

Marketing strategy in the coordination and promotion of local products.

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Pour citer cet article : BOUCHOUAR. O & SOUAF. M (2024) « Marketing strategy in the coordination and promotion of local products », African Scientific Journal « Volume 03, Numéro 23 » pp: 1232 – 1252.

Date de soumission : Mars 2024

Date de publication : Avril 2024



DOI : 10.5281/zenodo.11244429

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Abstract

This article examines marketing strategy in coordinating and promoting local products, as well as research avenues for the new marketing of these products. Based on a thorough analysis of the specifics of local product marketing, the key determinants affecting their consumption, and consumer profiles associated with these products, this study offers valuable insights for the development of effective marketing strategies in this field. The research methodology includes a literature review exploring pathways for new marketing of local products. The findings highlight the growing importance of authenticity, provenance, and sustainability of food products for consumers, as well as the challenges faced by industry players, such as standardization of practices and competition from large agri-food industries. By adopting innovative approaches and strengthening collaboration between producers and distributors, it is possible to overcome these obstacles and effectively promote these products in the market. This study thus contributes to understanding the crucial role of marketing in promoting local products and identifying avenues for their economic and social development within food systems and local economies.

Keywords: Local products, Marketing strategy, Marketing determinants, Consumer profiles, Authenticity, Economic development, Social development.

Introduction

In this article, we reviewed the existing literature by presenting different research approaches for marketing regional products. We then discussed consumer preferences for these regional products and outlined the two key models of consumer purchasing behavior: the Consumer Decision-Making Process (CDM) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). These models are central to most studies in the field of food and regional products. This article aims to formalize the conceptual framework. It addresses the stage of influence, the cognitive/affective stage, the stage of alternative evaluation, and the stage of behavioral intentions. The hypotheses are developed based on the interrelationship between the different variables in the conceptual framework.

1. Literature review: research paths for a new marketing of local products

In a world where consumers are increasingly aware of the impact of their choices on the environment, health and society, the marketing of local products is emerging as a promising approach to meet their needs and aspirations. Local products, which reflect the cultural identity, tradition and quality of specific regions, offer an attractive alternative to standardized and massively produced products.

However, developing effective marketing for local products poses unique challenges. This requires a thorough understanding of market dynamics, consumer preferences and the distinctive characteristics of each terroir. With this in mind, research plays a crucial role in exploring different avenues and strategies to promote these products in an authentic and engaging manner.

1.1. The specificities of marketing local products

Research conducted by Kriwy et al. (2017) as well as research by Kashani-Nazari et al. (2016) showed that women are more inclined to buy local products than men. On the other hand, the study by Kokmaz et. (2014) obtained the opposite results, indicating that men are more likely to purchase these products than women. Although most studies have shown that consumers who are younger, highly educated, and have higher incomes are more likely to purchase local products (Kriwy P. et al. 2017, Pearson D. et al. 2013, Dettmann RL, Dimitri C., 2009, Paul J., Rana J. 2012, Lockie S. et al., 2004). Some studies have revealed different results, showing that age, profession and education do not have a significant impact on the acceptance of local products by consumers (Korkmaz M. et al., 2014, Nasir VA, Karakaya F. 2004). Given the fact that this demographic analysis did not provide the information necessary to successfully target consumers of local products, many authors have applied segmentation analysis in order to identify the characteristics of different segments of consumers of local products. terroir. The

results revealed that the same segments of these consumers cannot be found in all the markets studied, that is to say that consumers of local products have different demographic, psychographic and behavioral characteristics, observed in different markets and different countries (Seegebarth B. et al. 2009, Pearson D. et al., 2013, Peštek A. et al. 2018, Tleis M. et al., 2017). Thus, various studies have been carried out on consumer perception and the barriers that prevent them from purchasing these products in order to better understand what motivates the consumption of local products. Currently, there is an organization researching the motivations and barriers that determine consumer behavior and influence their decision-making process. Most of these studies have shown that consumers face quite similar motivations and barriers when purchasing local products, although the degree of their influence can differ considerably. The most important reasons for purchasing these food products can be divided into three groups (Iris Food Board 2014) as follows: Avoiding negative properties of conventional food products, such as the use of various harmful chemicals in production, unbiased characteristics of local products, such as safety, and positive characteristics that consumers think these products have better taste, greater nutritional value compared to conventional products, etc. This is confirmed by most studies carried out in different markets which suggest that the most important motivations for purchasing local products are linked to consumers' perception of these products as healthy, tasty, safe and of high nutritional value (Seegebarth B. et al., 2016, McEachern MG et al., 2002, Pearson D. et al. 2013). In addition, consumers believe that territorial production guarantees environmental protection, animal welfare and the preservation of natural resources (McEachern MG et al., 2002, Pearson D. et al. 2013, Persaud A. et al. 2017, Schuldt JP 2012, Pearson D. et al. 2013). It is worth emphasizing that health and environmental concerns are much more important than other reasons, as well as the fact that the relative importance of each of these reasons has not changed significantly over the time (Hartman Group Organic and Natural. 2019). A study conducted by Kereklas (2014) showed that, unlike the purchase of conventional food products which are mainly based on personal considerations and habits, the acceptance of local products is under the significant influence of altruistic concerns, as well only under the influence of social pressure and social approval. However, the impact of these factors is rather indirect and less important for price-conscious consumers (Iyer P. et al., 2016, Bhat S. et al., 2014). Although most consumers have a positive attitude towards local products, only a small number act in accordance with these attitudes, that is, the number of consumers who often purchase these products is much lower. Therefore, the link between attitudes and purchase intentions is much stronger than the link between intentions and actual consumer behavior (Ham M. et al., 2016).

