How to communicate the added value of biodiverse vegetables?

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Results from the EU funded project DIVERSIFOOD

Biofach 2019

Nürnberg, February 2019
Background

Locally adapted varieties resulting from participatory on-farm breeding → Diversified agroecological systems → Biodiverse vegetables
Study design

Method:
• Representative online survey in the LINK and Norstat Internet-Panel in Switzerland, France, Spain and Italy

Field work:
• August 10th to August 21st 2017

Sample sizes:
• n = 500/country

Recruitment criteria:
• Internet access, aged 18 to 69, (co-)responsible for food shopping, eating vegetables
Research question 1

Which product attributes are most important for consumers when they buy vegetables in a supermarket?

Which product attributes to focus on in the communication with consumers?

→ Supermarket setting because people are most familiar with this purchase channel
## Results 1 – Importance of attributes

### Setting: buying vegetables in supermarket

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>CH</th>
<th>FR</th>
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*Setting: buying vegetables in supermarket*
Research question 2

How much do consumers value that

- biodiverse vegetables come from diversified agroecological systems,
- where the breeding and multiplying of seeds is again in the hands of farmers,
- resulting in a diverse food offer?
Results 2 – Diversifood label

Information treatment (including pictures):

«Our food chain is characterized by an ongoing concentration and standardization on all levels and a concomitant loss in diversity. [...] It is our aim to counteract this concentration process and increase the diversity of our food chain.

Nowadays, the breeding and multiplying of seeds is to a large extent in the hands of a small number of large multinational firms who develop so-called industrial varieties.

In the future the breeding and multiplying of seeds shall again be in the hands of farmers who would develop so-called «farmers’ varieties».

As a result this would lead to more diverse, locally adapted, healthy and tasty products, so-called «Diversifood»»
Results 2 – Diversifood label

→ On average 73% of the consumers like this idea and another 14% like it but have some objections.

→ In Switzerland, France and Spain a corresponding «Diversifood» label would have a high importance and in Italy medium importance for consumers when buying vegetables in a supermarket.

→ On average, consumers are willing to pay 10% to 20% more for tomatoes with a «Diversifood» label in a supermarket.
Results 2 – Diversifood label
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More **diversity**
(of food, taste/flavours)

More **biodiversity**

Empowerment of **farmers**
(more independence, freedom, autonomy)
Conclusions

- In Switzerland, France and Italy communication should focus on taste and provenance, be it regional or national.
- In Spain communication should focus on taste and appearance.
- The majority of consumers like the idea of a label for biodiverse products coming from diversified agroecological systems where the breeding and multiplying of seeds is again in the hands of farmers.
- Label communication should focus on diversity of food and taste, biodiversity and farmers’ empowerment.
Thank you for your attention!

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Appendix
Results – Willingness to pay more for diversifood

Information treatment: Introduce DIVERSIFOOD

Tomato-Mix
Switzerland
1kg

Organic Tomato-Mix
Switzerland
1kg

Tomato-Mix
Switzerland from the region
1kg

Organic Tomato-Mix
Switzerland from the region
1kg

FiBL
DIVERSIFOOD

04 February 2021
Results – Willingness to pay more for diversifood

Information treatment

Our food chain is characterized by an ongoing concentration and standardization on all levels and a concomitant loss in diversity:

1. At the beginning of the food chain are a small number of large multinational seed companies who develop homogeneous, industrial varieties for major crops.

   ![Global market share of top 3 seed companies:](image)

   - Monsanto (USA): 47%
   - DuPont (Pioneer) (USA): 27%
   - Syngenta (CH): 17%
   - Others: 9%

   Quelle: ETC Group 2011

2. These industrial varieties are cultivated by a decreasing number of farmers on increasingly monotonous agricultural landscapes.

3. The result is a highly standardized offer of fruits and vegetables that is displayed by a few large grocery stores.

   ![Image of fruits and vegetables]

Regarding the importance of diversity for the resilience, health and productivity of a system, this development is highly alarming, both for current and future generations.
Results – Willingness to pay more for diversifood Information treatment

It is our aim to counteract this concentration process and increase the diversity of our food chain.

