

# COOK

“Frozen meals that really do look  
& taste homemade”

Country Life Magazine

# Hello

We love food shops. We love them when there's a COOK logo over the door and we love them when they're owned and run by other people who're just as passionate about retailing as we are.



We know that our own retail estate will only ever reach a relatively small number of communities in the UK. For the hundreds, if not thousands, of communities where we will never open a shop we see COOK Concessions as the answer. We believe that our remarkable food can help local shops flourish nationwide and keep communities connected and vibrant.

The key for us is finding the right partners. It's important you not only like our business proposition but the way we do business, because experience tells us that's when our partnership will be most rewarding for us both.

We've spent more than a decade fine-tuning our approach and are now more committed than ever to growing and supporting a flourishing, brand-enhancing COOK Concessions business.

If you're the right partner, we look forward to working with you.

*Ed & Rosie*

Ed & Rosie, Co-CEOs



Click to play

*"The range, quality and overall strength of the COOK brand sets us apart from the competition"*

David, Budgens Hassocks & Henfield

## The story of COOK so far



## About Us

Here are a few things you should know about our business and brand.



### PURPOSE DRIVEN

At COOK we make the very best hand-prepared meals and puddings, frozen, so people can have more time for what matters. We stand for relationships: the power of positive human connections to change the world. We bring the two together under our driving purpose: Nourishing Relationships. It's why we get out of bed in the morning.

[Find out more](#)

### VALUES LED

The Essential Ingredients of our business are our five core values through which we all operate: Be Remarkable; Care; Be Part Of Our Family; Churchill's Pig (ask us!); and Have Fun. These values apply to everyone in our company. They can be difficult and expensive to uphold – but that's the point. If you ever feel we're not living up to our values, please let us know.

[See our values in action here](#)

### PEOPLE BRAND

Everything we do at COOK depends on people doing a great job. It's why we're passionate about creating a truly remarkable company culture. Our people have voted COOK among the Sunday Times Top 100 Best Companies To Work For every year since 2012 and we've consistently been the top manufacturer and one of the top few retailers. We're always keen to share what we've learnt and explore how we can get better. We'd love to chat about it.

[Find out more](#)

## Beef Bourguignon



# Community Retail

We've always felt it in our bones that shops can play a vital role in creating strong communities. It's a big reason why we've got over 90 COOK shops on high streets around the country.

## Testing the Theory

Until 2018, we had no clear evidence to support our hunch. Then an analysis of the 15 COOK shops most actively involved with their local communities showed that, as a group, they outperformed the rest by 5% in terms of like-for-like sales. Proof at last that a shop at the heart of the community not only benefits the town, but brings in extra sales, too. Of course, the shops must also be well-managed, offer great service and so on, too. We don't take that for granted.

## The Role of Concessions

With our current thinking, we see opening a further 30 COOK shops as being realistic over time, so our own retail estate will only ever reach a relatively small number of communities in the UK. For the thousands of others where we will never open a COOK shop, Concessions are the answer. That's how COOK can support independent shops and help make communities connected and vibrant. We're looking for shops and owners that are aligned with our vision for working with the local community.

## Defining a Community

Where to draw the geographical lines that define a community can be tricky, it's not an exact science because there are so many variable factors at play.

We always make decisions carefully and on a case by case basis when it comes to opening new stockists local to one of our own shops or an existing concession, taking into account the type of retailer; road systems, natural barriers, population density and range size.

## Sharing What We've Learned

As an award-winning retailer ourselves, we apply what we've learnt on our own shop floors to our Concessions business. That includes deciding the best range to sell in limited space; understanding how to merchandise and communicate our brand; and be responsive to changing customer behaviour.

Today there is so much said about the death of the high street. At COOK we believe that communities and shops can flourish together. Some might see that as a radical idea. To us, it's common sense.

"There is no competition when it comes to high quality and variety across any frozen food range."

Graham, The Hollies Farm Shop





## Our Founding Statement from 1997:

“To COOK using the same ingredients and techniques you would at home, so everything looks and tastes homemade.”

Today, nothing's changed.

