

# Northern Ireland

Bringing world-class food to your table



Northern  
Ireland

# Smart food ideas from Northern Ireland's nimble and innovation-led producers

The Caterer spoke to Michelle Charrington and Drew McIvor, business development directors with Invest NI's Food & Drink Division, to discover why you should explore what Northern Ireland's food and beverage producers have to offer



**“What we offer caterers is a comprehensive understanding of the products and capabilities of Northern Ireland producers”**

**Michelle Charrington**

Innovation in food and beverages is essential if foodservice businesses are to meet the challenge of growing competition and achieving profitable growth. If you are seeking an easily accessible source of innovative products that also combine consistently high quality and value for money, you should explore what Northern Ireland has to offer.

Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI), the UK region's business development body, offers comprehensive support to manufacturers and to foodservice wholesalers and operators seeking smart ideas from experienced producers.

This support includes a team of four experienced business development directors. Michelle Charrington, who has been based in England for more than 20 years, says: “Our role is to work with Northern Ireland companies and buyers in Britain in building mutually beneficial and profitable business relationships.

“What we offer caterers in Britain is a comprehensive understanding of the products, capacity and capabilities of around 400 Northern Ireland producers. We have developed close working relationships with foodservice buyers in

Britain and are able to pinpoint how our companies can help them to meet their business objectives with outstanding products.

Among the many benefits of working with our companies is their flexibility and versatility. They are fully accredited and are geared to adapt to the specific needs of individual customers in terms of original products and speed of response. We work to help buyers identify opportunities in Northern Ireland through a

successful programme of networking events, factory visits and ‘meet the buyer’ activities.

“We appreciate that caterers are operating in an intensely competitive business environment and are keen to develop long-term relationships with suppliers that will enable them to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

“We have already assisted many to identify opportunities in Northern Ireland through a successful programme of networking events, visits to our companies and ‘meet the buyer’ activities.

“Another important aspect of our approach is support for companies to participate in major trade shows such as IFE and Lunch, both in London, and ScotHot in Glasgow. In addition, Invest NI organises presentations at international events including Sial, Anuga, Hotel China and Gulfood.”

Drew McIvor emphasises: “Potential customers can count on Northern Ireland to deliver innovative, creative solutions as well as quality, which has been proven through strong results in the Great Taste Awards and Quality Food Awards.

“The manufacturing capability of our



**“We are likely to have original products to help freshen up your portfolio or menu”**

**Drew McIvor**

wide network of food and drink manufacturers means that Northern Ireland can satisfy customer needs across many chilled and ambient categories, as well as delivering volume requirements.

“So, whether you're a national catering wholesaler or an independent premium hotel operator, we are likely to have original products to help freshen up your portfolio or menu,” he adds.

“Our success is based on the position of food and drink processing as a £5bn industry which is also our biggest manufacturer and leading exporter. For instance, more than 70% of output from our companies is currently sold to Britain and global markets.

“Food and drink companies in Northern Ireland are highly professional, especially in how they do business with existing and potential customers. They are commercially astute and have logistics arrangements to ensure products are delivered when required and as customers expect,” he adds.

## A taste of quality

Trade customers in Britain already purchase food and drink from Northern

bacon and lamb.

The creativity now underpinning the food and drink industry has won acclaim from top chefs, food stylists and restaurateurs in Britain, including Heston Blumenthal, Angela Hartnett, Mark Hix, Nigella Lawson, Terry Laybourne, James Martin and Cyrus Todiwala.

Many of the UK's most important processors are located in Northern Ireland. These include Moy Park, one of the world's top poultry businesses, and meat processors including Dunbia, Foyle Food Group and Linden Foods. Dale Farm Dairies, Northern Ireland's leading dairy producer, has significant processing operations in England and Scotland.

In addition, major international processors, such as Kerry Group, Glanbia, Lakeland, ABP and Dawn Meats have substantial operations in Northern Ireland.

Furthermore, all food and drink in Northern Ireland is processed in modern, fully accredited factories.

The region is also home to the leading international food safety organisation, the Institute of Global Food Security at Queen's University Belfast.

