

CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF TRIPLOID SALMON AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL MARKETING

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Introduction

One of the remit of the Salmotrip project is to study the marketability of triploid salmon. From former cases dealing with the introduction of new techniques in food production and processing it is known that consumer resistance and societal opposition against new techniques can be strong. This has been observed in particular in the domain of genetic techniques.

In this project, several aspects of consumer information and communication are being addressed. The objective of this work is to study consumer perception and valuation of this particular new production technology, taking into account the potential risks and benefits as they are perceived by consumers. The relative economic value of these aspects will then be established.

Methods

Several studies were performed in 2009 and 2010. A discourse analysis on information available and discussions going on the world wide web was followed by one-to-one interviews with consumers, and NGO and retailer representatives. In the summer of 2010 a large quantitative study will be performed quantifying the attitudes of French, German, and UK consumers towards triploid salmon, with a specific focus on perceived risks and benefits, information need (content and type), information trust (source and provider). Some important communication and marketing aspects will be addressed in the survey,

Results

The discourse analysis indicates that not a lot of information is available and that knowledge levels are generally low. On the average, attitudes towards genetic engineering are negative, as are public discussions on salmon farming in general. Perceptions of triploid trout for sport fisheries are quite positive, perceptions of triploidy in fruit (grapes) are neutral and also largely unknown. The above findings were largely confirmed in the one-to-one interviews.

Conclusions

The results of the qualitative studies and the fresh results of the survey will be discussed from a marketing strategy perspective. So far, the results seem to favor a bottom-up consumer strategy with an emphasis on the communication with NGOs.

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