

The first ray of sustainable fish

Offering choice to environmentally aware shoppers sees benefits. By **Sacha Delfosse**.

First Ray supplies its range of Fish 4 Ever products to the grocery channel, which includes sardines, tuna, salmon, herrings, mackerel and anchovies.

“The Fish 4 Ever range is very extensive and offers the aware shopper a sustainable choice across the different shopping budgets,” company co-founder, Sandy Abram, said.

This year the company plans to extend the quantity of its products that are made with spring water, and will also be adding some additional salmon lines to the range.

Fish 4 Ever’s target markets are smart and aware consumers who are health and environmentally conscious, with an appreciation for quality while also being concerned about over fishing and supporting a sustainable option, Ms Abram explained.

Despite sustainability being very important to a lot of consumers, many experience two key issues when trying to purchase a sustainable tinned fish option.

“Firstly, they are confused as to which products on the market are truly sustainable as there are a lot of confusing marketing messages on the market,” Ms Abram said.

“Secondly, they experience difficulty in finding sustainable options as currently our two major retailers don’t have a sustainable tinned fish range.”

Ms Abram believes consumers are looking for retailers to take the lead and make sustainable tinned fish products available to them.

“However we have found that the independent stores with a gourmet and high quality focus have been most proactive and successful in ranging sustainable options within their tinned fish category,” she said.

Sustainable products do cost considerably more than the current unsustainable products available on the market, however retailers can market the sustainable factor to differentiate themselves in the market.

“Supporting a sustainable tinned fish range really gives retailers the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the future of our marine environment, the health of our oceans, the health of their shoppers and their leadership in this area,” Ms Abram said.

The company is focused on working with retailers to help promote its range and drive sales, offering promotions on an individual store basis or throughout a whole chain.

“When we launched Fish 4 Ever we did a considerable amount of in-store tastings and found that it did help customers to appreciate the quality of the products,” Ms Abram explained.

“It was also a great opportunity to educate people about sustainability. With a product like Fish 4 Ever sales are achieved by consumers’ awareness of current fishing practices and their ability to choose a sustainable option.”

The Fish 4 Ever range has a very loyal following as there is very little to no direct competition with strong sales throughout the year, which increase during the warmer months, Ms Abram said.

“During this time, people are eating more lighter meals and salads which our Fish 4 Ever tinned fish products are perfect for.”

The company has also recently simplified its packaging to clearly show that all products are sustainably caught and allows customers the ability to read and learn more on the back.

“Our packaging is also very vibrant in colour which from a sales and marketing perspective ensures our tinned fish products stand out.”

