

Reassuringly British:  
Consumer engagement with domestic products and brands

**Abstract**

**Purpose:** This paper investigates consumer engagement, evaluation and beliefs of domestic products and the influence of such associated attributes communicated via domestic COO labelling within the United Kingdom.

**Design/methodology/approach:** A visual ethnographic approach utilising the methods of autophotography and photo elicitation interviews was conducted to explore consumers' interaction with the domestic COO label and provenance advertising.

**Findings:** The results of photo elicitation interviews revealed both positive and negative cognitive, affective and normative implications of domestic provenance labelling of influence emerging within consumers.

**Originality/value:** This paper seeks to contribute towards the understanding of provenance labelling influence on consumers for products within the FMCGs sector, whilst specifically commenting upon attributes of reliance and influence that may assist navigation of changing priorities and national sentiments.

**Research limitations:** The findings are applied to the context of the United Kingdom, with contextual limitations acknowledged of doing so. Convenience sampling limitations are also acknowledged.

**Practical implications:** The findings provide UK-based FMCG manufacturers and retailers insight into the associated attributes of domestic brand and products interpreted by consumers, communicated via a COO label, to assist in their purchasing strategies.

**Keywords:** country-of-origin labelling; local produce; FMCG manufacturers; brand origin; consumer brand engagement

**Paper type:** research paper

No conflict of interest declared

## Introduction

Many studies within the disciplines of marketing and consumer psychology attempt to provide evidence that consumer behaviour, being the decision-making process of the consumer and their subsequent evaluation of products or services, can be influenced by past or present sentiments or events related to the nation-state, whether political, economic or social (Loxton *et al.*, 2020; Deli-Gray *et al.*, 2013; Viktoria Rampl *et al.*, 2012). Whilst consumer attitudes towards domestic or imported goods are often believed to evolve slowly (Karimov and El-Murad, 2019), perceptions of a country, its people and its products can evolve quickly in response to rapidly changing socio-political or socio-economic actions, thereby rapidly changing consumer behaviours towards goods originating where periods of turmoil are occurring (Caskey *et al.*, 2020). Such consumer affinity or animosity towards domestic or foreign products and the factors that facilitate them has received considerable attention within literature over time (e.g. Andéhn and Decosta, 2018; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999; Lampert and Jaffe, 1998; Khachaturian and Morganosky, 1990).

Within the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) sector, the influence of country-of-origin (COO) labelling on such habitual or frequently purchased necessity products is generally found to be of weaker influence, with consumers responding favourably to other comparable extrinsic cues such as brand or price (Pandey *et al.*, 2015; Ahmed *et al.*, 2004). However, it is documented that socio-political or socio-economic changes can affect customer engagement with the COO label (Coleman *et al.*, 2020; Dyer, 2017), as new and different extrinsic product attributes become prioritised and favoured in response to external changes, beliefs and pressures related to, or experienced within, the nation state. Recent examples include shifts within the socio-political landscape resulting from the United Kingdom (UK) leaving the European Union (EU) and the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to the return of psycho-political forces impacting retail, such as consumer ethnocentrism, local identity and global animosity, changing consumer behaviour as the product attribute of origin reinforces the importance of COO information on grocery labels influencing brand perceptions and purchasing decisions (Naeem, 2021; Ardley, 2018; Steenkamp, 2017). For example, consumption changes within the UK associated within the transition period found a 6% increase in demand for UK FMCG products, and a 13% decrease for EU FMCG products (Nardotto and Sequeira, 2021).

Whilst provenance information becomes a profound and influential, yet malleable product attribute assisting consumers within their purchasing decisions, perceptions of the British brand specifically has fluctuated over time (e.g. Dyer, 2017; Clayton and Higgins, 2020). With grounding in expectancy value theory and cue selection theories, this investigation seeks to explore customer beliefs regarding the importance and wider meanings that products and brands of UK origins, including the COO label itself in communicating such attributes, offers when, through globalisation and other social or political transformations, the wider meaning and purpose of the nation state has become redefined. Through the adoption of a visual ethnographic research approach, this paper seeks to explore consumer engagement with domestic products and brands, including existing beliefs, and other synonymous attributes related to provenance. Specifically, the cognitive, affective and normative attributes of consumers' interaction with domestic products of origin and associated COO label are explored to offer insight on what possible emergent priorities or beliefs are prioritised, relied upon or of influence. Findings indicate domestic provenance labelling possess attributes of

significance that engage consumer interaction, including trust-building and reassurance attributes, can incite emotions linked to political or other nationalistic beliefs, whilst engaging salient beliefs of supporting domestic producers. Commentary is provided to understand if such insights can be used to identify the future of UK retail and the importance of domestic provenance of goods.

## **Literature review**

Exposed to a perceived infinite number of stimuli within their shopping environments, consumers attempt to overcome informational overload and simplify their decision-making, according to information and categorisation theory (Zeugner-Roth and Bartsch, 2020). Categorising products related to provenance is one such strategy (Tseng and Balabanis, 2011). The inclusion of provenance or country symbols and imageries upon product labelling to signify a particular COO has long been utilised as a significant marketing communication strategy by manufacturers seeking to influence the categorisation process, thereby informing product evaluation and buying decisions of consumers (Pegan *et al.*, 2020; Bilkey and Nes 1982). Whilst often recognised as possessing weaker influence within the consumer decision-making process for FMCGs, provenance influence is malleable for such goods during political, economic or social turbulence as consumers infer alternative attributes from domestic goods (Loxton *et al.*, 2020; Hartnett *et al.*, 2007; Dube and Black, 2010). The response of manufacturers and consumers, and the influence of product provenance during such periods, along with its advertisement prominence, consumer engagement and desirability is complex and varied.

### *The COO effect*

Previous studies have provided a theoretical foundation and research direction for investigating the COO effect. One such explanation of evaluating products based upon provenance is found within Expectancy Value Theory, where normative salient beliefs promoted by COO stimuli affect product attributes and attitudes (Bloemer *et al.*, 2009). However, consumers may also evaluate products contingent on stimuli possessing high predictive and confidence value, according to theories on cue selection (Johansson, 1989), where cognitive and affective processing also influence behaviours. Within the FMCG sector, the relative importance and influence of a product's COO within various consumer evaluation processes remains a challenged issue (Brand and Baier, 2022; Wegapitiya and Dissanayake, 2018; Insch *et al.*, 2015). COO labels possess limited appeal or influence on low involvement goods during consumer evaluations or purchasing decisions in UK supermarkets, according to Kemp *et al.* (2010). Acknowledging that FMCGs habitual purchases, similar findings may suggest that provenance labelling only influences high-involvement purchase decisions or are reserved for high price-related or premium goods only (Josiassen and Assaf, 2010). However, limited COO research exists into FMCGs specifically (Melewar and Skinner, 2020a). Recent efforts attempt to further investigate the contextual and temporal specificity of such labelling practices in determining its effectiveness, particularly within the era of increased globalisation, as the label's attributes transform in the wake of external changes (Halkias *et al.*, 2022; Karimov and El-Murad, 2019; Insch and Cuthbert, 2018).

