and commercial operations.

“The new suite of effects and expressions will help our customers enhance their brand at no additional investment, making it a cost-effective solution to their needs.”

In its launch line-up Tetra Pak Artistry includes Tetra Pak Reflect to incorporate holographic effects onto the package, Tetra Pak Metallized to create a metallic effect and Tetra Pak Craft to give the package the natural look of bare paperboard with wood fibres.

More offerings are in the pipeline, including Tetra Pak Sculpt, an embossed surface texture for an innovative consumer experience.

Spouted pouch expansion

PRE-MADE spouted pouch producer Guala packGroup www.gualapackgroup.com is continuing to expand in the LATAM region with the opening of a new plant in Chile, close to the national capital.

“That new investment will strengthen our position in LATAM, a strategic area for our group and, together with our existing subsidiaries in Costa Rica and Brazil, will consolidat our production platform on the Central and South American continent,” says chief executive Michele Guala.

“Our vision remains, just like we did in Europe within the last five years, to invest in regional production sites in order to provide our local partners the best logistics and a proximity service.”

The new facility is already operating at full production capacity.

Advanced cobotic palletiser

GEBO Cermex www.gebocermex.com has introduced CoboAccess Pal, a compact, fenceless cobotic palletising solution particularly suited to low-speed applications.

“CoboAccess_Pal is a reliable and robust solution thanks to an industrial automation platform based on the combination of PC and PLC,” explains Giorgio Rocca, palletising/de-palletising product manager for Gebo Cermex.

“These two interfaces ensure precise, better-controlled cobot trajectories, leading to greater pallet quality and stability, instrumental for smooth pallet transportation through the supply chain.

“TIn order to minimise risks for operators, CoboAccess_Pal’s gripping tool is composed of foam to soften its surfaces when in contact with workers and to prevent injuries during maintenance interventions.”

Rocca points out that “CoboAccess_Pal has also been objectively certified – all of that in addition to the equipment’s full compliance with the European Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC”.

In addition to its high safety standards, CoboAccess_Pal maximises uptime through connectivity and a high level of intelligence, says Rocca. The cobotic palletising cell includes the new Gebo Cermex user-friendly HMI, based on an intuitive tablet approach navigation.

SOP and OPL functionalities are all accessible via the HMI to facilitate assistance for operators, trouble shooting and root cause analysis. The flexible layout can be customised according to specific site constraints.

Rocca says ease of use, ease of installation and ease of configuration were top of mind in designing the equipment, so that it can be quickly implemented by the operator onto another line due to its unique Plug & Play features.

Mark & Read tech advancing

MARKEM-IMAJE www.markem-imaje.com and Cognex www.cognex.com are deepening their partnership to develop the next generation of Mark & Read applications for FMCG sector producers.

The partners say this joint engineering and commercial initiative from such pre-eminent players in the coding and vision system sectors is intended to deliver an even more advanced and integrated solution for manufacturers to ensure the accuracy of coding on packaging.

Since 2015, Mark & Read - an automated Cognex camera and Markem-Imaje printer verification solution - has helped companies confirm the right code is correctly printed every time, reducing unnecessary waste and helping ensure non-coding related recalls run more smoothly.

Both companies’ research and development and commercial teams will be working more closely together to integrate their printing and reading solutions, collaborating at regional and global levels on opportunities and projects in the packaging market.

By collaborating earlier in the engineering design process, they will ensure their products work even more seamlessly together to provide even quicker and more accurate code verification. Manufacturers will also benefit from a more intuitive user experience.

“This combination will allow us to capitalise on our major customer references, helping them minimise rework due to missing or unreadable text and barcodes, reducing waste from using incorrect data in printed messages, and avoiding scrapped product due to incorrect packaging materials being used on the production line,” said Vincent Vanderpoel, chief executive of Markem-Imaje.

Robert Willett, Cognex Corporation’s chief executive, commented that “together with Markem-Imaje, we are building new capabilities to improve new global standards for printing product quality, eliminating production errors, lowering manufacturing costs and exceeding consumer expectations.”

