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This issue's cover star is Miles Browne from J A Harris & Sons



Samuel Neill fundraiser: doing well three years on

Three years ago, many of you supported a fundraiser for Samuel Neill, a young boy with cerebral palsy whose dad, Syd Neill has been a familiar face around the market for more than 20 years. His uncle, Paul Alywood is also a buyer on the market.

At the time, Samuel needed a life-changing operation and specialist physiotherapy at Great Ormond Street Hospital, which was not available on the NHS, to help him learn to walk again.

Samuel's mum, Becky recently got in touch with Market Times to let us know that three years on, 11-year-old Samuel is doing brilliantly. He even completed a Superhero triathlon at Eton Dorney Lakes recently, alongside his dad Syd.

Becky said: "We would like to say thank you to all the people from the market who so kindly supported Samuel's fundraise. Three years on, he is doing amazingly well and we are so thankful for all of the support that we received."

Left to Right: Samuel with dad Syd and sister Erin after the triathlon, Samuel underwent treatment at Great Ormond Street



Coffee cupping at the Food Exchange

Independent Brixton-based coffee roasters, Volcano Coffee Works recently visited the Food Exchange. They showed our community of food and drink entrepreneurs how to cup coffee and identify the aromas and taste profiles of different coffee beans, before serving up Espresso Martinis.

Volcano Coffee Works supplies the Food Exchange community with its daily caffeine fix and prides itself on selling ethically traded, sustainable coffee.

Left: The Food Exchange community learned to cup coffee



Above: Pollen + Grace pop-up

Market traders on the agenda at FPJ Live

Last month, Guy Singh-Watson from Riverford and Vernon Mascarenhas from Nature's Choice both took to the stage at the high-profile fresh produce industry event, FPJ Live.

Introduced as "one of the UK industry's leading lights", Guy shared the personal and professional story behind Riverford, which has grown over the last 30 years from "one man and a wheelbarrow" to a national veg box brand with more than 50,000 customers.

Vernon discussed a range of issues that are affecting the foodservice and wholesale sectors including urban farming, wonky veg and plastic-free packaging.

Right: Vernon Mascarenhas from Nature's Choice



Pollen + Grace pops up

Pollen + Grace, the Food Exchange tenant that uses natural whole food ingredients to create simple, home-cooked meals and snacks, recently completed a successful seven-week pop-up at Royal Exchange.

Featuring plant-based meals, a banana bread bar and a series of events, the pop-up attracted hordes of hungry City workers through its doors for breakfast, lunch, dinner and everything in-between.

Stephanie Johnson, Director at Pollen + Grace, said: "The pop-up has been a brilliant brand opportunity for Pollen + Grace and we've loved meeting our customers, both old and new. Looking forward to the next one in 2020!"



Bevington Salads receives City Harvest Award

Gary Marshall and the team at Bevington Salads have been awarded Best London Market Supplier 2019 by City Harvest London, for their dedication to rescuing surplus food over the last four years.

Gary said: "Bevington Salads has been supporting this wonderful charity since the start, I'm very honoured to receive this award. It's very humbling and satisfying to be a small part of the great work this charity does."

Rebecca Barrett from CGMA added: "As a market, we made a commitment to send zero waste to landfill nine years ago. The partnership with City Harvest is just one of the innovative solutions we have successfully employed to tackle the growing concerns around food waste."

To date, City Harvest has redistributed enough surplus food to serve more than 7 million nutritious meals to those facing food poverty in London.

Left: City Harvest's Nikki Tadema presents Bevington Salads with their award

New Covent Garden Market's international influence

New Covent Garden Market may feed and flower London, but the market's influence and recognition extends much further afield – as two recent articles in The New York Times show.

The first includes a black and white photograph of chef and restaurateur Jamie Oliver, riding his scooter around the Fruit & Veg Market back in the early days of his career. On the left-hand side of the shot, you can just see the face of Rushton Scranage, a catering distributor now based on B Row.

A second article in The New York Times credits 18 months as a florist's assistant "trudging the lanes of New Covent Garden Market in the early hours" as one of the influences that helped to shape the success of British designer Cressida Jamieson, who embroiders mostly floral designs onto clothing.

"Flowers are in everything," Jamieson told The New York Times reporter. "I think that's what I learned from being



Above: New Covent Garden Market in The New York Times

a florist. I would walk to work and feel really aware of the nature around me."



Visit www.risetothechallenger.co.uk for more information about the campaign or to pledge support.

