

Well-being as a global food trend: Health, sustainability and authenticity

Klaus G. Grunert, Natália Rohenkohl do Canto, Rongduo Liu & Ekaterina Salnikova¹

Abstract

Consumers view food not only as a bundle of attributes like nutrients and sensory properties, but also holistically as a source of pleasure and happiness. The well-known trends towards more healthful, sustainable, and authentic food, have long been viewed as involving trade-offs in the mind of the consumers, such that one has to give up something for obtaining something else, leading to a decrease in pleasure and happiness. We argue that we see a development towards foods that combine healthfulness, sustainability, and authenticity in a synergistic way, thus contributing to both the cognitive and affective elements of subjective well-being. We illustrate with evidence and examples from different parts of the world.

Introduction

In the food industry, like everywhere else, the major drivers of innovation are technological progress and changes in consumer needs and wants (Harmsen, Grunert & Declerck, 2000). Technological progress has allowed the food industry to produce foods with better sensory properties, improved nutritional profiles, lower degrees of processing, longer shelf life, and higher degrees of convenience, to mention a few. However, many new food products launched on the market fail and disappear again rather quickly, in spite of the product benefits enabled by the technology used. Extant research on success factors in new product development has identified *product concept effectiveness* as a major determinant of having success with new products. For this, the new product must align well not only with the launching company, its overall business strategy, and its technological and production-related skills and competencies, but also with the needs and wants of targeted consumers (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1995). Therefore, the analysis of changes in consumer needs and wants is one of the major prerequisites for successful new product development.

Looking back at the development of food-related consumer needs and wants for the past 50 years, most people would agree that there have been certain changes, which, in different guises, have been occurring in many places around the world (Grunert, 2017). For several decades we have seen a health trend building up, where healthfulness becomes an important motive for consumers that competes with the basic motive of seeking pleasure and sensory reward in food. Likewise, for many years we have seen the trend towards more convenience, with time-pressured consumers

¹ Klaus G. Grunert is Professor Marketing and Director of the MAPP Centre, Department of Management, Aarhus University. Natália Rohenkohl do Canto is a PhD student at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil. Rongduo Liu is Associate Professor at China Women's University, Beijing, China. Ekaterina Salnikova is a PhD student at the MAPP Centre, Department of Management, Aarhus University. Address correspondence to Klaus G. Grunert, klg@mgmt.au.dk.

looking for ways to save time and effort in the shopping, preparation, and consumption of food. More recently, we have seen the development of a sharpened focus on the authenticity of food. Perhaps, as a reaction to the globalization of food supply and increasingly less transparent food chains, many consumers focus on products that they regard as real, natural, unalienated, unspoiled, original, artisan, and coming from short supply chains. In addition, we have recently started seeing a much increased focus on the sustainability of food production, with people beginning to pay attention to topics like the environmental impact of meat production, food miles, and alternative sources of protein.

The way, in which these trends affect consumer food choice, has often been discussed in terms of trade-offs. Consumers perceive trade-offs between health and taste, for example, because healthy products are associated with low fat, sugar, and calories, and many products that are regarded as tasty are high in energy and macronutrients (Chrysochou et al., 2010). Foods with specific health properties, the so-called functional foods, have been developed to respond to consumer interest in healthy products, but sometimes they fail because consumers don't regard them as authentic (Lähteenmäki, 2010). Innovation in the food sector has been linked to an analysis of these trade-offs and to an intimate understanding of the way in which consumers form preferences.

However, today we believe that we can see the contours of the trends coming together. Their common denominator is the concept of *well-being*. Well-being is a subjective state and is commonly conceived as having two components: an affective component designating a feeling of happiness, and a cognitive component designating a feeling of satisfaction (Diener, 2012). In a food context, well-being thus refers to the feeling of happiness that good food and a good meal can elicit in people, and to people's appraisal that the food they eat is satisfactory in terms of key criteria like taste and health. The two components influence each other: feelings of satisfaction can contribute to a feeling of happiness, but also a feeling of happiness can color satisfaction appraisals by a form of the halo effect.

