

# Consumer perceptions of fresh fruit and vegetables and the added value of antioxidants

A study among non, light and heavy organic food users

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# Introduction and aim of the study

- Introduction
  - Awareness of health benefits
  - Organic versus non-organic consumer
- Aim of the study
  - Consumer perceptions on antioxidants and organic
  - Implications for communication managers

# Research design

- Procedure
  - Two self-administered questionnaires
    - Online panel study representative for Dutch population (n=492)
    - Organic food store visitors (n=511)
  - Time Period data collection: April-May 2007
- Measures
  - Perceptions of Fresh Fruit & Vegetables
  - Knowledge on, and trust in antioxidants and organic food products
  - Domain specific innovativeness (DSI) and social identification (SI)
  - Information seeking and buying behavior
- Demographics respondents
  - Non users (13%), Light users (56%), Heavy users (31%)

# Perceptions of Fresh Fruit & Vegetables

- Perceptions of Fresh Fruit & Vegetables (FF&V)
  - Healthy
  - Tasty
  - Lots of vitamins
- Most important characteristics

All respondents:	Heavy / light users:	Non users:
• Good taste	• Organic	• Easy to prepare
• Vitamins	• Free of pesticides	• Good-looking
• Safety	• Without additives	

# Knowledge on, and trust in antioxidants

	Familiar with		Trust in (beneficial effects of)	
	Organic	Antioxidants	Organic	Antioxidants
Non user	2.72	2.52	2.64	2.81
Light user	3.91	3.12	3.70	3.12
Heavy user	4.75	3.78	4.51	3.46

# DSI and SI

- DSI
  - Innovative behavior on FF&V among heavy users of organic
- SI

Social Identification	Non user	Light user	Heavy user
	(n=132)	(n=566)	(n=305)
	Mean	Mean	Mean
Conscious food consumer	4.11	5.04	6.02
Organic food consumer	2.20	4.15	6.08
Sustainable food consumer	3.60	4.39	5.56
Innovative food consumer	3.30	4.16	4.88

# Information seeking and buying behavior

- Information seeking behavior
  - Product labeling
  - Overview cards
  - Internet
    - Organic food products
    - Food products
    - Antioxidants in food products
- Buying behavior
  - No differences in shopping frequency
  - More FF&V among heavy users

# Main conclusions

- Little knowledge on antioxidants
- Vitamins, taste and safety are preconditioned characteristics of FF&V
- Price no barrier for FF&V consumption



# Main conclusions

- Heavy users are most interested in antioxidants and their health aspects and perceive a high level of knowledge and trust
- Heavy and light users identify themselves with the conscious and sustainable food consumer
- Need for information about antioxidants

# Management implications

Marketing communication strategies should be differentiated toward specific target groups

- Heavy users
  - Most involved consumer group
  - Endorse their current knowledge
  - Emphasize on naturalness of food products
  - Confirm their innovative behavior
- Light users
  - Lower knowledge on health aspects of antioxidants and organic
  - Are tempted by peripheral cues
- Non users
  - Barely seek any information
  - Not involved with the added value of antioxidants
  - Should not be targeted specifically