Young Foodies champions 'challenger' brands

Food Exchange tenant, Young Foodies has launched a 'Rise to the Challenger' campaign to encourage the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector to give more support to small and medium sized 'challenger' brands.

The campaign has been launched in partnership with GS1 UK, the Department of International Trade's Exporting is Great campaign, and the Food & Drink Federation.

Young Foodies co-founders, Thea Alexander and Chris Green, said: "If we can enable challenger brands to thrive, the whole industry will grow with them – and based on our research, it only takes small changes to enable this to happen."



Above: Donec fermentum

Nine Elms light installation

From 13 – 21 December, nine buildings across the Nine Elms neighbourhood will be lit up with animated projections of elm trees.

The illustrations, created by Pippa Taylor and projected by internationally acclaimed artist Jony Easterby, celebrate the area's history. They will light up New Union Square, the ROSE community clubroom, Brunswick House, Elm Quay Court and five more locations.

For more information visit: www.nineelmslondon.com/lightup



Market supports Griffin School to light-up the community

Every evening from 1 – 24 December, a school, community centre, church, business or arts venue in Nine Elms, will officially switch-on an illuminated, Christmas carol-themed 'window', creating a festive trail that residents, local workers and visitors can follow to discover the local area.

Covent Garden Market Authority has worked with Griffin School to help design their 'Holly and the Ivy' themed window, which will feature seasonal foliage and decorations sourced from the Flower Market. The switch-on will take place on Friday 6 December – pop along to meet some of the market's local neighbours and enjoy a festive mince pie!

For more information, please visit www.nineelmslondon.com



Above: 'Still Life Citrus' by Eyal Granit

New artwork for the Flower Market façade

A vibrant new artwork by photographer, Eyal Granit has been unveiled on the Nine Elms Lane façade of the Flower Market, where it will remain on display until October 2020.

More than 70 artists from around the world, including the US and Australia, competed to design an artwork inspired by fruit, vegetables or flowers sold at New Covent Garden Market.

The winning artwork, 'Still Life Citrus' was selected by judges including Lynn Parker, art curator at Royal Botanical Gardens Kew and Charlotte Brooks, art curator at the Royal Horticultural Society. Cassandra Thompson from market florist, Stems UK also helped to shortlist the entries.

The artist, Eyal Granit from Jerusalem in Israel, visited the market in October.

He said: "Citrus for me is going back to childhood. I am truly humbled to have received such an incredible opportunity to present my work to a global audience in London, where the public can encounter and enjoy it every day."

Daniel Tomkinson, Chief Executive at CGMA, said: "Eyal's artwork beautifully captures the freshness and vibrancy of the produce that New Covent Garden Market is famous for. We'd like to thank the judging panel for giving their time and expertise to help select this show-stopping image, which we're delighted to display on the façade of the Flower Market."

Covent Garden Market Authority collaborated with Art Night to commission the artwork, which is funded by VINCI St Modwen (VSM), New Covent Garden Market's redevelopment partner.

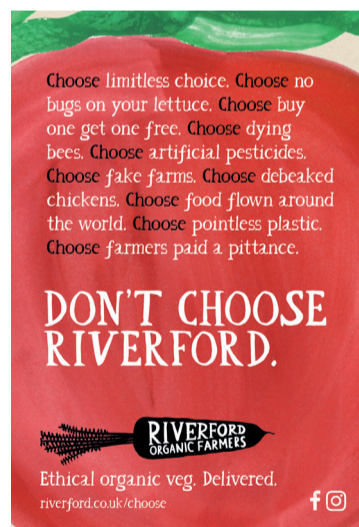
Want pointless plastic? Don't choose Riverford!

Riverford's latest marketing campaign highlights that its most popular veg boxes contain 77% less plastic than the equivalent packaged products from major UK supermarkets.

Launched earlier this year, the 'Don't Choose Riverford' campaign reached more than 1 million consumers by drawing attention to common supermarket practices such as pointless packaging, chemical pesticides, buy-one-get-one-free offers, food waste, and paying farmers 'a pittance'.

Clare McCombe, campaign marketing manager at Riverford, said: "Given our limited media budget, the campaign significantly exceeded our expectations and did a fantastic job at harnessing the spirit of the Riverford brand, while promoting our ethical values."

Clockwise from Top: Riverford veg box, One of the 'Don't Choose Riverford' campaign posters, Riverford veg box



Above: Mamma Mia! The Party at The O2

Oh, Mamma Mia!

Nature's Choice is excited to be working with event caterers, Rhubarb on the menu for Mamma Mia! The Party, a new themed restaurant experience that recently opened at The O2 in London.

