

# Foodservice Updates

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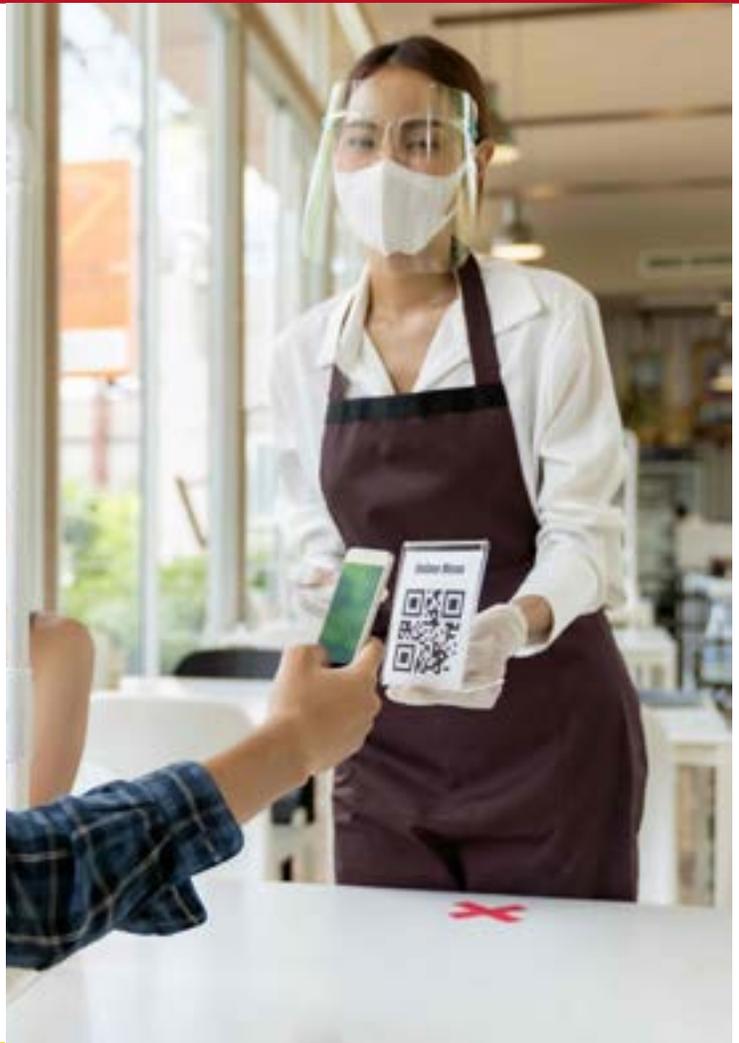
## We have your back

As the supply chain is being impacted by factors including labor shortages, extreme weather, gaps in the availability of raw ingredients, and a spike in demand from consumers returning to foodservice outlets, businesses at every link in the supply chain are feeling the stress. At a time when some foodservice operators have been completely dropped by their distributor(s), the strength of your partnerships is paramount. At the time of this writing, the average fill-rate from manufacturers to distributors was running below 85 percent. But the service level for Premier Value 4 members is considerably higher than this average. That is due to the work our distribution partner, US Foods, is doing to rebalance inventory to provide our members with the best possible service. In recent quarterly earnings releases, US Foods and Sysco disclosed their food cost inflation rates: 8.2 percent and 10.2 percent, respectively. To keep this in context, a normal food cost inflation would be in the 2-3 percent range. Value 4 members have protection against this inflation with contracted manufacturer agreements (CMA). CMA's give access to 350 vendors covering 105,000 products. Over the past 15 years, inflation on CMA products has been half of the inflation of non-CMA products. Our CMA contracts are firmly in place and while we will not know if that 50 percent "savings" rate is less or more until the current hyper-inflationary period has settled, we are confident that using CMA products is your best protection against inflation – and will offer extra security until we return to conditions that feel closer to normal. If you do not have these protections from your suppliers and partners, consider calling Value 4 to see if you qualify for our programs.



## Be clear about the QR

QR codes, which have enabled no-touch digital menu reviewing and ordering throughout the pandemic, all while helping short-staffed operators keep up with orders, have become ubiquitous in recent months. The National Restaurant Association said half of all full-service restaurants in the U.S. have begun using the codes since the start of the pandemic. But now concerns about privacy are making some question consumers' use of the codes because businesses can gather valuable data about consumer spending patterns through the codes – and it's all connected to their credit cards, the New York Times reports. If you're using QR codes in your business, be sure you understand how the tech companies enabling your codes are using your data (i.e. ensure they aren't selling it) and how you can best protect your customers and business in the event of a breach.



