

foodservice

INSIGHTER

COMMERCIAL

MAKING
CHANGE
WORK
FOR YOU

Embracing & navigating
dynamic times



MAKING CHANGE WORK FOR YOU

Foodservice has always been a dynamic industry — changing to meet new dietary movements, adjusting to guest preferences, staying ahead of the latest food trends and so much more. But the last couple of years have been about surviving drastic, uncontrollable circumstances. Even now that it seems we’ve turned the corner on the pandemic, labor and supply issues present new challenges.

This latest installment of Foodservice Insider is all about recognizing those changes and illuminating ways to not only embrace them, but to make change work for you. The insights, recipes and products found in these pages focus on helping you do more with less, optimizing the staff you have and crafting menus that bring in new, loyal guests.

No matter what’s on the horizon, we’ve got your back.

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Be sure to look for the » symbol throughout this issue to explore clickable content available on the General Mills Foodservice website.

making made easy.

“ We make almost everything from scratch here, but Pillsbury™ biscuits are just so easy and turn out great every time. We don’t have to sacrifice quality and they give us more time to focus on other parts of our business. My customers would be shocked if they knew we didn’t make them from scratch! ”

MELISSA GRAVES
DONNA’S OLD TOWN CAFÉ



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6 MENU Must-Haves

The needs of today's menus have changed for *many* reasons. That means it's more crucial than ever to find hardworking, low-labor product and ingredient solutions that can be used across your menu. The recipes and insights listed here will help you reduce inventory, increase profit margins and ease back-of-house labor.

1 BREAKFAST SANDWICHES

These crowd-pleasers are extremely versatile, and as consumers continue to enjoy breakfast items throughout the day, they make perfect sense for most menus.

45% of consumers ranked breakfast sandwiches as one of their favorite breakfast items.¹

2 BURGERS (WITH ALTERNATE PROTEIN CHOICES)

There's nothing like a classic, customizable burger — and having different protein options such as turkey patties or plant-based choices allows you to appeal to more patrons.

79% of consumers eat burgers away from home at least once a month.²

3 SHAREABLE APPS AND SIDES

With safety concerns over sharing food on the decline, diners are ready to pass the plate and try new dishes.

21% of consumers plan to order more appetizers to share with a group in the wake of the pandemic.³

▲ Chorizo Chimichurri Waffle Burgers »

▲ Italian Pigs in a Blanket with Calabrian Chili Dipping Sauce »



◀ Huevos Rancheros Breakfast Sandwiches »

▼ Cornbread Salad with Apple Butter Vinaigrette »



4 SUPER SALADS

Salads offer many benefits to operators: they use lots of ingredients often already on hand, and they're seasonal and customizable. Plus, since they can be made with local ingredients, they deliver on the trend of farm-to-table eating.

96% of consumers say they feel locally-grown and produced food is the freshest, healthiest and most nutritious food available.⁴

5 PLANT-BASED CHOICES

Whether in salads or sandwiches, diners continue to look for and expect plant-forward options on menus.

*Plant-based foods in the U.S. are a \$7 billion market.*⁵



6 PIZZA AND PASTA

These items deliver on all kinds of consumer demands ranging from comfort classics to customizable choices.

83% of consumers say they eat pizza at least monthly.⁶



Find even more pizza and pasta inspiration on the next page!

▲ Tofu Breakfast Sandwiches »

▲ Gluten-Free Grilled Chicken Peanut Noodle Salad »

¹QSR Magazine, Sept., 2021

²Datassential Keynote Report: Burgers, 2021

³2021 Starters, Small Plates & Sides Consumer Trend Report

⁴Forager Survey, Oct., 2020

⁵Good Food Institute, 2021

⁶Foodservice Director, March 2022

MASHUPS

- Mini Brunch Pizzas »
- Taco Mac Hand Pies »



THE Power OF PIZZA AND PASTA

To say these categories are popular would be an understatement. A recent survey found 86% of participants eat pasta at least once a week,¹ and pizza can be found on nearly a third of all entrée menus in the U.S.² Aside from being very well liked, they're also easily adapted to meet all kinds of dietary needs and consumer preferences. Take a look at how pasta and pizza can help you deliver on these three popular dining trends.