Of course, food has always been related to happiness. What is new is how happiness with food is related to satisfaction with key criteria. Healthy food is no longer only a grudge that prevents us from indulging in cream cakes and other less healthy foods, but also it is the happiness resulting from the feeling of doing something good for your body. Making sustainable food choices means not only feeling a pressure to reduce your meat consumption, but also the happiness resulting from the feeling of living a life in balance and harmony. Buying organic food not only means preventing your children from pesticide residues, but also brings the happiness resulting from supporting a form of production that is regarded as sympathetic (Goetzke, Nitzko & Spiller, 2014). And while cultural differences exist regarding perceptions on how specific foods affect well-being, the basic patterns of how foods are perceived to be related to different dimensions of well-being seems to be rather stable across different geographical areas (Ares et al., 2016). At the same time, we realize that food-related well-being is related to many other factors in addition to food products, like the social setting of eating and the resources one can bring to his/her food-related life (Dean et al., 2008). However, as we take a product innovation perspective, we concentrate specifically on the product-related parts. Our conceptual model of food-related well-being is shown in Figure 1.

Looking at consumer demand for food from the well-being perspective has important implications for new product development. First, it emphasizes that intangible product characteristics – health properties, the way the product was produced, the raw materials it is based on, the transparency of the value chain – become very important for the success of the product. Second, and following from the first, trust and credibility become key factors, along with the implications for market communication, third party certification, and brand building. Third, it emphasizes that the physical product and its intangible characteristics need to be in harmony and support each other. The appearance, the smell, the texture, and the taste - all need to support the positioning of the product as one that contributes to the well-being as described above.



Figure 1: Food-related well-being

There is still a plethora of unknowns concerning how a food product and its properties contribute to well-being (Block et al., 2011). In this paper, we will assemble some evidence to support our basic premise that well-being is a fundamental driver for consumer food demand on a global basis.

Health and well-being

Well-being in a food-related context is strongly associated with physical health (Ares et al., 2014). Health concern is one of the major trends of today’s food consumption in industrialized societies (Grunert, 2013). This concern is driven by an increasing focus on food and lifestyle-related diseases (i.e. diabetes, obesity, etc.), on an aging population, and on increasing consumer affluence. These factors have increased consumer interest in food products that support healthy lifestyles and reduce the risk of certain diseases (Asioli et al., 2017). Thus, food products that offer a health benefit continue to capture an increasingly greater share of the global food market. New food products have been launched with a health positioning, and even brands have been created with a view towards eliciting health associations. Nutrition labelling has received widespread attention as a policy tool to enable healthy choices and has become mandatory in many countries. Still, the existing research on the effects of nutrition labelling on consumer choice suggests that

these effects are limited (e.g., Sacks, Rayner & Swinburn, 2009) with a possible exception of simple health logos (Mørk et al., 2017).

While healthy food is an important element in the public discourse on food and eating, its role in actual food choice is more complex. This has to do with the fact that food choice is guided by multiple motives (Grunert & Wills, 2007). Additionally, much of the public discourse has painted a picture of healthy eating as something that requires compromises on other food choice motives such as taste, pleasure, and social gathering (Chrysochou et al., 2010), although the degree to which such trade-offs are felt seems to differ between cultures (Rozin, 2005).

Trade-offs between healthfulness and other desirable properties of food, especially taste, are not limited to only reformulated products (e.g., Hamilton et al., 2000). In Europe, many consumers are skeptical about functional foods because foods that have been enriched or otherwise modified for a health purpose are regarded as less natural and, thus, less authentic (Lähteenmäki et al., 2010). In other parts of the world, this trade-off seems to play a lesser role. For example, the increasing diabetic population in Japan and China is opening up consideration opportunities for supplement and functional food manufacturer to develop new products to mitigate or help prevent the disease. Functional foods for Asia's aging population have been identified as a core growth opportunity for firms in Singapore (Tay, 2017).

