



MAKING
ANIMAL WELFARE
MATTER

Positioning animal welfare as personally relevant

Lenka van Riemsdijk-Kopičárová

PROPOSITIONS

1. Consumer animal-friendly product choice reflects a social dilemma.
(this thesis)
2. Animal welfare is not sufficient for positioning animal-friendly products.
(this thesis)
3. Seductive environment is the biggest enemy of healthy eating.
4. The free market doesn't help the development of sustainable food systems.
5. Emotions drive the societal impact of science.
6. PhD students are stakeholder managers.

Propositions belonging to the thesis, entitled

Making animal welfare matter:

Positioning animal welfare as personally relevant

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Wageningen, Monday 2 December 2019

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Making animal welfare matter:

Positioning animal welfare as personally relevant

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CHAPTER 1

General introduction

“Animal agriculture, as we know it, is unjust, and it is unjust because it fails to treat farm animals with the respect they are due, treating them instead as renewable resources having value only relative to human interests. To protest that farm animals, as legal property, may be treated in whatever way their legal owners see fit is lame, first, because what is legal is not necessarily moral, and, second, because the right view challenges the very conception of animals as legal property.”

Tom Regan, The Case for Animal Rights (1983), p. 394

Animal welfare is a highly debated issue in society and science. The introduction of intensive animal production systems was, according to many, at the outset of the debate about the welfare of animals that we use for food. These production systems have been designed to meet increasing consumer demand for animal proteins, in particular meat, which experienced its boom after World War II. Changing from a luxury product, meat has become a part of daily diet for many consumers, in particular those living in high-income Western countries. Between 1960 and 2010, the global meat consumption has tripled, to reach 300 million tons (Godfray et al., 2018), and it is expected to continue its rapid growth, mainly in the developing countries where people are adopting Western consumption patterns (Miele, Blokhuis, Bennett, & Bock, 2013). With their focus on high efficiency of food production, the intensive animal production systems could thus accommodate the increasing demand for meat. The focus on production efficiency, however, required that the animals adapt to the production systems, which had often negative effects on the welfare of the production animals (Pluhar, 2010). One example is the development of intensive indoor housing systems – while these systems could house more animals, thus produce meat more efficiently, the limited living space and absence to the outdoor access has negative effects on the welfare of the animals (Blokhuis, Miele, Veissier, & Jones, 2013).

While society has witnessed heated discussions about what constitutes good animal welfare (Evans & Miele, 2007; Vanhonacker, Van Poucke, Tuytens, &

Verbeke, 2010), and who is responsible for the welfare of the production animals (Buller, 2013; de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b), science has approached animal welfare from two dominant angles. Some have approached animal welfare from an economic perspective, arguing that animal welfare is important as long as it impacts human welfare, whether it is physical (e.g., impact on human health) or emotional well-being (e.g., impact on human sensibilities) (McInerney, 1993). Others have argued that animals and their welfare are “intrinsically valuable” because animals are sentient beings, so it is morally right to consider their own interests (Rollin, 1992). Even though economic and ethical perspectives hardly overlap in their argumentation on why animal welfare is important, and society continues discussions about what animal welfare is and who is responsible, animal welfare remains a highly debated public issue.

1.1. Consumer attitudes towards farm animal welfare

Farm animal welfare is a complex ethical issue because production animals are raised to be slaughtered. Hence, even if we desire production animals to have a good life, we can hardly avoid them to suffer and to be slaughtered. Some consumers deal with this issue by changing their diets and lifestyles (to vegetarian or vegan), thus avoiding meat and other animal-based products altogether. For the majority of consumers, however, changing the existing consumption patterns to vegetarian or vegan is too disruptive as for many eating meat is perceived as healthy or even necessary and is tied to their culture and tradition (Buttler & Walther, 2018; Godfray et al., 2018; Pluhar, 2010). These consumers can thus either reduce their meat consumption or switch to animal welfare enhanced meat. Animal welfare enhanced meat, sometimes referred to as animal-friendly meat (Evans & Miele, 2007; Immink, Reinders, van Tulder, & van Trijp, 2013; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014, as well as Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of this thesis) is made from animals that have been raised in production systems with higher animal welfare standards, such as free-range or organic systems (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b). These systems give production animals better living conditions by

respecting the Five Freedoms of good animal welfare, which include freedom from discomfort and freedom to express natural behaviour (Webster, 2001).

Despite the positive consumer attitudes towards animal welfare, and an ample and increasing supply of animal welfare enhanced meat, consumers still mainly opt for conventional meat instead of meat produced with higher animal welfare standards. For example, 94 percent of European consumers believe that it is important to protect the welfare of the production animals and 59 percent is willing to pay more for animal-friendly products (European Commission, 2016). Meat producers and retailers react to this trend by broadening their assortments of animal welfare enhanced meat, such as the introduction of chicken meat concepts with enhanced animal welfare by the Dutch supermarkets in 2017 (Bos, van den Belt, & Feindt, 2018). Still, consumer meat choice does not fully reflect their high concern for animal welfare and the high availability of animal welfare enhanced meat as in the Netherlands the market share in 2017 was only 14% for animal welfare enhanced beef and 19% for animal welfare enhanced poultry (Logatcheva, Hovens, & Baltussen, 2017). This suggests that there may exist a mismatch between what consumers say they want to do (switching to animal welfare enhanced meat) and what they do (buying conventional meat), also known as attitude-behaviour gap (Auger & Devinney, 2007; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001).

Helping consumers to make more animal-friendly product choices involves the cooperation of several major parties, such as policy makers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and companies producing meat (Blokhuis et al., 2013). The first, policy makers, can apply a number of policy instruments, such as legislation that sets up minimum standards for animal welfare and education that helps consumers to make informed product choices (Ingenbleek, Immink, Spoolder, Bokma, & Keeling, 2012). The second, NGOs, mainly contribute through campaigns aimed at increasing the awareness of consumers on animal welfare issues and using pressure tactics focused at the policy makers to increase the minimum legal standards for animal welfare or to enforce existing legislation (Miele et al., 2013). The third, companies, can set-up innovative production

systems to improve the quality of life of the production animals (Buller & Roe, 2014). Additionally, companies can also influence consumer perceptions and product choice by applying marketing strategies, which include tools such as attractive package, branding or price promotions (Grunert, Bredahl, & Brunsø, 2004). Ultimately, it is, however, consumers who have a critical position when it comes to improving animal welfare above the legal standards. While governments can provide a sound basis through legislation, NGOs can increase awareness, and companies can optimize their assortment and apply marketing strategies, consumers make the final decision to accept or reject animal welfare enhanced meat.

1.2. Strategies to stimulate consumer animal-friendly product choice

If consumer buying behaviour is the most critical to improve animal welfare, it is crucial to understand what prevents consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat. The existing literature studying consumer animal-friendly buying behaviour mainly resolves around three research lines. The first research line studies the importance of animal welfare for the consumers. Within this research line, studies have typically measured consumer willingness to pay for animal welfare (for a review, see Clark, Stewart, Panzone, Kyriazakis, & Frewer, 2017), consumer perceptions of animal welfare and the individual differences in such perceptions (Kendall, Lobao, & Sharp, 2006; Vanhonacker, Verbeke, Van Poucke, & Tuytens, 2007). Relatedly, other studies measured the importance of animal welfare in relation to other product benefits such as taste, availability and value for money (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000). The second research line studies the barriers that prevent consumers who find animal welfare important to buy animal-friendly products. The literature addressing the second question has identified several major barriers, such as lack of consumer trust in claimed animal welfare (Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017; Schröder & McEachern, 2004); low availability and/or high price of animal-friendly products (Blokhus, Ekkel, Korte, Hopster, & Van Reenen, 2000; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014); situational

factors, which include, but are not limited to the temporal influences (e.g., time pressure) and physical surroundings (e.g., price promotions of competing products) (Belk, 1975; Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010); and, animal welfare being a relevant, but not a determinant purchase criterion (van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). The third research line brings together the previous research by asserting that animal welfare enhanced meat choice presents consumers with a dilemma because they must trade off benefits contributing to their self-interest such as taste and convenience, and benefits contributing to the societal interest such as animal welfare (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b). This so called social dilemma (Messick & Brewer, 1983) can cause a mental conflict because consumers who want to contribute to the improvement of animal welfare have to pay the price for the better life of the animals, while not receiving anything of personal relevance in return (Moisander, 2007). For most consumers, the social dilemma may therefore present a major barrier that prevents them from switching to animal welfare enhanced meat (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Griskevicius, Cantú, & van Vugt, 2012; Gupta & Ogden, 2009). Altogether, the existing literature provides a sound theoretical basis in understanding why consumers may be reluctant in switching to animal welfare enhanced meat.

While existing literature helps explaining the barriers that prevent consumers with positive attitudes towards animal welfare to switch from conventional meat to animal welfare enhanced meat, much less is known about which strategies can be used to address these barriers. For this purpose, the academic literature on marketing can provide useful insights on how to design strategies that can make animal welfare enhanced meat attractive and appealing to the (different types of) consumers. As these strategies can change consumer perceptions of different benefits contributing to their self-interest and societal interest, they can be particularly useful to address consumer social dilemma. Marketing plays however a very small role at best in the current research field on animal welfare.

This thesis aims to make an important contribution by being among the first to study how marketing strategies can address consumer social dilemma in animal welfare enhanced meat choice. We build on the existing literature, which has

identified two crucial elements of marketing strategies that could increase consumer preference for animal-friendly products. First, positioning strategies can make animal-friendly products appealing and attractive through reinforcing animal welfare with benefits such as taste, good feeling or curiosity (van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). In this way, positioning strategies could make animal welfare personally relevant to the buyer, thus addressing the social dilemma. Second, stakeholder endorsement, for example in the form of a reliable certification, is of particular importance to legitimize the claimed animal welfare because consumers cannot verify such claims themselves (Nuttavuthisit and Thøgersen 2017; Atkinson and Rosenthal 2014). In this thesis, we conceptualize and empirically test how marketing strategies can use both elements to encourage consumers to buy animal welfare enhanced meat. We also show how consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas (cf. Gupta & Ogden, 2009), e.g., whether a consumer is exclusively motivated by self-interest, by societal interest, or by both, can influence the effectiveness of such marketing strategies. By taking a social dilemma approach, this thesis aims to fill a gap in the scientific literature and also to help companies to increase their market shares of animal welfare enhanced meat. In line with these arguments, the main research question of this thesis is:

How can marketing strategies influence consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice?

The answer to the main research question is provided through three sub questions that will be addressed in separate chapters.

- 1. How can positioning strategies address consumer social dilemma to encourage animal welfare enhanced meat choice?*
- 2. How does positioning strategy interact with stakeholder endorsement in influencing consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice?*
- 3. How do consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas impact the effectiveness of marketing strategies?*

Chapter 2 entitled “Marketing animal-friendly products: Addressing the consumer social dilemma with reinforcement positioning strategies” provides a theoretical framework that explains how positioning strategies can address consumer social dilemma by reinforcing the animal welfare with different types of consumption values (functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic and situational), thus addressing the first sub question. The framework also assesses the value of stakeholders in marketing animal-friendly products, providing theoretical arguments for the second sub question.

Chapter 3 entitled “Strategies for positioning animal welfare as personally relevant” answers the first sub question by exploring which positioning strategies marketers use to persuade consumers to buy (different categories of) animal-friendly food in the Dutch supermarkets, and how these strategies combine different categories of consumption values to address consumer social dilemma.

Chapter 4 entitled “Positioning strategies for animal-friendly products: A social dilemma approach” builds on the results from Chapter 2 and 3 by empirically testing which positioning strategies (functional, emotional, social and epistemic) effectively increase consumers’ value perceptions in the context of animal welfare enhanced chicken meat, addressing the first sub question. It also provides answer to the third sub question by testing how consumer motivational orientation, i.e., the emphasis on self-interest and societal interest, influences the effectiveness of positioning strategies by moderating the impact of consumer value perceptions on animal welfare enhanced chicken meat choice.

Chapter 5 entitled “Positioning strategies for ethical products: Does stakeholder endorsement make a difference?” empirically tests how the interaction between positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement influences consumer value perceptions of animal welfare enhanced chicken meat, addressing the second sub question. It further distinguishes between the two main categories of consumer value pertinent to the situation of social dilemma – ethical and individualistic – and empirically shows how these value categories drive consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice.

Chapter 6 entitled “Can marketing increase willingness to pay for animal welfare enhanced meat? Evidence from experimental auctions.” extends the results from the previous chapter with a real-life experiment at point of purchase, in which it investigates the direct as well as the interaction effects of positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement on consumer willingness to pay for lunch meal with animal welfare enhanced chicken meat, providing answer to the second sub question. It also addresses the third sub question by testing how ambivalence towards meat, i.e., the existence of positive as well as negative feelings towards meat, influences the impact of consumer value perceptions on willingness to pay for lunch meal with animal welfare enhanced chicken meat.

Chapter 7 concludes the thesis by discussing the main results and the implications for companies and policy makers. It also reflects on the limitations of the conducted research and provides directions for future research. Figure 1.1. provides an overview of the different chapters and their interrelationships.

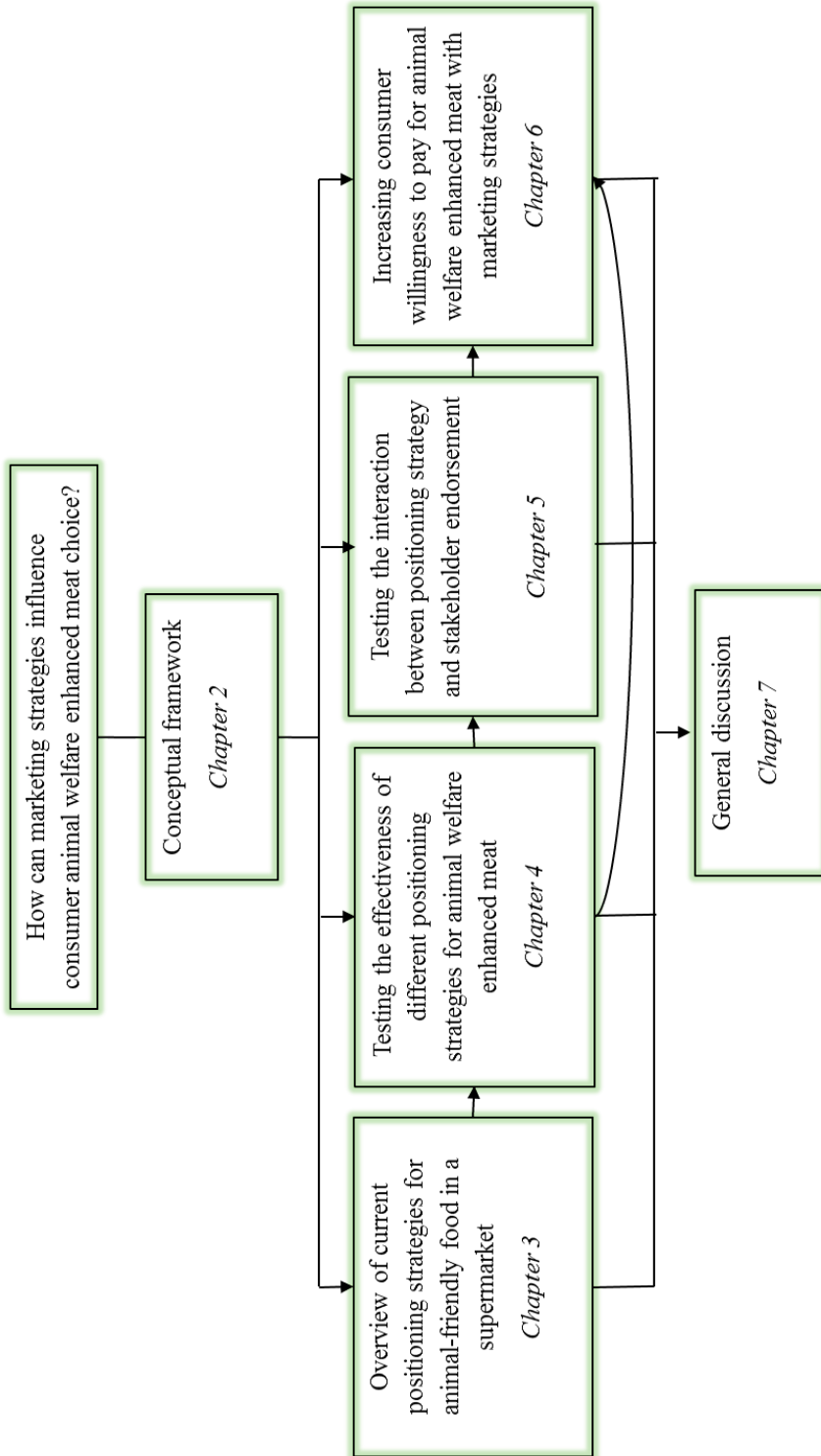


Figure 1.1. Schematic outline of the thesis. The arrows indicate how the chapters zoom in in the findings from the previous chapters.



A decorative border at the top of the page features a light blue background with a fine grid pattern. Overlaid on this are stylized white floral and leaf motifs. A thick, wavy green line runs along the bottom edge of the floral pattern, separating it from the white background below.

CHAPTER 2

Marketing animal-friendly products: Addressing the consumer social dilemma with reinforcement positioning strategies

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Abstract

This chapter presents a conceptual framework that aims to encourage consumer animal-friendly product choice by introducing positioning strategies for animal-friendly products. These strategies reinforce the animal welfare with different types of consumption values and can therefore reduce consumers' social dilemma, which is a major barrier to animal-friendly consumer choices. The chapter suggests how animal-friendly products can use various types of consumption values (functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic and situational) to create an attractive position relative to their competitors. It also explains why some consumer segments, such as those with a specific thinking style, may experience a stronger effect of some strategies, giving directions on how to approach different types of consumers. Finally, building on research asserting that animal welfare is a credence product attribute, the chapter proposes moderating effects of two factors that help consumers to evaluate the credibility of animal welfare claims, namely corporate social responsibility strategy and the role of stakeholders. Here it concludes that companies selling animal-friendly products need to be aware of the impact of their overall strategy on the effectiveness of positioning strategies for individual products and that, to gain consumer trust, they may need to collaborate with relevant stakeholders, such as media or animal-interest organizations.

2.1. Introduction

In the last two decades, animal welfare has developed into an interdisciplinary field of science, with social scientists playing an important role in advancing our understanding of how the societal concern can translate into improvements in animal welfare in practice (cf. Lund, Coleman, Gunnarsson, Appleby, & Karkinen, 2006). In that respect, consumer research has a critical position when it comes to improving animal welfare above legal standards in the current market-based policy paradigm. Because consumers ultimately make the decision to accept or reject animal-friendly products, consumer buying behaviour presents a powerful drive or a barrier for the development of a market for such products (Ingenbleek et al., 2013). Existing research on consumer purchase behaviour of animal-friendly products has studied, among other topics, consumer concern for animal welfare (Cornish, Raubenheimer, & McGreevy, 2016; European Commission, 2016), willingness to pay for animal welfare (Clark et al., 2017; Zander & Hamm, 2010), the role of consumer trust in animal-friendly labels (Harvey & Hubbard, 2013b) and the trade-offs that consumers are willing to make between animal welfare and other product benefits, such as healthiness, safety and taste (Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Krystallis, Grunert, de Barcellos, Perrea, & Verbeke, 2012; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000). The literature has also addressed several institutional and structural barriers, such as the dominant retailing channels and the limited supply of animal-friendly products (Koos, 2011), as well as the transparency of animal-friendly labels (Blokhuis et al., 2013; Miele & Lever, 2013), which, together with consumer purchase behaviour, present major challenges to companies selling animal-friendly products.

While the existing literature provides valuable insights in understanding consumer behaviour, these insights are limited in providing guidance in how to design specific marketing instruments for animal-friendly products. In other words, we still know very little on how marketing can encourage consumers to make animal-friendly decisions. As a consequence, there may be unused potential of animal-friendly products in the market. The development of marketing strategies is however complex because marketers must consider the

differences in preferences for animal-friendly products that may exist between consumer segments (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). Such differences may stem from a wide range of factors. Some consumers see purchasing animal-friendly products as an ethical obligation, while others trade it off against price and other product attributes (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014; Vanhonacker et al., 2007). Some perceive animal-friendly products as healthier than mainstream products, while others believe that these products are tastier and of higher quality and even others associate animal welfare with environmental friendliness (Aertsens, Verbeke, Mondelaers, & Van Huylenbroeck, 2009). Moreover, such differences do not only stem from varying preferences and perceptions but may also stem from norms and values within specific subcultures, such as those linked to the human-animal relations (e.g., whether animals are meant to serve humans) (te Velde, Aarts, & van Woerkum, 2002), or to the religion (e.g., more concern for certain animal species, such as cows in Hinduism) (Cornish et al., 2016) and even cultural differences at the national level (Ingenbleek et al., 2013; Miele & Lever, 2014). Additionally, the structure of and competition in animal-based production sectors and retailing created substantial differences in the habits and preferences of consumers across markets (Ingenbleek et al., 2012). Next to the challenges pertaining to the differences between consumer segments, marketers should deal in their strategies with competing products and brands that may try to attract consumers with arguments other than animal welfare, like taste or price. Prior research has recognized these elements and referred to them among others as the ethical complex that surrounds animal-friendly products (Freidberg, 2004) but is not yet grounded these insights in a marketing theoretical framework. We therefore argue that the academic literature on marketing can provide useful insights that may help companies to design strategies for animal-friendly products. Marketing plays however a very small role at best in the current multidisciplinary research field on animal welfare.

With the present chapter, we expand the consumer literature on animal-friendly product choice into the marketing domain. We present a conceptual framework (Figure 2.1.) that aims to encourage consumer animal-friendly product choice by introducing marketing strategies for animal-friendly products. In designing

specific strategies, we build on social dilemma theory (Messick & Brewer, 1983), in viewing consumer animal-friendly product choice as a dilemma between maximizing a consumer's self-interest that includes taste and convenience, and the societal interest that includes animal welfare. In recent years, a growing number of scholars has observed that this psychological conflict of interests can be a major barrier for consumers to purchase animal-friendly, or other ethical products (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Griskevicius et al., 2012). They therefore call for marketing strategies that can address such dilemmas. In response to these calls, this chapter develops a framework in which the social dilemma is addressed by positioning strategies that reinforce the animal welfare with different types of value that consumers may derive from animal-friendly products (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991), such as functional (e.g., taste, convenience) or emotional value (e.g., happiness). In short, we theoretically show how animal-friendly products can be made more attractive for consumers who primarily follow their self-interest.

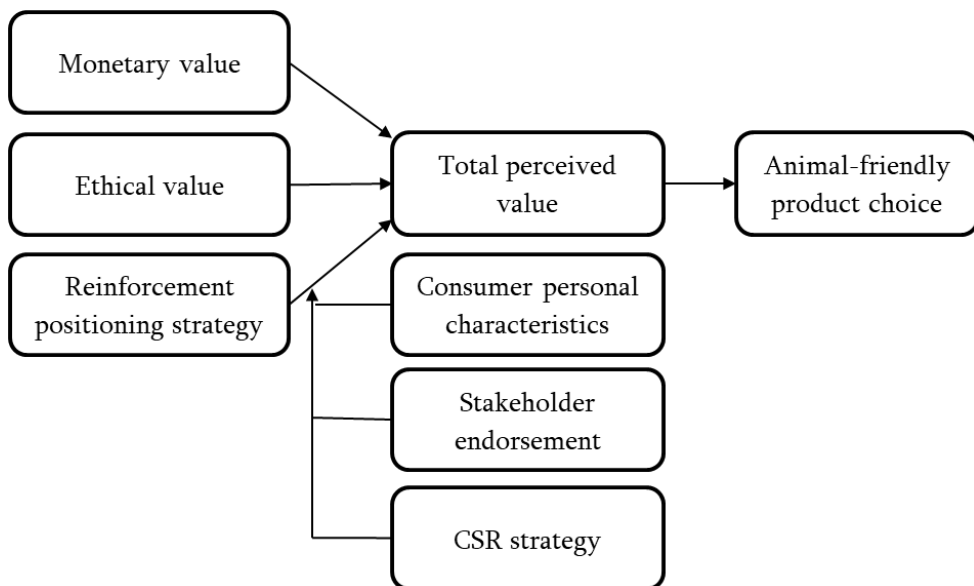


Figure 2.1. Conceptual framework.

Because consumers differ in their perceptions and preferences for the different positioning strategies, we also propose moderating effects pertaining to consumer personal characteristics. Specifically, we include thinking style, which refers to consumer rationality versus intuitiveness (Shiloh, Salton, & Sharabi, 2002) and anthropomorphism, which refers to consumers beliefs in whether animals have feelings, cognition and other humanlike characteristics (Grossman & Simon, 1969). Finally, we propose moderating effects of two factors that help consumers to evaluate the credibility of animal welfare claims, namely corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2007) and the role of stakeholders (Handelman & Arnold, 1999; Morsing & Schultz, 2006). In that respect, our framework links to prior studies that look at animal welfare in its socio-economic context (Boogaard, Oosting, & Bock, 2006; Miele et al., 2013). In consumer purchase decisions, such factors matter because for consumers, animal welfare is a so called credence attribute: they should trust companies and the system surrounding them that the stated claims are indeed correct (Ingenbleek & Immink, 2011). We will formalize the interrelationships between the variables in the conceptual framework with formulas and develop propositions to guide future empirical research. The chapter will finish with a number of concrete implications for animal-welfare policy makers and managers responsible for the marketing of animal-friendly products.

2.2. The role of total perceived value in animal-friendly product choice

To improve animal welfare further through the market, it is vitally important to increase the market shares of animal-friendly products (Ingenbleek et al., 2012). Hence, animal-friendly product choice is the logical outcome variable in our conceptual framework (see Figure 2.1.). The marketing literature on the determinants of consumer product choice has highlighted several interrelated factors that drive consumer product choice, such as the product's quality, the product's total perceived value and customer satisfaction (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Hellier, Geursen, Carr, & Rickard, 2003; Tsiotsou, 2006). A consensus has emerged that the product's total perceived value (Hellier et al., 2003; Sheth et al.,

1991) or, more specifically, the product's relative perceived value compared to its alternatives (Bettman, Luce, & Payne, 1998), is central in predicting consumer product choices. The total perceived value refers to a "consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given" (Holbrook, 1999; Woodruff, 1997; Zeithaml, 1988, p. 14). By comparing several alternatives, the consumer is likely to choose the product that offers the highest total perceived value. In the context of animal-friendly products, the alternatives are typically mainstream products as well as other ethical products, such as fair-trade and organic products. This relationship can be formulated as:

$$PC_{ijk} = PV_{ik} - PV_{jk} \quad (1)$$

where:

PC_{ijk} = choice of product i (animal-friendly product) over product j (alternative product) for consumer k.

PV_{ik} (PV_{jk}) = total perceived value of product i (j) for consumer k.

In the consumer behaviour literature, total perceived value is typically viewed as the sum of individual consumption values, a concept first introduced by Sheth, Newman et al. (Sheth et al., 1991). Consumption values include various types (see also Table 2.1.), such as monetary value (the economic sacrifice in the form of prices to be paid), functional value (e.g., product's healthiness), sensory value (e.g., tastiness), social value (e.g., status) and ethical value, which includes animal welfare (Schmitt, 1999; Sheth et al., 1991; Smith & Colgate, 2007). Because a product typically provides multiple types of value, consumers make complex mental evaluations of the different types of value to assess the total perceived value. For example, in the context of animal-friendly products, consumers typically not only consider the value of animal welfare, but they also evaluate the product in terms of its taste, nutritional quality and healthiness (e.g., as in food products), or its design, functional quality and status (e.g., as in fashion clothes). Because each of the consumption values has its unique contribution to the total

perceived value, the total perceived value of an animal-friendly product can be broken down into the following formulation:

$$PV_{ik} = \sum_{a=1}^N wcv_{ka} * CV_{ika} \quad (2)$$

where:

$a = 1, 2, \dots, n$ consumption values.

wcv_{ka} = importance weight given to the a -th type of consumption value for consumer k , with values ranging from 0 (not important at all) to 1 (very important).

CV_{ika} = perceived level of consumption value a of product i according to consumer k , with values ranging from -1 (much lower than alternative product) to 1 (much higher than alternative product).

As illustrated by Formulas (1) and (2), offering higher total perceived value than the alternative(s) is an important determinant of animal-friendly product choice. Animal friendliness is associated with two types of value. First, animal welfare is an important social issue (Bennett, 1995). Because consumers generally believe that the humane treatment of animals is the right and ethical thing to do (Ingenbleek et al., 2012), animal welfare has a positive impact on a product's total perceived value in terms of its ethical value. Second, the improved animal welfare typically comes with extra costs (Den Ouden, Nijsing, Dijkhuizen, & Huirne, 1997). These costs are, to a large extent, translated into higher consumer prices (Ingenbleek et al., 2013), having a negative impact on the total perceived value of animal-friendly products in terms of its monetary value. Animal friendly products therefore typically offer higher ethical value but lower monetary value than mainstream products. This presents a critical challenge to the marketing of animal-friendly products.

Table 2.1. Examples of package claims for reinforcement positioning strategies for animal-friendly products.

Consumption value	Objective	Example of package claim
functional	associate animal welfare with high functional utility	“Lower in saturated fat and thus healthier due to access to pasture for the animals.”
sensory	associate animal welfare with high sensory experience	“Experience the full taste due to the slow growth and the natural feed.”
emotional	associate animal welfare with positive feelings	“All animals enjoy a happy life with 100% natural environment on our organic farms.”
social	position animal-friendly products as socially accepted or enhancing status	“A growing number of consumers ban battery cages and buy free-range eggs instead.”
epistemic	position animal-friendly products as interesting	“Scan the QR code to see photos and stories from our innovative animal-friendly farms.”
situational	make animal welfare more valuable in a specific situation	“Celebrate the World Animal Day by buying our cruelty-free cosmetics.”

2.3. Social dilemma in animal-friendly product choice

Animal-friendly product choice typically confronts consumers with a social dilemma because they must trade off monetary value against animal welfare (ethical value) when choosing between mainstream and animal-friendly products [while the chapter mainly focuses on consumer decisions between animal-friendly products and mainstream products, the model would also be applicable



to decisions between two animal-friendly products of which one has higher animal welfare standards than the other, so the choice would still be influenced by (different levels of) ethical value as well as monetary value] (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). A social dilemma reflects a situation in which the choice of maximizing short-term individual welfare negatively impacts long-term societal welfare (Messick & Brewer, 1983). Individual welfare refers to individual benefits, which are enjoyed by an individual consumer or his direct social environment, such as the family, while societal welfare refers to societal benefits, which are shared by a larger social group. The benefits of animal welfare are collectively enjoyed and shared by the society, because better animal welfare arguably affects the mental wellbeing (due to less animal suffering) of both the consumers as well as the non-consumers of animal friendly products (Bennett, 1995; Ingenbleek et al., 2013). Hence, animal welfare can be conceptualized as a societal benefit, also referred to as public benefit in the existing literature (e.g., Brewer & Kramer, 1986; Messick & Brewer, 1983). Monetary value, on the other hand, benefits the buyer himself and can therefore be conceptualized as an individual benefit (or sacrifice).

In a social dilemma, consumers are faced with a difficult situation because they must compare two essentially different types of benefits—animal welfare and monetary value—and their decision to choose one of those benefits necessarily results in the loss of the other benefit. In such a situation, most consumers are likely to opt for a product that maximizes their individual welfare, rather than a product that maximizes societal welfare. This is because evolution has mostly favoured people that have put their immediate self-interest above (long-term) societal interest (Griskevicius et al., 2012). In other words, humans have evolved to have a strong tendency to prioritize self-interest over societal interest and to value the present benefits more than those in the future (Griskevicius et al., 2012). As long as animal-friendly product choice will present a social dilemma,

those tendencies will remain a significant psychological barrier to consumer animal-friendly product choice. This is formalized in the following formula:

$$PC_{ijk} = \sum_{a=1}^N [(w_{svka} * (SV_{ika} - SV_{jka}) + w_{ivka} * (IV_{ika} - IV_{jka})] \quad (3)$$

where:

$a = 1, 2, \dots, n$ consumption values.

w_{svka} = importance weight given to the a -th type of societal consumption value (also referred to as societal benefit) for consumer k , with values ranging from 0 (not important at all) to 1 (very important).

SV_{ika} (SV_{jka}) = perceived level of the a -th type of societal consumption value of product i (j) according to consumer k , with values ranging from -1 (much lower than alternative product) to 1 (much higher than alternative product).

w_{ivka} = importance weight given to the a -th type of individual consumption value (also referred to as individual benefit) for consumer k , with values ranging from 0 (not important at all) to 1 (very important).

IV_{ika} (IV_{jka}) = perceived level of the a -th type of individual consumption value of product i (j) according to consumer k , with values ranging from -1 (much lower than alternative product) to 1 (much higher than alternative product).

As highlighted in Formula (3), the importance weights consumers give to societal benefits (w_{svka}) and individual benefits (w_{ivka}) play a crucial role in consumer animal-friendly product choice. As long as animal-friendly products offer lower individual benefits (IV_{ika}) than mainstream products (IV_{jka}) and higher societal benefits (SV_{ika}) than mainstream products (SV_{jka}), the choice will depend on the relative differences (e.g., the price premium) and the importance weights. To help consumers to make more animal-friendly product choices, marketing strategies for animal-friendly products can take four forms (In the proposed model, the importance weights given to the societal and individual welfare/benefits are independent from each other, so a consumer could theoretically find societal welfare increasingly important, without any decrease

in the importance of his/her individual welfare). First, they can remind consumers of their ethical values at the point of purchase, i.e., increase the importance of societal welfare (wsv_{ka}) (Lieberman, Trope, & Wakslak, 2007). This strategy can be executed, for example, by providing a detailed information on the product label on how individual's product choice impacts the welfare of the animals. Even though this strategy is frequently used in marketing practice, it works against human nature, because it emphasises societal welfare over individual welfare (Griskevicius et al., 2012). Hence, this strategy is mainly useful to target a relatively small segment of consumers who highly value societal welfare and frequently buy animal-friendly products (van Dam & Fischer, 2013). Second, they can add even more societal benefits to the animal-friendly product to increase the relative difference with its alternative ($SV_{ika} - SV_{jka}$). Companies can do so, for example, by reminding consumers that animal-friendly production has also positive impact on local businesses or natural environment. Similar to the first strategy, this strategy is also mainly useful to target those consumers who put a strong emphasis on societal welfare. Third, decreasing the importance of individual welfare (wiv_{ka}) can also be used to increase the total perceived value of animal-friendly products, for example by persuading consumers that, in the case of food that they buy for their families, price should not matter.

Finally, the fourth strategy can reinforce product's animal friendliness with individual benefits, i.e., decrease the relative difference between individual benefits offered by the animal-friendly product and its alternative ($IV_{ika} - IV_{jka}$) (de Jonge, Fischer, & van Trijp, 2014). In this way, the strategy will reduce the social dilemma because consumers will no longer need to trade off societal benefits for individual benefits. This strategy is based on positioning animal welfare as personally relevant and may therefore be more efficient to target the larger consumer segment that prioritizes individual welfare (Griskevicius et al., 2012). Such a strategy must reinforce the product's animal welfare with benefits serving buyer's individual welfare, as concretized in the reinforcement positioning strategies that we will discuss in the next section.

2.4. Reinforcement positioning strategies for animal-friendly products

Product positioning is a widely discussed concept in the marketing literature (see, for review, Kaul & Rao, 1995), which is seen as a crucial strategic decision for every company because it determines consumer perception and product choice (Aaker & Shansby, 1982). Product positioning aims to create a clear, unique and desirable position in the minds of target customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Hence, positioning strategy can be defined as a strategic decision to select perceived benefits that create a clear, unique and desirable position relative to the product's alternatives. Perceived benefits refer to actual or potential advantages, such as functional advantages (e.g., nutritional quality, healthiness) or emotional advantages (e.g., happiness, pride) that the customer gains by using the product (Grunert & van Trijp, 2014). The communication of the benefits to the target customers is not a simple one-to-one process. Marketers use product attributes, such as design and animal housing system (Grunert & van Trijp, 2014), which are then concretized with package cues and other marketing instruments, such as package colour or a certification label. Consumers use these instruments to infer which benefits they can expect from using the product and assess the value and personal relevance of these benefits (Gutman, 1982).

