

Written evidence from Marks and Spencer (CCE0091)

Earlier this month M&S launched our Sparking Change National Challenge, inviting our 14 million Sparks customers to try a lower carbon diet, feel healthier and potentially save money – all whilst benefiting the planet. The new challenge is based on insights from almost 100 families across the country who took part in a nine-week behavioural change trial in partnership with charity Hubbub. The impact report from the original research is available [here](#) and a paper setting out the behaviour change findings from one of the researchers who ran the trial is attached to this email.

Through the pilot, participants were supported to make the most of the food they bought through the following small changes:

- Better planning – for example, through using our [meal planner](#)
- Better storing - e.g. through freezing tips or [storage tips](#)
 - 'Ask the expert' sessions helped to build confidence particularly around food safety
- Using up leftovers through recipe inspiration - e.g. through live cook-alongs with chef Chris Baber, or M&S recipes or recipes that participants posted in the community group.
 - The online community was particularly effective in providing inspiration

Participants were supported to do more scratch cooking, eat more plant-based food and reduce waste. By the end of the pilot 84% of the participants reported that they were eating more vegetables, fruit, pulses, nuts, seeds and wholegrains. To support the pilot we initially provided the participants with food from our Remarkable and Fresh Market Specials ranges, showing participants how scratch cooking using fresh ingredients could be straightforward as well as cost effective. Hubbub collected weekly spend data from the participants and this showed that after taking part in the trial participants reduced the cost of their weekly grocery shop by 39% per week – an average of £22 per week.

The academic paper attached sets out what prompted this saving. It says:

Meal planning was described as an effective tool that participants implemented during the intervention that supported them to reduce meat consumption and food waste, and saved them money on their weekly shop:

it's probably just down to meal planning and preparation really, which was something that we'd never really done before, we just did our weekly supermarket shop every week, and then we spend the same 50-60 pounds every week and anything that was left in the fridge would just get thrown away, and we'd move on to this week's food. But since then the shop has gone down by probably a third, the cost, and we're finding that the food is still absolutely fine week after week. And you know, we can keep it in the fridge and it's still perfectly edible and perfectly

okay to use with different recipes and skills that we've picked up along the way." – F1

You can read more about the Sparking Change challenge on our website [here](#).