



# No Vice Ice

Licking The Planet Into Shape



**OCTOBER 2023**

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## Production & Business Development Report – 2023

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# A review of the 2023 season



## OVERVIEW OF 2023

2023 has been a big season for the No Vice Ice team, as we have been busy creating new flavours, designing new packaging and focussing on scaling up the business overall. Our lolly machine was switched on in March and produced at least a batch of lollies each week, with the help of our two cohorts of trainees, up until October.

From a Business Development perspective, we have driven our brand throughout the local community, forging more relationships across local businesses and events. We have made positive changes to our product whilst maintaining our initial range of stockists and securing many new ones. From a Production perspective, we have re-established and developed supply chain partnerships that were nurtured throughout our first and second seasons, and overtaken quantities produced and sold in seasons one and two. We also took delivery of our shiny new freezer bike which has given us the ability to pedal up to events to sell directly to our customers whilst also using the opportunity to spread the word about our mission and educate our local community about the cause.



# This season's stats...

<p><b>5,533</b></p> <p>lollies produced</p> <p>1,797 - Tangy Apple 1,891 - Strawberry Crush 936 - Cheeky Cherry 910 - Blackcurrant Burst</p>	<p><b>5,307</b></p> <p>lollies sold</p>	<p><b>111</b></p> <p>lollies used for samples, donated to local causes</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>local businesses stocking our lollies</p>
<p><b>110kg</b></p> <p>of surplus fruit redirected to the production of our lollies this season (strawberries)</p>	<p><b>88.95</b></p> <p>litres of juice made from surplus apples used</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>people trained and paid to produce our delicious lollies</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>local events attended, selling lollies directly to customers</p>
<p><b>28</b></p> <p>new ice lolly flavours tested</p> <p>2 new flavours launched (Cheeky Cherry &amp; Blackcurrant Burst)</p>	<p><b>310</b></p> <p>hours of production used</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>staff trained to Level 2 in Food Safety &amp; Hygiene</p> <p><b>4</b></p> <p>staff trained to Level 3 in Food Safety &amp; Hygiene</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Shiny new Freezer Bike!</p>

In addition, to date we have some stocks of lollies still on hand to the value of £312.50, as well as enough Strawberry Crush ingredients to make roughly 600 Lollies at the start of next season.

Due to us keeping relationships ongoing with our partners and suppliers, we were provided with 110kg of surplus strawberries from Rectory Farm, which we processed with the help of our trainees, and this Strawberry puree saw us through the whole of the 2023 season.

In the lead-up to the launch of our 2023 season, we had a lot of conversation about profitability and product development, which led to us changing some of the ingredients in the lollies. While we used pressed apple juice made from surplus apples in all of our lollies last year, after discussion amongst the director team, we decided to source a natural apple juice concentrate for the sweetening agent in all lollies except the Tangy Apple flavour. This has led to increased profitability, enabling us to put more into our community outreach and trainee programme.

# New for 2023

## Reduced Size

A review of the size of our lollies was conducted, and after some market research and conversations with stockists and customers, we decided to reduce the size of the lollies from 80ml to 55ml. This was due to customer feedback from parents saying children weren't able to finish the whole lolly at its larger size, as well as financial factors as well. This benefitted us as the RRP of the lollies stayed the same, thus increasing our profit margin and allowing us to put more into our mission of supporting our local community.

The smaller lolly size meant we were also able to increase our minimum order quantity for stockists as we were able to fit more lollies into the boxes (increased from 48 to 72) thus also leading to increased profits.



## New Flavours

The start of the season was dedicated to expanding our product range and testing out new recipes for two additional flavours that we would be able to produce all year round, without the need for seasonal fruits such as fresh strawberries and raspberries. Lots of new product development was carried out, with new responsible suppliers sourced for pure blackcurrant juice, cherry juice and apple juice concentrate.

We have therefore introduced two new flavours to our range: Cheeky Cherry and Blackcurrant Burst. Feedback from customers was that they "loved the natural taste of the cherry flavour and the sweetly tart taste of the blackcurrant". The flavours have proven to be very popular this season.

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# continued...

## New Packaging

The start of this season was also dedicated to sourcing new printed packaging, to reduce production and labour times and thus increasing efficiency.

Packaging in previous years has included purchasing separate wrappers and stickers and adding another stage to our production process so the introduction of ready-made packaging and branding has reduced our labour dramatically, thus giving us the ability to produce more lollies in the time available to us.