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# Good, clean, quality food from Northern Ireland

By Paula McIntyre

Paula McIntyre, one of the best-known chefs in the UK, is based in Northern Ireland, where she is a food writer, broadcaster and educator. She is a leading figure in slow food in the UK and has taken part in television and radio food programmes. She is a regular panellist on Jay Rayner's *Kitchen Cabinet* series on Radio 4, was a judge for four years on the Food and Farming Awards on BBC Radio 4's *Food Programme* and is a regular chef demonstrator at Borough Market in London.

"Northern Ireland epitomises clean, quality food. Our fish and meats, especially beef, mostly reared using grass-based systems, are showcased on menus throughout Britain, Ireland and other parts of Europe.

"I've worked with the products in restaurants and hotels and cookery demonstrations in Britain and Northern Ireland. I've used the foods to create richly flavoured, original and delicious dishes for diners. I appreciate just how great the food really is and the dedication of the farmers and processors to excellence.

"Food remains a serious business in Northern Ireland. It's a highly valued and respected industry and is still our biggest manufacturer, one which contributes upwards of £5bn to the economy annually and is now a major supplier to foodservice operations, including high-end restaurants and hotels and multiple retailers across Britain.

"Beef, poultry and dairy are the region's three most successful food categories and include industry leaders such as poultry processor Moy Park, top UK beef processors Foyle Food Group, Dunbia and Linden as well as Dale Farm, the biggest producer of dairy products, and Lac Patrick. "The premium meats, beef, poultry, pork and lamb have flavour, full traceability and provenance from farms operating to the highest hygiene and animal welfare standards.

"This is why many of the top chefs in Britain regularly look to Northern Ireland for a broad range of quality ingredients, including plants grown in the region's fertile soils. Traditional vegetables,

especially potatoes and vegetables, are to be found with more exotics plants including Japanese wasabi rhizomes and shiitake mushrooms.

"The quality, innovation and variety of local food and drink supports a vibrant hospitality sector, which has seen significant investment in new hotels and restaurants. Chefs and restaurateurs work alongside food companies in creating original products and dishes. Hastings Hotels, the leading hospitality group led by Howard Hastings, majors on local food and drink, and the group recently opened the Grand Central Hotel, the biggest in Belfast.

"One food that sums up Northern Ireland is the soda farl, a traditional griddle bread. It's indigenous to Northern Ireland and has history, a story and is also a thing of great taste.

"Celebrity chef Mark Hix, for instance, produces a guanciale bacon soda. The guanciale is from Hannan Meats, a business owned by Peter Hannan, which has twice won the UK Great Taste supreme awards and is the most successful ever in this prestigious competition. What better story of our recent food evolution? A traditional bread, an innovative value-added charcuterie product and an award-winning English uber-chef all coming together in one delicious and simple dish.

"Artisan food production is relatively new in Northern Ireland, but it's a fast growing and highly innovative sector. Abernethy butter, for instance, is stocked in delis and used by many top chefs, including Marcus Waring, Heston Blumenthal and food writer Nigella Lawson.

The quality of our milk and cream also brings a soft and deliciously velvety texture to artisan ice cream and gelato from Quinn's Gelato. A collaboration between Clondeboye Estate and Morelli's ice cream resulted in triumph in this year's Irish Food Awards for a strawberry frozen yoghurt, featuring milk from Lady Dufferin's own pedigree herds of Holstein and Jersey cows.

Northern Ireland also brings heritage and skill to the creation of the 'daily cuppa'. Thompson's have been blending tea in Belfast for over 120 years. The company's mission is simply to create the 'perfect



Paula McIntyre

everyday cuppa'. A 3-star Great Taste accolade for Thompson's Special Everyday Blend suggests that they have succeeded. Suki tea, meanwhile, sustains a new generation of loose-leaf tea drinkers. One of only a few UK blenders to achieve triple certification (Fair Trade, organic and Rainforest Alliance), there's a tea for every occasion, from the iconic Belfast Brew to award-winning Apple Loves Mint and new Japanese Matcha. Boutique roaster Johnson's coffee is passionate about its

Bellagio professional coffee beans. Dedicated to supplying only the finest quality coffee, Johnson's are also a sought-after supplier of customised own-label blends.

