

IFE 2026 introduces new Sports & Nutrition section as sector continues rapid growth

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IFE, part of Food, Drink & Hospitality Week, will debut a dedicated Sports & Nutrition section at its 2026 event on 30 March – 01 April, responding to the rapid growth of the UK’s fitness and active-lifestyle market.

The UK sports nutrition sector is currently worth over \$1 million and is forecast to more than double by 2035, with a projected CAGR of around 7.8 per cent. Participation in physical activity is also at record levels: government data shows 63.7 per cent of adults in England now meet the Chief Medical Officers’ recommended activity guidelines, representing more than 30 million people exercising regularly.

The fitness industry continues to expand, with 11.5 million gym members across more than 5,600 clubs and a total market revenue of £5.7 billion in 2024. This creates a substantial consumer base looking for products that support training, recovery and everyday active living.

For retailers and hospitality operators, the trend represents a major commercial opportunity. Consumers are seeking protein-rich snacks, functional drinks, recovery supplements and health-focused meal options, and are willing to invest in credible products that align with their fitness and wellness goals.

From gym cafés and vending to hotel menus and retail shelves, demand for high-protein and performance-oriented foods is reshaping buying patterns. Mintel highlights that even amid cost pressures, consumer interest in high-protein and active-

lifestyle ranges remains resilient, positioning the category as a growth driver across retail and foodservice.

Federico Dellafiore, Event Manager for IFE, comments: “Sports and nutrition food products are no longer attracting niche audiences. They are part of mainstream consumer behaviour, and we’ve seen a strong appetite from both retailers and hospitality buyers for a dedicated platform. The new Sports & Nutrition section at IFE 2026 will showcase the breadth of this fast-growing category and enable meaningful connections between suppliers and professionals looking to meet evolving consumer demand.”

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