

Rapid growth in the RTD coffee sector has helped Single-O's canned coffee make an immediate impact.



Innovative approach fosters success in RTD coffee

Single-O has become one of Australia's most recognisable and innovative coffee roasters since diversifying from specialist café coffee to include RTD coffee. Adam McCleery writes.



09 Feb 2024

Article type: Publication

Page: 17

Food & Beverage Industry News

Readership: 5316

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a license



MEET THE MANUFACTURER

Single-O Australia, an Australian coffee product manufacturer, has grown from a small café in Sydney to a wholesaler in the space of 20 years and in that time the team has continued to innovate.

The origin of the idea, and the company name, started by Dion and Emma Cohen, came when the pair started to talk about single origin coffee at a time, 2003, when it wasn't necessarily a widely spoken about area of the industry.

Single-O general manager Mike Brabrant said the germ of the idea would only continue to grow over the next two decades.

"It was born out of serving oat latte on the batch taps and then when we started to look into retail sales we realised pretty quickly we already had a blend that was loved by our customers, so we just needed to come up with how we wanted to package and market the product," he said.

Because single origin coffee was the first brainchild of the team, they ultimately settled on Single-O as the company name.

"We took the recipe from our Surry Hills and Queensland where we have our batch on tap system," said Brabrant.

"Then we went back and did some more research and development before canning it. It was very much a café out model."

The first roaster the team bought, a 15kg machine, was affectionately named 'Boris'

"We started in a small retail store before buying the roaster. Eventually we got so popular through retail sales we started building up a wholesale business," said Brabrant.

"Today our business is an amazing and diverse bunch of high-quality people across Australia and Japan.

"This includes our own retail Single-O sites too, one in Surry Hills and one in Newstead in Brisbane, and we have the online retail business."

The Newstead-based coffee bar will be home to Queensland's first coffee-on-tap counter, offering a unique experience of self-serve filter coffee on tap, inviting patrons to get up close and personal with rotating single origin batch brews, or the cult-favourite Oat Iced Latte.

For espresso lovers, Single O will feature its signature blend Reservoir, which delivers its hallmark stone fruit and milk chocolate flavours

"The first blend we came up with was the Reservoir Blend, which we still have today, and it was roasted on our first roaster," said Brabrant.

The original Surry Hills café recently introduced the world's first batch brew bar, Freepour Coffee On Tap, also launching one of coffee's earliest climate-change impact awareness campaigns, No Death To Coffee.

Single O's carbon neutral announcement marks the culmination of a 20-year journey, with a commitment to offsetting 3,219 tCO₂-e of CO₂-e through Greenfleet



Single-O coffee is backed by years of expert barista, café, and coffee experience. Combining for a quality product.



09 Feb 2024
 Article type: Publication
 Page: 18
 Food & Beverage Industry News
 Readership: 5316

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a license

MEET THE MANUFACTURER



Single-O continues to experiment with new flavours and blends based on expert market research and knowledge.



Single-O blends are also found tapped in cafe's.

Australia at a rate of \$17.82 per Carbon offset with the achievement of their carbon neutral status.

Single O was also the first roaster to introduce climate-resilient coffees to customers as part of its No Death To Coffee campaign, giving Aussies a world-exclusive taste of the future of coffee.

Banning hundreds of thousands of single use cups from landfill through a ban on branded single use cups since the brand's inception in 2003.

They have also installed 92 solar panels at their roasteries - a move which currently offsets 30 per cent of electricity production; co-founded The Juggler, which has saved over 18 million two-litre plastic milk bottles from the waste stream (seen in cafes across Australia); and launched their first climate-resistant F1 varieties in Australia.

Two of the products Single-O manufacture include the canned oat latte RTD coffee and the parachutes, a compostable drip bag product.

"Which was born out of seeing the drip bag category in Japan and thinking that if we could put high grade and premium coffee into that with a sustainable outer, how would it perform," added Brabrant.

"When we launched that product, we went out to the online market and got feedback from 200 customers and they told us they wanted particular things when it comes to sustainability of the product and how to dispose of it correctly, and price.



Single-O uses unique art from local artists on its 1kg coffee bags.

"Then on the can product it was the same process but different product."

Customer, and wider market feedback, has always been a crucial part of the Single-O approach.

"Our customer feedback model is very important to what we do," said Brabrant.

"We always come at it from a quality perspective, and we back ourselves, but you need to understand what your customer's expectations are.

"You get great feedback. Sales have been good, and we have sold 60 to 70 per cent of what we had to market, which is a positive sign. We are getting good qualitative feedback through the QR code, giving us things like taste profiles. It has been overwhelmingly positive.

"Consumer demand plays an important role. We have seen a massive



Single-O's Iced Latte Pilot Can is a prime example of the manufacturer's continued innovation.

increase oat milk in cafes."

Single-O coffee products are manufactured on the Australian Central Coast, with oats for the oat milk coffee being locally sourced.

"We source ingredients from 26 different countries, which goes up and down, and the main focus when we do that is on quality," added Brabrant.

"We have seen a massive growth in alternative milks, particularly oat milk. So this worked to add that to our product offering."

Tapping into areas that spoke to customers, while also providing a premium product was the goal for Single-O.

"You have to think back 20 years there weren't a lot of people talking about source, and single origin," said Brabrant.

"But I think our industry has come a long way in two decades and now that is commonplace and Single-O has almost become a category name in that time.

"But when the company started there was no one really talking about it. That was where it all started. They were four people with diverse backgrounds who wanted to give it a crack."

The growth of RTD coffee in Australia has also helped the growth of Single-O, which also has a small presence in Japan where the RTD coffee market is huge.

"RTD is massive in Japan, and we have a wholesaler over there and that has been great for us," said Brabrant.

"That does influence some of what we do but it was more about trends of convenience for people looking for a product on the go."