

Meat Business Women Regional Conference, Belfast



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What's Changing the Way We Eat?

The Trends Worth Watching

Invest NI Food & Drink Consumer Insights Service



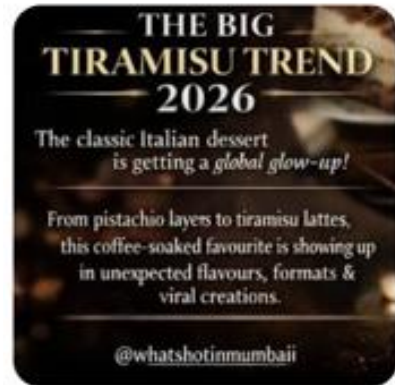
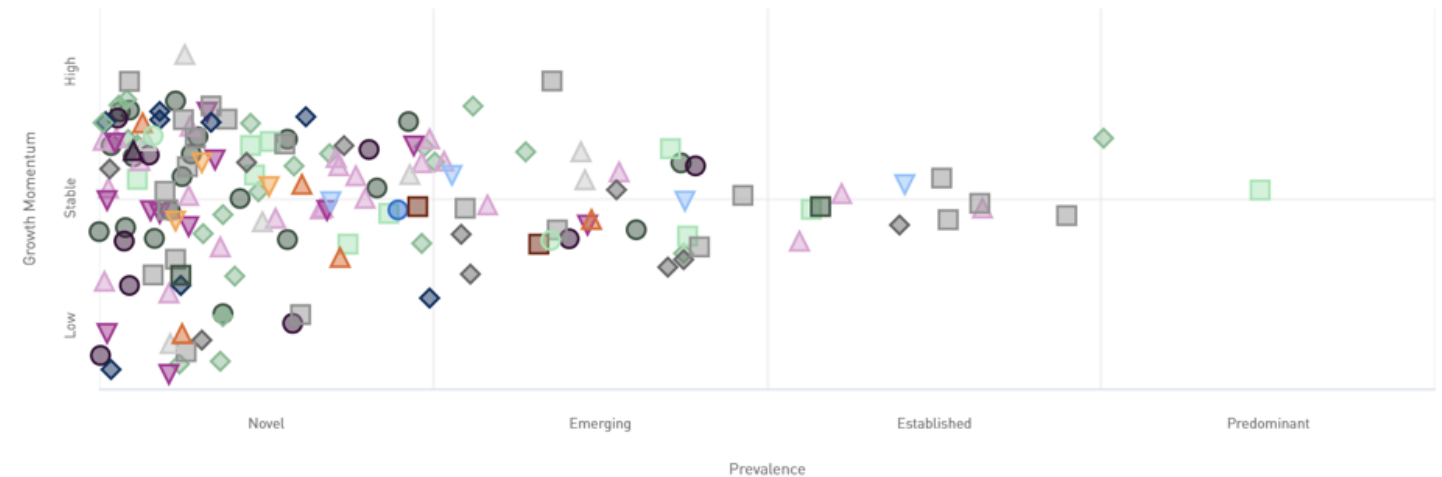


Mintel: Flavourscape AI – Meat in UK

The flavour maturity landscape uses advanced data analytics to show you the market at a glance. Flavours on the left of the landscape are niche while those on the right are dominant. Flavours near the top are growing in prevalence, while those near the bottom are shrinking. Select an attribute to view its market activity, including forecasts and recent product launches.

Click and drag to zoom

Label data points ☐ Off



The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/food/2026/sep/ag...>

The age of tiramisu: a runaway dessert trend

7 days ago — The dessert “is probably one of the main trends of 2026,” says Cc planner Oliver Stanton – when we speak, he has just ... [Read more](#)

The Forces Reshaping Food Choices



Value: Consumers are becoming increasingly selective about where they spend.



- Premium Food
- Speciality Retailers
- Provenance led purchase
- Premium Convenience
- Premium at home vs eating out

- Private label growth
- Discount retailers
- Promotion shopping
- Value meal solutions
- Alternative cooking methods



Free



68p



£1.50



£7.99



£220+



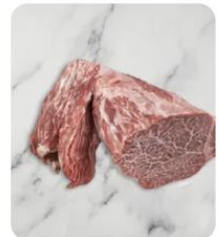
Tesco Lean Beef
Steak Mince 5%
Fat 250G
£2.55
Tesco



Tesco Finest
Sirloin Steak
227G
£7.50
Tesco



Waitrose No. 1
Wagyu Beef Sirloin
Steak
£16.00
Waitrose & Partners
4.1 ★★★★★ (55)



