



VEGPOWER

Festive Fare

Market Insight Report
Edition 4: January 2023

How did the cost-of-living crisis impact festive food shopping?

+ Market data update

Festive Fare

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Veg Power is a not-for-profit alliance founded in 2018 to turn around vegetable consumption in the UK. 80% of our children are not eating enough vegetables, with a third eating less than one portion a day. Our mission is to inspire kids to love vegetables and to share that joy with their parents today and their own children tomorrow.

Veg Power is only made possible by generous support of our members:



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Executive Summary

The UK has enjoyed decades of low inflation. That all changed with the end of the pandemic and the start of the war in Ukraine.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) started to rise sharply in October 2021, peaking a year later at 11.1%. Food inflation has been even higher. As of December, it stood at 16.8% and was still increasing.

The cost of everyday staples and budget lines have been hit disproportionately hard, ratcheting up the pressure on lower income households. Three out of ten people are having a hard time paying for daily essentials. Amongst the least affluent, it's one in two.¹

Millions of families are having to cut corners. It's not just discretionary spend that's being sacrificed. Amongst households with three or more children, 52% say they're spending less on food and other essentials.²

15% of respondents strongly agreed they'd spent less on food this Christmas than in previous years

The cost-of-living crisis will have been felt even more acutely over Christmas. We commissioned YouGov to explore what trade-offs and behavioural changes people made as they tried to cope:

- 15% of respondents strongly agreed they'd spent less on food this Christmas than in

previous years. That figure rose to 28% amongst Veg Power's primary audience: families with kids and a gross household income (HHI) under £30,000.

- This segment was also the most likely to have changed their shopping habits. 29% strongly agreed that they'd done more of their food shopping at discounters like Aldi or Lidl; 28% strongly agreed that they'd shopped around more due to price; and 23% strongly agreed that their food choices had been dictated by offers and discounts.
- The cost-of-living crisis appeared to have only had a marginal impact on people's attitudes towards veg over Christmas...with the striking

exception of lower income families with children. 28% of this group agreed that increased energy costs had caused them to eat less veg; 20% agreed that they'd cut back on veg to save money; and the same percentage agreed that they'd foregone veg to buy food treats instead.

What effect was there on people's food shopping behaviours over the three weeks of Christmas? Our analysis of retail sales data kindly donated by IRI Worldwide shows that:

- In terms of food overall, volumes were down 1.7% compared to 2021. This is a steep decline, but much less than the 4.6% fall seen over the entirety of Q4.
- Even whilst volumes dropped, spend in the major multiples increased by 11% over Christmas.
- Veg underperformed the market. Whilst Christmas sales value grew by 3.6%, volumes dropped by 5.5%.
- Alarmingly, our analysis shows that the nation's Christmas shopping baskets have become considerably less healthy over time. Compared to 2018, veg's volume share was 7.6% lower last year and fruit was down 6.4%. Meanwhile, sweets and snacks commanded 5.7% higher volume whilst alcohol's share was up by 10%.
- The findings are even more dramatic in terms of value sales. Last Christmas, shoppers' share of spend on veg was nearly 18% lower than in 2018.

¹ This is the YouGov survey referenced in 'Examining the human cost' https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/5o80suvivww/Internal_CostofLiving_221209.pdf

² This is the ONS survey referenced in 'The battle to cope' <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/datasets/impactofincreasedcostoflivingonadultsacrossgreatbritain>



MERRY CHRISTMAS?

Christmas was tough for lower income families

28%

STRONGLY AGREED
they spent less on
food

28%

STRONGLY AGREED
that they'd shopped
around more to save
money

20%

AGREED
that they'd cut
back on veg to
save money

Inflation: The scale of the problem

There are various ways to measure inflation. We have chosen the CPI, which excludes mortgage interest and rental payments but includes all other goods and services.

Not only is this the metric used to set the Bank of England's 2% inflation target, CPI also makes international comparisons easier.

Inflation in the UK has been benign for a long time. Things started to change in October 2021, when CPI jumped to 4.2% - the highest for a decade. It continued to climb from there, reaching a peak of 11.1% in October 2022. The rate of increase has since slowed a little, but still stood at 10.5% in December.