"Other thriving sectors in Northern Ireland now include charcuterie, craft beer, cider and spirits. As well as being home to the world's oldest licensed whiskey distillery, Old Bushmills, Northern Ireland now distils gins, including award-winners such as Jawbox, Shortcross, Echlinville

and Boatyard.

"Craft vodka and rum are also being distilled and cider processed using Bramley apples, another local product with EU PGI status. Furthermore, the region offers an impressive variety of ales, beers and stouts from 40 craft breweries.

"What this all adds up to is Northern Ireland being a source of the greatest variety of delicious, wholesome, original and safe food and drink.



Northern Ireland has a proud heritage of farming and fishing, resulting in an abundance of fabulous produce. Our success as the region's leading hospitality business owes much to our ability to source original food and drink with outstanding flavours from a network of quality conscious and customer-led local suppliers.

Howard Hastings,  
chief executive  
Hastings Hotels Group

## Original food-to-go options from Around Noon

Around Noon, a UK leader in innovative food-to-go, supplies caterers, especially coffee shops, convenience stores and corporate clients through out Britain, with fresh sandwiches and other lunch foods from its modern production plant at Slough in Berkshire.

The business, which has its headquarters in Newry, county Down, has been a market leader in food on-the-go on the island for more than a decade. It now supplies a wide range of customers in many parts of England, Wales and Scotland and employs around 330 people.

Among its successful and eclectic range of lunch options is its Scribbles sandwiches, offering original flavours. Around Noon's chief executive Gareth Chambers describes Scribbles as "fine food with attitude".

"Our strategic focus is on developing innovative, quality and delicious foods for people on the move, especially at lunchtime," he says.

"We are now offering a new hospitality option of a comprehensive range of high-end platters of gourmet foods, especially for corporate clients, a market we are targeting for faster growth. These platters can be adapted to meet the specific food needs of an individual client because we have our own team of chefs and a strong customer focus."

"We are ideally positioned in Slough at the centre of an extensive transport network. This helps us to service existing and potential customers quickly with fresh foods and to respond fast to their specific requirements."



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## Buchanans, the pulse of natural wholefoods



Over 60% of the natural wholefoods produced by Buchanans, including pulses, dried fruits, nuts and seeds, are sourced and supplied to foodservice customers including chefs and caterers throughout Britain.

The company, based in Carrickfergus in County Antrim, has developed over more than a decade supplying the market in Britain.

The family-owned company has been sourcing and supplying natural whole foods from around the world since 1871. Buchanans, which has Salsa accreditation, has a comprehensive portfolio of products including on-trend chia seeds, goji berries and quinoa.

In addition to its wholefood health-conscious customers, Buchanans has become a popular choice for home bakers influenced by the success of cookery programmes such as *The Great British Bake Off*.

Managing director Jonathan McVeigh says the company is continuing to experience growth in foodservice and has been encouraged to extend its operations.

"We're investing over £700,000 in an additional new warehouse for the extra storage and processing we need to meet the demand for our quality products, especially in Britain," McVeigh says.

"The significant investment will enable us to expand our portfolio of valued customers."

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## Dale Farm

Quality, innovation, service and scale – these are the key ingredients of dairy co-operative Dale Farm's foodservice offering.

As the largest UK farmer-owned dairy co-operative, Dale Farm's network of 1,300 farmers provide it with the highest quality, Red Tractor-approved milk, from which its extensive dairy range is developed.

Dale Farm's award-winning dairy products and brands, including Loseley, Fivemiletown, Rowan Glen, Spelga, Dromona and Mullins, are sold in over 45 countries across the globe.

As well as its strength in retail, Dale Farm has a major presence in the foodservice industry, remaining a provider of choice to food producers and wholesalers across the UK and beyond.

Dale Farm's foodservice products supplied under both branded and own label lines encompass every dairy need, including milk, cream, cheese, butter, dairy spreads, yogurt, ice-cream and desserts.

With manufacturing sites across the UK, Dale Farm has the ability to offer quality, scale, flexibility and innovation to meet the foodservice sector needs. Common throughout all its products is Dale Farm's commitment to consistently high standards – starting at farm level and continuing throughout the production process.

