

Health, nutrition & wellbeing

Good physical and mental health depends on many factors, with striking a balanced, proportionate nutritional intake one of the most critical.

Over half of UK adults are currently overweight or obese, and evidence suggests that obesity figures are on the rise. Obesity raises the risk of a number of non-communicable diseases, such as coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some cancers, which is why it's important that we play our part in helping our customers and Partners live healthier lives, be that through our products, services or inspirational communications.

For Waitrose, the opportunity to play a positive role is clear: create product ranges that help customers achieve a balance in their diet. Our supermarket aligns with external commitments, such as The Food

Foundation's Peas Please pledge, committing to increase the amount of vegetables in our meals, and ensuring that, by 2023, all main-meal recipes provide at least one of a person's five a day.

Waitrose launched its Holistic Living line of health-focused products in January 2021. The thriving range has expanded to include juices, meals accurately portioned for one, and vitamin and mineral supplements. Over 1,600 products now carry our Good Health logo, helping customers achieve a balanced, healthy diet. The logo can also be found on healthier recipes published in print and online.



Our progress

Reformulation programmes

Our reformulation programmes improving the nutritional quality of our own-brand products continued throughout 2021. We updated our Health and Nutrition policy with targets for calories, salt, saturates and sugar that support government reformulation programmes, and, to date, 85% and 91% of applicable Waitrose own-brand products already meet the government's 2024 targets for salt and calories respectively.

Helping our customers make healthier choices

All our healthy-eating marketing content is overseen by our team of expert nutritionists to ensure we provide a trusted, evidence-based voice for health. We signpost healthier choices using our Good Health logo and highlight nutrition and health benefits to educate and inspire our customers. Waitrose Health magazine brings together medical professionals and award-winning lifestyle journalists. Each seasonal issue turns insight from experts in the fields of nutrition, fitness and mental wellbeing into inspiring health advice. More regularly, we also have dedicated healthy-eating articles and recipes in our monthly Food magazine as part of our work to maintain a balance of healthy recipes across all our publications. For example, 40% of recipes in Waitrose Weekend met our Good Health criteria. To encourage customers to incorporate plant-based protein and meat-free days into their diet, 37% of these Good Health recipes were meat free.



dedicated Waitrose Health magazines published, inspiring customers to make healthy diet and lifestyle choices.



Supporting communities to make healthier choices

In addition to Partners and customers, we also take strides to support the health of those in our wider communities. Waitrose is a member of the Veg Power campaign and supported its Eat Them to Defeat Them activity, helping to distribute resources encouraging young children to try more veg in 1,828 primary schools. In addition, Waitrose is a member of the Child Food Poverty Task Force which calls for an end to child hunger, and we promoted the Full Time campaign, led by Marcus Rashford and Tom Kerridge, to inspire families on low incomes to cook healthy meals with few ingredients and minimal equipment.

Healthy Eating Week

We are a longstanding supporter of the British Nutrition Foundation's annual Healthy Eating Week. During 2021, the week's theme was Find Your Healthier You. As part of our commitment to help our Partners live healthier lifestyles, our Partnership was the week's largest participating workforce, with 153 registrations representing teams across our head offices, contact centres and stores. Our Partnership's activities included providing a range of resources on our intranet covering each of the week's five themes and hosting a joint cook-along with the British Nutrition Foundation, broadcast live from the Waitrose Cookery School to our customers and the campaign's participants.

Our challenges

Understanding the latest health needs

As understanding of health and the needs of customers, Partners and communities evolves, it's important that we keep on top of the latest trends and information. That's why, in spring 2022, we commissioned market research to help us plan and deliver the most impactful health initiatives. By gathering detailed, up-to-date data about customer needs and behaviours, we can appropriately tailor support across our products, communications and marketing.

Imbalanced diets

During 2021, society paid greater attention to how imbalanced diets affect the health of people and our planet. Compared to UK dietary guidelines, the current average UK diet is high in saturated fat, salt and sugar and low in vegetables and fibre, with negative consequences for our nation's health. Additionally, the volume of animal protein consumed is causing further environmental harm. Shifting to a dietary pattern aligned with the Eatwell Guide (the UK dietary guideline) will bring about both personal and environmental health benefits. As such, Waitrose has looked for ways to provide customers with more choice when it comes to incorporating the health needs of the planet and people into their meals. One facet of this is making meat-free mealtimes and flexitarian lifestyles even easier. In September 2021, Waitrose announced its largest-ever vegan and vegetarian product launch with two new ranges. Plantliving and GoVeggie are part of the Holistic Living brand.

CASE STUDY

Talking openly about the menopause



Menopause is a natural part of life for all women, and with over 44,000 women working for our Partnership, it's important that we support our Partners through this life stage. Our Partnership's physician and health professionals have been working together since 2019 to ensure all Partners feel able to talk comfortably about the menopause.

To mark World Menopause Day on 18 October 2021, we issued our first menopause guidance. The guidance collated all relevant policies that support Partners experiencing the menopause and introduced a suite of helpful information through a dedicated intranet site.

The site offers useful resources for anyone going through the menopause or supporting someone else through it, including ask-the-expert videos, leaflets, Partner interviews and access to our online community for women experiencing the menopause. There is also guidance for managers to hold supportive conversations and details of how they can make suitable adjustments for Partners with the help of our occupational health experts. We hope the guidance will leave a lasting legacy to help women experiencing the menopause get the support they need.

“Our Partnership's physician and health professionals have been working together since 2019.”



Looking forward

In 2022, the government will introduce new legislation to restrict the way in which foods and drinks high in fat, sugar or salt are sold and promoted. As we prepare our stores for the changes, we are taking the opportunity to highlight the wide range of healthier foods available so that it is easier for customers to make healthier choices.

Work remains ongoing to reduce the amount of calories, salt, saturates and sugar across several product categories in line with government reformulation programmes. Alongside this, we are also looking at how we can increase the beneficial nutrients in our products and are actively seeking ways to add more vegetables to the recipes of our main-meal products.

This year, we will continue to support the British Nutrition Foundation's Healthy Eating Week. The theme for 2022 is 'Eat well for you and the planet'. In addition to our usual drive to sign-up and engage with as many different Partners as possible across the business, we aim to place a bigger emphasis on communicating key theme-related nutrition and health messages to our customers.

We will also keep supporting healthy communities, working with charity partners to identify and respond to emerging needs around nutrition, food and cooking, and continuing to promote sleep, positive mental health and healthy, sustainable diets that protect and restore nature and encourage a happier world.

91%

of Waitrose own-brand products now meet the government's 2024 calorie reformulation targets.