

SALIENT Food Trials Newsletter

Issue 4 | December 2025

Welcome to the fourth issue of the SALIENT Newsletter

In each newsletter, we will be highlighting what is happening in some of the SALIENT trials

A reminder of SALIENT ...

SALIENT is a large research project, made up of a team of more than 30 researchers across England. We are working together to find out how the food system can support people to have healthier and more sustainable diets.

The SALIENT team are making **small changes** in places like supermarkets, canteens and food banks. We are then **researching if these changes help** people buy and eat food that is more nutritious, and better for the planet.

Introducing our fourth Food Trial ...

Price discounts and loyalty cards in UK supermarkets



Fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of vitamins and minerals, dietary fibre and contribute to a healthy, balanced diet. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables each week helps to reduce your risk of health conditions such as heart disease, stroke and cancer.

However, recent government figures show that [fruit and vegetable consumption in the UK is below recommended levels](#) and that only one third of all adults consume at least five portions per day.

Fruits and vegetables have a much lower carbon footprint compared to meat and other food groups and therefore eating higher amounts of fruits and vegetables could have a positive impact on the environment.



Evidence shows that discounts are popular and can influence what people decide to buy. By offering discounts on fruits and vegetables, this may encourage them to make healthier and more sustainable choices.

Recent statistics show that [95% of UK adults](#) own at least one supermarket loyalty card. Loyalty cards are popular with customers because they offer regular discounts and rewards. It also provides supermarkets with extra information about their customers and a way to market to them directly.

So, looking at loyalty card data is a good way of helping us to understand how well discounts for fruits and vegetables work.



What did we do?

In this trial, we worked with a large chain supermarket that has stores all around the country, to find out if loyalty-card price discounts on fruit and vegetables encourage people to buy more of them. We also looked at whether or not the size of the store and its location made any difference.

The supermarket chain let us look at their sales and till data for 90 stores around the country, for a period of two years. That way, we could see what sales were like before and after the discounts on

fruits and vegetables were brought in. We also compared purchases between customers with and without loyalty cards.

Where did the trial take place?

We looked at sales data from 2023-2025.

What did we find?

The results are promising.

- 86% of stores (76 out of 90) increased their sales of fruits and vegetables for loyalty card holders.
- The discounts increased purchases of fruits and vegetables by 8%. For a family of four who each have 4 portions of fruit and veg a day, that would mean an extra bag of carrots and punnet of tomatoes each week.
- The discount worked just as well in poorer areas as it did in wealthier ones, and it didn't seem to make a difference where in the country the stores were located.
- The discounts worked a bit better in the smaller stores than in the larger ones, but there wasn't much of a difference.

Where can I find out more about the study?

You can read more information on the SALIENT trials website - [link](#).



Did you know?

The concept of loyalty schemes was introduced as copper coupons in the USA in 1773!

Find out more info [here](#).

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the SALIENT team! Our next newsletter will be published in the new year.

ABOUT SALIENT

Who SALIENT works with to test these food systems changes

The SALIENT Team work with two main groups.

We work with partners in the food system (e.g. retailers, caterers, food banks) to run our trials. The SALIENT team are independent of these food system partners – our trials are not funded by them and we do not work for them.

We also work with people who are active in their communities, who give us ideas and feedback on the SALIENT trials. They have helped us design this newsletter.

About this newsletter

This newsletter is for everyone interested in the work that is happening across SALIENT.

We welcome your views on it. Email us at salientcommunity@herts.ac.uk.

To subscribe to receive the email version of this newsletter, please email Claire Thompson at c.thompson25@herts.ac.uk.

Copyright information

All the images within this newsletter, unless otherwise indicated, have been licensed by Adobe Stock, under an Education License, with the University of Hertfordshire.