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**Lidl Selects 11 Brand New Northern Ireland Suppliers to Hit Shelves This September**

Hailing from every county in Northern Ireland and producing a range of locally made artisan products, 11 suppliers in Northern Ireland have been selected to take part in Lidl’s *Kick Start Supplier Development programme*. The chosen suppliers will see their products go on sale in all 195 Lidl stores throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland from September 17th for a limited period while stocks last.

Earlier this year Lidl called on small and medium-sized Northern Ireland suppliers to enter the *Kick Start Supplier Development Programme* which is designed to help small and medium suppliers in Northern Ireland to grow their brand and build their supply network. Beating off competition from over 200 entrants, a total of 20 new and exciting products from Northern Ireland have been selected.

The range is vast and includes products like; bacon jam from Enniskillen, Rhuberry gin from Saintfield, chilli beef craft peanuts from Newtownards, hot chocolate from East Belfast, premium pesto from Ballymena, pulled pork from Newry and many more.

One of this year’s successful entrants is Belfast based supplier, Refuge Hot Chocolate, who will see their delicious hot chocolate (£3.49) go on sale in all Lidl stores across Ireland and Northern Ireland. Founder, Tara Mullan, was inspired to create her artisan chocolate product after sampling a similarly delicious product while skiing in Andora. Refuge Hot Chocolate was established as a social enterprise to help support survivors of human trafficking.

Speaking about the importance of the Kick Start opportunity Tara said;

“For our product to be recognised by one of Europe’s leading retailers is an incredible endorsement. Having our products on Lidl shelves this month will bring a whole new level of exposure to Refuge, taking us from a regional to a national level. We are delighted to be able to reach more customers than ever before.

“Refuge is so much more than our product. We aim to use ethically sourced eco products while raising awareness of important issues through our support of the anti-trafficking charity, Flourish.”

Another of this year’s chosen suppliers is Noisy Snacks, founded by ‘Noisy’ Noel Allen.

Noisy Snacks owner Noel struggled to find a beer pairing snack which didn’t give drinks a peculiar taste, and in the end decided to launch his own. After significant research and development Noel held a sampling night where his unique style of shaking together the seasoning and nuts in a tub, grabbed the attention of the samplers and from that moment on making NOISE was what the product was all about. 4 of his Noisy Nuts products – pickled onion, chilli & lime, chilli beef and bacon jalapeno will go on sale in Lidl stores for £2.99 each.

Speaking ahead of the Kick Start in-store promotion Noel said;

“We were blown away to be selected as one of the suppliers for the Lidl Kick Start promotion. Up until now we’ve been selling Noisy Nuts locally and online, but this means now our product will be in over 190 Lidl stores across Ireland and there will be even more happy customers enjoying our snacks and making NOISE.”

As well as the limited edition in-store promotion, Kick Start also provided the ambitious companies with free business development seminars delivered by a panel of Lidl and wider industry experts, covering key disciplines such as quality control, packaging, communications and brand building.

‘Kick Start’ represents an investment of almost £180,000 by Lidl and the newly selected range will complement Lidl’s existing portfolio of quality Irish products.

Liam Casey, Commercial Director at Lidl Ireland & Northern Ireland commented:

“This is Kick Start’s Northern Ireland debut, and as a committed local sourcing champion with ambitions to grow our current Northern Ireland supplier base, we were very encouraged by the vision, skill and commitment of the producers who applied. A total 86 products have been selected from across the island and more than a quarter were from Northern Ireland which is fantastic to see.

“We look forward to stocking their products across all our stores this month and encourage customers to go along to their local store to find out more and try something new.”

**ENDS**

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**Notes to Editors:**

* Following its successful trial in the Republic of Ireland in 2017, Lidl launched its Kick Start Supplier Development Programme in Northern Ireland in 2018 for the first time.
* Lidl has 195 stores throughout Ireland and Northern Ireland. 38 stores are based in Northern Ireland.

**Full List of Kick Start Products & Suppliers**

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| Brand | Product | g / ml | £ |
| Hillstown Brewery | Long Mountain Wheat Beer 5.3% | 500ml | £ 1.99 |
| Hillstown Brewery | Douglas Top Lager 4.1% | 500ml | £ 1.99 |
| Hillstown Brewery | Mid Hill IPA 4.5% | 500ml | £ 1.99 |
| Tom and Ollie | Marinated Slow Roasted Tomato Segments | 200g | £ 2.99 |
| Tom and Ollie | Premium Pesto assorted | 150g | £ 2.49 |
| Refuge Hot Chocolate | Refuge Hot Chocolate | 330g | £ 3.49 |
| Glenn McDowell Artisan Butchers | Low Fat Flavoured Pork Sausages | 400g | £ 2.99 |
| Copeland Spirits Ltd | Copeland Raspberry & Mint Gin/ Rhunerry 37.8% | 700ml | £ 24.99 |
| Feckin Drinks Co. | Feckin Irish Gin 40% | 700ml | £ 19.99 |
| Feckin Drinks Co. | Feckin Irish Vodka 37.5% | 700ml | £ 19.99 |
| Noisy Snacks Limited | Noisy Pickled Onion | 85g | £ 2.99 |
| Noisy Snacks Limited | Noisy Chilli & Lime | 85g | £ 2.99 |
| Noisy Snacks Limited | Noisy Chilli Beef | 85g | £ 2.99 |
| Noisy Snacks Limited | Noisy Bacon Jalapeno | 85g | £ 2.99 |
| Oh So Lean | Low Fat Mexican Turkey Burger | 220g | £ 2.49 |
| Oh So Lean | Low Fat Ready Meals | 350/400g | £ 3.49 |
| Oh So Lean | Low Fat Pork Rissoles | 300g | £ 2.99 |
| Erne Larder Preserves | Bacon Jam | 220g | £ 2.49 |
| The Curious Farmer | Curious Farmer Cooking Spices | 50g | £ 1.99 |
| The Little Meat Company | Little Meat Co Pulled Meat | 160 / 210g | £ 1.99 |