

PRESS RELEASE - for immediate release.

The Source shines a light on the South West's food-to-go opportunity

Ahead of its return to Westpoint, Exeter on Tuesday 2 and Wednesday 3 February 2027, The Source trade show is putting a spotlight on one of the food and drink industry's fastest-growing categories: food-to-go.

The Source already brings together an exceptional mix of producers, catering equipment specialists and foodservice suppliers. For 2027, the show will shine a light on how many of those businesses can help hospitality, retail, forecourt and convenience buyers develop this increasingly important part of their offer.

Why now?

Lumina Intelligence forecasts that the UK food-to-go market will reach **£24.9 billion in 2026**, growing by 3.4% year on year and outperforming the wider eating-out market.[1] IGD, using its own market forecast, expects food-to-go to reach £27.9 billion in 2026 and £35 billion by 2031.[2]

More significant than the headline numbers is what is driving the market. Lumina says growth is increasingly led by higher spend per visit, premium add-ons and sharper propositions, rather than rapid outlet expansion.[1] Its 2026 reporting also says quality has overtaken value as the most important purchase driver, reflecting demand for better ingredients, health credentials and trusted brands.[3]

Why it fits the South West

Much of the national conversation about food-to-go focuses on commuter hubs and city centres. While that is part of the picture, the South West has its own compelling story, built around travel routes, tourism, independent retail, farm shops, cafés, forecourts, visitor attractions and quality regional produce.

- **Forecourts and travel corridors.** Forecourts account for 18.3% of UK convenience sales, while Lumina reports that 69% of forecourt purchases are unplanned. The South West's road-trip and staycation routes, including the A30, A38 and M5, give suppliers and operators a distinctive food-to-go opportunity.[4]
- **Farm shops, delis and independent retail.** These outlets are an important route to market for small, quality-led producers and are well placed to offer distinctive regional products in convenient formats.
- **Convenience, cafés and visitor destinations.** Across the region, businesses serving residents and visitors alike need products that combine convenience with quality, provenance and strong presentation.

In other words: the categories fueling the national food-to-go opportunity are ones the South West already does well. The Source is ideally placed to help buyers discover high-quality products, innovative suppliers and fresh ideas from across the region.

“Food-to-go is no longer defined purely by commuter hubs and city centres,” said Mike Anderson, Managing Director of Hale Events.

“Across the South West, farm shops, forecourts, convenience stores, cafés, visitor attractions and hospitality businesses are all looking for high-quality products that can be enjoyed on the move.

“The Source already attracts many of the producers, suppliers and equipment companies serving this market. By highlighting the food-to-go opportunity, we can help buyers discover relevant products and connect exhibitors with businesses looking to develop this side of their offer.”

What to expect at the 2027 show

Food-to-go opportunities will be highlighted through The Source's pre-show marketing, editorial content and exhibitor promotion, drawing attention to businesses across bakery, deli, dairy, drinks, packaging and catering equipment whose products and services are suited to forecourt, farm shop, café, visitor attraction and convenience counters.

For buyers developing a food-to-go offer, the campaign will make it easier to identify relevant products, suppliers and ideas before visiting the show. For exhibitors already serving the market, or considering doing so, it will highlight their relevance to buyers actively looking for food-to-go solutions.

The Source returns to Westpoint, Exeter on Tuesday 2 and Wednesday 3 February 2027. Visit thesourcetradeshow.co.uk for more information.

ENDS

Notes to editors

The figures from Lumina Intelligence and IGD are separate market forecasts produced using their respective methodologies; they should not be combined.

[1] Lumina Intelligence, “UK Food-to-Go Market Size, Growth and Share Statistics 2026”, forecasting a £24.9bn market in 2026, up 3.4% year on year. [View source](#)

[2] IGD, “How the food-to-go market will evolve to 2031”, forecasting £27.9bn in 2026 and £35bn by 2031. [View source](#)

[3] Catering Insight, reporting findings from Lumina Intelligence’s UK Food-to-Go Market Report 2026, including the increased importance of quality as a purchase driver. [View source](#)

[4] Lumina Intelligence, “UK Forecourt Market 2025: EV Growth & Retail Shift”, reporting that forecourts account for 18.3% of UK convenience sales and that 69% of purchases are unplanned. [View source](#)

Hale Events are a team of professionals who organise specialist exhibitions and trade shows across the South West. Currently they organise [the Source trade show](#), the [Source Roadshow](#), and [Expowest Cornwall](#). They also deliver the bi-weekly South West hospitality & catering enewsletter, [Rise & Shine](#).



2 - 3 February 2027 Exeter
thesourcetradeshow.co.uk
Inspiration & opportunity on a plate

For more information about Hale Events or any of their shows, please contact Mike Anderson on 01934 733433 or mike.anderson@hale-events.com. Details about all their shows can be found at www.hale-events.com.

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