Based on the hugely-popular films and theatre production, over the course of four hours guests get to enjoy a four-course gourmet meal in a Greek Taverna complete with olive trees and bougainvillea, plus a spectacular show and an ABBA disco.

The Taverna seats 500 people per show, who devour two pallets of fresh New Covent Garden produce each day, including 50 boxes of British heritage tomatoes from Westlands Nurseries in Evesham, pomegranates, fresh herbs, freshly-squeezed unpasteurised juices, and specialist ingredients such as bronze fennel microgreens and cucumber flowers.

"Rhubarb are so happy with the collaboration," reports Shaunie Dykes, business development executive at Nature's Choice, "they've recommended us to supply this Christmas' big dinner show at the Royal Albert Hall, Cirque de Soleil!"

Christmas opening hours

Please check our website for the general opening hours of the Fruit & Vegetable Market and Flower Market over the festive season: www.newcoventgardenmarket.com/visit

It is up to each wholesaler to decide when they open, so if you are visiting a particular business on the market it is also worth checking with them for their opening dates and times.



Above: Walter H5 hydroponics unit for growing food, developed by Department 22



Above: Tom from Department 22 discusses circular economy at a Food Exchange event

Future food trends

What will the food industry look like in the future? What trends could the market be tapping into? We asked Tom Leech and Dejan Mitrovic from Department 22, an innovation agency that was based in the Food Exchange until recently, to share three key trends that are shaping the future of food.

1. Planet-friendly food

According to climate scientists, making changes to your diet is the single biggest way to reduce your environmental impact. A growing number of Britons are reducing the amount of meat in their diet and by 2025, it's estimated that around 25% of the population will be either vegan or vegetarian. There are also more flexitarians – people who eat a mostly plant-based diet, with occasional meat.

“This trend is about more than swapping meat for plants though,” says Dejan. “There’s also more interest in eating seasonal and local produce, reducing food waste, and using hydroponically grown plants, which use fewer pesticides and much less water”.

2. Exploring food roots

As people become more aware of how their food choices impact the planet, there’s also a growing interest in where their food comes from and how it was grown. Until now, consumers have relied on brands to tell them who farmed their food, or on certifications such as organic or Fairtrade.

“With the latest mobile technology, consumers can already scan products that they see on a shelf to find out more

about their origin. Emerging technologies like Blockchain will make it possible to trace every step of a product’s journey, down to the exact farm it was grown on and the factory it was processed in”, explains Dejan. In the future, we may be able to get lots of information about a product’s origin, environmental impact and nutritional value from smart sensors in supermarkets.

3. Circular economy

Shockingly, one third of all food that is produced globally goes to waste, but a growing number of businesses are turning food that might otherwise be wasted into an entirely new product. “Some good examples include Toast ale, which is brewed from surplus bread, and Rubies in the Rubble, which turns leftover fruit and veg into chutneys and relishes,” says Tom.

“Some food brands are even using waste to grow produce, for example the Dutch business GRO uses waste coffee grounds to grow oyster mushrooms,” Tom explains. The mushrooms are used to make vegetable crisps, which are labelled as a 100% circular-economy product.

The Flower Market Year



Left to Right: Simon Lycett at the launch of his new book, Snowberry



The sense that summer is properly upon us only really seems to dawn on me when the British-grown dahlias start to arrive at the Flower Market. They come like the circus rolling into town, with a spot of Carmen Miranda and Carnival thrown in for colourful good measure.

Florist, Simon Lycett has published a beautiful new book – *The Flower Market Year* – that documents a year in the life of New Covent Garden Flower Market, before it relocated to its current interim site.

The market has played a key role in Simon's life as a florist for the last 25 years, so ahead of the relocation he wanted to capture and preserve a sense of its atmosphere for posterity.

Alongside his own observations about the people and produce that make New Covent Garden Market so unique, he commissioned the award-winning photographer Michelle

Garrett, who specialises in photographing gardens and plants (as well as food and travel) to capture the Flower Market in action over a period of 12 months.

The Flower Market Year is packed full of stunning photography that showcases seasonal flowers, foliage and the creative ways in which Simon uses his favourite flowers from the market to produce beautiful, seasonal floral arrangements.

Simon says: "Michelle became a regular on the market, snapping away for 12 months and has really captured some superbly nostalgic images."