ANNUAL RATE OF INFLATION

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
UK	2.48%	1.79%	0.85%	2.59%	9.07%
Euro Area	1.74%	1.21%	0.25%	2.59%	8.38%
USA	2.44%	1.81%	1.23%	4.70%	8.00%

SOURCE: UK Inflation Rate | Inflation Rate and Consumer Price Index (rateinflation.com)

Inflation in the UK has been benign for a long time. Things started to change in October 2021, when CPI jumped to 4.2% - the highest for a decade

Most western economies are facing an identical challenge, and we don't have to look very far for the root causes.

COVID is the first. As most parts of the world returned to normality last year, demand spiked. But large parts of the supply chain, particularly in China, remained badly fractured. Some sectors have also faced labour shortages, placing further pressures on the supply side.

The second is the war in Ukraine. Historically, Russia has supplied 40% of the natural gas consumed by EU countries, and over a quarter of the oil. Hardly surprising, then, that the conflict has pushed energy prices through the roof.

It's also had a direct impact on food costs. Ukraine used to account for 16% of global grain and oilseed exports. The war has cut that in half, removing some 3m metric tons per month from the world market. In parallel, it's driven up the cost of animal feed and fertilisers. Farm input costs have risen by at least a third³, a cost that has still not come through to prices at either the farm gate or checkout. This margin pressure is pushing many growers into a perilous position threatening UK production and in turn food security, rural communities and the environment.












34% INCREASE
IN FARM INPUT COSTS

³ Cost of farm inputs soars 34% in a year - Farmers Weekly <https://www.fwi.co.uk/business/markets-and-trends/input-prices/cost-of-farm-inputs-soars-34-in-a-year>

Soaring grocery bills

In December 2022, CPI stood at 10.5%. Food inflation was even higher at 16.8% - a rate not seen for 45 years.⁴ The cost of certain items has risen much faster, with everyday staples suffering some of the biggest increases.

					
Food item	Low fat milk	Olive oil	Whole milk	Sugar	Cheese
Price rise (%)	46.0%	39.5%	38.5%	38.5%	32.6%
					
Food item	Other food products (inc yeast, baking powder, stock)	Butter	Pasta products and couscous	Flour (all types)	
Price rise (%)	32.5%	29.3%	29.1%	29.0%	

Source: Office for National Statistics, December 2021 to December 2022

Staples have also been hit disproportionately, with the cost of the lowest-priced options in vegetable oil, pasta and tea increasing by 65%, 60% and 46% respectively.⁵

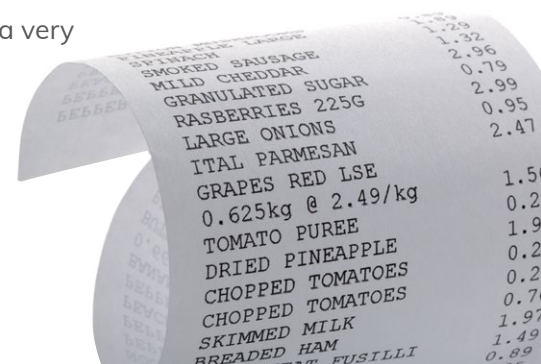
In combination, these two factors have had a shocking consequence: lower income families are facing even higher rates of food inflation.

The ONS has measured the gap: “In the year to October 2022, the difference in experienced inflation between low-income households (those in the second

income decile) and high-income households (those in the ninth income decile) was 1.4 percentage points. This is the largest since March 2009.”⁶

And let’s not forget, as we highlighted in our last report, that lower income households already spend a significantly greater proportion of their disposable income on food and other essentials like energy.

It all contributes to a very vicious circle.



⁴ UK inflation drops but food keeps inflation high - BBC News

⁵ Bread and pasta price rises force millions to cut food portions - yahoo.com

⁶ Inflation and cost of living for household groups, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

What's happening to veg prices?

Veg's share of shoppers' baskets by volume far outstrips its share by value. In other words, it's relatively more affordable than other food types.

The ONS data suggests that fresh veg is maintaining – or even slightly extending – this price advantage. However, the picture looks very different for frozen and canned:

PRICE RISE (%)

Dec 2021 to Dec 2022



12.2%

Fresh or chilled veg (excluding potatoes)



16.8%

All food



20.4%

Canned, dried or processed veg



25.7%

Frozen veg (excluding potatoes)



Examining the human cost



You only have to turn on the news to see how millions of lives are being affected across the UK.