Ed & Dale

Ed & Dale, founders

# Britain's Best Kitchens

OK, it's not an official accolade but we're mighty proud of our kitchens in Kent. Here's why...



## KITCHEN HEROES

It's a team effort, just like in any big kitchen, but it's the chefs who are the ones who get all the glory and their names on the label. They simmer, roast, fry and bake, preparing every dish by hand, just like you would at home.



## GREAT INGREDIENTS

You can't make a good meal out of bad ingredients. We love using produce from local farmers and only work with suppliers that share our values about quality, sustainability and animal welfare.

[Find out more](#)



## REMARKABLE RECIPES

There's always something cooking in our little Development Kitchen, where a small team of talented chefs try out new recipes and work on old favourites to make them even better.

WHIPPING

## GETTING READY

Over in the Prep Team, it's a hub of activity: peeling, chopping, dicing, grinding prime cuts of higher-welfare pork, lamb and beef into mince, making pastry from scratch, and getting all the components of our meals ready for the chefs.



MIXING

STIRRING

## THE GATEKEEPERS

We diligently check each and every ingredient as it arrives at the COOK Kitchen. If we're not 100% happy, it's not going anywhere near our meals.





"This Corgi au Vin is as good as homemade"

The Times



We've won more Great Taste Awards than any other maker of prepared meals, chilled or frozen

# Winning in Taste

## For every dish we ask ourselves



1.

Is it better than the competition?

Have we benchmarked it against the best competitor products?

Have we benchmarked it against similar COOK dishes?



2.

Can we make it in our kitchens?

Do we have the kit and the skills to make it consistently?

Will it taste the same after 3 – 6 – 12 months in production?



3.

Is it true to our brand promises?

Does it look and taste homemade?

Does it use clean, kitchen cupboard ingredients?

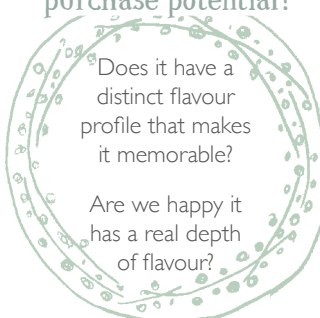
Does it deliver clear value for the customer?

4.

Does it have a repeat purchase potential?

Does it have a distinct flavour profile that makes it memorable?

Are we happy it has a real depth of flavour?



5.

Is there a clear usage or occasion?

Will the customer know how to use it, and what to serve it with?

Does it solve an obvious customer problem?

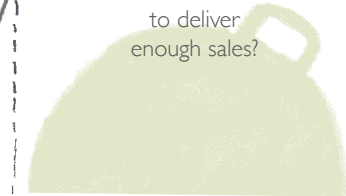


6.

Does it make sense commercially?

Does it hit the required margin?

Do we back it to deliver enough sales?



When we've answered "Yes" to all of the above, then we ask:  
Are we proud enough of it that we'd recommend it to a friend?

“COOK are extremely professional to deal with. We feel that the COOK brand is very sympathetic to our own, and that our target customers are very similar. The quality of the COOK product is outstanding.”

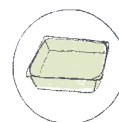
Rosemary, Frosts Farm Shop



Roasted Vegetable Lasagne

# A better way of doing business

As a certified B Corp we believe in a better way of doing business, one that's committed to benefiting people and the planet, not just making profits. We are independently audited every three years to make sure we're going above and beyond to meet the highest ethical standards. We've got loads of initiatives to make sure we're living our driving purpose of Nourishing Relationships. Below are six big ones but we'd love to share the others. Just ask.



## More Sustainable Packaging:

The switch-over from black plastic to more sustainable trays began with our Kids Meals moving into cardboard. It stepped up in 2019 when a new, 100% recyclable plastic tray became available – we were the first company in the UK to test it. These might not be the last word in sustainable packaging, but we're continuing to work to reduce our use of plastics, both in packaging and behind the scenes in our shops and kitchens.