Every Dale Farm farmer is accredited by Red Tractor – a globally respected seal of approval that ensures the highest standards of animal welfare, milk quality, environmental care and traceability.

The co-operative maintains excellence at its production facilities and is leading the way in sustainable dairy production – having developed one of the world's



"Northern Ireland food and drink producers, including smaller companies, are massively engaged in the British market and especially in the Quality Food Awards. They benefit enormously from the brilliant support from Invest NI to help them identify and develop opportunities in both foodservice and retail. "I have been hugely impressed by the innovation and commitment demonstrated by smaller Northern Ireland food and drink companies, in particular in Britain. They carry forward the close



and responsive relationships they have in foodservice and retail in Northern Ireland to the way they do business in Britain.

"Invest NI, for example, was a valued partner in our Retail Industry Awards study tour, which took a delegation of retailers there to see just how closely and successfully companies there work with customers to ensure they satisfy their individual market requirements."

**Helen Lyons, publishing director, Quality Food Awards and Retail Industry Awards**

largest solar dairy farms to power its cheese plant in Northern Ireland.

Innovation and ongoing investment into NPD remains core to Dale Farm's continued success, ensuring its brands and products continue to evolve alongside the ever-changing needs of consumers.

Dale Farm is always keen to work with its customers on a partnership basis, regularly collaborating with foodservice customers to create bespoke lines or ranges that best meet their needs.

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**To find out more about how you can benefit from Dale Farm's quality, innovation and scale, contact:**  
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"We are now introducing the new product alongside our successful range of gluten-free thick and cocktail pork sausages to our foodservice and retail customers in Britain as well as in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland."

Doherty's has been a leading supplier of gluten-free Irish pork sausages to wholesaler Central Foods in Northampton over the past five years.

Doherty's also offers other premium gluten-free products, such as beef burgers and meatballs.

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## Foyle Foods, a major supplier of premium grass-based steak



Foyle Food Group is a major processor and supplier of premium British and Irish beef steak and other meat products to many of Britain's leading restaurants and hotels, as well as its best-known fast-food outlets.

The company, headquartered at Omagh, includes Fairfax Meadow among its major customers in foodservice and it supplies Miller and Carter with dry-aged premium British and Irish steak cuts throughout its extensive network of steakhouses in Britain.

Premium beef from Foyle Food Group, from its established and trusted farm supply chain for foodservice in Britain, includes dry-aged sirloin, rib-eye, fillet and rump.

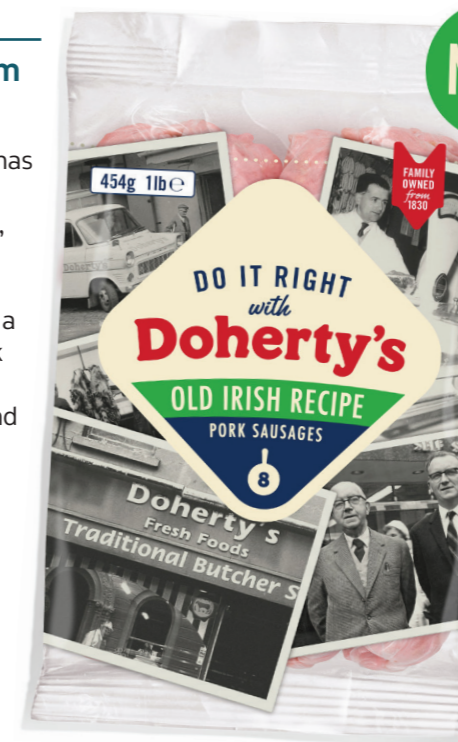
Paul Armstrong, commercial director at Foyle Food Group, says: "Our clients know they can count on us for superb quality beef. Virtually all the animals processed by us are reared on grass-based systems and are tender, rich in flavour and fully traceable. Farmers

## Doherty's - new flavours from old Irish recipe sausages

An Old Irish Recipe Irish Pork Sausage has just been launched by Doherty's, a leading supplier to hotels, restaurants, bars and canteens in Britain. The new product is a response by the family-owned and managed food business to a developing market trend towards thick and flavour-packed pork sausages.

"We've been producing sausages and other meat products since the 1830s and have a wealth of experience and knowledge in developing such products," says Brian McQuaid, Doherty's sales manager.