COMFORT

- Pulled Pork Mac & Cheese Biscuit Sandwiches »
- Corny Deep Dish Pizza »



LIGHTER SIDE

- Chickpea Orzo »
- Bloody Mary Flatbread Pizzas »



¹National Pasta Association, 2022

²Pizza Trends, May NAF CMI Monthly Trends



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Tips to ENHANCE the FOODSERVICE EXPERIENCE

60%

of surveyed guests said they'd dine at a restaurant more frequently after a positive experience!

Eating in restaurants has always been about enjoying an experience that can't be replicated at home. Unfortunately, many uncontrollable factors have made it more difficult to deliver the consistency and value diners seek. Sonja Kehr is a corporate chef with General Mills, and she recently shared easy-to-implement ideas on enhancing the foodservice experience even during times of change.

TIP 1 CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Guests likely understand the struggles all businesses are facing. If you're experiencing longer wait times or other setbacks, it's always better to over-communicate those situations either in person, with in-store signage (at the host stand, cash register or on menus) or through social outlets. Simple messaging can go a long way in managing expectations and keeping things running smoothly.

39%
of surveyed guests said a good experience would encourage them to spend more!



73%
of guests who had a poor experience that was not resolved by restaurant management told their family and friends about it!

TIP 2 MAKE YOUR INVENTORY WORK HARDER

To deal with product unreliability, Chef Sonja Kehr recommends keeping more flexible ingredients on hand. She says it's all about being creative to deliver what customers expect. "If a shipment of a key item is missed, what else can be used that provides the same function? For example, instead of pie dough circles for empanadas, try thawing and rolling out a biscuit or using a puff-pastry sheet as casing. No mayo for a dressing? Sub with plain yogurt you may have on hand." The more you can use a single item in multiple applications, the better!

TIP 3 KEEP THINGS RUNNING SMOOTHLY FRONT-OF-HOUSE

Your front-of-house staff can have a huge impact on the overall guest experience — almost as much as the food.

Server initiatives can go a long way in helping motivate employees. Consider weekly prizes (gift cards, time off, bonuses, scholarships, etc.) that resonate with your unique staff.

"Encourage servers to suggest an appetizer, but make it super easy and fast to execute. Doing so increases ticket totals and tips, plus it buys time back of house and keeps guests satisfied while they wait for their other courses."

SONJA KEHR

CORPORATE CHEF, GENERAL MILLS FOODSERVICE



TAKEAWAY Is Here to Stay

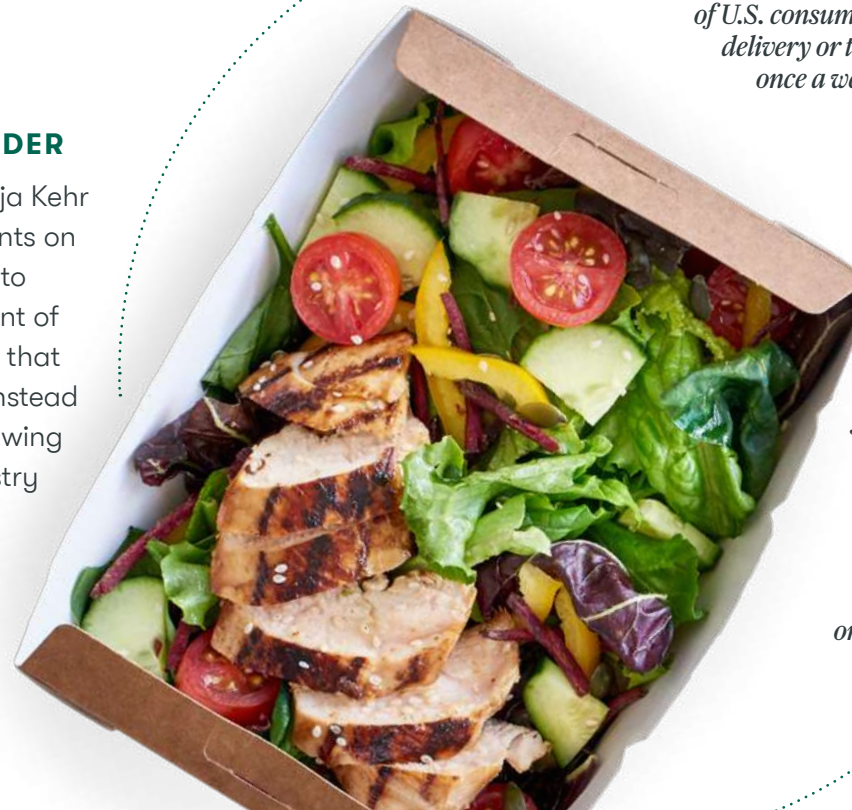
60%
of U.S. consumers order delivery or takeout once a week²

