



How McCain responds to changes in the external environment

Technological changes



Food technology is one of the most dynamic technologies in the modern economy.

Challenges of food technology

Food technology involves researching and developing new techniques for making products as diverse as ice cream, probiotic yoghurt, frozen oven chips and muesli bars. Each of these products involves finding technical solutions to problems such as how to:

- * freeze while retaining flavour
- * maximise natural nutritional characteristics
- * turn a frozen product into an oven heated product.

McCain is continually being faced by new challenges from technological factors. It should be no surprise therefore that McCain's food technologists were only too happy to rise to the challenge of making its potato products even healthier. McCain needed a solution that not only reduced fat and salt, but also kept the sort of flavour that would delight customers.

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Solutions

The solution was to use sunflower oil which reduced saturated fats by 70% across the whole potato product range. Food technologists know that by working with real potatoes they are dealing with a product with a very strong nutritional pedigree.

For example, it is a little known fact that potatoes are a major source of vitamin C for the UK diet. As a product, potatoes are the second most important staple food in the world today (rice is the first), providing essential carbohydrates that help us to generate energy.

Potatoes also have tremendous future potential. In 1995 the potato became the first vegetable to be grown in space. NASA worked with top scientists to develop super-nutritious and versatile potatoes. These can be used to feed astronauts on long space voyages and NASA hopes one day that these will feed space colonies.