"We've found the recipe for the sausage, which has a pork content of 60% and a succulent texture, in our archives and it has proved a very popular sausage in taste tests.



**NEW**

supplying Foyle Foods operate to environmental best practice and the highest hygiene and animal welfare standards. Our beef is also sourced from mostly continental and traditional breeds, such as Aberdeen Angus and Hereford.

"To reflect our commitment to sustainability, we have created seals of approval – Brio and Pure Life – which are independently audited and monitored. Some of our brands have been awarded these seals of approval to demonstrate that best practice has been observed when producing our products."

The company, among the biggest and most successful meat processors in the UK, sells 70% of its premium British and Irish beef in this market and the remainder in export markets in Europe, Canada, Hong Kong and other parts of Asia. It employs 1,200 people.

In 2016, the company enhanced its business service to caterers in Britain through the establishment of Foyle Ingredients in Omagh, county Tyrone.

"Through Foyle Ingredients we offer caterers a broad range of prepared meats, such as sliced, diced and minced steak and a full range of burgers. We now offer caterers a comprehensive portfolio, from fine dining steaks to burgers for the fast food industry," he adds.

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### Traditional and modern options from Irwin's Bakery

Customers at one of the UK's biggest pub chains are enjoying traditional bread from Irwin's Bakery, Northern Ireland's largest independent bakery.

Irwin's, which is based at Craigavon in county Armagh, supplies Northern Ireland's iconic potato bread to JD Wetherspoon for its traditional breakfasts. In addition, the family-owned and managed bakery, which was established in 1912, supplies muffins to Delice de France for a wide range of customers, including cafés and other catering outlets across Britain.



Irwin's Bakery

John Hopkins, marketing director at Irwin's Bakery, says foodservice is an important and developing business sector for the company, which has won a host of awards for quality and innovative produce, including Great Taste Awards.

"We are focusing resources on what is a significant part of our business. It's great to be able to take one of the most traditional and outstandingly tasty breads, potato bread, to such a successful client as JD Wetherspoon.

"It's a bread we've been baking for generations and continues to be among the most popular and successful in our comprehensive portfolio of breads, morning goods, cakes and biscuits. Indeed, we offer existing and potential clients an extensive range of quality products," he adds.

"Among a number of projects in the pipeline is a new 'food-to-go' concept, which looks like becoming an exciting part of our business, especially in Britain. It's a hugely important market for the company and one in which sales of our products are growing strongly," continues Mr Hopkins.

The foodservice range also includes other traditional Northern Irish products such as soda bread along with pancakes, fruit breads, rolls, and both plain and wholemeal sandwich breads.

Irwin's Bakery has also pioneered the development of healthier breads, including the 'Better You' low-calorie white and wholemeal pan breads.

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### Spirited growth for Northern Irish Jawbox gin in Britain

Northern Ireland's award-winning Jawbox Small Batch gin is now available in many of the top hotels, bars and cocktail lounges throughout Britain. Prestigious clients serving this classic London dry gin include London's Holborn Dining Rooms and Milk and Honey, the classy cocktail bar in the heart of Soho.

Gerry White founded Jawbox in 2016, and it is the first gin to be launched in Belfast in more than a century. He describes Britain as the small batch producer's biggest and most successful marketplace to date. "We've now established an extensive distribution network throughout Britain and sales are growing strongly," he says.

"While business there is exceeding all our targets, we still see substantial scope for even faster growth of all our gins," he adds.

In addition to the original classic gin introduced in 2016, Jawbox has just launched two gin-based liqueurs – Pineapple and Ginger and Rhubarb and Ginger.

"The new liqueurs are another option for the cocktail sector, and both are attracting significant interest from existing clients as well as other potential customers we are targeting," White continues.

Jawbox Small Batch gin (ABV 43%) is distilled in Northern Ireland and is infused with 11 distinctive botanicals, including local heather from the Black Mountain, which overlooks Belfast.