### *The British COO effect*

How and why FMCG manufacturers choose to communicate their product's provenance is multifaceted, including consumers' engagement with it, and malleable over time. For example, using a 'British mark' has previously resulted in the devaluation of brands whilst possessing questionable influence upon shoppers, with manufacturers once choosing to avoid such promotional techniques (Clayton and Higgins, 2020; Vieira, 2017). The "Buy British" movement of the 1970s and 1980s instigated by the UK government to overcome the economic turmoil of the time failed to resolve the issues caused by increased globalisation and deindustrialisation, where consumers were uninfluenced in purchasing domestic goods, with attributes of British goods suffering from the stereotypical views of being unreliable or of inferior quality to foreign equivalents (Clayton and Higgins, 2020).

However, the inclusion of implicit and explicit British provenance information on product labelling and packaging design is evident, with the practice becoming particularly prominent during the Brexit debate (Ardley, 2018) and the COVID-19 pandemic (Bentall *et al.*, 2021). Even before these periods, a renewed consumer interest in the *Made in Britain* label was observed and considered a prominent marketing strategy (Comunian and England, 2018), with domestic retailers launching their own British-made product ranges. Within the last few decades, British brands generally have become synonymous with creativity, freedom and rebelliousness, supported by a loyal consumer base (Ardley, 2018). Groves (2001) found that a British mark shares positive synonymous product attributes such as authenticity and quality within the FMCG sector particularly, with Benton *et al.*, (2017) reporting an increase in domestic consumers preferring to buy British. However, understanding such attraction to COO information generally and British provenance specifically, is complex, with changeable attitudes towards the label subject to product category, temporal and contextual conditions (Dyer, 2017; Semaan *et al.*, 2019).

Semaan *et al.* (2019) attempts to address such mixed results observed over time and within literature regarding the effectiveness and influence of the COO label, suggesting that the heuristic has different effects on different consumers in different temporal or evaluative contexts. The perception of a product's COO is malleable, with the appeal able to change over time because of evolving historical and contemporary beliefs and events (Amatulli *et al.*, 2019). For example and regarding British branding reputation, the 2001 foot and mouth disease crisis within Britain not only instigated a change in consumer behaviour towards British meat produce, but also generated a debate over local vs. commercial purchasing (Hartnett *et al.*, 2007). Brexit evidenced changes in consumer purchasing, highlighting a perceived overreliance on imported goods, with consumers recognising the importance of supporting more local or British producers during this time (Dyer, 2017). Such similarities were also observed during periods of lockdown within Britain, with consumers recognising, besides from the advantageous practicalities of travelling shorter distances, limiting their exposure to others or overcoming availability issues, the importance of purchasing from and supporting local British producers during times of crises rather than larger corporations (Palau-Saumell *et al.*, 2021; Gordon-Wilson, 2021). Given that perceptions of products and brands of domestic COO, including the wider national sentiment and environmental conditions, have changed over the last fifty years, uncovering the associations of being

branded British today may assist manufacturers in developing new provenance-based marketing strategies.

### *Manufacturer motivations for provenance labelling*

Why manufacturers engage in origin labelling is typically a result of either a regulated, mandatory requirement to explicitly identify the COO of certain products, or an unregulated, voluntary design heuristic intended to take advantage of a positive country, regional association, or a heightened demand for domestic goods due to changes within the domestic landscape (Aichner, 2014). However, manufacturers often include COO information on their products without fully understanding the impacts such practices have on consumer behaviour (Palmatier and Crecelius, 2019). Manufacturers may believe COO labelling results in positive consumer evaluations and therefore increased purchases, often without citing evidence or engaging in appraisal methods to understand if the practice is providing the benefits assumed to be true (Insch *et al.*, 2015). The label's perceptive influence may become ubiquitous with other extrinsic attributes, as FMCGs manufacturers for example often believe that COO labelling communicates authenticity or product quality (Insch and Florek, 2009).

Manufacturers competing against imported goods may assume that the label provides a source of competitive advantage as a product differentiation strategy (Baker and Ballington, 2002), regarded as both a territorial brand management strategy within the domestic market and a defence strategy against larger multinational competitors (Melewar and Skinner, 2020b). Smaller, inexperienced manufacturers or those lacking resources to develop such brand identity may also use COO labelling as a differentiation strategy (Niss, 1996). The label's influence for non-perishable FMCG goods remains inconclusive due to limited investigations, although an association with reliability has been identified (Leonidou *et al.*, 1999). Changes within the socio-political or economic landscape resulting in a perceived consumer appetite to support local products may consist of another motivator, although manufacturers showcasing their provenance during this time may inadvertently influence brand image, particularly during heightened political tension, as national imageries and symbols become synonymous with a political affiliation (Ardley, 2018).

### *Common COO communication strategies*

How manufacturers choose to communicate their product's provenance often combines both visual and linguistic stimuli (Aichner, 2014; Insch and Florek, 2009). The '*Made in...*' descriptor is one such frequently used manifestation, explicitly providing an immediate identifiable origin for consumers (Oumlil, 2020). Rural or small and medium-sized businesses often utilise such strategies to exploit positive stereotypes or attitudes associated with a particular regional (or local) city or province (Adina *et al.*, 2015). Other language-based COO strategies include stereotypical brand names, like the fictional placenames introduced by British supermarket retailer Tesco plc. associated with different product categories, including Boswell Farms (beef products) and Suntrail Farms (fresh fruit) (Barnes, 2017), or descriptors with culturally adapted value appeals, including local dialects and languages, a strategy often used by smaller businesses to appeal to the local community (Hornikx *et al.*, 2010).