How it is now:

Nowadays, the breeding and multiplying of seeds is to a large extent in the hands of a small number of large multinational firms who develop so-called ‘industrial varieties’.

Our idea:

In the future, the breeding and multiplying of seeds shall again be in the hands of farmers who would develop so-called ‘farmers’ varieties’.

As a result, this would lead to more diverse, locally adapted, healthy and tasty products, so-called ‘diversifood’:
Results – Willingness to pay more for diversifood

Price Sensitivity Meter: Four price points

- **penetration price**: the price where the highest market penetration can be expected

- **perceived normal price**: the price the target group expects for a product of good quality

- **point of marginal inexpensiveness**: the lowest acceptable price threshold that can be used for a product. A price below this threshold could result in damage to the brand image and loss of credibility.

- **point of marginal expensiveness**: the highest acceptable price threshold that can be used for a product. A price above this threshold would widely be regarded as unacceptable. It is just above the point for premium pricing.
Willingness to pay for 1 kg of mixed CH tomatoes (1/2)
Penetration price / perceived normal price

F130C: At what price per kilogram would you say: “These tomatoes are cheap/ expensive/ too expensive/ too cheap.”?; Price Sensitivity Meter (PSM); filter: consumes tomatoes and prefers offer 1 (see picture); [n = 91]
Willingness to pay for 1kg of mixed CH tomatoes (2/2)

Price range

Point of marginal inexpensiveness: Euro 1,75

Point of marginal expensiveness: Euro 4,25

F130C: At what price per kilogram would you say: “These tomatoes are cheap/ expensive/ too expensive/ too cheap.”?; Price Sensitivity Meter (PSM); filter: consumes tomatoes and prefers offer 1 (see picture); [n = 91]
F410: Please indicate your gender.; single punch question

Gender

Switzerland [n = 508]
- Female: 52%
- Male: 48%

France [n = 500]
- Female: 49%
- Male: 51%

Spain [n = 568]
- Female: 51%
- Male: 49%

Italy [n = 506]
- Female: 49%
- Male: 51%
What is your age?; numeric question

Age distribution by country:

- Switzerland [n = 508]: 17% 18-29, 33% 30-44, 29% 45-59, 21% 60-79
  Mean: 45

- France [n = 500]: 18% 18-29, 28% 30-44, 28% 45-59, 27% 60-79
  Mean: 46

- Spain [n = 568]: 16% 18-29, 34% 30-44, 27% 45-59, 23% 60-79
  Mean: 45

- Italy [n = 506]: 15% 18-29, 28% 30-44, 28% 45-59, 29% 60-79
  Mean: 47
**Nationality**

- **Switzerland** [n = 508]:
  - National: 88%
  - Foreigner: 5%
  - National with dual citizenship: 3%
  - Foreigner with dual citizenship: 7%

- **France** [n = 500]:
  - National: 97%
  - Foreigner: 3%

- **Spain** [n = 568]:
  - National: 95%
  - Foreigner: 3%

- **Italy** [n = 506]:
  - National: 96%
  - Foreigner: 4%

F420: Are you national, of a foreign nationality or a dual citizen?; single punch question; shares < 3% percentage numbers are not displayed.
F430: Do you work full-time, part-time or are you not working?; single punch question; shares < 3% percentage numbers are not displayed
F440: How many people live in your household (including you)?; numeric question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1 member</th>
<th>2 members</th>
<th>3 members</th>
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<th>&gt; 4 members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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Education

F460: Which is your highest completed level of education?; single punch question (categories have been aggregated for the sake of comparison between countries
F470: What is your monthly gross income?; single punch question; categories have been aggregated for the sake of comparison between countries.
F490: How often do you purchase organic food products?; single punch question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Never (1)</th>
<th>Very rarely (2)</th>
<th>Rather rarely (3)</th>
<th>From time to time (4)</th>
<th>Rather often (5)</th>
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