

Winter 2018 #2

News and Insights

Issue 2

Fresh

from the Innovate Kitchen



The **IMPACT** Edition. How Innovate
is Changing the Eating Habits of a Generation.

Welcome to Fresh

from the
Innovate
Kitchen



Changing the Eating Habits

Innovate has set itself an exciting - and challenging - target. We want to change the eating habits of a generation.

Yes, this is about tackling childhood obesity – a problem which starts early, quickly gets worse and can set a pattern for life. Children as young as five are now being treated for Type 2 diabetes linked to being overweight. Already 10% of children are obese when they start primary school and a third of children leave primary school overweight or obese.

But obesity isn't the only problem. The importance of healthier eating for everyone should not be overlooked. As the School Food Plan says "Eating too few fruit and vegetables can make you ill whatever your weight." Generally, the diet of children and adolescents is poor. Only 10.1% of boys and 7.5% of girls aged 11-18 eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Children aged 4-18 also eat more sugar, saturated fat and salt than they should.

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of a Generation

At Innovate we are determined to make a difference. A real difference. So we've developed an ambitious new healthy eating strategy covering:

- **Menu** - We are redesigning our menu to include new healthier products, and to re-engineer the recipes of existing favourites to improve their nutritional value.
- **Choice** - It's useless putting healthier items on the menu if no-one chooses them. So we're working hard to educate students about good nutrition and to

influence them to make healthier choices.

- **Engagement** - This strategy will only work if students are actively involved, when they feel like joint architects of the process.
- **Excitement** - It is very easy, when talking about obesity and nutrition, to sound negative and restrictive. Or to lecture. We think the key is to get everyone excited about food, about growing it, cooking it, sharing it with friends, and exploring new tastes and ideas.

INNOVATE'S HEALTHY EATING STRATEGY



We believe there are 3 Steps in developing a Healthy Eating Strategy:

1.

BEGIN WITH
THE CUSTOMER

2.

DEVELOP AN EXCITING
(AND HEALTHY) MENU

3.

INFLUENCE
CHOICE

1. BEGIN WITH THE CUSTOMER.

When we started Innovate ten years ago, we began by asking students and staff what they liked and disliked about school catering, and what they would like to see change. It was a simple step that led to a very different perspective on what school catering should be.

Ten years on things have changed a lot. But the basic principle of asking your customers what they want still holds true. And you can't develop a sensible healthy eating strategy unless you recognise how diverse the customer base is:

- Primary school children and secondary school students are very different in their tastes, and in the extent to which parents, carers and others influence their choices.
- Some students come from families who cook from scratch and are knowledgeable and diligent about

good nutrition. Others may never have seen a vegetable peeled.

- The influences on what students choose to eat are many and various – what they have learnt to like and dislike at home, the desire to socialise, peer pressure, spending power or simply the desire to engage in other lunchtime activities
- Students are put off school food by things other than food – queues, waiting times, food availability, lack of choice. You have to deal with these 'dissatisfiers' or they simply go elsewhere.
- We will only get this right if we ask and engage students
- One size cannot fit all. The idea of 'one perfect menu' that suits everyone and that every student regardless of age, background or taste will flock to is nonsense.

2. DEVELOP AN EXCITING (AND HEALTHY) MENU

Once you recognise the very diverse tastes of students and staff it becomes clear that you have to approach the concept of a 'healthier' menu on a number of fronts. Too 'pure' a menu will only attract those already converted to healthier eating. We want to change the eating habits of a generation, not just a minority.

This means increasing take-up – because if students are not using the school canteen we lose our opportunity to influence them – and gradually improving their food choices over time.



Expanding the number of vegetarian options is important. But so too is improving the recipes of traditional favourites by reducing fat, salt or sugar content or adding nutrients.

Above all we want food to be exciting and tasty, as well as nutritious. That is why we take students to street food markets to discover exciting ideas, and then take those ideas and re-engineer the recipes to make them healthier.

HEALTH BY STEALTH

The use of more fruit and vegetables in recipes, without it even being obvious

FORTIFIED PRODUCTS

Using products or formulating recipes with specific nutrients added e.g. fortified breads and pizza bases

MORE PLANT-BASED MEALS WITH MASS APPEAL

Creating more plant-based options that are just sold as great food, for example Quorn chilli with cauliflower 'rice'

SUGAR REDUCTION

Changing recipes and using new ingredients to reduce sugar content

NEW IDEAS

Finding exciting, new products and making them as healthy as possible

VEGETARIAN & VEGAN

More vegetarian and vegan options for those who have committed to such diets

SALT REDUCTION

Reformulating recipes not simply to reduce salt content but to substitute flavour with others spices, herbs or other ingredients

PRODUCT SWITCHES

Changing to closely related products that are healthier, for example wraps using spinach or beetroot wraps rather than sandwiches using white bread

HEALTHY SWAPS

Re-engineering recipes of popular dishes to improve their nutritional value

3. INFLUENCE CHOICE

The final strand of the strategy is to educate students (and their families) about food, nutrition and cooking so that they take an interest in what they are eating and are more ready to experiment with different foods. This is especially true in secondary schools where parental influence on meal choices is far more limited and where access to fast food outlets and grocery stores is easier.