The concept of consumption values (Sheth et al., 1991) is a valuable instrument that can be used to develop product positioning strategies (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), because it distinguishes between different motives influencing consumer product choice. While the existing literature offers many taxonomies of the concept (for reviews, see Holbrook, 1999; Smith & Colgate, 2007), it generally agrees that the relevance of different types of consumption values depends on the particular product and particular consumer. As the present chapter aims to provide a general guidance for the development of positioning strategies for animal-friendly products, we selected various consumption values, which may be used for different products and consumers. These include six consumption values: functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic and situational. In addition, we include ethical value, i.e., the product's capacity to increase societal welfare, in our theoretical model, yet this value is not useful for reinforcement

positioning strategies, because it serves societal welfare, rather than individual welfare. Similarly, while monetary value, i.e., the economic sacrifice in the form of prices to be paid, is theoretically useful for product positioning strategies, its utility is limited for positioning strategies for animal-friendly products due to the additional costs associated with higher animal welfare.

Functional value refers to the “utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001, p. 211). The functional reinforcement strategy can, for example, be executed by associating higher animal standards with healthiness, i.e., by positioning free-range eggs as higher in Omega-3 Fatty Acids and lower in saturated fat, thus healthier than alternative products.

Sensory value refers to the product’s appeal to the senses (Schmitt, 1999). Positioning on sensory value can, for example, highlight the tastiness of organic beef, which stems from high quality nutrition and slow growth of the animals.

Emotional value stresses the product’s capacity to arouse feelings, moods and emotions (Sheth et al., 1991). The emotional reinforcement strategy can, for example, be executed by highlighting the natural living environment and happy life or dairy cows living on organic farms, hence eliciting positive emotions in the buyer.

Social value is defined as “the perceived utility acquired from an alternative’s association with one or more specific social groups” (Sheth et al., 1991, p. 161). Humane treatment of animals is an important issue that our society perceives as the right and ethical thing to do (Ingenbleek et al., 2012), so animal-friendly product choice can be a way to get social acceptance, especially from reference groups that are highly involved in protecting animal welfare. For example, positioning free-range products as the first choice of animal-friendly consumers, emphasises the social value.

Epistemic value refers to a product’s capacity to arouse curiosity or produce intellectual stimulation (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009). Epistemic

reinforcement strategy can, for example, make consumers curious by providing interesting package information, together with a QR code with additional details, on a new, innovative husbandry system.

Finally, situational value refers to a specific situation, in which the product becomes more valuable (Sheth et al., 1991). A positioning strategy reminding consumers of the World Animal Day can use this event to emphasise the importance to buy cosmetics that has not been tested on animals. The examples of package communication for each reinforcement value are listed in Table 2.1.

By including the proposed consumption values, the total perceived value can be reformulated as follows:

$$PV_{ik} = \beta_0 + w_{fuk} * F_{uik} + w_{sek} * S_{eik} + w_{emk} * E_{mik} + w_{sok} * S_{oik} + w_{epk} * E_{pik} + w_{mok} * M_{oik} + w_{sik} * S_{ik} + w_{etk} * E_{tik} + \epsilon_{ik} \quad (4)$$

where:

$F_{uik}, S_{eik}, E_{mik}, S_{oik}, E_{pik}, M_{oik}, S_{ik}, E_{tik}$ = perceived functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic, monetary, situational and ethical value of product i according to consumer k , respectively, with values ranging from -1 (much lower than reference product, which is typically the mainstream alternative) to 1 (much higher than reference product).

$w_{fuk}, w_{sek}, w_{emk}, w_{sok}, w_{epk}, w_{mok}, w_{sik}, w_{etk}$ = importance weight consumer k gives to the functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic, monetary, situational and ethical value, respectively, with values ranging from 0 (not important at all) to 1 (very important).

As illustrated by Formula (4) and the model depicted in Figure 2.2., each consumption value impacts the total perceived value. However, to address the social dilemma, marketers need to use those consumption values, individually or combined, that serve the buyer's individual welfare. Specifically, they need to reinforce product's animal welfare with consumption values by positioning animal welfare as also being beneficial for one's individual welfare. Hence we refer to such strategies as reinforcement positioning strategies. Such strategies are

likely to positively affect consumer animal-friendly product choice, we thus propose:

Proposition 1. Reinforcement positioning strategy has a positive effect on animal-friendly product choice by increasing the total perceived value of an animal-friendly product.

The effects of reinforcement positioning strategies can be formulated as:

Effect of functional reinforcement strategy:

$$F_{uik} = \beta_0 + cf_{uk} * X_{AW} \quad (5a)$$

Effect of sensory reinforcement strategy:

$$S_{eik} = \beta_0 + cse_k * X_{AW} \quad (5b)$$

Effect of emotional reinforcement strategy:

$$E_{mik} = \beta_0 + cem_k * X_{AW} \quad (5c)$$

Effect of social reinforcement strategy:

$$S_{oik} = \beta_0 + cso_k * X_{AW} \quad (5d)$$

Effect of epistemic reinforcement strategy:

$$E_{pik} = \beta_0 + cep_k * X_{AW} \quad (5e)$$

Effect of situational reinforcement strategy:

$$S_{iik} = \beta_0 + csi_k * X_{AW} \quad (5f)$$

where:

X_{AW} = product feature animal welfare (e.g., a certified label), which can take value 0 (not present) or 1 (present).

cf_{uk} , cse_k , cem_k , cso_k , cep_k , csi_k = extent in which consumer k associates product's animal welfare with the functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic and situational value, respectively, with values ranging from -1 (strong negative association) to 1 (strong positive association).

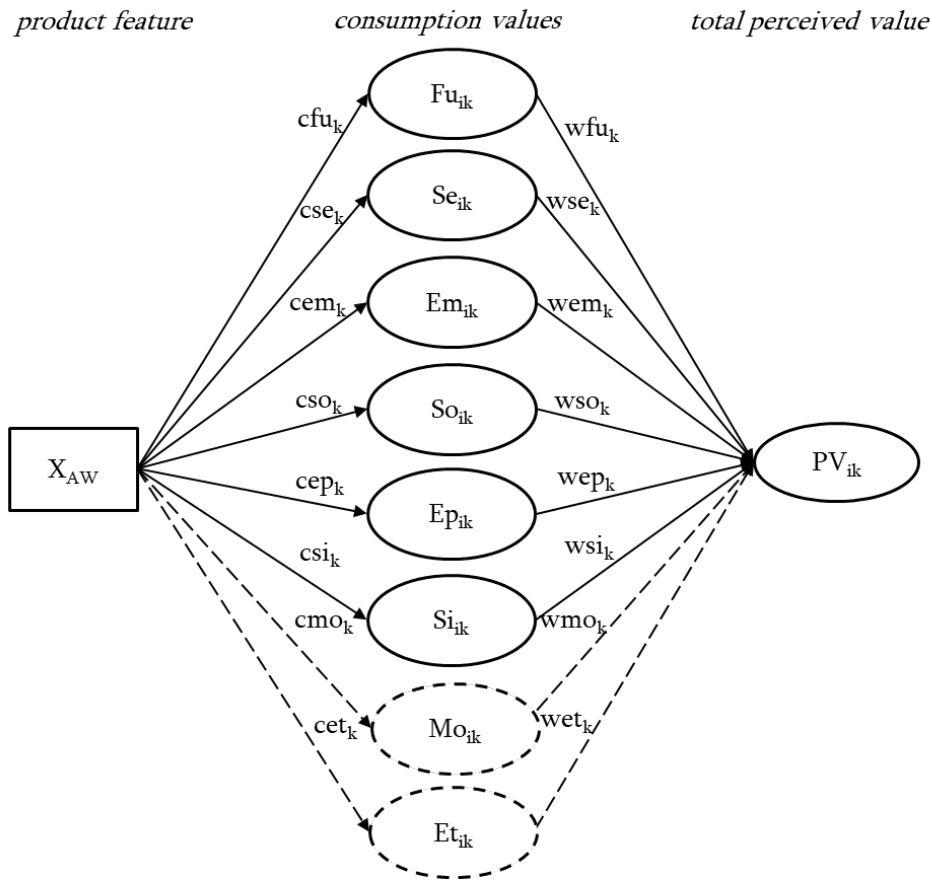


Figure 2.2. Reinforcement positioning strategies for animal-friendly products (adapted from Brunswik, 1956). The dashed arrows and constructs represent the existing associations of animal welfare with the monetary and the ethical value, which do not represent reinforcement positioning strategy.

Even though reinforcement positioning strategies are likely to have an overall positive effect on consumer animal-friendly product choice, the strength of this effect will not be the same for all consumers. Some consumer segments, such as those with particular thinking styles (Shiloh et al., 2002), may experience a stronger effect of some strategies. In other words, specific personal characteristics are likely to make consumers more sensitive to one strategy over another. In the

next section, we will discuss the role of consumer personal characteristics in greater detail.

2.5. Role of consumer personal characteristics in effectiveness of reinforcement positioning strategies

Different groups of consumers may need different strategies to be persuaded to purchase animal-friendly products. This is because consumer personal characteristics may play an important role in how consumers perceive different reinforcement positioning strategies. Because consumers obviously differ in numerous ways, we restrict ourselves here to two ways that are typical for animal-friendly products, namely thinking style (Shiloh et al., 2002) and degree of anthropomorphism (Grossman & Simon, 1969). Studies that examined consumers' attitudes towards animal-friendly products have for example found that consumers can think very differently about such products and the animals at the basis of the production chains (for example about whether animals have feelings and whether they were created to serve humans) (Evans & Miele, 2007). These insights are captured by the two proposed moderator variables discussed below.

2.5.1. Consumer thinking style

Thinking style is a personality trait that is originally conceptualized as analytic-rational or intuitive-experiential (Epstein, 1990; Shiloh et al., 2002). Consumers using an analytic-rational thinking style tend to rely on logical and rational appeals in the decision-making and they like to be intellectually stimulated and challenged (Shiloh et al., 2002; Vidrine, Simmons, & Brandon, 2007). Consumers using intuitive-experiential thinking style, on the other hand, typically rely on their intuition and they are more influenced by emotional appeals (Vidrine et al., 2007).

Thinking style is a two-dimensional construct, consisting of need for cognition and faith in intuition (Epstein, Pacini, Denes-Raj, & Heier, 1996). Existing literature takes different approaches to conceptualizing thinking style based on consumer scores on the two dimensions. Some studies assume the interrelatedness of the dimensions, so they cluster consumers into two groups on the dominant dimension (e.g., Ares, Mawad, Giménez, & Maiche, 2014), while others assume independence of the dimensions, so they cluster consumers into four groups (e.g., Shiloh et al., 2002) or study the effects of the dimensions separately (Haugtvedt, Petty, & Cacioppo, 1992; Hodgkinson, Langan-Fox, & Sadler-Smith, 2008). The present study proposes to study the individual effects of each dimension, as this may give the most accurate results on how thinking style moderates consumer response to the various reinforcement positioning strategies.

The proposed reinforcement positioning strategies generally use two types of appeals to reinforce product's animal welfare: rational and emotional appeals. Rational appeals can be defined as those that use logical arguments or reasons related to brand attributes (Albers-Miller & Royne Stafford, 1999). Rational appeals frequently stress product quality and performance (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Emotional appeals, on the other hand, aim to make consumer feel good about the purchase, by creating a connection between the consumer and the brand (Albers-Miller & Royne Stafford, 1999). A free-range meat, for example, can use rational appeal by emphasizing that the product is healthier because it is lower in saturated fat or emotional appeal by making consumer feel good about his/her choice of products that grant good life to the animals. As illustrated in 2.1., some consumption values—functional and epistemic—use rational claims, while others—sensory, emotional, social—use emotional claims (situational value can use both types of claims, as this value is generally tied either to product's functional or social value (Sheth et al., 1991). In other words, a product can enhance its situational value in a condition (e.g., an event) in which its purchase or use is more valuable in terms of its functional or social value). Hence, consumers with high need for cognition, who rely on logical and rational appeals in the decision-making, are likely to be more sensitive to strategies using rational

appeals to reinforce the ethical value of animal welfare than consumers with low need for cognition. Consumers with high faith in intuition, in contrast, are sensitive to emotional messages and hedonic experience, so they will be more sensitive to strategies using emotional appeals to reinforce the ethical value of animal welfare than consumers with low faith in intuition. We thus propose:

Proposition 2. Need for cognition strengthens the associations between product's animal welfare and reinforcement values with rational appeals.

Proposition 3. Faith in intuition strengthens the associations between product's animal welfare and reinforcement values with emotional appeals.

2.5.2. Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism, in the context of animal welfare, is the extent to which consumers believe that animals have feelings, cognition and other humanlike characteristics (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Grossman & Simon, 1969). Consumers with a high degree of anthropomorphism arguably believe that animals used for the production of physical products (e.g., food, apparel) or services (e.g., circus performance) should not be seen as products only but rather as live beings who deserve a good life.

As depicted in Table 2.1., the proposed reinforcement positioning strategies differ in the types of attributes that they emphasise in that some strategies emphasise product-related attributes, i.e., those related to the physical products, while others emphasise process-related attributes, i.e., those related to the production process (Bond, Thilmany, & Keeling Bond, 2008). The first group of strategies includes functional and sensory reinforcement strategy, which emphasise physical product qualities, such as functional quality/healthiness and taste. The second group, including emotional, social and epistemic strategy, emphasises that due to the husbandry system used in the production process, consumer will get a good feeling, a social approval or an interesting information, so they put the production process central. We expect that consumers with a low degree of

anthropomorphism, who thus consider animals as products, will be more sensitive to strategies using product-related attributes. On the other hand, consumers with a high degree of anthropomorphism, who believe that animals are live beings with right to have a good life, will arguably respond stronger to strategies using process-related attributes. We thus propose:

Proposition 4. Anthropomorphism weakens the associations between product's animal welfare and reinforcement values with product-related attributes.

Proposition 5. Anthropomorphism strengthens the associations between product's animal welfare and reinforcement values with process-related attributes.

By including the moderating effects of consumer personal characteristics, the effects of reinforcement positioning strategies can be reformulated as follows:

Effect of functional reinforcement strategy:

$$Fu_{ik} = \beta_0 + cfu_k * X_{AW} + ncfu_k * X_{AW} * NC_k + anfu_k * X_{AW} * AN_k \quad (6a)$$

Effect of sensory reinforcement strategy:

$$Se_{ik} = \beta_0 + cse_k * X_{AW} + fise_k * X_{AW} * FI_k + anse_k * X_{AW} * AN_k \quad (6b)$$

Effect of emotional reinforcement strategy:

$$Em_{ik} = \beta_0 + cem_k * X_{AW} + fiem_k * X_{AW} * FI_k + anem_k * X_{AW} * AN_k \quad (6c)$$

Effect of social reinforcement strategy:

$$So_{ik} = \beta_0 + cso_k * X_{AW} + fiso_k * X_{AW} * FI_k + anso_k * X_{AW} * AN_k \quad (6d)$$

Effect of epistemic reinforcement strategy:

$$Ep_{ik} = \beta_0 + cep_k * X_{AW} + ncep_k * X_{AW} * NC_k + anep_k * X_{AW} * AN_k \quad (6e)$$

Effect of situational reinforcement strategy:

$$Si_{ik} = \beta_0 + csi_k * X_{AW} + ansi_k * X_{AW} * AN_k \quad (6f)$$

where:

NC_k = level of need for cognition of consumer k.

FI_k = level of faith in intuition of consumer k.

AN_k = level of anthropomorphism of consumer k.

$ncfu_k, ncep_k$ = effect of need for cognition on the extent in which consumer k associates product's animal welfare (featured with a certified label, for example), with functional and epistemic value, respectively.

$fise_k, fiem_k, fiso_k$ = effect of faith in intuition on the extent in which consumer k associates product's animal welfare with sensory, emotional and social value, respectively. $anfu_k, anse_k, anem_k, anso_k, anep_k, ansik$ = effect of anthropomorphism on the extent in which consumer k associates product's animal welfare with functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic and situational value, respectively.

2.6. Role of stakeholder endorsement and CSR strategy in effectiveness of reinforcement positioning strategies

Next to consumer personal characteristics, the effectiveness of reinforcement strategies is likely to depend on consumer evaluations of the trustworthiness of the company offering animal-friendly products. The trustworthiness of companies in the animal-based production chains is often debated, not only for reasons of animal welfare but also in the context of animal diseases and impact on human health (Berg, 2004; Pennings, Wansink, & Meulenberg, 2002). In some countries, such as in the UK, continuous pressure from non-governmental organizations and media has even led to 'ethical reform', through which food retailers were compelled to reconsider their unethical practices (Freidberg, 2004). In marketing theoretical terms, animal welfare is a credence attribute, which means that consumers lack the ability to assess whether the product meets the claimed animal welfare criteria or not (like they can with size, colour or price) (Ingenbleek & Immink, 2011). We therefore include variables in the framework on stakeholder endorsement and the company's CSR strategy. The first is

important because it helps consumers to generate information from an independent source regarding the claimed animal welfare (Berens, van Riel, & van Bruggen, 2005). The second is important because in their CSR strategy companies establish their relationship with society at large (Peloza & Shang, 2011).

2.6.1. Stakeholder endorsement

For companies selling animal-friendly products, managing communication and support from stakeholders is of crucial and growing importance (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). Cooperation with stakeholders may therefore be a useful tool that can increase the effectiveness of marketing strategies, primarily when used as a guarantee of the trustworthiness of the product information (van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). While stakeholder definitions and forms of support know many conceptualizations in the current literature (see, for review, Miles, 2017), the present study uses stakeholder endorsement, defined as a rather passive support from an independent information source (Scandellius & Cohen, 2016). Stakeholder endorsement is a common tool in the marketing strategy that can increase the trustworthiness of the product and its claims (Galarraga Gallastegui, 2002; Jahn, Schramm, & Spiller, 2005). Stakeholder endorsement typically involves the use of a certified label, issued by a relevant (international) organization, such as the EU ecolabel issued by the European Union or the cruelty-free bunny label issued by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

Stakeholder endorsement may influence the effectiveness of reinforcement positioning strategies because it increases the trustworthiness of the animal welfare claim (Morsing & Schultz, 2006; Schröder & McEachern, 2004). Reinforcement positioning strategies reinforce product's animal welfare with consumption values, i.e., position animal welfare as being also beneficial for one's individual welfare. Hence, the claimed animal welfare is an important element in the reinforcement positioning strategy, because if consumers perceive such

claim as untrustworthy, they are unlikely to appraise the claimed individual benefits. These effects have been found in several studies (e.g., Du et al., 2007; Folkes & Kamins, 1999; Handelman & Arnold, 1999), which commonly conclude that consumer perceptions of the product's ethical value correlate with the perceptions of other reinforcement values. We thus propose:

Proposition 6. Stakeholder endorsement strengthens the associations between product's animal welfare and reinforcement values.

By including the moderating effects of stakeholder endorsement, the effects of reinforcement positioning strategies can be reformulated as:

Effect of functional reinforcement strategy:

$$F_{iik} = \beta_0 + cf_{ik} * X_{AW} + sef_{ik} * X_{AW} * SE \quad (7a)$$

Effect of sensory reinforcement strategy:

$$S_{iik} = \beta_0 + cse_{ik} * X_{AW} + sese_{ik} * X_{AW} * SE \quad (7b)$$

Effect of emotional reinforcement strategy:

$$E_{iik} = \beta_0 + cem_{ik} * X_{AW} + seem_{ik} * X_{AW} * SE \quad (7c)$$

Effect of social reinforcement strategy:

$$So_{iik} = \beta_0 + cso_{ik} * X_{AW} + seso_{ik} * X_{AW} * SE \quad (7d)$$

Effect of epistemic reinforcement strategy:

$$Ep_{iik} = \beta_0 + cep_{ik} * X_{AW} + seep_{ik} * X_{AW} * SE \quad (7e)$$

Effect of situational reinforcement strategy:

$$Si_{iik} = \beta_0 + csi_{ik} * X_{AW} + sesi_{ik} * X_{AW} * SE \quad (7f)$$

where:

SE = stakeholder endorsement.

sef_{ik}, sese_{ik}, seem_{ik}, seso_{ik}, seep_{ik}, sesi_{ik} = effect of stakeholder endorsement on the extent in which consumer k associates product's animal welfare with functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic and situational value, respectively.

2.6.2. *CSR strategy*

With the growing transparency and access to information that consumers can learn about companies selling animal-friendly products, more emphasis is placed on the company's image and reputation (Balmer & Greyser, 2006). The company's image and reputation therefore play a crucial role in the perceptions and response to the positioning strategies, because consumers tend to compare the information about company's products with the information about the company. In other words, consumers evaluate and infer the information on specific products from their perceptions of the company (Brown & Dacin, 1997). This is particularly important for animal-friendly products, because consumers are not able to validate the product's animal friendliness themselves. They may therefore use their knowledge of the company's overall ethical policy to help them decide on whether to trust the animal welfare claims or not. Hence, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, which refers to company's activities and approach with regards to its societal obligations (Brown & Dacin, 1997), is likely to influence the trustworthiness of the animal welfare claim, hence the effectiveness of reinforcement positioning strategies.

While companies can employ various CSR strategies (see, for review, Baumgartner & Ebner, 2010), a common conceptualization distinguishes between proactive and reactive strategies (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Groza, Pronschinske, & Walker, 2011). Companies employing reactive CSR strategy "feel they must engage in CSR—mostly unwillingly" (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012, p. 951), while companies employing proactive CSR strategy "actively engage in and support CSR" (Groza et al., 2011, p. 641). Building on research that has found proactive CSR strategy being perceived more positive by consumers than reactive strategy (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, & Hill, 2006; Wagner, Lutz, & Weitz, 2009), we expect similar effects with regards to the impact of reinforcement positioning strategies. We thus propose:

Proposition 7. CSR strategy moderates the strength of the associations between product's animal welfare and reinforcement values. The associations are stronger for companies employing proactive CSR strategy than for companies employing reactive CSR strategy.

Finally, by including the moderating effects of CSR strategy, the effects of reinforcement positioning strategies can be reformulated as:

Effect of functional reinforcement strategy:

$$F_{uik} = \beta_0 + cf_{uk} * X_{AW} + csf_{uk} * X_{AW} * CS \quad (8a)$$

Effect of sensory reinforcement strategy:

$$S_{eik} = \beta_0 + cse_{k} * X_{AW} + csse_{k} * X_{AW} * CS \quad (8b)$$

Effect of emotional reinforcement strategy:

$$E_{mik} = \beta_0 + cem_{k} * X_{AW} + csem_{k} * X_{AW} * CS \quad (8c)$$

Effect of social reinforcement strategy:

$$S_{oik} = \beta_0 + cso_{k} * X_{AW} + csso_{k} * X_{AW} * CS \quad (8d)$$

Effect of epistemic reinforcement strategy:

$$E_{pik} = \beta_0 + cep_{k} * X_{AW} + csep_{k} * X_{AW} * CS \quad (8e)$$

Effect of situational reinforcement strategy:

$$S_{iik} = \beta_0 + csi_{k} * X_{AW} + cssi_{k} * X_{AW} * CS \quad (8f)$$

where:

CS = CSR strategy.

csf_{uk} , cse_{k} , $csem_{k}$, $csso_{k}$, $csep_{k}$, $cssi_{k}$ = effect of CSR strategy on the extent in which consumer k associates product's animal welfare with functional, sensory, emotional, social, epistemic and situational value, respectively.

The full conceptual model, which includes the moderating effects of consumer need for cognition, faith in intuition and anthropomorphism, as well as the effects of stakeholder endorsement and CSR strategy, is shown in Figure 2.3.

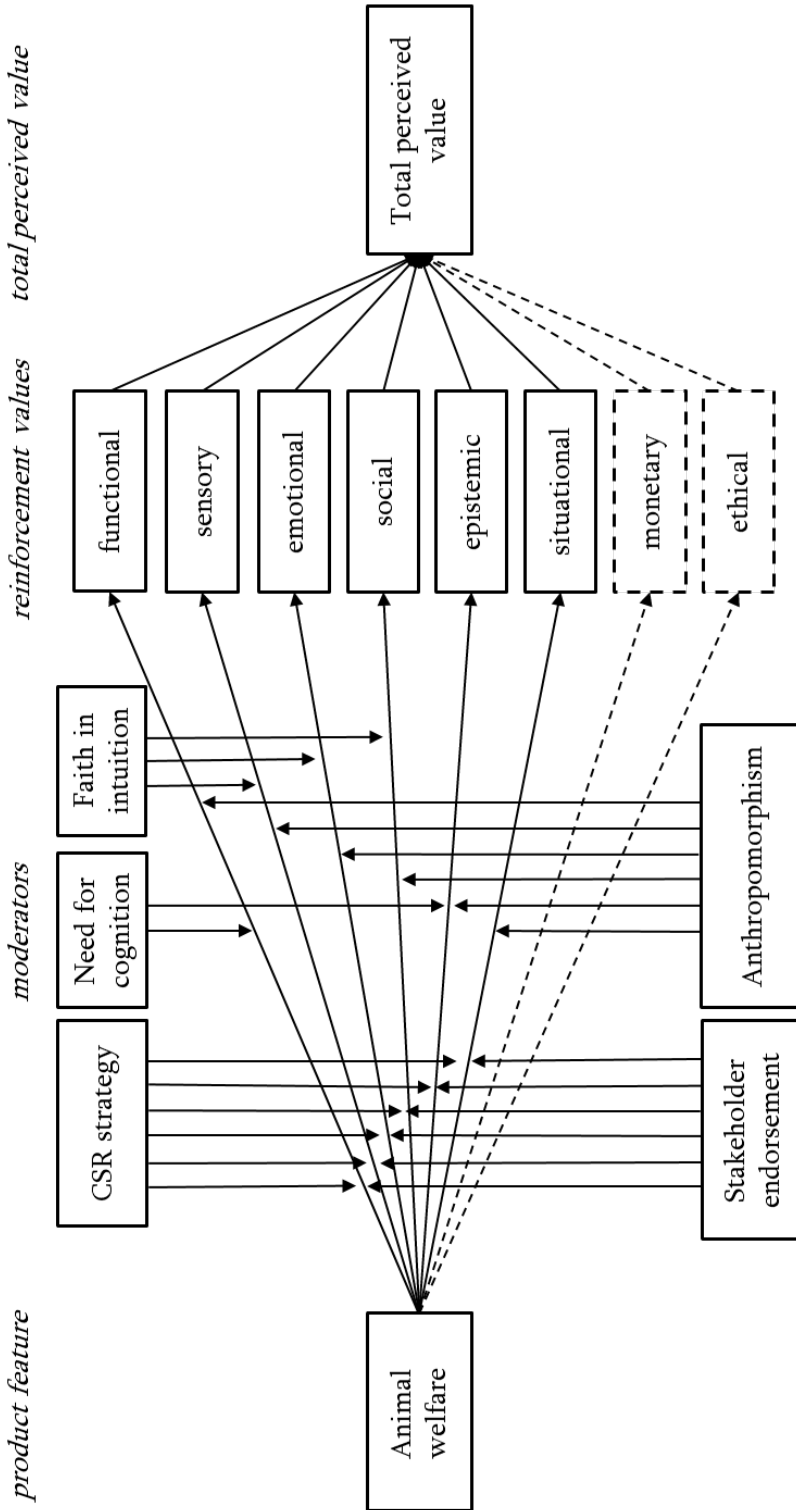


Figure 2.3. Full conceptual model. The dashed arrows and constructs represent the existing associations of animal welfare with the monetary and the ethical value, which do not represent reinforcement positioning strategy.

2.7. Conclusions and implications

In conclusion, drawing on social dilemma theory, customer value theory and marketing literature on the design of positioning strategies, this chapter argues that marketing has unused potential to stimulate consumer animal-friendly product choice. When choosing between animal-friendly and mainstream products consumers may be confronted with a social dilemma because they must trade off monetary value against animal welfare. Positioning strategies can reduce the dilemma by reinforcing animal welfare with personally relevant individual benefits. Consequently, consumers who typically opt for mainstream products will be more likely to choose animal-friendly alternatives.

This conclusion has several implications for marketing managers responsible for the animal-friendly products and animal-welfare policy makers. The main implication from this study logically is that marketing managers should not merely emphasise product's animal-friendliness through a (certified) label, because this is unlikely to attract consumers who prioritize their self-interest. Instead, they should communicate that animal-friendliness also provides individual benefits, such as taste, healthiness, good feeling and social acceptance. While the product package is one way of communicating these benefits, managers can also use other means of communication, such as advertising, in-store displays and company websites.

In designing positioning strategies, managers also need to think deeper about their target customer, i.e., the market segment they would like to attract. This chapter identified several potential segmentation bases that are relevant for animal-friendly products, namely those based on consumer need for cognition, faith in intuition and anthropomorphism. We argued why these different market segments may be more sensitive to particular positioning strategies, giving practical guidelines to the managers on how to approach these segments. Based on these insights, companies can conduct market research to identify the specific market segments relevant for their products (e.g., age, gender, lifestyle or benefit-related segments). Such research should consider the geographic context to account for country-specific factors, such as cultural and religious influences.

Third, companies may want to think about their collaboration with relevant stakeholders, such as media, animal-interest organizations and consumer organizations. These stakeholders may be helpful, or even necessary, to gain consumer trust in the products, not only with respect to the claimed animal-friendliness but also with respect to other product claims, such as those on product's healthiness, tastiness, or value for money. The present chapter mainly focused on stakeholder endorsement, which is a rather passive support typically in form of a certified label, because stakeholder endorsement is particularly suitable for positioning strategies. Companies may, however, also consider other strategies, such as a long-term collaboration with media, or a campaign, in cooperation with an animal-interest organization, communicating the company's overall contribution to the improvement of animal welfare standards (e.g., the campaign for a global ban on cosmetics animal testing launched by The Body Shop in collaboration with Cruelty Free International).

Fourth, companies need to be aware that their CSR strategy can also influence how consumers perceive positioning strategies designed for individual products. Companies employing a reactive CSR strategy may benefit less from positioning strategies that reinforce animal welfare with individual benefits than companies employing a proactive strategy. Hence, companies need to critically look at their overall CSR strategy, making sure that consumers do not see contradictions between the overall strategy and the positioning strategies for individual products.

Finally, our theory has implications for policy makers. In the current political-economic environment, policy makers can stimulate animal-welfare not only by securing the legal lower boundary but also by encouraging private parties in the market to make extra steps by launching animal-friendly products. Obviously, companies will feel more encouraged when the opportunities are clear to them. While in the past many market studies were assigned by policy makers to investigate citizens' attitudes towards animal welfare, they may now encourage companies by assigning more studies on which consumers are attracted by which values. Furthermore, policy makers should secure the interests of companies that

genuinely increase standards, by punishing companies that make unjustified animal welfare claims. In that respect, improving animal welfare through innovation and communication in the market does require government control to ensure that all players follow the rules.

2.8. Limitations and directions for future research

The implementation of the presented framework is limited by several factors. First, as the proposed strategies reinforce improved animal welfare with additional benefits, it is mainly relevant for marketing pre-packed animal-based products with higher levels of animal welfare than the legally set minimum, rather than products without animal ingredients. Second, its applicability is limited to countries where stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations and media, exist who are powerful and trustworthy enough to influence the perceptions of consumers on animal welfare. Finally, the framework assumes the existence of intensive animal farming industry where consumers are disconnected from animal farming and largely (have to) rely on information that is presented to them through marketing and media.

Our framework suggests several directions for empirical studies examining the propositions formulated in this chapter. A likely approach to test (parts of) the theory unfolded here is to design consumer experiments that can be conducted in controlled settings. Research may for example test images or actual proto-types of animal-friendly products supported with positioning strategies based on different consumption values. To design the strategies, studies can build on existing research examining the currently-used positioning strategies of animal-friendly products (van Riemsdijk, Ingenbleek, Houthuijs, & van Trijp, 2017), which has shown that if marketers use reinforcement positioning strategies at all, they predominantly rely on strategies emphasizing either emotional value or functional and sensory value. Subsequently the intended or actual product choices can be monitored. Once such studies offer sufficient evidence to bring strategies to the market, researchers can ally with companies by examining the

effectiveness of different positioning strategies in a real market context, for example by making use of point-of-purchase data.

Researchers may use similar approaches to test the effects of consumer characteristics. They may measure the different dimensions of thinking style, the level of anthropomorphism and other relevant characteristics, to study their impact on the relationships between positioning strategies and consumers' product choices. To study these effects, samples with sufficient variance on the relevant consumer characteristics will be needed.

Finally, the effectiveness of one or more strategies can be tested in the context of companies with different CSR policies and/or different levels of support (or even critique) from the side of stakeholders. While such effects can probably be studied most accurate in a controlled experimental setting, stakeholder debates on animal welfare are quite common in many countries in Western Europe and Northern America. We therefore suggest that also case study research on the actual debate and the market responses can make an interesting addition to our understanding of how marketing can help to create a market for products contributing to higher levels of welfare of production animals.





CHAPTER 3

Strategies for positioning animal welfare as personally relevant

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Abstract

Next to organic food products, an assortment of ethical products is emerging in the supermarket that targets the large market segment of consumers that are open for ethical product choices but do not restrict themselves to them. In this chapter we examine the positioning strategies that marketers use to persuade consumers in this segment to buy animal-friendly products. We approach product positioning from a consumption values perspective from which we examine strategies that make animal welfare personally relevant to the buyer because they reinforce animal welfare with suitable consumption value (functional, emotional, social, sensory, epistemic and/or ethical). Using data from 129 animal-friendly products from a Dutch supermarket, we explore the positioning strategies of these products. The results identified four different strategies used to position animal-friendly products in a Dutch supermarket. They respectively call upon consumers' emotions, functional or sensory perceptions, curiosity, and sense of public welfare. The findings also show substantial category differences, with fresh products relying predominantly on emotional value and processed food on functional value. This study is the first to empirically explore positioning strategies of animal-friendly products on the basis of their consumption values. The study offers a novel perspective to understand how companies try to extend the market for animal-friendly products, thus providing a basis for a new research agenda.

3.1. Introduction

In response to the growing public concern for animal welfare, companies are introducing an increasing number of animal-friendly products to the market. In Europe, 94% of consumers believe that it is important to protect the welfare of farm animals and 59% of consumers even claim to be willing to pay more for animal-friendly products (European Commission, 2016). However, the market share of animal-friendly products remains low. In the Netherlands, for example, the market share ranged from less than 7% for animal-friendly dairy to 9% for animal-friendly meat and 29% for animal-friendly eggs (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2014). To stimulate the sales of animal-friendly products, companies use marketing campaigns and strategies (Ingenbleek & Immink, 2011). Still, these products only represent a small proportion of the market, which may suggest that companies still struggle to release their market potential.

The literature on consumer perceptions of ethical products has addressed animal welfare mostly as a component of organic production (e.g., Harper & Makatouni, 2002). The more specific literature on animal welfare has inventoried policy instruments such as legislation, subsidies, labelling schemes and education programs that potentially can help to create a market for animal-friendly products (e.g., Bennett & Appleby, 2010; Ingenbleek et al., 2012). Another strand of literature, focusing on consumer perceptions, has addressed, among other topics, consumer willingness to pay for animal welfare (Zander & Hamm, 2010), determinants of consumers' willingness to switch stores to buy more animal-friendly products (Toma, Stott, Revoredo-Giha, & Kupiec-Teahan, 2012), the role of consumer trust and the trade-offs between perceived benefits such as healthiness, safety and taste (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000). In a recent review of the literature, Vanhonacker and Verbeke (2014) observe that to further develop a market for animal-friendly products, companies must improve the positioning strategies of these products so that they appeal to the preferences of diverse consumer segments. To do so, positioning strategies highlight those perceived benefits that consumers desire to create an attractive position relative to competitors. However, the literature on

positioning strategies for animal-friendly products hardly provides any guidance on different ways in which these products can be differentiated from other animal-friendly products.