As well as sales in the UK and Ireland, Jawbox is developing international



"It's our experience that Northern Ireland companies are focused on Great Britain and quick to respond effectively to new business opportunities they identify here. They are proactive, professional, flexible and customer-focused. "A number of food manufacturers in Northern Ireland are active members of the British Frozen Food Federation and regularly support our initiatives, such as our stand at SIAL in Paris as well



as our best practice workshops and annual conference. "As a result, Northern Ireland companies are highly valued within the Federation. We enjoy excellent relationships with manufacturers of frozen, chilled and ambient products throughout Northern Ireland."  
**John Hyman, chief executive, British Frozen Food Federation**

markets and recently launched in Sweden. The gin is also on sale in other parts of Europe as well as Australia, and is set to be launched in the US in early 2019.

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### Dairy product excellence from LacPatrick



LacPatrick, one of Northern Ireland's leading dairy businesses, has seen significant growth in sales of bulk butter and buttermilk to foodservice clients in Britain.

Since last year's Brexit referendum, LacPatrick's sales in Britain have increased by as much as 25%.

Based near Coleraine in County Derry, LacPatrick Dairies, a dairy co-operative, sources grass-fed milk from its own network of almost 1,000 farmers, 700 of

whom are in Northern Ireland. LacPatrick has recently agreed on a merger with the much larger Lakeland Dairies, one of Ireland's biggest dairy businesses.

The cross-border farmer-owned co-operative provides Irish bulk butter to manufacturers as well as leading hotels and restaurants throughout the UK. Buttermilk is destined for bakeries in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Marketing and business development manager Brendan Lappin says LacPatrick is experiencing growth from existing foodservice clients seeking quality Northern Irish dairy products. "Our butter has a strong image because Northern Ireland is seen as being a source of green and clean dairy products," he says.

"We source milk from our own dairy farmers, which means clients can count on complete traceability, heritage and provenance. Our farmers all operate to the highest hygiene and animal welfare standards.

"And our plant, where we produce butter, buttermilk and cream, is among the UK dairy industry's most modern and is highly automated.

"The strength of our commitment to the local environment is also seen in our advanced anaerobic digester, which substantially reduces waste and generates electricity for our operations at Ballyrashane, near Coleraine.

"In addition, the short sea journey from Northern Ireland to most parts of Britain means we can supply fresh butter and buttermilk quickly for clients," adds Lappin.

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### Pure Roast Coffee - a specialist in quality coffee



Pure Roast Coffee, the Northern Ireland premium coffee roaster and a major supplier of single estate coffee beans, ground coffee and easy-serve pods to hotels, restaurants, cafes and machine manufacturers throughout Great Britain, has recently expanded its catalogue of specialist coffees. Ninety eight per cent of the roaster's business is with foodservice in Britain.

Based at Lisburn in Northern Ireland and with a distribution centre in Bolton, Pure Roast Coffee showcased its commitment to high-end coffee by winning a coveted three gold stars in this year's Great Taste Award for its Ethiopian Duromina Heirloom variety. The company has won almost 20 Great Taste Awards.

The roaster has just added a range of specialist coffees, including two prized organic varieties – a Washed Ethiopian Duromina and a Guatemalan Dinamica, as well as a Costa Rican Geisha and a Washed Ethiopian Nano Challa.

Martin Symington, Pure Roast Coffee's managing director, explains: "The new single estate coffees are a response to the

growing demand from our existing foodservice customers for premium products with distinctively different flavours. We've used our extensive network of growers to come up with some exceptional coffees, a great example of our ability to respond quickly and effectively to requests from customers."

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### Shortcross premium gin takes off in Britain

Shortcross, Northern Ireland's original craft gin, is now readily available in both foodservice and retail in Britain. The gin is also on sale in airports throughout the UK as a result of the Northern Ireland company's deal with the World Duty Free Group.

Shortcross, a popular choice in cocktail bars, especially in London, counts among its key customers the Bloomsbury Hotel and Dickie's Bar at Corrigan's Mayfair, as well as high-end hotels, restaurants and bars in other parts of Britain.

The distillery was launched in 2012 by husband and wife team Fiona and David Boyd-Armstrong at Crossgar in county Down. It was the first gin to be distilled in Northern Ireland in over a century and is located on the extensive Rademon family estate, which also provides the unique botanicals for the gin, including wild clover, elderflower, elderberries and fresh apple. These are harvested from the historic estate's walled garden and combined and distilled with water drawn freshly from its well to produce the small batch gin. These homegrown, indigenous



botanicals are the key to the unique aroma and flavour profile of Shortcross.

