

## **EMBARGOED FOR 08:00 AM TUESDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2020**

### **UK shoppers ramp up online grocery shopping ahead of second lockdown, but Brits remain cautious around the Christmas food shop**

- *Online share of sales reach similar levels to June peak as UK shoppers cautiously plan ahead for restricted Christmas entertaining*
- *Total Till sales in the last four weeks ending 28th November 2020 grow by 10.1%, with a 13% spike in sales in the week ending 7th November as shoppers prepared ahead of second national lockdown*

**London, 8th December 2020:** UK supermarket sales increased by 10.1% in the last four weeks ending 28th November 2020, with weekly sales growth peaking at 13%<sup>1</sup> in the week ending 7th November, as shoppers prepared for the UK's second national lockdown, reveals new data released today by [Nielsen](#).

Despite the spike in spend in the first week of the recent lockdown, Nielsen data shows that overall UK shoppers maintained their existing shopping habits. Shoppers continue to limit their visits to stores, with visits down 12% compared to this time last year, however they continue to spend more each time they shop, on average 16% more.

How much shoppers will spend this year remains relatively uncertain as data from Nielsen Homescan<sup>2</sup> reveals that 1 in 4 shoppers intend to spend less on Christmas groceries this year than usual, with half of these shoppers saying it's because they are entertaining less, while more than a third are citing financial concerns as the main reason.

#### **Growth in online spend**

However, as UK shoppers start to cautiously plan for Christmas, many are switching their spend to online. Nielsen data shows that in the four weeks to 28 November, online sales increased by 109% compared to the same period last year, with online share of grocery spend reaching 13.6%, (compared to the 7.1% of share in November 2019) and not far from the 14% peak levels seen in June of this year.<sup>3</sup>

In the last four weeks, Nielsen data also shows that sales of frozen food increased by 19.7%, whilst sales of alcohol soared by 23.2%, likely due to shoppers stocking up in light of the uncertainties around entertaining, as well the closure of bars and restaurants during the lockdown period.<sup>1</sup>

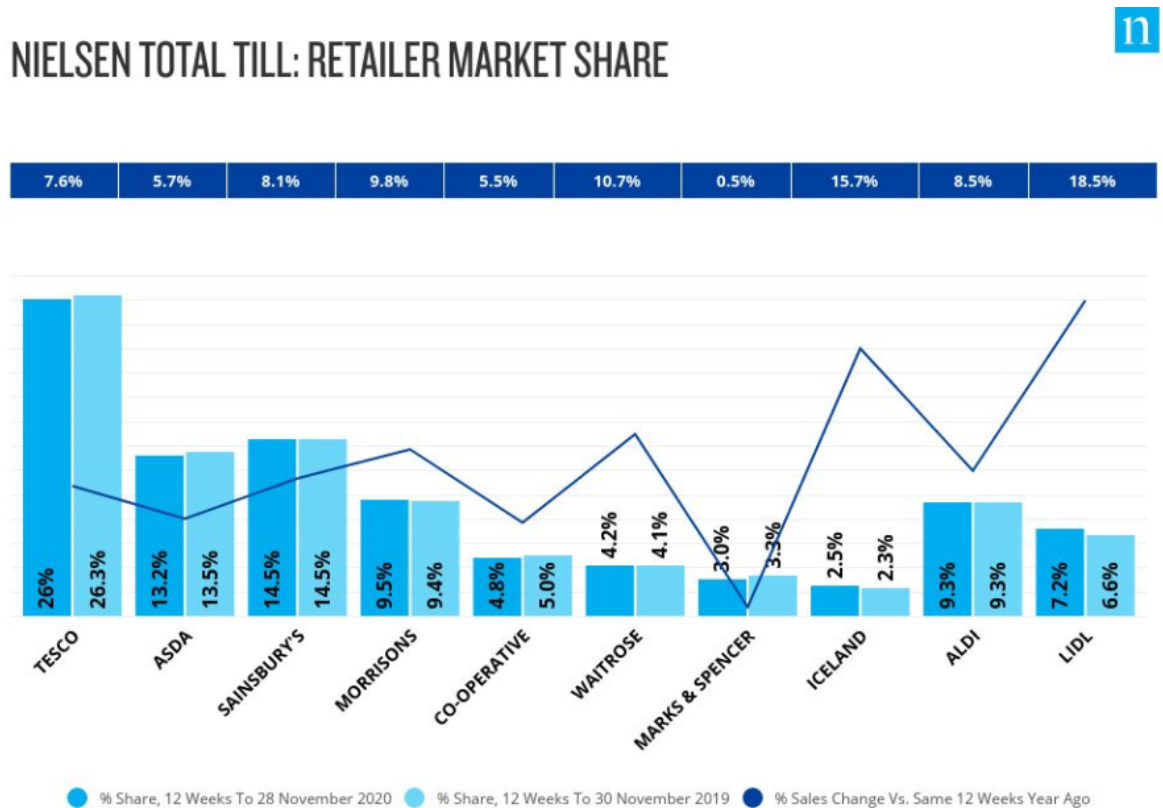
In terms of retailer performance over the last 12 weeks ending 28th November 2020, Morrisons (+9.8%) continued to outperform the 'big four' retailers, whilst the discounters Aldi (+8.5%) and Lidl (+18.5%) continued to benefit from shoppers looking to save money. M&S (+0.5%) had the slowest

growth overall as many of its food hall stores are located within clothing and home stores, as well as the restrictions placed on travel and high street shopping.

**Mike Watkins, Nielsen’s UK Head of Retailer and Business Insight, said:** “Pandemic lifestyle shopping habits have now become engrained for UK shoppers, and are likely to remain for some time. Ongoing restrictions means that shoppers will continue to plan ahead and it’s no different when it comes to the Christmas grocery shop.”

**Watkins continues:** “With the peak Christmas period fast approaching, there are limited opportunities for shoppers to entertain this year and any gatherings that do take place will be smaller. We can see that shoppers are preparing for this where they can - buying packaged grocery, alcohol and frozen food - and many have planned their online orders early. However, there’s still a big opportunity for brands and retailers as we anticipate that up to £1b more will be spent on groceries this December, compared to last year.”

Table: 12-weekly % share of grocery market spend by retailer and value sales % change



The figures in the table are based on 12 weeks sales through to 28 November 2020 compared with the same 12 week period in 2019  
 Source: Nielsen Total Till, Nielsen Homescan.

**Notes**

Unless otherwise stated all data is Nielsen Homescan Total Till

<sup>1</sup>Nielsen Scantrack Grocery Multiples

<sup>2</sup>Nielsen Homescan Survey November 2020

<sup>3</sup>Nielsen Homescan FMCG

**About Nielsen Homescan Total Till**

The Nielsen continuous 14,500 GB household panel is geo-demographically balanced and designed to measure household purchasing through a wide range of channels. It includes all food and drink and non-food spend (e.g. household, personal care, clothing, electrical, cards and stationery, toys, music, general merchandise, etc.) It represents the total amount paid (after all coupons and vouchers), found on the till receipt.

**About Nielsen**

Nielsen Holdings plc (NYSE: NLSN) is a global measurement and data analytics company that provides the most complete and trusted view available of consumers and markets worldwide. Nielsen is divided into two business units. Nielsen Global Media, the arbiter of truth for media markets, provides media and advertising industries with unbiased and reliable metrics that create a shared understanding of the industry required for markets to function. Nielsen Global Connect provides consumer packaged goods manufacturers and retailers with accurate, actionable information and insights and a complete picture of the complex and changing marketplace that companies need to innovate and grow.