



LATE AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY HEATWAVE LIFTS GROCERY SALES BUT RETAILER FORTUNES ARE MIXED

Sales at UK supermarkets up +2.2% in the last four weeks following wet start to summer

After a mixed bag of summer weather, the late August bank holiday heatwave lifted total supermarket sales to +2.2% in the last four weeks. The UK faced a wet start to the summer, but unusually hot weather over the long Bank Holiday weekend led to increased sales.

Over the last four weeks, shoppers spent £193m more than they did in the same period last year, with nearly half of this spend at discounters and high street value retailers.¹ Soft drinks sales were boosted by 5.1%, while the frozen foods and beer, wine and spirits categories saw an uplift of 4.1% and 3.3% respectively. Shoppers also bought more barbeque equipment, sales of which increased by 127%; sunscreen sales were up 26%, and ice cream up 17%. Shoppers also spent £5.7m more on pre-mixed alcoholic drinks, an increase of 32%.²

Despite strong sales for these categories and overall growth, there were mixed fortunes for retailers over the last 12 weeks, as all of the top four retailers - Asda, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco - saw a drop in market share. Brighter news was seen at M&S where there was growth in food sales over the 12 weeks, and discounters maintained a 16% market share.

Mike Watkins, Nielsen's UK Head of Retailer and Business Insight, said: "Momentum has been hard to sustain over the summer as seen in the 12 week trends, but in the latest four weeks there has been strong performance from The Co-op as well as Sainsbury's which has attracted over 370 thousand new shoppers and is currently the fastest growing top four supermarket. We are also seeing sales improve at M&S with new marketing campaigns designed to attract more frequent visits to their food halls and stand alone food stores."

Watkins concludes: "We anticipate a slow start to the September to December trading period, and don't expect sales to accelerate until the end of November. For the major supermarkets, there are three challenges ahead: to grow spend per visit faster than the discounters; to encourage shoppers to visit more often for their various shopping occasions, and to roll out inspiring advertising campaigns that will help to build loyalty through to the end of the year, including the crucial month of December. Retailers will also need to make sure that their messages resonate with the increasingly price conscious and Brexit-conscious shoppers."

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



	% share, 12 weeks to 7 September 2019	% share, 12 weeks to 8 September 2018	% sales change vs. same 12 weeks year ago
TESCO	26.4%	27.0%	-1.2%
ASDA	13.5%	13.7%	-0.7%
SAINSBURY'S	14.3%	14.5%	0.0%
MORRISONS	9.4%	9.7%	-1.8%
CO-OPERATIVE	5.3%	5.3%	0.6%
WAITROSE	4.1%	4.2%	-1.2%
MARKS & SPENCER	3.2%	3.2%	0.3%
ICELAND	2.3%	2.2%	2.0%
ALDI	9.4%	8.8%	8.7%
LIDL	6.6%	5.9%	12.2%

The figures in the table are based on 12 weeks sales through to **7 September 2019** compared with the same 12 week period in 2018

Source: Nielsen Total Till, Nielsen Homescan.

Notes

¹ Nielsen Homescan FMCG, Total GB , 4 weeks to 07.09.2019

² Nielsen Scantrack Grocery Multiples, 4 weeks to 07.09.2019

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

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