

Hints and Tips

- mostly gleaned from our fundraisers!

You aren't asking for a donation or selling a raffle ticket you are selling something which your supporters will really enjoy. You need to tell them that. If you just tell them you are selling Christmas puddings to benefit your good cause and they cost £x you will sell far less than if you **use a mouthwatering description and stress the proven quality** of the Great Taste Award. **On our website are copies of promotional letters which you can download.** They are in word and can be edited to suit you. There is also a jpeg of our great taste award certificate which can be put on posters. Also for posters and promotional letters, you can request a jpeg of your label to be emailed.

In your first year **only order what you are really confident of selling.** You can always reorder - some new customers do so several times. It costs you in discount but it is great for morale and next year you can maximise your discount when you know what you can do. 454g puddings outsell 908g by 4 to 1 overall. Brandy butter sells to about 25% of pudding customers. In sponge puddings sales are highest in chocolate, then ginger, then orange & lemon.

If you are going to make the effort to organise a stall at a Christmas fair (whether its your own organisation's fair or a large commercial fair) then you may as well put some energy in and really sell. Playing really safe and deciding to take orders at your fair will be disappointing - you need to have puddings, not pictures of puddings. Be extrovert for a couple of hours or rent an extrovert. **Pull customers in from the aisles and make them taste.** Tell them they are buying an award winning Rolls Royce of puddings - imagine that on Christmas day! If they say they don't like Christmas pudding sell them a chocolate one. If they do like Christmas pudding how about a chocolate pudding for boxing day as well! It's astonishing what push, patter and good old fashioned hard sell will do. You can justify it - it's not for you, it's for charity!

If you have a good relationship with a large local company they may let you sell puddings to their office staff one lunchtime from a stall in their foyer. Several of our schools sell lots this way. **Committee members (or their partners!) can be a great sales force.** Members of your committee could email work colleagues with a promotion of your puddings or put up a poster at the teapoint. Maybe they could get their company to buy some as a Christmas giveaway - we'll even do a special label for them if they buy 2 dozen or more. Then there are sports and hobby clubs, exercise and evening classes, as well as social groups - all are potential sales targets.

One of our hospices sells amazing quantities of puddings (all 3 flavours for year round sales) in their canteen which is open to visitors. Others put them on reception desks and sell them at coffee mornings. **Any event which gets people into your building - get the puddings and the cash box out!** From September onwards people are already thinking Christmas and will happily make an early pudding purchase.

Bundle the extras: e.g. plum pudding £5.50 brandy butter £2.00 pudding and butter together £7.00. A plum pudding plus a chocolate for Boxing day - 50p off.

If you take orders in advance **take money with orders.** No exceptions, or you'll spend days chasing people to collect and pay for their puddings. If they've paid and they don't collect that's their problem. If you are only selling by taking orders **don't offer too wide a range.** You have to order in whole cases and you have no opportunity to sell off part cases.

Here's a really good low tech scheme for **organising pudding orders** which came from one of our schools: all orders are written in a triplicate book along with name of child and class. 1 copy goes to the treasurer with the cheque attached. When they arrive, each order is put in a bag with the 2nd copy stapled to it and delivered to appropriate classroom. The 3rd copy is kept in the book as a record of all sales.

One last suggestion. One of our schools charges a 50p entry fee for the label drawing competition. They just draw a 50p coin shape on the entry form and ask that the entrance fee be sellotaped on. They can then offer a prize and still generate a bit extra for the funds.