First of the new generation of Mark & Read solutions are likely be available by the end of 2018, with a range of additional improvements available in 2019.
Environment

Fukushima tree planting

THE Kirin group of beverage companies www.kirin.co.jp has collaborated with students at the Haramachi Third Junior High School to plant trees in a coastal disaster forest maintenance site in the Shimuki district of Haramachi.

The area was devastated by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, while the Fukushima nuclear power plant – which experienced nuclear accidents subsequent to the natural disaster – is only 25km or so to the north.

Kirin’s funding of the tree planting derives from a commitment made to support reconstruction work following what is known locally as the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Over the years Kirin – and many other corporations – have contributed funds, staff and beverages to reconstruction efforts.

This year’s tree planting was timed to coincide with the National Tree Festival Fukushima, a major event which drew the support of the imperial family.

The area is renowned for its springtime cherry blossoms and is one of many places in Japan to celebrate the new season with cherry blossom festivities.

Last year Kirin stepped up its reconstruction work as part of a project known as Fukushima Pride. This focuses primarily on building markets across Japan and overseas for agricultural, forestry and fishery products from Fukushima Prefecture.

Kirin is helping find outlets for Fukushima products and promoting their appeal, sometimes in association with Kirin beverages.

Aussies react to China blow

THE Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation www.packagingcovenant.org.au is leading fresh moves to improve Australia’s recycling of PET bottles, cardboard and other waste in the wake of China’s major revision of scrap purchasing.

This has seen scrap mixed plastic value drop from A$325 per tonne to $75 while cardboard has fallen around 40% to A$125 per tonne. Mixed paper scrap is now virtually worthless.

“What essentially lies at the heart of this issue is China’s decision to revise the contamination threshold for scrap paper and plastics,” said Brooke Donnelly, APCO’s chief executive.

“We need to develop the right domestic infrastructure to lower the contamination levels in our waste and start building viable end market solutions here in Australia to ensure a smaller, cleaner packaging waste stream.”

APCO is developing a range of solutions to improve sustainable packaging design, reduce contamination and improve recycling rates.

For example, it helped create the first nation-wide labelling program to help Australians better understand how to recycle packaging correctly and assist organisations in designing for recycling and working towards lowering contamination levels. Launched in conjunction with Planet Ark and PREP Design, the program has already been adopted by Australia Post, Blackmores, Nestlé, Officeworks, Unilever and Woolworths among others.

APCO has accelerated the delivery of the PREP design tool, an online evaluation portal that determines if a packaging format is recyclable or not in the current kerbside collection service. For the first time in Australia, organisations can develop their packaging to be recyclable where possible, driving waste avoidance outcomes at the design stage.

APCO is also reviewing its Sustainable Packaging Guidelines to help businesses reduce the environmental impact of their packaging and develop a standardised approach to key issues such as the use of recycled content in packaging.

“Transitioning to a circular economy is essential if we are to reduce the environmental impacts of packaging and this requires collaboration from brands, governments, the recycling and packaging industry and consumers alike,” said Donnelly. “APCO is in a unique position to facilitate this collaboration and we look forward to working with all stakeholders to help Australia realise a circular economy.”

The Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation is a co-regulatory, not-for-profit organisation that partners with government and industry to reduce the harmful impact of packaging on the environment.

Better for our Planet

BOXED Water www.boxedwater.com has done well with the Better for our Planet campaign it introduced earlier this year. The company had long run a successful tree planting partnership with the National Forest Foundation (NFF) and this year has moved into a new phase, more actively involving retailers and consumers.

A key aspect of this is planting two trees for every picture of Boxed Water posted using #betterplanet.

“As we’ve seen since the beginning of our partnership, Boxed Water is truly passionate about our national forests and the important role they play in our health and happiness,” said Mary Mitsos, president and chief executive of the NFF.

Boxed Water and the NFF have planted in the Deschutes National Forest, Custer-Gallatin National Forest, Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, and Stanislaus National Forest.

“Since 2009, we’ve seen consumers of all ages looking for a sustainable alternative to plastic bottles and other ways to help our planet. This campaign has far exceeded our expectations of reforestation based on consumer response,” said Rob Koenen, Boxed Water’s chief marketing officer.