Visual COO stimuli are argued as more effective than linguistic practices (Hornikx *et al.*, 2007), manifesting through flags, symbols, and emblems. Flags can however inadvertently signal a political affiliation. Shanafelt (2008) noted how the St George's cross has become tainted by associations with far-right political ideologies. Whilst immediately communicating a product's provenance and being instantly recognisable by consumers, adopting the Union Jack flag to highlight both "British" and "local" often results in confusion, as it does not communicate an exact place of origin (Penney and Prior, 2014). This highlights the wider complexities of investigating the COO effect, as contextualising provenance can be achieved in numerous ways and produce disaggregate effects, including country-of-brand, country-of-design, country-of-manufacture, country-of-assembly and country-of-parts, each possessing differing influences upon product evaluation, brand evaluation and purchase intentions (De Nisco and Oduro, (2022). Despite these varied provenance indicators, previous studies have highlighted how the consumer rarely acknowledges the information on labels, and therefore manufactures may benefit from improved effectiveness by combining both text-based and visual cues about their place of origin (Penney and Prior, 2014).

Ultimately however, it appears that such labelling practice is a key driver for consumers within their purchasing decisions for FMCGs, but different and underlying socio-political, socio-economic and other psychological concepts or cues may interact with its influence or attribute associations (Amatulli *et al.*, 2019). Research has begun to support the idea that the label's effectiveness not only varies across different product categories and consumer groupings, but that its influence also varies across temporal and spatial dimensions in response to changing external conditions.

## **Methodology**

Adopting a visual ethnographic research approach, an integrated data collection activity utilising the methods of autophotography and photo elicitation was undertaken to explore how domestic consumers interact and evaluate UK COO labelling and provenance communication strategies. Specifically, it is explored how provenance information and origin as a product attribute becomes synonymous with other influential and reassuring attributes, often relied upon or recognised to navigate shifting and emergent consumer priorities within the nation state. Such exploration responds to the acknowledgement that such domestic product and brand attributes are pronounced within the UK as brands seek to capitalise on provenance within their marketing communications (Ardley, 2018).

Visual ethnography is used extensively within interdisciplinary research, incorporating visual media into research practice (Pink, 2021; Glaw *et al.*, 2017; Harper, 2002). The interactive participant-driven research method of autophotography involving the collection of visual data taken by participants themselves, alongside subsequent photo elicitation interviews, allows the researcher to work in collaboration with participants, using the evidence collected to explore meanings and beliefs whilst allowing the use of photographs to be accepted as a data set (Pink, 2021; Thomas, 2009; Brace-Govan, 2007). Once reliant upon disposable cameras, digital photography development has increased the accessibility of such methods within qualitative studies across a variety of disciplines, where smartphones or social media sites including Instagram can be efficiently used to achieve research objectives (Derr and Simons, 2020; Morrison *et al.*, 2019; Glaw *et al.*, 2017).

The complementary process of photo elicitation utilises participants' own collected imagery to generate discussion within an interview setting (Bignante, 2010). Such methods evoke feelings or memories, allowing for different perspectives and discussion than what conventional interviews can provide, where participants respond to symbolic representations within photographs to identify different layers of meaning and interpretation (Glaw *et al.*, 2017). This collaborative experience enhances conventional qualitative data collection efforts, resulting in greater expression of beliefs by participants via their collected imagery, increasing research rigor and allowing for a triangulation of the data between different sources (Bignante, 2010). This also addresses the difficulties of eliciting emotional responses attributed to conventional methods (Pink, 2021).

### *Data collection procedures*

The data collection activity was a month-long research investigation during a period where the practice of domestic provenance labelling by brands was pronounced (April 2019), requiring participants to visually log, using their smartphone camera, any FMCG product or brand they encountered whilst shopping instore that had a visible UK COO label or provenance attribute incorporated on the product, brand name or promotional material. Adopting a convenience sampling method, 25 individuals were recruited to ensure practical and logistical difficulties of photographic studies that often occur with larger samples were minimised (Balomenou and Garrod, 2016). Such recruitment methods and sample sizes are most common, with 36.7% of previously documented autophotography studies utilising the same sampling procedures and 67.4% having a sample size of less than 50 (Balomenou and Garrod, 2016). Participants of UK nationality were selected to complement the research objective of investigating domestic customer attitudes to domestic provenance labelling. 72% of participants were female and 28% male with an average age of 41. Participants required no specified skill or ability other than possessing a smartphone with camera functionality and an email account to forward photographs to a specified address.

Participants of the data collection activity were invited to interview to assist with photo elicitation. Specifically, this involved verbally discussing a selection of their own photographs to evoke feelings and beliefs, ultimately furthering the contribution to the development of a rich data set combining domestic COO labelling prevalence, design and consumer evaluation. Photographs chosen for this purpose ensured that there was evidence present of both product category and COO labelling design variations. Questions were organised to elicit cognitive, affective, and normative themes given that the label has been found to possess these three distinct psychometric processing capabilities (Andéhn and Decosta, 2018; Adina *et al.*, 2015; Bloemer *et al.*, 2009; Johansson, 1989) to ascertain COO labelling influence, interpretation, and experiences during the photographic collection phase. A semi-structured interview approach was adopted within photo elicitation interviews as different participants had collected different photographs of both product category and COO label design.

Questions were therefore organised into categories to uncover meanings and beliefs pertaining to COO labelling influence in three distinct themes: (1) cognitive based questions, (2) affective based questions and (3) normative based questions. Questions were specifically contextualised to understand consumers' attitudes to provenance-based attributes that may provide marketing insight to their reliance, influence and reassurance during crises. Cognitive

based questions sought to elicit opinions regarding manufacturers' intentions when including provenance labelling on their own products, the consequences of doing so during a heightened period of divisiveness, and the overall usefulness of origin information during the shopping experience. Affective based questions prompted discussion of specific evoked emotions when viewing origin labelling on products specifically during such crises, along with the overall affective experiences during shopping or product purchase evaluations. Normative based questions sought to uncover salient beliefs of the moral consequences of engaging with domestic produce. These three distinct constructs are often used to address an acknowledged lack of overarching theory that can explain the COO effect (Andéhn and Decosta, 2018; Brijs *et al.*, 2011), with such lines of inquiry successfully utilised within similar studies exploring provenance evaluation (i.e. Pegan *et al.*, 2020; Tellström *et al.*, 2006).