31% say they use third-party delivery services at least

2x
per week²

34% of consumers spend at least

\$50
per order when ordering food online²



TIP 4 PLUS-UP YOUR TAKEOUT CHOICES

Takeout and delivery were on the rise before the pandemic, but now they're even more ingrained in weekly schedules.

Chef Sonja advises operators to think about the consumer's experience while unboxing their order and work backwards from there. Yes, separating cold ingredients from hot is essential, but she recommends going a step further and giving them the tools to build their own meal such as instructions for a bento-box approach. It helps connect them to the food and can even create the feeling they've made it themselves.

We know it seems like new, unforeseen challenges arise all the time, but with the right partners and product solutions, you can bring back the classic foodservice experience that creates loyal guests and restaurant success.

¹25+ Restaurant Industry Customer Statistics You Must Know for 2022, lunchbox.io
²Restaurant Online Ordering Statistics, Upserve 2021

Sweet Nostalgia

5 CLASSIC DESSERTS



TRIPLE BERRY GRANOLA CRISP

Using frozen berries keeps a fruit crisp dessert in season year-round. [Get the recipe »](#)



Unlike some culinary trends that come and go, there's always going to be a place for a little sweetness on menus. Here are some timeless, easy-to-make classics we think guests will love!

CHOCOLATE LAVA CAKE

Dig in to find the gooey hot fudge center of this decadent chocolate cake. [Get the recipe »](#)

BISCUIT BREAD PUDDING

This dessert bakes into a moist, old-fashioned classic. [Get the recipe »](#)



PEANUT BUTTER BROWNIE DESSERT POPS

A fun way to transform classic brownies into a sweet treat with a pop of portability. [Get the recipe »](#)



LEMON BLUEBERRY SKILLET

Versatile enough to be used as a breakfast or brunch dish — or even a dessert! [Get the recipe »](#)

Chef Throwdown: Retro Desserts Reimagined

We challenged our chefs to take a classic dessert and reimagine it in a new, unexpected way. [Watch the video »](#)

MAKING Change WORK FOR YOU

The foodservice industry has seen more than its fair share of changes over the past couple of years. While unpredictability seems constant, with the right partners, products and solutions, there are opportunities to make the best of recent shifts. →



IMPROVING AND PROTECTING MARGINS

In today's environment, it's crucial to take a closer look at portion sizes, but the practice isn't about serving less food to save money. It's about finding the balance between meeting guest expectations and delivering value — for patrons and operators alike. Chef Michael Braden from General Mills recommends caution though. "Be careful when reducing portions. Customers expect they'll get what they got last time. You want to ensure you're protecting your perceived value."

For example, he suggests offering different sized portions of some of your most popular menu items. This strategy offers customers a lower-cost, lower-portioned option for someone who may want to spend or eat less — and the dish can also be priced to provide better margins for you.



