

Innovative Research Solutions with Industry

Food

CLIENT:
Garrett's

AREA:
Food Development



Developing and testing new products for the food industry



Garrett's Butchers in Limerick are renowned for their specialty meats. Garrett's manages the quality of all produce from the farm right through to the plate. Garrett Landers' individual passion for food and his demand for perfection has driven his farm partners, butchers and service staff to be as committed as he is to ensure high quality produce.

Garretts wished to raise the bar in speciality butchering to give the customer a greater choice in traditional cuts through developing new and innovative products. The new products included a line of prepared vegetables and the innovative products were to be developed from the current offering of prepared meats. The evaluation of consumer products using sensory techniques has revolutionised the food development process and it was hoped deploy these techniques to support new product development.



Food development at Garrett's

The Food Development Service at Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) provides sensory, focus group and consumer evaluation for product development. This group has developed food evaluation into a highly scientific technique for market testing. This involves a rigorous research method that measures product taste, aroma, texture, flavour, appearance and cooking / packaging requirements. This methodology identifies the key characteristics that drive consumer choice and hence optimizes the product's market performance.

The Service tested 35 of Garrett's' meat products for acceptability and rated each product for

consumer preference. A detailed sensory assessment and suggested areas for improvement were provided for each product. In addition a range of prepared vegetable recipes were developed for the client to offer as a new product range. Cooking and packaging recommendations for new products were delivered by the Service's trained chef. Due to changes in the market place and competitive pressures, businesses are now constantly refining, improving and changing what they do and produce. Acceptability testing assists with these processes and minimizes the risk associated with new product development and change. →

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→ The product development carried out by the Food Development Service at LIT for Garretts Butchers was funded by Enterprise Ireland innovation vouchers. As a result Garretts Butchers now has a list of 'preferred' products on which to proceed with innovative development. This is an integral part of product modification and ensures the focus is on key product lines. The research meant the brands that were highly rated could face the competition with confidence and that Garretts products were formulated in line with Irish consumer palates. In addition the company was provided with a range of prepared vegetables recipes which will introduce a new product line that will complement the current prepared meats offering. This will help to diversify and future proof the business.

The partnership allowed Garretts to carry out research and product analysis in line with company specific requirements. Innovation of the current meat product range and development of a new line of prepared vegetables will assist with business growth and development. These will ensure that the company is offering the correct product lines and is producing new lines to secure further consumer purchasing. ■

TESTIMONIAL

Garrett Landers
Garrett's Butchers

"The research allowed us to test new product ideas to ensure that only those products with proven potential are developed. Developing the wrong products can be expensive and a challenge for many producers. Access to a trained sensory panel ensured a consumer perspective to minimize risk and guide us on our innovative pathway."



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