Again this requires action on different fronts – from curriculum work on food provenance, cooking and physical well-being to the promotional and marketing strategies we use within school catering. This works best as an integrated strategy between Innovate and the school, and with strong student involvement.

LABELING & POS

Simple approach that enables everyone to identify healthier options, and vegetarians and vegans to identify suitable products

MERCHANDISING

Thinking about where and how healthier products are displayed & how they are presented

MARKETING

Using integrated marketing strategy (promotions, pricing, meal deals, posters, electronic boards, etc.) to promote healthier products

ALLOTMENTS / FARMERS MARKET

Growing food and organising a School Farmers Market

INFORMATION & EDUCATION

Working with schools to enhance student interest and awareness of nutrition and well-being

FOOD FOR LIFE

Signing up for Food for Life Accreditation Scheme

SCHOOL VISITS

School trips to food factories, wholesalers, etc.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Work with Students to set up SNAG (School Nutrition Action Group)

EVENTS

Cookery Classes, competitions, sports days, etc.



SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MENU CHANGES INTRODUCED THIS TERM:

* Redeveloped Sandwiches, Baguettes and Wraps range:

- Introduced new products including Caribbean Chicken and Mango Baguette, Jerk Chicken & Pineapple Salsa Wrap, Avocado & Spicy Bean Wrap, Falafel Yoghurt, Chickpea & Mint, Prawn Marie Rose Baguette, Sundried Tomato and Fruity Carrot Slaw
- Replaced all white wraps with multi-grain wraps and introduced new beetroot and pumpkin wraps
- Increased salad in a number of products
- Replaced regular mayonnaise with light/low fat mayonnaise

* Redeveloped Hot Grab & Go range to enhance product specifications, including introducing or increasing the salad in products, and replacing white wraps with multi-grain wraps

* Introduced new main meals with more vegetarian and vegan options

* Reduced sugar and fat, and added nutrients, across cake and cookie range

* Reduced price of whole fruits, maintained price on fruit bags and introduced new range of larger fruit pots

* New range of Grab & Go pasta with a range of healthier meat and vegetarian toppings

* Redeveloped pizza recipes, fortifying the pizza bases with vegetables

* New "Shaker" salads (with dressing insert) and protein pots (e.g. Spinach and feta)

* Enhanced vegetable pots range with a new vegetable pot including hummus/dip

NOTE: We continue to search out new ideas and are already working on potential new products for January. Our intention is to refresh the menu on a termly basis, working with the ideas coming out of the new SNAGs (Student Nutrition Action Groups) being set up in many of our schools.

SOCIAL IMPACT. WHAT IS IT?

"Impact is the measure of an action's benefit to society and the planet – we must shift it to the centre of our consciousness"

Sir Ronald Cohen, *On Impact: A Guide to the Impact evolution*

Innovate has committed to being an Impact Organisation. That means that we seek to have a positive impact on society and, more explicitly, commit to helping solve some of the biggest challenges society faces. In terms of schools, and school food, this involves the following agenda:

- TACKLING CHILD AND ADOLESCENT OBESITY
- IMPROVING CHILD AND ADOLESCENT NUTRITION GENERALLY
- MINIMISING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

"Eating well reduces your chances of falling ill with cancer, heart disease, a stroke, or diabetes – whatever your weight. The Cabinet Office recently estimated that 70,000 premature deaths a year could be prevented if people made relatively modest changes to their eating habits.

But this is not just about bodily well-being. A balanced and nutritious diet feeds the mind as well as the body. Many studies have shown that children who eat well perform better at school. There is also evidence that practical cooking and gardening lessons help to develop children's scientific and environmental understanding. It is no accident that academically successful schools tend to have a good food culture."

School Food Plan

"We cannot change the eating habits of a generation and ignore the impact we are having on the world that this generation, and their children, are inheriting. Food production, food waste and food packaging are of major importance in the challenge to meet carbon reduction targets and create a sustainable world."





INNOVATE IS WORKING REALLY, REALLY HARD TO TACKLE THESE ISSUES AND ARE SERIOUS ABOUT MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE.

BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW WE MEAN THAT?

Innovate is owned by its management team and by Bridges, the country's leading social impact investor. Bridges has won numerous awards, including Best Social Impact Investor, Education/Investor Investor of the Year and the Cabinet Office's Public Service Transformation Award.

Innovate and Bridges are committed to making a significant, positive social impact in terms of healthy eating, education and sustainability. We are the only educational caterer with this explicit objective and whose performance is measured by the improvement it achieves in childhood nutrition and sustainability.

Bridges
Fund Management

innovate
my goodness!

School Impact Partnerships

We can change the eating habits of a generation, but we can't do it alone. Eating habits are so entrenched, and there is so much work to do on nutrition education, that only an integrated approach between ourselves and the school will work.

This is why we are now implementing Impact Partnerships. In these partnerships we jointly commit to a set of measurable Impact objectives and activities, dovetailing what we each do for maximum effect.