“By taking the simple action of posting on social media, we will plant two trees. We have built a strong community that is making a big impact and this year we expect even greater participation.”

In addition to planting trees, Boxed Water has this year also run a sweeps contest to reward consumers for their commitment to the planet. Entry has been open to all through social media posts and email.
Nestlé commitment underlined

THE Nestlé announcement that it is determined to make all of its packaging either recyclable or re-usable by 2025 has been celebrated by Stefano Agostini, chief executive of Nestlé UK & Ireland www.nestle.co.uk.

“Packaging is fundamental to our business and crucial in delivering safe, high quality food to our consumers as well as reducing food waste.” Nestlé needed to do more to address the sustainability of its packaging.

“That is not to say we haven’t already being working on this. I spent many years at Nestlé Waters where bottles are a vital part of the product and the environmental impact of our packaging has been at the front of my mind for my whole career. It is very important to me,” Stefano stressed.

Pioneer plant-based pack

FRIESLANDCAMPINA www.frieslandcampina.com has pioneered use of a cardboard 1-litre pack made 80% of plant-sourced raw materials for its Chocomel dairy beverage brand in the Netherlands.

In addition to the cardboard, which is produced from wood that is 100% sourced from FSC-certified forests, the plastic cap and the outer plastic layer of the iconic yellow-coloured pack are now made from plants.

FrieslandCampina stresses that this ‘concerns the part of the plant that remains after the part that is suitable for food has been taken out. The processing of this material for the packaging of Chocomel is therefore not at the expense of food.’

On an annual basis, about 40 million packages are involved.

By crossing the 80% limit FrieslandCampina reaches the threshold for the highest possible, 4-star certificate, ‘Ok Biobased’. This is issued by the worldwide accredited inspection and certification organisation Vinçotte.

Compared with the previous packaging, the new Chocomel pack yields a CO₂ saving of 17%, according to the independent Swedish environmental research institute IVL.

To achieve climate-neutral growth, FrieslandCampina is working on an efficient and sustainable production chain. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 12 of the United Nations, ‘Sustainable consumption and production’ (SDG 12), Friesland-Campina aims to use only agricultural raw materials and paper packaging by 2020, from fully sustainably managed sources.

Water resource funding

FOR the renewal of its I LOHAS natural water, Coca-Cola Japan www.cocacola.co.jp is not only introducing new packaging which features environmental benefits but is stepping up its water resource support activities.

Partly driven by I LOHAS sales, CC Japan will this year channel funds to 23 organisations throughout Japan which are orientated primarily to the protection of water catchments, especially forests and mountains.

Mountain land has a special status in Japan, to the extent of being celebrated in an annual public holiday.

CC Japan’s conservation initiative also embraces several thousand retailers which contribute their own environmental promotion projects and local funding.

I LOHAS natural water’s sustainability strengths, which have included use of recyclable and increasingly light-weighted PET bottles, now also feature aqueous flexographic printing.

The brand is offered nationally in Japan in several PET bottle sizes from 280ml upwards, with sales via all channels including vending machines.

Dalston’s goes cardboard

BRITISH independent soda brand Dalston’s has shifted packaging for its multi-packs from plastic shrink wrapping to cardboard.

Dalston’s Soda www.dalstons.com said the move would eliminate 24 tonnes of single-use plastic from its supply chain within two years. The company promotes its sodas as ‘born and blended in London’.

The pack transition has begun with its new Cherryade and Fizzy Elderflower flavours, as well as the long-established Real Lemonade.

‘With the grocery carbonated soft drink aisle overflowing with plastic packaging, we thought it was about time that we did something to start positive, sustained change,’ said Dan Broughton, managing director of Dalston’s Soda.

“We really hope this prompts others to follow our lead.”

He did, however, point out that making the transition had been far from simple and had also proven quite expensive.

“We had to jump through a lot of hoops to make this change happen — the lack of options for this kind of pack was staggering! Also, to make it possible, we’ve absorbed the initial extra costs involved, as we believe a change like this not only benefits the environment, but is what consumers are crying out for!’

Dalston’s is now set to build further on this sustainability foundation.