To the extent that consumers experience such trade-offs between healthfulness and other desirable properties of food, they may be satisfied with the healthfulness of the product, but the product will not elicit the positive affect that contributes to happiness and ultimately well-being. In the same time, we also have examples of foods bought for health reasons where such trade-offs seem to play a much lesser role. This goes, for example, for the rising importance of clean labels – products that are positioned as *not* containing some particular ingredient, like artificial additives, gluten, or lactose (Asioli et al., 2017). In Europe, the number of consumers who consider the ingredient list as an important item has risen from 3% to 78% within a few years, and it has been the second most important factor for consumers choosing a food product, after price (Nascimento et al., 2018). More than 75% of consumers in the U.S. report reading ingredients list before deciding to purchase, and a staggering 91% say that recognizable ingredients are an important aspect in that decision. 68% want to understand every ingredient in a list with a single unrecognizable ingredient affecting their purchase decision (NPI, 2017). Such numbers are subject to the biases of self-reporting, but mirror the high level of consumer interest in product ingredients. The objective health effects of changes in product formulations that go with clean label products are usually small or limited to a small group of consumers with special health concerns, but a much wider range of consumers perceives them as healthier alternatives (Hartmann et al., 2018). The number of products launched with such free-from positionings has been steadily rising during the last years. It has been argued that the growth of such alternative theories of what healthy eating entails is linked to the development of socialmedia, so that consumers easily can find others that corroborate their own views on what is healthy (Sarraf et al., 2019). We believe that what is common for these alternative interpretations of healthy eating is that they break the formerly perceived trade-off between healthy eating and other food choice motives, by combining healthiness with product characteristics viewed as making the food more authentic (see below) and

at the same time eliciting positive affect in the consumer, leading to a higher degree of subjective well-being.

Another example where trade-offs play a lesser role and not only where consumers perceive a food as healthy, but also where the food seems to elicit positive affect in consumers, is superfoods. Superfoods is not a term used by nutritionists, but it is widely used to designate minimally processed foods that because of their nutrient density have desirable functional properties and that at the same time are viewed as natural, like aloe vera or acai berries. For example, a study on Germany consumers' preference for superfood ingredients, using bread as a case, found that consumers valued bread that serves a functional purpose through superfood ingredients such as linseed or chia (Meyerding et al., 2018).

We, thus, believe that the development of new healthy food products has been hampered by the fact that these products often lead the consumers to think about these products in terms of trade-offs, possibly resulting in satisfaction with their health properties, but also in a lack of positive affect. Products not framed in terms of such trade-offs will have a higher change of eliciting positive affect. Products combining the healthy with the authentic are good examples for this.

Sustainability and well-being

The sustainability topic has been receiving growing attention among consumers (Crabbe, Moriarty, & Lieberman, 2018), although the fact that consumers link food production and consumption to sustainability aspects is of relatively recent origin (Grunert et al., 2014). Still, we have already seen markets replete with eco-labels, both ethical and environmental (e.g., Rainforest Alliance, Fair Trade, Carbon Footprint, Marine Stewardship Council etc.). Major topics in the discussion about food and sustainability have been climate change, food waste, and ethical aspects of food production.

Climate change is “probably one of the most pressing challenges of this century” (Shi, Visschers, & Siegrist, 2015: p.2183). It has led to an increasing focus on environmentally friendly purchases, with at least some consumers being willing to pay for products that have a low carbon footprint (Adaman et al., 2011; Motoshita et al., 2015). One food item that has been receiving special attention in the climate change discussion is meat. In the last few years, consumers have increasingly viewed eating less meat as beneficial for the environment (Siegrist, Visschers, & Hartmann, 2015). The meat reduction theme develops on the background of a meat reduction trend that has been in the making for some time, especially with younger women (Kubberød et al., 2002). Meat reduction trend originally had nothing to do with the environmental impact of meat production, but with a trend towards vegetarianism that has likewise been ongoing for some time, although with very different incidence in different parts of the world. While sales of meat substitute products have been growing, their overall market share is still very small. This may be related to the fact that the public discourse on meat reduction and meat substitutes has again been framed in terms of a trade-off, namely that meat reduction is necessary for environmental reasons and that this necessarily implies that everybody needs to give up some of his/her eating pleasure (Hoek et al., 2011). In other words, meat reduction and use of meat substitutes may be perceived as contributing to sustainability, but as leading to a decrease in well-being. This may change with the

current development in the positive framing of alternative proteins, where even insects are being portrayed as gastronomically attractive and are met with positive curiosity by some consumers (Videbæk et al., 2017).