Fiona Boyd-Armstrong says Britain has become a "vitally important market for Shortcross" and one which is "continuing to grow strongly".

"We are building a significant presence there, particularly in foodservice and especially in premium cocktail lounges," she adds.

The distillery, which includes a modern visitor centre on the estate, has also developed business with retailers such as Fortnum & Mason in London, Laithwaite's Wine and the Good Spirits Company in Scotland.

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### Irish processed potatoes from Wilson's Country popular in Britain

Wilson's Country, Northern Ireland's leading potato packer and processor, supplies a range of peeled, chipped, diced and sliced products to distributors in Britain. The company operates from a state-of-the-art processing plant in Craigavon, County Armagh, and sends around 40% of its output to catering operations across the British Isles.

Angus Wilson, who founded the business in 1986 and is now chief executive, says foodservice sales in Britain have been developing recently and are continuing to grow.

"Britain has become an important marketplace, especially for our Irish processed potatoes, and it's a market that we are keen to develop," he adds.

"Our extensive investment in new production systems and cold stores enables us to respond quickly to opportunities developing there."

Formed in 1986 and currently employing around 100 people, the company has geared up for growth in Britain with the installation of new packaging lines and the revamping of its cold stores on the processing site, where it has been based since 2005.

In addition to a comprehensive portfolio of peeled, diced and cooked potatoes, Wilson's has a range of value-added and ready to cook products,

including fresh peeled potatoes, fresh chips, garlic and herb diced potatoes, and spicy wedges, all in smaller retail packs under the quirky 'You Say Potato' brand.

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### New dairy-free products from market leader Mash Direct

Mash Direct, the UK leader of gluten-free convenient vegetable side dishes, is going from strength to strength with the launch of its new dairy-free range, as well as leading the way in the foodservice and food manufacturing sectors in Britain.

Based on the family farm in Comber, county Down, Mash Direct has invested considerable effort to enhance its success in the chilled product sector as well as specialising in bespoke solutions to meet the specific requirements of individual clients, spanning from the health service to pub chains and restaurants.

In 2013, Mash Direct became 100% gluten-free in response to the rise of gluten intolerances across the UK. Now, with the demand for dairy-free products, Mash Direct is taking the lead in the food industry and creating a range of

dairy-free potato and vegetable products, due to go on sale this autumn.

The recipes have been carefully crafted in the kitchen and include mashed potato, root veg and sprouting broccoli and potato crush, all with no dairy, yet still replicating the taste and texture of homemade food.

Mash Direct is very adaptable and can meet needs when it comes to unique and varied requirements within the foodservice and food manufacturing sectors. The company's ability and willingness to work with and produce bespoke recipes for each individual customer is unparalleled in the marketplace and it can offer a comprehensive range, including individual portions and gastronomic trays, both chilled and frozen.

As a family business, the personal touch is very important to Mash Direct and its customers. This passion has led to exceptional service levels and innovation, which sets it apart in the marketplace. Mash Direct has received more than 152 accolades as a testament to its success, including quality, farming, sustainability, business and innovation awards.

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### Rule of Crumb's new cheesy garlic bread



Rule of Crumb, a leader in free-from foods, has just launched an innovative cheesy garlic bread that is both gluten and dairy-free for foodservice clients especially in Great Britain.

The new garlic bread joins an extensive portfolio of products that have won a host of awards in free-from competitions in Britain and Ireland over the past five years.

Colm McLornan, founder and managing director of Rule of Crumb, which is based in Antrim, says the new garlic bread also features innovative packaging which enables it to be cooked quickly from frozen.