The present study aims to fill this gap by introducing a new approach to the understanding of positioning strategies of animal-friendly products, namely, an approach based on different types of consumption values (Sheth et al., 1991). Consumption values are closely related to perceived benefits, as they refer to those product benefits that are personally relevant and valuable to the buyer. Animal welfare as the primary perceived benefit is only personally relevant to those consumers who are strongly motivated by their ethical values (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b). For the majority of consumers, reinforcing animal welfare with other types of consumption values, such as functional or emotional value, may motivate them to purchase animal-friendly products. The literature, however, makes no reference to the concept of consumption values in the positioning strategies of animal-friendly products. In this study, we draw on existing typologies of consumption values (e.g. Sheth et al., 1991) and adapt these to the specific situation of animal-based food products. We then explore the positioning strategies of 129 animal-friendly products from a Dutch supermarket. Using an exploratory cluster analysis, we synthesize the data to identify a small set of distinctive positioning strategies that are currently used in Dutch supermarkets. As our chapter develops descriptive theory, it fits the early stage of thinking on positioning strategies for animal-friendly products and it provides a basis for subsequent studies that create normative insights on how companies should position their animal-friendly products and other ethical products (Hunt, 2010). The results of our study help to identify how marketers of animal-friendly food products use and combine different consumption values to position their products, and, can therefore be helpful for other companies to design their own positioning strategies. We will zoom deeper into the findings by also exploring category differences.

3.2. Review of literature

3.2.1. Background on positioning strategies

Product positioning is a widely discussed concept in the marketing literature (see, for a review, Kaul & Rao, 1995), which, as first emphasised by Aaker and Shansby (1982), is seen as a crucial strategic decision for every company because it has a direct impact on consumer perception and product choice. Product positioning sets a product's frame of reference so that it can arrange "for a market offering to occupy a clear, distinctive and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers" (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008, p. 410). Hence, the *positioning strategy* essentially refers to the selection and combination of perceived benefits that create a clear, distinctive and desirable position relative to the competitors. Perceived benefits are the actual or potential advantages that the customer gains by buying and/or using the product (Grunert & van Trijp, 2014). They include, but are not limited to, functional advantages, such as product reliability; emotional advantages, such as fun; and social advantages, such as status. While the perceived benefits essentially drive consumer product choice, marketers use product attributes, such as design and technical features, to communicate the benefits to the target customer (Grunert & van Trijp, 2014). These attributes are then concretized with marketing instruments (price levels and communication messages, for example) that may appear as cues on the package of the product. From the way in which the instruments are used, consumers then make inferences about the benefits that they can expect from using the product, and finally, assess whether those benefits are personally relevant and valuable (Gutman, 1982). Importantly, research has shown that this process does not necessarily depend on conscious, highly cognitive information processing, because consumers also make such inferences in the case of habitual, unconscious or emotional-based decisions that typically characterizes food choice (Costa, Dekker, & Jongen, 2004). The concept of consumption values, referring to the various motives influencing consumer product choice (Sheth et al., 1991), is therefore potentially useful to understand to which purchasing

motives of consumers companies try to appeal in their product positioning strategies.

However, the existing literature on animal-friendly and sustainable products makes little reference to such values. In the literature on sustainable products, we can observe two positioning strategies: responsible strategy and integrated quality strategy (Ingenbleek & Frambach, 2010). The *responsible strategy* emphasises improved animal welfare and/or the broader welfare of the society/natural environment, commonly referred to as ethical benefits (van Dam & van Trijp, 2011). This strategy thus targets consumers who attach high importance to and are willing to pay for improvements in public welfare in general and/or animal welfare in particular. Companies targeting consumers that are less involved may position their products with an *integrated quality strategy*, in which animal welfare is integrated with other benefits, such as taste and healthiness, to increase consumers' overall quality perceptions (Ingenbleek & Frambach, 2010). Still, this strategy views quality as a general concept, not distinguishing between different dimensions of perceived quality. Hence, with the growing number and diversity of animal-friendly products, that also compete with other categories of ethical products, it is necessary to build a distinct position that is characterized by unique types of benefits that the product delivers. The consumption value perspective, which recognizes different types of benefits, offers a way to make such distinction.

3.2.2. A consumption value perspective

The concept of consumption values was first introduced by Sheth et al. (1991), who aimed to explain what drives consumers to choose a specific product, a specific product type or a specific brand over another. While the original study mainly viewed consumption values as predictors of consumer choices, later studies also indicated their importance in the development of product positioning strategy (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) and market segmentation (Long & Schiffman, 2000). In other words, knowing which type of value is important for (different

types of) consumers has substantial implications for a product's marketing strategy.

Consumption values know various conceptualisations in the existing literature (see, for reviews, Smith & Colgate, 2007; Woodall, 2003) and they typically refer to the motives of consumption. Consumption values are perceived uniquely by individual consumers, they depend on the situation or the product and can change over time (Smith & Colgate, 2007). Hence, the relevance of different types of consumption values depends on the particular product and particular consumer. For animal-friendly products, ethical value, i.e., their capacity to increase animal welfare, is inherent to the product type yet not equally relevant to the different types of consumers. Building upon existing taxonomies of consumption values, we identified six consumption values that are applicable to food products: functional, emotional, sensory, social, epistemic and ethical value. We do not include economic value (price-quality ratio), because animal-friendly production is usually more costly than mainstream production (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b). As these costs are, at least partially, translated into a higher final price, positioning on economic value is typically not feasible for animal-friendly products.

Functional value refers to the “utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001, p. 211). For an animal-friendly product, this strategy can, for example, be executed by positioning free-range meat as leaner and, therefore, of a higher quality than mainstream products. *Emotional value* stresses the product's capacity to arouse feelings, moods and emotions (Sheth et al., 1991). As animal-friendly dairy products are manufactured in systems with higher animal standards than mainstream products (Buller, 2013), the positioning strategy can accentuate the happier life of the animals, hence eliciting positive emotions in the buyer. *Sensory value* refers to the product's appeal to the senses (Schmitt, 1999). Positioning on sensory value can, for example, highlight the tastiness of organic eggs, which stems from the high-quality organic feed. While sensory value is sometimes viewed as a part of emotional value (cf. Smith & Colgate, 2007) or

functional value (cf. Sheth et al., 1991), we consider it a separate dimension in the context of food products, as functional benefits (e.g., healthiness) and emotional benefits (e.g., being proud of supporting animals) do not necessarily provide sensory experience. *Social value* is “the perceived utility acquired from an alternative’s association with one or more specific social groups” (Sheth et al., 1991, p. 161). Animal welfare is a shared societal concern that dictates standards for an acceptable behaviour (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). Hence, animal-friendly product choice can help obtain social acceptance from certain reference groups such as the heavy users of animal-friendly products. For example, organic meat, positioned as the first choice of animal-friendly consumers emphasises social value. *Epistemic value* refers to a product’s capacity to arouse curiosity or produce intellectual stimulation (Sheth et al., 1991). This strategy can, for example, be executed by providing details on a new animal husbandry system. Finally, the *ethical value* is the product’s capacity to increase public welfare. Typically, this strategy emphasises the higher welfare of the animals used in the production of various categories of free-range or organic products.

The presented types of consumption values can be used individually or in a combination with each other. The positioning strategy is then defined by the types of values that it emphasises. To operationalize the strategy, marketers make use of different elements such as product package, price, promotion, shelf position and store position. To analyse the positioning strategies in our empirical study, we focus on package communication, which is generally believed to be one of the most important elements affecting consumer food choice (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). Package communication is determined by package cues, which can be defined as any piece of information (e.g., a word, sentence, symbol or picture) that communicates one or more consumption values. For example, these cues might include a “better life” label (certified by the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals that guarantees animal welfare standards higher than the legally set minimum), which communicates ethical value, or a picture of a serving suggestion, which communicates sensory and functional value.

3.3. Methods

3.3.1. Data collection and coding

To empirically explore the positioning strategies of animal-friendly products, we selected animal-friendly products from pre-specified categories from the assortment available in a Dutch supermarket. Next, we coded the attributes that play a role in the positioning strategy of the product based on the cues that communicate the benefits to consumers. Finally, the products were clustered to examine corresponding patterns of attributes among them. This clustering serves to identify different positioning strategies.

In selecting a particular supermarket, we chose a medium sized (950 m²) C1000 supermarket, a Dutch middle-segment supermarket chain. We selected the product categories in which the main ingredient was of animal origin (meat, dairy and eggs) or in which a prominent ingredient was of animal origin (e.g., mayonnaise). We then searched all products from the selected categories on whether a prominent ingredient is of animal origin, the claim of animal friendliness is traceable (e.g., verified by an independent organization) and whether the level of animal welfare is higher than minimally required by the current law or law in the near future. We searched 27 product categories and found at least one product meeting the three criteria in 15 product categories (no animal-friendly products were found, for example, in frozen meat, fresh fish, soup and pet food). When several product variations (e.g., different flavours of yoghurt) of the same brand and product type carried the same cues, we only selected one product. We photographed the selected products to obtain a final sample of 129 products (see Table 3.1. for an overview of the number of products per category).

Next, the attributes were coded. Attributes are at an abstraction level between the concrete cues that can be found on the product packaging and the theoretically conceptualized consumption values (van Kleef, van Trijp, & Luning, 2005). As there are, to the best of our knowledge, no suitable conceptualizations of attributes, we inferred them from the cues and then related them to

consumption values. We first developed a coding list of cues from the photographs of a subset of products. Cues are directly present on the package and include, for example, certification labels, words (like “natural”) and pictures of serving suggestions. Using the list of cues and the subsample of products, we inferred the attributes that the cues communicate to develop a coding list for the attributes as well. The final list included 22 attributes, such as husbandry description, healthy ingredients or reference to a social group (see Appendix 3.1.). While most attributes refer to a unique type of consumption value, four of them relate to two types. A serving suggestion relates, for example, both to functional and sensory value types.

Next, two coders coded the cues of a subset of products in the sample. Cohen’s Kappa for inter-rater reliability (cf. Cohen, 1960) was .80, suggesting that the coding scheme worked reasonably well. Points of difference were discussed between the two coders and adjusted. The attributes were then derived from the cues in a binary manner, meaning that the product received a score of 0 or 1 on each attribute depending whether it contained no cues (score 0) or at least one cue (score 1) that belong to the attribute. Appendix 3.1. shows the full list of cues, their descriptions and the attributes to which they relate. Because the attribute-level is central to a positioning strategy (Kaul & Rao, 1995), the attributes were subsequently used in a cluster analysis to derive positioning strategies.

3.3.2. Analyses

We analysed the data by running a Jaccard binary hierarchical analysis in IBM SPSS Statistics 20.0 on the dataset. This analysis clusters the products according to their shared attributes. The Jaccard measure, introduced by Sneath (1957), has been proven to yield reliable results in clustering dichotomous data, consistent with the results obtained by several other popular measures, such as the Dice and Russell/Rao (Finch, 2005). As this is an exploratory study, there is no clear indicator of how many clusters should be identified. Accordingly, we split the clusters step by step and noted attributes that distinguished the clusters at each

step. As the desired outcome was not to find an optimal cluster solution but to discover relevant positioning strategies, not every split was meaningful. Some cluster splits revealed a relevant new positioning strategy, whereas others distinguished slight differences within strategies. Some clusters appeared to indicate the same strategy. In line with the approach suggested by Doyle and Saunders (1985), the final cluster solution was based on utility, namely, the theoretical relevance of the different positioning strategies, i.e., their potential to differentiate the product, rather than on statistical tests such as an error sum of squares. The theoretical saturation was reached at the 14-cluster solution, as we observed no new strategies in further cluster splits. The results revealed the four positioning strategies that are shown in Figure 3.1.

3.4. Results

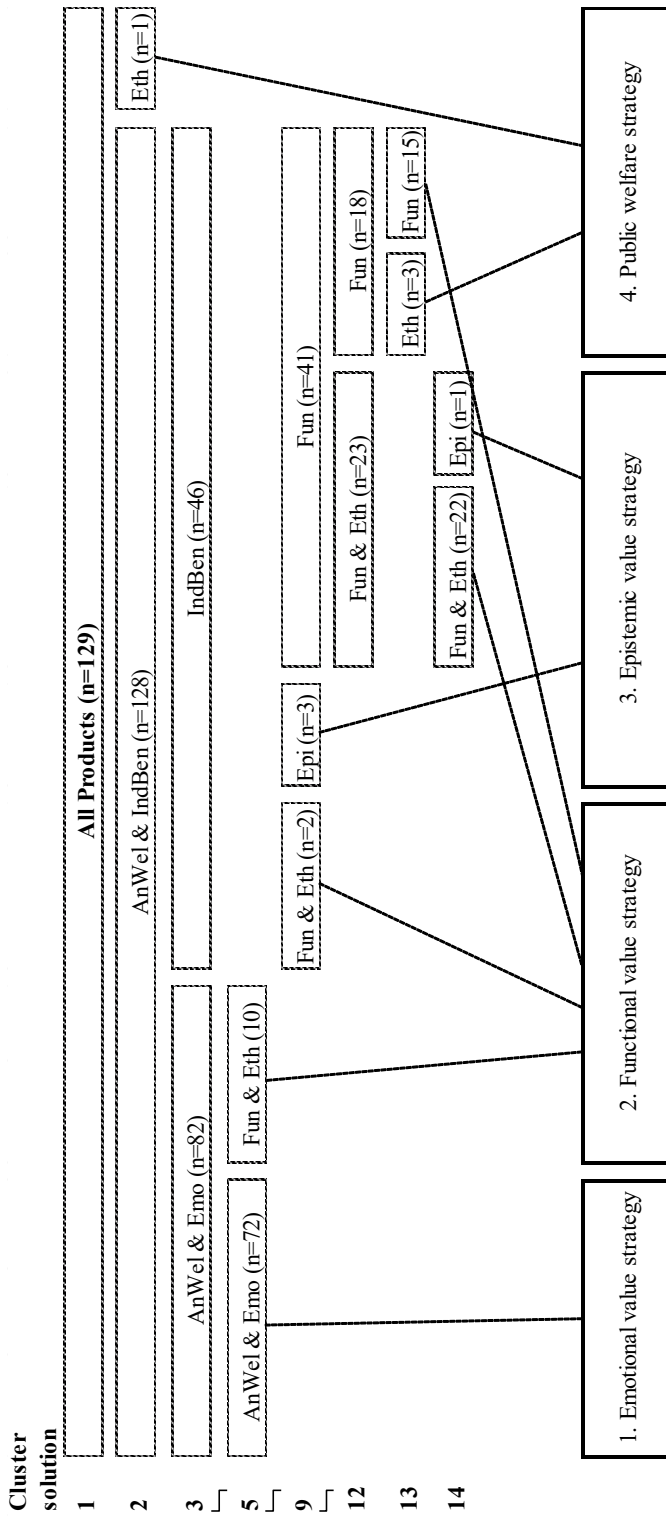
To derive the positioning strategies, we analysed 13 cluster splits step by step (see Figure 3.1.). In the first split, one product, containing no attributes other than an organic label, is cast off the large cluster. In the second split, we observe the appearance of the cluster labelled ‘animal welfare & emotional value’, which contains products reinforcing the improved animal welfare with emotional value. For example, products in this cluster contain detailed descriptions of improved animal husbandry or rural images, which do not only imply improved animal welfare but also evoke positive feelings. The other cluster, however, contains less information about improved animal welfare but more on attributes such as quality, nutritional information or a new feature. Therefore, this cluster is labelled ‘individual benefits’, as the products emphasise various types of individual benefits.

In the fourth cluster split, 10 products are cast off the ‘animal welfare & emotional value’ cluster. These products are labelled ‘functional & ethical value’ because, while they do contain rural images, these images are unrelated to animal welfare. For example, many products contain images of grasslands, which indicate the naturalness and thus functional quality of the products. The functional quality is,

in some cases, specified by nutritional details. These products do not contain any information about animal welfare other than a certified label (animal-friendly or organic). As a result, this cluster is specific by focusing on the functional value of the products, supported by a certified label indicating improved public welfare. This combination of attributes – attributes referring to the functional value and a certified label – also appeared in some clusters emanating from the ‘individual benefits’ cluster (in the 9- and 14-cluster solution). Together, these clusters indicate the *functional value strategy*. The remaining products in the ‘animal welfare & emotional value’ cluster indicate the *emotional value strategy*.

In the 9-cluster solution as well as in the 14-cluster solution, two clusters, ‘epistemic value’, emanated from the ‘individual benefits’ cluster. The ‘epistemic value’ clusters are unique because they contain epistemic cues such as a new taste or information about an innovative husbandry system. The products in these clusters thus make use of the *epistemic value strategy*, which makes consumers curious about original features of the product.

Finally, the twelfth cluster split revealed a small cluster of products on ‘ethical value’. Products in this cluster, together with the one product cast off in the first cluster split, contain cues on improved animal welfare (e.g., a picture of an animal) and/or cues indicating sustainable origin (e.g., a fair trade certified label). Here, animal welfare is being communicated as part of the broader public welfare, indicating the use of the *public welfare strategy*.



AnWel= animal welfare; IndBen = individual benefits; Eth = ethical value; Emo = emotional value; Fun = functional value; Epi = epistemic value; n = number of products in the cluster

Figure 3.1. Theoretically relevant cluster solutions, defined by their positioning strategies. The vast lining indicates the clusters and their strategies.

To strengthen the generalizability of the results, we collected products from three other supermarkets. Two of them (Jumbo and Albert Heijn) represent the two largest supermarket chains in the Netherlands, while the third (Lidl) positions itself as a price fighter. We used the same product selection criteria as for the main dataset and selected products that were not sold in the C1000 supermarket. We found 18 products, of which ten meats, three eggs and five dairy products. We analysed the products according to the determining variables from the cluster analysis, to see if the positioning strategies are comparable to the strategies that we found in the main dataset. All products appeared to fit with the strategy types developed on the basis of our main dataset (ten with the emotional, one with the functional, two with the epistemic and five with the public welfare strategy).

Fundamentally, all four positioning strategies identified in this study combine two particular types of consumption values: the ethical value, which serves public welfare, and one or more values that serve the buyer's individual welfare. However, the strategies differ in the specific types of consumption values and their relative emphasis. Below, we describe the strategies in more depth.

3.4.1. Description of positioning strategies

3.4.1.1. Emotional value strategy

The emotional value strategy is typical by its focus on improved animal welfare and, thus, refers principally to the responsible strategy as described by Ingenbleek and Frambach (2010). The emotional value strategy is used by the majority of products in our dataset (72 products out of a total of 129) and it is characterized by the use of multiple attributes referring to improved animal welfare, such as a certified label, pictures of animals, rural narratives and detailed descriptions on animal husbandry. For example, the package of C1000 free-range eggs shows a picture of hens grazing outside and it uses the words 'outside', 'free-range' and 'pasture' to highlight the welfare of the animals. Many of these attributes evoke positive feelings in the consumer and can thus be conceptualized as delivering

emotional value. Hence, while this strategy mainly emphasises the ethical value of improved animal welfare, it is reinforced by the emotional value associated with the animal welfare.

3.4.1.2. Functional value strategy

This strategy emphasises the product's functional value, such as nutritional quality and healthiness, while the information about animal welfare is limited to a certified label. The functional value strategy is the second most frequently found in our dataset, used by 49 products. The cues frequently found on the products using this strategy include, e.g., serving suggestions, written statements indicating traditional recipes, improved taste, high product quality and no additives. Because the information about animal welfare is limited to a certified label, it serves as a supportive element to defend the product's functional value rather than as a main element in product differentiation. For instance, a C1000 veal schnitzel employs the functional value strategy by using two certified labels – one that guarantees product safety and one that promotes its healthiness – complemented with cooking instructions.

Note that there is an overlap between functional and sensory value. In particular, in the context of food products, taste (sensory value) is part of a product's overall quality (Grunert, 2005), hence it is related to its functional value. Some information cues, such as the phrase 'traditional recipe' or the picture 'serving suggestion' arguably suggest improved sensory experience as well as high product quality. In our dataset, five cues, found on 24 products using the functional value strategy, communicate sensory value. This indicates that approximately one-half of the products use functional value in combination with sensory value, while the other half focus solely on functional value. In conclusion, the products using the functional value strategy in our dataset emphasise functional value, in many cases in combination with sensory value, to reinforce animal welfare.

3.4.1.3. Epistemic value strategy

This strategy emphasises the epistemic value of the products by adding a new feature or additional information about animal welfare. Although it is a relatively infrequent strategy, found on 4 products, it can be distinguished clearly from other strategies identified in this study. This strategy, instead of focusing on the emotional or the functional value, makes use of the product's capability to make consumers curious about original features of the product such as a new taste or an innovative husbandry system.

The products in this cluster make use of the epistemic value in two different ways. First, some products arouse consumer curiosity by adding a new product variation that is unrelated to animal welfare, e.g., a lactose-free milk. Second, other products position improved animal welfare as interesting and arousing curiosity, e.g., by referring to a website with detailed information about an innovative husbandry system. Therefore, while both groups of products emphasise epistemic value that reinforces the ethical value of animal welfare, the second group makes an explicit link between the two consumption values. For example, Campina lactose-free milk not only highlights the new feature, which is the lactose-free content, but also provides additional information about lactose intolerance.

3.4.1.4. Public welfare strategy

The public welfare strategy positions the product as being beneficial to the natural environment, thus placing animal welfare in a broader context of being part of public welfare. This strategy has only been found on 4 products in our dataset. These products contain attributes communicating ethical value, such as fair trade and/or organic certified labels and narrations on sustainable origin and, in some cases, pictures of an animal. Similarly to the emotional value strategy, these attributes evoke positive feelings as well and can thus be conceptualized as delivering emotional value. Hence, the public welfare strategy positions the

product as being beneficial for the public welfare while at the same time evoking positive feelings in the mind of the buyer. An important difference between the emotional value and the public welfare strategy is that the latter is unlikely to create a distinctive position vis-à-vis other sustainable products, so it mainly focuses on differentiation from mainstream products. For example, Biorganic life milk employs the public welfare strategy by making use of three cues that highlight its organic character: the brand name (Biorganic), the keyword “100% organic” and the Skal certified organic label.

3.4.2. Category differences

The resulting positioning strategies were examined on product category (see Table 3.1.). Overall, the results show that the strategies seem to be category-dependent rather than randomly distributed across different categories. In many product categories, we observe a dominant strategy that the majority of products share. The fresh meat is almost exclusively positioned with a focus on animal welfare, reinforced with emotional value (emotional value strategy). Other fresh products, such as milk and eggs (although in the latter case, the number of products was small) also prevalingly make use of the emotional value strategy. Many processed foods, like sandwich meat, mayonnaise and cheese, are positioned on their functional and sensory benefits (functional value strategy).

Table 3.1. Overview of positioning strategies per product category.

Category	No. of products	Emotional value strategy	Functional value strategy	Epistemic value strategy	Public welfare strategy
<i>Fresh food</i>					
Fresh Meat	22	20 (91% ^a)	2 (9%)		
Milk	16	11 (69%)	4 (25%)	1 (6%)	
Eggs	2	2 (100%)			
<i>Processed food</i>					
Processed Meat	5	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	
Sandwich Meat	6	2 (33%)	4 (67%)		
Mayonnaise	10		10 (100%)		
Life milk	6	1 (17%)	4 (66%)		1 (17%)
Ice cream	1				1 (100%)
Cheese	9	3 (33%)	6 (67%)		
Porridge	6	6 (100%)			
Salads	3		3 (100%)		
Whipped cream	1	1 (100%)			
Custard	14	10 (72%)	2 (14%)		2 (14%)
Yoghurt	19	12 (63%)	7 (37%)		
Drinkable yoghurt	9	3 (33%)	6 (67%)		
<i>Total (n)</i>	129	72	49	4	4

Note: ^a The percentages indicate the number of products per strategy within each product category.

3.5. Discussion and implications

The aim of this chapter is to conceptualize product positioning strategies for animal-friendly products and to explore their use in the marketplace. The findings imply that a "one size fits all" approach is not the most promising way forward to develop the market for animal-friendly products further. The results from the empirical study indicate four distinct positioning strategies on the market for animal-friendly food products: emotional value strategy, functional value strategy, epistemic value strategy and public welfare strategy. The strategies are shown in Table 3.2., where they are classified by the consumption values they emphasise and the product categories in which they primarily occur. These strategies offer insights at a higher level of abstraction in what companies do to position animal-friendly products (cf. Hunt, 2010).

A joint characteristic of all four strategies is that marketers use the combinations of two categories of consumption values that refer to two fundamentally different types of perceived benefits: public benefits and individual benefits. Public benefits are advantages that are not enjoyed by an individual consumer but are always shared by a larger social group (Bennett, 1995) and, apart from animal welfare, include, for example, protection of the natural environment and reduction of child labour. Our findings suggest that marketers combine public benefits in their positioning strategies with individual benefits, which are self-interested advantages enjoyed by a particular consumer or his direct social environment (Moisander, 2007). This suggests a common way by which marketers try to overcome the main challenge of marketing animal-friendly products, namely, that the benefit is not enjoyed by the individual consumer who pays for the product but rather by the animal or society at large (Bennett, 1995). Consumers may therefore experience a discrepancy between what they do (prioritizing the individual welfare by buying a mainstream product) and what they should do (giving a higher priority to the public welfare by buying an animal-friendly product) (cf. Moisander, 2007). Product positioning can potentially overcome this discrepancy. Our results indicate that each of the positioning strategies attempts to do so in their own way: the emotional value

and public welfare strategy by using emotional value, the functional value strategy by using functional and sensory value and the epistemic value strategy by using epistemic value. If this interpretation is correct, the effectiveness of each strategy will depend on the relevance of a particular consumption value for a particular consumer and the values that are offered by competing products. Given the trade-off between public and individual benefits that also applies to other ethical food products, such as organic or fair-trade, these positioning strategies may be applicable to other ethical products as well.

Table 3.2. Positioning strategies for animal-friendly products.

Positioning strategy	Description	Reinforcement values	Product categories in which the strategy is frequently used
Emotional value	reinforces improved AW with evoking positive feeling in the consumer	emotional ethical	fresh meat milk eggs porridge
Functional value	emphasises nutritional quality, healthiness and tastiness with improved AW as a supportive element	functional sensory ethical	sandwich meat mayonnaise cheese salad
Epistemic value	stresses original features of the product, such as a new taste or an innovative husbandry system	epistemic ethical	milk processed meat
Public welfare	emphasises benefits for the public welfare, with emotional value as a supportive element	ethical emotional	ice cream custard

Although the focus of this study was to explore the variety of the positioning strategies rather than their relative frequency, it is apparent that marketers of the products in our sample seem to favour either strategies calling on consumers' feelings or strategies emphasizing products' nutritional and sensory qualities. One reasonable explanation is that marketers imitate positioning strategies of their competitors. As a consequence, social value (status and social acceptance) and epistemic value (curiosity) may be underutilized.

Finally, we also found sharp category differences in regard to the use of the positioning strategies. While fresh products predominantly use the emotional value strategy, where animal welfare plays a central role, the processed food products use the functional value strategy. With processed food, the reference to the animal is weaker than with fresh food. As Schröder and McEachern (2004) argue, consumers tend to avoid the cognitive association with the live animal, particularly in case of meat. In line with this observation, we would expect that marketers avoid emotional and use functional value strategies in the (fresh) meat category.

3.6. Future research

Several directions for future research emerge from this study. While our study investigated the strategies for animal-friendly products as used by marketers, it did not test whether these strategies are also effective in increasing the market share. Future research may study this in two different ways. First, it may conduct market-level studies in which data are collected about the positioning strategies that are then related to sales data, using our conceptualization of strategies as a starting point. While market-level studies offer insight in the outcomes of such positioning strategies, they are limited in offering explanations of why consumers would choose an animal-friendly product or not depending on the positioning strategy. Such a deeper, explanatory understanding requires consumer-level studies, probably conducted in an experimental setting. Future research may therefore investigate the effectiveness of positioning strategies that use different

types of individual benefits and compare their effectiveness for different consumer segments and categories of animal-friendly products.

This study used product packaging as the single determinant of product positioning strategy. While the package is one of the most important elements that communicates product positioning, other elements, such as price, promotion, shelf and store position, should be taken into account when determining product positioning. We recommend the inclusion of these elements in future studies to refine the understanding of the positioning strategies. Studies may, for example, collect price and other data for products within a certain product category and compare the data on animal-friendly products with different strategies and to mainstream products. Finally, the generalizability of our findings is limited to food products from a single country. Future studies may extend the results to international product samples and/or other animal-based categories such as apparel and shoes (leather), and cosmetics (animal testing).

Appendix 3.1. Full list of cues, attributes and consumption values.

Cue	Attribute	Consumption value(s)
"Health-conscious choice" logo Keyword "low fat" Phrase "No additives" Phrase "Nutritional components" Phrase "Pure ingredients" Vegetarian Union logo	healthy ingredients	functional
Phrase "Made from animal product"	animal-based ingredients	functional
Keyword "tasty" Keyword "trusted" Phrase "Product quality"	quality	functional
Picture "serving suggestion"	serving suggestion	functional and sensory
Phrase "Prepared with love" Phrase "Traditional recipe"	preparation	sensory
Country of origin Keyword "Dutch" Picture "Dutch flag" Purveyor logo	Dutch origin	social
Personal story "consumer" Phrase "Tested as the tastiest"	reference to social group	social
"Better Life *" logo "Better Life **" logo "Better Life ***" logo "Caring Dairy" logo	certified label animal	ethical and emotional
Keyword "free range" Phrase "Animal feed" Phrase "Animal living space" Phrase "Animal longevity" Phrase "Animal outdoor" Phrase "Animal welfare" Phrase "Happy cows"	husbandry description	ethical and emotional

Phrase "Outdoor grazing"		
Phrase "Small husbandry size"		
Keyword "bird"	rural narration	emotional
Keyword "butterfly"		
Keyword "flower" or "clover"		
Keyword "natural"		
Personal story "landscape and farming"		
Picture "animal"	rural image	emotional
Picture "animal ingredient (egg)"		
Picture "animal silhouette"		
Picture "butterfly"		
Picture "farmer silhouette"		
Picture "flowers"		
Picture "grassland with flowers"		
Picture "grass or grass land"		
Picture "ladybug"		
Picture "children silhouette"	image of people	emotional
Picture "happy healthy people"		
Better Life website	certified label	epistemic
"Caring Dairy" logo and website	animal with information	
Brand website	general product	epistemic
Facebook reference	information	
QR code		
"Health-conscious choice" logo and website	nutritional information	epistemic
Keyword "temporarily"	new product	epistemic
New product		
New package feature	new packaging	epistemic
"Discover the origin" logo	product origin	epistemic
"Discover the origin" explanation		
EKO logo	certified label	ethical
Skal logo	organic	

Free-range logo Pasture milk logo Pasture milk logo and explanation Pasture milk logo in the Dutch flag Pasture milk logo with the Dutch flag	certified label outdoor	ethical
Fair trade logo Fair trade logo and explanation FSC logo FSC logo and explanation Phrase "Climate-neutral packaging" UTZ logo and explanation	sustainable label or claim	ethical
Keyword "conscious" Keyword "honest" Keyword "with care/respect" "Safety Guard" logo	responsible production	ethical and functional







CHAPTER 4

Positioning strategies for animal-friendly products: A social dilemma approach

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Abstract

Many consumers express concerns about the welfare of animals in agriculture, but often refrain from purchasing animal-friendly alternatives that address their concerns. To support consumers in making choices in line with their values and attitudes, this study approaches consumer animal-friendly product choice as a dilemma between maximising the buyer's self-interest and maximising societal interest. To address this social dilemma, we developed and tested positioning strategies that reinforce the animal welfare label with complementary consumption values (functional, emotional, social and epistemic). The results from a choice experiment with Dutch chicken meat shoppers showed that two strategies - emotional and epistemic - effectively increase consumer value perceptions. These insights imply that animal-friendly products positioned to invoke emotion or curiosity drive consumers towards animal-friendly product choices, and that these strategies are most effective for consumers who base their choice solely on maximising either self-interest or societal interest.

4.1. Introduction

Animal welfare is an important consumer issue subject to ongoing public debate about how farm animals should be treated and the types of origin and welfare information that should be provided on product packages (Clark et al., 2017; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). The debate encourages an ongoing dialogue about how the responsibility for animal welfare should be distributed between consumers, producers and authorities such as governments (Blokhuis et al., 2013). In the United States, the majority of consumers are becoming more concerned about the welfare of animals raised for food (Packaged Facts, 2017), support the use of mandatory labels regarding the level of animal welfare (Tonsor & Wolf, 2011), and believe that farm animal welfare should be a regulatory issue (Packaged Facts, 2017). Studies in Europe show comparable patterns (European Commission, 2016; Nocella, Hubbard, & Scarpa, 2010). Labels and certifications are therefore an important tool for communicating with consumers to provide transparency on animal welfare practices (Ingenbleek et al., 2012; Jahn et al., 2005) and enable them to make informed choices that are in line with their values and attitudes.

While consumer concern may indicate a market opportunity for animal-friendly products, research shows a discrepancy between stated consumer concerns and attitudes on one hand and low market shares on the other (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Harvey & Hubbard, 2013a; Vanhonacker et al., 2007). Consumers state that they are concerned about animal welfare and find the issue important when buying animal-based food products (European Commission, 2016; Mayfield, Bennett, Tranter, & Wooldridge, 2007; Packaged Facts, 2017). Furthermore, the majority of consumers even say they are willing to pay more for improved animal welfare (Aschemann-Witzel & Zielke, 2017; Clark et al., 2017); for example, a study conducted in 2014 among 2,000 U.S. shoppers revealed a willingness to pay 13–54% more for improved cow welfare, depending on the welfare-related production practice used (Wolf & Tonsor, 2017). The market shares for high-welfare products in 2015 were much lower than this high level of consumer support would suggest however, comprising just 4% for organic beef (Sustainable

Food News, 2016) and 1% for labelled grass-fed beef (Cheung & McMahon, 2017).

The current literature dedicated to explaining this discrepancy between consumer attitudes and their purchase of animal-friendly products has mainly focused on topics such as the trade-offs consumers are willing to make between various perceived benefits (e.g., healthiness, safety, taste and animal welfare) (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000), the role of consumer information and trust in animal welfare labels (Jahn et al., 2005; Schröder & McEachern, 2004; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014), social desirability bias (Auger & Devinney, 2007; Carrington et al., 2010), and consumer individual differences in the perceptions of animal welfare (Kendall et al., 2006; Vanhonacker et al., 2007). Previous studies have therefore primarily addressed the causes of the discrepancy between the stated concern and the market share of animal-friendly products; however, few have taken an actionable approach by developing solutions that help consumers to make decisions more in line with their stated value of animal welfare. As a logical next step, research should therefore focus on marketing strategies that respond to consumer concerns, which will help consumers to increase their animal-friendly product choices.

This study aims to make two contributions to increase the understanding of consumer animal-friendly product choice. First, we develop and test several strategies that reinforce animal welfare labels with different types of consumption values, including functional, emotional, social and epistemic values. We use a social dilemma approach that reflects the dilemma between maximising a buyer's self-interest and the wider societal interest (Messick & Brewer, 1983). This approach addresses the main challenge in marketing animal-friendly products; namely, that the main benefit – animal welfare – is not enjoyed by the individual consumer who pays for the product, but rather by the animal or perhaps by society at large, which is responsible for how animals are kept (Bennett, 1995; Mayfield et al., 2007). Our approach therefore opens a new window of marketing instruments aimed at addressing and managing the social dilemma that confronts consumers when purchasing products derived from

animals. In this study, we propose and empirically test one such instrument, namely positioning strategies that reinforce the animal-welfare label with other types of benefits. Although several authors note that animal welfare must be integrated within the broader concept of product quality (Harvey & Hubbard, 2013a; Verbeke, Pérez-Cueto, de Barcellos, Krystallis, & Grunert, 2010), the current literature provides little guidance on how to design such strategies. The present study therefore draws on the theory and typology of consumption values (Sheth et al., 1991), which refer to the perceived benefits that are personally relevant and valuable to the buyer. Second, this study also addresses individual differences pertaining to consumer attitudes towards social dilemmas. Specifically, we focus on individual differences in terms of the relative importance of societal interest and self-interest, also referred to as motivational orientation (Beersma & De Dreu, 2002). Using a choice experiment, we show that motivational orientation is not only an important predictor of animal-friendly product choice, but that it also interacts with the consumer perceptions of value associated with animal welfare labels.

