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## Return of the big weekly shop tops lockdown shopping trends

### Lockdown has seen Irish shopping behaviours more reminiscent of 20 years ago re-emerge.

Nationwide retailer [SuperValu](#) has produced research that paints a unique picture of how staying at home has influenced shopper habits across Ireland.

The statistics from SuperValu show a renewed interest in baking with flour product sales up 200pc not to mention a surge in gardening interests with plants and flowers sales also rising 200pc.

SuperValu plays a vital role in the Irish economy and is one of the State's largest private-sector employers with 14,500 people.

The retailer emphasised that it continues to source locally wherever possible which helps to sustain 30,000 jobs in the Irish economy.

SuperValu serves over 2.6m customers every week and has 223 stores nationwide and its feedback is an interesting bellwether for how the Irish are weathering the Covid-19 crisis.

The lockdown has seen the public focus spend more time in the kitchen: this has included a focus on broader culinary activity, with SuperValu reporting an 80pc increase in olive oil sales. Meanwhile, the need to clean up more often in the kitchen saw a 60pc rise in sales of dishwasher tablets.

### Baking through a storm

With the majority people working remotely since March when the Covid-19 lockdown measures came into play, there has been renewed interest in baking and sales in this category have risen, most notably with flour products up 200pc. There has also been a considerable uptake in demand for other related products such as toppings, mini marshmallows and core baking ingredients like raising agents, flavourings and food colourings.

With many cafes closed, consumers are still looking for their coffee fix and SuperValu statistics show a 100pc increase in coffee pod sales. Also, as families relax together by watching streamed series and box sets, there has been a 60pc increase in sharing chocolate bars in SuperValu stores. However, shoppers are also craving healthy food, and SuperValu's statistics show that a banana is being sold every second across its stores.

SuperValu shoppers have also become increasingly green-fingered, with plants and flowers sales rising 200pc. The food retailer's data also show that personal hygiene has been of paramount importance to shoppers during the lockdown, with soap sales up by 400pc and due to Covid-19, SuperValu has sold enough toilet paper to go around the world eight times.

"SuperValu's statistics provide a unique snapshot of Irish shopping habits during the lockdown," said Edel Russell, Innovation & Consumer Director SuperValu.

"It's clear that people have been focusing on home cooking, baking and gardening and are spending more quality family time together. Our strong roots in communities across the country means that we are committed to serving vulnerable groups throughout the Covid-19 crisis and our trusted retailer network continues to provide these essential supports, with home delivery growth equivalent to opening 12 new SuperValu stores."

## **Serving the community**

Owen Clifford, head of [Retail Sector](#), Bank of Ireland, explained to *ThinkBusiness* that the findings from SuperValu indicate the resurgence of traditional Irish shopping behaviours.

"As consumers we have reverted to the 'big weekly shop' - our shopping behaviours have returned to the norm of 15-20 years ago," Clifford said.

"Given the size of the individual shop, we are more considered and functional- making a shopping list and sticking to it in store. Our dwell time in store has contracted significantly – this is reducing the level of impulse purchases.

"Grocery stores located within the community that allow us complete our large shop in a timely, accessible manner are benefiting from this shopping pattern. SuperValu's extensive store network nationwide and strong focus on Irish goods and communities has met these requirements of the

Irish grocery shopper,” Clifford explained.

Recent research from Kantar indicated that March – just when Ireland went into lockdown – was the [biggest month of grocery sales ever recorded](#). The average household spent an additional €122 on groceries during the four weeks to 22 March.

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