The reasons for such a condition can be found in the barriers consumers face when purchasing local products. Most authors state that high prices are the most important obstacle, followed by the narrow range of products, low availability in stores, consumer distrust of certification labels, lack of time in the purchasing process, as well as negative attitudes towards local products caused by a lack of information and satisfaction with conventional products (Ham M. et al., 2016, Bryła P. 2016, Henryks J. et al., 2014).

1.1.1. Consumer Perspectives and Practices

Much of the literature dealing with local food marketing has focused on consumer purchasing preferences. Customers noted several barriers to accessing local food. Some observed that there was a lack of information on supplier location characteristics (e.g. address, hours, products sold, products in season) (Ohberg, 2012; Pearson et al., 2011), as well as temporal restrictions on the availability of local food, both in terms of opening hours and seasonal change of products offered (Pearson et al., 2011). This is further exemplified by many consumers' belief that conventional grocery stores provide a more convenient shopping experience (Weatherell, Tregear, & Allinson, 2003), making it easier to purchase all of their groceries in one place. However, many local food sellers do not feel able to sell their products in grocery stores due to traditional food sourcing strategies used by grocery stores (Bloom, 2012). This means buying in large quantities at lower unit prices. Thus, the "inconvenience" of local food constitutes an obstacle for consumers.

Local food is also perceived by customers to be more expensive than food found in conventional grocery stores (Pearson et al., 2011). This sentiment is echoed by sellers of local food products (Bloom, 2012) noting that among food producers, the biggest marketing concern was competition with cheaper imported products. Contrary to this idea, places to purchase local food, such as farmers' markets, have been shown to increase the amount of fresh produce available for purchase in disadvantaged areas and at more affordable prices (Larsen and Gilliland, 2009). Nganje, Hughner, and Patterson (2014) note that unwarranted perceptions of product safety risks associated with local produce can also affect customers' purchasing decisions. This highlights that greater awareness and education on several aspects of local food could help increase consumer interest in buying local.

An example of this can be seen at farmers' markets, where customers may not represent the views of the general consuming public, but there is a strong desire among local customers to purchase from and support local farmers. (Feagan and Morris, 2009). This desire can be attributed to the fact that consumers value the ability to interact with sellers at direct sales locations, more than worrying about product prices (Feagan and Morris, 2009). Support for

local produce may extend beyond farmers' markets, as grocery store customers have also demonstrated a willingness to pay a premium for produce from local farms (Toler , Briggeman , Lusk, & Adams, 2009) , hinting at a desire for fairness and greater equality across all food chains.

Although physical distancing issues with produce vendors cannot be easily overcome, effective marketing strategies could eliminate other barriers to local food that result from misinformation or lack of knowledge about food production and the local food system.

1.1.2. Supplier Perspectives and Practices

Marketing represents an attractive means of retailing, especially for small farms unable to achieve economies of scale, as it can help increase gross sales (Detre , Mark, Mishra , & Adhikari , 2011). Larger farms, better suited to achieve such economies of scale, generally engage in more traditional marketing chains (Corsi , Borsotto , Borri , & Strøm , 2009). Small farms most often cite the inability to meet product volume requirements and transaction costs as reasons for avoiding middlemen buyers and more “traditional” marketing chains (Eastwood, Brooker, Hall, & Rhea , 2002). This makes direct market farming all the more attractive, as there are no contractual obligations to meet with intermediaries. Direct marketers can also avoid market price volatility, thereby reducing price uncertainty (Broderick , Wright, & Kristiansen , 2011 ; Uematsu & Mishra , 2011).

