

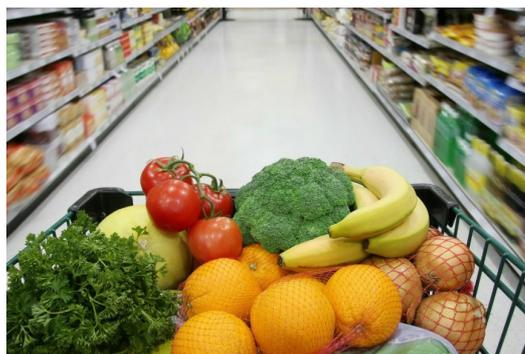
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By Fred
Searle

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Second wave poses retail availability challenges



New research from tech company outlines difficulties for retailers as they battle to keep pace with fluctuations in consumer demand

Over a third of UK shoppers have used online shopping more since lockdown but have found it inefficient due to insufficient delivery slots and replacement items.

That is the finding of new research by retail technology app Ubamarket, which predicted these issues are "bound to cause an increase in consumer footfall" at UK supermarkets, as well as "fluctuations in consumer behaviour".

Following rising concerns about a second wave of coronavirus, supermarkets have allegedly seen surges of panic buying across the country.

While many retailers have reassured the public that they are well prepared for the second lockdown, some have already reinstated rationing on certain goods.

Fluctuating demand - in particular for

online deliveries - remains a logistical problem that supermarkets are having some difficulties catering to.

Tesco's outgoing chief executive Dave Lewis last week issued a message to consumers that Covid-19 panic buying was "unnecessary" and that customers should "continue to buy as normal".

Chief executive of Ubamarket Will Broome said: "The concerns around stockpiling are not to be taken lightly, and it is important that the public continue to shop in a considerable manner."

He added: "It is encouraging to see that Britain's retailers and grocers are committed to reassuring customers and ensuring that they are able to provide essential goods without disruption."

The key findings from Ubamarket's latest retail research are as follows:

50 per cent of UK shoppers found that being able to do a weekly shop at their

local supermarket during lockdown was vital to combating isolation.

50 per cent haven't used cash at all since the start of lockdown and have relied exclusively on card and contactless payments.

43 per cent want their shopping experience moving forward to require as little human interaction as possible.

38 per cent found that since lockdown, they have used online shopping more but have found it to be inefficient due to insufficient delivery slots and replacement items.

34 per cent say that the self-checkouts cause significant anxiety due to hygiene concerns and proximity to other shoppers.

40 per cent will no longer use cash when shopping or when in bars or restaurants due to concerns around the transfer of germs.

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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want to be able to complete their supermarket shop and exit the store in under 20 minutes.

Commenting on the findings, Broome said: "Our research clearly shows how integral the supermarket is to British consumers, and the different ways they want to purchase their goods following Covid.

"The implementation of retail technology is one way that Britain's retailers could safeguard themselves against this fluctuating demand and irregular consumer behaviour.

"With this, supermarkets and stores can access far more in-depth and accurate consumer data, helping them

to assess their behaviour, manage stock more efficiently and effectively, whilst being able to effectively communicate directly to the consumer base."