### *Data analysis procedures*

The analytical approach adopted an interpretive thematic analysis of the collected imagery in combination with interview responses to ensure a comprehensive examination of the data, as summarised in the analytical protocol as recommended by Glaw *et al.* (2017) whilst building upon the seminal work of photographic elicitation analysis by Collier and Collier (1986), and further developed by Noland (2006) and Thomas (2009). Question responses were first organised into three categories (cognitive, affective and normative), allowing for the identification of common themes regarding provenance labelling strategies and their influence. A detailed analysis followed using the thematic protocols of Braun and Clarke (2006), with each theme recorded using an identified word or phrase, creating a detailed data set. For example, a cognitive response to the design variation of the "Made in..." label was "*I have always associated the use of Made in Britain or similar to appeal to consumers that are looking for higher quality products,*" so "quality" became the identified theme within the design category. Key themes emerging from interview data were identified as a result, allowing for the identification of common or representative responses. Quotes were also recorded to evidence and support the emerging themes within the interview response data.

### **Analysis of findings**

Seeking to elicit how provenance information operates across three distinct behavioural dimensions and how such information can be interpreted by consumers as a possibility to assist in navigating change, questions were split into categories: (1) cognitive based questions, (2) affective based questions and (3) normative based questions. Adopting the photo elicitation and analysis methods to maintain collaborative interaction, interviewees were shown a selection of their own collected photographs to generate discussion.

### *Cognitive responses*

Cognitive questions sought to explore how country-image perceptions or COO labelling becomes synonymous with quality or trust attributes of products and manufacturers. Questions also sought to explore why manufacturers may include provenance labelling on their products as a design or marketing strategy. Emerging from the interview data was the belief that such information becomes synonymous with specific product qualities and thereby



taken advantage of by manufactures as a signal for quality or as a trust-building mechanism to encourage a purchase, where product quality is reinforced through UK COO labelling:

*"I have always associated the use of 'Made in Britain' or similar to appeal to consumers that are looking for higher quality products, therefore brands would use this as a way to promote just how good English products are. Featuring Britain on product packaging might give some consumers a sense of trust in what they are buying."*

Female, 31

Considering the advantages of communicating domestic origin information of products to consumers, common beliefs were that manufacturers were able to rely upon a perceived trust to reassure the customer during anticipated future difficulties:

*"I trust British businesses and I imagine that it's going to be more and more important to support them in the future if Brexit means we can no longer import food and drinks".*

Male, 47

Similar reflections were observed when exploring the perceived quality of domestic products, where links between origin, quality, and consumer trust was discussed. Participants signalled beliefs that shoppers would want to be reassured by such labelling as an indicator of product quality, thereby increasing trust:

*"People like to know where their food is produced or grown. We import far too much stuff when we have it on our own doorstep. They would trust that it is likely to have been subject to vigorous quality checks at the time of production."*

Female, 55

However, anticipating possible future restrictions impacting choice and availability during crises, concerns were shared that the label may become attributed within higher prices:

*"We have good food standards in this country, I would be happy to buy more British products if I had too. I think that things might be more expensive though if more people have to buy British."*

Female, 41

Positive sentiments were not shared by all, where UK provenance labelling does not equate to reliability or quality attributes for all products:

*"I think [the label] has been tainted. It's useful for finding goods that I want to purchase from the UK that I know are good quality, but 'British' does not mean that all products are going to be of good quality...even though the label might want to us to think that it does."*

Female, 47

Similar concerns were also shared when such limited choice may result in product standards suffering:

*“British’ doesn’t mean the same thing to everyone. It also doesn’t mean necessarily good quality either. If we have limited choice in the future and are forced to buy more British food, then there are certain products or meals I would choose to avoid, as we’re not good at making everything.”*

Female, 50

Considering the advantages of communicating origin information of products to consumers, common beliefs were that manufacturers were able to rely upon a perceived positive reputation for quality to reassure the customer during difficult times, whilst allowing the customer to positively support local producers by purchasing these types of goods, and more generally believing that origin labelling will assist with sales or result in repeat business:

*“I think brands will be able to appeal to consumers who want to continuously support local businesses and products to help them survive during the rocky roads ahead.”*

Male, 28

### *Affective responses*

During the second phase of the photo elicitation interviews, questions sought to uncover emotions and feelings when viewing UK COO labelling and associated imagery on products, with discussions including what effect this may have during the shopping experience. An overwhelming majority recorded a positive response is engendered during such evaluations, with commonly cited beliefs being a sense of pride, reassurance or general enthusiasm to see such representation on products. Specifically, positive emotional responses were provoked when acknowledging how purchasing actions supports suppliers during difficult events:

*“I feel that by purchasing local products, I am helping Britain’s economy. It makes me feel part of something, but that I am also helping the little person.”*

Male, 24

Participants reflected upon feelings of pride when viewing such imagery, resulting in a building of trust with the supplier whilst recognising an opportunity to support both businesses and the wider economy during difficulties:

*“It evokes a sense of pride, approval and trust. It makes me feel that by buying British I am supporting British businesses and helping the UK economy.”*

Female, 31

The reasons behind viewing such imagery positively were explored. A common theme emerging was how viewing origin information evokes a sense of patriotism, which when acted upon through the opportunity to purchase becomes synonymous with those consumers who are also seeking to support home country manufactures:

*“It makes me have a sense of pride and patriotism. I’m more inclined to purchase these goods as you know money is going back into our own country.”*

Male, 26

However, negative reactions towards domestic provenance labelling were also observed, stemming from a perceived association or potential confusion from utilising such designs often seen as representing political symbols or ideologies. The type and design of COO labelling is influential:

*“If I felt that a product was overly marketed with the Union Jack, overly stating that it is proudly Made in Britain (so labouring the point) I might be less inclined to buy it as I would see it as overly nationalistic and/or xenophobic.”*

Female, 42

With regards to specific types of design manifestations or provenance communications, more detailed distinctions were made when viewing local associations on produce as opposed to wider national representation, with an increased sense of loyalty to the local producer highlighted, showcasing how both cognitive and affective responses are of influence:

*“I would be inclined to be pleased to see that it is made in Britain, I might associate it with being high quality, and want to try it based on that. If it were locally produced, I would be very inclined to try it in order to support local business.”*

Female, 30

#### *Normative beliefs*

Final questions sought to explore normative beliefs of participants. Specifically, discussions explored the moral, social and personal values of purchasing domestically, however it is noted that that normative level responses can be influenced by both cognitive and affective processing (Adina *et al.*, 2015). Responses evidenced therefore specifically allude to participant beliefs of other shoppers' engagement and perceived importance of engaging with domestic products during crises. Exploring why shoppers would engage with purchasing domestically, themes of helping others or how purchasing actions supports the economy during difficult events were observed:

*“I believe it's to reinforce the belief that the product is produced in the UK, giving the consumer an idea that they're supporting their country.”*