Clockwise from Top Left: Cloni ranunculus,
Physalis, Seasonal sweet pea floral arrangement,
Phalaenopsis orchids

Getting to know: Lavenders of Covent Garden



We've been working in the industry for more than 20 years, so we're experienced florists and designers and we know all the best suppliers



Right: The team at Lavenders of Covent Garden

We chat to floristry buyer and designer, Faye Lavender about Lavenders of Covent Garden, which opened on the Flower Market in October 2019

When Faye heard through one of her suppliers that a unit was going to be available on New Covent Garden Market, she knew it would be a great opportunity for Lavenders. "We started out as a family-run business but we were bought by APAC in February 2019," says Faye. "APAC also owns Whittington's, which has been on the Flower Market for years, but Lavenders offers something a bit different and we were excited about the opportunity to have both businesses on the market."

Lavenders was established more than 30 years ago by Jeannette and Norman Lavender, to supply the florist trade with sundries, basket ware and dried flowers,

which were popular back in the '80s. Jeannette and Norman's son, Brady joined the family business in 1994 after training in retail merchandising and window dressing. Brady took over the business soon after, when his dad sadly passed away, and was later joined by his wife, Faye.

The pair both have a long-standing connection with New Covent Garden Market, going back to their childhoods. "My dad was a wholesaler on the fruit and veg market until about 15 years ago, and Brady's dad had retail units on the fruit and veg market," explains Faye. "So we've always known about the market and understood how hard the traders work to supply London with top-quality fresh produce and flowers."

The original Lavenders of London is based in Isleworth, close to Shepperton Studios,

which has led to some interesting orders over the years. "We've supplied floral displays for Downton Abbey and EastEnders, ivy garlands for the Harry Potter films and even 15,000 rose petals for the Gladiator film. We had to deadhead thousands of whole silk flowers because you couldn't get hold of individual silk petals back then. Now you can buy them in boxes, which would have made things easier!"

Lavenders has also worked on some impressive visual merchandising, including a Union Jack flag window display for designer Marc Jacobs' store in Mayfair, which was made from 50,000 red, white and blue roses. "At the time, you couldn't get blue roses so we had to dye them blue. We lay them on the hedges to drip-dry, so we turned them blue too," laughs Faye.

As an independent wholesaler, Lavenders has always focused on top-quality products and excellent customer service rather than competing on price, and that's no different at the newly-opened Lavenders of Covent Garden. "We've been working in the industry for more than 20 years, so we're experienced florists and designers and we know all the best suppliers. We can offer a bespoke service and source pretty much anything. We're also very transparent about our prices, everything has a price tag and we also have a scanner on the wall, so our customers can check prices easily."

Faye and her husband Brady, travel to Holland regularly, as well as places like China, Vietnam, Cambodia and India, so that they can see what's on trend and bring it back to the market. When we spoke to Faye, she was about to travel to

China for a trade show and several factory visits.

Lavenders has added a mezzanine and created seasonal and themed areas, such as an Aztec room, which provide inspiration for customers that include independent florists and designers, as well as renowned department stores like Harrods.

Their best-sellers include silk flowers, which are popular with restaurants and retailers who use them to create displays that “look great on Instagram and will last for a while”, as well as basket ware and dried flowers, which are back on trend. “We’re also seeing a lot of demand for light fittings, metal ware and ceramics, and we’re getting lots of requests for flame

retardant displays and products with an UV finish, which makes them last longer.”

Lavenders of Covent Garden has a team of six staff, including Faye and Brady who are usually there one-day-a-week each. Store manager, John has been working on the Flower Market for 10 years and Alan, who oversees both Lavenders and Whittington’s, has been in the trade since he was just 16 years old. Trish and Scott are both experienced florists, and the newest team member is Nicola.

“Market life means a lot of early mornings, but it is lovely when people come in to see us and say how much they like what we’re selling, or when you’re in a restaurant or shop and see one of our beautiful displays. It gives you a real sense of pride.”



Clockwise from Top Left: Dried flowers are back in vogue, Brady Lavender, Basket ware is selling well, Seasonal sundries in the shop entrance.

Well-seasoned vs fresh faced: the market

“ Because I spent time working away from the market, I really appreciate the informal and relaxed atmosphere

We get a glimpse of the market through the eyes of one of our most seasoned market employees, Nick Sharma, who works at Mushroom Man on the Fruit & Veg Market.



How long have you worked in the market?

It is hard to believe, but I started working at New Covent Garden Market almost 35 years ago.

What did you start off doing?

