Baking and Rugby Continue to Drive Sales

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Trading comment from Waitrose Commercial Director, Mark Williamson, for the week ending 26th September 2015.

The Great British Bake Off and Rugby World Cup teamed up this week to deliver a provisional divisional sales increase of 2.1 per cent compared with the same week last year (excluding fuel).

The week's Bake Off episode - in which contestants were asked to create cream horns for the signature bake and mokatines for the technical challenge - combined with strong promotional activity to inspire shoppers.

Sales of our own label frozen puff pastry were up 23 per cent, including the Waitrose Cooks' Ingredients puff block, which was up 25 per cent. Almond sales rose by a massive 76 per cent, fondant icing climbed by 24 per cent and jam was up 16 per cent.

Home baking sales are certainly on the rise; dried fruit was up 37 per cent and sales of colours and essences were up 25 per cent. Sales of Waitrose six large British Blacktail eggs were also up 26 per cent.

It was another feast for sports fans with the Rugby World Cup continuing to captivate and provide the opportunity to gather family and friends. Frozen party food sales increased by 60 per cent and frozen pizza sales were up 17 per cent.

Sales of our bottled ale selection, which includes products from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, saw a significant rise, too, up 25 per cent up on last year, while canned ales and stouts were up 28 per cent.

We also opened two new branches. Little Waitrose Heathfield in East Sussex exceeded all expectation and courses at our new cookery school, which forms part of our new branch in King's Cross, are already in huge demand.

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