Male, 26

It was believed that the label is used to create a sense of, or take advantage of, the national pride of consumers during difficult times, particularly those who have instilled patriotic beliefs and wish to act upon them, as one participant reflected:

*“To create a sense of national identity, self-sufficiency and self-reliance during [this] change, which in turn can generate sales through a sense of belonging to Britishness as a concept.”*

Female, 27

The use of COO labelling designs and a possible confusion of a political agenda was commonly cited as reasons why individuals might possess negative beliefs towards representations of provenance. Possible perceived associations to right-wing politics were highlighted given how

often national flags are utilised in such origin communication labelling, suggesting that imagery, not text-based associations, are influential:

*“People could assume this symbolic or national imagery is associated with particular political beliefs given how often it is used within political messages and with certain ideologies that use this imagery, and therefore that particular brand or manufacturer also shares the same beliefs. I imagine this could be off putting to those who do not share the same beliefs. People can view it as unwelcoming or racist”.*

Female, 63

Further confusion of provenance symbols and political associations was discussed:

*“If a customer feels closely associated to Britain, then packaging, imagery or association of this kind would make a product significantly more attractive to them. They would want to support British business because doing so supports their political standpoint. The likelihood is that the presence of Britain would subconsciously impact them when making a purchase.”*

Male, 28

Lastly, design types of COO information and their effectiveness was considered. Many considered symbolic references such as country flags may prove divisive, given their ability to evoke a sense of patriotism for certain consumer groups, but often used more generally to signify a certain political agenda or alliance. Concerns were identified of UK imagery commonly used to indicate origin, such as the Union Jack flag, possibly resulting in confusion or suggest a link to political affiliations or beliefs. Participants questioned whether such practices are necessary for manufacturers and whether brands needed to display or communicate such provenance information through their marketing or design activities. This highlights a danger where types of domestic country symbols or imagery has become synonymous with a particular political alliance, therefore resulting in the two becoming confused when interpreted by the customer:

*“Some people feel that this emphasis of British is now distasteful, synonymous with patriotism, anti-immigration sentiment, prejudiced against others as well as/opposed to proud of British products. The flag is all over [this] Brexit madness.”*

Female, 30

## **Discussion of key findings and conclusion**

Distinct themes were recorded during elicitation interviews conducted with participants of the photographic data collection activity. On a cognitive processing level, participants admitted origin information is a useful cue within their supermarket shopping decisions and will assist with increased sales during periods of turmoil. This is in stark comparison to previous studies highlighting the ineffectiveness of origin labelling for low involvement or frequently purchased necessity goods (Balabanis and Siamagka, 2017). In an attempt at explaining this behavioural disparity, Weatherall *et al.* (2003, p. 234) discovered an attitude-behaviour gap during such purchasing evaluations, stating that “interest in local foods is strong [...] actual demand is weaker because these benefits are traded-off against more prosaic ‘expediency’ factors such as price, accessibility and convenience.”

Participants believed that such labelling is attributed to product quality and thereby used as a trust building mechanism between manufacturer and consumer, whilst also possessing the ability to reassure the consumer during difficult times. This attribute was also found by Bonroy and Constantatos (2015), highlighting how food choices and perceptions of quality can be influenced by origin information. On a manufacturer level, this technique is commonly used as a differentiation strategy by smaller firms with little experience or resources to develop a strong brand image (Lusk *et al.*, 2006), whereas on a consumer level, shoppers will often place an increased trust from people, cultures or brands they are more familiar with when attempting to seek reassurance when country-image perceptions change (Koschate-Fischer *et al.*, 2012).

Acknowledging the affective processing of such labels, interviewees stated a positive feeling when purchasing home nation products, seen as supporting both UK based manufacturers and the economy during national change. The feeling increased further when discussing local produce. Participants believed that origin labelling allows consumers to support local producers, local jobs and the local economy willingly and actively, often seen as a common emotional motivator (IGD, 2005) but also allowing the preservation of local heritage and tradition during a crisis (Seyfang, 2006). It is interesting to note a general positive sentiment of products and brands with domestic origins within responses, contributing to the belief of how COO associations can change overtime. However, an intention-behaviour gap has been evidenced in previous studies, where positive attitudes towards local produce does not necessarily lead to actual purchases (Carrington *et al.*, 2010).

Several interviewees simply stated that they felt proud when viewing national imagery on products, with reasons exploring such a feeling pertaining to patriotism and a love of country that are compounded during difficult times. Negative feelings of viewing imagery often associated with political agendas or ideologies were discussed, with particular focus on viewing country flags on products. This contrasts with the findings of Balcombe *et al.*, (2016) who found that whilst COO format is assumed to be important within consumer evaluations, only minimal influence is generated during purchase considerations, suggesting further investigations are needed to address conflicting beliefs.

Many participants indicated fellow shoppers' love of country or patriotic salient beliefs would influence their assessment of a product's appeal or attractiveness. Furthermore, participants also signalled fellow shoppers would be reassured when viewing national imagery in attributes such as quality and increased trust, as a national effort to support more local producers and suppliers takes hold. However, those who are of different political beliefs were believed to be more likely to view such imagery as unwelcoming, highlighting the possible mistaken association between COO label and political agenda. A shifting socio-political landscape has been shown to impact the label's effect and associations over time, so the strength of influence of these highlighted beliefs may change also (Dyer, 2017).

The relationship between supplier and consumer was explored further. Respondents acknowledged a perceived responsibility of consumers to support domestic producers or the wider national economy during periods of turmoil, as acknowledged by Palau-Saumell *et al.* (2021). Furthermore, increased emphasis was placed on supporting local manufacturers and

producers, with provenance labelling seen as a vital mechanism for customers to do so via their purchasing power. Other participants highlighted concern that indications of origin represented visually as flags or other national symbols may become attributed with political affiliations or ideologies. Whilst flags can immediately communicate provenance, such imagery may risk signalling an unintended and inexistant political affiliation which could alienate certain customers (Shanafelt, 2008; Penny and Prior, 2014). Inclusion of the Union Jack, whilst attempting to show inclusivity of all nations within the UK can also be a source of confusion as it does not communicate the exact country or place of origin (Penny and Prior, 2014).