Latest data from The Food Foundation's authoritative Food Insecurity Tracker⁷ shows a rapidly worsening picture as the cost-of-living crisis deepens.

26% of households with children had experienced food insecurity in September 2022. This has increased by 50% since last April, compared to households without children, where there has been a 26% increase in the same time frame, reflecting the severity of the impact of the current economic conditions on the youngest population group.

26% of households with children have experienced food insecurity in the past month.

At the beginning of December, YouGov surveyed 1,670 adults to explore the cost-of-living crisis. The findings make bleak reading.

Regardless of household income, three out of every ten people say they're having a hard time paying for the daily essentials. Amongst the least affluent families, it's one in two. Even the relatively well-off are feeling the pinch, with 14% claiming to be struggling.

What did respondents have to say when asked specifically about food?

THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

Household income				
ALL	<£20K	£20-40K	£40-60K	>£60K

Q: "Thinking about your finances, which of the following best reflects your position?"

I cannot afford my essential costs, and often go without things like food and heating.	6%	14%	5%	3%	3%
I can only just afford my essential costs and often struggle to make ends meet.	23%	35%	23%	20%	11%
% Struggling	29%	49%	28%	23%	14%

Q: "How often, if at all, have you struggled to afford food in the past three months?"

Always	5%	13%	3%	3%	1%
Most of the time	11%	19%	12%	7%	6%
Occasionally	29%	34%	32%	28%	22%
% Struggling	45%	66%	47%	38%	29%

SOURCES: You Gov December 2022

Let's focus on the second quartile: normal working households with incomes around the national average. 15% find that covering their grocery bills is always or usually a struggle, with a further third saying it's sometimes a challenge.

In other words: as they looked towards the Christmas season, nearly half of this segment of the population had concerns about how they were going to put enough food on the family table.

⁷The Food Foundation: <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/initiatives/food-insecurity-tracking#tabs/Overview-of-surveys>

The battle to cope

To stretch resources as far as possible, people are having to dramatically modify their everyday behaviours.

Research conducted by ONS between June and September 2022 highlighted some of the most significant changes.⁸

It's no surprise that consumers are making the 'easiest' cuts first. Spending on non-essentials is being radically pared back. This is true across income brackets, and particularly pronounced amongst larger households.

44%
OF PEOPLE
are cutting their spending on essential items including food.

But the belt-tightening doesn't stop there. 44% of people are cutting their spend on essential items including food. That figure rises to 52% amongst households with three or more children.

A survival tactic that is becoming increasingly prevalent is shopping around. This is one reason why grocery baskets are getting smaller whilst the overall number of shopping trips is increasing. People are having to put in the extra legwork to search out the best deals.

Shopping around inevitably plays in favour of the discounters, and Aldi and Lidl have had stellar years. Reviewing sales for the 12 weeks up to Christmas Day, Kantar⁹ reported that:

- Aldi remained the fastest growing grocer. 27% growth took its market share up from 7.7% this time last year to 9.1%.
- Lidl's sales increased by 23.9%, moving its market share up to 7.2%.
- Iceland's sales grew by 10.2%, pushing its market share to 2.5%. Sales of frozen poultry rose by 15% and frozen prepared foods by 18%.

THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

	All	Personal Income			Household Size	
		£10-15k	£20-30k	£50k+	1-2 Kids	3+ Kids
Q: "Which of the following are you doing because your cost of living has increased?"						
Using less gas or electricity at home	52%	59%	55%	46%	52%	51%
Spending less on non-essentials	62%	65%	65%	60%	66%	75%
Spending less on food and other essentials	44%	45%	48%	33%	47%	52%
Shopping around more	39%	44%	40%	36%	35%	34%

SOURCES: ONS 2022⁸

⁸ Impact of increased cost of living on adults across Great Britain - Office for National Statistics <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/datasets/impactofincreasedcostoflivingonadultsacrossgreatbritain>

⁹ UK grocery price inflation fuels first ever 12 billion Christmas (kantar.com)

Coping at Christmas

Heating, eating or treating the family to a few non-essentials: these impossibly difficult trade-offs are the daily reality for large sections of the population.

With all its additional costs, Christmas will have made a bad situation even worse. How did people react?

To find out, Veg Power commissioned a YouGov survey of 1,836 UK adults at the beginning of January.