The company recently scored a 387-store listing for its sodas in the Sainsbury’s retail group.
iN THE NEWS

Celsius Holdings has hired Edwin Negron-Carballo as chief financial officer, relieving chief executive John Fieldly of his additional duties as CFO, a position he held for his first six years with the company. Negron-Carballo, a CPA, has over 30 years of senior financial management experience in major companies and is well versed in mergers and acquisitions.

Edwin Herscovici has been appointed to one of two new senior leadership positions within Anheuser-Busch InBev. Previously global marketing VP of strategic functions, he becomes chief non-alcohol beverages officer. In this role he will focus on accelerating growth in the group’s soft drinks business which accounts for more than 10% of current volumes. The group has also restructured its international regions.

David Gibbons is retiring from his position as director and chairman of Cott Corporation. Jerry Fowden will move from his role of chief executive to the newly created position of executive chairman while Thomas Harrington will be promoted to chief executive and will be appointed to serve on the board. Commented Fowden: “After a thorough and thoughtful succession planning process, Tom is the clear choice to lead Cott into the future as CEO. He is an accomplished, results-oriented leader, with significant industry knowledge and operational experience. He brings the vision and qualities needed for Cott to continue to execute on its strategic priorities.”

Specialty flavours company FlavorHealth has appointed Ajay Chandran as VP of commercialisation to handle the company’s expanding portfolio of natural taste enhancement solutions. A feature of Chandran’s earlier career was his executive role at PureCircle where he successfully led marketing efforts to expand stevia awareness in North America and Asia Pacific, including liaison with major beverage producers.

The board of the Australian Made Campaign – the organisation responsible for promoting and administering Australia’s iconic gold-and-green ‘Australian Grown’ logo has selected Ben Lazaro as its new chief executive. He takes over from Ian Harrison who is retiring.

Mexico City-based Grupo Lala has appointed Mauricio Leyva Arboleda with a mandate to ‘resume its growth and reactivate its profitability’. Leyva worked for more than 13 years at AB InBev, most recently as president of the Middle Americas Zone and chief executive of Grupo Modelo until the end of August this year.

South America, including his native Colombia.

Convergent Coffee Company, one of the pioneers in nitro-infused craft cold brew, has made two executive appointments as it implements growth plans. JP Walsh has become VP sales, bringing 20 years of industry experience including most recently a sales leadership position at Nestlé Waters North America. Jeffrey Martin has become director of operations; his career path includes over 20 years with Anheuser Busch.

Helène Gunnarson from TVååker, Sweden has been named vice-chairman of Arla Foods following the appointment of Jan Toft Nærgaard as Arla’s new chairman. As we reported earlier, the governance change is because Åke Hanttoft is retiring after seven years as Arla’s chairman. Gunnarson has been a farmer since 1997 and an elected representative in the Arla cooperative since 2000. She has been a member of the board of directors since 2008 and is the chairman of the Swedish Area Council and the Organic Committee.

International Dispensing Corporation has announced that José ‘Pepe’ Martinez has agreed to join its board. A well-known global supply chain executive with a strong track record in end-to-end business solutions for the food and beverage and packaging industries, Martinez spent 17 years with The Coca-Cola Company. IDC says his most recent role as MD of aseptic carton packaging and production equipment make him “uniquely qualified” to serve on the board.

John Wilson has stood down from his position as chairman of Fonterra Co-operative Group as he recovers from a serious health scare. He will remain a director until the AGM in November. John Monaghan has been selected as his replacement. Monaghan is an experienced director and has been on the Fonterra board since 2008. He has taken a lead role in global trade issues and has strong networks both domestically in New Zealand and internationally.

Miles Hurrell is taking over as interim chief executive of Fonterra following the decision for Theo Spierings to step down. Hurrell has most recently been chief operating officer, farm source for Fonterra – this is the unit responsible for working directly with the co-operative’s farmer owners and also controls a chain of retail stores. Monaghan said it was not best practice to have the chairman and chief executive stand down at the same time but events had overtaken the decision. “It’s important that we give ourselves the time to take stock of where we are as a co-operative, breathe some fresh air into the business, then determine any changes that are needed. Appointing a new CEO is the most critical decision a board will make. We will take all the time we need to find the right person.”