### *Implications of findings for post-pandemic retail and recommendations for future research*

Understanding how consumers interact with provenance-based product attributes communicated through a COO label can help uncover ways marketing strategies can seek to reassure and engage with domestic consumers by having an awareness of the ubiquity that provenance has with other product attributes within the current UK marketplace. This also has implications for post-pandemic retail, as an awareness of positive temporal and contextual attributes related to COO can be relied upon to reassure and engage consumers. Specifically, the COO label was found to possess additional cognitive, affective and normative attributes that may be of benefit to manufacturers. With consumers seeking reassurance and placing increased trust on those indicators that provide familiarity, and the COO label able to offer this, manufacturers seeking to develop their relationships with potential consumers may benefit from communicating their domestic provenance to capitalise on this consumer desire. However, the strategies for communicating provenance must be considered, given that manifestations of provenance via flags or other confused attributes of political imagery may have negative affective consequences based upon socio-political sentiment or shifting and emergent priorities of the time. Manufacturers may also benefit from the consumer moral sentiment of wanting to support local and domestic producers, another attribute positively associated with the COO label.

A recognised contextual limitation lies within the complexity of investigating provenance labelling within the UK, given that COO terminology is often used interchangeably to acknowledge a specific provenance (i.e. 'British' and 'English'). Whilst specific provenance influence varies among the different regions within the UK, for example Davidson *et al.*, (2003) found that Scottish consumers showcase more favourable responses to products labelled as 'Scottish' than 'British,' this study adopted a flexible terminology of 'British' and 'UK' to represent provenance of products with origins of the UK. Given that a convenience sampling method was used and therefore not representative of the UK population or its devolved nations, a second limitation acknowledged, future studies may want to investigate how attitudes change among representative samples. Lastly, it was discovered that some participants reported feelings of nervousness of taking photographs in public spaces. Whilst ethical arrangements were fully considered, this highlights the importance of designing appropriate monitoring and feedback mechanisms when participants are required to take photographs in situations where it is unusual to do so, a common critique of visual methodologies (Milne and Muir, 2019).

Findings presented do not imply any Brexit-related causality, but sentiments portrayed by participants do emerge during a period of substantial inter-population conflict, therefore some comments inevitably will represent the diversity of attitudes associated with the dispute. Whilst Brexit may have mediated some findings presented, it was not necessarily responsible for them as patriotic or other nationality-based sentiments existed long before the debate. Ultimately, changing national sentiment can affect the economy, political sentiment and wider society as consumers experienced heightened feelings of uncertainty with supply, quality and availability issues of goods and services, as observed during the Brexit debate and similarly with COVID-19. The COO label's malleable and synonymous attributes can offer marketing strategies seeking to capitalise on a desire for familiarity and consistency to ensure a positive consumer engagement. Further research is recommended to explore in detail the complexities of these contextual and temporal influences and their ability to alter provenance labelling perceptions and attributes. Furthermore, there exists the opportunity to explore in detail the motivations for manufactures adopting COO labelling and developing practical recommendations of using this marketing strategy, whilst acknowledging the contextual and temporal factors that may influence its effectiveness.

## References

Adina, C., Gabriela, C. and Roxana-Denisa, S. (2015), "Country-of-origin effects on perceived brand positioning", *Procedia Economics and Finance*, Vol. 23, pp. 422-427.

Ahmed, Z.U., Johnson, J.P., Xia, Y., Chen Kheng, F., Teng, H.S. and Boon, L.C. (2004), "Does country of origin matter for low-involvement products?", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp. 102-120.

Aichner, T. (2014), "Country-of-origin marketing: a list of typical strategies with examples", *Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp. 81-93.

Amatulli, C., De Angelis, M., Halliday, S.V., Morris, J. and Mulazzi, F. (2019), "Temporal dynamism in country of origin effect: The malleability of Italians' perceptions regarding the British sixties", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 36 No. 6, pp. 955-978.

Andéhn, M. and Decosta, J-N.P.L. (2018), "Re-imagining the country-of-origin effect: a promulgation approach", *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 27 No. 7, pp. 884-896.

Ardley, B. (2018), "After Brexit: rethinking the structure of the UK economy and its branding strategies", *Strategic Change*, Vol. 27, pp. 441-446.

Baker, M.J. and Ballington, L. (2011), "Country of origin as a source of competitive advantage", *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 157-168.

Balabanis, G. and Siamagka, N.-T. (2017), "Inconsistencies in the behavioural effects of consumer ethnocentrism: the role of brand, product category and country of origin", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 34 No. 2, pp. 166-182.

Balcombe, K., Bradley, D., Fraser, I. and Hussein, M. (2016), "Consumer preferences regarding country of origin for multiple meat products", *Food Policy*, Vol. 64, pp. 49-62.

Balomenou, N. and Garrod, B. (2016), "A Review of participant-generated image methods in the social sciences", *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, Vol. 10 No.2, 335-351.

Barnes, A. (2017), "Telling stories: the role of graphic design and branding in the creation of 'authenticity' within food packaging", *International Journal of Food Design*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 183-202.

Bentall, R.P., Lloyd, A., Bennett, K., McKay, R., Mason, L., Murphy, J., McBride, O., Hartman, T.K., Gibson-Miller, J., Levita, L., Martinez, A.P., Stocks, T.V.A., Butter, S., Vallières, F., Hyland, P., Karatzias, T. and Shevlin, M. (2021), "Pandemic buying: testing a psychological model of over-purchasing and panic buying using data from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland during the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic", *PLOS ONE*, Vol. 16 No. 1, p.e0246339.

Bignante, E. (2010), "The use of photo-elicitation in field research: exploring maasai representations and use of natural resources", *EchoGeo*, Vol. 11, available at: <http://echogeo.revues.org/11622> (accessed 28 March 2020).

Bilkey, W. and Nes, E. (1982), "Country-of-origin effects on product evaluations", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 13, pp. 89-100.

Bloemer, J., Brijs, K. and Kasper, H. (2009), "The CoO-ELM model: A theoretical framework for the cognitive processes underlying country of origin-effects", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 43 No. 1/2, pp. 62-89.

Bonroy, O. and Constantatos, C. (2015), "On the economics of labels: how their introduction affects the functioning of markets and the welfare of all participants", *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Vol. 97 No. 1, pp. 239-259.

Brace-Govan, J. (2007), "Participant photography in visual ethnography", *International Journal of Market Research*, Vol. 49 No. 6, pp. 735-750.

Brand, B.M. and Baier, D. (2022), "Measuring country of origin effects in online shopping implicitly: a discrete choice analysis approach", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print.

Brijs, K., Bloemer, J., and Kasper, H. (2011), "Country-image discourse model: Unraveling meaning, structure, and function of country images", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 64 No. 12, pp. 1259-1269.

