

Book Review

Food and Drink Statistics: A Sector by Sector Guide to Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Drink Statistics in the UK, Euro PA & Associates, Cambridge, UK, 1998. ISBN 1-900017-05-9, 236 pp., £30.00

The production, processing, manufacture and retailing of food and drink is one of the largest industries in the UK. It is one of the few industries which has a direct bearing on each member in the community, many being directly influenced through employment and each one of us as a consumer. It is a rapidly changing diverse industry which is influenced by many varied parameters and, therefore, to obtain relevant and up-to-date statistical information it is necessary to search many different sources many of which are not conveniently available. A single volume which brings together commercial information relating to all aspects of the food and drink chain, i.e. from production to consumption would be extremely useful as a front line reference book for many industrialists and technologists.

The collators of this book 'Food and Drink Statistics 1998' have attempted what may initially have seemed like an impossible task in putting together in a uniform pictorial manner a statistical sector by sector guide to agriculture, fisheries, food and drink in the UK. The book is divided into a number of sections each dealing with a specific food or food group. After a brief introductory text each

section follows the same basic format; production, trade, consumption, market, and industry structure, including market share and company financial information. This uniformity enables the reader to quickly scan the clearly presented charts to find the information required on any particular raw material or product. The collators have addressed the problem of rapid changes in the market by making this the first edition of an annual statistical guide which will be updated in the spring of each year and, as such, the current issue will always contain the most recent statistical and economic data available.

Whilst this book is not the definitive source for all statistical/economic information it does give a perspective on what is an extremely complex industry and allows a first stage interrogation process of the available statistics and points the reader to other possible statistical sources. It will be a valuable addition to any library servicing the food and drink industry and will be used by all those technologists who must be familiar with the economic trends within their particular industry segment.

J.F. Kennedy and L.L. Lloyd
Birmingham Carbohydrate and Protein Technology Group,
The University of Birmingham,
B15 2TT Birmingham, UK.