Yumi Clevenger-Lee has become VP/chief marketing officer at Nestlé Waters North America, replacing Antonio Sciolet.
NWN credited Sciuto with leading the digital transformation of our company. He is credited with several major advances, including the Hypa packaging system, Quebec-based Lassonde produces ready-to-drink fruit and vegetable juices and drinks marketed under brands such as Apple & Eve, Everfresh, Fairlee, Fruité, Graves, Oasis and Rougemont. It is also a major producer of cranberry sauces and has extensive other beverage interests.

SweeGen Inc, which supplies nature-based, non-GMO sweeteners, is expanding its customer support services and has appointed Shari Joslinas as SVP application technology. Prior to joining SweeGen in 2018, Joslinas held various executive roles in the flavour industry focusing on domestic and global innovation with a proven track record in commercialising flavour and ingredient technologies.

Coca-Cola Oceania has welcomed Richard Schlasberg to New Zealand as the new GM for NZ and the Pacific Islands. He succeeds Sandhya Pillay who has moved to Singapore to take on a global customer director role, responsible for the Restaurant Brands International business in the Asia Pacific region. Schlasberg is a familiar face within the global Coca-Cola family, having worked in Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands in various general manager and marketing director roles. He joined Coca-Cola in 2002 in Sweden as a senior brand manager.

Succeeding Richard Schlasberg as country director for Coca-Cola Netherlands is Ben Bijrens, extending his previous role as country director for Belgium and Luxembourg. Prior to joining Coca-Cola in 2012, he spent 11 years with Proctor & Gamble. His time with Coke has included introducing the Belgian-developed FINLEY (brand a Fuze Tea. Says Bijrens: “Coca-Cola has the ambition to build up an even stronger and broader portfolio. We want to grow, but in a responsible way. That growth is not just in the number and types of drinks, but certainly also in our role as a partner for local communities and economies. For consumers, we now offer a broader choice of especially low-calorie and free drinks in the coming years. We want to have a suitable drink in our portfolio for every occasion.”

Nestlé Central & West Africa has appointed Rémy Ejel as its new market head. He previously held a similar role in the group’s southern African region. Ejel takes over in the CWAR from Kais Marzouki who has been assigned to Nestlé Philippines as market head.

Nestlé Ghana has appointed Philomena Tan, until now business executive officer for Milo Malaysia and Singapore, as its new MD. This follows the recent appointment of former MD Freda Duplan who has been promoted market head of Nestlé Pakistan, becoming the first African woman to achieve this rank within the group. As with...
been with Tetra Pak for over 16 years, most recently as VP carton value and carton economy in Italy.

Monster Beverage Corporation has promoted Emelie Tirre to president of the Americas and Guy Carling to president of EMEA, both new executive officer positions within the company. Tirre has been with Monster since 2010. Carling started with the company in 2007. Over the past 11 years, he has overseen the development and expansion of over 80 markets in Europe (including Russia), the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia.

UK’s WOW Food and Drinks has appointed Stephen Knight as commercial director with the aim of accelerating growth and reaching out to new customers and consumers. Knight’s previous experience was with Cott Beverages, Cereal Partners Worldwide and Malton Foods.

Ocean Spray Cranberries has made three executive appointments: Joseph Vanderstelt as SVP/CFO, Brian Schiegg as SVP/CCO and Jamie Head as CIO. Vanderstelt will oversee all of accounting, finance and procurement. He has more than 20 years of finance and strategy experience in the beverage industry; most recently as CFO at Craft Brewer Alliance. Schiegg will lead North American sales, international sales and operations, and also e-commerce. He joins Ocean Spray from Mars, Inc. Head joins Ocean Spray from GlaxoSmithKline.

Energy drink producer MATI has hired several experienced people to fill key roles. Robert M ortati has been appointed executive chairman for Roquette’s USA operations. He was previously supply chain director in Malaysia which is an important market for CO-RO. ROQ’s headquarters are in Fredenslund, Denmark.