[Find out more](#)



## Healthier Diets:

We're ensuring that a third of our core range is made up of Love Eating Well meals, which means they clock in at under a third of an adult's Reference Intake (RI) of fat, sugar, salt and calories. We want sales of our meat-free dishes account for at least 10% of our savoury total, too, so we're growing our veggie range. Good news not just for vegetarian and vegan customers, but for everyone else as well.

[Find out more](#)



## Carbon Neutral:

We only buy renewable electricity and we offset our remaining carbon emissions which come from cooking gas, transportation and refrigeration. We realise that offsetting isn't a long-term solution, so we are committed to having net zero emissions by 2030. This is a marathon not a sprint, and means a great many changes in how we run our business, from the design of our new kitchen in Kent to upgrading our transportation fleet.

[Find out more](#)



## Lending a Hand:

We actively encourage our team to support and inspire other organisations through volunteering our time and expertise. Everyone employed by COOK directly gets five paid volunteering days a year if they work full time, and they're used to support charities, beach cleans, animal shelters, and more. The problems facing society and the planet will only be solved if we work together.



## One Feeds Two:

COOK was the first national partner of the One Feeds Two Foundation. For every meal we sell with their logo on the packaging, we'll donate a school meal to a child living in poverty in Malawi. School meals encourage attendance, aid concentration and help to give children the tools they need to lift the next generation out of poverty. Through our partnership with One Feeds Two we've already donated over two million meals.

[Find out more](#)



## RAW Talent:

This is our scheme to help people back into work following a prison sentence, homelessness or other challenges. Too often, it's incredibly hard to shake the stigma after a prolonged period of unemployment. So far we've helped more than 80 people back to work. People are amazing; sometimes they just need a second chance and the opportunity to prove it.

[Find out more](#)

# Becoming a Concessions Partner

We are looking for partners to share in the success and growth of COOK. Working closely together results in a core understanding of each others business.

What we are looking for is:

## An established business run by like-minded people

We need to have confidence in your business and in you. We're in this for the long haul and want to build a long-term relationship based on trust. That means we need to see eye-to-eye. Life's too short to be in partnership with people we don't get along with.

## People who care about food as much as we do

We have a simple goal: to make the best-tasting, prepared food you can possibly buy. We obsess about the taste and quality of our food. We really want to work with people who share our passion.

## A desire to make COOK a destination in your store

We don't want to be just another product on a shelf (or in a freezer). We want COOK to be a destination in your store and for your store to be a destination for your customers. You therefore need to be willing to give COOK enough space and prominence.



“The new freezers that we have upgraded to, and the smart cladding and POS has massively contributed to our COOK turnover increasing by over 60% year on year”

Pedro Enriques,  
S. Pugh & Son Garden Centre

# Case Study

## Rosemary Towers – Director, Frosts Garden Centre, Woburn Sands

### How have you found dealing with COOK?

From a business point of view the support and information we have received from our concessions manager and all the COOK team has been exceptional.

COOK are extremely professional to deal with. From a customer point of view, we feel that the COOK brand is very sympathetic to our own, and that our target customers are very similar. The quality of the COOK product is outstanding.

### Do you feel COOK brings customers into the shop and so helps the rest of your business?

Sales trends suggest that we have not only increased incremental business, but have also attracted new customers.

### Why did you increase the number of freezers with COOK?

At the beginning of last year we had two COOK freezers, by mid-year we had increased to four and then by October to six. At each stage we have been very pleased with the increase in sales. We took the decision to increase the number of COOK freezers following visits to Concessions and stand alone shops. We were also getting very positive feedback from customers which proved that there was demand for an increased range.

### What results outside of direct COOK sales have you seen as a result of the increased freezer range?

We have noticed that regular COOK customers tend to shop with us every 3-4 weeks to make bulk purchases and at the same time they also purchase other items from the Food Hall.



“We have not only increased incremental business, but have also attracted new customers.”



# What next?



Website Enquiry Sent → COOK get in touch Initial Proximity Checks conducted



Retailer Submits Application Form to COOK



Application goes through 1st sign off stage



If progressed to next step → Concessions Manager makes contact



Site Meeting for final sign off and confirm we are a good fit for each other