At a time when the total number of farms has declined, the number of direct market farms and the value of products sold through direct marketing have increased, particularly among smaller farms (Low & Vogel, 2011; Monson , Mainville, & Kuminoff , 2008; Thilmany and Watson, 2004). Although direct market retailing for farmers involves a greater time commitment, as they must grow and sell produce, (Bloom, 2012; Tippins et al., 2002), the costs can be offset by other non-economic factors, such as perceiving more ability to interact with customers and receive valuable customer feedback on products (Broderick et al., 2011; Glowacki-Dudka , Murray, & Isaacs , 2012). These interactions with consumers can also serve as informal educational opportunities, which are considered an important element in helping to strengthen alternative food systems (Wittman et al., 2012). Direct marketing is perceived by sellers as a less stressful endeavor than those engaged in wholesaling because intermediaries can be very demanding (LeRoux , Schmit , Roth, & Streeter , 2009). Thus, the social value of direct market agriculture can be very attractive to farmers.

In order to make sellers of local food products more financially viable, customers must be recruited. Regarding farmers' markets, it has been noted that innovative advertising practices are necessary to increase promotion and ensure customer loyalty over a long period of time

(Schmit and Gómez, 2011). Schmit and Gómez (2011) recommended that farmers' markets use strategies similar to those currently used by grocery chains. This mimicry strategy also applies to farmers, who may find it advantageous to mobilize strategies used in other sectors to strengthen their entrepreneurial capacity (McElwee, 2006). However, replicating the marketing techniques used by large grocery chains can be difficult. Individual vendors or even farmers markets do not have access to the same advertising capital or time that grocery store chains have.

To overcome this problem, several regions have used directories to present what is available locally (Blouin et al., 2009). Since 2002, the Waterloo Region Health Unit ¹has made available to the public a paper, available at various tourist promotional locations, and a digital map of participating farmers who wish to display their farms. Although similar maps had been made, little analysis of the impact/effectiveness of this advertising strategy had been undertaken, with Waterloo representing one of the few regions to make these results available. More than 50% of the farmers surveyed attributed an increase in visits to the card and more than 40% attributed an increase in sales to the card (Xuereb, 2005). Perhaps these initiatives that expand a pool of agricultural resources offer more effective marketing than any single farmer could do.

Evidence on the marketing strategies used by direct market farmers is scarce and increasingly outdated. Instead, researchers have focused on the marketing of local produce in the context of farmers' markets (Pearson et al., 2011; Schmit and Gómez, 2011; Weatherell et al., 2003). In a survey of 59 Waterloo Region farms, more than 50% of farmers surveyed used word of mouth, roadside signs and/or newspaper advertisements in their marketing strategies, and more than 25 % of farmers used brochures/leaflets or had their own website (Xuereb, 2005). Additionally, over 65% of farmers indicated that road signs and word of mouth were among their most effective marketing methods (Xuereb, 2005).

Although this study informs the breadth of marketing instruments used to connect with consumers, it is limited to a relatively narrow geographic area. Another study examining farmers' marketing practices of 570 farms in the northeastern United States found that all respondents used word-of-mouth and more than half had business cards (Baer and Brown, 2005). Contrary to Xuereb's study, only 23% of farmers had road signs (Baer and Brown, 2005). Interestingly, only 48% of farmers had a mechanism to evaluate their advertising efforts, suggesting the need for farmers to have more education on how to develop and evaluate

¹ Waterloo is a city located south of Brussels, in Belgium.

advertising strategies (Baer and Brown, 2005). The motivation of farmers to use specific advertising strategies is lacking in the literature limited to the marketing practices of direct market farmers. Other authors have called for more attention to be paid to the promotional strategies used by direct market farmers (Timmons and Wang, 2010), a gap that the proposed study aims to fill.

Websites and other forms of technology are increasingly important tools for marketing among direct market farms. As the use of computers on farms has continued to grow over the past decade, this trend may continue to increase. In 2013, 67% of farmers in the United States had access to the Internet (United States Department of Agriculture, 2013). In Ontario, 58% of farms use a computer for farm management purposes (Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, 2013), with 44.7% of all farms having access to high-speed Internet (Statistics Canada, 2015).

However, computer use varied by farm, with larger producing farms more likely to use a computer for their business than smaller producers (United States Department of Agriculture, 2013). A similar trend was observed in Canada, with small farmers less likely to use a computer for their business (Statistics Canada, 2009). With lower adoption of computer use on small farms, it is unclear what role technology plays in the direct marketing of local produce.

In the context of North American agriculture, little academic interest has been given to the use of technology for marketing purposes, with more attention given to advances in production technology (e.g., see Tey and Brindal, 2012). Very little research has focused on the use of online marketing (i.e., via websites) by agricultural producers of any size. Internet access may be an important determinant of the financial success of direct marketing farms (Uematsu and Mishra, 2011), but the cause of this relationship is unclear. Some authors have hypothesized that farmers might use websites to highlight and complement other advertising efforts in which they are engaged (Baer and Brown, 2005), thereby increasing the reach of farms. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether the technology is used to complement other marketing efforts or whether it is a significant endeavor in its own right.

