



Your Which?

Supermarket offers that aren't so special

Which? chief executive Peter Vicary-Smith looks at buy-one-get-one-free deals

This month's Which? report on supermarket special offers struck a chord. Whenever I do the grocery run, I am overwhelmed by the great number of large, brightly coloured signs promoting big discounts that seem too tempting to be ignored.

But, as the report shows, being persuaded by the buy-one-get-one-free offers actually means that, in my household, we end up throwing food away. According to the report, we're not alone – families with children waste an average of £610 a year on food that ends up in the bin.

This is bad news at a time when household budgets are being squeezed and, for the first time in at least 22 years,



a hard-pressed nation goes on the 'credit-crunch diet'.

While the squeeze seems to have forced the big stores to shift their marketing strategy to focus on price, I would be sceptical about whether the supermarkets are locked into a genuine price war or rather a campaign to present themselves as the cheapest option.

If supermarkets really wanted to offer good value for money, they should lower their prices, rather than

tempting us all to buy more than we need.

If you want to get the best out of your grocery shop, think about whether special offers really do represent good value for money. Avoid offers that could leave you out of pocket and reduce food waste, which can be caused by buy-one-get-one-free offers.

While we wait for supermarkets to slash the cost of shopping essentials, Which? has developed an invaluable online tool to help you compare those prices. Visit www.which.co.uk/supermarkets from 11 December to find out more information.

In addition, a change in buying habits should mean you can look forward to cuts in the cost of shopping and that less food ends up in the bin.

Which? people



Chris Vernon-Smith

Interactive content developer

When we prepare our complex research to be published on Which? Online, we aim to make sure it's presented as clear and concise content that's easy to navigate. The relaunch of the website this year means that it's quicker and easier than ever to get the information you want.

It's Chris Vernon-Smith's job to ensure that our online tools are as engaging and informative as possible. One recent example has been the creation of a 'green home' online.

Chris says: 'Green issues can appear in many reports and our recent creation of the interactive green home (see www.which.co.uk/greenhome) allows us to bring actionable information into one place. Users can click on each room to find out steps they can take towards a greener lifestyle – and click through to reports for in-depth advice.'

He adds: 'We've also just published a fuel calculator (see www.which.co.uk/fuelcalculator) that allows you to work out your CO2 emissions.'

Motoring is a key area for our content developers. They produce tables, image galleries and other content, such as videos for about 70 reports a month. Chris says: 'Image galleries are often used for car reports as they allow users to view parts of each model. In future, we hope to produce a green car tool so you can click on each part and get useful information.'

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