This new packaging presents the brand in a more professional, striking way and helps our message to be communicated across to our partners and community.



## New Freezer Bike

Thanks to funding from the Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme - delivered by OxLEP, we were able to purchase our shiny new branded freezer bike which has enabled us to attend 5 local events and sell directly to our customers at the higher retail price.

The bike has also proved to be a valuable marketing tool which we have been able to use to deliver orders to our local stockists as well as create a buzz around the local area.

We are really looking forward to the opportunities that the freezer bike will open up to us in the near future, such as attending events and festivals and spreading more lolly love !

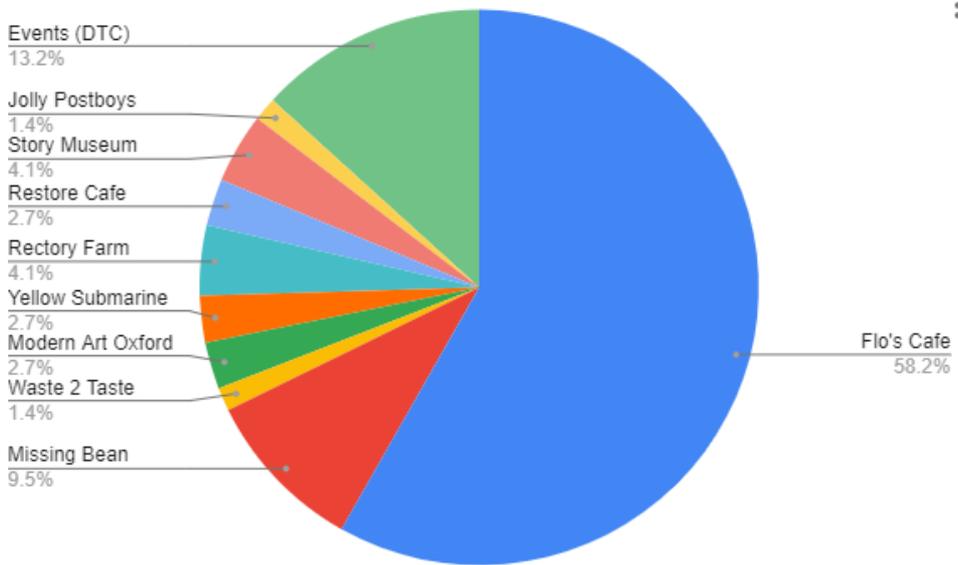


# Stockists and Supply Chain review

## Stockists

We have maintained supplying Flo's this season and they remain our main stockist. We had great feedback from the café team when trialling out new flavours and also managed to be strong competitors against the cafe's ice cream supplier, Marshfield Farm.

In addition to the stockists that we were supplying lollies to last year, we have increased our range of vendors to 11 local businesses with positive feedback and results from all partners.



## Suppliers

Oxford Farmhouse and Rectory Farm remain some of our most valued suppliers and we continue to use their products in our lollies in order to fulfil one of our main missions of sustainability, as all strawberries and apples supplied by them were rescued from waste and processed quickly.

A HUGE thank you to these suppliers for keeping this valuable partnership alive. We look forward to working with you again next season!

## Collaborating with new partners

We have also successfully sourced reliable and natural ingredients from new suppliers, LOOV Organic, Biona Organic and Gerald McDonald Farm for our new range of lollies that we can produce all year round.

We have plans to build on our partnerships with local stockists to develop new flavours using some of their ingredients. Ideas for this include Iced Latte and Oat Vanilla flavours, for example, using ingredients provided by a local coffee shop who are one of our vendors.

If you are interested in collaborating, then do get in touch!

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# Land-to-Lolly

## Understanding our supply chain

One of our key values is using food surplus wherever possible in our recipes. This has its challenges as it is a rapid procurement process - we have to respond quickly when surplus is available. In order to strengthen our resilience in this area and hear about a wider potential supplier base we have built up greater connections with Good Food Oxfordshire, OX4 Food Crew and our existing suppliers.

### Circular Economy

Having a close relationship with our suppliers and community is always at the forefront of our minds so we were thrilled to secure Rectory Farm café as one of our stockists, thus selling the strawberries back to the farm, in ice lolly form!



### Apple Pressing at The Oxford Farmhouse

In October we took 3 trainees to The Oxford Farmhouse to join them for one of their Apple Pressing sessions and understand about our supply chain.