Even if farmers have the technological knowledge to manage and actively contribute to a digital marketing approach, they may not always be able to ensure the sustainability of such an involved marketing strategy. As Bloom (2012) notes, farmers feel the pressure to take on the dual roles of producer and distributor.

In interviews, farmers revealed that time constraints affect farmers' decisions regarding how much to produce, as well as where and how they would sell their product (Bloom, 2012; Griffin and Frongillo, 2003). This dual role can lead farmers to give up certain agricultural activities

due to time constraints (Tippins et al., 2002). The time required for any specific marketing strategy is an important consideration when determining its feasibility.

The literature on local food sales has grown over the past decade, with a greater academic focus on the role of local food in the broader food production system. However, the current literature on marketing in local food systems is limited. Greater attention was paid to customers' motivations to buy local rather than to the barriers sellers of local food products have to selling their product.

Additionally, existing marketing strategies attempt to grow local food and go beyond promoting individual vendors. The limited research conducted on these initiatives has found them to be effective, but more rigorous empirical research is needed to determine whether this evidence is purely anecdotal.

1.2. Main marketing determinants affecting the consumption of local products

A number of authors have conducted research on consumers' perception of a specific marketing instrument as an important element of the offering (product, price, distribution or promotion), in order to make suggestions for improving the offer on the market of local products (Song BL et al. 2016, Anisimova T., Sultan P. 2014, Argyropoulos C. et al. 2013, Enax L., Weber B. 2015, Puelles Gallo M. et al. 2014, Aschemann-Witzel J. 2013, E., Immink V. 2016). Thanks to the specificities of territorial production, food products from the region have an additional value which motivates consumers to buy them. However, this additional value cannot be confirmed by experiment. This is why consumers are looking for ways to distinguish these food products from conventional products (Song BL 2016, Anisimova T. 2014, Argyropoulos C., 2013). This highlights the importance of visual product cues that can positively or negatively affect consumers' senses and perceptions of product characteristics. However, although certification is very important for consumer trust, it is still unclear what visual attributes local food products should have and what the role of packaging is. Enax 's study found that it is of great importance to consumers, who find products with recognizable packaging healthier and tastier (Enax L., Weber B., 2015). Similar results were obtained by Puelles et al. (2014), highlighting the difference between producer and distributor brands. Producer brands are perceived to be of higher quality compared to private labels, while private labels are aimed at the price-conscious consumer group. A study by Aschemann-Witzel examined the importance of nutritional and health claims visible on packaging and their effects on consumers' perception of the sensory properties of local products (Puelles Gallo M., LlorensMarín M., Talledo Flores H., 2014). The results revealed that products with claims were neither more preferred nor rejected when it came to regular or loyal local product consumers. However, highlighting these

claims on packaging had significantly positive effects on casual shoppers. On the other hand, research carried out by van Herper et al. (2016) obtained opposite results. They revealed that packaging of all types can have negative effects on the sales of local products, highlighting the fact that offering products without packaging increases consumer choice and that this effect is not limited to local products. Taking into account the results of previous studies, it is still unclear which visible characteristics of local products, in addition to formed attitudes, have the greatest effect on consumer perception and senses, and to what extent these effects are important for the acceptance of local products.

Price is considered one of the main obstacles consumers face when making purchasing decisions in the local produce market (Nasir VA, Karakaya F., 2014, Ham M. et al., 2016, Bryła P. et al. 2016, Henryks J., Pearson D. 2014). Knowing that these products have high prices due to higher production costs and limited supply (Cavaliere A., Peri M., Banterle A., 2016), as well as the fact that their added value is intangible. Iyer et al. (2016) suggest that emphasis should be placed on promoting current and future benefits, particularly when targeting price- and value-conscious consumers. Similarly, Bezawada et al. (2013) point out that a reduction in prices and an increase in assortments are very effective for consumers of non-essential local products and also stimulate purchases by core consumers. This is particularly evident in sales of local food products with high purchase frequency, as well as for products that come directly from farms. However, promotional price reductions do not have significant effects on the frequency of purchase of this type of product (Bezawada R., Pauwels K., 2013, Herpen E. et al., 2013). Marian et al. (2014) obtained similar results, showing that the lowest purchase frequency is achieved for the most expensive organic brands. This implies that when consumers have another quality indicator, such as a certification label, they perceive higher prices only as a cost, and not as an indicator of additional product value. However, it remains unclear whether consumers perceive the high prices of these products as unjustified or whether these prices constitute a barrier to purchase due to insufficient income for most consumers. Answering this question is one of the main prerequisites for creating a successful business strategy in the local food market.