In the remainder of this chapter, we introduce our conceptual framework and hypotheses by first reviewing the role of perceived value in animal-friendly product choice, followed by the theoretical underpinnings of social dilemma, positioning strategies and the role of motivational orientation. Using a choice experiment, we test the hypothesised relationships. Finally, we discuss the results and conclude with a research agenda and implications for policy makers and businesses.

4. 2. Theoretical framework and hypotheses

4.2.1. Role of perceived value in animal-friendly product choice

In the current political economic climate, policy makers have little room to introduce legal measures to respond to society's concern for animal welfare (Ingenbleek et al., 2012). To increase the market shares of animal-friendly

products, companies must therefore stimulate consumer animal-friendly product choice, which represents the outcome variable of our conceptual framework (see Figure 4.1.). Research dedicated to studying the determinants of consumer product choice generally agrees that product choice is primarily driven by the total perceived value of the product (Hellier et al., 2003; Sheth et al., 1991) or, more specifically, the relative perceived value of an option in the choice set (Bettman et al., 1998). *Total perceived value* refers to a consumer's overall evaluation of the utility of a product, which depends on the perceived benefits in relation to the perceived costs (Holbrook, 1999). In the context of animal-friendly product choice, an animal-friendly product is evaluated relative to its alternatives, which are typically mainstream products, and the product with the highest total perceived value is likely to be selected (Ingenbleek & Immink, 2011). This relationship can be formulated in the following hypothesis:

H1: The total perceived value of an animal-friendly product has a positive effect on animal-friendly product choice.

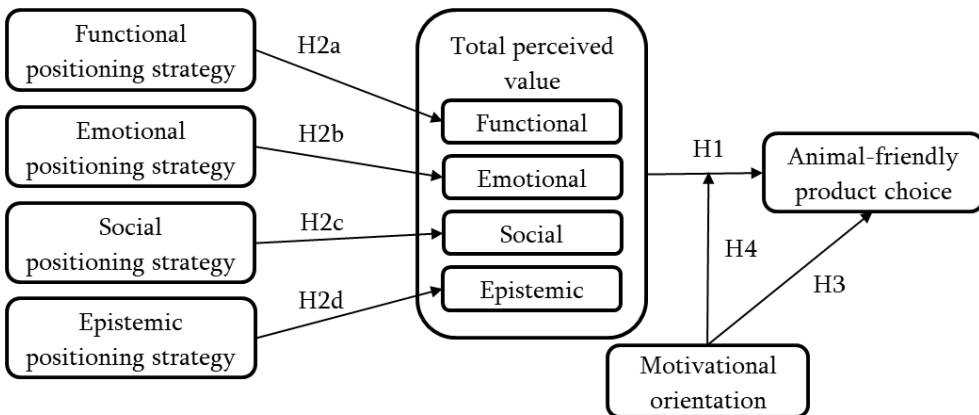


Figure 4.1. Conceptual model.

4.2.2. *Social dilemma in animal-friendly product choice*

Animal-friendly product choice is fundamentally different from a purchase decision between unlabelled products because it involves a trade-off between maximising the buyer's individual benefits and maximising societal benefits, commonly referred to as a *social dilemma* (Messick & Brewer, 1983). Because the primary benefit of animal-friendly products – improved animal welfare – is collectively enjoyed and shared by society (Bennett, 1995), it can be seen as a *societal benefit*, also referred to as a public benefit in the existing literature (e.g., Messick & Brewer, 1983; Pino, Peluso, & Guido, 2012). Societal benefits can be defined as advantages that cannot be enjoyed by an individual consumer but are necessarily shared by a larger social group. Consumers generally believe that the humane treatment of animals is the right and ethical thing to do (Harvey & Hubbard, 2013a; Ingenbleek et al., 2012); thus, animal welfare is also relevant to the buyer's self-interest by delivering *ethical value*.

Conversely, *individual benefits* are enjoyed by an individual consumer or their direct social environment, such as the family (see Griskevicius et al., 2012). Individual benefits thus serve the buyer's self-interest, which also includes that of their kin, including family, friends and community members. Even though animal-friendly products offer higher societal benefits, they usually have a higher price to reflect the additional costs associated with exceeding the legal animal welfare standards in the production and distribution process (Den Ouden et al., 1997). These costs are generally translated into higher consumer prices, i.e., the *monetary value* of animal-friendly products (Smith & Colgate, 2007). Hence, animal-friendly product choice typically requires trading off monetary value for ethical value, thus presenting a social dilemma to the consumer.

In a situation of a social dilemma, consumers may use strategies that help them deal with the tension and guilt stemming from engaging in a behaviour contrary to their own ethical standards. Prior literature has labelled such strategies as motivated reasoning strategies (Kunda, 1990), distinguishing two types that may be used in the context of animal-friendly food choice. The first, moral rationalisation, is based on reconstruing actions that contradict their own ethical

standards as less problematic, for example, by arguing that factory farming is not as cruel to the farm animals as it is presented in the media because animals do not know better, thus do not suffer (Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2012; Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008). The second strategy, moral decoupling, prompts consumers to separate the judgements of a product's performance from its ethicality, for example, by arguing that factory-farmed meat is as healthy and tasty as its animal-friendly alternative (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012; Haberstroh, Orth, Hoffmann, & Brunk, 2017). These strategies are particularly useful when consumers are unable to make what they consider to be ethical choices, such as when animal-friendly products are unavailable or when conventional products are superior to animal-friendly products in terms of choice variety or product quality. For consumers who are unable to pay premium prices for animal-friendly products despite their efforts to support animal welfare (Hill & Martin, 2014), motivated reasoning strategies can help them to change their perceptions of a social dilemma by making the conventional product choice seem less problematic. These strategies only provide justification for choices that have already been made however, and do not change the situation of the social dilemma itself. They may therefore be of limited use in helping consumers to deal with the tension when making food choices that contradict their own ethical standards, leaving room for companies that sell animal-friendly products to develop instruments that address the social dilemma.

One instrument companies could use involves marketing intervention strategies, which can take at least two forms: activating consumers' broad moral principles at the point of purchase (Lieberman et al., 2007) or establishing a salient mental link between a product's animal friendliness and the consumer's individual welfare (de Jonge et al., 2014). In theoretical terms, the first strategy can be visualised as expanding the concept of the purchase further from the buyer's here and now, thus emphasising its impact on (distant) others or its long-term consequences. In doing so, the buyer is reminded of their moral values, for example by providing detailed information on the product label regarding how an individual's choice affects the welfare of the animals. This strategy, the default option of marketers and policy makers, is hindered by the fact that it works

against human evolutionary tendencies, in which the present self-interest prevails over societal interest and future discounting (Griskevicius et al., 2012).

The second strategy, based on positioning animal welfare as personally relevant by bringing the issue psychologically closer to the buyer's here and now, may be more efficient because it takes evolutionary tendencies into account (Griskevicius et al., 2012). Such a strategy must establish a salient mental link between the product's animal welfare and the buyer's individual welfare. The positioning strategies discussed in the next section are a logical instrument in this approach.

4.2.3. Positioning strategies addressing the social dilemma in animal-friendly product choice

Product positioning is a well-established topic in the marketing literature (see, for a review, Kaul & Rao, 1995). As first emphasised by Aaker and Shansby (1982), positioning is seen as a crucial strategic decision because it has a direct impact on consumer value perception. *Product positioning* establishes a product's frame of reference to enable "a market offering to occupy a clear, distinctive and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers" (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008, p. 410). Hence, *positioning strategy* essentially refers to the selection and combination of perceived benefits that create a clear, distinctive and desirable position relative to the alternatives. Perceived benefits include, but are not limited to, functional advantages such as product reliability; emotional advantages such as fun; and social advantages such as status. Marketers communicate the perceived benefits to the target customer through product attributes such as design and technical features (Grunert & van Trijp, 2014), which are further concretized using marketing instruments such as labels and price levels, which appear as cues on the packaging of the product. The use of these instruments encourages consumers to make inferences regarding the benefits they can expect from using the product, and assess whether those benefits are personally relevant and valuable (Gutman, 1982).

The concept of *consumption values*, referring to the various motives influencing consumer product choice (Sheth et al., 1991), is a well-established tool used to design positioning strategies. Building upon existing taxonomies (for reviews, see Holbrook, 1999; Smith & Colgate, 2007), we identified several value types that are potentially relevant for the purchase of animal-friendly meat: functional, emotional, social and epistemic. Marketers and policy makers can design labels that highlight the relationship between a product's animal friendliness and any of the individual consumption values or their combinations. By reinforcing animal welfare with consumption values, such labels may increase a buyer's individual welfare and thus address the social dilemma in animal-friendly product choice.

Functional value refers to the “utility derived from the perceived quality and expected performance of the product” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001, p. 211). Functional value includes a broad variety of functional product benefits, ranging from purely utilitarian (e.g., food safety) to sensory (e.g., tastiness), to the quality/price ratio (value for money). A functional positioning strategy could therefore present an animal welfare label as an overall symbol of quality, a tool that guarantees product safety, an indicator of superior taste or a cue that suggests good value for the money. Although different sub-classifications of functional value have been proposed (cf. Schmitt, 1999; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), we conceptualise functional value as a theoretical concept that includes both physical performance and sensory benefits, but excludes the quality/price ratio, which refers to monetary value. In the context of meat, this functional value is linked to tastiness (e.g., Verbeke & Viaene, 1999); thus, the functional positioning strategy should highlight the tastiness of the animal-friendly meat. Because positioning the animal-friendly product as tastier than other products will likely increase the perceived functional value, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2a: A functional positioning strategy increases perceived functional value.

Emotional value stresses the product's capacity to arouse feelings, moods and emotions (Sheth et al., 1991). The nature of animal-friendly labels makes them particularly suitable for emotional positioning because contributing to animal

welfare naturally elicits positive emotions such as happiness and contentment in most people. Using positive emotional reinforcement, marketers may design strategies to invoke different positive emotions: pride, making the buyer proud of helping animals; happiness, using idealised rural images of happy animals; or contentment, by associating the product with pleasant portraits of animals. The use of negative emotions such as guilt, shame and regret is less suitable for creating a preference towards a particular product, which is the aim of this study, even though negative emotions might be powerful in directing consumers away from unsustainable behaviours (Zeelenberg & van Doorn, 2014). For animal-friendly products, the emotional positioning strategy could accentuate the happy life of the animals, thereby eliciting happiness in the buyer. We hypothesise the following:

H2b: An emotional positioning strategy increases perceived emotional value.

Social value is “the perceived utility acquired from an alternative’s association with one or more specific social groups” (Sheth et al., 1991, p. 161). Animal welfare is a shared societal concern that dictates the standards of acceptable behaviour (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014); hence, animal-friendly product choice can enable certain reference groups, such as the heavy users of animal-friendly products, to obtain social acceptance. Marketers can therefore use cues such as “Best choice!” and “Organic consumer choice award” to reinforce the association of animal welfare labels with social approval. Two strategies, both originating in the social norm theory first introduced by Perkins and Berkowitz (1986), can be applied; using an injunctive social norm, which is based on behaviour prescription, or a descriptive social norm, which is based on leading by example. Empirical research revealed that descriptive norms have a stronger effect on sustainable behaviour than injunctive norms (Melnik, van Herpen, & van Trijp, 2010). Similar effects can be expected for animal-friendly product choice too, leading us to select a descriptive social norm for our study, using a social positioning strategy to label free-range meat as the favourite choice of animal-friendly consumers. We hypothesise the following:

H2c: A social positioning strategy increases perceived social value.

Epistemic value refers to a product's capacity to arouse curiosity or produce intellectual stimulation (Brakus et al., 2009). Although intellectual stimulation is an important benefit sought in many product and service categories (e.g., mobile phones, games, vacations), it is less applicable to food; therefore, arousing curiosity is a more suitable benefit for our study. To date, there is very fragmented empirical evidence on the effectiveness of epistemic value, and several authors have called for more research on this topic (e.g., Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), which makes epistemic value an important element in our study. An animal welfare label by itself could be a powerful tool to make consumers curious for more details, such as the breed, feed, housing systems or other welfare-related attributes. Products can also provoke curiosity by adding a website or QR code that encourages consumers to seek additional information, displaying an interesting "Did you know...?" fact, or introducing a new housing system. In the animal welfare context, the epistemic positioning strategy could highlight the fact that the meat comes from a new, free-range husbandry system, thereby arousing consumer curiosity. We propose the following:

H2d: An epistemic positioning strategy increases perceived epistemic value.

4.2.4. The role of motivational orientation in animal-friendly product choice

While the proposed positioning strategies may influence animal-friendly product choice by addressing the social dilemma, they are unlikely to have the same impact on all consumers. Consumers differ in their attitudes towards social dilemmas, particularly in terms of the relative importance of societal interest and self-interest, also referred to as their motivational orientation (Beersma & De Dreu, 2002) or social value orientation (van Lange, 1999). Individual differences in motivational orientation are closely related to the extent to which consumers perceive the trade-off as necessary for maximising their individual welfare. These differences therefore play an important role in animal-friendly product choice.

Motivational orientation can be defined as the relative importance that individual consumers attach to individual and societal benefits. The existing literature distinguishes between egoistic and pro-social orientations, wherein the former is characterised by the dominance of selfish motives and the latter by the dominance of pro-social motives (e.g., Beersma & De Dreu, 2002). The current study extends the existing linear dimension in which egoistic and pro-social orientations are the two extremes by putting the social dilemma central. Based on their individual position, a person will generally experience either a significant mental dilemma when attempting to maximise selfish and public goals in the same purchase, or a minor mental dilemma when aiming to maximise either selfish or public goals. To accommodate such differences, this study proposes a third, dissonant orientation. The motivational orientation can thus take three core values: *egoistic orientation*, characterised by the dominance of selfish motives; *pro-social orientation*, characterised by the dominance of pro-social motives; and *dissonant orientation*, characterised by the (equally) high importance of both selfish and pro-social motives (see Figure 4.2.). This conceptualisation also views pro-social motives as a broader category that not only includes benefits for others, but also benefits gained in the long run. Finally, because a person's motivation may differ for different types of (purchase) behaviour, this study views motivational orientation as context-specific, rather than as a personality trait (see also van Dam & van Trijp, 2011).

The proposed conceptualisation of motivational orientation is useful in mapping consumer attitudes towards social dilemmas. The current literature on animal-friendly and sustainable consumer behaviour focuses primarily on explaining the role of social dilemmas (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b), interventions in social dilemmas (van Vugt, 2009) and the role of human values as predictors of behaviour in social dilemmas (de Groot & Steg, 2008). The common assumption of these studies is that, in a social dilemma situation, all consumers experience a mental dilemma. In other words, they rarely note that consumers might differ in how they perceive a social dilemma.

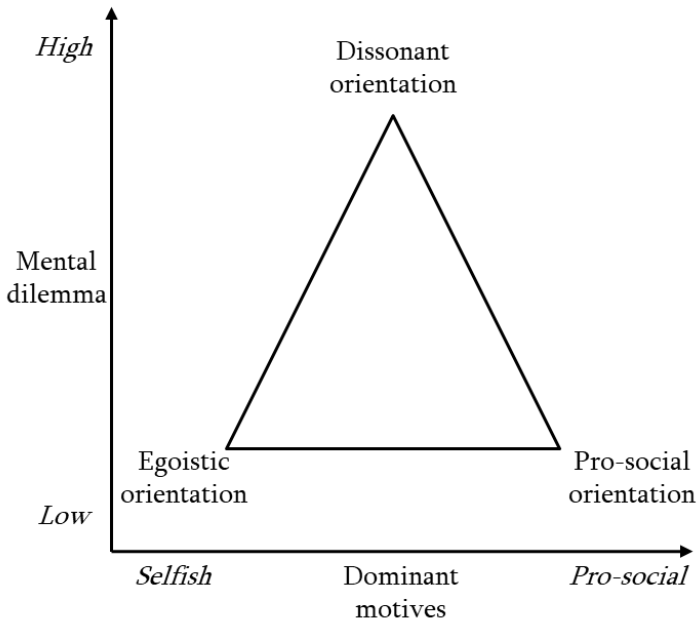


Figure 4.2. Typology of motivational orientation as a function of perceived dilemma and dominant motives.

This study aims to address this question by arguing that a social dilemma situation presents a mental dilemma only to consumers with a dissonant orientation, not to those with egoistic and pro-social orientations. For consumers with an egoistic orientation, animal-friendly product choice presents no mental dilemma because animal welfare is not a determinant purchase criterion for them. For consumers with a pro-social orientation, buying animal-friendly products presents no mental dilemma because supporting animal welfare is part of their ‘sustainable identity’, which contributes to their self-esteem (van Dam & Fischer, 2013). In contrast, consumers with a dissonant orientation experience a mental dilemma when buying animal-friendly products because they struggle to find an animal-friendly product with a favourable price-quality ratio. These consumers will then most likely opt for ‘compromise products’ with high animal welfare standards and a favourable quality/price ratio, if such products are available on the market

(de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b). In the existing classification of animal-friendly meat products, such compromise products are typically labelled as barn-raised (with more space for the animals than in conventional housing systems) or free-range (with additional access to the outdoors) (Veissier, Butterworth, Bock, & Roe, 2008). Products carrying an organic label are typically the most animal-friendly option, but also the most expensive, because they must comply with strict standards of sustainability and healthiness (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Veissier et al., 2008). As this study focuses on animal welfare, we operationalised the animal-friendly product choice as the choice of a free-range product, rather than organic, which also includes other sustainability- and health-related benefits. We thus propose the following:

H3: Motivational orientation influences animal-friendly product choice such that consumers with a dissonant orientation are more likely to choose 'compromise' animal-friendly products than consumers with egoistic and pro-social orientations.

In addition to its direct effect on animal-friendly product choice, motivational orientation may also play an important role in the impact of total perceived value on animal-friendly product choice. We expect that consumers with a dissonant orientation will be more sensitive to perceived value than consumers with pro-social or egoistic orientations. Consumers with a dissonant orientation demand a product with high animal welfare that also offers high individual benefits in terms of function, emotional rewards or other advantages, making them particularly sensitive to the increased total perceived value of the animal-friendly product. Conversely, consumers with pro-social and egoistic orientations are less likely to choose an animal-friendly product on the basis of its perceived value comprised of individual benefits. The first group of consumers includes those mainly motivated by societal welfare, which is a part of their 'sustainable identity' (van Dam & Fischer, 2013), and their choice of animal-friendly products will therefore be arguably less driven by perceived value emphasising individual welfare. The second group of consumers includes those exclusively motivated by self-interest who do not feel responsible for societal welfare (de Jonge & van

Trijp, 2013b). We expect that these consumers are less likely to choose an animal-friendly product even if its total perceived value increases, because such an increase will arguably not compensate for the lower monetary value compared to mainstream products. We therefore expect that:

H4: Motivational orientation moderates the relationship between total perceived value and animal-friendly product choice, such that this relationship is stronger for consumers with a dissonant orientation than for consumers with pro-social and egoistic orientations.

4.3. Methods

The hypotheses were tested in a choice experiment ($N = 575$) that manipulated the positioning strategies. Two pre-test studies were conducted: a qualitative study ($N = 13$) to develop the stimuli and a quantitative study ($N = 154$) to test the measurement scales and to determine whether the choice task indeed presents a social dilemma. All studies were conducted in the Netherlands.

4.3.1. Pre-test studies

4.3.1.1. Stimuli development

The stimuli were developed in several steps. First, product packages were designed for use in the choice experiment. The aim was to simulate a situation of social dilemma; therefore, several product packages offering varying numbers of individual and societal benefits were designed. One product emphasised individual benefits (mainstream product), one product emphasised societal benefits (organic product) and two products were positioned between these two extremes, offering both types of benefit. This approach also created a choice set with a relatively high external validity because a similar assortment can typically be found in Dutch supermarkets. Packages were designed for four products,

which differed in price and in the level of animal welfare: mainstream chicken breasts, barn-raised chicken breasts, free-range chicken breasts and organic chicken breasts. The animal welfare information included the housing system (barn, organic) and two certified labels (two better-life stars issued by The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, which guarantees free-range animal welfare standards; and an EU organic farming label). The product prices reflected the current average market prices in Dutch supermarkets.

Chicken meat was selected as the product for several reasons. First, poultry accounts for more than 20% of the total fresh meat consumed in the Netherlands, of which chicken is the most popular (Dagevos, Voordouw, van Hooft, van der Weele, & de Bakker, 2012). Moreover, although certain consumers avoid beef and pork meat due to their religion, this is typically not the case with chicken meat. The second reason is the high sensitivity of the Dutch public to the issue of chicken welfare, primarily as a result of a widespread campaign in 2011 encouraging consumers to boycott factory-farmed chicken meat.

Second, labels were designed for the free-range chicken meat with claims to manipulate the positioning strategies. Each strategy was operationalised using only a short claim on the front of the package. While product positioning can be defined by various elements such as product package, price, promotion, shelf position and store position, the product package is generally believed to be one of the most important elements affecting consumer food choice (Silayoi & Speece, 2004). Only the claim on the packaging was manipulated in this study, with no changes made to other package elements such as colour or pictures, to prevent unwanted effects stemming from different aspects of packaging. The authors jointly developed two claims for each positioning strategy.

Finally, consumer understanding of the claims and their associated value were tested in in-depth, face-to-face interviews with Dutch chicken meat buyers ($N=13$). The respondents were presented with the product packages and asked which benefits they expected each product to deliver. Their remarks regarding the colours, wording and product photographs were also noted. After indicating which benefit each claim was supposed to communicate, respondents chose the

claim that they found more effective in communicating the benefit and rated how well it did so. The results were used to adapt the final packages and to select one claim for each positioning strategy.

The final functional value claim stated “Chicken with a better life, it’s in the taste!”; the final emotional value claim stated “Chicken with a better life, it makes me feel good!”; the final social value claim stated “Favourite choice of animal-friendly consumers!”; and the final epistemic value claim stated “Discover free-range chicken!¹”. In the control condition, the free-range chicken was presented without any claim. Figure 4.3. shows the stimuli and the choice task for the functional value condition.

4.3.1.2. Scale development and testing

In developing the scales for measuring consumption values, the existing literature was reviewed for suitable items on taste (functional value) (Feuz, Umberger, Calkins, & Sitz, 2004; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), happiness and contentment (emotional value) (Bloch, Brunel, & Arnold, 2003; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), social acceptance (social value) (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), curiosity (epistemic value) (Brakus et al., 2009), quality/price ratio (monetary value) (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) and sustainability (ethical value) (Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004). New items were also developed if the original items did not fit the context of this study. While functional, emotional, social and epistemic values needed to be tested to assess the hypotheses of this study, ethical and monetary values also had to be analysed to determine whether the choice task in this study presents a social dilemma.

¹ Free-range chicken meat was a relatively new product concept at the time. The concept has, however, already been used in other product categories such as eggs.

Imagine that you are having guests for dinner and that you would like to purchase chicken breasts at a local supermarket. You stand in front of the shelf and there are four products. Which one do you buy? Designate your first choice as number 1, your second choice as number 2, your third choice as number 3 and your last choice as number 4. For products that you would definitely not buy, indicate the number 0.



Note: Product B represents barn chicken and product C free-range chicken. Product C is labelled barn chicken, because free-range was a relatively new concept, while barn systems are associated with improved animal welfare, as shown in the pre-test study. We therefore used the term “barn” to indicate improved animal welfare and the 2-stars certified label, which is well-known to Dutch consumers as one that guarantees high animal welfare standards (e.g., free access to the outdoors).

Figure 4.3. Choice task for the functional value condition.

To test the scales, an experimental pre-test study was conducted with Dutch chicken meat buyers ($N = 154$), with five conditions equal to the main study. In this study, using telephone interviews, the respondents evaluated the products that they were shown online on a webpage communicated during the interview using the product packages designed on the basis of the face-to-face interviews. Unlike the main study, this study only included questions measuring consumption values. Using SPSS 22, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the resulting dataset to scrutinise the existence of the six consumption values and the items that load on each value, after which reliability analyses were also conducted for each subscale. Unsatisfactory results were identified for two subscales: functional and epistemic. The items in the functional scale did not load on the same factor, so one item was replaced. The items in the epistemic scale loaded on a single factor, but the scale had a slightly unsatisfactory reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .688$); therefore, one new item was added. The final items used in the main study and their reliabilities are shown in Table 4.1.

An analysis was also performed to determine whether ethical value delivers significantly different types of benefits than other consumption values, thus supporting the argument that ethical value serves societal welfare, whereas functional, emotional, social, epistemic and monetary values serve individual welfare. The discriminant validity of the ethical value construct was measured against other consumption values following the procedure advised by Bagozzi and Phillips (1982). Using the lavaan package in R software, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed to assess pairs of constructs in a series of two-factor models, in which the first factor referred to the ethical value construct and the second factor to one of the five remaining value constructs. Each model was run twice: once constraining the correlation between the two factors to 1 and once without such constraint. A chi-square difference test confirmed the discriminant validity of the ethical value against each consumption value; for all models, the chi-square was significantly lower ($p = .01$) for the unconstrained model than for the constrained model.

Table 4.1. Final consumption value scales and their reliabilities.

Consumption value	Items ("Which product...")	Reliability	Source(s)
functional	...is tastier? ...is more tender? ...has better flavour?	.898	Feuz et al. (2004); Sweeney & Soutar (2001)
emotional	...makes you feel better? ...gives you more the feeling of doing something good? ...makes you happier? ...gives you a more pleasant feeling?	.916	Bloch et al. (2003); Sweeney & Soutar (2001); current study
social	...would improve more the way you are perceived by your family or friends? ...would make a better impression on your family or friends? ...could trigger more criticism from your family or friends? ^a	.747	Sweeney & Soutar (2001)
epistemic	...makes you more curious? ...makes you want to know more? ...makes you want to search more for extra information? ...makes you more curious about extra product details?	.827	Brakus et al. (2009); current study

Consumption value	Items ("Which product...")	Reliability	Source(s)
monetary	...is more reasonably priced?	.802	Sweeney & Soutar (2001)
	...offers more value for money?		
	...has a better quality for the price?		
ethical	...is produced in a more socially responsible way?	.780 ^b	Lichtenstein et al. (2004); current study
	...is produced more honestly?		
	...is produced more environmentally friendly?		
	...is produced more animal-friendly?		

^a Reverse-coded; ^b reliability calculated on data from the experimental pre-test.

4.3.1.3. Validation of the social dilemma setting

The choice task was also examined to determine whether it presents a social dilemma by validating the concept that animal-friendly product choice requires a trade-off between ethical and monetary value. For this analysis, only the control sub-sample ($n = 29$) from the previously described dataset was used to prevent spillover effects of positioning strategies (i.e., strategy emphasising functional value may also increase perceived monetary value). Specifically, the relative ethical and monetary values of the free-range chicken versus the mainstream chicken were compared. The results confirmed that the free-range chicken was perceived to offer higher ethical value than the mainstream chicken ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 2.42$, $p < .001$; on a scale from -7 to 7 , where -7 refers to mainstream chicken offering much higher value, 0 to both products being equal, and 7 to free-range chicken offering much higher value). The results also showed

that mainstream chicken was perceived to offer higher monetary value than the free-range chicken ($M = -1.83$, $SD = 3.52$, $p = .009$). Together, these findings confirm that the choice task indeed presents a social dilemma.

4.3.2. Main study

4.3.2.1. Research design

The main study was an online between-subjects experiment ($N = 575$) with five experimental groups ($n = 115$): control, functional, emotional, social and epistemic. In each group, participants were presented with four products that realistically reflected the current product offer: mainstream, barn-raised, free-range or organic chicken breasts. In each group, participants were shown the same four products, of which only the free-range chicken had different claims (or no claim in the control condition). The questionnaire began with questions about sustainable shopping behaviour, followed by the choice task (see Figure 4.3.), measures of motivational orientation and consumption values, and concluding with classification questions.

The participants were Dutch shoppers sampled from the panels of a Dutch panel provider (Panel Inzicht) and randomly assigned to one of the experimental groups. Only participants who purchased groceries at least from time to time and had purchased chicken meat breasts in the past month were included. Data were collected in December 2015. The average age of the participants was 48.8 years, ranging from 18 to 78 years, and 40% were men. There were no substantial differences among participants in the different experimental groups in terms of gender, age, household composition or education.

4.3.2.2. Measures

Animal-friendly product choice was measured by asking participants to choose from four products in a hypothetical situation (see Figure 4.3.). The participants assigned numbers to each product, from 1 for their first choice to 4 for their last choice (or a 0 if they would definitely not choose a certain product). The animal-friendly product choice was operationalised as the choice of free-range chicken over the mainstream chicken; however, consumers were asked to choose among all available products to obscure the aim of the study. A 1 (animal-friendly product choice) was assigned if the free-range chicken was chosen over the mainstream chicken, a -1 if the mainstream chicken was chosen over the free-range chicken, or a 0 if neither product was chosen. The cases assigned a 0 ($n = 5$) were excluded from the analysis because the aim of the study was to predict animal-friendly product choice over mainstream product choice.

Motivational orientation was measured by asking participants to evaluate eight randomly presented product attributes regarding how important they find each attribute when buying chicken meat. Four attributes (price, taste, freshness and tenderness) referred to immediate individual benefits and four attributes (animal friendliness, environmental friendliness, healthiness and safety) referred to delayed and/or societal benefits (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b). To ensure that safety and healthiness were viewed in terms of their long-term benefits, participants were instructed to consider the long-term consequences of these attributes. The participants were asked to divide 100 points among the eight attributes; the more important the attribute was, the more points it earned. The sum of the attributes referring to individual benefits and the sum of the attributes referring to delayed/societal benefits were both calculated. The data were transformed so that values close to a 0 indicated that the participant prioritised either individual benefits (egoistic orientation) or delayed/societal benefits (pro-social orientation), whereas values close to 100 indicated (close to) an equal importance being attributed to individual and delayed/societal benefits (dissonant orientation).

Perceived consumption values were measured using items presented in random order (see Table 4.1.). Participants were shown two products, mainstream chicken and free-range chicken, and were asked to rate the two products on each item in a two-step procedure. First, they rated which product, if any, scored better (e.g., Which product is tastier?). Second, they were asked how much better they expect the selected product to be (e.g., How much tastier is product A(B)?). This resulted in a seven-point scale, in which the lowest value (-3) indicated that the mainstream chicken is much better, the mid-value (0) indicated that the products are alike, and the highest value (+3) indicated that the free-range chicken is much better. The total perceived value was calculated as the average of functional, emotional, social and epistemic values.

4.3.2.3. Measure validation

A confirmatory factor analysis was performed using the lavaan package in R software, specifying a five-dimensional model consisting of functional, emotional, social, epistemic and monetary value dimensions. Each value dimension was manifested by the corresponding items, as shown in Table 4.1. The model was assessed in terms of fit and reliability.

The model had a good fit (model $\chi^2(109) 341.34$, $p < .001$, $RMSEA = 0.061$, $SRMR = 0.053$, $CFI = 0.962$, $TLI = 0.953$), with all the indices meeting the recommended cut-off values (Kline, 2015). The reliability of each scale was then assessed. The Cronbach's α values were .747 for the social value scale and .916 for the emotional value scale (see Table 4.1.), indicating a good reliability of each consumption value scale. Overall, these results suggest that the items measuring consumption values were appropriate.

4.4. Results

4.4.1. Product choices

To examine the shifts in animal-friendly product choice as a result of the different positioning strategies, we performed a detailed analysis of the product choices (Table 4.2.). Although the primary aim was to increase the choice of free-range chicken over mainstream chicken, we observed a general shift in preference towards the animal-friendly products in all manipulated groups. The number of consumers whose first choice was organic chicken, the most animal-friendly option, increased from 1.7% in the control condition to 5.2% in the emotional and social conditions, 6.1% in the functional condition and 7% in the epistemic condition. Similarly, we observed an increase in the number of consumers who opted for the barn-raised chicken in all manipulated conditions. Hence, although the number of consumers who made the free-range chicken their first choice decreased in all manipulated conditions, we observed that consumers frequently opted for other animal-friendly options (barn-raised or organic), with free-range chicken as their second or third choice.

Table 4.2. Product choices (N = 575).

Product type	Percentage	Experimental condition				
		Control	Functional	Emotional	Social	Epistemic
Mainstream <i>lowest level of animal welfare</i>	1 st choice	59.1%	52.2%	52.6%	50.4%	46.5%
	2 nd choice	11.3%	13%	12.3%	15.7%	13.2%
	3 rd choice	11.3%	9.6%	14.9%	8.7%	9.6%
	Last or no choice	18.3%	25.2%	20.2%	25.2%	30.7%
Barn <i>3rd highest level of animal welfare</i>	1 st choice	20%	23.5%	25.4%	28.7%	31.6%
	2 nd choice	62.6%	55.7%	58.8%	55.7%	50.9%
	3 rd choice	8.7%	10.4%	12.3%	9.5%	11.4%
	Last or no choice	8.7%	10.4%	3.5%	6.1%	6.1%
Free-range (manipulated) <i>2nd highest level of animal welfare</i>	1 st choice	20%	12.3%	17.6%	13.9%	13.1%
	2 nd choice	7.8%	20.2%	19.3%	19.1%	24.5%
	3 rd choice	55.7%	45.6%	57%	58.3%	53.5%
	Last or no choice	16.5%	21.9%	6.1%	8.7%	7.9%
Organic <i>highest level of animal welfare</i>	1 st choice	1.7%	6.1%	5.2%	5.2%	7%
	2 nd choice	8.7%	7%	6.1%	7%	7.8%
	3 rd choice	9.6%	11.3%	9.6%	13.9%	10.4%
	Last or no choice	80%	75.6%	79.1%	73.9%	74.8%

4.4.2. Hypotheses tests

Logistic regression run in SPSS 22 was used to analyse the effect of total perceived value (H1) and motivational orientation (H3) on animal-friendly product choice, as well as the interaction between total perceived value and motivational orientation (H4), using standardised scores for each variable. A binary logistic regression showed that the model including the total perceived value, motivational orientation and the interaction between these variables had the most parsimonious fit with the data ($R^2 = .34$ (Cox & Snell) $.47$ (Nagelkerke), model $\chi^2(3) 233.21$, $p < .001$). These three variables correctly predicted animal-friendly product choice in 79.3% of the cases. A one-way MANOVA using Pillai's trace showed a significant effect of the positioning strategy on the perceptions of functional (H2a), emotional (H2b), social (H2c) and epistemic value (H2d) of the product ($V = .05$, $F(16, 2280) = 1.65$, $p = .049$).

In Table 4.3. we present the results of the hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 predicted that total perceived value has a positive effect on animal-friendly product choice. Our results support this hypothesis, showing that the total perceived value of animal-friendly products significantly increased animal-friendly product choice ($b = 1.64$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 101.81$, $p < .001$), with an odds ratio of 5.15, 95% *CI* [3.75, 7.09].

Table 4.3. Parameters and effect sizes of hypothesized relationships.