6 in 10
full-service operators reported offering fewer menu items than pre-pandemic.¹

Another strategy Chef Michael recommends is to continuously train your staff and make them partners in your efforts to preserve margins and reduce costs. Reiterate how crucial it is that every portion be the exact right size — down to the ounce — so nothing is being given away.

MENU SIMPLIFICATION

Now is the ideal time to audit your menu and make tough choices on items that can be removed. LTOs can help you ease the transition while you figure out the right balance.

There are plenty of advantages to simplified, more streamlined menus:

- They alleviate the hurdles that come with labor shortages and can create faster order turnarounds.
- Larger profit margins can be achieved by increasing the volume of your food and ingredient orders and lowering the number of items you keep in inventory.
- While making menu cuts may seem painful, you can achieve more consistent branding by being known for a few key, signature items.

"Alleviate back of house labor and supply constraints through use of frozen, refrigerated and speed scratch products."

THE STATE OF THE INDEPENDENT OPERATOR
MOMENTUM, TECHNOMIC 2022



Chocolate Almond Croissant Éclairs »



Crispy Patty Melts »



Plant-Based "Tenders" and Biscuit Sandwiches with Hot Honey Butter »

"It's the right time to ask tough questions of your menu: What are cash cows and what are the dogs? Is this dish bringing me profit, or do I think I can cut this? Strategically reevaluating your menu is a crucial and wise practice."

CHEF MICHAEL BRADEN
SENIOR CULINARY MANAGER, GENERAL MILLS FOODSERVICE

MAKING NEW MENU FORMATS WORK HARDER

As online ordering along with digital and web-based menus grow in popularity, it's important to unlock their full potential. Here are a few of the upsides:

- Digital menus offer the flexibility to be updated on the fly, allowing for adjustments due to supply issues and other factors.

- Online ordering brings in a wealth of information you can analyze for inventory management, menu insights, staffing needs and more.
- Avoid third-party delivery surcharges that hurt margins by upgrading your own website to accommodate orders.
- Implement various reminders and suggested add-ons to boost up-sells, especially for online ordering.

Work closely with your digital menu provider to ensure you have the most impactful templates, experience data and other benefits they provide.

Change is certainly here to stay, and while it may be frustrating, putting a positive spin on necessary pivots will help today and tomorrow.

¹NRA Industry Forecast 2022



To get started with menu simplification, try these tasty, on-trend recipes that only use 5-6 ingredients.



ReTHINKING SCRATCH

Part of what makes scratch cooking so appealing is the idea the item was crafted by hand, from time-honored recipes and traditions. However, with today's labor shortages, supply chain issues and razor-thin margins, scratch recipes don't fit within the reality some operators are facing. It's worth examining choices that bring the wholesomeness, taste and quality of scratch with much more simplicity and ease.



GET TO KNOW YOUR FREEZER-TO-OVEN CHOICES

Brands like Pillsbury™ have a heritage built on quality, craft and dependability. With consistency and value being extremely important to today's customers, now's the time to take a closer look at the benefits of freezer-to-oven items. These products deliver:

- Consistent size and shape
- Minimal training required
- Speed-to-plate which helps turn tables
- Reduced waste — bake only what you need



Pillsbury™ Freezer-to-Oven Croissants »



Pillsbury™ Freezer-to-Oven Cornbread Biscuits »



Pillsbury™ Supreme™ Freezer-to-Oven Cinnamon Roll Dough »



Pillsbury™ Freezer-to-Oven Southern Style Biscuits »



Pillsbury™ Best™ Place & Bake™ Twirl Dough Cinnamon »



CHEF MICHAEL BRADEN
SENIOR CULINARY MANAGER
GENERAL MILLS FOODSERVICE



PILLSBURY™ BAKE IN ADVANCE PROGRAM

The General Mills culinary team created the Pillsbury™ Bake in Advance Program to help operators address labor challenges and maximize revenue. It demonstrates how to batch bake Pillsbury™ Frozen Baked Goods in advance, freeze and then thaw as needed. This strategy allows you to:

- Work with all labor skill levels
- Make the products you need weeks in advance — efficiently using your staff
- Bake anytime, including off-peak hours
- Freeze and thaw without compromising product quality
- Thaw and use only what you need to help save costs and minimize waste

Check out the execution guide, tips, recipe ideas and more! [Get inspired »](#)



FIRST-IN-FIRST-OUT PROTOCOLS

It's always a good idea to make sure your staff is doing all they can to ensure items closest to their expiration date are used first.