Another important obstacle to the growth of the market for local products is the insufficient development of distribution channels (Ham M. et al., 2016, Bryła P., 2016, Henryks J., Pearson D., 2014). However, different channel types attract different consumer segments. Specialized solidarity stores are particularly important for attracting the main consumers of local products (Hamzaoui-Essoussi L. et al., 2013, Liébana-Cabanillas F., 2014), because these stores offer a wide range of certified local food products. . On the other hand, although the Internet can be an

effective channel for sales aimed at young people (Liébana-Cabanillas F. 2014, Medina- Viruel MJ et al. 2014), the development of conventional stores is particularly important to attract consumers of non-essential local products, even if there is also a small percentage of loyal buyers who also purchase in this type of store (Cavaliere A., 2016, Herpen E., 2012). Although consumers adopt an attitude towards grocery stores and supermarkets not only based on their personal habits but also based on the range of products these stores sell (Islam S. 2015, Henryks J. et al. 2011). Furthermore, this can have positive effects even on the image of low-cost outlets. According to the study by Diallo et al. (2015), although local products have high prices, customers do not see a link between local products and the price level in stores, probably because they believe that the higher prices of local products are related to production costs and high quality, not to the store's pricing strategy. The results of previous studies suggest that consumers perceive insufficient development of distribution channels as one of the main obstacles to the future development of the market for local products. However, the results obtained do not indicate whether consumers perceive the lack of these products in their favorite grocery stores as the main problem, or the inability of consumers to find local food products in any other type of store despite the effort they are willing to make when purchasing these products, which is an even bigger barrier.

Previous studies related to the promotion of local products have focused on the creation of messages in line with the motivations of consumers of local products. Kereklas et al. (2014) revealed that promotional messages with both altruistic and selfish appeals are most effective when targeting consumers. Similar results were obtained by several other authors (Hidalgo-Baz M. et al., 2016, Salai S. et al. 2014). However, although some studies suggest that social networks and other Internet-based channels could be effective instruments for promoting local food products (Medina- Viruel MJ et al. 2015, Pechrová M. et al. 2015). It is still unclear whether consumers prefer traditional or modern media as sources of information about this type of products and what is the relative impact of different promotion channels on consumer preferences and acceptance of this type of product. Taking into account all the factors mentioned above, this document fills one of the literal gaps regarding the marketing mix instruments that are discussed above, as basic elements of the offer in the market of terroir products in development.

The decision on marketing channel system is the most critical one faced by management and the role of marketing channel should not only serve markets, it should also create markets (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). Channel decisions involve a relatively long-term commitment to other businesses. Push and pull marketing strategy is really important in channel management.

Push strategy is a promotion strategy focused on using sales force and trade promotion to push products through channels. The producer promotes the products to wholesalers. These promote to retailers who promote to consumers. Pull strategy is a promotion strategy that requires spending heavily on advertising and consumer promotion to increase consumer demand (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004; Kotler and Lane, 2006).

Finally, we can say that marketing through authenticity is a precise approach to succeed in the marketing of local products. The marketing strategy should then be focused on promoting physical evidence of the authenticity of local products and the excellent services offered to consumers as well as on the participation of stakeholders in the development of the authenticity of local products at a price reasonable which will differentiate the offer in a distinct way.

1.2.1. Marketing of local products as a development opportunity

Concerns surrounding food scares have increased the importance of product provenance and traceability for consumer confidence. There has been a growing desire to move away from conventional food supply chains towards high quality markets based on origin and authenticity (Morley et al., 2000; DEFRA, 2002). The opportunity to add value and benefit by capitalizing on public enthusiasm for products locally has been highlighted by The Policy Commission (2002). Policy initiatives were a response (Weatherell et al., 2003). Knight et al. (2007) argued that being able to trace production back to the individual producer is a major advantage in product sourcing. Recent research from Mintel (2010) indicates that the purchase of local products is increasingly driven by support for local farmers, food producers and retailers. Additionally, the emergence of farm stores and other direct sales initiatives provides an excellent opportunity for cooperatives to take advantage of this demand.

1.2.2. Challenges for marketing local food products

An obvious barrier to local food is the perceived price premium, particularly in a recession where luxury food products may be the first to be discarded by cost-conscious consumers (Watkins, 2008). Several studies (Weatherell et al., 2003 ; IGD, 2005) have suggested that although consumers are interested in local products, they consider them more expensive than alternatives. Mintel (2008) found that price is seen as the main barrier to market expansion for locally sourced products, with 20% of buyers saying it is too expensive. However, it has also been established that 20% of consumers source local produce to save money (Mintel , 2008). There seems to be some confusion around the relationship between rising prices and local products. Therefore, perceptions of price, quality and value for money are issues that need to be addressed for consumer connection.