Carrington, M.J., Neville, B.A., and Whitwell, G.J. (2010), "Why ethical consumers don't walk their talk: towards a framework for understanding the gap between ethical purchase intentions and actual buying behaviour of ethically minded consumers", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 97 No. 1, pp. 139-158.



Caskey, D., Chen, J.F. and Warden, C.A. (2020), "Surfacing consumer psychosensory perceptions of a nonendemic food: the case of coffee in a tea culture", *Journal of Sensory Studies*, Vol. 36 No. 1, p.e12625.

Clayton, D. and Higgins, D.M. (2020) "'Buy British': An analysis of UK attempts to turn a slogan into government policy in the 1970s and 1980s", *Business History*, pp. 1-22.

Coleman, P., Dhaif, F. and Oyeboode, O. (2020), "Food shortages, stockpiling and panic buying ahead of Brexit as reported by the British media: a mixed methods content analysis", working paper, *SocArXiv*, available at: <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/vfqhn> (accessed 12 December 2020).

Collier, J. and Collier, M. (1986), *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Comunian, R. and England, L. (2018), *Chapter 14: Creative regions: from creative place-making to creative human capital*. In: Paasi, A., Harrison, J. and Jones, M (Eds.) *Handbook on the Geographies of Regions and Territories*, Edward Elgar Publishing.

Davidson, A., Schröder, M.J.A. and Bower, J.A. (2003), "The importance of origin as a quality attribute for beef: results from a Scottish consumer survey", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 91-98.

De Nisco, A. and Oduro, S. (2022), "Partitioned country-of-origin effect on consumer behavior: A meta-analysis", *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, DOI: 10.1080/08961530.2021.2022062.

Deli-Gray, Z., Árvai, L. and Matura, T. (2013), "Polarisation of the society: a possible outcome of the economic crisis? Hungarian citizens' purchases of food and household items in retail stores in the present economic crisis", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 41 No. 4, pp. 274-288.

Derr, V. and Simons, J. (2020), "A review of photovoice applications in environment, sustainability, and conservation contexts: Is the method maintaining its emancipatory intents?", *Environmental Education Research*, Vol. 26 No. 3, pp. 359-380.

Dube, L.F. and Black, G.S. (2010), "Impact of national traumatic events on consumer purchasing", *International Journal of Business Studies*, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 333-338.

Dyer, S. (2017), *Buying British*, *History Today*, Vol. 67 No. 8, pp. 56-67.

Filimonau, V., Beer, S. and Ermolaev, V.A. (2022), "The COVID-19 pandemic and food consumption at home and away: An exploratory study of English households", *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, Vol. 82, 101125.

Glaw, X., Inder, K., Kable, A. and Hazelton, M. (2017), "Visual methodologies in qualitative research: autophotography and photo elicitation applied to mental health research", *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Vol. 16, pp. 1-8.

Gordon-Wilson, S. (2021), "An exploration of the substitutions of British pub consumers during the COVID-19 crisis", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 96, 102998.

Groves, A.M. (2001), "Authentic British food products: a review of consumer perceptions", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 181-268.

Halkias, G., Florack, A., Diamantopoulos, A. and Palcu, J. (2022), "Eyes wide shut? Understanding and managing consumers' visual processing of country-of-origin cues", *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 33 No. 3, pp.1432-1446.

Harper, D. (2002), "Talking about pictures: a case for photo elicitation", *Visual Studies*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 13-26.

Hartnett, E., Adkin, A., Seaman, M., Cooper, J., Watson, E., Coburn, H., England, T., Marooney, C., Cox, A. and Wooldridge, M. (2007), "A quantitative assessment of the risks from illegally imported meat contaminated with foot and mouth disease virus to Great Britain", *Risk Analysis*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 187–202.

Hornikx, J., van Meurs, F. and de Boer, A. (2010), "English or a local language in advertising?: the appreciation of easy and difficult English slogans in the Netherlands", *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 47 No. 2, pp. 169-188.

Hornikx, J., van Meurs, F. and Starren, M. (2007), "An empirical study of readers' associations with multilingual advertising: the case of French, German and Spanish in Dutch advertising", *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 204-219.

IGD (2005), *The Local and Regional Food Opportunity*, Institute of Grocery Distribution, Watford.

Insch, A. and Cuthbert, R. (2018), "Why country of origin still matters in food retailing: Implications for promotion management research", *Journal of Promotion Management*, Vol. 24 No. 3, pp. 363-375.

Insch, A. and Florek, M. (2009), "Prevalence of country of origin associations on the supermarket shelf", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 37 No. 5, pp. 453-471.

Insch, A., Williams, S. and Knight, J.G. (2015), "Managerial perceptions of country-of-origin: an empirical study of New Zealand food manufacturers", *Journal of Food Products Marketing*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 304-319.

Josiassen, A. and Assaf, A. (2010), "Country-of-origin contingencies: their joint influence on consumer behaviour", *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing Logistics*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 294-313.

Johansson, J.K. (1989), "Determinants and Effects of the Use of "Made in" Labels", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 6 No. 1.

Karimov, F. and El-Murad, J. (2019), "Does country-of-origin matter in the era of globalisation? Evidence from cross sectional data in Uzbekistan", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 47 No. 3, pp. 262-277.

Kemp, K., Inch, A., Holdsworth, D.K. and Knight, J.G. (2010), "Food miles: do UK consumers actually care?", *Food Policy*, Vol. 35 No. 6, pp. 504-513.

Khachaturian, J.L. and Morganosky, M.A. (1990), "Quality perceptions by country of origin", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 18 No. 5, pp. 21-30.

Koschate-Fischer, N., Diamantopoulos, A. and Oldenkotte, K. (2012), "Are consumers really willing to pay more for a favorable country image? A study of country-of-origin effects on willingness to pay", *Journal of International Marketing*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 19-41.

Lampert, S.I. and Jaffe, E.D. (1998), "A dynamic approach to country-of-origin effect", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 32 No. 1/2, pp. 61-78.

Leonidou, L.C., Hadjimarcou, J., Kaleka, A. and Stamenova, G.T. (1999), "Bulgarian consumers' perceptions of products made in Asia Pacific", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 16 No. 2, pp. 126-142.

Loxton, M., Truskett, R., Scarf, B., Sindone, L., Baldry, G. and Zhao, Y. (2020), "Consumer behaviour during crises: preliminary research on how coronavirus has manifested consumer panic buying, herd mentality, changing discretionary spending and the role of the media in influencing behaviour", *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, Vol. 13 No. 8, p. 166.