GARBAGE CAN CHECKS

It's not the most glamorous task, but taking stock of what's being wasted offers powerful insights into simple changes you can make.

“Your back-of-house staff is invaluable in ensuring you're not creating unnecessary waste. Look for ways to engage and empower them so they're true partners in reducing costs. For instance, when you do a garbage can check, let them know what you find, and explain ways they can help. If they feel invested in the success of the operation, they will simply perform better.”

New Ways to Turn Your STALES INTO SALES

Now more than ever, it's crucial to ensure you're getting the most from every single item you make. Here's fresh inspiration to take goods from yesterday's bakery case and turn them into something special.



▲ *Cinnamon Roll French Toast Breakfast Sandwich* »
Yesterday's baked cinnamon rolls are today's French toast transformed into a breakfast sandwich with bacon, egg and cheese.

◀ *Irish Chocolate Truffle Bread Pudding* »
This rich, custardy bread pudding can be made with day-old croissants, bittersweet chocolate and Irish cream liqueur.

◀ *Seared Southwest Steak with Jalapeño Cheddar Toast* »
Jalapeño cheddar scones make a crispy toast and pair perfectly with this southwest steak meal. Use day-old scones to speed prep and reduce waste.

◀ *Baked Pancake French Toast* »
Leftover pancakes can be given new life as delicious, versatile French toast. Pair with savory breakfast proteins or go sweet with seasonal fruits.



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¹Guidance CLT 1/21: Atlanta, GA, N=126, better delivered on airiness, tenderness, and moistness than our previous Southern Style biscuits
²Guidance CLT 1/21: Atlanta, GA, N=126, better delivered on crispness and moistness than our previous Southern Style biscuits
³The NPD Group/SupplyTrack®, Frozen Biscuits in Foodservice Channel, 12 months ending May 2022, in Units & Pounds

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SPOTLIGHT

Chef Ted



Chef Ted Osorio's extensive foodservice career spans more than 30 years of working in hotels, fine dining restaurants, catering and non-commercial operations. Over that time, he's developed a special appreciation for biscuits and how they deliver versatile, all-day appeal. He says, "As a chef it's fun to be creative and make something out of nothing with a biscuit. I like to bring awareness to operators about how truly versatile they are."

When reflecting on the creative process, Chef Ted likes to deliver solutions operators can really use. "We strive to create ideas that will be useful to an operation, not something that will take a lot of time, labor, budget or equipment — not an 8-step recipe."

Chef Ted recommends these recipes for inspiration, noting, "You don't have to be a professional chef to execute these ideas, but they may be ones you haven't thought about."



Scan here to follow @generalmillscf on Instagram for Culinary Live videos, product information, recipes, menu inspiration and more!



▲ Biscuit & Gravy Pull-Aparts »



▲ Open-Faced Fish Biscuit Tostada with Spicy Lemon Coconut Sauce »



ONE-CASE WONDERS: PILLSBURY™ BISCUITS

Did you know that with just one case of one product, you can create so many unique, delicious dishes across every daypart? Chef Ted is a huge fan of biscuits' versatility. "You can thaw and manipulate them to do what you want to do — cut into quarters and deep fry them, throw them on a griddle or even put them in a waffle iron for sweet and savory dishes. Their uses are unlimited, even with the equipment you already have on hand."



BREAKFAST



Loaded Chorizo Breakfast Waffle Dogs »

DESSERTS



Apple Cinnamon Biscuit Doughnuts »



Parmesan Biscuit Fries »

LUNCH & DINNER

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