Consumers had to make cuts across the board, with money spent on trips out being especially vulnerable.

Food was certainly not sacrosanct, with 15% strongly agreeing they'd spent less than in previous years. This figure rises to 28% amongst families with kids and a gross HHI of under £30,000.

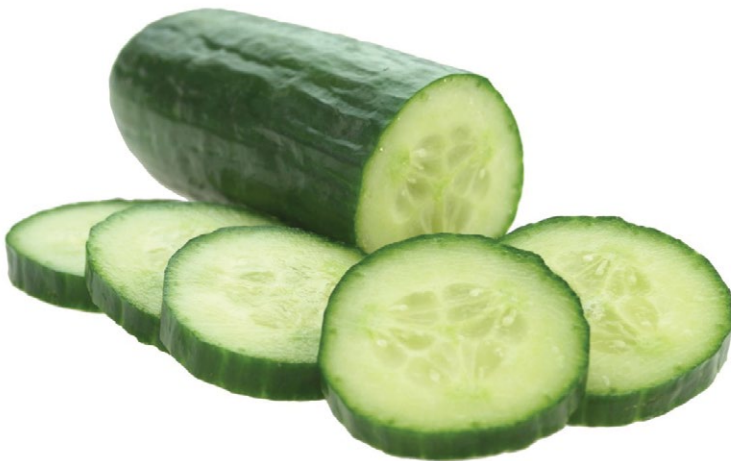


Our survey underlines how well Aldi and Lidl did amongst the population at large. Their appeal was even greater amongst households with kids and a gross income of less than £30,000. 29% of these respondents strongly agreed that they'd done more of their food shopping at discounters.

This segment was also the most likely to have changed their shopping habits. 28% strongly agreed that they'd shopped

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around more; and 23% strongly agreed that their food choices had been dictated by offers and discounts.

Whilst every penny counted this Christmas, money spent on veg clearly wasn't uppermost in people's minds.

But there's a glaring exception: lower income families with children. 28% agreed that increased energy costs had caused them to cook less veg; 20% agreed that they'd cut back on veg to save money; and the same percentage agreed that they'd foregone veg in order to buy food treats.

Percentages of this magnitude demonstrate just how easy it is for veg to fall out of their shopping baskets.

These are startling figures. Households with kids and a gross income of under £30,000 are the key target for Veg Power, and percentages of this magnitude demonstrate just how easy it is for veg to fall out of their shopping baskets.

The picture from our survey overall is bleak, but especially so for this segment: less Christmas trips out, fewer presents under the tree, more shopping around... and remorseless pressure to cut their grocery bill whenever and wherever they could.

Where did people trim their spend most over the festive season?

	All		LOWER INCOME FAMILIES*	
	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree
As a result of the cost-of-living crisis, my family spent less on going out this Christmas	27%	60%	45%	70%
As a result of the cost-of-living crisis, my family spent less on presents this Christmas	21%	53%	36%	61%
As a result of the cost-of-living crisis, my family spent less on food this Christmas	15%	46%	28%	61%

How did people change their food shopping habits?

In comparison to previous years, my family did more of our food shopping at discount supermarkets such as Aldi or Lidl over Christmas	17%	39%	29%	54%
In comparison to previous years, my family's food choices at Christmas were more dictated by special offers and discounts	11%	34%	23%	53%
In comparison to previous years, my family spent more time this Christmas shopping around in different food stores looking for cheaper prices	11%	33%	28%	54%

How disposable were veg given competing demands on the household budget?

In comparison to previous years, my family cooked less veg this Christmas because of the increased cost of energy	3%	9%	11%	28%
In comparison to previous years, my family ate less veg at Christmas in order to save money	3%	7%	10%	20%
In comparison to previous years, my family sacrificed vegetables at Christmas so we could afford food treats instead	2%	6%	7%	20%

For this question, we specified that respondents should include salad veg but exclude potatoes.

SOURCE: YouGov survey commissioned by Veg Power, January 2023
* Households with a gross HHI up to £30,000 and with children in the household.

Christmas

the moment of truth

How did these claimed changes pull through into actual food shopping behaviours?
As always, we are indebted to IRI Worldwide for its data and support.

TOTAL FOOD

Let's start by looking at Q4 in its entirety. The chart below shows the real impact of inflation: in the main multiples, people were spending a lot more money for a lot less food.