Relationship		Parameter	Effect size
Logistic regression		<i>Wald statistics</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>
H1	Total perceived value → Product choice	1.64***	5.15
H3	Motivational orientation → Product choice	0.81***	2.25
H4	Total perceived value * Motivational orientation → Product choice	-0.61**	0.54
<i>Model $\chi^2(3) = 233.21$, $p < .001$</i>			

Relationship	Parameter	Effect size
MANOVA	<i>F-statistics</i>	<i>Partial Eta</i>
H2a Functional positioning strategy → Functional value	0.22	.11
H2b Emotional positioning strategy → Emotional value	0.40*	.15
H2c Social positioning strategy → Social value	0.10	.05
H2d Epistemic positioning strategy → Epistemic value	0.29*	.15
<i>Model F(16, 2280) = 1.65, p = .049</i>		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that functional positioning increases perceived functional value. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunnett one-way t-tests showed no support for this hypothesis, as the results indicated no significant effect of the functional strategy on functional value ($b = 0.22$, $p = .157$, $r = .11$). We therefore conclude that the label communicating functional positioning strategy does not significantly increase perceived functional value. Hypothesis 2b predicted that emotional positioning increases perceived emotional value. The results confirmed that emotional strategy had a small significant effect on emotional value ($b = 0.40$, $p = .040$, $r = .15$), supporting Hypothesis 2b. We can therefore confirm that the label communicating emotional positioning strategy increases perceived emotional value. Hypothesis 2c predicted that social positioning increases perceived social value. Our results do not support this hypothesis, as they show no significant effect of social strategy on social value ($b = 0.10$, $p = .433$, $r = .05$), indicating that the label communicating social positioning strategy does not significantly increase perceived social value. Surprisingly, the label communicating social strategy increased the perceived functional ($b = 0.28$, $p = .073$, $r = .13$) and emotional value ($b = 0.53$, $p = .005$, $r = .44$) of the product, which may indicate the existence of a spillover effect on other consumption

values. Finally, Hypothesis 2d predicted that epistemic positioning increases the perceived epistemic value. Our results showed a small yet significant positive effect of epistemic positioning strategy on perceived epistemic value ($b = 0.29$, $p = .030$, $r = .15$), providing support for Hypothesis 2d.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that motivational orientation influences animal-friendly product choice, such that consumers with a dissonant orientation are more likely to choose animal-friendly products than are consumers with egoistic and pro-social orientations. We found support for this hypothesis, noting that consumers with a dissonant orientation are significantly more likely to choose animal-friendly products compared with consumers with egoistic and pro-social orientations ($b = 0.81$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 26.04$, $p < .001$), with an odds ratio of 2.25, 95% *CI*[1.65, 3.06].

Hypothesis 4 predicted that motivational orientation moderates the relationship between total perceived value and animal-friendly product choice, making this relationship the most important for consumers with a dissonant orientation. We did not find support for this hypothesis; although the interaction between total perceived value and motivational orientation had a significant effect on animal-friendly product choice ($b = -0.61$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 11.20$, $p = .001$), our data show that the nature of the relationship is not what we expected. Specifically, consumers with a dissonant orientation had a weaker relationship between total perceived consumption value and animal-friendly product choice. In other words, although total perceived value has a significant positive effect on animal-friendly product choice, this effect is weaker for consumers with a dissonant orientation and stronger for consumers with egoistic and pro-social orientations, with an odds ratio of 0.54, 95% *CI* [0.38, 0.78]. To gain additional insights into this relationship, we ran a new logistic regression in which motivational orientation was recoded so that the lowest value referred to the egoistic, the middle value to the dissonant and the highest value to the pro-social orientation. This approach allowed us to determine whether the effect may have been attributable to pro-social consumers or egoistic consumers only. The results showed no significant interaction effect between total perceived value and

motivational orientation on animal-friendly product choice ($b = 0.11$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 0.31$, $p = .565$), revealing that both the pro-social and the egoistic orientations strengthen the relationship between total perceived value and animal-friendly product choice.

Finally, we ran an additional analysis to understand whether the impact of individual value dimensions on animal-friendly product choice differs from the results of the multi-item construct. We ran a logistic regression that tested the effects of individual value dimensions (functional, emotional, social and epistemic), motivational orientation and the interactions between individual value dimensions and motivational orientation on animal-friendly product choice. We conducted a binary logistic regression which showed a good fit of the model ($R^2 = .34$ (Cox & Snell) .50 (Nagelkerke), model $\chi^2(9) = 250.61$, $p < .001$). These nine variables correctly predict an animal-friendly product choice in 80.3% of the cases. We found significant positive direct effects for functional value ($b = 0.58$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 12.34$, $p < .001$), emotional value ($b = 1.14$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 32.67$, $p < .001$) and epistemic value ($b = 0.26$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 3.63$, $p = .57$) on animal-friendly product choice. The impact of social value on animal-friendly product choice was not significant ($b = 0.26$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 3.63$, $p = .716$), which indicates that the unique contribution of social value is not strong enough to influence consumer choice. The interaction between perceived value and motivational orientation had a significant effect on animal-friendly product choice for epistemic value ($b = -0.33$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 4.72$, $p = .030$), a marginally significant effect for emotional value ($b = -0.38$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 2.70$, $p = .10$) but no significant effects for functional ($b = 0.04$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 0.05$, $p = .827$) or social value ($b = -0.12$, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 0.43$, $p = .515$). In the new logistic regression, in which motivational orientation was recoded so that the lowest value referred to the egoistic, the middle value to the dissonant and the highest value to the pro-social orientation, all interaction effects were non-significant. In summary, the insights from the additional analysis largely confirm the results of the main analysis. The effects of individual value types on animal-friendly product choice, specifically those of emotional and epistemic value, are stronger for consumers

with egoistic and pro-social orientations and weaker for consumers with a dissonant orientation.

4.5. Discussion and implications

This study measured the impact of several positioning strategies designed to address a social dilemma and the role of motivational orientation in animal-friendly product choice. Two strategies, emotional and epistemic, were found to be effective in increasing consumer perceptions of the respective values. In addition, we showed that motivational orientation plays a crucial role in animal-friendly product choice; however, its effect was different than expected. These insights imply that animal welfare labels that invoke consumer feelings or provoke curiosity are likely to increase animal-friendly food choices and are most effective for consumers with egoistic and pro-social orientations.

The main contribution of this study is the empirical investigation of positioning strategies addressing the social dilemma in animal-friendly product choice. We tested four strategies; functional, emotional, social and epistemic. Contrary to our predictions, the functional and social strategies did not significantly increase the perceived functional and social value of the product, respectively. For the functional strategy, one possible explanation is that the cue, in the form of a claim on a label, was not powerful enough to convince consumers that the product is tastier than the others. The addition of other cues, such as a picture of a serving suggestion or a tinted plastic foil that makes the meat look more appealing, might be required to enhance functional value, or perhaps an alternative claim might be more effective in emphasising the tastiness of the meat. Manipulating tastiness in an online experimental setting could prove challenging because taste is an experiential cue (Schröder & McEachern, 2004); thus, a different type of research might be needed to test the effectiveness of a functional strategy.

There are three likely reasons why the social strategy was not found to be effective. First, even though existing research supports the importance of social

norms in animal-friendly product choice (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006), the present study is unique in its attempt to manipulate, rather than measure, the social norm. This is an important distinction, because while we know that for consumers who perceive a social pressure from relevant reference groups, this pressure translates into animal-friendly food choices, it is at least as important to investigate how policy makers could affect the social norm by providing information on the animal welfare label. We found that the social positioning strategy was not powerful enough to significantly increase perceived social acceptance. Considering that social norms are a deep-seated motivation and difficult to change (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006), the manipulation of a social norm might require a long-term strategy, such as the repeated exposure to influential messages. Second, although the qualitative pre-test did not reveal that consumers consider the claim untrustworthy, adding an information source that consumers perceive as trustworthy may be needed to strengthen the claim. Finally, because the claim used to manipulate the social norm increased the perceived functional value, it can be speculated that the claim “favourite choice” suggested that the product has perhaps been chosen because of its excellent quality; therefore, the claim itself might have been problematic.

Most importantly, this study has identified two major strategies that marketers can use to design effective animal welfare labels for animal-friendly food products. The first strategy appeals to consumer feelings, as we have shown that consumers are sensitive to the positive emotions they experience when supporting animal welfare. Although the short claim used in our study only led to a small change in consumer choice, we believe that larger effects might be expected when combining several cues that evoke good feelings. In implementing this strategy, we recommend a combination of several of the following cues: images of happy animals and/or content farmers, feel-good phrases, symbols (such as emoticons) and bright colours. Second, and perhaps more surprisingly, invoking consumer curiosity regarding animal welfare also drives them towards a more animal-friendly product choice. Although this strategy is rarely used in the category of animal-friendly food (van Riemsdijk, Ingenbleek, Houthuijs, et al., 2017), our study has revealed the strong potential

of epistemic positioning. In implementing this strategy, marketers can provoke curiosity by highlighting the innovativeness of the husbandry system, adding a QR code that shows how the animals are doing (e.g., a live video stream from the stalls) or showing interesting and fun “Did you know?” facts about animal welfare. Companies producing animal-friendly products might find these insights useful and could use emotional and epistemic appeals not only on their product packages, but also in their advertisements, company webpages and events. In this way, the appeals become integrated within their overall strategy and, together with a well-designed animal welfare label, help consumers make a more animal-friendly product choice. While these strategies effectively increased consumer value perceptions, our results are inconclusive about whether this translates into increased numbers of consumers actually making the product their first choice. These contradictory results may be explained by the interference of other factors, such as that the nicer packages (manipulations) may have influenced how consumers make inferences about the price. Also, the results may be prone to a spillover effect in that our manipulations influenced respondents’ value perceptions of other animal-friendly products. Hence, companies need to carefully test the positioning strategies and their effects on consumer product choice.

This study is the first to establish the role of motivational orientation in animal-friendly product choice. We have shown that, while motivational orientation plays a crucial role in animal-friendly product choice, the nature of this relationship was unexpected. Contrary to our predictions, our results indicate that the positioning strategies are more effective for consumers with pro-social and egoistic orientations than for consumers with a dissonant orientation. This finding suggests that strategies emphasising the concept of “what’s in it for me?” are most likely to result in animal-friendly product choices by consumers predominantly motivated by self-interest or societal interest. These findings have important implications for marketers and policy makers, as they suggest that consumers who typically buy the most sustainable products (such as products carrying several certified labels) may switch to a less sustainable option. As a consequence, labels emphasising “what’s in it for me” may lead to cannibalization

on the sales of other sustainable products; therefore, such labels must be used with caution, ensuring that the labels on other sustainable products also emphasise personally relevant benefits. Conversely, these findings also suggest that consumers who are predominantly motivated by self-interest and typically buy mainstream products can switch to animal-friendly products. Strategies emphasising personally relevant benefits, such as taste, convenience, or even fun and reflection of self-image, therefore have an unexpected potential. Ultimately, because positioning strategies attract people away from mainstream to animal-friendly options, we can conclude that marketing is a powerful tool that can even drive consumers who do not care about animals towards animal-friendly product choices.

4.6. Limitations and future research directions

This study has a number of limitations that can establish an agenda for future research. First, as we have focused on one product category, the generalisation of our findings to other food categories should be done with caution. The conceptual framework provides a sound basis for research in other product categories however. Second, we measured a hypothetical choice, not a real choice, which could be tested in a real-life (store) experiment. Third, due to the study design, which used several animal-friendly products in the choice set, the measured outcomes seem to have suffered from a spillover effect of positioning strategies on participant perceptions of other animal-friendly products. To prevent this, we would recommend using a simple choice set with only one animal-friendly product in future studies.

Fourth, despite our careful selection of the eight most relevant attributes to measure motivational orientation, as advised by de Jonge and van Trijp (2013b), we cannot exclude the fact that there are other attributes, such as availability, which might have particular relevance for certain consumers. Future studies might address this issue by including a full list of potentially relevant attributes and/or allowing the participants to add missing attributes themselves. Fifth, the

results that did not reveal whether the effectiveness of the social positioning strategy might have been influenced by the selected measurement scale, which only assessed the social norm (i.e., the opinion of others) but not the subjective norm (i.e., how important the opinion of the particular others is to the consumer) (Parker, Manstead, & Stradling, 1995). To obtain more accurate results, we would therefore recommend measuring the subjective norm in future studies. Moreover, changing social norms might require a more long-term strategy, such as repeated exposure to messages from highly influential, trustworthy sources such as the Dutch Consumers' Association. Finally, it was beyond the scope of our study to provide a comprehensive framework that also accounts for the moderating effects of consumer personality (e.g., thinking style, values) or other stakeholders (e.g., whether the strategy is backed up by a trustworthy external source). This would be a fruitful area for future research, helping marketers and policy makers to design carefully targeted and effective animal welfare labels.





CHAPTER 5

Positioning strategies for ethical products: Does stakeholder endorsement make a difference?

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Abstract

In the current information-rich consumer markets, the successful marketing of ethical products depends not only on traditional marketing instruments, but also on endorsement by stakeholders. While these two factors have separately received scholarly attention in the marketing literature, this study examines the combined effects of product positioning and stakeholder endorsement on consumer value perceptions and product choice. The results of an online choice experiment with 300 Dutch shoppers indicated that positioning strategies reinforcing the ethical value of the animal welfare enhanced meat must be supported by stakeholder endorsement to increase the consumer-perceived value of the product. Hence, to increase sales of ethical products, companies may need to collaborate with stakeholders who can support the legitimacy of their ethical claims. In their marketing strategies, companies should also emphasise individualistic benefits, such as taste or curiosity, instead of solely focussing on ethical benefits, such as animal welfare.

5.1. Introduction

In the era of customer advocacy, companies engaging in ethical business can no longer pursue traditional marketing strategies based on one-way communication (Lusch & Webster Jr, 2011). Instead, they must build consumer trust by engaging in an open dialogue and collaboration with their customers and other stakeholders (Cronin, Smith, Gleim, Ramirez, & Martinez, 2011; Lusch & Webster Jr, 2011; Morsing & Schultz, 2006). Researchers have argued that, when integrated into a company's business strategy, such collaborations can contribute to long-term value creation for the company (Andriof, Waddock, Husted, & Rahman, 2017; Tantalo & Priem, 2016). In consumer markets where information about product origins and ethical attributes are abundantly available, this collaboration with stakeholders is particularly vital for achieving corporate legitimacy, which refers to the appropriateness of a company's activities in terms of the societal values and norms (Castelló & Lozano, 2011; Handelman & Arnold, 1999). In more specific terms, collaboration with stakeholders can increase the effectiveness of marketing strategies for a company's products, particularly ethical products, because the endorsement of stakeholders can help to build consumer trust (Cronin et al., 2011; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). Consumer trust is a key precondition in building the market for ethical products, since ethical attributes such as animal friendliness or environmental impact are typically credence attributes that cannot be verified by the consumer (Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014; Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017). Increasing consumer trust in ethical products, for example by using a trustworthy certification, is therefore one of the key drivers of the expansion of the market for such products (Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017).

The literature on the drivers of and barriers to the market for ethical products has identified several important themes (for reviews, see Clark et al., 2017; Cronin et al., 2011; Joshi & Rahman, 2015; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). First, the growth of this market can be hindered by institutional and structural barriers, such as the dominant retailing channels (Koos, 2011). Second, consumer purchase behaviour can also present a challenge to market growth (Bray, Johns, & Kilburn,

2011; Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2014; Ingenbleek, Meulenberg, & van Trijp, 2015). Within this theme, the existing literature has highlighted several major concepts, including consumer-citizen duality (de Bakker & Dagevos, 2012; Moisaner, 2007), social desirability bias (Auger & Devinney, 2007; Carrington et al., 2014), consumer (mis)trust in certified labels (Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014; Thøgersen, Haugaard, & Olesen, 2010) and the trade-off consumers are willing to make between ethical attributes and other product attributes, such as price or taste (Bray et al., 2011; Carrington et al., 2014; Clark et al., 2017; Krystallis et al., 2012).

Other studies have emphasised that barriers pertaining to consumer perceptions of ethical products can be addressed using marketing strategies (Cronin et al., 2011; Kronrod, Grinstein, & Wathgieu, 2012; Ottman, 2017; Peloza, White, & Shang, 2013; Rex & Baumann, 2007; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). Specifically, the core marketing strategies for ethical products should achieve the following: facilitate consumer ability, for example by providing trustworthy information through certified labels; enhance consumer opportunity, for example by broadening the portfolio of ethical products; and facilitate consumer motivation, for example by positioning products so that they emphasise appealing benefits in response to salient consumer motives (Ottman, 2017; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). While existing research has explored either marketing strategies that use stakeholder endorsement (Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014; Janssen & Hamm, 2012) or product-positioning strategies (Du et al., 2007; Peloza et al., 2013; van Riemsdijk, Ingenbleek, Houthuijs, et al., 2017), there are, to the best of our knowledge, no studies combining these two tools. In other words, we know very little about whether combining and aligning a positioning strategy with some form of stakeholder endorsement would be more successful than using these tools independently to drive consumers towards a more ethical product choice. This research aims to address this knowledge gap by designing positioning strategies and testing their interaction with a stakeholder endorsement in the form of a certified label, in the context of animal welfare enhanced meat products.

This study aims to make two contributions to the literature on marketing strategies for ethical products. First, it will test the interplay between two important elements of modern marketing strategy that can increase customer perceived value, namely positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement. While positioning strategies are important for emphasising the appealing benefits that serve the buyer's individual welfare, stakeholder endorsement serves as a guarantee of a product's claimed ethical attributes. Second, we distinguish between two main categories of consumer perceived value that are pertinent to ethical products; ethical value, which serves societal interest, and individualistic value, which serves a buyer's self-interest (Carrington et al., 2014; Ingenbleek et al., 2015; White, MacDonell, & Ellard, 2012). Building on research that considers ethical product choice to be a social dilemma between maximising a buyer's self-interest and the societal interest (Moisander, 2007), we study how each of the value types translate into ethical product choice.

In the remainder of this chapter, we first introduce our conceptual framework and hypotheses by reviewing the role of individualistic and ethical value in ethical product choice. This is followed by a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of positioning strategies and stakeholder endorsement. We then test the hypothesised relationships in a choice experiment and conclude with a discussion highlighting the implications for businesses.

5.2. Theoretical framework and hypotheses

5.2.1. Individualistic versus ethical value in ethical product choice

The literature on consumer product choice, which is the dependent variable in our conceptual framework (see Figure 5.1.), mainly revolves about studying its determinants, with researchers generally agreeing that product choice is primarily driven by the total perceived value of a product (Holbrook, 1999; Sheth et al., 1991). *Total perceived value* refers to a consumer's overall evaluation of the utility of a product after comparing the perceived benefits against the perceived

costs (Holbrook, 1999). Total perceived value is a multidimensional construct, with various taxonomies presented in the existing literature (for reviews, see Holbrook, 1999; Smith & Colgate, 2007). Its dimensions, typically referred to as consumption values (Sheth et al., 1991), specify the motives of consumption, such as functional (e.g., food safety), sensory (e.g., tastiness), emotional (e.g., happiness), epistemic (e.g., curiosity), monetary (e.g., low price), ethical (e.g., animal welfare) and social (e.g., status) (Brakus et al., 2009; Sheth et al., 1991; Smith & Colgate, 2007; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Importantly, the consumption values are specific to the situation and/or the product (Smith & Colgate, 2007).

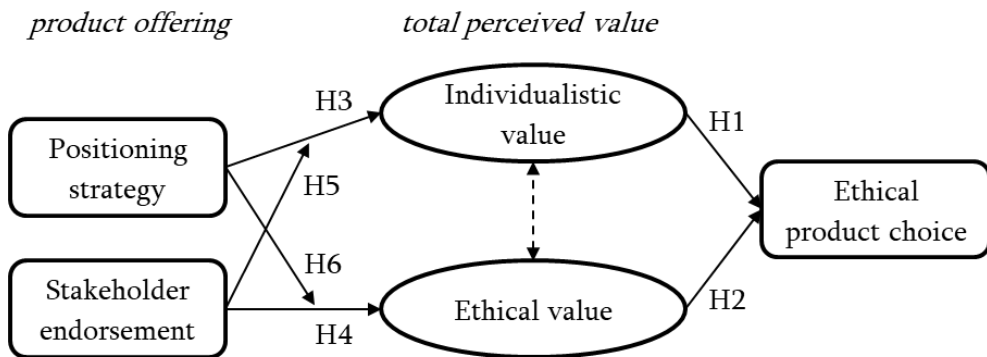


Figure 5.1. Conceptual framework.

In the context of ethical product choice, consumption values can be categorised into two groups of particular relevance: individualistic value and ethical value. This categorisation reflects on the particularity of ethical product choice, which attends that ethical product choice is a social dilemma (Ingenbleek et al., 2015; Moisaner, 2007). A social dilemma refers to a situation in which maximising a buyer's individual welfare necessarily involves a trade-off against societal welfare (Messick & Brewer, 1983). In other words, a consumer who wishes to maximise the *ethical value*, which serves societal welfare, must give up (some of) the *individualistic value*, which serves their own individual welfare. This is true for many categories of ethical products, such as free-range or organic food, fair-trade

products and electric cars, because the production of such products is more costly than that of conventional products (Dragusanu, Giovannucci, & Nunn, 2014; Harvey & Hubbard, 2013a; Kley, Lerch, & Dallinger, 2011). These costs typically translate into a higher final price, which negatively impacts the *monetary value* of ethical products (Smith & Colgate, 2007), a component of the individualistic value. On the other hand, ethical products benefit societal welfare more than conventional products by addressing social and environmental issues such as animal welfare (animal-friendly food), the lives of the poor in developing countries (fair-trade products) and climate change (electric cars). As contributing to the solution of social and environmental issues is generally considered the right and ethical thing to do, ethical product choice is relevant to the buyer because it delivers ethical value (see Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Ethical product choice therefore typically requires trading individualistic value for ethical value, thus presenting a situation of a social dilemma to the buyer.

While the role of individualistic value in consumer product choice is well documented in the current literature (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Woodall, 2003), the role of ethical value appears to be more complex, and seems to differ between product categories, customer segments and other categories (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Peloza & Shang, 2011). In the context of food choice, such as organic food (Honkanen, Verplanken, & Olsen, 2006), meat (Schröder & McEachern, 2004) and dairy (Heerwagen, Christensen, & Sandøe, 2013), however, authors have generally agreed that ethical value is, next to the individualistic value, an influential motive driving consumer product choice. As this study focuses on animal-friendly food choice, we therefore expect both types of value to contribute to the ethical product choice. We hypothesise:

H1: Individualistic value has a positive effect on ethical product choice.

H2: Ethical value has a positive effect on ethical product choice.

5.2.2. *Marketing as a tool to increase the total perceived value of ethical products*

5.2.2.1. Product positioning strategies

The role of total perceived value as a determinant of ethical product choice calls for the development of marketing strategies that can increase the total perceived value of ethical products. One such approach is a *product positioning strategy*, which refers to the creation of a clear, distinct and desirable position relative to the product's alternatives in the minds of its target customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Marketers design positioning strategies by identifying relevant and unique perceived benefits, such as functional or emotional, that the customer would gain by buying and/or using the product, then communicating these benefits using product attributes (Grunert & van Trijp, 2014). Consumers then make inferences about which benefits will be delivered by the specific (combination of) features and how these benefits would be personally valuable (Gutman, 1982). For example, a consumer may infer that fresh ingredients (product attribute) make the product tasty (perceived benefit), which stimulates the consumer's senses, providing sensory value (Brakus et al., 2009).

Positioning strategies for ethical products that emphasise the buyer's individual welfare can effectively address the social dilemma that characterises ethical product choice (van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). To do so, the positioning strategy needs to create a salient mental link between the product's ethical value and the buyer's individual welfare by communicating benefits that stem from the product's ethical attributes and contribute to the buyer's individual welfare. These benefits can be linked to a number of consumption values, including functional (e.g., food safety, quality), sensory (e.g., aesthetics, tastiness), emotional (e.g., pride, happiness), epistemic (e.g., curiosity, intellectual stimulation) and social (e.g. status, social acceptance) (Brakus et al., 2009; Sheth et al., 1991; Smith & Colgate, 2007; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Because the positioning strategy emphasises the buyer's individual welfare, we expect that

positioning strategy increases consumer perceptions of the individualistic value and not the perceived ethical value of an ethical product. We thus propose:

H3: Positioning strategy has a positive effect on consumer perceived individualistic value.

5.2.2.2. Stakeholder endorsement

While the positioning strategy is usually designed by the company selling the product, companies are not the only relevant source of product information for the consumers. Instead, consumers actively look for, or are passively exposed to, additional information, typically from the company's stakeholders, including their customers, the media and consumer organisations (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013; Labrecque, von der Esche, Mathwick, Novak, & Hofacker, 2013). Stakeholders play a critical role in influencing consumer evaluations of how well the company performs in terms of its societal and environmental obligations (Morsing & Schultz, 2006; Scandeliuss & Cohen, 2016), which is typically referred to as legitimacy (Handelman & Arnold, 1999) or Corporate Social Responsibility (Brown & Dacin, 1997) in the marketing literature. Consumer evaluations of a company's performance are closely related to their evaluations of the performance of its products (Brown & Dacin, 1997).

Stakeholder support can take many forms, ranging from rather passive support, also referred to as stakeholder endorsement, to more active stakeholder engagement (Scandeliuss & Cohen, 2016). In the food sector, third-party-certified labels, which are a form of stakeholder endorsement, are commonly used to increase the trustworthiness of the product and its claims (Janssen & Hamm, 2012; Noblet & Teisl, 2015). Such certified labels can focus on product-related product attributes, such as freshness or nutritional quality, or on process-related product attributes, such as animal welfare or environmental impact (Frewer, Howard, Hedderley, & Shepherd, 1997). *Stakeholder endorsement* can thus involve any form of passive support from diverse company stakeholders, such as

a certified ecolabel, a nutritional quality label or the mention of the company's name on a list of ethical companies published online (Scandeliuss & Cohen, 2016). This is distinct from *stakeholder engagement*, which refers to various forms of active stakeholder involvement, such as (product) co-creation, strategic collaboration on a solution to an environmental issue, or a public comparison of a company's ethical products with those of its competitors (Scandeliuss & Cohen, 2016).

We expect stakeholder endorsement to have a direct effect on a product's perceived ethical value, stemming from the fact that ethical attributes are credence product attributes (Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014). A third-party certification that endorses the product by guaranteeing its ethicality will therefore positively influence consumer evaluations of the ethical value of the product. We thus propose:

H4: Stakeholder endorsement has a positive effect on consumer perceived ethical value.

5.2.2.3. Interplay between product positioning and stakeholder endorsement

Literature on stakeholder marketing suggests that stakeholder endorsement may also strengthen the effectiveness of a positioning strategy (Du et al., 2007; Urde & Koch, 2014). If the stakeholder is a reputable and trustworthy non-governmental organisation, consumers may infer that such an organisation would not endorse a product if any of the product claims were false. Stakeholder endorsement may therefore also increase the trustworthiness of product claims not related to the product's ethicality, such as those regarding tastiness or innovativeness. This is supported by the results of a study conducted by Du et al. (2007), who investigated the role of positioning in the context of socially responsible dairy products. In their study, they found a spillover effect of ethical value upon consumer perceptions of a product's individualistic value. Specifically, a socially responsible product using emotional appeals to emphasise

its ethical benefits in its positioning strategy enhanced consumer belief in the product's ability to deliver functional benefits as well, despite no reference to functional benefits (Du et al., 2007). From this we can infer that a certified label guaranteeing a product's ethicality may also increase consumer perception of the individualistic value emphasised by product positioning. We thus hypothesise:

H5: Stakeholder endorsement moderates the relationship between positioning strategy and perceived individualistic value, such that this relationship is stronger when the endorsement is present than when it is absent.

Finally, the interaction between stakeholder endorsement and positioning strategy may also increase consumer perceptions of ethical value. Because positioning strategy aims to address the social dilemma in ethical product choice, it emphasises the buyer's individual welfare by making an explicit link to the ethical benefits of the product. In other words, positioning strategy claims that the product provides a relevant individualistic value *because* it has been produced in an ethical way. Hence, the extent to which consumers can be certain that the product has indeed been produced in an ethical way is of crucial importance (Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017). Presuming that stakeholder endorsement increases the trustworthiness of the claimed ethical benefits, such as animal welfare (van Trijp & Fischer, 2011), the endorsement is likely to strengthen the effect of positioning strategy on perceived ethical value. We thus hypothesise:

H6: Stakeholder endorsement moderates the relationship between positioning strategy and perceived ethical value, such that this relationship is stronger when the endorsement is present than when it is absent.

5.3. Methods

5.3.1. Research design

Our hypotheses were tested in an online between-subjects choice experiment (N = 300) conducted in the Netherlands. We manipulated positioning strategy

(yes/no) and stakeholder endorsement (yes/no) to generate four experimental conditions (for each, $n = 75$); *control* (no positioning / no endorsement), *positioning* (yes positioning / no endorsement), *endorsement* (no positioning / yes endorsement) and *endorsed positioning* (yes positioning / yes endorsement).

5.3.2. Sample

The participants were adult shoppers who buy groceries at least from time to time, and who had purchased chicken breast meat (the experimental product used here) in the last month. The participants were sampled by a Dutch commercial provider of consumer data (Panel Inzicht) and randomly assigned to one of the experimental conditions. The participants voluntarily signed up with the provider and received a small incentive for their participation. The data were collected in July 2017. The average age of the participants was 48.9 years, ranging from 18 to 86 years, and 38.3% were men. There were no significant differences among participants in different experimental conditions in terms of gender, age or household composition; however, slightly more participants with higher levels of education were included in the control condition, with fewer in the endorsement condition. Education was therefore used as a covariate in the data analysis.

5.3.3. Stimuli

The stimuli were packages of four chicken breast products with different levels of animal welfare. Chicken breasts were selected as the product for two reasons. First, poultry meat is the second most consumed type of meat by Dutch consumers (Terluin, Verhoog, Dagevos, van Horne, & Hoste, 2017), of which chicken is the most popular (Dagevos et al., 2012). Second, certain consumers who eat meat may avoid beef or pork due to their religion but will typically eat chicken meat. Animal welfare was selected because it is an important ethical issue for the absolute majority of the studied population; the protection of farm animals

was reported to be important for 94% of Europeans and 95% of the Dutch population (European Commission 2016). Moreover, animal welfare labels are among the most important food labels for Dutch consumers (de Vries, Visser, & Roozen, 2016), and the better-life certified label used in the present study is well-known and considered trustworthy by the Dutch consumers (Temminghof 2017).

The chicken breast products presented to the participants differed in price and the level of animal welfare: conventional, barn, free-range and organic. The product prices reflected the current average market prices in Dutch supermarkets. Three products (conventional, barn and organic) can typically be found in a supermarket, while the fourth product (free-range) presents an animal welfare enhanced product alternative that could be added to the current assortment. Each product was presented as a product photograph with a short description that included the product's level of animal welfare, price and an explanation of the additional product attributes, such as a certified label or a claim about the product's innovativeness.

To manipulate positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement, we modified the labels for the free-range chicken. Positioning strategy emphasises the epistemic value, considering that the suitability of each consumption value depends on the product type (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Curiosity is one of the influential motives driving animal-friendly food choices (Hughner, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz II, & Stanton, 2007). The strategy emphasised that the chickens lived in an innovative, free- animal welfare enhanced husbandry system that provided a natural environment for the animals. This information was complemented by a package claim that stated "Discover free-range chicken!", provoking curiosity in the consumer. Stakeholder endorsement was operationalised using a certified label issued by The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, a well-known label trusted by Dutch consumers (Temminghof, 2017). The certified label showed two out of a maximum three better-life stars, which typically refer to free-range husbandry systems for farm animals. Participants in all experimental conditions were shown the same

products, of which only the free-range product differed between experimental condition.

5.3.4. Questionnaire

The questionnaire began with a question about the participant's past shopping behaviour regarding chicken breasts, followed by the choice task. They were then asked further questions measuring their value perceptions of the free-range chicken, their opinion of the relative importance of animal welfare compared to other ethical issues (fair trade and environmental friendliness), their general animal-friendly shopping behaviours and finally a set of classification questions.

5.3.4.1. Measures

The choice task presented the participants with four chicken breast products (conventional, barn, free-range and organic). The participants were told that the supermarket had decided to add the new, free-range chicken to its product assortment. They were asked to indicate how many times they would choose each of the four products in their next 10 purchases of chicken breasts. The number they indicated for the free-range product was taken as their ethical product choice, the dependent variable in this analysis. The selected measure was developed along the lines of measures frequently used to measure purchase intention regarding branded products (e.g., Laroche, Kim, & Zhou, 1996).

The consumption values were measured by items presented in random order (see Table 5.1.). The participants were asked to evaluate the free-range chicken on a seven-point Likert scale using a series of statements; three statements measured the ethical value and 17 items measured individualistic values (including functional, emotional, social, epistemic and monetary value).

Table 5.1. Final consumption value scales, reliabilities and origins.

Consumption value scale	Sub-scale	Items ("This product...")	Reliability	Sources
Individualistic	functional	...is tasty.	.964	Bloch et al. (2003); Brakus et al. (2009); Feuz et al. (2004); Sweeney & Soutar (2001)
		...is tender.		
		...has good flavour.		
	emotional	...makes me feel good.		
		...gives me the feeling of doing something good.		
		...makes me happy.		
		...gives me a pleasant feeling.		
	social	... would improve the way I am perceived by my family or friends.		
		... would make a good impression on my family or friends.		
		...makes me curious.		
epistemic	...makes me want to know more.			
	...makes me want to search for extra information.			
	...makes me curious about the extra product details.			
	...is reasonably priced.			
monetary	... offers value for money.			
	...is good quality for the price.			
	...is produced in an animal-friendly way.			
Ethical	animal welfare	...has a higher level of animal welfare than other products.	.903	adapted from Brown & Dacin (1997)
		...contributes to the improvement of animal welfare.		

5.4. Results

5.4.1. Scale testing

Our Exploratory Factor Analysis, run in IBM SPSS Statistics, showed that one item (“This product could trigger criticism from my family or friends”), which measured individualistic value in terms of social acceptance, was negatively correlated with other items measuring individualistic value. A reliability analysis showed that scale reliability improved (from Cronbach’s $\alpha = .944$ to Cronbach’s $\alpha = .964$) if this item was excluded. We therefore excluded this item from the main analysis. Subsequent reliability analyses indicated that the individualistic value and ethical value scales had good reliability, with Cronbach’s α values above .9 for both scales. The final items for both the ethical value and the individualistic value, their reliabilities and the origin of the items can be found in Table 5.1.

We also tested whether ethical value delivers a significantly different type of benefit than individualistic value, which would support the argument that animal welfare serves societal welfare, whereas individualistic benefits serve individual welfare. We assessed the discriminant validity of the ethical value against the individualistic value, following the procedure advised by Bagozzi and Phillips (1982). Using the lavaan package in R, we ran a confirmatory factor analysis using two-factor models to assess the two constructs (ethical and individualistic value). Each model was run twice: once constraining the correlation between the two factors to 1 and once without such constraint. A chi-square difference test confirmed the discriminant validity of ethical value against individualistic value, while for the unconstrained model, the chi-square value was significantly lower ($p = .001$) than for the constrained model.

5.4.2. Hypotheses tests

A regression analysis was used to analyse the effect of individualistic value (H1) and ethical value (H2) on ethical product choice. A one-way MANOVA was used to test the effect of positioning strategy on individualistic value (H3), the effect of stakeholder endorsement on ethical value (H4) and the interaction between positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement on individualistic (H5) and ethical value (H6). Finally, we used the PROCESS macro developed by Hayes & Preacher to test whether individualistic and ethical value mediate the effects of the experimental condition, defined by the positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement, on ethical product choice. All analyses were run in SPSS Statistics 24 and are presented in Table 5.2.

A simple linear regression showed that individualistic and ethical value are significant predictors of ethical product choice ($F(2,297) = 18.095, p < .001$), with an R^2 of .109. Hypothesis 1 predicted that individualistic value has a positive effect on ethical product choice. Our results support this hypothesis, showing that perceived individualistic value significantly increased ethical product choice ($b = .387, p < .001$). Hypothesis 2 predicted that ethical value has a positive effect on ethical product choice; however, our results did not support this hypothesis, as the unique contribution of ethical value to ethical product choice was not significant ($b = -.094, p = .212$). Ethical value was significantly correlated with individualistic value ($r = .684, p < .001$) and product choice ($r = .171, p = .003$).

A one-way MANOVA, with participant education level as a covariate and Pillai's trace, showed a significant effect for the experimental condition on the perceptions of individualistic and ethical value ($V = .04, F(6, 590) = 2.06, p = .056$). Education was used as a covariate to control for its influence because there were more participants with higher education in the control condition, and fewer in the endorsement condition. To test the main effects of positioning strategy (H3) and stakeholder endorsement (H4), as well as their interactions (H5 and H6), we used simple contrasts to compare each of the experimental conditions (*positioning, endorsement or endorsed positioning*) against the *control* condition.