Japanese Wagyu
Beef Fillet A5
£699.95
FF Fine Fo... & more

Implication: Consumers will pay more when benefits are clear, relevant and meaningful. 01/10/2026

Health: Food as a wellness tool

Health is increasingly about:

✚ Managing Weight

- GLP-1s
- Portion control
- Nutrient density

✚ Optimising Nutrition

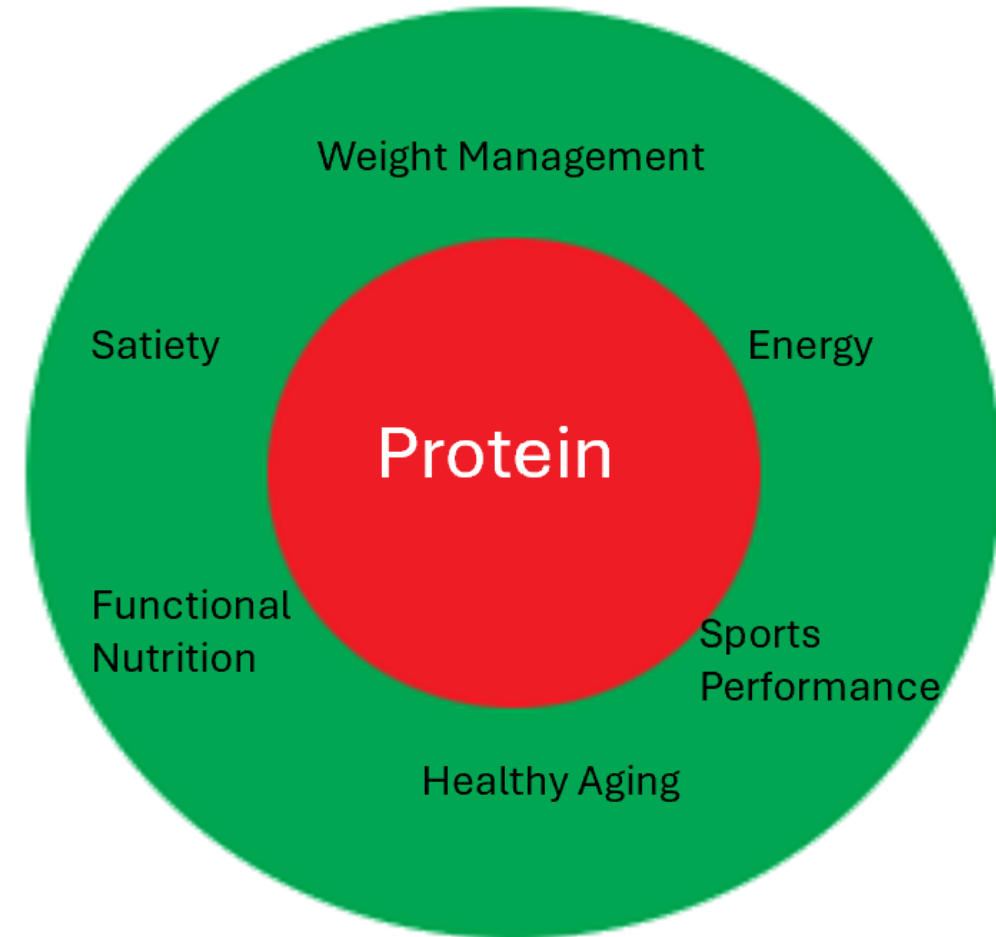
- Protein
- Fibre
- Gut Health

✚ Supporting Wellbeing

- Healthy ageing
- Energy
- Collagen
- Functional ingredients/adaptogens



Oatco Superfuel



Implication: Protein remains a major opportunity.

Convenience: Consumers Buy Solutions, Not Ingredients

The forces driving convenience

- 🕒 Time poor households
- 👨‍👩‍👧 Dual income families
- 🏠 Smaller households
- 💻 Hybrid working
- ⚡ Energy costs
- 👨‍🍳 Lower cooking confidence

Problem:

"I don't have time to shop but I still want to cook nutritious meals for my family"



Solutions:

Meal kits | Ready meals | Air fryer formats | Prepared ingredients



STOCKED Frozen
Meal Blocks - Portion...
£66.30



Implication: Meal solutions will outperform ingredients.

Sustainability: The Gap Between Intention and Action

Consumers Care About:

-  Climate change
-  Plastic waste
-  Food waste
-  Local sourcing
-  Animal welfare

Barriers

-  Price
-  Convenience
-  Availability
-  Trust

What Works:

- ✓ Less plastic



- ✓ Recyclable packaging



- ✓ Less food waste



- ✓ Local & resource efficient production

Carbon neutral beef and sheep production. How is that possible?



