Consumer Countries/Markets

UK supermarket growth slows, but BWS sales still lead the way
Supermarket growth has slowed in the last month as the off-trade recovers, according to the latest data – but BWS still leads the FMCG category, according to Nielsen. Total till data from the 4 weeks to 5 September, BWS proved to be the strongest category in the UK supermarkets, growing 15%, boosted by champagne sales up 24% and sparkling wines up 17%, compared to wider FMCG sales which continued to level out at +5.3% in the four weeks ending 5th September 2020.

The analysts said supermarket growth was “stabilising” after the pandemic accelerated growth, at +5.3% year-on-year over the four week period, but argued that online growth was here to stay, with online FMCG sales up 102%.

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Natural / Physical Resources

Horticulture researchers find ways to combat climate change in vineyards
Researchers in Prosser are developing ways to preserve the quality of wine-making industries by creating ways to prevent grapes from overheating.

As climate change threatens Washington vineyards, a group of viticulture and enology researchers in Prosser are developing ways to preserve the quality of wine-making industries.

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Nuusbrokkies / News Snippets

Stores In Japan Are Stocking Shelves With Remote-Controlled Robots
Two major convenience store franchises in Japan are testing out robots capable of stocking shelves using two creepy hands with three “fingers” each. The seven-foot is called Model-T, named after the Ford automobile that triggered a car revolution in the early 1900s. During a pilot program, it was controlled by a “pilot” in an office miles away.

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Technology

The fourth agricultural revolution is coming – but who will really benefit?
Depending on who you listen to, artificial intelligence may either free us from monotonous labour and unleash huge productivity gains, or create a dystopia of mass unemployment and automated oppression. In the case of farming, some researchers, business people and politicians think the effects of AI and other advanced technologies are so great they are spurring a “fourth agricultural revolution”.

Given the potentially transformative effects of upcoming technology on farming – positive and negative – it’s vital that we pause and reflect before the revolution takes hold. It must work for everyone, whether it be farmers (regardless of their size or enterprise), landowners, farm workers, rural communities or the wider public. Yet, in a recently published study led by the researcher Hannah Barrett, we found that policymakers and the media and policymakers are framing the
fourth agricultural revolution as overwhelmingly positive, without giving much focus to the potential negative consequences.

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