Table 5.2. Parameters and significance values for the hypothesised relationships, including an additional mediation analysis.

Relationship	Parameter	Significance of parameter
<i>Simple linear regression</i>		
	<i>B</i>	<i>p</i>
H1 Individualistic value → Product choice	0.387	.000
H2 Ethical value → Product choice	-0.094	.212
<i>Model F(2, 297) = 18.095, p < .001</i>		
<i>MANOVA</i>		
	<i>F-statistics</i>	<i>p</i>
H3 Positioning strategy → Individualistic value	0.08	.698
H4 Stakeholder endorsement → Ethical value	0.15	.473
H5 Positioning strategy * Stakeholder endorsement → Individualistic value	0.57	.006
H6 Positioning strategy * Stakeholder endorsement → Ethical value	0.60	.005
<i>Model F(6, 590) = 2.06, p = .056</i>		
<i>Sobel test</i>		
	<i>b</i>	<i>p</i>
Marketing strategy ^a → Individualistic value → Product choice	0.101	.031
Marketing strategy ^a → Ethical value → Product choice	-0.024	.309

^a defined by positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement

Hypothesis 3 predicted that positioning strategy increases perceived individualistic value. Our results did not support this hypothesis, showing no significant effect of positioning strategy on individualistic value ($b = 0.08$, $p = .698$, $\eta = .01$). Hypothesis 4 predicted that stakeholder endorsement increases perceived ethical value, but we did not observe a significant effect of stakeholder endorsement on ethical value ($b = 0.15$, $p = .473$, $\eta = .14$), so this hypothesis was not supported. Additionally, we also inspected whether positioning strategy or stakeholder endorsement decreased the variation in participant value perceptions by looking at their respective standard deviations. While the presence of positioning strategy caused a small decrease in the standard deviation of perceived individualistic value (from 1.29 to 1.23, with individualistic value measured on a seven-point scale), the presence of stakeholder endorsement caused an increase in the standard deviation of the perceived ethical value (from 1.22 to 1.34). In summary, since consumers neither perceived a higher individualistic/ethical value, nor were they more certain about the products' individualistic/ethical values, our results do not support hypotheses 3 and 4.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that the interaction between positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement increases perceived individualistic value. Our results support this hypothesis, showing that the *endorsed conditioning* experimental condition increases individualistic value, with a small but significant effect ($b = 0.57$, $p = .006$, $\eta = .16$). Hypothesis 6 predicted that the interaction between positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement increases the perceived ethical value, which was supported by our results; the *endorsed conditioning* experimental condition was found to significantly increase ethical value ($b = 0.60$, $p = .005$, $\eta = .16$).

To test the indirect effects of experimental condition on ethical product choice, we used bootstrapping tests with 5,000 samples. The results of these analyses revealed that individualistic value mediates the relationship between experimental condition and ethical product choice ($b = .1008$, $SE = .0477$, 95% CI [.0235, .2139]), while ethical value does not ($b = -.0237$, $SE = .0189$, 95% CI [-.0788, .0007]). A Sobel test was used to confirm these results, revealing similar

values for the indirect effect of individualistic value ($b = .1008$, $SE = .0468$, $p = .0313$) and ethical value ($b = -.0237$, $SE = .0233$, $p = .3092$).

5.5. Discussion

This study investigated the interplay between positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement in terms of consumer ethical product choice by evaluating consumer perceptions of a product's ethical and individualistic value. Our results reveal that positioning strategies emphasising the buyer's self-interest should be supported by a stakeholder endorsement to increase the consumer-perceived value of the ethical product. Contrary to our predictions, neither positioning strategy nor stakeholder endorsement alone were sufficiently effective at increasing consumer value perceptions. Furthermore, only individualistic value, not ethical value, affected ethical product choice.

The main contribution of this study is the empirical investigation of the interaction of two core marketing strategies, product positioning emphasising the buyer's self-interest and stakeholder endorsement, in the context animal welfare enhanced meat. This answers previous calls for an investigation into which (combinations of) ethical marketing strategies influence consumer ethical value perceptions and behaviour (Cronin et al., 2011). While existing research has typically emphasised the unique contribution of each strategy to the perception of, and preference for, ethical products by consumers (Du et al., 2007; Janssen & Hamm, 2012; Noblet & Teisl, 2015; van Riemsdijk, Ingenbleek, Houthuijs, et al., 2017), our study is unique in that it also explores the combined effects of these two strategies. We found that positioning strategies emphasising individual welfare did not effectively increase consumer value perceptions. Here, consumer trust most likely plays a major role, as the products presented to our participants were unbranded. Consumers were therefore unable to assign responsibility for the presented information about the innovative product feature, and may have found it untrustworthy, even more so because the information referred to credence product attributes (the animal-housing system). Using a well-known,

trustworthy brand could potentially address this issue, since branding is a powerful tool for obtaining consumer trust (Buil, Martínez, & De Chernatony, 2013). Still, consumer reactions to information coming from a brand manufacturer alone may be less positive than expected. This may be due to the specific character of positioning strategies, which, to address consumer social dilemma, need to emphasise the perceived benefits that increase the perceived individualistic value without harming the perceptions of ethical value (van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). Thus, if consumers cannot be certain about the product's ethical value, they may react less favourably to positioning strategies emphasising their self-interest.

Perhaps most surprisingly, stakeholder endorsement alone was not effective at increasing consumer perceptions of ethical value. This conclusion was particularly unexpected because the consumers were provided with information from a third-party organisation considered reputable and reliable by the general public. While existing studies (e.g., Janssen & Hamm, 2012; Noblet & Teisl, 2015) have emphasised that such information is commonly used to increase the trustworthiness of the product's ethicality, our study suggests that this may not necessarily translate into consumer perceptions of ethical value.

Finally, our results show that a product's ethical value only made a minor contribution to consumer product choice, which was largely driven by the product's individualistic value. This finding supports earlier conclusions regarding the complexity of ethical value on consumer product choice (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Pelozo & Shang, 2011). First, as the role of ethical value depends on the product category, it is reasonable to assume it would play a larger role in the purchase of public luxuries, such as food and drinks consumed in cafés and restaurants. Second, consumers differ in their need to do good; while some attach a high importance to ethical product benefits in their decision-making, others may only consider such attributes to supplement individualistic benefits (Ingenbleek et al., 2015; Ottman, 2017).

5.6. Implications

Our results suggest that, to stimulate consumer ethical product choice, companies must collaborate with stakeholders who can support the legitimacy of their ethical products. First, to influence consumer product choice, companies need to link individualistic benefits, such as curiosity but potentially also taste or happiness, to a product's ethical benefits, such as environmental friendliness or animal welfare, in their positioning strategies. The extent to which consumers can be certain a product has indeed met the ethical standards claimed by the brand manufacturer will therefore be of crucial importance (Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017). Such a guarantee of ethical standards claims is typically provided by certification labels or other third-party endorsements. If such endorsement is missing, consumers may question the product information provided by the manufacturers, especially in product categories where branding is used sparsely, such as fresh food products. This implies that companies need to identify relevant third-party stakeholders, set-up a collaboration and communicate such collaboration to their customers. While this study used stakeholder endorsement in form of a certification label, other perhaps more engaging forms of stakeholder collaboration, also known as stakeholder involvement strategies (Morsing & Schultz, 2006), could have an even larger effect. For example, a reference to a long-term partnership with an animal-friendly non-governmental organisation can serve as an assurance that the company considers animal welfare to be important and actively pursues high standards in the production process.

Second, despite the crucial role of stakeholders in endorsing a product, our results show that product information from a single source may not be sufficient for company claims to be perceived as trustworthy by consumers. Companies should therefore avoid relying solely on certified labels, and must instead provide complementary information; for example, explaining what the label guarantees, the issuing organisation, or how a labelled product differs from an unlabelled product. This information may be necessary at first because consumers are not always familiar with the meaning of certified labels (Temminghof, 2017). Even

when consumers are familiar with the label, they may overlook it if this additional information is missing, thus omitting its effect on a product's ethicality.

Finally, our results show that consumer ethical product choice is primarily driven by a product's individualistic value, which relates to selfish benefits such as taste, status or curiosity. Companies should therefore emphasise that high ethical standards, such as animal-friendly or organic production, can be an indicator of overall quality, superior taste or product safety. Additionally, they may also appeal to consumer feelings, making consumers proud for making the ethical choice or invoking happiness by using idealised images of farmers or happy families buying fair-trade or locally grown products. Another suitable strategy would be to present the ethical choice as one enhancing consumer status, for example by suggesting that energy-efficient cars or home appliances are the best one can buy and, thus, not for everyone. Furthermore, a product's ethicality can also be used as a cue to make consumers curious for more details, for example on the process behind recycled plastics or how pesticide-free food can help protect biodiversity. Lastly, ethical production can also increase value for money, for example by positioning environmentally friendly electric cars as more economic than gasoline-powered cars.

5.7. Limitations and future research

The reported results should be generalised with caution as the study was conducted in a single country, used one type of ethical product and one type of ethical issue; however, future studies may use the proposed conceptual framework in different situations. Another limitation stems from the use of a hypothetical situation with pictographic stimuli. To increase the external validity of our results, we would therefore recommend that a real-life (store) experiment be conducted. Furthermore, while our results suggest that neither stakeholder endorsement nor a positioning strategy emphasising the buyer's self-interest are by themselves effective in influencing consumer value perceptions, we assume

that this may be influenced by consumer (mis)trust. Future studies might address this issue by not only using a trustworthy product brand, but also by measuring consumer trust in the brand and the certified label. Finally, it was beyond the scope of our study to provide a comprehensive model exploring the differences between consumers (e.g., with different consumption patterns, attitudes towards the ethical product, stated issue importance) and their responses to different types of strategies (e.g., stakeholder endorsement vs. stakeholder involvement). This would be an interesting area for future research and would help companies to effectively market their ethical products.

5.8. Conclusion

This study revealed that consumer value perceptions and ethical product choice are influenced only when a positioning strategy emphasising the buyer's self-interest is aligned with a stakeholder endorsement. In addition to collaborating with stakeholders, companies should emphasise individualistic product benefits instead of solely focussing on ethical product benefits in their marketing strategies.





CHAPTER 6

Can marketing increase willingness to pay for animal welfare enhanced meat? Evidence from experimental auctions.

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Abstract

Consumer concern for animal welfare is currently not fully reflected in the market share of animal welfare enhanced meat. A possible solution is developing effective marketing strategies that can position animal welfare enhanced meat so that it appeals to consumer preferences. Encouraging evidence from existing research on positioning strategies for animal welfare enhanced meat employed experimental vignette studies that placed respondents in hypothetical situations. This study extends this work with a real-life experiment at point of purchase measuring consumer willingness to pay for animal welfare enhanced meat. It also studies how consumer attitudes, specifically ambivalence in how one feels towards eating meat, influence consumers' reactions to the positioning strategies. The study conducts experimental auctions with 101 participants from a Dutch university and measured participants' willingness to pay for different lunch meals with free-range chicken meat that manipulated two elements: the positioning strategy and a certified animal welfare label. Results indicate that all manipulations significantly increase consumer willingness to pay, with higher price premiums for animal-friendly certified label than for positioning strategy, and the combination of both elements generated the highest willingness to pay (without providing evidence for an interaction effect). We further found that consumers with conflicting feelings towards meat experience a weaker effect of their positive evaluations of product's value on willingness to pay. This implies that to maximize sales of animal welfare enhanced meat, companies should combine positioning strategies that emphasise appealing product benefits, such as curiosity, with certified labels that can support the claimed animal friendliness. Moreover, companies should keep in mind that ambivalence towards eating meat may weaken the effectiveness of marketing strategies.

6.1. Introduction

Understanding what drives consumers to purchase animal-friendly products is crucial to expand the market of animal welfare enhanced meat (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). So far, companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat seem to struggle in finding effective marketing strategies that stimulate consumers to switch from conventional meat to animal welfare enhanced meat (Carrington et al., 2014; Harvey & Hubbard, 2013a). Numerous surveys indicate that consumers find animal welfare important, that they look for labels that help them identify animal-friendly products and that they are willing to pay for products with higher animal welfare (Aschemann-Witzel & Zielke, 2017; Clark et al., 2017; European Commission, 2016; Packaged Facts, 2017). Despite these positive beliefs and attitudes, consumers still mainly opt for conventional meat instead of meat produced with higher animal welfare standards, such as free-range or organic (Harvey & Hubbard, 2013a; Sustainable Food News, 2016). In the Netherlands, for example, the market share in 2017 was only 14% for animal welfare enhanced beef and 19% for animal welfare enhanced poultry (Logatcheva et al., 2017), whereas 85% of Dutch consumers expressed that they are willing to pay more for animal-friendly products (European Commission, 2016). Companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat could therefore greatly benefit from research studying how marketing can help translate consumer concern and attitudes towards animal welfare into actual purchase behaviour.

At the same time, the effectiveness of marketing strategies for animal-friendly products is hindered by consumer attitudes. Negative events and information like the horsemeat scandal from 2013 are likely to create negative feelings about meat, which may lead to conflicting, or ambivalent attitudes towards meat (Berndsen & Van der Pligt, 2004; Sparks, Conner, James, Shepherd, & Povey, 2001). Ambivalent attitudes mean that consumers have simultaneously positive (e.g., tasty, high nutritional value) and negative beliefs about meat (e.g., unhealthy, causes animal suffering). Ambivalence has been found to weaken the translation of positive consumer attitudes to purchase intentions (Sparks et al., 2001), thus possibly presenting a challenge to marketing animal welfare enhanced meat.

The existing literature has identified two crucial elements of marketing strategies that increase consumer preference for animal welfare enhanced meat and, possibly, other food products. First, positioning strategies make animal-friendly products appealing and attractive through emphasizing benefits such as taste or curiosity, instead of emphasis on only the product's animal friendliness (van Riemsdijk, Ingenbleek, van der Veen, & van Trijp, 2019; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). This is necessary for a majority of consumers who find animal welfare important, but still prioritize personally relevant benefits, such as taste, health and price (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013a; Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000). Second, reliable certification is of particular importance to create trust in animal welfare claims because consumers cannot verify such claims themselves (Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014; Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017).

An important methodological limitation of the body of literature on marketing strategies for animal-friendly products is that empirical studies testing the effects of marketing instruments on consumer decisions commonly made use of experimental stimuli that placed respondents in hypothetical situations [so called vignette studies (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014)]. Because participants do not experience the consequences of their answers, these methods are more likely to induce participants to give socially desirable answers, particularly in case of product attributes with a social dimension, such as animal welfare (Olesen, Alfnes, Røra, & Kolstad, 2010). The socially desirable answers may result in overstating the importance of animal welfare or an over-estimation of their real willingness to pay (WTP) for animal-friendly products, also known as hypothetical bias (Carrington et al., 2010; Clark et al., 2017; Van Loo, Caputo, Nayga Jr, Meullenet, & Ricke, 2011). While previous research gives encouraging evidence that positioning strategies can increase consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice in hypothetical situations (van Riemsdijk et al., 2019), we still know very little about whether such strategies could actually make consumers willing to pay more for animal welfare enhanced meat at point of purchase.

This study aims to address this gap by testing the effects of marketing strategies, which use product positioning and certified label, in a more realistic context. By using a non-hypothetical context, where consumers actually have to pay for animal-friendly products, this study helps to overcome hypothetical bias and can therefore help reveal whether or not marketing strategies increase consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat at point of purchase. As a second contribution, the present study investigates the role of consumer ambivalence towards meat, i.e., the extent to which consumer holds both positive and negative feelings towards eating meat (Sparks et al., 2001), in the effectiveness of the marketing strategies on consumer WTP. We show that consumers with moderately ambivalent feelings about eating meat show less consistent behaviour, in that their positive perceptions of animal welfare enhanced meat lead to a lower marginal WTP for such meat as compared to consumers with non-ambivalent feelings.

In the remainder of this chapter, we introduce our conceptual framework and hypotheses by first reviewing consumers' perceptions of animal-friendly products, followed by discussing how marketing strategies can influence consumer perceptions and, thus, increase consumer WTP for animal-friendly products. Next, we discuss theoretical foundation of ambivalence towards meat and explain how experimental auctions can help accurately measure consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat, and how we used experimental auctions to test the hypothesised relationships. We conclude with the discussion of the results and a research agenda for companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat.

6.2. Theoretical background

6.2.1. Understanding consumer perceptions of animal-friendly products

When designing appealing marketing strategies, marketers need to understand consumer motives and perceptions of animal-friendly products. Existing research

has generally shown that while consumers find animal welfare important, the majority of consumers still prioritize personally relevant benefits, such as taste, health, product safety and price (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013a; Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000). Animal-friendly food choice in general, and meat choice in particular, typically presents consumers with a so called social dilemma because they must trade off animal welfare for other product benefits, such as price and (perceived) availability (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). A social dilemma reflects a situation when the (product) choice that maximizes one's short-term individual welfare negatively impacts long-term societal welfare (Messick & Brewer, 1983) and it is believed to be a major barrier for consumers to buy animal-friendly and other ethical products (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Griskevicius et al., 2012). To address this barrier, manufacturers of animal-friendly products (as well as policy makers or animal-interest organisations) may design campaigns that reinforce animal welfare with personally relevant benefits. In the Netherlands, where higher animal welfare standards are reflected in higher prices of animal-based food products, animal welfare enhanced meat can, for example, be positioned as healthier and tastier (Stadig & Tuytens, 2016).

Because consumers differ in their perceptions, attitudes and behaviour towards animal-friendly products, a number of studies has distinguished different consumer segments (Krystallis et al., 2012; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014; Vanhonacker et al., 2007). These studies have shown that socio-demographic factors, such as gender, education or presence of children, may partially explain the differences between consumer segments (Krystallis et al., 2012; Toma et al., 2012; Vanhonacker et al., 2007). Psychographic factors, such as values and beliefs in relation to animals, consumer lifestyles or personality characteristics are however suggested as more powerful explanations of these differences because they are closer related to choice behaviour (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014; Verain et al., 2012).

6.2.2. *Marketing strategies for animal-friendly products*

Marketing strategy refers to companies' decisions that have a major impact on creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging value with companies' customers and other stakeholders (Keefe, 2008), and it typically includes decisions pertaining to segmentation, target market selection and product positioning (Varadarajan, 2010). Literature dedicated to studying which marketing strategies effectively stimulate consumer animal-friendly product choice has identified several marketing strategies, which are particularly suitable for animal-friendly, and other ethical products (Cronin et al., 2011; Pelozo et al., 2013; Rex & Baumann, 2007; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011). These strategies typically focus on the following issues: enhancing consumer opportunity, i.e., by providing a broad and easily available assortment of animal-friendly products; facilitating consumer ability, i.e., by increasing awareness about animal welfare and providing trustworthy information through certified labels; and facilitating consumer motivation, i.e., by making animal-friendly products appealing and attractive through product positioning strategies (Ottman, 2017; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011).

Rather than considering each strategy to be an independent element, our research views each strategy to be a cornerstone necessary to increase the sales of animal-friendly products. First, marketers need to use positioning strategies to make animal-friendly products appealing and attractive through emphasizing personally relevant benefits such as taste or curiosity (van Riemsdijk et al., 2019; van Trijp & Fischer, 2011) to attract the majority of consumers who find animal welfare important, but still prioritize personally relevant benefits (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013a; Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000). Second, marketers need to use reliable certification to create trust in animal welfare claims because consumers cannot verify such claims themselves (Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014; Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017). Good availability and broad assortment are then preconditions for consumer purchase of animal-friendly products.

Latest research also suggests that marketers would benefit from using several strategies simultaneously (see Chapter 5 of this thesis) . The study presented in Chapter 5 has shown that to increase consumer animal-friendly product choice, positioning strategies, which are vital in increasing consumer motivation, need to be supported by certified labels, which facilitate consumer ability to distinguish animal-friendly products from the others. Since the study measured hypothetical product choice in an online experiment, it would be a logical next step to extend those results in a real-life situation to uncover if indeed positioning strategies that emphasise personally relevant benefits must be used together with trustworthy certified labels to effectively influence consumer purchase behaviour.

6.2.3. Ambivalence towards meat

Consumer perceptions and attitudes towards meat are greatly influenced by public information and events, such as horsemeat scandal, studies on the carcinogenicity of red and processed meat and companies' accusations of repackaging meat past its sell-by date. It is likely that such events create negative feelings about meat and, for some consumers, this may lead to conflicting attitudes towards meat (Berndsen & Van der Pligt, 2004). In the literature, such conflicting feelings or attitudes are referred to as ambivalence towards meat (Sparks et al., 2001). The extent in which a consumer believes that eating meat has benefits in terms of, for example nutritional value and tastiness, as well as disadvantages in terms of, for example, unhealthiness, environmental problems and the moral aspects of killing animals defines how much a consumer is ambivalent towards meat (Berndsen & Van der Pligt, 2004).

Ambivalence has been found to influence the effect of attitudes on behavioural intentions in consumer meat choice (Sparks et al., 2001), also referred to as meat paradox (Buttler & Walther, 2018). Consumers with higher levels of ambivalence, i.e., those who hold positive as well as negative feelings towards eating meat, showed a weaker relationship between their attitudes and intentions

related to meat choice (Sparks et al., 2001), reduced meat consumption (Berndsen & Van der Pligt, 2004) and intentions to reduce their future meat consumption (Berndsen & Van der Pligt, 2004). The literature distinguishes between two types of ambivalence towards meat: latent and felt ambivalence (Berndsen & Van der Pligt, 2004). While latent ambivalence assumes the existence of positive as well as negative evaluations in one's memory (Kaplan, 1972), it can lead to feelings of discomfort when brought to one's attention in a decision-making context. This feeling of discomfort is conceptualized as felt ambivalence (Jamieson, 1988).

Understanding how ambivalence influences consumer behaviour is important for at least two reasons. First, it may help increase consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice and/or decrease overall meat consumption. Second, it may help companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat to segment their customer base. Despite its potential, ambivalence has hardly been studied in the current literature (Buttlar & Walther, 2018).

6.2.4. Willingness to pay

Willingness to pay refers to the price premium that an individual is willing to pay to obtain a wanted benefit, such as animal welfare, or to avoid an unwanted characteristic, such as unhealthy ingredients (Clark et al., 2017; Hanley, Shogren, & White, 2013). Consumers' WTP is thus a measure of consumer purchase behaviour and it is believed to reflect the total perceived value of the product (Li, Li, & Kambele, 2012; Netemeyer et al., 2004). An accurate appraisal of consumer WTP for animal welfare is critical to effectively market animal-friendly products in that it helps to develop new products, design promotional strategies and set up pricing tactics (Braidert, Hahsler, & Reutterer, 2006; Miller, Hofstetter, Krohmer, & Zhang, 2011). Studies measuring consumer WTP for animal welfare indicated a small positive WTP for animal welfare (for a review, see Clark et al., 2017) which varies by a number of factors, such as animal type, product type and region. For example, Clark et al. (2017) conclude that consumers are willing to pay most for the welfare of beef cows, and the least for the welfare of pigs; and

that consumers in Southern Europe are willing to pay more for animal welfare than consumers in Northern Europe.

An accurate estimation of consumer WTP has been an important objective of many marketing studies (Miller et al., 2011), which has logically resulted in a huge variety of techniques and methods that are used to test consumer WTP (for a review, see Breidert et al., 2006). The techniques can be classified along several dimensions, of which we discuss the three most important ones. First, while some methods, such as market observations or experiments use *revealed preferences*, other, such as surveys, use *stated preferences* (Breidert et al., 2006). Second, the stated preference methods can either *directly* ask respondents to indicate their WTP, or they can *indirectly* estimate consumer WTP from their rankings or ratings of different products (Breidert et al., 2006). Finally, while some methods measure consumers' *hypothetical* WTP, other use *non-hypothetical* (also called actual or incentive-aligned) WTP, in which participants are obliged to purchase the product if they claim that they are willing to pay the price (Miller et al., 2011). As we will explain later, we will use experimental auctions in this study, which measure non-hypothetical WTP, using direct measurement of stated preferences.

While existing research shows that, generally, consumers are willing to pay for animal welfare (for a review, see Clark et al., 2017), it provides little guidance for companies on how to market their animal-friendly products to increase consumer WTP. Few exceptions are studies measuring how consumer WTP for animal welfare increases when supported by a certified label (e.g., Olesen et al., 2010; Olynk, Tonsor, & Wolf, 2010) or studies linking [comparing] WTP for animal welfare to [WTP for] other product attributes, such as taste and food safety (e.g., Heid & Hamm, 2013; Koistinen et al., 2013). To advance our understanding on how marketing can increase consumer WTP for animal welfare, the present study tests the hypothesized relationships that we present in the next section.

6.3. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

The conceptual framework of this study is depicted in Figure 6.1. The framework corresponds to the two aims of this study. First, it draws relationships between marketing strategy and WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat (H1-H3). Second, it places ambivalence towards meat in the framework, and to do so it also includes customer value as a concept (H4-H5). As our research design does not allow to test the mediating effect of total perceived value between marketing strategies and consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat, we depicted these relations with dashed arrows.

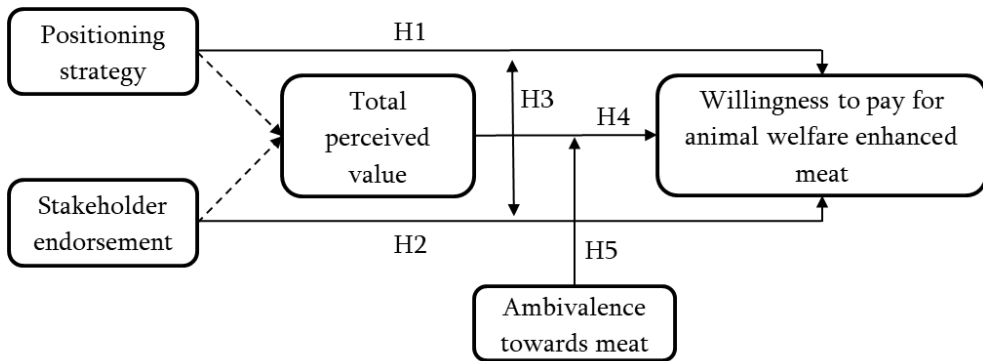


Figure 6.1. Conceptual model.

6.3.1. Increasing consumer WTP with marketing strategies

Consumers' WTP is seen in the consumer behaviour literature as a measure of a broader construct that reflects consumer purchase behaviour (Breidert et al., 2006). WTP is defined as the price premium that a consumer is willing to pay to obtain a certain benefit, such as taste, good feeling or animal welfare (Clark et al., 2017; Hanley et al., 2013). A logical starting point for marketers who want to increase consumer WTP for their products is therefore to identify which benefits consumers find the most important when buying animal-based food. Consistently, existing research finds that the majority of consumers prioritize

personally relevant benefits, such as taste, health, quality and safety (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013a; Harper & Makatouni, 2002; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014; Verbeke & Viaene, 2000). Animal welfare and other sustainability-related benefits are also important for most consumers, but they are not prioritized over personally relevant benefits (Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). This means that consumers are willing to pay more for personally relevant benefits such as taste and healthiness than for animal welfare. If consumers thus believe that animal-friendly food offers personally relevant benefits, this will translate in WTP for these products. To communicate personally relevant benefits, marketers can use positioning strategies that emphasise these benefits, for example, by claiming that animal-friendly dairy is tastier than regular dairy or that animal welfare enhanced meat is of higher quality than regular meat. Thus far, to our knowledge, no research has tested whether such positioning claims increase consumer WTP, but our previous research (Chapter 4 and 5 of this thesis) suggest that such effects may exist. We thus hypothesize:

H1: Positioning strategy increases consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat.

Next to the positioning strategies, stakeholder endorsement may be another powerful tool that can increase consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat. In the food category, stakeholder endorsement is typically communicated with a third-party certified label, such as an animal welfare label (e.g., Animal Welfare Approved), a fair-trade label (e.g., Max Havelaar) or a general quality label (e.g., EU CE marking). Research has shown that certified labels can increase the trustworthiness of the product and its claims (Janssen & Hamm, 2012; Noblet & Teisl, 2015). While certified labels can potentially guarantee the claimed benefit related to a wide range of product attributes, they are particularly valuable for so called credence attributes that consumers cannot verify themselves, as opposed to search or experience attributes (Caswell & Mojduszka, 1996; Olynk et al., 2010). By making consumers certain that the product offers the claimed benefits, certified labels are likely to increase the overall value perceptions of the product, which may encourage product purchase.

The value of animal welfare certified labels has been studied for several product categories, for example meat, fish and dairy (e.g., Olesen et al., 2010; Olynk et al., 2010). These studies show that certified labels endorsing the products' animal friendliness are a potentially powerful tool to increase consumer WTP for animal-friendly products. In the present study, stakeholder endorsement will be communicated with a trustworthy animal welfare label, so we expect a similar effect:

H2: Stakeholder endorsement increases consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat.

Finally, we also expect that the two elements of marketing strategy – positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement – may, if used in combination, further boost consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat. Literature on stakeholder marketing suggests that if the stakeholder is a reputable and trustworthy third-party organisation, stakeholder endorsement may increase the effectiveness of a positioning strategy (Du et al., 2007; Urde & Koch, 2014). This effect can occur because consumers may assume that a reputable and trustworthy organisation would only endorse a product if all the product's claims (including claims used for the positioning strategy) were legitimate. Stakeholder endorsement has been tested in the context of sustainable dairy (Du et al., 2007) and animal welfare enhanced meat (Chapter 5 of this thesis). The study of Du et al. (2007) concluded that a strategy emphasizing products' ethical benefits with no further reference to functional benefits also increased consumer functional value perceptions. Similarly, the study presented in Chapter 5 of this thesis shows that stakeholder endorsement and positioning strategy emphasizing personally relevant benefits strengthen each other in influencing consumer purchase intentions. While these studies made use of experimental vignettes that placed respondents in hypothetical situations, we expect that their results will also

extend to non-hypothetical situations, and to consumer WTP, since WTP is also a measure of consumer purchase behaviour. We thus hypothesize:

H3: Positioning strategy interacts with stakeholder endorsement, such that when used together, their effect on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat is stronger than when used individually.

6.3.2. Total perceived value and ambivalence towards meat

To test the effect of ambivalence, we include total perceived value in our model. If companies want to persuade consumers to buy animal-friendly products, they need to increase the total perceived value of such products (sometimes called utility) (Hellier et al., 2003). Total perceived value has been found to predict a number of important inter-related behavioural outcomes, such as purchase intentions, consumer product choice, consumer WTP or consumer word-of-mouth (Hellier et al., 2003; Vinhas Da Silva & Faridah Syed Alwi, 2006) and is therefore a central concept in our conceptual model (see Figure 6.1.). Total perceived value is a multidimensional construct that includes various types of product benefits in relation to the perceived costs (Holbrook, 1999). The existing literature proposed various taxonomies of total perceived value (for reviews, see Holbrook, 1999; Smith & Colgate, 2007), which generally depend on product category and/or purchase situation (Smith & Colgate, 2007). For animal welfare enhanced meat, the total perceived value can be classified into two groups of particular relevance: individualistic value and ethical value. This classification reflects the social dilemma typical for animal welfare enhanced meat choice, in which consumers must trade off their individual welfare for animal welfare (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Griskevicius et al., 2012). Hence, consumers who wish to maximize the *ethical value*, i.e., the capacity to contribute to the improvement of public welfare in general, and animal welfare in particular (see Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006), must give up (some of) the *individualistic value*, which serves their own welfare. For animal welfare enhanced meat, the individualistic value typically includes the following sub-categories (van Riemsdijk et al., 2019):

functional, which refers to the functional quality and performance; *emotional*, which refers to the product's capacity to arouse consumer feelings; *monetary*, which refers to the value for money; and *epistemic*, which refers to a product's capacity to arouse curiosity (Sheth et al., 1991; Smith & Colgate, 2007).

Total perceived value has been recognized as the key driver of consumer purchase behaviour in general (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Woodall, 2003), and animal-friendly purchase behaviour in particular (Heerwagen et al., 2013; van Riemsdijk et al., 2019; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). With regards to consumer WTP as a specific measure of consumer purchase behaviour, authors generally agree that total perceived value is an important predictor of consumer WTP² (Ajzen, Rosenthal, & Brown, 2000; Li et al., 2012; Netemeyer et al., 2004). We thus hypothesise:

H4: Total perceived value has a positive effect on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat.

Ambivalence towards meat refers to the existence of conflicting attitudes or feelings towards meat (Sparks et al., 2001). Ambivalence towards meat is caused by the existence of negative issues stemming from meat consumption, such as moral issues due to the suffering of animals, ecological issues and health issues, and at the same time the existence of positive effects of eating meat, such as sensory pleasure and tradition (Buttlar & Walther, 2018). Consumers who are highly ambivalent hold positive as well as negative feelings towards meat, while those who are not ambivalent (prevalingly) hold only one type of feelings (Sparks et al., 2001). Consumers who prevalingly hold negative feelings towards meat are typically non-omnivores, who thus experience no inner conflict because they do not eat meat (Buttlar & Walther, 2018). Consumers who prevalingly hold positive feelings towards meat also arguably experience no inner conflict because their meat choice is driven by positive attitudes towards meat. Consumers with highly ambivalent feelings, however, typically experience an inner conflict also called the meat paradox (Buttlar & Walther, 2018). The meat

² Some studies (e.g., Demirgüneş, 2015), however, suggest that the relationship between total perceived value is mediated by other constructs, such as customer satisfaction.

paradox essentially refers to a weak, or inconsistent, effect of ambivalent consumer attitudes on consumer behaviour. In the context of product choice, this effect has been observed as a relatively weak effect of consumers' attitudes towards the product on consumer purchase intentions (Sparks et al., 2001). In other words, Sparks et al. (2001) have found that consumers with higher levels of ambivalence showed a weaker relationship between their attitudes and intentions related to meat choice than consumers with lower levels of ambivalence. Since total perceived value can be viewed as a measure of consumer attitudes and WTP as a measure of purchase intention (Aaker, 1996; Netemeyer et al., 2004), we expect ambivalence to have a similar effect on these constructs. Specifically, we expect that ambivalence towards meat will weaken the effect of consumers' value perceptions on their WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat. We thus hypothesize:

H5: Ambivalence towards meat moderates the effect of total perceived value on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat so the less consumer is ambivalent towards meat, the stronger the effect.

6.4. Methods

Experimental auctions are among the most popular methods to measure consumer WTP (Clark et al., 2017) and they have been increasingly popular to measure WTP for credence attributes, such as animal welfare (Hobbs, Bailey, Dickinson, & Haghiri, 2005). One of the main advantages of experimental auctions is that they are incentive-aligned, where real money is exchanged for actual products, so they encourage participants to bid exactly their WTP (Lusk & Shogren, 2007). Research suggests that incentive-aligned methods are preferred to non-incentive-aligned (hypothetical) methods because they make participants more price sensitive (Miller et al., 2011). By using real money, which consumers have to pay for products on the basis of their answers, experimental auctions help decrease hypothetical bias because consumers are less likely to give socially desirable answers (Van Loo et al., 2011).

Originally, experimental auctions have used the procedure called Vickrey n^{th} -price auction (Grunert et al., 2009; Vickrey, 1961). In the Vickrey n^{th} -price auction, group sessions are used to make participants compete for a product, as the product is typically sold to the highest bidder. This procedure is different to actual purchase behaviour, such as when consumers shop for food, as there is typically sufficient supply for all shoppers rather than just one or few products being available to the highest bidders (Grunert et al., 2009). Moreover, if consumers are confronted with the bids of others and have to compete for a product, their competitiveness can distort their WTP. Therefore, the lottery procedure developed by Becker, DeGroot and Marschak (1964) (BDM) is more suitable for simulating an actual shopping for food (Grunert et al., 2009).

