

Effect of information on consumers' sensory evaluation of beef, plant-based and hybrid beef burgers

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Introduction: To facilitate the transition process from a meat-based diet to a diet with higher plant-based food intake, several options have been developed to provide consumers with an alternative to conventional meat products. One of these are the so-called 'hybrid meat products', which can appease consumers with the familiar taste and texture of meat products, whilst providing a superior nutritional profile for example by benefiting from reduced salt and fat and increased fibre, vitamin, and mineral content.

The aim of this study was to assess the effect of providing information on the consumers' sensory evaluation of three burgers: 100% beef, 100% plant-based and a hybrid burger (60% beef and 40% vegetables).

Materials and methods: A total of 99 UK consumers with balanced age and gender were recruited. Consumers were asked to assess the burger products under blind, expected and informed conditions and answer questions on liking, Check-all-that-apply (CATA), willingness to buy (WTB) and willingness to pay (WTP). In addition, under blind and informed conditions, consumers were asked to indicate their likes and dislikes about each sample.

Results: Results show that consumers are positive towards hybrid burgers, in terms of overall acceptability, purchase intent, willingness to pay and subjective comments.

Conclusions: Hybrid meat products could represent an effective way for consumers to lower their meat consumption without compromising too much on the sensory quality and could represent a transition product to a more plant-based diet. These results are valuable and should inform future marketing, labelling and reformulation efforts of new hybrid meat product launches.

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