	Volume/Units	Value/Spend
Q4 2022 vs Q4 2021	-6.2%	+6.6%
Q4 2022 vs Q4 2020	-9.7%	+5.8%
Q4 2022 vs Q4 2019	-4.6%	+13.9%

WHAT HAPPENED AT CHRISTMAS?

For the purposes of this report, we have defined 'Christmas' as the two weeks prior to the 25th December plus the week following.

Whilst some people undoubtedly had to cut their spend, shoppers in general did their best to make it a normal Christmas. Total food volumes for these three weeks were down 1.7% compared to 2021; a significant fall, but much less than the 4.6% decline seen across the quarter. However, this came at a heavy cost. Value sales (spend) in the main multiples were 11% higher than last year.



TOTAL VEGETABLES

By volume, veg sales declined faster than the market overall. Unit sales were down 8% compared to Q4 2021 and nearly 16% compared to Q4 2020.

Sales during the quarter in the main multiples totalled £1,103m. That's slightly higher than Q4 2021, but £68m less than in Q4 2020.

Veg also did better at Christmas than in the quarter as a whole – but still underperformed the total food market by a wide margin. Share of basket by volume was 9.7% (versus 10.1% at Christmas 2021), whilst share by spend was just 5.0% (versus 5.4% the year before).

	Volume/Units	Value/Spend
Q4 2022 vs Q4 2021	-8.2%	+1.0%
Q4 2022 vs Q4 2020	-15.9%	-5.8%
Q4 2022 vs Q4 2019	-6.2%	+2.4%

Total Veg Sales	Volume/Units	Value/Spend
Xmas 2022 vs Xmas 2021	-5.5%	+3.6%
Xmas 2022 vs Xmas 2020	-13.9%	-3.6%
Xmas 2022 vs Xmas 2019	-6.2%	+1.7%



Christmas shopping baskets are becoming less healthy.

IRI's data allows us to examine how the composition of the average family shopping basket has changed over the last four Christmases. It doesn't make for pleasant reading.

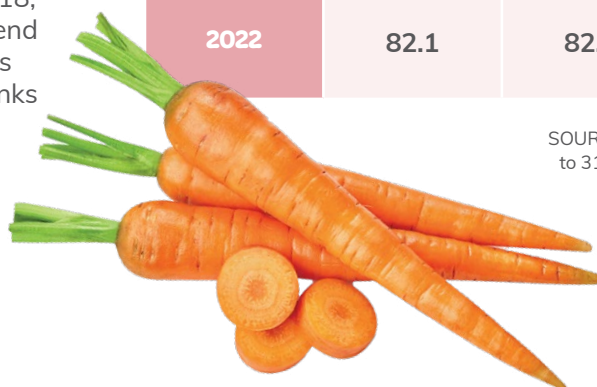
Indexed against 2018, veg's share of basket by volume increased slightly in 2020 (presumably as a result of the shift towards healthier eating during COVID). Since then, it has dropped significantly. Fruit has followed a similar pattern.

Worryingly for the nation's health, the big gainers have been alcohol, sweets and snacks.

To express this another way: the average Christmas basket now contains 5.7% more sweets and snacks than it did in 2018...and 7.6% less veg.

The changes are starker yet when we look at how people are choosing to spend their money.

It's worth underlining what this data tells us. Since 2018, shoppers are opting to spend 9% more of their Christmas grocery budget on soft drinks and 5% more on sweets and snacks. Conversely, they are spending approximately 17.5% less on veg and fruit.



SHIFTS IN VOLUME SHARE OVER THE THREE WEEKS OF CHRISTMAS

	Indexed volume share, where 2018 = 100.			
	Veg	Fruit	Alcohol	Sweets & Snacks
2019	98.6	100.4	103.0	102.0
2020	101.9	98.2	110.0	97.4
2021	96.4	97.0	111.0	103.4
2022	92.4	93.6	110.0	105.7

The average Christmas basket now contains 5.7% more sweets and snacks than it did in 2018...and 7.6% less veg.