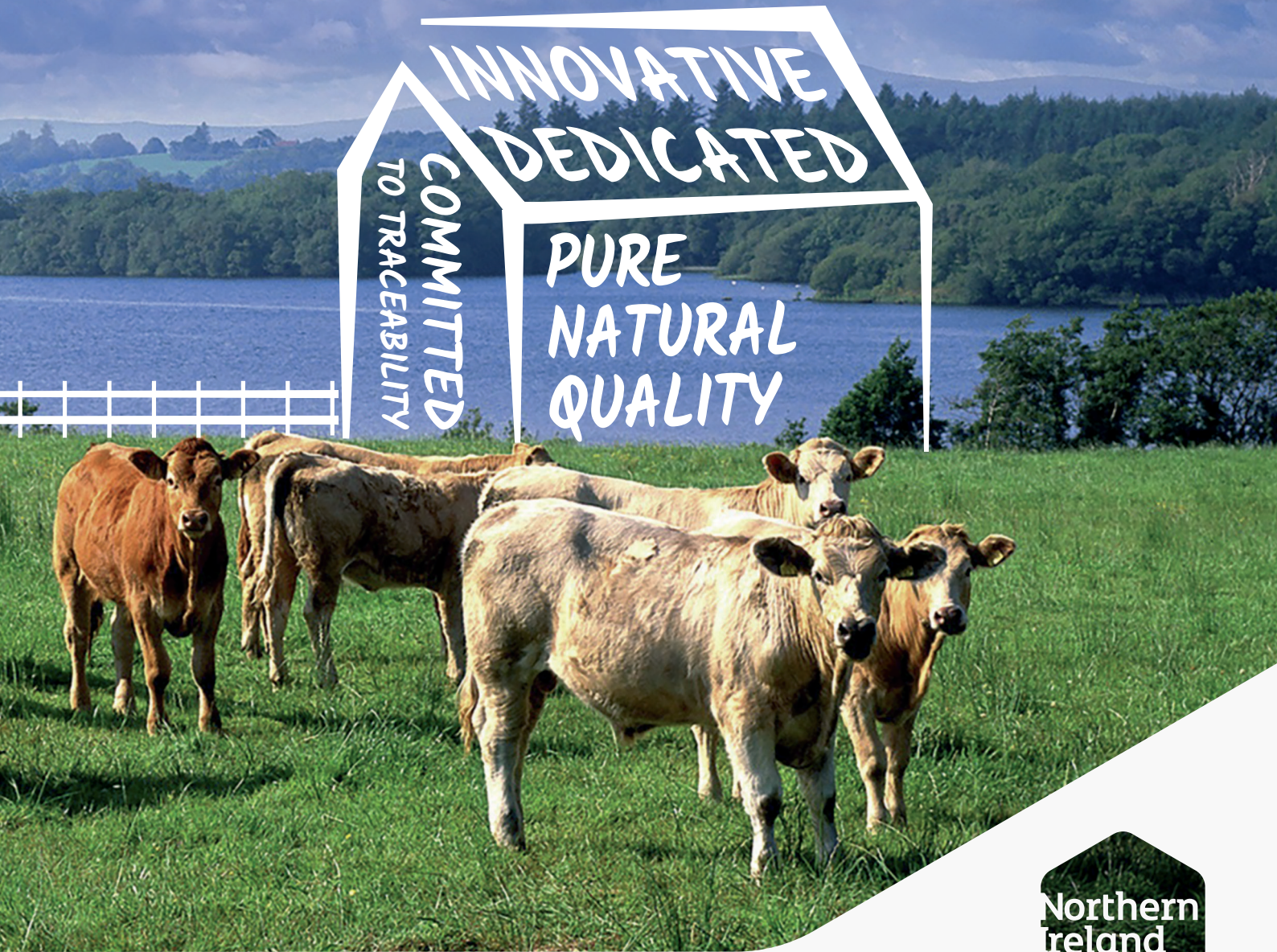
"We've come up with individual wrapping, which makes cooking easier and also eliminates waste. It's an ideal product for caterers and is a further example of our strategic focus on free-from foods with packaging to reduce waste," McLornan says.

The company provides a broad range of free-from foods, such as breaded chicken Kiev's, breaded cod fillets and goujons, part-baked breads, including muffins and rolls, and chocolate profiteroles, which are both gluten-free and dairy-free. It delivers its products to Sterling Foodservice and other distributors in Britain for hotels, restaurants and retailers.

Rule of Crumb was established in 2013 by McLornan and business partner Claire Hunter, both successful hoteliers, who saw a void in the gluten-free supply chain to restaurants and other hospitality establishments.

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