

Case Study

Home-Grown Cereals Authority

– repositioning HGCA at the centre of the grain chain

Introduction

The Home-Grown Cereals Authority (HGCA) is the cereals and oilseeds sector of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB). Formerly a government agency, and now an executive non-departmental public body, it supports the UK cereal and oilseeds industry in improving its competitiveness in the UK and overseas markets.

Objective

- Position HGCA at the centre of the grain chain.

Strategy

Mistral developed and implemented a strategy consisting of six integrated campaigns to match key elements of the business plan. It delivered messages to target audiences (including levy payers) throughout the food chain in domestic and overseas markets for UK grain and oilseeds.

Our overall recommended strategic objective was to

“Position the HGCA as the hub of the cereals industry, recognised and appreciated for all it does.”

In order to achieve this positioning, HGCA needed to communicate a wide range of topics to diverse audiences (levy-payers, users of home-grown cereals, influencers, research community and the media), each with differing needs. With this in mind, a central component of the communications plan was to formulate a small number of key message platforms

corresponding to each audience, these platforms would be based around a number of overall key messages which would enable information to be communicated across all audiences and media.

Each message platform was carefully researched by Mistral (including audience research into perceptions of HGCA) and backed with hard evidence. The platforms were:

- Adding value
- Benefits not features
- Accountable, accessible and authoritative
- Focused
- Safe food.

Tactics used to transfer these messages included a launch; market segmentation; media relation; e-newsletter; events, outreach programme; speaker opportunities; benchmarking; position statements; corporate PR; and campaign-specific strands.

Results

A SMART communications programme was developed, including media coverage targets. Mistral met these targets and, in addition, organised several notably successful media events.

Mistral also developed proactive initiatives such as Grain Web – an online newsletter for non-levy payers.

The campaign’s overall effectiveness was monitored by HGCA on an annual basis via independent market research.