SHIFTS IN VALUE SHARE OVER THE THREE WEEKS OF CHRISTMAS

	Indexed value share, where 2018 = 100.			
	Veg	Fruit	Soft drinks	Sweets & Snacks
2019	97.1	96.9	101.1	102.1
2020	93.7	95.3	103.1	97.0
2021	86.6	92.2	108.1	104.0
2022	82.1	82.8	109.0	105.4

SOURCE: Analysis of retail sales value and volume data up to 31st December 2022 kindly donated by IRI Worldwide

Opinion: Risky business



Dan Parker
Chief Executive,
Veg Power

Once again, I am grateful to IRI Worldwide for giving us access to its data, and to the Veg Power team and partners for turning a good deal of information into actionable pieces of insight.

In this report we wanted to concentrate on shoppers' real-world behaviours over the festive season. Christmas is always a somewhat abnormal period and that's certainly been the case recently. 2020 saw the last-minute lockdown. Whilst there were far fewer restrictions in 2021, the emergence of Omicron threw a long shadow. According to YouGov, it persuaded 31% of us to change our plans.¹⁰

This December, we all had something else to worry about: the cost-of-living crisis.

Millions of families are having to make impossibly tough choices on a daily basis. The pressure was even more acute over Christmas. On top of deciding between heating and eating, there was treating and gifting to consider as well. The Bank of England has estimated that average household expenditure increases by £740 – or 29% - in December.¹¹ For many people, that simply wasn't an option last year.

Difficult trade-offs had to be made. Our primary interest is how these trade-offs affected family food shopping, especially veg purchasing. All in all, it paints a picture of Christmas of tough choices and poorer diets for many.

THE FIVE-YEAR VIEW

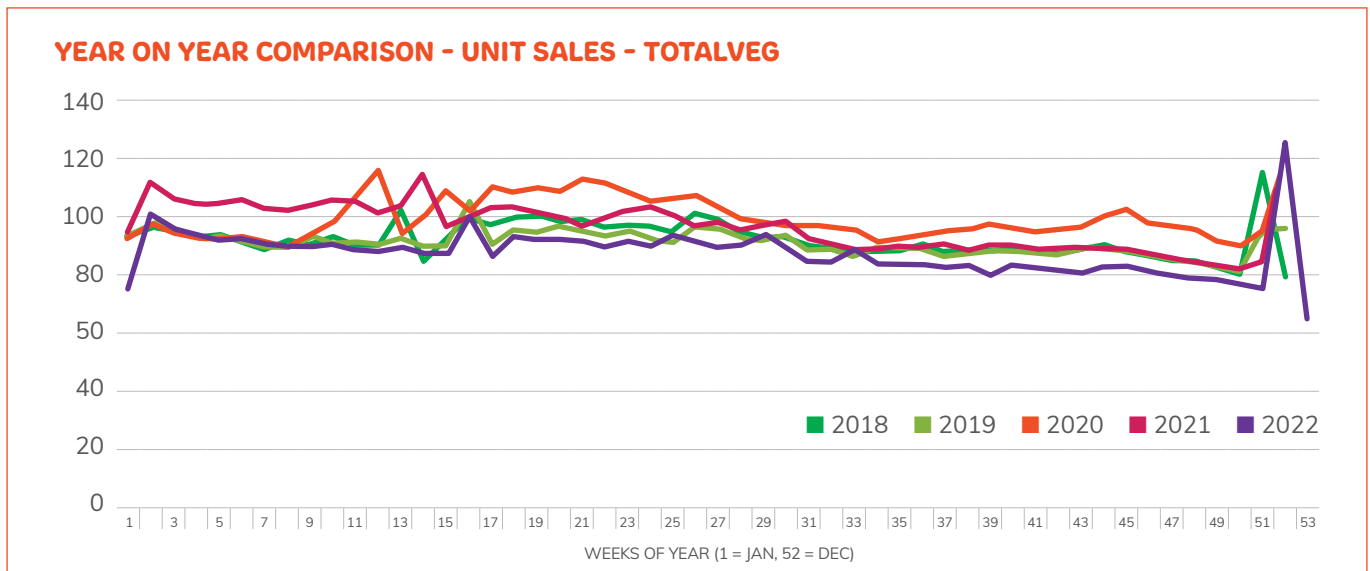
Google data show us that use of the word "unprecedented" increased seven-fold in March 2020 and has remained popular ever since. For the grocery market 2020 and 2021 were certainly unprecedented; the forced growth in home groceries made deciphering the underlying trends challenging.