Two new board members have joined CO-RO. Vibeke Bak Solok is EVP/COO group risk function at Danske Bank. Sisse Fjelsted Rasmussen is group CFO at Stark Group. Both have extensive financial and governance experience.

Bruce Dallas has been appointed to the role of GB marketing director at Britvic. The appointment follows the decision by Kevin McNair to step down from the role after three years at Britvic. Dallas has been with Britvic for two years as GB brand director for carbonates. Prior to joining Britvic, he held various senior international marketing roles at Diageo, Unilever and Robertson’s Foods.

Plant-based ingredients supplier Roquette has named Rohit Markan as managing director for India. He succeeds Marc Dilly who will be moving to a new role within the group. Roquette has developed a growing presence in India since 2006. It works with more than 2000 local customers, who are supported by three manufacturing facilities in Pantnagar, Gokak and Viramgam. The company also has a customer technical services centre in Mumbai. Markan has been with Roquette since 2016, prior to that he spent nearly 14 years with Dow Corning.

Kai Ackner has been appointed executive board chairman for KHS GmbH. He will be responsible for the technology, development/production, and human resources areas. The companies in the KHS Group are 100% subsidiaries of the MDAX-listed Salzgitter AG corporation.

Freeland Foods, parent company of Go Raw, has appointed Tim Prager as chief executive. Prager was most recently president of Beanitos, a Texas-based bean snack company. Prior to that he led the sales and marketing team for O.N.E. Coconut Water, a brand which achieved exponential growth and was sold to Pepsi. Earlier he held executive roles with Sweet Leaf Tea and Nestlé Waters North America.

John LeBoutillier has become a managing director at Brynwood Partners. He was until now president and chief executive of Harvest Hill Beverage Co, a Brynwood portfolio company. Prior to joining Harvest Hill he held senior management positions at Kraft Foods for 15 years and was at Unilever where he was president of Unilever Canada. Succeeding him at Harvest Hill is Robert Mortati who was formerly chief marketing officer of Apple & Eve. He is also a Kraft Foods veteran.

Former Coca-Cola European Partners UK grocery channel director Chris Silcock has become a senior sales director for Kellogg’s UK. He will report to Oli Morton, MD for Kellogg’s UK and Ireland, who previously held the position prior to being promoted.

Brian Sudano, managing partner of Beverage Marketing Corporation, has joined the board of the Alkaline Water Company. Sudano has had an impressive career covering almost all aspects of the beverage sector and is respected as an industry commentator.
The British Soft Drinks Association is the national trade association representing the collective interests of producers and manufacturers of soft drinks including carbonated soft drinks, still and dilutable drinks, fruit juices and smoothies, and bottled waters.

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100 Years Ago
From the Mineral Water Trade Journal of September 1918

The mischievousness youth
Now that the summer holidays are over a breathing time may permit members of the trade to indulge in a little mental stock taking. In these days of an almost perfect system of organisation, there are still many evils to uproot and many inequalities to adjust, and a little retrospection may help in their removal. In busy seasons they are permitted to exist by sheer default.

Take, for example, the evil of bottle smashing. In the Midlands during the holidays it seems to be the usual custom for an epidemic of this nature to break out among youths almost like an epidemic of measles or chicken-pox. Why is it that growing lads should develop this bumm of destruction and mischievous desire to smash anything which comes within their reach in the shape of glass or earthenware? It seems to be a virus as deadly as any physical malady.

It would appear that the eradication of this reprehensible propensity will have to be undertaken by the educational authorities of the country, and the sooner the trade as a whole bring this matter before these bodies the better will it be in the interests of all concerned.

The extravagant demand of retailers
While upon the matter of holidays, another inequality is recalled painfully to one’s memory. In the absence of beer in any large quantities, great demands have been made for mineral waters at holiday resorts. At one of these places during the recent Bank Holiday one cottage had accumulated 200 dozens of mineral waters, and sold every bottle in less than four hours. The price paid to the manufacturer for the goods was £17 10s. – the price charged to the consumers £40! This reveals a nett profit to the poor hard-worked retailer of £22 10s. in one short afternoon! Ye gods!