Archer et al. (2003) found that lack of convenience and preference for supermarkets are other reasons why consumers do not visit local food stores. Along with price, IGD (2005) identified awareness, accessibility and availability as other major barriers to growth in the local produce market. Therefore, emphasis must be placed on the availability and accessibility of local products for the future confidence and growth of the sector.

The customer profile can be seen as an obstacle. Archer et al. (2003) found that farmers' market shoppers were generally female, aged over 55 and retired, with the majority traveling up to ten miles and spending on average 30-100 Euro. Young shoppers are accustomed to year-round products, so marketing activity is needed to emphasize the role of local and seasonal products.

1.2.3. Retailer Approaches to Local Food Marketing

There has been a marked change in attitude towards local produce among high street retailers, influenced by greater public anxiety about the food system and consumers placing greater trust in specialist stores (Padel , Foster, 2005). However, consumers' preference for purchasing local products remains traditional supermarkets (Weatherell et al., 2003). If the market share of local food products is to increase significantly, supermarkets will have to play their role by contributing positively to local economies. It is clear that supermarkets want to be part of this resurgence, but there are concerns that they have no underlying sustainable commitment to a local food ethos (Jones et al., 2004; CPRE, 2008). This has controversially affected the local food sector which is characterized by small businesses (DEFRA 2, 2003) but it is the supermarkets which attract the majority of shoppers. These have begun to incorporate the concept of terroir into their stores, but it is assumed that this is only a reaction to current demand and that their predominant interests still lie in global sourcing. Supermarket distribution systems are served from domestic purchases (Hingley , 2005) and, as a result, retailers' interpretations of the concept of local food differ significantly. For example, some large retailers have equated the term terroir to the area covered by a regional distribution center (RDC), which could be more than 100 miles. Furthermore, Sodano and Hingley (2009) suggest that the centralized purchasing structure of large retailers does not fit so easily into the management of smaller, niche or specialist supplier networks; which are more likely to be decentralized and do not produce the economies of scale of large supplier partnerships for these retailers.

During the last quarter of the 20th century, localism and community enterprise fell out of fashion and suffered in the era of national purchasing policies and centralized efficiencies (Sodano , Hingley , 2009). So, in the climate of the modern food industry, the local produce

² Department for Environment , Food and Rural Affairs .

and beverage sector is still a nascent industry in need of support. Ilbery et al. (2006), believe that the local food sector can now offer a significant alternative to the dominant conventional food supply chain built around national sourcing (Jones et al., 2004; Watkins, 2008).

1.3. Profiles of consumers of local products

Previous studies show that consumer profiles have a significant impact on their purchasing behavior for local products (Lea and Worsley 2005; Tsakiridou et al. 2008). Socioeconomic variables such as age, education and income are important in decision-making and the purchase of local products.

Consumers with higher income and education show a strong correlation with food safety and environmental concerns (Tsakiridou et al. 2008). In general, consumers of these products belong to higher socio-economic segments (Connor and Douglas 2001; O'Donovan and McCarthy 2002).

Another study reveals that consumers of local products come from urban centers, are better educated and wealthier, and are more concerned about environmental and food safety issues (Gendall , Betteridge , and Bailey 1999). Similarly, in Europe for example, consumers of local products tend to be highly educated and belong to a high income category (Roddy , Cowan and Hutchinson 1996). A demographic profile shows them to be female, aged 30 to 45, with children and having higher levels of disposable income (Davies, Titterington and Cochrane 1995). Studies (Fotopoulos and Krystallis 2002a, b; Tsakiridou , Mattas and Tzimitra Kalogianni 2006) reveal that groups with a higher level of education and higher income display strong awareness and high purchasing intention for local products, while users without a territorial identity present higher levels of lower education and income.

1.3.1. Sex

One of the main demographic variables for purchasing local products is gender. Studies (Lea and Worsley 2005; Tsakiridou , Mattas and Tzimitra-Kalogianni 2006) show that women have a more positive attitude towards local products and are more likely to purchase them regularly. This could be partly explained by the fact that they do the household shopping and take on a higher level of responsibility for the family, and are therefore more likely to be conscious of local produce (Lockie et al. 2004; Onyango , Hallman and Bellows 2007). Another study (Ureña , Bernabéu and Olmeda 2008) claims that although women have more favorable attitudes towards the purchase and consumption of local products than men, they are less willing to pay a premium for it. Women are more concerned about health, diet, and environmental information, but they also demand more information about food products and seek to take advantage of lower costs where available. Conversely, the study by Roitner-Schobesberger et

al. (2008) curiously reveals that men in Bangkok seem more inclined than women to buy local products. This is because men in Thailand have higher educational qualifications and earn higher incomes than women.