## Could food lockers work for you?

Amid labor challenges and an escalation in carry-out and delivery business in the past 18 months, food lockers have become a tech solution on the rise. Nation's Restaurant News reports that Smashburger has been testing a couple of versions of them – one that displays the status of an order on a screen that directs a customer to the locker where their food can be found, and another that lets customers use the restaurant's mobile app to unlock the correct locker when they approach, thanks to geofencing technology. If you're considering food lockers as a pickup solution, find ways to make the experience feel human and personal – that could be as simple as placing the lockers within view of your kitchen assembly line.



## Breakfast Waffle Club

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 tbsp Molasses Brewpub Mustard
- 2 waffle buns, Toasted
- 6 slices roasted turkey
- 2 slices bacon, Crispy
- 1 slice American cheese
- 2 slices tomato
- 1 leaf lettuce, Shredded
- 5 oz tater tots, Seasoned

Blurry dayparts? Dream up something new.



### *Instructions:*

1. Toast two waffles and spread with Molasses Brewpub Mustard.
2. Layer American cheese, roasted turkey, bacon, tomatoes, lettuce, a few tater tots, and top with second waffle.
3. Serve remaining tater tots on the side and enjoy.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Ken's

As we continue to figure out what school and work routines will look like this fall, your dayparts may be in flux for some time. The lack of clear boundary between meals and snack times means restaurant operators could have more leeway to blend them in creative ways. Consider your most popular breakfast or lunch items, or late-afternoon snack and dinner options, and how you might combine them to create something exciting and unexpected.

# Food Trends



## Give your appliances an extra-thorough check

Poorly maintained appliances aren't just energy drains but also food safety hazards – and if you aren't using up-to-date technology to monitor your equipment right now, ensure you are manually checking it daily for signs of malfunction. The walk-in cooler, for example, is among the top sources of food inspection violations. Monitor your cooler's working order by confirming there is no difference between the temperature of the air in the cooler and the food being stored. Look for traces of mold and ensure the door closes securely. Check for the build-up of grease on the exhaust fan, as well as any water dripping from it, which can pose a food contamination risk.



**#FoodSafety**

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## Rodent-proof your facility

As the weather cools, rodents will be seeking shelter in warmer environments like your kitchen and storage areas. If you have put off regular maintenance and repairs in recent months, now is a good time to check your facility for cracks and crevices where pests might enter and to trim any vegetation surrounding your facility that could provide a shelter for them. If you find potential entry points, seal them with caulk or weather foam – as opposed to a less-permanent or half-baked solution that might alert a health inspector to a problem.



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## Could a food truck work for you?

Not so long ago, a food truck was often perceived as a potential means for a fledgling restaurant concept to develop a following with the public before launching a brick-and-mortar location, or for a smaller independent restaurant to spread its brand awareness. Now, established brick-and-mortar brands are looking to food trucks as a way of modernizing to suit the constraints of the Covid era. Take Au Bon Pain. Nation's Restaurant News reports that Tabbassum Mumtaz, the CEO of Ampax Brands, which is the new franchisor of the Au Bon Pain bakery and café brand, considers food trucks – along with ghost kitchens – to be important tools that the brand can use to modernize itself. Research from IBISWorld found that from 2016-2021, the food truck industry has grown at an annualized rate of 7.5 percent, surpassing the growth of the broader foodservice sector. To be sure, food trucks have their disadvantages – at the time of this writing, most small, independently owned food trucks weren't



eligible for the Paycheck Protection Program or Economic Injury Disaster Loans. However, they do offer a key advantage – namely flexibility – that happens to suit the current times extremely well. While the pandemic has decreased demand for food truck business in office parks, it has increased opportunities for it in residential neighborhoods, hospital and grocery store parking lots, and highway rest stops.

Team Four/Value 4 provides customized Supply Chain Solutions and Business Consultancy to the foodservice owners and operators throughout the United States. To find out how we can help your business save money contact us at:

1-888-891-3103 or visit our web site at [www.teamfourfoods.com](http://www.teamfourfoods.com) and [www.valuefour.com](http://www.valuefour.com)