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By Michael Barker

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Tesco unveils 2019 Incubator brands

Supermarket initiative has helped bring names such as Brewdog, Bol and Graze to national attention



A seaweed company and another specialising in cooking kits are among the six food and drink brands selected for Tesco's 2019 Incubator programme.

The initiative, set up in 2017, is designed to give a leg up to a selected group of small entrepreneurial brands that have the potential to offer something different and exciting to customers.

Well-known brands such as Brewdog, Propercorn, Fevertree, Bol and Graze have all made their name after coming through the year-long programme, which includes advice and guidance on marketing products effectively, responding to Tesco customer insight, as well as tips and mentorship from Tesco's Product team.

The brands selected for 2019 are Kefir-brand gut health specialist Biotiful; seaweed product supplier Mara Seaweed; free-from and vegan cake firm Just Love Food Company; Ugly Drinks, which supplies natural, flavoured sparkling water; three-step cooking kit business SimplyCook; and craft beer producer Thornbridge.

Three non-food brands have also been selected, covering pet food, cosmetics and nappies.

Tesco said its selection had been made with the latest health and wellness trends in mind. Group chief commercial officer Andrew Yaxley said: "Our Incubator Programme is a really important part

of the work we've done in recent years to build closer, long-term partnerships with our suppliers. There are so many brilliant brands out there and we're proud to partner with some of those we believe are at the forefront of the latest consumer trends.

"By working in partnership, we can provide customers with fantastic, innovative products, and continue to help suppliers of all shapes and sizes develop and grow with us."