Dahm , Samonte , and Shows (2009) studied student attitudes in the southeastern United States. An equal number of men and women knew the correct definition of the term *terroir*, recognized the labels and label of a *terroir* product and expressed positive attitudes towards *terroir* products, emphasizing the fact that gender is not not important in the decision to buy local products.

This finding differs somewhat from other studies which have identified women as having the strongest opinions and attitudes towards local products. Thus, the influence of gender on the purchasing behavior of these products could be considered questionable.

1.3.2. Age

Many studies suggest that younger consumers are more likely to purchase products than older consumers (Onyango , Hallman , and Bellows 2007). Budget constraints may indirectly influence purchasing because many older consumers have limited disposable income (Davies, Titterington , and Cochrane 1995; Rimal , Moon, and Balasubramanian 2005). In contrast, Roitner-Schobesberger et al. (2008) reveal that consumers of local products tend to be older. Older consumers (over 51) have a more positive attitude towards local products than younger age groups. The older consumer tends to have health problems, in part because of perceived health vulnerability and the fact that they are generally at greater health risk than younger consumers (Bhaskaran and Hardley 2002). . In a Swedish study, Magnusson et al. (2001; 2003) state that there is no significant difference between age groups regarding their intention to purchase local products. As such, one could infer that the importance of age may not be as clear as it initially was.

1.3.3. Level of education

There is a strong correlation between the increase in the consumption of local products and the increase in formal education levels. On the other hand, consumers with general scientific training are more inclined to consume local products (Lockie et al. 2002). A European study by Margetts et al. (1997) suggested that education level is the most influential factor on perceptions of healthy eating. In Greece, education appears to have transformed the unconscious consumer into a highly motivated organic supporter, and overall, educated respondents appear to be more likely to know nutritional information (Krystallis , Fotopoulos , and Zotos 2006).

Several studies (Arvanitoyannis , Krystallis and Kapirti 2003; Fotopoulos and Krystallis 2002a; Tsakiridou et al. 2008) assert that consumers with higher education are more willing to pay a high price for local products. In contrast, an earlier study in the United States (Thompson and

Kidwell 1998) found a negative relationship between education and willingness to pay; Shoppers with a college or professional degree were less likely to purchase local products because they had less confidence in the retail outlet, the certification process, and the value of the product. Lea and Worsley (2005) argue that education level produced minimal differences in the propensity to purchase local products, a view that is supported by other studies (Lin, Smith, and Huang 2008; Rimal , Moon and Balasubramanian 2005). Consequently, we do not know to what extent the level of education can be a determining factor in the purchase of a local product.

1.3.4. Income level

Higher income and education levels have a strong correlation with food security and environmental concerns (Tsakiridou et al. 2008). According to British studies (Rimal , Moon and Balasubramanian 2005; Tregear , Dent and McGregor 1994), the level of disposable income is positively correlated with the purchase of a local product. As was discovered in one study, most consumers of local products were high-income earners, often professionals with a good level of education (Chryssochoidis and Krystallis 2005). These results contradict a study (Fotopoulos and Chryssochoidis 2000) which revealed that higher income in a household was not an essential problem in the purchase of local products. However, Lockie et al. (2002) in their study, based on Australian data, emphasize that low-income people are not necessarily less interested in consuming local products. Here too, we are faced with contrasting data and conclusions and, as such, we must maintain certain reservations on the importance of the level of household income as important demographic variables for the purchasing behavior of local products .

1.3.5. Role of family

The role of the family is another potential influence on the choice of local products (Margetts et al. 1997). Hill and Lynchehaun (2002) suggest that children have a major influence on purchasing decisions for local products. Families are often introduced to local products with the arrival of newborns, given the additional concern families have for babies' safety. Buyers of local produce are more likely to be married couples aged 35 to 55 with children (McEachern and Willock 2004). According to one study, households with young children are willing to pay a higher price for local products than other households (Soler, Gil and Sánchez 2002). These studies are consistent with previous studies which demonstrate the presence of children in the family and their encouraging role in the choice of consumption of local products (Huang 1996; Thompson and Kidwell 1998). On the other hand, one study (Padel and Foster 2005) indicates that individual health was a more motivating reason than family health, even for parents.

“Frequent” local buyers generally have fewer children than the average. Households without children have clearly established a link with local food as a source of “pleasure”. Surprisingly, one study (Magnusson et al. 2001) downplays the effect of children, indicating a minimal difference in the intention to purchase local products between families with children and those without.