It gave the opportunity for different trainee cohorts to meet and to learn not only about the juice pressing process, but also about how Oxford Farmhouse works with people who have experienced homelessness.

# Lolly Labs

## Linking with the community

Throughout the season, we ran a series of free Lolly Labs, in which children and families came to our production kitchen at Flo's, The Place at the Park, and participated in making their own ice lolly. All aspects of the lolly making process were open to the children to take part in, from start to finish, and they all made their own lolly wrapper.



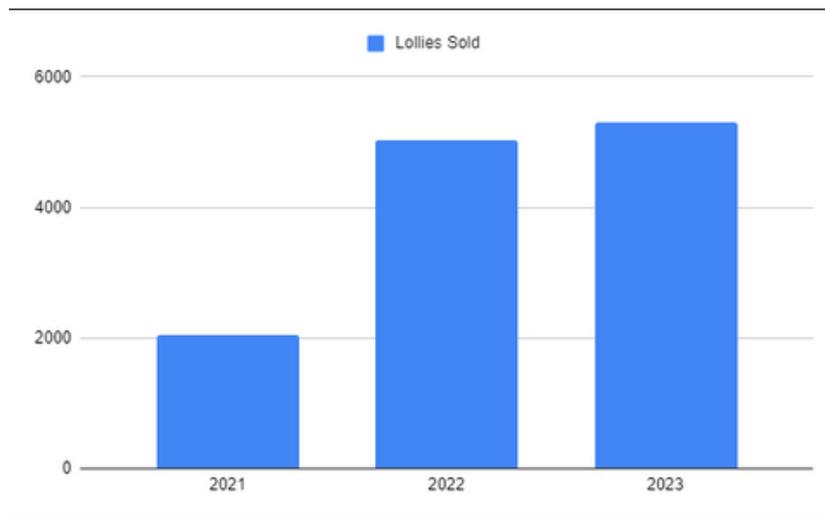
Over 85 children and young people attend 5 Lolly Labs over Summer, including 4 open-to-all sessions, and a private booking with Oxford youth group 'Name It'. We made our Tangy Apple lollies, using apple juice from surplus apples from Oxford Farmhouse. Whilst making their lollies, we told attendees about our mission at No Vice Ice, our traineeship, and educated people about food surplus and waste.

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# Growth and aspirations

## Growth 2022 v 2023

Despite experiencing some delays in launching this season due to the new packaging taking longer to complete than anticipated, as well as a delay in the arrival of the new sized moulds (meaning our full Summer rollout didn't start until July) we were still able to increase sales of the lollies by 277 units.



## What can you expect to see in 2024...?

We are looking forward to experimenting with some more premium flavours, using ingredients such as coffee and oat milk from local suppliers and/or stockists with the aim to expand on our current customer-base and reach out to adults as well as children.

We are also on the lookout for a new Lolly HQ as we are starting to outgrow our current home at Flo's community production kitchen. We anticipate this new home being somewhere very nearby and this could potentially be provided by another social enterprise - watch this space!

Plans also include purchasing a flow wrapping machine and a new, super-fast lolly machine which would speed up production and increase profitability of our lollies, ensuring our business model is robust enough to continue the community impact work we deliver. This would all be dependent on funding over the next few months.

We are always on the lookout for new stockists in order to ramp up sales and profits and also always have our ears out for any events that we could join on the freezer bike to sell lollies directly to customers and spread the lolly love to other areas of the community.

Check out our impact report for more info on Lolly Labs and outreach, this can be found on our website.

If you have any ideas, or would like to get involved in any way, please feel free to email us at [hello@noviceice.com](mailto:hello@noviceice.com)

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# And finally... THANK YOU!

The last 3 years would not have been possible without the support of many people/funders/organisations so a big round of applause to you all:

- Customers and lolly lovers of Oxford – you are great!
- Our director team, staff and trainees
- Flo's – The Place in the Park
- OX4 Food Crew
- Oxford City Farm
- Waste2Taste
- The National Lottery
- Oxford City Council
- The Funding Network (Oxford Gives)
- OSEP and OXLEP's Escalate programmes
- CAG Oxfordshire
- The School for Social Entrepreneurs
- Good Food Oxfordshire
- Oxford Farmhouse
- Rectory Farm
- Our Stockists - Flo's Cafe, Eat the Future @ OU Museum of Natural History, Waste 2 Taste, The Missing Bean, The Story Museum, Modern Art Oxford, Yellow Submarine, Rectory Farm, Restore Cafe & The Jolly Postboys

