

Consumer Preferences for Fruit

Results of a pilot study in four EU-countries

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Introduction

The aim of this project (Workpackage 1.2 – CONPREF) is to understand the forces that drive consumer preferences with respect to fruit and fruit products in order to identify consumer segments to stimulate consumption. Before conducting the main study, a cross-cultural pilot study was carried out in four EU-countries. This poster presents the first results of this pilot in advance of the results of the main study.

Method

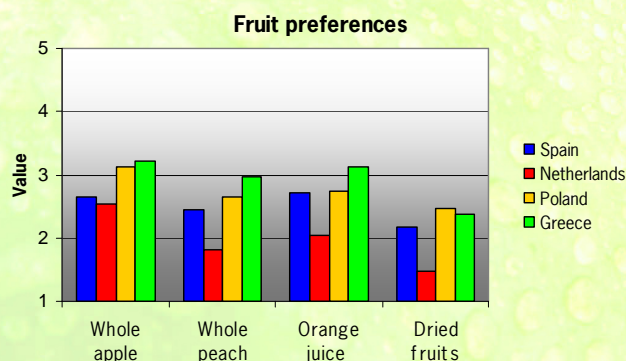
The pilot study involved an online panel study among consumers in Spain, The Netherlands, Poland and Greece. Participants completed a self-administered questionnaire on fruit preferences. The data were collected by a market research company in July 2008. In total, 307 participants completed the questionnaire (Spain, n=73; The Netherlands, n=89; Poland, n=70; Greece, n=75).

The questionnaire covered questions about consumer preferences and perceptions with regard to four different fruit products (e.g., apple, peach, freshly squeezed orange juice and dried fruits) and two non-fruit products (e.g., chocolate bar and salty snacks).

Results

Consumption Preferences

- Analyses of Variances reveal that mean scores for each fruit product preference differ over the countries ($p < .001$). In general, product preferences are highest in Greece and lowest in The Netherlands.
- Mean preferences also differ for the different fruit products. Apples seem to be preferred to peaches, even in countries where peaches tend to be more popular (i.e., Spain and Greece), and dried fruits are less popular than the other products.

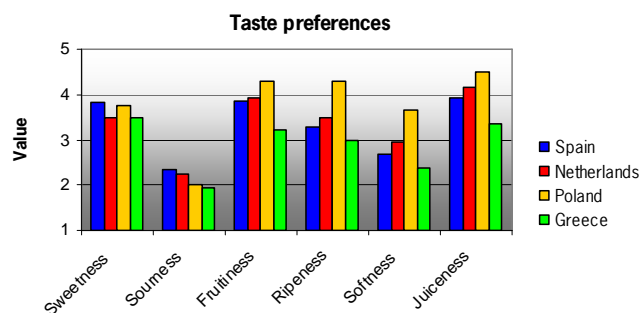


Beliefs and Feelings in Relation to Fruit Products

- Beliefs and feelings that consumers have with regard to fruit products differ across products ($p < .001$) and across the four countries ($p < .01$).
- In general, respondents believe that fruit products prevent diseases, give energy, are not so difficult to take along and eat, are fun and have a good taste. In contrast, although chocolate bars and salty snacks also are perceived to give energy, have a good taste and are relatively convenient, they are not believed to be healthy/prevent diseases.
- Respondents in The Netherlands are less positive about the ability of fruit to prevent diseases and to give energy and found fruit products more difficult to take along and to eat (except for apples). Polish people give a higher rating for the 'fun'-factor of fruit products.

Taste Preferences

- Tastes differ significantly across countries ($p < .001$), except for sweetness and sourness.
- Poland prefers fruity, ripe, soft and juicy fruits, whereas Greece prefers fruit that tends to be less fruity, less ripe, less soft and less juicy.



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