Discussion

In this article, we examine the marketing strategy in the coordination and promotion of local products, as well as the research avenues for new marketing of these products. Local products, due to their close connection to a specific place and their unique characteristics, are attracting increasing interest among both consumers and suppliers. Our study focuses on the specificities of marketing local products, the main determinants affecting their consumption and the consumer profiles associated with these products. By analyzing these aspects, we aim to provide valuable insights for the development of effective marketing strategies in this area.

The specificities of marketing local products

- Consumer Perspectives and Practices: Our study results reveal that consumers are placing increasing importance on the authenticity and provenance of food products. The notion of terroir arouses particular interest, often associated with values of tradition, quality and sustainability. This highlights the need for marketing strategies to highlight these aspects in order to meet consumer expectations.
- Supplier Perspectives and Practices: Our results show that suppliers of local products have a deeper understanding of the unique characteristics of their products and their target market. However, certain gaps persist in terms of communication and distribution, highlighting the need to develop more effective marketing strategies to promote these products to consumers.

Main marketing determinants affecting the consumption of local products

- Marketing of local products as a development opportunity: Our results highlight the potential for economic and social development represented by the marketing of local products. By highlighting their specificities, players in the sector can not only stimulate demand, but also promote local development and the preservation of traditional know-how.
- Challenges for marketing local food products: We have identified several challenges facing players in the marketing of local products, including the standardization of production and distribution practices, as well as increased competition from large agri-

food industries. These challenges highlight the need to innovate and adapt marketing strategies to maintain the competitiveness of these products in the market.

- Retailers' approaches to local food marketing: Our results show that retailers play a crucial role in the promotion and dissemination of local food products. However, disparities remain in their commitment and understanding of the specifics of these products. It is therefore essential to strengthen collaboration between producers and distributors to optimize the visibility and accessibility of these products on the market.

Profiles of consumers of local products

We observed significant differences in preferences and motivations for purchasing local products depending on the gender of consumers. These results highlight the importance of adopting a differentiated approach in marketing strategies in order to meet the specific needs of each segment of the population.

- Consumer age also influences their purchasing behavior and their perceptions of local products. Younger generations are often more sensitive to aspects related to sustainability and innovation, while older people generally attach greater importance to tradition and authenticity. These results highlight the importance of adapting marketing messages according to different age groups.
- Our results indicate that the level of education of consumers influences their sensitivity to aspects of quality and provenance of local products. More educated consumers are often more inclined to seek out authentic products and to be sensitive to arguments promoting terroir. This suggests the need to develop tailored communication strategies to effectively reach this market segment.
- The income level of consumers plays an important role in their purchasing habits for local products. Our results show that higher-income consumers are generally willing to spend more on quality, locally sourced products. However, offering a diverse price range is essential to make these products accessible to a wider range of consumers.
- Finally, the role of the family also influences purchasing behavior for local products. Eating habits and culinary preferences transmitted within the family play a crucial role in shaping the tastes and preferences of individuals. Therefore, marketing strategies must take into account the social and cultural influence of the family in the promotion and consumption of local products.

In conclusion, our results highlight the crucial importance of a strategic and differentiated approach in the marketing of local products. By understanding the specificities of the market,

consumer expectations and the challenges faced by players in the sector, it is possible to develop effective marketing strategies to promote these products, stimulate demand and promote their economic and social development.

Conclusion

Our study offers an in-depth perspective on marketing strategy in the coordination and promotion of local products, as well as on research avenues for new marketing of these products. Through a rigorous analysis of the specificities of the marketing of local products, the main determinants influencing their consumption and the consumer profiles associated with these products, we were able to extract valuable lessons for the development of effective marketing strategies in this area.

We have found that consumers are placing increasing importance on the authenticity, provenance and sustainability of food products, highlighting the need for marketing strategies to highlight these characteristics in order to meet market expectations. Likewise, suppliers of local products must better understand the specificities of their target market and develop more effective communication and distribution strategies to promote their products.

Our results also highlighted the potential for economic and social development represented by local products, as well as the challenges faced by players in the sector, such as the standardization of practices and competition from large agri-food industries. However, by adopting innovative approaches and strengthening collaboration between producers and distributors, it is possible to overcome these obstacles and effectively promote these products in the market.

When it comes to consumer profiles, we observed significant differences based on gender, age, education level, income level and family role. These insights highlight the importance of adopting a differentiated approach in marketing strategies to meet the specific needs of each population segment and maximize the impact of marketing initiatives.

In conclusion, our study offers valuable perspectives to guide marketing strategies in the field of local products. By understanding the specificities of the market, identifying challenges and adapting to different consumer profiles, it is possible to effectively promote these products, stimulate demand and promote their sustainable development and positive contribution to local economies. We hope that these results will serve as a basis for future research and contribute to strengthening the position of local products in food systems and agri-food markets.

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