

Consumer preferences for farmers' varieties

Background & Research Questions

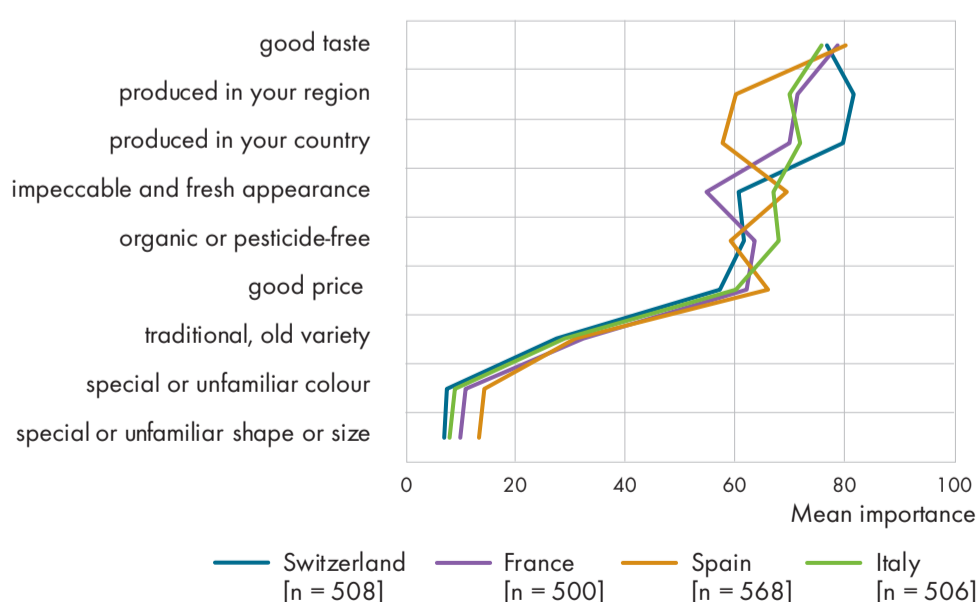
Our food value chain is characterized by an ongoing concentration and standardization on all levels and a concomitant loss in diversity. Putting the breeding and multiplication of seeds back into the hands of farmers is one strategy to counteract this concentration process and embed diversity in the food value chain. In this project we investigated consumers' preferences for so-called farmers' varieties, using vegetables as an example.

- Which product attributes are most important for consumers when they buy vegetables?
- Do consumers like the idea of farmers' varieties, i.e. varieties that are developed through the breeding and multiplying of seeds by farmers, and why?
- Are consumers willing to pay a price premium for farmers' varieties, that are more diverse, locally adapted, healthy and tasty?
- How should farmers' varieties be marketed (marketing channels, communication)?
- For which product categories should farmers' varieties be developed?

General findings

- The most important vegetable purchasing criteria are in order of priority: (1) good taste, (2) produced in your region, (3) produced in your country (see Fig. 1).
- Consumers like the idea of farmers' varieties. The most important reasons are in order of priority: (1) more diversity, (2) more independence for farmers, (3) more taste (diversity).
- Consumers are willing to pay a price premium for farmers' varieties (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 1: Importance of vegetable product attributes per country



Data collection

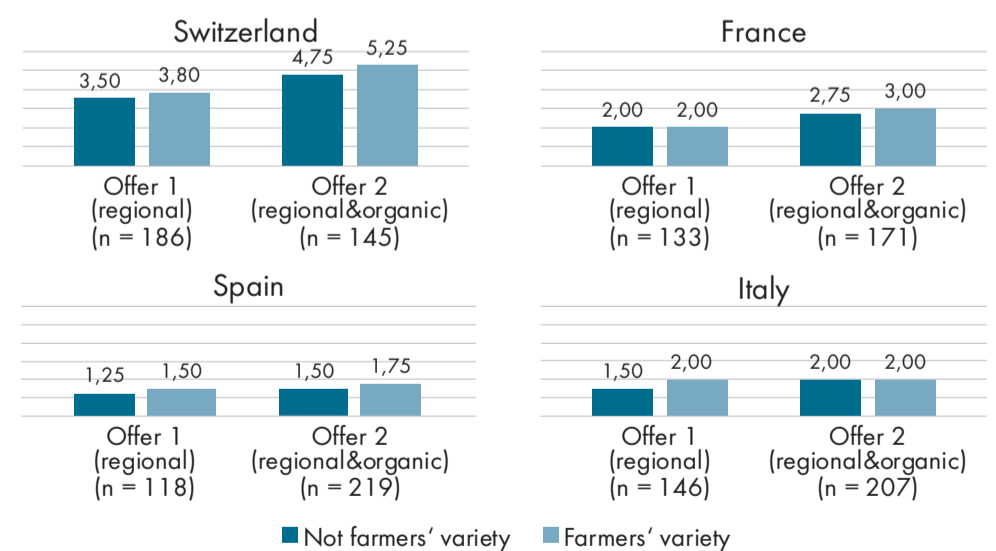
- Representative online survey in the LINK and Norstat Internet-Panel in Switzerland, France, Spain and Italy.
- 500 participants per country.
- Field work from August 10th to August 21st 2017.



Diversifood vegetable varieties

- Farmers varieties should be marketed on a regional/national level – directly by the producer (farm shops, local markets, etc.) or using intermediaries like supermarkets (high reach) and/or speciality stores. The communication to consumers should focus on taste (diversity), regional or national provenance, diversity and independence for farmers.
- The most important product categories for farmers' varieties are in order of priority: (1) vegetables, (2) fruits, (3) dried fruits and nuts, (4) bread.

Fig. 2: Price premium per country (in €)



Acknowledgement

This project has received funding from the European Union's H2020 Programme under grant agreement no 633571