My first job was in the warehouse at a fruit and veg trader called Pavitt, Steward & Calder. I worked my way up from the shop floor, doing invoicing and then accounts, for about 11 years. Unfortunately, the company went into liquidation, but I soon found alternative employment at Morning Fresh with the late Phil Dean, who later founded Mushroom Man. I was at Morning Fresh for about five years but sadly, they too went into liquidation.

I then found alternative employment for MG & Sons Ltd and was there for about a year but I was made redundant – they had a restructure and it was LIFO – last in, first out! I became despondent as a result of the liquidations and redundancies, so decided to leave the market and retrained as a computer engineer for PC World.

After a few years, Phil Dean (my ex-boss from Morning Fresh), approached me and said his accountant at Mushroom Man was retiring and asked if I would consider coming

back to the market, so I did! That was about 10 years ago. Sadly, Phil Dean took his own life in 2013 but Mushroom Man has continued to thrive and flourish very well under our existing director, Michael Hyams.

What's your earliest memory about the market?

When I started on the market back in the 1980s, there was a very cohesive community. Everyone knew everyone else. You knew about each other's business, but you also knew about each other's personal lives. People were eager to help if you had any problems; it was like being part of a family.

These days, people are much more focused on the success of their own business so we've lost a bit of the community spirit. But there are quite a few traders who have been here for a similar length of time to me, 20 or 30 years or more, who still have a real bond.

What is your favourite thing about the market?

Because I spent time working away from the market in a pressurised job, as a computer engineer, I really appreciate the relaxed, informal atmosphere in the market. It's not so formal or stuffy, less pressurised and no long, unsociable hours.

There's a real family environment at Mushroom Man. There are eight of us in total, so we're relatively smaller than some other businesses on the market, but it's a team effort and we work really well together. We're like a football team!

If you could be remembered for one thing, what would it be?

I'd like to be remembered for being helpful, as a friendly, cheery face around the market.

If you could be any mushroom, what would you be and why?

I'd be a wild mushroom, like Girolles – they're colourful, they've got more texture and flavour than a cultivated mushroom, and they're a bit exotic!

through two different lenses



We're out on the market at least once a week, looking for inspiration

We get a glimpse of the market through the eyes of a fresher-faced tenant, Keziah Brown, age 30, Director at Heaps + Stacks in the Food Exchange.

Tell us about Heaps + Stacks – what does a creative events planning agency do?

We create and deliver interactive events, where we do everything from coming up with the creative ideas to building the set and arranging the catering, as well as managing the event on the day.

For example, last week we launched a collaboration between the TV presenter Stacey Solomon and Primark. This included a panel discussion about body confidence, ceramics workshops where we made pottery in the female form, and a photography studio where people could use glitter to make a feature of parts of their body they might usually hide, such as stretch marks or birth marks.

Our work is incredibly varied, depending on the client and their goals.

How long have you been based at the market?

The business has been running for four years but we've only been based at the Food Exchange since August 2018. Before that, we were just down the road in Battersea in an industrial unit.

How do you work with other businesses that are based here at the market?

We're out on the market at least once a week, seeing what produce the traders have that we can use for our events. At the Primark event, we had a room decorated with lavender and pampas grass from the Flower Market, and Arnott & Mason supplied us with plants for a plant potting workshop that we ran recently for Uniqlo. For Halloween, we featured pumpkins at some of our events. We're often out on the market looking for inspiration!

What's your favourite thing about the market?

We love being at New Covent Garden Market. Whenever someone new joins the team, they're so excited about going down to the market and seeing all the fresh produce. Plus the Food Exchange is a great building with a lot of space, considering how close we are to central London. It's so quick and easy to get to Soho and other places where we hold our events.

If you could be remembered for one thing, what would it be?

Wow, that's a big question! There are loads of event agencies out there, but they're often doing things that

have been done a million times before. I'd like to be remembered for curating totally unique and beautiful experiences.

If you could be any fruit, vegetable or flower, what would you be and why?

Last year, I was on holiday in Thailand with a group of eight friends and one of them asked us all what our favourite flower was. I said Birds of Paradise, just for fun. She then got them all tattooed on her hip... so now I have to say that's my favourite!

We'd love to hear from you

What did you think of this issue of Market Times?
It would be great to get your feedback.

If there's something you'd like to share or see
featured in our next quarterly newsletter,
just let us know.
It's your news and your stories.

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Our photographers: Clive Boursell, Tom Moggach, Tom Carter, Kris Humphreys, Lara Arnott Photography, Michelle Garrett, Nicola Kiess



Above: Silk flowers on sale at Lavenders of Covent Garden