- ✓ Hybrid Products

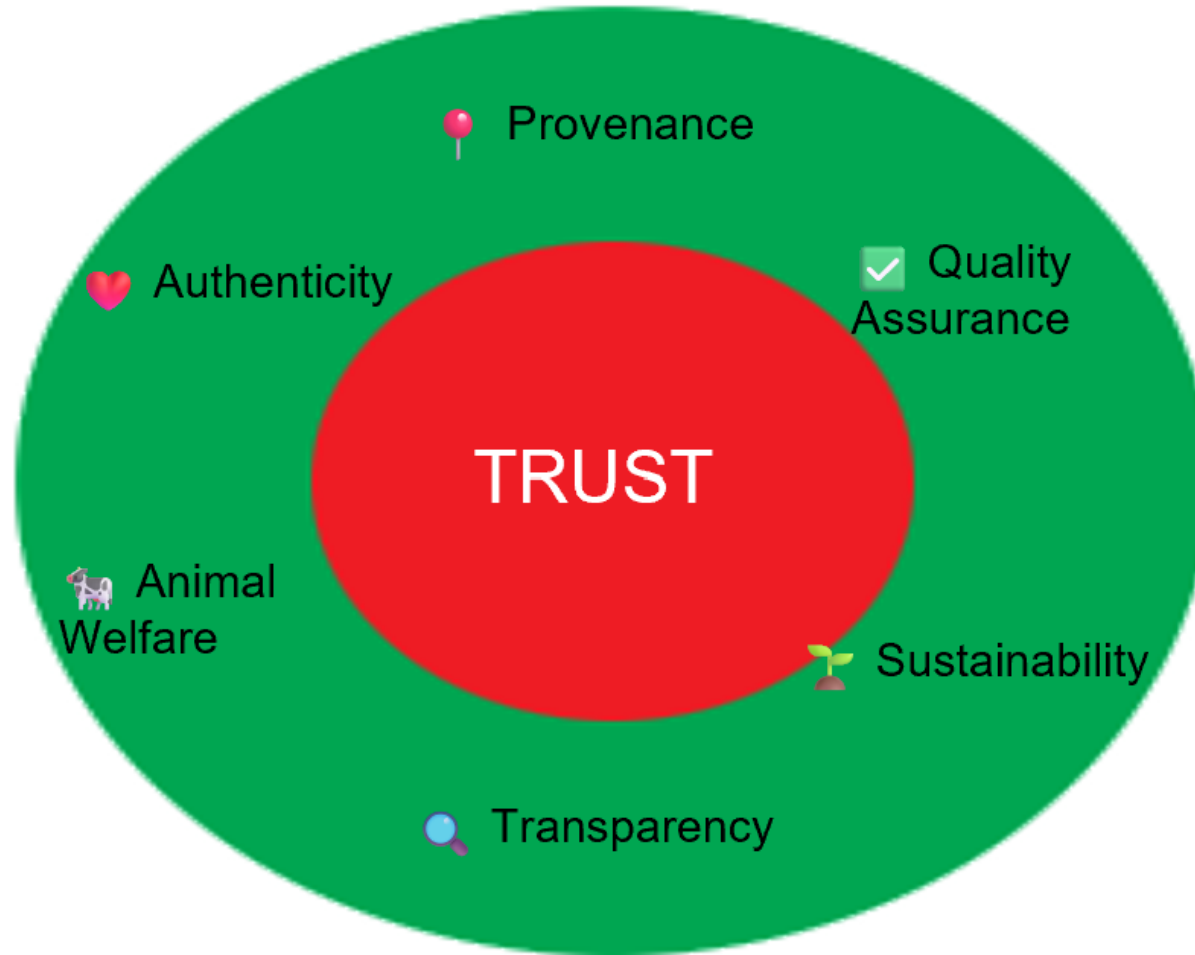
Protein power: Lidl to launch "first-of-its-kind" hybrid meat range

By Thomas West
17-Sep-2026 Last updated on 17-Sep-2026 at 11:00 GMT



Implication : Sustainable choices must also be easy, affordable and convenient.

Trust, Provenance and Transparency: Consumers Want Reassurance, Not Just Food



Why are consumers willing to pay more?