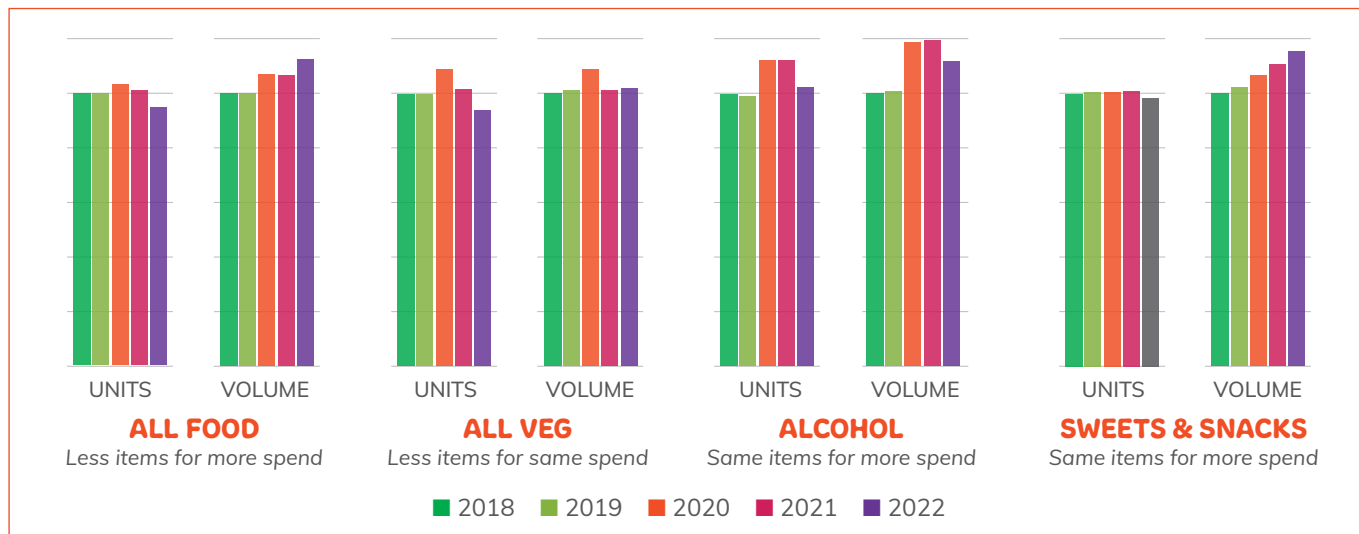
By the second half of 2022 life in the UK has settled back to post-lockdown "normality" but under the pressure of the cost-of-living crisis. Now we have a reasonable period of post-lockdown retail data from which we can form a clearer picture of the impact of the financial crisis on vegetables sales.

Please note, as you consider this data, that the retail data we use does not include sales at the discounters. During this five-year period there has been a 2.5% swing in market share to Aldi and Lidl¹². Please also note the cumulative inflation for this period 2018 to 2022 is around 15%, with food pushing a little higher¹³.

If images speak a thousand words then none of them are good as we look at this graph of total veg unit sales. 2018, 2019 and the second half of 2021 are similar, let's call them "normal". 2020, the orange line, lock-down, increased sales. The purple line, the costs-of-living crisis, and a worrying decline in veg sales.

The trends are sadly far from unprecedented. After the 2008





financial crisis the Institute of Fiscal Studies reported a 7.5% reduction in vegetable consumption as part of the UK overall diet¹⁴, and the ONS data shows it took 10 years for the market for vegetables to recover.

As we reported in September, veg is proving worryingly disposable. In H1 2022, veg's share of overall basket spend dropped to 6.2%. That's 0.5% lower than before the pandemic. IRI's data shows that things haven't improved since then. In Q4, veg's value share of total food was 5.5%. Over the three weeks of Christmas, it was just 5%.

SACRIFICING VEGETABLES

These bar graphs show H2 data for units/volume and value/spend vs a 2018 base. Total food spend has increased but shoppers are walking away with less items in their baskets. As inflation has increased prices across all food, shoppers are refusing to spend more on their vegetables in order to maintain their vegetable volume. Instead they are choosing to sacrifice vegetable volume in order to maintain their volume on other goods which are at notably higher prices. Less veg so you can still afford the alcohol, sweets and treats. Though the cause is more

complex than a just simple budget balancing decision.

