What do consumers think?
Northern Ireland consumer perceptions of reformulation

We spoke to over 370 people across Northern Ireland:

- Quantitative survey of 305 respondents
- Qualitative focus groups with over 30 participants
- Digital diaries with 40 participants

Consumers are open to reduced sugar and fat alternatives provided that taste, value and health properties stay the same:

- 60% are aware of existing efforts to make pre-packaged and processed foods healthier.
- 72% agree it's a good thing that efforts are being made to make products healthier.
- 74% agree product changes will make it easier to buy healthier food for children.

Quantitative research covered 7 food categories:
- Morning goods
- Breakfast cereals
- Ice cream
- Pudding
- Cake
- Biscuits
- Yoghurt
How to encourage consumer acceptance

Consumer acceptance depends on if there are changes to...

- **taste**
  - Negative changes to taste is the top reason why consumers would not buy alternatives

- **value**
  - Consumers worry about losing out and manufacturers making money

- **health**
  - Consumers worry about sugar and fat replacements being equally unhealthy or even dangerous (e.g. sweeteners)

If consumers believe that manufacturers or retailers are behind the changes, acceptance drops and concerns about profit-making increase.

Raising awareness of changes and creating a positive buzz will be important.

- Wider public messaging
- Changes to shop environment
- Front of pack product labelling