In the BDM procedure, similarly to the Vickrey auctions, each participant submits a sealed bid for the product(s). Rather than selling the product to the highest bidder, in the BDM procedure, the actual price to be paid is randomly determined, and all participants who bid at or above the actual price (are allowed to) buy the product for its actual price. The BDM procedure therefore encourages participants to bid exactly their WTP (Grunert et al., 2009) and generates the most similar WTP (compared to open-ended questions, choice-based conjoint and incentive-aligned choice-based conjoint) to the real purchase data (Miller et al., 2011). Because BDM generates WTP very similar to the real purchase data and its procedure is comparable to actual food purchases, we use the BDM procedure in our study.

6.4.1. Design

The hypothesized relationships were tested in a non-hypothetical experiment (N = 101) conducted in the Netherlands. The participants were presented lunch meals with chicken meat, specifically wraps with crispy chicken meat, as these present a common lunch meal for the participants in our sample. Chicken meat has been selected because it is, together with beef and pork, one of the most consumed types of meat by Dutch consumers (Dagevos et al., 2012; Terluin et al.,

2017). Moreover, while certain consumers may avoid eating beef or pork due to their religion, most non-vegetarian consumers typically eat chicken meat.

We manipulated positioning strategy (PS) and certified label (CL) of the chicken meat in a 2x2 within-subjects design; and also included a reference product. This resulted in 5 products: reference, control (no PS / no CL), positioned (yes PS / no CL), certified (no PS / yes CL) and certified positioned (yes PS / yes CL). Figure 6.2. provides an overview of the different lunch meals.

6.4.2. Sample

124 adult consumers who eat chicken meat participated in the experiment. Data were collected during 4 weeks in November and December 2018 at Wageningen University (NL) and the participants were recruited by the researchers involved in this study. The participants voluntarily signed up online, via e-mail or face-to-face and received a lunch at the University canteen for their participation. Since the aim of the study was to measure participants' WTP for improved animal welfare, participants had to be familiar enough with the situation of social dilemma that is characteristic for animal-friendly food choice (van Riemdsdijk, Ingenbleek, van Trijp, & van der Veen, 2017; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). We therefore restricted our study to participants who lived in the Netherlands for at least 3 years, resulting in a sample of 101 participants. Almost all participants (99%) were University students. The mean age of the participants was 22 years, ranging from 18 to 32 years, and 28% were men.

6.4.3. Stimuli

The participants were presented with five products, each complemented with a short product description (see Figure 6.2. for all product descriptions). First product, labelled as regular wrap, contained a regular chicken meat with no improved animal welfare. The price of the regular wrap was 3,50 Euro, equal to

the price of the crispy chicken wrap sold at the university canteen at the time of the experiment. Next to the regular wrap, participants were presented with four alternative wraps (A, B, C and D), which all contained an animal welfare enhanced (free-range) chicken meat of Dutch origin. The alternative wraps were manipulated in a 2x2 design, which manipulated positioning strategy (yes/no) and certified animal welfare label (yes/no).

The positioning strategy aimed to increase the epistemic value, i.e., curiosity, since curiosity is one of the influential motives driving animal welfare enhanced meat choice (Hughner et al., 2007; van Riemsdijk et al., 2019). Positioning strategy thus emphasises that the chicken has lived in an innovative, free-range animal welfare enhanced husbandry system which created a natural environment for the animals, provoking curiosity in the consumer. The selected certified label is also known as the better-life label, issued by The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, which is considered a well-known and trustworthy label by the Dutch consumers (Temminghof, 2017). The certified label showed two out of a maximum three better-life stars, which typically refer to free-range husbandry systems for farm animals.

Next to the explanation of the manipulated product attributes (certified label and/or innovative husbandry system), the information presented with alternatives A, B, C and D included the free-range character and the Dutch origin of the meat, but excluded the product price, as we aimed to measure consumer WTP for these products. The order of the alternative wraps was changed several times to eliminate order effects (Mantonakis, Rodero, Lesschaeve, & Hastie, 2009). A pre-test study (N = 10) helped to ensure that the stimuli, the rules of the experimental auctions and the questions in the questionnaire were clear.



		POSITIONING STRATEGY	
		NO	YES
STAKEHOLDER ENDORSEMENT	NO	<p>Crispy chicken wrap control</p> <p>With free-range chicken meat of Dutch origin.</p>	<p>Crispy chicken wrap positioned</p> <p>With free-range chicken meat of Dutch origin. Innovative: the chicken lived in an innovative animal welfare enhanced chicken barn with a natural environment for the animals.</p>
	YES	<p>Crispy chicken wrap certified</p> <p>With free-range chicken meat of Dutch origin. Labelled with 2 better-life stars certified by the Dutch animal protection organization, which guarantees a better life with more living space and a free access to the outdoors for the animals.</p> 	<p>Crispy chicken wrap reference</p> <p>With chicken meat of Dutch origin. Price: 3,50 Euro</p> <p>Crispy chicken wrap certified positioned</p> <p>With free-range chicken meat of Dutch origin. Innovative: the chicken lived in an innovative animal welfare enhanced chicken barn with a natural environment for the animals. Labelled with 2 better-life stars certified by the Dutch animal protection organization, which guarantees a better life with more living space and a free access to the outdoors for the animals.</p> 

Figure 6.2. Experimental study design indicating all experimental stimuli.

6.4.4. *The BDM procedure*

Experimental auctions using the BDM procedure (Becker et al., 1964) were organized to collect data as the BDM procedure best simulates shopping for food (Grunert et al., 2009). Participants were invited to join a study measuring how people make choices when buying food. The experiment took 25 minutes on average and the participants received a 7,50 Euro voucher to buy lunch at the university canteen after finishing the experiment. While the participants made their choices independently, several participants could participate at the same time.

First, participants were explained that their answers have actual consequences on the type of products they will receive as part of their lunch and it is therefore in their best interest to be absolutely honest.

Second, we explained the rules of experimental auctions. One rule was that they would get a pre-specified lunch meal as part of their lunch. Another rule was that they could exchange the regular lunch meal for an alternative if they are willing to pay the actual price for the alternative product. The price of the alternative product would only be known to them at the end of the experiment, so they were encouraged to write down exact their WTP for each alternative. We also explained that at the end, only one alternative product is going to be available (next to the regular product), so they must compare each alternative product to the regular product rather than the different alternative products to each other. This prevented participants to choose one alternative product, and provide their WTP for this alternative only, so we could obtain participants' WTP for all alternatives.

Third, to ensure that participants understand the rules and the procedure, a practice round with another product type (orange juice) was used. Participants were asked to write down how much they would be willing to pay extra for an alternative orange juice (fair-trade labelled or in a bottle from recycled plastic). We then revealed that only the fair-trade alternative is available, and randomly determined the price for this alternative. Participants were then told which

orange juice they would get (regular or fair-trade), if they were satisfied with their product and the price they had to pay. After having answered participant's questions, the experimental auction with the lunch meals could start.

Fourth, participants were told that they receive wraps with crispy chicken meat as part of their lunch. They were given the opportunity to exchange the regular wrap for an alternative wrap (A, B, C and D) if they are willing to pay the actual price for the alternative wrap. They could inspect all alternatives and were encouraged to carefully read the product descriptions. Fifth, participants wrote down their WTP for all alternative wraps. Sixth, they completed a pen-and-paper questionnaire.

Finally, at the end of each experiment, participants randomly drew the actual price for the available alternative wrap, which was the certified free-range wrap. If participant's WTP for the certified wrap was at or above the actual price, he/she got the certified wrap for the actual price, and the remaining value on a voucher to buy products of his/her choice. Otherwise, the participant got the regular wrap and the remaining value (4 Euro) to buy other products.

6.4.5. Questionnaire

The questionnaire began with questions about participant's past animal-friendly shopping behaviour with regards to different categories of animal-based food (meat, eggs, milk), internal reference price for a regular crispy chicken meat wrap, questions measuring participant's value perceptions of the wrap with certified positioning, ambivalence towards meat, attitudes towards animal welfare, meat consumption, familiarity with the better-life certified label and concluded with classification questions.

6.4.5.1. Measures

Total perceived value is a formative construct (Diamantopoulos, Riefler, & Roth, 2008), with dimensions depending on the type of product (Peloza & Shang, 2011). For animal welfare enhanced meat, the relevant dimensions are functional (tastiness), emotional (good feeling), ethical (animal welfare) and epistemic value (curiosity) (Grunert et al., 2004; Hughner et al., 2007; van Riemsdijk et al., 2019). Monetary value, which refers to the value for money, has not been included because the products we presented without the prices, and participants could thus not evaluate the value for money. Moreover, the effect of monetary value on consumer WTP is arguably different than those of other value perceptions, since when consumers evaluate a product as offering a good value for money, they may not be willing to pay more for this product (see also Kalra & Goodstein, 1998). The role of social value is unclear, as some studies (e.g., Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006, tested with organic dairy) conclude that social acceptance is influential in predicting consumer animal-friendly purchase intentions, while other (e.g., van Riemsdijk et al., 2019, tested with free-range meat) show that it is not. As part of the social value is captured in the ethical value construct, in that contribution to the animal welfare is considered to be a socially desirable behaviour (Ingenbleek et al., 2012), we did not include social value as a separate construct. Total perceived value was measured with five items adapted from van Riemsdijk et al. (2019) and Brown and Dacin (1997), of which functional, emotional and epistemic value were measured with one item each and ethical value with two items to achieve a more balanced ratio between individualistic and ethical value. Participants compared two wraps, namely the control and the certified positioned, on a 7-point scale, where the lowest value refers to the control wrap being much better, while the highest value refers to the certified positioned wrap being much better. The total perceived value was calculated as the average of the five items.

Ambivalence towards meat was measured with 5 items adapted from Berndsen and Van der Pligt (2004). The items measured felt ambivalence with 3 questions and 2 statements on a 7-point scale, where the lowest value refers to participant

feeling no ambivalence towards meat, while the highest value refers to participant feeling maximum ambivalence, i.e., conflicting feelings, towards meat. Since our study confronts participants with various types of meat which differ in their level of animal welfare, felt ambivalence rather than latent ambivalence is a more suitable measure (see also Berndsen & Van der Pligt, 2004). The ambivalence towards meat was calculated as the average of the five items. Reliability analysis showed that the five items yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .884, suggesting that the items constituted a reliable measure of ambivalence towards meat.

6.5. Results

6.5.1. Willingness to pay for animal welfare

To examine the effects of positioning strategy and certified label, we performed a detailed analysis of consumer WTP for the animal welfare enhanced wraps (see Figure 6.3. for the mean values and Graph 6.1. for sample distribution). We could observe a small positive WTP for animal welfare only, $M = 0.14$ Euro, 95% CI [0.11, 0.17], which translates to 4% price premium that, on average, consumers are willing to pay on top of the regular wrap, which costs 3.50 Euro. As our data further show, half of the participants is willing to pay a maximum of 0.10 Euro, and almost 40% of our sample is not willing to pay extra for animal welfare.

Positioning strategy adds more value to the animal welfare enhanced meat, with an average WTP of 0.27 Euro, 95% CI [0.22, 0.31], which translates to 7.6% price premium that, on average, consumers are willing to pay on top of the regular wrap. Additional analyses show that almost 25% of the participants is not willing to pay extra for positioning strategy, and that half of them is willing to pay a maximum of 0.20 Euro.

		<i>POSITIONING STRATEGY</i>	
		<i>NO</i>	<i>YES</i>
<i>STAKEHOLDER ENDORSEMENT</i>	<i>NO</i>	Crispy chicken wrap <i>control</i> WTP = €3.64 [3.61, 3.67]	Crispy chicken wrap <i>positioned</i> WTP = €3.77 [3.72, 3.81]
	<i>YES</i>	Crispy chicken wrap <i>certified</i> WTP = €3.84 [3.79, 3.88]	Crispy chicken wrap <i>certified positioned</i> WTP = €3.96 [3.90, 4.02]

Crispy chicken wrap
reference
Price: €3,50

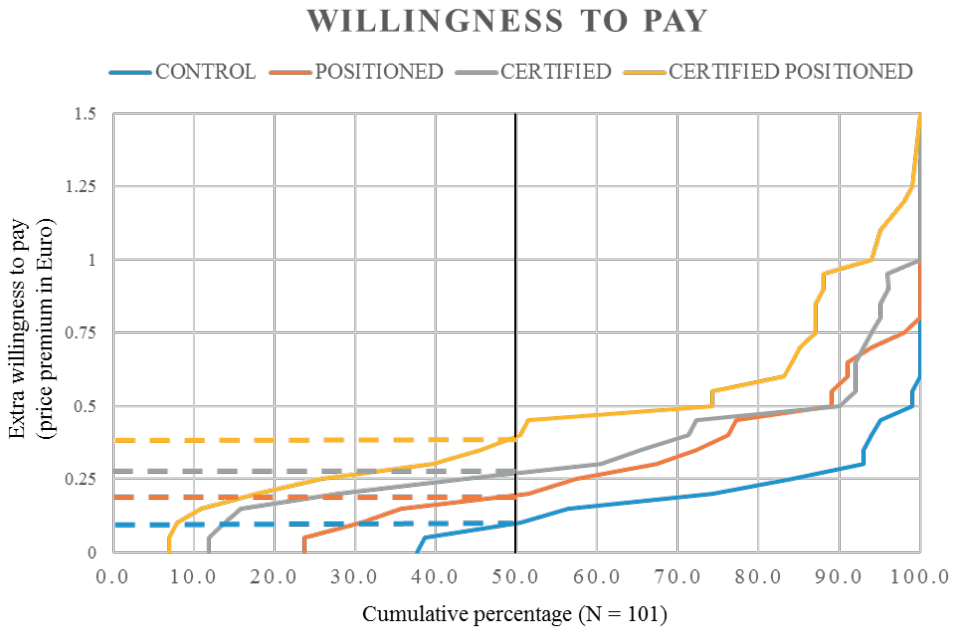
Note: WTP refers to mean total willingness to pay for the product (N = 101). Values in square brackets represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 6.3. Results of willingness to pay for animal welfare enhanced wraps.

The certified label elicits a slightly higher willingness to pay than positioning strategy, M = 0.34 Euro, 95% CI [0.29, 0.38], which translates to 9,6% price premium that, on average, consumers are willing to pay on top of the regular wrap. Only 12% of our sample reports not to be willing to pay extra for the certified label, and half of the participants is willing to pay a maximum of 0.30 Euro.

Finally, the certified positioning yields the highest WTP, M = 0.46 Euro, 95% CI [0.40, 0.52], which translates to a 13.2% premium that consumers, on average, are willing to pay for a wrap with certified free-range chicken meat produced in an innovative husbandry system compared to a wrap with conventional chicken meat. The certified positioning yields the highest median value of all

manipulations, 0.40 Euro, and 93% of our sample is willing to pay extra for the product with certified positioning.



Graph 6.1. Distribution of participants' willingness to pay for animal welfare enhanced wraps.

6.5.2. Hypotheses testing

A repeated-measures ANOVA was used to test the effects of positioning strategy (H1), stakeholder endorsement (H2) and their interaction (H3) on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat in our within-subjects design. A simple linear regression was used to analyse the effect of total perceived value (H4) as well as the interaction between total perceived value and ambivalence towards meat (H5) on WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat, using standardised scores for each variable. All analyses were run in SPSS Statistics 23 and their results are presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. Parameters and effect sizes of hypothesized relationships.

Relationship		Parameter	Significance ^a
Repeated-measures ANOVA		<i>F-statistics (Pillai's trace)</i>	
H1	Positioning strategy → WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat	.574	.000
H2	Stakeholder endorsement → WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat	.332	.000
H3	Positioning strategy * stakeholder endorsement → WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat	.001	.789
<i>Model F(1, 100) = 249.28, p < .001</i>			
Simple linear regression		<i>b</i>	
H4	Total perceived value → WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat	0.207	.027 ^a
	Ambivalence → WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat	0.048	.637
H5	Total perceived value * ambivalence → WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat	-0.192	.035 ^a
<i>Model F(3, 97) = 2.27, p = .085</i>			

^a one-tailed significance values

Hypothesis 1 predicted that positioning strategy has a positive effect on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat. Our results support this hypothesis, as a repeated-measures ANOVA, with Pillai's trace, showed that positioning strategy significantly increases consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat ($V = .574, F(1, 100) = 135.000, p < .001$).

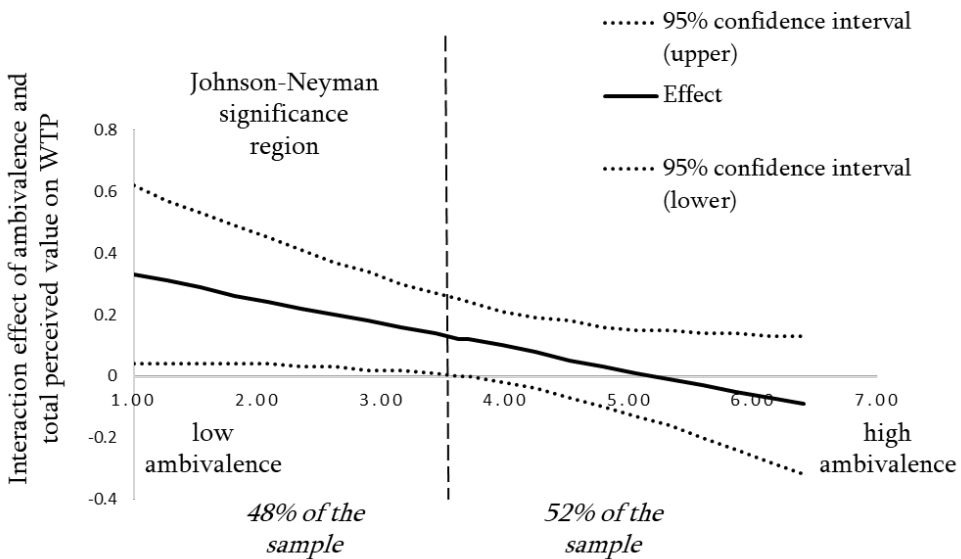
Hypothesis 2 predicted that stakeholder endorsement has a positive effect on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat. Our results support this hypothesis, showing that stakeholder endorsement significantly increases consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat ($V = .332$, $F(1, 100) = 49.643$, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis 3 predicted that positioning strategy interacts with stakeholder endorsement, such that when used together, their effect on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat is stronger than when used individually. Our results did not support this hypothesis, showing no significant interaction effect ($V = .001$, $F(1, 100) = 0.072$, $p = .789$). As shown in Figure 6.3., although the combination of positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement generated the highest WTP, this presented a direct cumulative effect of both elements rather than an interaction effect.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that total perceived value has a positive effect on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat. A simple linear regression, including total perceived value, ambivalence towards meat and their interaction in the model, showed that total perceived value significantly increases consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat ($b = 0.207$, $p = .027$), thus supporting Hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that ambivalence towards meat moderates the effect of total perceived value on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat, so the less ambivalent a consumer is towards meat, the stronger the effect. Our results show that there is a significant interaction effect ($b = -0.192$, $p = .035$) on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat. This provides support for Hypothesis 5, showing that ambivalence towards meat moderates the effect of total perceived value on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat in that the more ambivalent consumer is towards meat, the weaker the effect. To further explore whether this effect occurs for all values of ambivalence, we performed a floodlight analysis as advised by Spiller, Fitzsimons, Lynch Jr and McClelland (2013) that identified Johnson-Neyman significance regions between which the effect is significant at $p = .05$ (see Graph 6.2.). These significance

regions refer to values between 1 and 3.62, on a 7-point scale where the lowest values (1) refer to no ambivalence at all and the highest value (7) to maximum ambivalence. Overall, our results thus provide partial support for Hypothesis 5 in that ambivalence towards meat attenuates the effect of total perceived value on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat, but this effect is restricted to consumers who experience no to moderate ambivalence towards meat.



Graph 6.2. The interaction effect of ambivalence towards meat and total perceived value on consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat.

6.6. Discussion

This study investigated how marketing strategies using product positioning and stakeholder endorsement increase consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat, and how consumer ambivalence towards meat interacts with consumer value perceptions in influencing consumer WTP. Our results reveal that both a positioning strategy that arouses curiosity and an animal welfare certified label

directly increase consumer WTP. Consumers are willing to pay 0.20 Euro on average (almost 6%) for certified label and 0.13 Euro (almost 4%) for a new, innovative husbandry system (on top of the 4% that they are willing to pay extra for animal welfare). Contrary to our predictions, the two elements do not reinforce each other. Furthermore, our findings suggest that ambivalence towards meat can present a challenge to increasing consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice. Our results show that consumers with moderately ambivalent feelings about eating meat show less consistent behaviour in that their positive perceptions of animal welfare enhanced meat lead to a lower marginal WTP for such meat as compared to consumers with non-ambivalent feelings.

If we compare our findings on consumer WTP for animal welfare (i.e. the WTP for the free-range meat without marketing strategy), the results show some consistency with recent results from a special Eurobarometer, a large scale European survey with more than 27 thousand participants (European Commission, 2016). According to our data, 62% of consumers is willing to pay extra for animal welfare enhanced meat (Eurobarometer reports 59% as EU average, but 85% in the Netherlands), with 37% reporting a maximum of 6% price premium (Eurobarometer reports that 35% of EU/Dutch consumers is willing to pay 5% extra). The differences can be explained by using different methodologies (Eurobarometer measured hypothetical WTP), population (Eurobarometer used representative sample) and specificity (Eurobarometer measured WTP for non-specified animal-friendly products, and with non-specified elements, such as certified labels). Our study used experimental auctions where participants had to pay for the products. This approach helped to minimize social desirability bias, as participants are likely to give honest answers if their answers have consequences on the products that they will consume and the price that they must pay for these products. In that respect, our findings confirm that consumers are likely to pay more for animal-friendly products, but, importantly, they need encouragement in the form of positioning strategies and certified labels to really do so. This conclusion leads to important implications.

6.7. Implications

For policy makers, the findings imply that WTP for animal welfare is unlikely to emerge all by itself. As consumers need some help from marketers to pay more for animal-friendly products, policy makers should engage in partnerships with retailers and brand producers to materialize the latent demand for animal-friendly products. One concrete action that policy makers can do to encourage companies to invest in the marketing of their products, is to conduct a large national-level survey that identifies the market segments and their associated WTP for animal-friendly products if they would be supported by positioning strategies and certified labels. This would reduce the risks for companies associated with investments in their marketing strategies. In countries that lack a strong infrastructure for animal welfare certification, policy makers may also develop the organization for certified labels so that the industry can build on labels that are trusted by the general public.

Our results also provide companies with valuable and reliable insights on how to market their animal welfare enhanced meat, i.e. which elements of marketing strategy drive consumers to pay the highest price. They suggest that companies may use each element on its own considering its unique contribution to consumer WTP. Essentially, the results of the current study are encouraging for the companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat, since they show that even small changes, such as adding a certified label, can considerably increase consumer WTP. To boost consumer WTP even further, companies could combine different strategies. This implies that to maximize sales of animal welfare enhanced meat, companies may combine positioning strategies that emphasise appealing product benefits, such as curiosity, with certified labels that can support the claimed animal friendliness. However, also in countries where animal welfare labels are absent, companies can already increase the WTP for animal-friendly products if they position their products more as personally relevant.

The increasing ambivalence towards meat may present a challenge to companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat. Currently, NGO's, media, but also

governments create campaigns that aim to encourage consumers to decrease their meat consumption, i.e., by emphasizing negative issues associated with meat, such as unhealthiness, animal welfare and environmental consequences. These campaigns, while certainly addressing an important issue, may also increase consumer ambivalence towards meat, which translates in weak relationships between perceived value and WTP (and arguably purchase intention) for meat. This suggests that even when companies manage to position animal welfare enhanced meat as offering higher perceived value, the increase in value will not fully translate into consumer WTP for such meat, eventually pushing the prices of animal welfare enhanced meat downward. Since consumers with ambivalent feelings are arguably those who are highly concerned about animal welfare (yet unlikely to abandon all meat products from their diets), who are the target market for animal welfare enhanced meat, this may present a threat to the the growth of the market for animal welfare enhanced meat. The solution to this problem is not straightforward, since governments are likely to further promote healthy diets, which include eating less meat. As the first step, however, governments could investigate the side effects, e.g., in terms of discouraging consumers to buy animal welfare enhanced meat, in the development of future meat campaigns.

An important remaining question is whether the price premium that consumers are willing to pay is proportional to the additional costs of animal-friendly production systems. Existing research on animal welfare economics estimated that animal-friendly production can cost from as little as 5% extra, to as much as 50% extra, depending on the product type and animal welfare level, among other factors (Majewski, Hamulczuk, Malak-Rawlikowska, Gebska, & Harvey, 2012). For example, while the minimum additional costs of improved pig welfare from conventional systems to free-range systems only present 4-8%, the minimum additional costs of organic systems are 31% (Bornett, Guy, & Cain, 2003). Taking a different approach, Majewski et al. (2012) conducted market-level quantitative assessments, i.e., estimations based on scenarios where markets will fully switch to animal-friendly systems, with the majority (80%) of producers upgrading to moderate animal welfare systems, and the rest (20%) to high welfare systems. Majewski et al. (2012) conclude that covering increased animal welfare standards

would, for example, require 36% increase in pork and 8% increase in beef prices in the Netherlands. Overall, these numbers are larger than consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat, which means that companies need to look for marketing strategies that can increase consumer WTP for animal welfare enhanced meat.

6.8. Limitations and future research

Our findings should be seen in the light of their limitations. First, while the research design of experimental auctions makes an important contribution to the external validity of consumer animal welfare research, the sample that we used cannot be taken as generalizable. In that respect our study provides more insights on the process through which marketing strategies influence consumer WTP for animal welfare. Future research may therefore complement our findings in larger representative country samples that can give more accurate estimates of how much consumers on a country-level are willing to pay for animal-friendly products that are supported by marketing strategies. Second, our study included ambivalence towards meat as an individual difference variable, but did not include other consumer personal characteristics, such as values (Schwartz, 1992) and thinking style (Epstein, 1990). In larger country-samples such variables may be added because they provide potentially valuable information for marketers that aim to identify and describe consumer segments with distinctive responses to marketing instruments and (related to that) distinctive levels of WTP.





CHAPTER 7

General discussion

Responding to consumer concern about the welfare of production animals, companies increasingly introduce animal welfare enhanced meat to the market. However, consumers' meat choices still do not fully reflect their positive attitudes towards animal welfare, indicating that the attitude-behaviour gap still exists on the market for animal welfare enhanced meat (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). This thesis has argued that a social dilemma is at the heart of the attitude-behaviour gap because consumers must trade off personally relevant benefits for animal welfare when buying animal welfare enhanced meat. The main aim of this thesis was therefore to provide insight into how marketing strategies can address consumer social dilemma to encourage consumer purchases of animal welfare enhanced meat. To meet the main aim of this thesis, three research questions were addressed: 1) How can positioning strategies address consumer social dilemma to encourage animal welfare enhanced meat choice?; 2) How does positioning strategy interact with stakeholder endorsement in influencing consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice?; 3) How do consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas impact the effectiveness of marketing strategies? This final chapter provides answer to each of the research questions and integrates the answers into implications at a theoretical level, as well as implications for companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat and policy makers. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the conducted research, suggestions for future research and a final conclusion.

7.1. Summary and conclusions

7.1.1. Addressing consumer social dilemma with positioning strategies

To identify how positioning strategies can address consumer social dilemma in animal welfare enhanced meat choice, a theoretical framework has been developed, followed by two empirical studies. In Chapter 2 of the thesis, a theoretical framework was presented that explains how reinforcement positioning strategies can address the social dilemma by reinforcing animal

welfare with personally relevant individual benefits. Because the choice between conventional and animal-friendly products typically requires buyers to trade off monetary value against animal welfare (Ingenbleek et al., 2013), consumers are likely to experience a psychological conflict of interests between their individual welfare (which includes monetary value) and public welfare (which includes animal welfare). Even though most consumers find animal welfare important, their behaviour, including purchase behaviour, is focused on maximizing individual welfare rather than public welfare. Such behaviour stems from evolutionary tendencies because evolution has mostly favoured people that have put their immediate self-interest above (long-term) societal interest (Griskevicius et al., 2012). Therefore, positioning strategies that emphasise animal welfare, reminding consumers to consider the (long-term) consequences of their purchase behaviour on the life of the farm animals, are unlikely to be effective in encouraging animal-friendly product choice. Instead, positioning strategies that emphasise how animal welfare can be beneficial for the individual consumer are more effective because consumers will no longer need to trade off public benefits for individual benefits. Such strategies can reinforce animal welfare with different consumption values (Schmitt, 1999; Sheth et al., 1991), such as functional (emphasizing high functional utility, for example healthiness), sensory (highlighting high sensory experience, such as tastiness), emotional (eliciting positive feelings, such as happiness), social (suggesting social acceptance or status, for example from animal-friendly consumers), epistemic (arousing curiosity, for example about innovative features) and situational (increasing value in a specific situation, for example during the World Animal Week). By emphasizing individual benefits, which are likely to (partially) compensate for the higher price of animal-friendly products, while also highlighting animal welfare, positioning strategies are likely to reduce the social dilemma and, consequently, encourage animal-friendly product choice. The chapter concluded that the effectiveness of reinforcement positioning strategies needs to be tested in empirical studies.

Chapter 3 explored which positioning strategies marketers use to persuade consumers to buy (different categories of) animal-friendly food. The results from the empirical study in a Dutch supermarket indicate four distinct positioning

strategies: emotional value strategy, which reinforces improved animal welfare with evoking positive feeling in the consumer; functional value strategy, which emphasises nutritional quality, healthiness and tastiness with improved animal welfare; epistemic value strategy, which stresses original features of the product; and public welfare strategy, which emphasises benefits for the public welfare and positive feelings as a supportive element. These results show that marketers tend to depart from a “one size fits all” approach by using various positioning strategies. However, the study revealed that most products used similar cues and appeals in their positioning strategies, especially when compared to other product from the same category. Fresh meat in our sample, for example, is almost exclusively positioned with a focus on animal welfare, reinforced with positive feelings. One reasonable explanation is that marketers imitate positioning strategies of their competitors. From our sample we could observe that many products, in particular in the fresh food category, use a limited number of cues to position their products. For example, the cues that could be found on fresh meat were mainly limited to an animal welfare certified label, a rural image, words tasty and honest and, in some cases, a picture of a serving suggestion. This suggests that marketers would benefit from having insights on the effectiveness of a variety of positioning strategies, including social and epistemic cues, among others, so that they can differentiate their products from the competitors. Importantly, marketers seem to be, at least implicitly, aware of consumer social dilemma because each strategy combines animal welfare (in case of public welfare strategy integrated as part of a larger social and natural environment) with one or more individual benefits. The effectiveness of each strategy, however, will depend on whether the communicated benefits increase consumer value perceptions, and whether such value perceptions significantly contribute to consumer product choice.

Chapter 4 empirically tested the effects of four distinct positioning strategies, identified on the basis of the theory, designed to address social dilemma on consumers’ value perceptions of animal welfare enhanced chicken meat in an online experiment. Each strategy reinforced animal welfare with a different type of individual benefit: functional with tastiness, emotional with happiness, social

with social acceptance and epistemic with curiosity. Two strategies - emotional and epistemic - were found to be effective in increasing consumer perceptions of the respective values, and both value types had a positive effect on animal welfare enhanced chicken meat choice. These results imply that positioning strategies that invoke consumer feelings or provoke curiosity are most likely to effectively address consumer social dilemma and, consequently, increase animal welfare enhanced meat choices. Contrary to our predictions, the functional and social strategies did not significantly increase consumer value perceptions. One possible explanation is that the cues, in the form of a claim on a label, were not powerful enough to convince consumers that the product is tastier than the others. The addition of other cues, such as pictorial or package materials that make the product look more appealing, or perhaps alternative claims, might be more effective in increasing the functional and social value perceptions. Alternatively, different methods may be needed to manipulate taste and social norm. Taste is an experiential cue (Schröder & McEachern, 2004), so consumers may need to physically experience the product with their senses, which is not possible in an online experiment. Social norms have strong motivational power and are difficult to change (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006), so the manipulation of a social norm might require a long-term strategy, such as the repeated exposure to influential messages.

In conclusion, this thesis has shown that strategies positioning animal welfare as personally relevant, which are likely to address consumer social dilemma, can be effective in encouraging consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat, and that this process is mediated by consumer value perceptions. Specifically, two strategies have been found effective to persuade consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat - the emotional positioning strategy, which invokes positive feelings in the buyer, and the epistemic strategy, which provokes curiosity. As the epistemic strategy has hardly been used on the meat products from our dataset, it may be a particularly useful strategy to create a strong and distinct position for a (new) brand of animal welfare enhanced meat.

7.1.2. Interplay between positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement and its effect on consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice

To examine how positioning strategies interact with stakeholder endorsement, a theoretical framework with propositions has been developed, followed by two empirical studies. In Chapter 2 of the thesis, a theoretical framework was discussed that assessed the value of stakeholders in marketing animal-friendly products. A specific characteristic of animal-friendly products is that animal welfare is a credence attribute, which means that consumers lack the ability to assess whether the product meets the claimed animal welfare or not (Ingenbleek & Immink, 2011). To ensure the trustworthiness of the claimed animal welfare, marketers often use stakeholder endorsement, which typically involves the use of a certified label issued by a relevant, reliable and independent organisation (Janssen & Hamm, 2012; Scandeliuss & Cohen, 2016). While stakeholder endorsement may be valuable on its own, it is argued that it can also strengthen the effectiveness of positioning strategies on consumer value perceptions and, consequently, animal-friendly product choice (Urde & Koch, 2014). In the reinforcement positioning strategies, the trustworthiness of the claimed animal welfare is even more important than in strategies that make no reference to the animal welfare because the reinforcement strategies associate individual benefits with the claimed animal welfare. Only when consumers trust the animal welfare claims, they can trust and appraise the individual benefits emphasised in the reinforcement positioning strategies. Endorsement by or, in broader terms, collaboration with relevant stakeholders, such as animal-interest organisations, consumer organisations and media, may therefore be helpful or even necessary to effectively market animal-friendly products.

The interaction between positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement was empirically tested in the context of animal welfare enhanced chicken meat in an online experiment presented in Chapter 5. In the experiment, the distinction was made between the two main categories of consumer value pertinent to the situation of social dilemma – ethical (animal welfare) and individualistic (including relevant categories of individual benefits) – and the effects on each

value type were studied. The results indicate that instead of solely focussing on animal welfare in their marketing strategies, companies should emphasise benefits serving the buyer's self-interest. The results further show that epistemic positioning strategy must be supported by certified animal welfare label to increase the perceived ethical and individualistic value of animal welfare enhanced chicken meat. Hence, stakeholder endorsement, i.e., certified label, is a necessary element in the marketing strategy. However, these results may have been influenced by the study design, as the presented products were unbranded, so consumers may have been sceptical because they were unable to assign responsibility for the presented information. A well-known reputable brand could potentially effectively employ positioning strategies even without the stakeholder endorsement. Consumer trust, however, remains an important issue - if consumers cannot be certain about the claimed animal welfare, they may also mistrust the claims about individual benefits that stem from animal welfare.

Perhaps most surprisingly, stakeholder endorsement alone was not effective at increasing consumer perceptions of ethical value. This result was particularly unexpected because the consumers were provided with information from a third-party organisation considered reputable and reliable by the general public. While previous studies (e.g., Janssen & Hamm, 2012; Noblet & Teisl, 2015) have emphasised that such information is commonly used to increase the trustworthiness of the product's ethicality, our study suggests that this may not necessarily positively affect consumer perceptions of ethical value. A complementary information explaining, for example, who is the issuing organisation, or how a labelled product differs from an unlabelled product, may be necessary because consumers are not always familiar with the meaning of certified labels (Temminghof, 2017), or they may not pay attention to these labels.

Extending the results from the previous chapter, Chapter 6 used a real-life experiment at point of purchase, in which it investigated the interaction effect of positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement on consumer willingness to pay for a lunch meal with animal welfare enhanced chicken meat. The results

indicate that both elements - positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement - on their own significantly increase consumer willingness to pay, with higher price premiums for stakeholder endorsement than for positioning strategy. This suggests that companies may use each element on its own and that even small changes, such as adding a certified label, can significantly increase consumer willingness to pay.