LOWER INCOME SHOPPERS

Fresh produce is a massive, multi-billion-pound category that sits at the core of shoppers' baskets. Veg Power's award-winning econometric analysis on vegetable sales since 2018 shows that 90% of the market is relatively stable. Even with the extreme upward pressure from COVID, lockdowns, veganism, and the mighty marketing of Veg Power, the sector's unit sales only grew by 9% in 2020 against a 2018 base.

Likewise, with all the downward pressure from prices, inflation and the cost-of-living crisis, 2022 unit sales were only down 6% on the 2018 base. However, these small percentages represent many millions of pounds to the sector, and billions of portions of veg.

Our data only offers a small window, but the picture painted in this report is quite clear; these fluctuations are much more pronounced amongst lower income families. This makes lower income family shopping absolutely critical to both the financial health of the horticulture sector, and the

dietary health of their children. Lower income families are the elastic part of a relatively inelastic market.

The drive to lower prices is designed to attract and retain those shoppers strongly responsive to pricing. When it comes to vegetables, lower income families are four times more likely to change their food choices based on discounts and offers than those earning over £45k. Furthermore, lower income families are three times more likely to be buying less vegetables to save money.¹⁵

SO, WHAT CAN WE DO?

Listening would be a good start. This year will see our fifth large-scale national survey of the attitudes and claimed behaviour of 3,000 parents and children dedicated solely to vegetables. To support the qualitative survey, we run focus groups and one-to-one interviews, particularly with lower income families.

One thing that comes across strongly in all our research is the interplay of price, risk and total perceived cost. An economist will tell you that vegetables are cheap, with lower than market inflation. A nutritionist will tell you that when

¹⁰ How many Britons' Christmas plans have had to change because of Omicron? | YouGov. ¹¹ How much do we spend at Christmas? | Bank of England. ¹² Statista <https://www.statista.com/statistics/280208/grocery-market-share-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/> ¹³ UK Inflation Rate | Inflation Rate and Consumer Price Index (rateinflation.com). ¹⁴ Food expenditure and nutritional quality over the Great Recession | Institute of Fiscal Studies. ¹⁵ You Gov, January 2023, commissioned by Veg Power.

Festive Fare

measured in terms of cost per calorie, vegetables are expensive.

At Veg Power our expertise is behaviour change, and our analysis is that lower income family shoppers don't think in either of these terms. They think in terms of risk. "If I buy this item, will it be eaten? Will it take up too much of my time? Will it cause friction and stress? Will it just end up in the bin?"

Of course, one of the best ways to mitigate risk is to lower the price; but whatever the price, food in the bin is money wasted. If increasing overall prices forces a choice between the treats your family expects, or the vegetable they don't really want, then the real cost of choosing broccoli is the friction in your home when you tell the family there are no crisps this week.

The danger with long-term, available-to-all lower prices is



not only the erosion of UK horticulture with all the knock-on harm to food security, rural communities and the environment, but it also reinforces a lasting sense that vegetables are an undesirable commodity product.

Our job is to mitigate parental risks outside of pricing. Eat Them to Defeat Them turns millions of children into champions for vegetables, asking their parents to buy more vegetables to help defeat them. This is mitigating risk. 57% of parents whose

children participated in the schools' programme said that their children ate more vegetables as a result, as did 30% of the parents themselves. The campaign returns in February in partnership with ITV.

Our new campaign, Simply Veg, is all about equipping parents with the very best information, tips, hacks and support, so that they feel confident serving vegetables. We're also providing parents with the tools to engage their children - such as our recent partnership with Dreamworks Animation. Simply Veg isn't so much about the culinary recipe that puts the food on the plate but the parenting "recipe" that guides the food from the plate to the belly.

The real risk, as we saw in 2008, is that a sharp drop in vegetable consumption in lower income families becomes the new normal. The dietary health of our children and the financial health of horticulture would both suffer as a result.



This is a tomato.
We have the data* to prove it.

IRI is happy to support VegPower on their mission.

* Botanically, we know tomatoes are a fruit but our data tells us that shoppers treat them like vegetables. Speaking of data, our proprietary technology platform, Liquid Data™, gives access to more FMCG shopper and sales data than any other agency. Combining that with a super talented team is how we join the dots to provide competitive insights for the majority of FMCG manufacturers and retailers across the world. Get in touch to talk about how we can help your business.



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