Lusk, J.L., Brown, J., Mark, T., Proseku, I., Thompson, R. and Welsh, J. (2006), "Consumer behaviour, public policy and country-of-origin labeling", *Review of Agricultural Economics*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 284-292.

Maloni, M.J. and Brown, M.E. (2006), "Corporate social responsibility in the supply chain: an application in the food industry", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 68, pp. 35-52.

Melewar, T.C. and Skinner, H. (2020a), "Why would anyone come to Corfu to have a Heineken?", *Qualitative Marketing Research*, Vol. 23 No. 4, pp. 891-906.

Melewar, T.C. and Skinner, H. (2020b), "Territorial brand management: beer, authenticity, and sense of place", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 116, pp. 680-689.

Milne, E.-J. and Muir, R. (2019), *Photovoice: A critical introduction*. In: Pauwels, L. and Mannay, D. (Eds.) *The SAGE Handbook of Visual Research Methods*, SAGE Publications Ltd.

Morrison, A., Erstad, O., Liestøl, G., Pinfold, N., Snaddon, B., Hemmersam, P. and Grant-Broom, A. (2019), "Investigating agentive urban learning: An assembly of situated experiences for sustainable futures", *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 45 No. 2, pp. 204-223.

Naeem, M. (2021), "Understanding the customer psychology of impulse buying during COVID-19 pandemic: implications for retailers", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 49 No. 3, pp. 377-393.

Nardotto, M, and Sequeira, S. (2021), "Identity, media and consumer behavior", Discussion Paper DP15765, *Center for Economic and Policy Research*.

Niss, H. (1996), "Country of origin marketing over the product life cycle: a Danish case study", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 6-22.

Noland, C.M. (2006), "Auto-photography as a research practice: Identity and self-esteem research", *Journal of Research Practice*, Vol. 2, pp. 1-19.

Norris, A. and Cranfield, J. (2019), "Consumer preferences for country-of-origin labeling in protected markets: evidence from the Canadian dairy market", *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 391-403.

Oumlil, B.A. (2020), "Country-of-origin (COO) impact and product categories' evaluations: the case of an emerging market", *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 57-65.

Palau-Saumell, R., Matute, J., Derqui, B. and Meyer, J.-H. (2021), "The impact of the perceived risk of COVID-19 on consumers' attitude and behavior toward locally produced food", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 123 No. 13, pp. 281-301.

Palmatier, R.W. and Crecelius, A.T. (2019), "The "first principles" of marketing strategy", *AMS Review*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 5-26.

Pandey, S., Khare, A. and Bhardwaj, P. (2015), "Antecedents to local store loyalty: influence of culture, cosmopolitanism and price", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 43 No. 1, pp. 5-25.

Pegan, G., Vianelli, D. and de Luca, P. (2020), *International Marketing Strategy: The Country of Origin Effect on Decision-Making in Practice*, Springer, Cham, Switzerland.

Penney, U. and Prior, C. (2014), "Exploring the urban consumer's perception of food", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 42 No. 7, pp. 580-594.

Pink, S. (2021), *Doing Visual Ethnography*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London.

Sanderson Bellamy, A., Furness, E., Nicol, P., Pitt, H. and Taherzadeh, A. (2021), "Shaping more resilient and just food systems: lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic", *Ambio*, Vol. 50, pp. 782-793.

- Semaan, R.W., Gould, S., Chao, M.C.-h. and Grein, A.F. (2019), ““We don’t all see it the same way”: the biasing effects of country-of-origin and preference reversals on product evaluation”, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 53 No. 5, pp. 989-1014.
- Seyfang, G. (2006), “Ecological citizenship and sustainable consumption: examining local organic food networks”, *Journal of Rural Studies*, Vol. 22 No. 4, pp. 383-395.
- Shanafelt, R. (2008), “The nature of flag power: how flags entail dominance, subordination, and social solidarity”, *Politics and the Life Sciences*, Vol. 27 No. 2, pp. 13-27.
- Steenkamp, J-B.E.M. (2017), *Global brand strategy: World-wise marketing in the age of branding*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Steenkamp, J-B.E.M. (1990), “Conceptual model of the quality perception process”, *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 21 No. 4, pp. 309-333.
- Tellström, R., Gustafsson, I.B. and Mossberg, L. (2006), “Consuming heritage: The use of local food culture in branding”, *Place Branding*, Vol. 2. No. 2, pp. 130-143.
- Thomas, M.E. (2009), *Auto-photography*, in Kitchen, R. and Thrift, N. (Eds.), *International encyclopaedia of human geography*, Elsevier Academic Press, Elsevier, San Diego, pp. 244-251.
- Tseng, T. and Balabanis, G. (2011), "Explaining the product-specificity of country-of-origin effects", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 28 No. 6, pp. 581-600.
- Verlegh, P.W.J. and Steenkamp, J-B.E.M. (1999), “A review and meta-analysis of country-of-origin research”, *Journal of Economic Psychology*, Vol. 20 No. 5, pp. 521-546.
- Vieira, H. (2017), “Holding Brexiteers to account by looking at economic history”, available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2017/04/05/holding-brexiteers-to-account-by-looking-at-economic-history/> (accessed 3 January 2022).
- Viktoria Rampl, L., Eberhardt, T., Schütte, R. and Kenning, P. (2012), “Consumer trust in food retailers: conceptual framework and empirical evidence”, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 40 No. 4, pp. 254-272.
- Weatherall, C., Tregear, A. and Allinson, J. (2003), “In search of the concerned consumer: UK public perceptions of food, farming and buying local”, *Journal of Rural Studies*, Vol. 19 No. 2, pp. 233-244.
- Wegapitiya, B.M.A.C. and Dissanayake, D.M.R. (2018), “Conceptual review on country of origin effect in international markets”, *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*, Vol. 7 No.3, pp. 12-19.

Zeugner-Roth, K.P. and Bartsch, F. (2020), "COO in print advertising: Developed versus developing market comparisons", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 120, pp. 364-378.



**Citation on deposit:** Atkinson-Toal, A. (2023). Reassuringly British: consumer engagement with domestic products and brands. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 51(7), 845-861. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijrdm-01-2022-0003>

**For final citation and metadata, visit Durham Research Online URL:**

<https://durham-repository.worktribe.com/output/1926889>

**Copyright statement:** This author accepted manuscript is deposited under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC) licence. This means that anyone may distribute, adapt, and build upon the work for non-commercial purposes, subject to full attribution. If you wish to use this manuscript for commercial purposes, please contact [permissions@emerald.com](mailto:permissions@emerald.com).