Surprisingly, even though the combination of both elements generated the highest willingness to pay, the results provide no evidence for an interaction effect. These results are different from the results reported in Chapter 5, which used consumer value perceptions instead of willingness to pay as a dependent variable, in that Chapter 5 supported the existence of an interaction effect but not direct effects. Unlike in the online experiment, the real-life experiment involved face-to-face contact and the exchange of real money, which most likely served as a guarantee that the product claims were true, possibly explaining the presence of the direct effects. The absence of the interaction effect may have been due to the specific study design, where the participants were encouraged to consider each product as the only one available to them, next to the conventional product (with meat from intensive husbandry system), because only one animal welfare enhanced product will be available to them at the end. Hence, if the participants wanted to avoid undesirable outcome (buying the conventional product), they were more prone to indicate a relatively high willingness to pay for each element (stakeholder endorsement and positioning strategy) because this increased their chances to receive the animal welfare enhanced product. Consequently, since the participants were students with mostly a limited budget, this constraint may have led to a lower willingness to pay for the product with both elements than if the budget was unlimited or if the answers were hypothetical.

In conclusion, this thesis showed that both the reinforcement positioning strategy and the stakeholder endorsement are crucial elements in the marketing strategy of animal welfare enhanced meat. When used together, they effectively increase consumer value perceptions and willingness to pay for animal welfare

enhanced meat. Moreover, we have shown that consumer animal-friendly product choice is largely driven by perceived individualistic value, which is unlikely to increase without using positioning strategy. Still, this thesis presents some inconsistent results on the effectiveness of positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement when used on their own. Next to the study design effects, which are explained in the previous paragraphs, these inconsistencies may be due to the different processes that affect consumer product choice and willingness to pay. It may be that, unlike consumer product choice, willingness to pay is not fully mediated by consumer value perceptions, which are well-thought evaluations of product's benefits. Instead, or perhaps additionally, positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement may affect consumer willingness to pay directly, through sub-conscious information processing. Alternatively, willingness to pay may mediate the relationship between consumer value perceptions and product choice (cf. Li et al., 2012; Netemeyer et al., 2004), which could explain the differential effects of marketing strategies. Finally, the increase of consumer perceived value may not symmetrically translate into the willingness to pay, due to the existence of price maximum that consumers are willing to pay for animal welfare enhanced meat.

7.1.3. Impact of consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas on the effectiveness of marketing strategies

Consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas were empirically tested with two distinct theoretical concepts - motivational orientation (Beersma & De Dreu, 2002) and ambivalence towards meat (Sparks et al., 2001). Both concepts refer to the importance consumers attach to the conflicting aspects of meat consumption: selfish versus societal benefits that measure motivational orientation; and positive versus negative feelings that measure ambivalence towards meat. Importantly, both concepts are similar in that they categorize consumers into those who attribute conflicting outcomes to the behaviour in social dilemmas (consumers prioritizing selfish as well as societal motives and consumers holding positive as well as negative feelings) and those who do not

(consumers prioritizing selfish or societal motives and consumers holding positive or negative feelings). While motivational orientation measures conflicting motives with respect to meat in the purchase context, ambivalence towards meat measures conflicting feelings towards meat in a more general context.

In Chapter 4, in an online experiment, we tested how consumer motivational orientation moderates the effectiveness of positioning strategies on animal welfare enhanced chicken meat choice. Motivational orientation refers to the relative importance that consumers attach to short-term self-interest, by prioritizing features such as taste and price as compared to long-term and/or societal interest, by prioritizing features such as animal welfare and safety (with focus on the long-term consequences). Consumer motivational orientation is closely related to one's perceptions of social dilemmas in general and the social dilemma in animal welfare enhanced meat choice in particular. Consumers with more extreme orientations, i.e., those who put sole emphasis on either self-interest (egoistic orientation) or societal interest (pro-social orientation) will arguably not perceive the trade-off between individual welfare and public welfare, which is inherent to social dilemmas, as problematic. Consumers who highly value both their individual welfare and the public/animal welfare (dissonant orientation), on the other hand, arguably perceive such trade-off as problematic because they experience psychological conflict of interests between their individual welfare and public welfare. Hence, we expected that consumers with the dissonant orientation demand a product with high animal welfare that also offers high individual benefits, making them particularly sensitive to the increased perceived value of the animal-friendly product. Surprisingly, the results showed that consumers with the dissonant orientation demonstrate a weaker relationship between their value perceptions of animal welfare enhanced chicken meat and the product choice. A possible explanation is that consumers with the dissonant orientation hold dichotomous beliefs, which are known to attenuate the relationship between attitudes and behaviour (cf. Sparks et al., 2001; Thompson, Zanna, & Griffin, 1995). Importantly, this finding suggests that

positioning strategies are most powerful in increasing animal-friendly product choices of consumers with the egoistic and pro-social orientation.

Chapter 6 investigated how ambivalence towards meat influences the impact of consumer value perceptions on willingness to pay for lunch meal with animal welfare enhanced chicken meat in a real-life experiment. Ambivalence towards meat refers to the extent to which a consumer believes that eating meat has benefits in terms of, for example, nutritional value and tastiness, as well as disadvantages in terms of, for example, unhealthiness, environmental problems and the moral aspects of killing animals. Consumers who prevalingly hold positive feelings towards meat arguably do not perceive the trade-off inherent to the social dilemma in animal welfare enhanced meat choice as problematic because they do not consider negative effects of eating meat, such as (the lack of) animal welfare. Consumers who prevalingly hold negative feelings towards meat most likely refrain from eating meat, e.g., by adopting vegetarian diets. Our results showed that for both groups, their value perceptions are a powerful predictor of their willingness to pay. On the contrary, consumers with conflicting feelings towards meat experienced a weaker effect of their positive evaluations of product's value on willingness to pay, which is likely to be explained by the conflict of interests that they experience when buying meat. This suggests that ambivalence towards eating meat may weaken the effectiveness of marketing strategies on animal welfare enhanced meat choice.

In conclusion, this thesis showed that both theoretical constructs – motivational orientation and ambivalence towards meat – are important factors influencing the effectiveness of marketing strategies on animal welfare enhanced meat choice. These concepts have consistent effects as they attenuate the relationship between the attitudes towards the products and the product choice. So, even though marketing strategies are a powerful tool that can increase the attractiveness of animal welfare enhanced meat and, consequently, stimulate consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice, their effectiveness may be limited for consumers who experience a conflict of interests when buying meat.

7.2. Implications

7.2.1. Theoretical implications

The main theoretical contribution of this thesis is that it extends the scientific animal welfare debate from the interdisciplinary field of animal science, economics and, recently, also consumer behaviour to marketing. In the past 20 years, a growing body of literature has been dedicated to studying consumer perceptions, attitudes and preferences on animal welfare and animal-friendly products (for reviews, see de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2014). However, no prior systematic effort has been dedicated to the development of marketing solutions that can influence consumer behaviour and, as a result, help consumers to make decisions that are in line with their stated value of animal welfare. This thesis therefore focused on the development of such marketing solutions. It builds on the existing literature that explains why social dilemma prevents consumers from buying animal welfare enhanced meat (de Jonge & van Trijp, 2013b; Griskevicius et al., 2012) to testing how marketing strategies can address the social dilemma. It has shown that strategies positioning animal welfare as personally relevant, whether it is by evoking positive feelings, arousing curiosity or, possibly, communicating other benefits, are effective in encouraging consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat because they increase consumer value perceptions. It thus implies that even relatively small changes in the positioning strategy, such as communicating an additional benefit on the product packaging, can stimulate consumers to focus on such benefits and not only increase the value perception but also the willingness to pay for the product and the product choice. This thesis has also connected the applied literature about certified animal welfare labels (e.g., Olesen et al., 2010; Olynk et al., 2010) to the literature about stakeholder endorsement and studied its importance as an element in the marketing strategies for animal-friendly products.

The insights on the effects of reinforcement strategies are also useful for the marketing domain, as they extend the set of factors which have previously been studied to successfully market sustainable product, such as nudging (e.g., Lehner,

Mont, & Heiskanen, 2016), message framing (e.g., Chang, Zhang, & Xie, 2015) and collaboration with stakeholders (e.g., Cronin et al., 2011). Furthermore, our findings extend the marketing literature on the spillover effects of ethical positioning strategies (e.g., Du et al., 2007). For example, the study conducted by Du et al. (2007) found that socially responsible brands, i.e., brands that include ethical benefits as an integral aspect of their positioning strategies, also benefit from higher consumer value perceptions in terms of individualistic benefits (e.g., product quality, taste and nutritional value) than brands that do not integrate ethical benefits in their positioning strategies (although they engage in socially responsible activities). The reinforcement strategies, as presented in this thesis, go a step further by clearly linking the individualistic benefits to the ethical benefits, showing that brands employing reinforcement strategies can benefit from even stronger consumer preferences than brands primarily emphasizing ethical benefits in their positioning strategies.

Finally, this thesis extends the existing literature on the effects of ambivalence on consumer attitude-behaviour relationship (Costarelli & Colloca, 2007; Penz & Hogg, 2011; Sparks et al., 2001) in that it shows that ambivalence may help explain why marketing strategies are not (equally) effective for different types of consumers. Specifically, it shows how consumers' ambivalent attributions regarding social dilemmas can decrease the effectiveness of marketing strategies on animal welfare enhanced meat choice. Our results imply that consumers with ambivalent beliefs and motives, i.e., those who associate eating meat with positive as well as negative outcomes, or those who wish to maximize both their individual welfare and the public welfare, are less sensitive to the marketing strategies due to their weaker relationship between the value perception and product choice. This result is consistent with the findings from prior research, which has shown that consumers with ambivalent feelings demonstrate a weaker relationship between their attitudes and purchase behaviour (Sparks et al., 2001).

7.2.2. *Practical implications*

This thesis makes an important first step into the development of practical marketing solutions that can encourage consumers to switch to animal-friendly products. The existing solutions largely rely on campaigns led by the governments and animal interest organisations, which were predominantly focused on increasing the awareness and consumer concern for animal welfare (de Bakker & Dagevos, 2012). In the current situation, these campaigns have most likely reached their limits – almost all consumers are concerned about animal welfare in the conventional meat production systems (European Commission, 2016). To further improve animal welfare, the focus needs to shift to marketing instruments that can remove the barriers, such as quality, taste or packaging, that refrain consumers from purchasing animal-friendly products (see Ingenbleek et al., 2012). This shift brings great responsibility to the companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat and their marketers, who are in charge of such marketing instruments.

In studying the marketing instruments that companies can use, this thesis has investigated if strategies that can suppress consumers' social dilemma can encourage consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice. It shows that such strategies are effective in increasing consumer value perceptions and, consequently, their animal welfare enhanced meat choice. Relatedly, our findings also show that even though consumers repeatedly state that they are concerned about animal welfare, their product choice is largely driven by immediate self-interest. This means that consumers most likely buy (animal-friendly) products with, and because of, high functional and sensory benefits, novel and interesting products, or products that give them a good feeling. For example, our results show that strategies using emotional cues, such as pictures of (happy) animals, are effective to market animal welfare enhanced meat. Furthermore, innovative husbandry systems, such as the cooperative 'Family Pen Systems' (de Olde, Carsjens, & Eilers, 2017), may also present an attractive opportunity for companies because they provoke curiosity. However, less complex solutions, such as showing interesting and fun "Did you know?" facts

about animal welfare in the existing husbandry systems, may also be effective in making consumers curious, thus encouraging them to buy the animal welfare enhanced meat.

Importantly, our results show that reinforcement strategies can make consumers opt for a less animal-friendly product (e.g., barn instead of free-range, or free-range instead of organic). The strategies employed in this research, however, used rather generic messages, for example by stating that buying chicken with a better life (label) gives a good feeling, which may have influenced consumer perceptions of other animal-friendly products, too. It is reasonable to assume that more specific messages, which point out to the unique features of a specific brand of animal welfare enhanced meat would not affect consumer perceptions of other products, thus prevent cannibalisation on other animal welfare enhanced products from the company's product portfolio. Still, decisions on product positioning strategies need to be made at assortment level rather than at individual-product level. Overall, product claims should emphasise unique product features and avoid claims that may make the more animal-friendly product alternatives less attractive to prevent consumers from switching to a less animal-friendly (or less sustainable) option.

When developing effective marketing strategies for animal welfare enhanced meat, marketers may put more emphasis on creating unique positions for their particular brands. Our results, albeit based on products from one supermarket, show that many animal-friendly brands are positioned using the same or very similar cues and strategies, such as animal welfare certified labels and rural images evoking positive feelings. Considering that the aim of positioning is "to occupy a clear, distinctive and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers" (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008, p. 410), it seems that the existing brands do not use marketing to its fullest potential. It may therefore be worthwhile to consider using unique cues and message appeals in the positioning strategies. This, however, needs to be done carefully, seeing that consumer trust plays an important role when buying animal welfare enhanced meat. To increase the credibility of their animal welfare claims, companies should

consider using third-party certification in their marketing strategies or use alternative forms of stakeholder endorsement. The combination of endorsement from a reputable stakeholder and positioning strategy that uses attractive, somehow unique cues and appeals, may be the most effective way to market animal welfare enhanced meat.

Even though the combination of positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement seems to improve consumer value perceptions of the animal-friendly product most, the value perceptions do not symmetrically translate into consumer willingness to pay. This finding suggests that there is a price maximum consumers are willing to pay for animal-friendly products. Companies should therefore carefully consider the economic consequences of the different strategies that can increase consumer perceived value, e.g., the costs of novel features, the costs of package redesign or the costs of certified labels and compare these with the price ceiling for animal-friendly products.

Finally, our results suggest that campaigns that aim to educate consumers about the effects of meat consumption and animal welfare may have undesirable effects in terms of animal welfare enhanced meat choice. We have shown that when consumers have conflicting feelings and attitudes, which mainly stem from the fact that they consider the negative aspects of eating meat, such as animal welfare and environmental impact, they demonstrate a weaker relationship between their attitudes and purchase behaviour. This inconsistency results in lower effectiveness of marketing strategies, which presents a challenge to companies selling animal welfare enhanced meat. Policy makers, but also NGO's thus should consider that campaigns emphasizing negative issues associated with meat are most likely effective in decreasing overall meat consumption, but they do not necessarily stimulate consumers to switch from conventional to more animal-friendly products. The solution to this problem is not straightforward, since policy makers are likely to further promote healthy diets, which include eating less meat. Importantly, decreasing meat consumption certainly has benefits in terms of animal welfare, environmental sustainability and health. Decreasing meat consumption is, without doubt, an important and necessary step in society's

strive for better animal welfare. However, for most consumers, eating less meat probably is an attainable goal, but they are unlikely to abandon all meat products from their diets. To further improve the welfare of the farm animals, consumers thus need to change their consumption patterns, by abandoning conventional meat that meets the lowest legally set animal welfare standards and opting for higher animal welfare meat instead. If such behaviour would be facilitated by the manufacturers of animal welfare enhanced meat as well as policy makers, it would certainly make such change in consumption patterns easier. As the first step, policy makers could study the side effects, such as those discouraging consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat, in the development of future meat campaigns. Eventually, it should become clear how to build up the campaigns to address both issues – public health and animal welfare.

7.2.3. Implications for the animals

The primary aim of this research was to improve farm animal welfare through better consumer choices. For animals, consumer meat choices are inevitably not animal-friendly. Consumers who developed very strong moral standards for animal welfare refrain from consuming meat or from animal-based products altogether. Many others adopt flexitarian diets, which include eating meat less frequently and/or in smaller portions. Encouraging such consumer choices obviously remains the most effective way to improve farm animal welfare. This thesis, however, suggests that encouraging consumers (who are not ready to take the step towards meatless diets) to buy animal welfare enhanced meat can also improve the welfare of farm animals. Such encouragement is particularly effective when it shows how animal welfare enhanced meat can provide personally relevant benefits to the consumers.

Our findings suggest that consumer willingness to pay for better animal welfare (i.e., animal welfare enhanced meat) significantly increases with the use of marketing strategies that emphasise personally relevant benefits and provide a guarantee for the claimed animal welfare. This is important because significant

improvements in animal welfare are, at the current state, not possible at the price for the conventional animal husbandry, and animal-friendly products are therefore more expensive than conventional products. While being costlier, animal-friendly production systems, such as free-range and organic, provide a better life to the animals. For example, in the Netherlands, broilers raised in free-range and organic systems, which are labelled with 2 and 3 better-life stars certified by the Dutch animal protection organization, respectively, enjoy a better quality of life than broilers raised in the conventional systems: they must have access to the outdoors (at least 1 m²/chicken in free-range and 4 m²/chicken in organic, none in conventional), they grow at a more natural and healthy pace (to a maximum of 25 kg/m² of body weight in free-range and organic, 42 kg/m² in conventional) and live a longer life (56 days in free-range, 81 days in organic, 35-42 days in conventional) (The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, 2019). These improvements, while perhaps not big enough from a moral perspective (e.g., the short life of broilers), are an important step towards a more animal-friendly future.

Most importantly, encouraging consumers to consciously and consistently opt for animal-friendly options may be a step towards the change of consumers' mindsets – for too long, consumers have been uninterested in the origin of their meat, encouraged by meat producers and marketers to focus on the hedonic aspects. Farm animals were seen as products and, in many cases, treated as such. Marketing strategies presented in this thesis can perhaps contribute to changing this mindset because they remind consumers that opting for a more animal-friendly product can also be beneficial for themselves, even if it's just by giving consumers a good feeling about their better choices.

7.3. Limitations and future research

This thesis represents an important first step in the expansion of consumer literature on animal-friendly product choice into the marketing domain. As an early contribution to this field, it is not without its limitations. A first limitation

is related to the operationalization of the positioning strategies, which used single verbal cues to communicate the product benefits. Such single cues are not only relatively weak as compared to the combination of several cues, but they are also prone to misinterpretation, which may affect consumer perceived value. Future research may therefore study how strategies using (combinations of) various cues, such as verbal, pictorial or other, on product packaging but also on store displays and other places can encourage consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat.

Second, the inconsistent findings in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 on whether positioning strategy and stakeholder endorsement are on their own effective in influencing consumer purchase behaviour can most likely be (partially) explained by consumer (mis)trust in product information. This conclusion could, however, only be made implicitly since we did not measure consumer trust. We would therefore strongly recommend measuring consumer trust in the brand and the certified label in future studies. Next to studying consumer trust, it would also be worthwhile to study the interrelationships between consumer value perceptions, product choice and willingness to pay. While, for the interpretation of research findings from Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, this thesis considers willingness to pay to closely reflect consumer product choice, these two behavioural outcomes may be different, and their differences may underlie different processes. For example, future research could study whether willingness to pay is affected directly by the marketing strategies, or it perhaps mediates the relationship between consumer value perceptions and product choice (see also Netemeyer et al., 2004).

Third, the generalizability of the findings is limited by the fact that the studies were conducted in the Dutch context only. Since the Dutch consumers are generally aware of the issues surrounding farm animal welfare, they are familiar with the certified animal welfare label used in this research and they generally trust this label, our results should be interpreted with great caution across different cultures and contexts. For example, in the US, the large variety of

animal welfare labels, of which many are the result of private initiatives, may decrease consumer familiarity with and trust in such labels (Sullivan, 2012).

Fourth, the research presented in Chapter 2 analysed products from one supermarket only, and its findings can therefore not be seen as representative but rather as indicative of the strategies used to position animal-friendly food. Future research may therefore study and compare positioning strategies used by the products from different supermarkets, as well as track the development of such strategies, assess their effectiveness and give new insights to the marketers of animal-friendly food. It may also distinguish between strategies used by manufacturers' brands and private labels, since the positioning strategies of private labels typically need to be aligned with the supermarket's core business strategy and are therefore less susceptible to the positioning strategies of the competing manufacturers' brands.

Finally, consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas were measured with two distinct theoretical concepts, of which the first – motivational orientation – has hardly been studied in the context of animal-friendly product choice. The lack of a validated (context-specific) measurement scale could be a limitation of the present research and future studies would therefore greatly benefit from the development of a validated scale for motivational orientation. To better understand how consumers' attributions influence the effectiveness of marketing strategies, it would be worthwhile to also study which factors and strategies can influence such attributions.

7.4. Final conclusion

This thesis has shown that marketing strategies can be effective in encouraging consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat if they position animal welfare as personally relevant and provide a guarantee for the claimed animal welfare. Positioning strategies need to reinforce the animal welfare with personally relevant benefits, such as a good feeling or curiosity because

consumers do not buy animal welfare enhanced meat because it's beneficial for the animal but because it's beneficial for themselves. In this way, positioning strategies can reduce consumers' social dilemma because consumers do not only associate animal welfare with the lack of personally relevant benefits (e.g., a higher price), but also with the boost of personally relevant benefits (e.g., a good feeling). As a condition to this effect, marketing strategies seem to be less effective when they lack reliable third-party stakeholder endorsement, e.g., in form of a certified animal welfare label, unless the brand manufacturer is considered to be particularly credible. By studying the effects and conditions of positioning strategies, this thesis has enriched our set of marketing instruments to encourage consumers' animal-friendly product choice.

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Summary

Responding to consumer concern about the welfare of production animals, companies increasingly introduce animal welfare enhanced meat to the market. However, consumers' meat choices still do not fully reflect their positive attitudes towards animal welfare, indicating that the attitude-behaviour gap still exists on the market for animal welfare enhanced meat. This thesis argues that a social dilemma is at the heart of the attitude-behaviour gap because consumers must trade off personally relevant benefits for animal welfare when buying animal welfare enhanced meat. The main aim of this thesis is therefore to provide insight into how marketing strategies can address consumer social dilemma to encourage consumer purchases of animal welfare enhanced meat. To meet the main aim of this thesis, three research questions were addressed: *1) How can positioning strategies address consumer social dilemma to encourage animal welfare enhanced meat choice?; 2) How does positioning strategy interact with stakeholder endorsement in influencing consumer animal welfare enhanced meat choice?; 3) How do consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas impact the effectiveness of marketing strategies?* The questions are addressed theoretically in a conceptual framework (Chapter 2) and empirically in the subsequent chapters.

An exploratory study testing the strategies of animal-friendly food in a Dutch supermarket (Chapter 3) and an online experiment with Dutch shoppers (Chapter 4) provided answer to the question on how positioning strategies address social dilemma in animal welfare enhanced meat choice. Consumers are confronted with a social dilemma when buying animal-friendly products because they must trade off (personally relevant) monetary value against (socially relevant) animal welfare (Chapter 2). To reduce the social dilemma, positioning strategies can reinforce animal welfare with personally relevant benefits such as taste, good feeling or curiosity, thus making animal-friendly products appealing and attractive to the buyer. The common strategies marketers use to position animal-friendly food respectively call upon consumers' emotions, functional or sensory perceptions, curiosity, and sense of public welfare; with fresh meat

predominantly relying on emotional value (Chapter 3). Reinforcement positioning strategies can be effective in encouraging consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat, and this process is mediated by consumer value perceptions (Chapter 4). Specifically, two strategies have been found effective to persuade consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat: the emotional positioning strategy (which invokes positive feelings in the buyer) and the epistemic strategy (which provokes curiosity). Because the epistemic strategy has hardly been used on the meat products from the dataset tested in Chapter 3, it may be a particularly useful strategy to create a strong and distinct position for a (new) brand of animal welfare enhanced meat.

The answer to the question on how positioning strategies interact with stakeholder endorsement to influence animal welfare enhanced meat choice is provided in two empirical studies – an online experiment with Dutch shoppers (Chapter 5) and a real-life experiment at point of purchase with students from a Dutch university (Chapter 6). Animal welfare is a credence product attribute that consumers cannot assess themselves. To evaluate the credibility of animal welfare claims, consumers therefore often rely on a third-party stakeholder endorsement, e.g., in form of a certified animal welfare label (Chapter 2). Stakeholder endorsement is an important element of marketing strategies for animal welfare enhanced meat, as shown in hypothetical (Chapter 5) and realistic (Chapter 6) settings. In the hypothetical setting, stakeholder endorsement is necessary, next to the positioning strategy, to increase the perceived value and, consequently, the choice of animal welfare enhanced meat (Chapter 5). In the realistic setting, stakeholder endorsement is not necessary but still beneficial to increase consumer willingness to pay for animal welfare enhanced meat (Chapter 6). Hence, marketing strategies seem to be more effective when supported by a reliable third-party stakeholder unless the brand manufacturer is considered to be particularly credible.

The question on how consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas impact the effectiveness of marketing strategies was addressed in an online experiment (Chapter 4) and in a real-life experiment (Chapter 6).

Consumers' individual attributions regarding social dilemmas influence their perceptions of the trade-off that is inherent to the social dilemma in animal-friendly product choice. Some consumers perceive such trade-off as problematic because it contradicts their beliefs and motives, affecting their animal-friendly purchase behaviour (Chapter 2). This thesis consistently shows that consumers with contradictory beliefs and motives are less sensitive to the marketing strategies for animal welfare enhanced meat than consumers with unequivocal beliefs and motives (Chapter 4 and 6). Specifically, consumers with dichotomous motives, i.e., those who wish to maximize both their individual welfare and the public welfare, are less sensitive to the positioning strategies than consumers with unequivocal motives (Chapter 4). Comparably, consumers with ambivalent feelings, i.e., those who associate eating meat with positive and negative outcomes, are less sensitive to the marketing strategies than consumers with unequivocal feelings (Chapter 6). Hence, the effectiveness of marketing strategies for animal welfare enhanced meat may be limited for consumers who experience a conflict of interests when buying meat. Some care should therefore be taken when designing awareness campaigns about the effects of meat consumption and animal welfare as they could potentially discourage consumers to switch from conventional to more animal-friendly products.

Overall, this thesis shows that marketing strategies can be effective in encouraging consumers to switch to animal welfare enhanced meat if they position animal welfare as personally relevant and provide a guarantee for the claimed animal welfare. By studying the effects and conditions of positioning strategies, this thesis has enriched our set of marketing instruments that companies and policy makers can use to encourage consumers' animal welfare enhanced meat choice.

Samenvatting

Als reactie op de bezorgdheid van consumenten over het welzijn van productiedieren, introduceren bedrijven steeds meer diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees op de markt. De positieve houding van consumenten ten opzichte van dierenwelzijn is echter niet volledig terug te zien in hun keuze voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees. Dit wijst op de kloof tussen houding en gedrag die nog steeds bestaat op de markt voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees. Het uitgangspunt van dit proefschrift is dan ook een sociaal dilemma dat ten grondslag ligt aan de kloof tussen houding en gedrag, omdat consumenten persoonlijk gewin inleveren voor dierenwelzijn wanneer zij diervriendelijk geproduceerd vlees aanschaffen. Het hoofddoel van dit proefschrift is het verschaffen van inzicht in hoe marketingstrategieën het sociaal dilemma kunnen aanpakken om de aankoop van diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees door consumenten te bevorderen. Om het hoofddoel van dit proefschrift te realiseren, zijn er drie onderzoeksvragen geformuleerd: 1) Hoe kunnen positioneringsstrategieën het sociale dilemma bij consumenten aanpakken om de keuze voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees te bevorderen? 2) Hoe werken positioneringsstrategie en aanbevelingen van derden op elkaar in bij het beïnvloeden van de keuze door consumenten voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees? 3) Hoe kunnen de individuele opvattingen van consumenten over sociale dilemma's de effectiviteit van marketingstrategieën beïnvloeden? Deze vragen zijn theoretisch behandeld in een conceptueel raamwerk (hoofdstuk 2) en empirisch in de opvolgende hoofdstukken.

Een verkennende studie waarin de marketingstrategieën van diervriendelijk voedsel in een Nederlandse supermarkt zijn getest (hoofdstuk 3) en een online experiment met Nederlandse consumenten (hoofdstuk 4) verklaren hoe positioneringsstrategieën het sociale dilemma bij het kiezen van diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees aanpakken. Consumenten worden geconfronteerd met een sociaal dilemma wanneer ze diervriendelijke producten aanschaffen, omdat ze (persoonlijk relevante) monetaire waarde tegen (maatschappelijk relevante) dierenwelzijn moeten inwisselen (hoofdstuk 2). Om het sociale dilemma aan te

pakken kunnen positioneringsstrategieën dierenwelzijn versterken met persoonlijk relevante voordelen zoals: smaak, een goed gevoel en nieuwsgierigheid. Hierdoor worden diervriendelijke producten aantrekkelijk voor de koper. De bekende marketingstrategieën die worden gebruikt voor diervriendelijk voedsel beroepen zich respectievelijk op emoties van consumenten, functionele of zintuiglijke waarneming, nieuwsgierigheid en een gevoel van publiek belang; vers vlees speelt voornamelijk in op emotionele waarde (hoofdstuk 3). Positioneringsstrategieën die persoonlijk relevante voordelen van dierenwelzijn benadrukken kunnen effectief zijn in het aanmoedigen van consumenten om over te stappen naar diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees, en dit proces wordt gemedieerd door waardepercepties van de consument (hoofdstuk 4). Twee specifieke strategieën zijn effectief bevonden om consumenten over te laten stappen op diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees: de emotionele positioneringsstrategie (welke positieve gevoelens oproept bij de koper) en de epistemische strategie (welke nieuwsgierigheid oproept). Omdat de epistemische strategie bijna niet voorkomt in de praktijk (hoofdstuk 3), maar effectief is bevonden (hoofdstuk 4), zou het een bijzonder nuttige strategie kunnen zijn om een sterke en onderscheidende propositie te ontwikkelen voor een (nieuw) merk voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees.

Het antwoord op de vraag hoe positioneringsstrategieën en aanbevelingen door derden op elkaar inwerken bij het beïnvloeden van de keuze voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees wordt gegeven in twee empirische studies: een online experiment met Nederlandse consumenten (hoofdstuk 5) en een real-life experiment op het moment van aankoop met studenten van een Nederlandse universiteit (hoofdstuk 6). Dierenwelzijn is een kenmerk waarop consumenten moeten vertrouwen omdat ze het niet zelf kunnen beoordelen. Om de geloofwaardigheid van claims over dierenwelzijn te beoordelen, vertrouwen consumenten vaak op een aanbeveling van een derde partij, bijvoorbeeld in de vorm van een gecertificeerd dierenwelzijnslabel (hoofdstuk 2). Aanbevelingen door derden zijn een belangrijk element in de marketingstrategieën voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees, zoals aangetoond in een hypothetische (hoofdstuk 5) en in een realistische omgeving (hoofdstuk 6). In de hypothetische

omgeving is de aanbeveling door een derde, naast de positioneringsstrategie, noodzakelijk om de gepercipieerde waarde te verhogen en vervolgens de keuze voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees te bevorderen (hoofdstuk 5). In de realistische omgeving is de aanbeveling door een derde niet noodzakelijk maar wel bevorderlijk voor de bereidheid van consumenten om meer te betalen voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees (hoofdstuk 6). Kortom, marketingstrategieën lijken effectiever te zijn wanneer deze ondersteunt worden door een betrouwbare derde partij tenzij het merk van de fabrikant al beschouwd wordt als zeer geloofwaardig.

De vraag hoe individuele opvattingen van consumenten over sociale dilemma's de effectiviteit van marketingstrategieën beïnvloeden, is behandeld in een online experiment (hoofdstuk 4) en een real-life experiment (hoofdstuk 6). Het sociale dilemma bij de keuze voor diervriendelijke producten stuit inherent op een compromis. De individuele opvattingen van consumenten beïnvloeden de perceptie van het compromis. Sommige consumenten ervaren zulke compromissen als problematisch omdat het hun overtuigingen en motieven tegenspreekt, wat vervolgens hun koopgedrag beïnvloedt (hoofdstuk 2). Dit proefschrift laat consistent zien dat consumenten met tegenstrijdige overtuigingen en motieven minder gevoelig zijn voor marketingstrategieën voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees dan consumenten met ondubbelzinnige overtuigingen en motieven (hoofdstuk 4 en 6). Consumenten met dichotome motieven, zij die zowel het individuele als het publieke belang proberen te maximaliseren, zijn minder gevoelig voor positioneringsstrategieën dan consumenten met ondubbelzinnige motieven (hoofdstuk 4). Ook zijn consumenten met ambivalente gevoelens, zij die het eten van vlees associëren met zowel positieve als negatieve uitkomsten, minder gevoelig voor marketingstrategieën dan consumenten met ondubbelzinnige gevoelens (hoofdstuk 6). De effectiviteit van marketingstrategieën voor diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees zou dus beperkt kunnen zijn voor consumenten die een belangenconflict ervaren bij het kopen van vlees. Daarom zou men voorzichtig moeten zijn bij het opzetten van bewustmakingscampagnes over de effecten van vleesconsumptie en dierenwelzijn, omdat deze mogelijk consumenten

ontmoedigen om over te stappen van conventionele naar meer diervriendelijkere producten.

Dit proefschrift laat zien dat marketingstrategieën effectief kunnen zijn bij het aanmoedigen van consumenten om over te stappen op diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees als de strategieën het dierenwelzijn als persoonlijk relevant positioneren en daarnaast bewijs leveren voor de geclaimde verbetering van het dierenwelzijn. Door de effecten van en voorwaarden voor positioneringsstrategieën te onderzoeken, heeft dit proefschrift de mix van marketinginstrumenten verrijkt welke door bedrijven en beleidsmakers ingezet kunnen worden om consumenten aan te moedigen om diervriendelijker geproduceerd vlees te kiezen.

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About the author

Lenka van Riemsdijk-Kopičárová was born in Čadca, Slovakia on June 4, 1985. In 2009, she received her master's degree in Marketing at the University of Economics Bratislava, Slovakia. She also studied Political Science at Radboud University Nijmegen as an exchange student in 2008.

Shortly after finishing her studies, Lenka started to work as a marketing lecturer at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. Next to teaching various marketing courses and supervising Bachelor theses, Lenka is responsible for English-taught courses on consumer behaviour and branding. Her passion for consumer behaviour and animal welfare has led to the start of her PhD project at the Marketing and Consumer Behaviour group of Wageningen University in 2013. During her PhD she presented her research at international conferences and published several papers.

Lenka van Riemsdijk-Kopičárová
Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS)
Completed Training and Supervision Plan



Wageningen School
of Social Sciences

Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
A) Project related competences			
Writing PhD research proposal	MCB&HU	2012	6
Mobilizing the latent demand for animal friendly products (workshop)	EL&I-NWO	2013	0.5
B) General research related competences			
Introduction course	WASS	2013	1
Scientific Writing	Wageningen in'to Languages	2015	1.8
Systematic Literature Review	WASS	2013	2
Quantitative Data Analysis: Multivariate Techniques, YRM 60306	WUR	2013/2014	2
Advanced Statistics Course: Design of Experiment, MAT 22306	WIAS	2013	1
Quantitative Research Methodology and Statistics	WUR	2014	6
PhD lunch colloquia series	MCB	2013/2014	1.2
<i>The impact of value-based positioning strategies on consumer socially responsible product choice</i>	EMAC doctoral colloquium, Leuven, Belgium	2015	1
<i>Addressing the social dilemma in animal-friendly product choice with positioning strategies</i>	WAFL conference, Ede, the Netherlands	2017	1

Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
<i>Supporting animal-friendly food labels with positioning strategies</i>	WASS PhD day, Wageningen	2017	1
C) Career related competences/personal development			
Information Literacy including EndNote Introduction	WGS	2013	0.6
Supervision of Bachelor theses	HU	2019	3.8
Brain friendly working and writing	WGS	2019	0.3
Brain training	WGS	2019	0.3
Mobilising your scientific network	WGS	2019	1
Total			30.5

*One credit according to ECTS is on average equivalent to 28 hours of study load

Abbreviations:

EMAC = European Marketing Academy

EL&I = Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation

HU = University of Applied Sciences Utrecht

MCB = Marketing and Consumer Behaviour

NWO = The Dutch Research Council

WAFL = Welfare Assessment at Farm and Group Level

WASS = Wageningen School of Social Sciences

WGS = Wageningen Graduate School

WIAS = Wageningen Institute of Animal Sciences

WUR = Wageningen University and Research Centre

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