+

- Northern Ireland Origin
- Farm Assured
- Traceable Supply Chain
- Animal Welfare Standards
- Local Producer Story
- Sustainability Credentials

=



Implication: Trust can justify premium pricing and drive loyalty

Technology & AI: The Digitalisation of Food Decisions

Discover



Decide



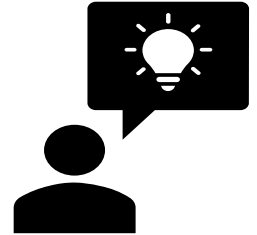
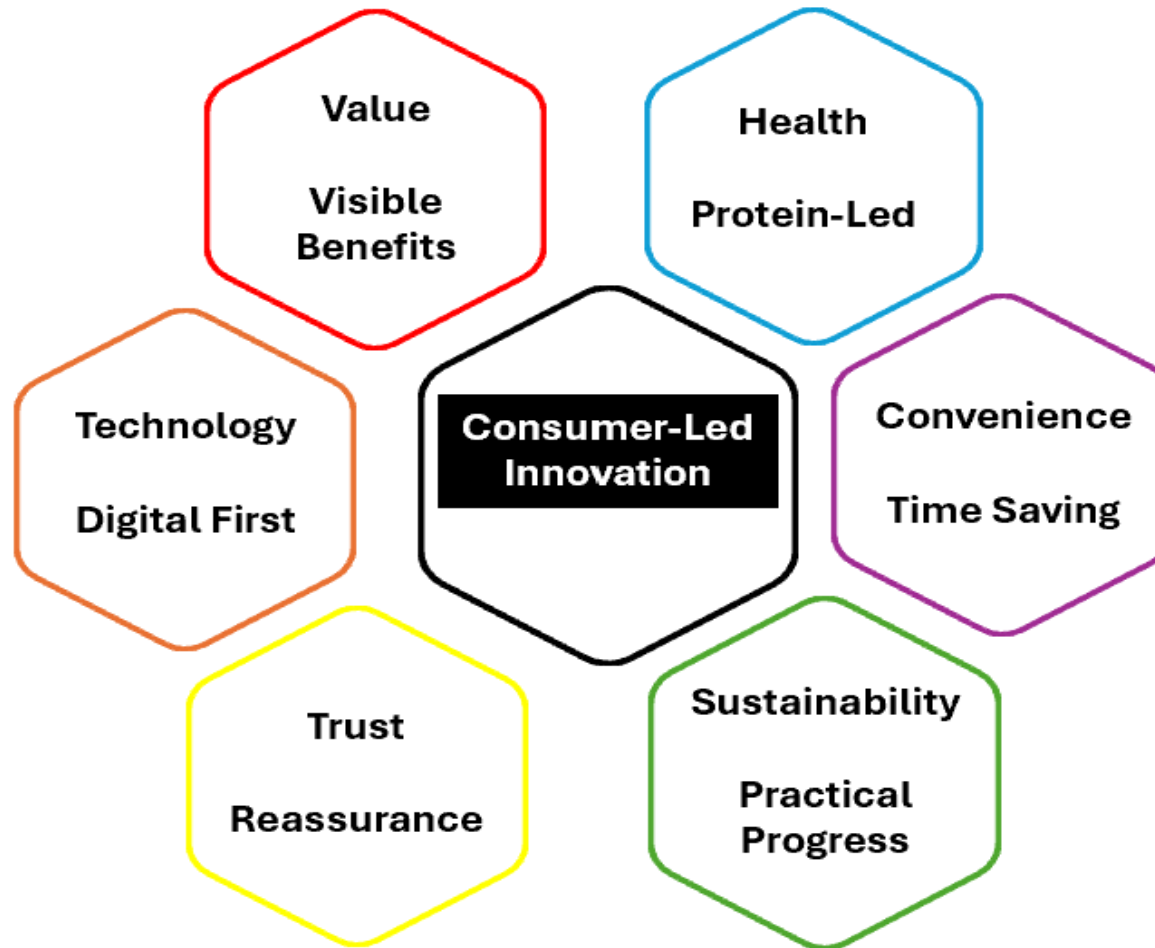
Buy

Home delivery.



Implication: Digital visibility is becoming as important as shelf visibility.

Summary: The Future of Food Innovation



Winning innovations will solve multiple consumer needs

How Can Invest NI Help?

- We support businesses at every stage, from local entrepreneurs and small start-ups to large companies and international investors.
- Our support is tailored to business needs and includes advice, mentoring and finance.
- Generic support for businesses but also specific in relation to the

Food & Drink Consumer Insights Service



**Start-up
support**



**Innovation
and R&D**



**Export
development
and market
expansion**



**Leadership
and
training**



**Green
economy
solutions**

Thank you

For more information email:
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