For example, we will develop new, healthier menu ideas with the Student Nutrition Action Group, they might explore the nutritional value of these items in the food technology curriculum, we will jointly develop a promotional strategy to encourage students to try these new products, and the school will communicate the new menu on its website, in roll-calls and at assembly.





Social Impact in ACTION!

Earlier in the year The Royal Latin School in Buckingham and Innovate decided to enter into an 'Impact Partnership' which would address four key areas:

HEALTHY EATING, SUSTAINABILITY, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND MENTAL WELLBEING.

One of the school's Assistant Headteachers was appointed as Project Leader and in June a launch workshop was held involving forty students. Support at the workshop came from Innovate, Food for Life, Place2Be (Children's Mental Health Charity) and Phil Vickery, former England Rugby captain.

The students have now been formed into four action groups, each supported by a teacher from the school, and are working on a range of initiatives including menu development, nutrition education, a school allotment, plastics recycling, sport for all and student mental health issues.



“ My daughter came home today absolutely brimming with enthusiasm and positivity after the workshop. I wanted to pass on how valuable she felt it was and how valued she felt herself. Her impression was that all those involved really were listening and taking on board the points the students made. She particularly rhapsodised about the delicious food which had been prepared, so much of it vegan-friendly and all carefully labelled. She was delighted to see the school embracing a more healthy approach for all to the foods offered, as well as trying for improvements in the support of mental health issues and other areas of school life. ”

- Parent, Royal Latin School



FIT FOR THE FUTURE - CHANGES AT INNOVATE

As you can see, there are a lot of exciting things going on at Innovate, much of it made possible by our new partnership with Bridges.

We have now been joined in that partnership by Cucina and together we have formed the Impact Food Group. Whilst Innovate and Cucina will continue to operate separately this does allow us to achieve greater efficiencies in areas like procurement, finance and IT and to better respond to changes in education such as the development of MATs. It also enables us to expand our value-added services to schools, such as our social impact work.

These changes have enabled us to strengthen our management team. We are delighted to welcome to Impact Food Group John Hamill as CEO and Phil Morris as CFO. Both join from Servest Atalian where John headed up their burgeoning catering division and Phil was CFO.

Geoff Peppiatt, Innovate's founder, can now concentrate on his role as Chairman leading the strategic development of the company and expanding its social impact activities.

Ken Navin takes on the role of Client Relationship Director, testimony to our determination that you will see us as the best of all your suppliers.

Karl Hudson will focus on menu development, charged with introducing exciting new products every term and re-engineering recipes to improve their nutritional value.

Bryan Lygate and Nitin Rampal have been promoted to become our Operations Directors leading a much strengthened team of Area Managers and Operations Support Managers.

Richard Corbyn becomes Director of Business Development and Lisa-Cheri McKay joins us in the newly created post of Procurement Manager.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW OPERATIONS DIRECTORS

Bryan Lygate and Nitin Rampal are Innovate's two Operations Directors. They lead a team of Area Managers and Operations Support Managers, which we believe offers our clients the highest ratio of local management support in our industry.

This is a significant investment by Innovate and is testimony to our determination to deliver the highest quality customer and client experience.

As part of our drive for excellence, Nitin and Bryan are proud to make the following promises to all our clients:

- **Food Quality** - We will provide the highest quality food that you will see from any school caterer.
- **Service** - We will operate the fastest, most efficient service systems possible, using the latest technologies and food service concepts to minimise queues and maximise take-up.

- **Healthy Eating** - We will continuously evolve our menus to introduce healthier new products and re-engineer existing recipes. We will work with you to create a good food culture and educate students about nutrition.
- **Environment** - We will deploy the most sustainable business model in our sector, minimising food waste and packaging and utilising advanced recycling and composting methods.
- **Engagement** - We will engage and empower students to shape their catering service and work with us to improve nutrition and sustainability.
- **Relationship** - We will be a highly responsive, value added supplier. We will agree annual service standards with you, communicate meaningfully and regularly, measure progress and manage all issues with a sense of urgency.

mary's meals

a simple solution
to world hunger



As we worry about tackling child and adolescent obesity in the UK it is very easy to forget that in many parts of the world children are starving. Innovate is therefore delighted to recommit to an amazing charity, Mary's Meals, and will be running a variety of fund-raising projects throughout the year.


Mary's Meals is focused on one goal – that every child receives a nutritious daily meal in a place of education. These life-changing meals attract hungry children into the classroom. The food fills their empty bellies so they have the energy and opportunity to learn, giving them the chance of a brighter future. The meals also support families struggling to feed their children while boosting the country's wider economy.

Mary's Meals now feeds 1, 361, 586 children every school day in some of the poorest countries in the world. We want to help them feed more.

It costs just £13.90 to feed a child for a whole school year. We should be able to help Mary's Meals feed a lot more.



✓ FUNDRAISING



If you would like to discuss any of the issues in this newsletter please contact your Innovate Area Manager who will be more than happy to assist.

Alternatively please call 0845 494 0005 or email hello@innovatefood.co.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

If you would like to watch a short profile about Innovate's work please click [here](#).

You may also be interested in these websites:

innovatefood.co.uk

bridgesfundmanagement.com

marysmeals.org.uk

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