Another development refers to concerns related to the waste generated in the food sector, which can be divided into two main categories: food waste and packaging waste. Concerns about food waste are related to the fact that one-third of the food produced for human consumption in the world is lost or wasted. Although consumers want to avoid food waste, this usually is not prioritized when there are trade-offs in relation to concerns with taste, convenience, or health (Aschemann-Witzel, de Hooge, Amani, Bech-Larsen, & Oostindjer, 2015). In the same time, food packaging is produced in high volumes, and often has a short and single usage, causing problems related to waste management and littering (Geueke, Groh, & Muncke, 2018). Consumers believe that avoiding excessive packaging has one of the strongest impact on the environment (Tobler, Visschers, & Siegrist, 2011). With this growing awareness of the environmental damage associated with conventional packaging, consumers are becoming interested in ‘green’, ‘environmentally friendly’, or ‘sustainable’ packaging (Herbes, Beuthner, & Ramme, 2018; Singh & Pandey, 2018). However, consumers have a lack of knowledge about environmentally friendly packaging, and the characteristics that make a packaging be considered “sustainable” can differ across cultures (Herbes et al., 2018).

For some consumers, their purchase decisions are driven by the commitment to environmental and social values (Ladhari & Tchegnna, 2015). This trend is related to consumers’ willingness to pay more for ethical brands (Crabbe et al., 2018), and two of the concerns that receive special attention in this aspect are animal welfare and social inequality.

Animal welfare “involves societal and human values, ethical concerns and moral considerations since it incorporates the belief of what is right or what is wrong in animal treatment and care” (Cembalo et al., 2016: p.237). With animals being recognized as sentient beings (Akaichi & Revoredo-Giha, 2016) and with the negative perception of modern farming among the public (Clark et al., 2016), consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about many aspects of animal welfare (Bonny et al., 2017; Clark et al., 2016, 2017), especially in industrialized countries (Grunert, Sonntag, Glanz-Chanos, & Forum, 2018). After reviewing 80 studies on the topic, Clark et al. (2016) concluded that the public considers two core concepts as central aspects to a good welfare: (1) naturalness (providing enough space and freedom, having access outdoors and to un-adulterated feed) and (2) humane treatment (good housing condition, with access to natural light, cleanliness and sufficient space, among others). Examples of conditions that are considered inhumane refer to the use of battery cages in poultry, gestation crates and castration without anaesthetic in pigs. Other aspects “off the farm” are also being increasingly considered in welfare concerns, as animal transport and slaughter conditions (Clark et al., 2016).

There are studies suggesting that consumers have a generally low willingness-to-pay (WTP) for all animal types with animal welfare attribute, which can result in behavioral changes towards the acquisition of higher welfare products (Clark et al., 2017). However, the concerns about animal

welfare issues vary according to age, gender, education and familiarity. The most concerned individuals with the topic and with a higher WTP for welfare food products are younger, female, with a higher education and less familiar with modern production (Clark et al., 2016, 2017; Eurobarometer, 2016). The attitudes towards the issue also seems to vary according to animal type, with layer hens and broiler chickens viewed as farmed under the worst welfare conditions, and with dairy cows' conditions being viewed more positively. Farming conditions for pigs vary across studies, but seem to be regarded as needing less improvement than chickens (Clark et al., 2016).

The premiums consumers are willing to pay for better animal standards also vary according to other factors, as animal type, region (Clark et al., 2017), and product type (Ortega & Wolf, 2018). In Ortega and Wolf's (2018) study, for example, more value was given to high- (e.g. pork chop) than low-value (e.g. ground pork) products; and the demand for different products varied, with 91% of the consumers investigated having a positive animal welfare demand for eggs, 90% for chicken breast, 78% for ground pork, and 85% for pork chops. Clark et al.'s (2017) review identified pigs with the lowest average WTP estimate, and beef and dairy cows with the highest WTP. These specificities represent a challenge, since the higher WTP cannot be generalized to the entire animal. It becomes therefore necessary to evaluate if the animal welfare strategy is adequate for the specific product being considered.

