

Attract the cream of the crop with a Food and Drink Challenge.



A Food and Drink Challenge is an enterprise activity aimed at secondary school pupils. Now in its fourth year, it's a great way of introducing young people to the world of work and, in particular, food and drink manufacturing.

Pupils work in teams with a local manufacturer and are set the task of creating and developing a new food or drink product which involves real business skills that range from new product development to production and marketing.

For employers taking part in the challenge, there are proven benefits – not least of which is the opportunity to give tomorrow's workforce the chance to weigh up the food and drink industry as a possible career, as well as:

- Partnership development with local schools.
- Allows potential recruits to experience working in the industry.
- Staff development opportunities.
- Access to product development ideas.

Photos: Students of St Margarets High School



Case Study: **The Rooster Challenge**

Albert Bartlett Ltd, the UK's largest supplier of root vegetables, ran the Rooster Challenge with the help of Scottish Food and Drink Federation. The 3 month challenge was taken up by St Margarets High School in Airdrie, Lanarkshire. They were given the job of developing a new product line featuring Bartlett's Rooster potatoes.

280 pupils were involved in the task which focused on replacing existing Rooster recipes with healthier options. Creating new packaging, advertising posters and radio jingles were also part of the project along with Food Hygiene and Health & Safety training. Teacher/pupil site visits and company presentations gave added insight into the business.

The resulting products were showcased at a trade fair where each team presented to a panel of judges including Michelin Star winning chef Andrew Fairlie and Ronnie Bartlett, the company's MD.

The winning idea was later launched nationally and led to the production of a range of 8 more packs, each carrying the story of the challenge as part of the design, and generating over a million sales. This success has led to the company rolling out the challenge concept across the county.

Ronnie Bartlett commented: *"I think that the Challenge provides a significant learning experience for kids and highlights what can be achieved by businesses when they take time out to work on such projects. It's a definite win for all concerned."*