What a commentary upon the attitude of some makers in pouring such wealth into the pockets of retailers without revealing any inclination to either advance prices or compel retailers to be content with a reasonable profit! This true object lesson may cause some makers furiously to think, and possibly make them believe that the time has come when the trade should have a voice in the regulation of the selling prices of the goods they manufacture. The attempt to make the public pay, two, three, and even four times the original price paid for a bottle of mineral water, has, and is doing, more to injure the popularity of temperance drinks than any other cause.

Beer substitutes – The brewers’ protest to the Ministry of Food
The brewers are protesting against the war-time beer, and, as they put it, ‘beer substitutes’. In a letter to the Food Ministry the Chairman of the Brewers’ Society points out that as their suggestion, made in June last, that nothing under 24 degrees original gravity should be permitted to be offered for sale as beer, had not been adopted, a liquid gravity as low as 10 degrees (which brewers do not consider beer at all) may be sold at 4d. per pint.

The brewers do not object to the sale of this beverage under 24 degrees, but they protest against it being called ‘beer’. It should, they insist, only be offered under a name which would make it clear to the public that they are not buying genuine beer, ale, or stout. Further, this substitute ought not to be sold at 4d. a pint, which is the controlled price of beers of 24 degrees to 30 degrees.

The taste of the Japanese in our beverages is being developed. Hitherto, apparently, the Japanese have been permitted to believe that aerated waters were confined to champagne cider, a drink called ‘citron’, and lemonade.

Now, the Japan Aerated Water Association of Tokio is seeking to dissipate this mistake. About a dozen kinds of beverages hitherto unknown to the Japanese people at large – ginger ale, hop ale, botanic beer, kola, vanilla, loganberry, and the like – have been introduced to the Tokio public.

“In Europe,” says an American authority, “beer sugar may be better refined; but in the United States there is something lacking in the refining process that leaves in the beet sugar product a foreign element that makes for bad or poor results when used by manufacturers and bottlers of carbonated beverages”.

Cultivate public appreciation by manufacturing the best beverages that you can. This is the only way.

50 Years Ago
From the Soft Drinks Trade Journal of September 1968

Pull tab Tetra pack opens new soft drinks market
Two thousand miles of paper are used every year by Cooke Bros. (Tattenhall) Ltd. for their range of still soft drinks packed in Tetra Pak, under the brand name of “CALYPSO” – The drink in a Pack!

Cooke Bros. first introduced Tetra Paks for their orange drink in 1959 after considerable research to ensure a long shelf life for their product.

The range has been extended now to cover lemon and cherry and a smaller carton is used to pack their mixed fruit flavoured drink ‘POPTAIL’. So far, the main outlet for their products has been through the dairy trade, who are always interested in marketing products other than milk due to the fact that their profit margins on milk are sostringently controlled by the Government, and the fact that ‘Pull Tab CALYPSO’ shows the wholesaler a useful profit.

Mr. John Posnett, managing director of Cooke Bros., feels that for many new outlets the soft drinks manufacturer could benefit from this improved pack. This is the era of the ‘convenience package’ and the ‘Tetra Pak has the advantage that it is not only convenient, it is easily disposable and safe.

We hear –
THAT Coca-Cola Southern Bottlers Ltd., J. & J. Vickers Co. Ltd., and the off-licence group, Unwins and Co. Ltd., are co-operating in a joint promotion for Coca-Cola and Cossack Vodka. Purchasers of the standard size Cossack Vodka in any of Unwins’ 180 branches throughout London and the South East, will also receive free, a 25 oz. family size bottle of Coke.

THAT sales of Shloer in its elegant new dark green pack, are on the increase throughout the U.K. This is particularly true of Shloer sold through the Westminster Wine Co. Ltd., where sales have risen from an average of 80 cases per month to 1,200 cases in 3 weeks, with steady repeats.

THAT INTERBRAU, the trade fair covering machinery and equipment and allied trades, will be held in Munich from 13th to 18th September.

THAT H. W. Carter – the world’s largest blackcurrant processors and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Beecham Products (U.K.) – are opening their factory to production engineers from overseas food producers who visit Foodpack International 68 next month.
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