The second ethical concern is about instituting equality in trade also known as equal opportunities for all (Ladhari & Tchegnina, 2015). It is originated in the awareness of inequalities and injustices in trade combined with "a concern for the precariousness of the social well-being of the workers and the negative impact of the traditional production systems on the environment" (Sama et al., 2018: p.290). Supporters of these issues are individuals predisposed toward equality and social justice values, who are concerned about their choices and buying habits (Ladhari & Tchegnina, 2015). They attribute a high value to the type of production and are willing to pay a premium for products in accordance with a socially and environmentally responsible production system (for example, Fair Trade certification). The consumers more prone to use Fair Trade products seem to consist of middle-aged individuals and individuals with higher levels of education (Sama et al., 2018). They have personal values such as equality (brotherhood, equal opportunity for all), unity with nature (harmony with nature), social fairness (correct unfairness, rescue the poor), and peace (free of war and conflict)" (Ladhari & Tchegnina, 2015: p.475) Their motivation for purchasing Fair Trade products is related to the willingness of improving "the wages and the working conditions of workers and farmers" (Darian et al., 2015: p.318).

Therefore, for new products positioned in terms of sustainability, we see a distinction of two types of product innovations. First are those that are framed in terms of trade-offs and that may lead to consumer satisfaction in terms of their sustainability properties, but may not evoke the positive affect that is a major component of well-being. Meat substitutes are an example of this. And, second, there are products that avoid such trade-offs and elicit positive affect felt by the consumer leading to an increase in their subjective well-being. Welfare eggs are a good example of this.

Authenticity and well-being

As a response to globalization of food supply, industrialization of food practices, and long supply chains and their limited transparency, many consumers express lack of trust in conventional food production (Dentoni et al., 2009; Stanton et al., 2012). Increasingly, consumers demand more transparent alternatives to commercialized products, and focus on consuming real, natural, original, and authentic foods (La Trobe & Acott, 2000; Verbeke, 2005; Zepeda & Deal, 2009). Natural, organic and local foods have emerged as such alternatives on markets worldwide (Khan & Prior, 2010). Consumer interest in these food attributes has been continuously growing over the past two decades across the globe (Rozin et al., 2004, 2012; Zepeda & Deal, 2009;). Consumption motives with relation to authenticity for consumers are ranging from nostalgic to symbolic associated with consumers' identities and lifestyle choices (Autio et al., 2011; Chinnici et al., 2002; Hughner et al., 2007). We deal with three aspects of the trend towards authenticity: natural foods, local foods, and organic foods.

Consumers are increasingly demanding naturalness of food products (Devcich et al., 2007), perceiving natural foods to be tastier, healthier, less risky, and more environmentally-friendly (Hemmerling et al., 2015; Rozin et al., 2004; Rozin, 2005, 2006;). Food manufacturers respond by introducing products with minimum processing (Rozin, 2005), products with salient natural claims (e.g. "all natural", "no artificial ingredients"), and products with a more natural homemade appearance (Lunardo & Saintives, 2013).

There is no standard or official definition of a natural food product. In the literature, most of the definitions of natural foods refer to the absence of artificial additives and presence of natural ingredients. For example, natural foods were defined as "foods that do not contain additives and are unprocessed" (Roininen et al., 1999: p.75), or "foods containing neither preservatives nor artificial colorings" (Onyango et al., 2006: p.65). Perception of naturalness has been subdivided into three categories: how the food is grown, how the food is produced, and the properties of the final product (Roman et al., 2017). The first category refers to organic and local farming methods (Hemmerling et al., 2016; Hsu et al., 2016; Lee & Yun, 2015; Lockie et al., 2002; Meyer-Hofer et al., 2015; Olbrich et al., 2015; Onwezen & Bartels, 2013; Onyango et al., 2006). The second category emphasizes absence of negative ingredients (e.g artificial ingredients, additives, colors and flavors, preservatives, chemicals, hormones, pesticides, and GMOs), presence of natural ingredients, and production process (minimally processed and homemade) (Hemmerling et al., 2015; Lockie et al., 2002; Roman et al., 2017; Tobler et al., 2011). The third category corresponds to the final product properties attributed to natural foods, such as health, environmental-friendliness, taste, and freshness (Hemmerling et al., 2015; Roman et al., 2017).

