

European consumer preferences for hybrid meat products

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Introduction: Hybrid meats, containing both meat and plant-based ingredients can bridge the gap for consumers who want to reduce their meat intake without sacrificing the taste, convenience and familiarity of processed meat products. Co-creation and the inclusion of consumers in development processes can influence the adoption and success of the product. Therefore, this study aimed to identify which healthy meat products incorporating plant-based ingredients have the most potential for development in each of the participating countries.

Materials and methods: 2,405 consumers from three European countries (Denmark, Spain and the UK) participated in an online survey to provide their preferences for hybrid meat products. Participants were screened on the basis of age, gender, being partly or primarily responsible for food purchases, purchasing and eating meat. Quotas were implemented to ensure participants in each country were equally distributed in terms of age and gender.

Results: Overall, the results indicated that all consumers would most like a beef burger made with 25% plant-based ingredients, such as onions, herbs, spices, garlic or mushrooms. Consumers considered hybrid meat products as “healthy” and “environmentally friendly”, however they were less likely to be considered “enjoyable”, “affordable” and “simple”.

Conclusions: These findings provide insights and practical suggestions for companies manufacturing healthier solutions for meat products and policy makers aiming to promote healthier diets. As future resilience of the meat industry will require responding to food expenditure patterns and trends of meat consumption, these hybrid products could support value growth by providing an opportunity to build a strategy around the growing flexitarian consumer demographic.

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