The production of organic food has been growing for over two decades (Sahota, 2014). During this time, multiple factors affecting rising consumer interests in organically produced foods have been studied in extensive agricultural and food marketing research ranging from striving for food quality and safety, to promotion of regulatory organic standards, to conventionalization of the food industry (Hempel & Hamm, 2015; Naspetti & Zanolini, 2009; Schleenbecker & Hamm, 2013). Despite consumers' generally more positive attitudes towards organic food products and climbing organic food and drink sales, several challenges remain for the organic food industry. Heavy demand concentration in North America and Europe, misalignment of certifications and standards

worldwide, smaller consumer base responsible for most of the organic food purchases, and irregular organic foods shopping patterns (Sahota, 2018) result in a plethora of studies focusing on barriers to organic food purchases like higher price (Aschemann-Witzel & Zielke, 2017), lack of availability (Zanoli & Naspetti, 2002), uncertainty regarding organic attributes, nonuniformity of organic standards, and skepticism of organic labels (Yiridoe et al., 2005).

The motivations to buy organic foods relate to three main domains: personal health, food quality, taste, safety, and ethical and altruistic concerns including sustainability and animal welfare (Pearson et al., 2007, 2011; Hemmerling et al., 2015; Hughner et al., 2007). Protection of health through avoidance of hormones and pesticides is consistently cited as the main reason why consumers buy organic foods (Cinnici et al., 2002; Hughner et al., 2007; Zepeda & Deal, 2009). Perceived healthiness of organic foods consists of and relates to the next domain of food quality and security, which also relates to taste and freshness (Hill & Lychehaun, 2002; Krystallis & Chryssohoidis, 2005; Magnusson et al., 2001; Pearson & Henryks, 2008; Zepeda & Deal, 2009;), nutritiousness (Hill & Lychehaun, 2002; Zepeda & Deal, 2009), wholesomeness, and food safety (Michaelidou & Hassan, 2008; Schifferstein & Ophuis, 1998). Some researchers found that specific life events (Zepeda & Deal, 2009), such as the birth of children, the death of a loved one, and a health issue of a family member, and “shocking news about conventional food products” (Hjelmar, 2011) were identified as motivators for organic food consumers.

Health concern was shown to be a better predictor of buying organic food than general altruistic motives and environmental concern (Hughner et al., 2007; Magnusson et al., 2003; Shepherd et al., 2005; Zanoli & Naspetti, 2002). However, Zepeda and Deal (2009) showed that the more organics a person consumes, the more likely they include environmental concerns in the purchase decision. Kareklas et al. (2014) demonstrated that egoistic (personal health) and altruistic (environmental) considerations simultaneously predict consumer attitudes towards and purchase intentions of organic foods. Other studies also find environmental concerns to be a motivational, and often leading, factor in consumer attitudes towards organic foods with conventional farming including the use of chemicals and pesticides perceived to be harmful to the natural environment (Gomiero, 2018; Hidalgo-Baz et al., 2017; ; Honkanen et al., 2006; Hughner et al., 2007). Ayub et al. (2018) found environmental consciousness to be the most significant factor influencing purchase intention towards organic foods among young consumers.

Locally grown and produced foods are a recently developing and growing trend in food marketing (Lang et al., 2014; Megicks et al., 2012). Research defines preference for local products as an emergent consumer ideology named “locavorism” (Reich et al., 2018). The food marketing literature attributes the rising demand for local foods to some extent to a corporate acquisition of organic food production with some consumers turning to local foods as a more holistic and authentic substitute (Adams & Salois, 2010; Aschemann-Witzel & Zielke, 2017). Zepeda and Deal (2009: p.702) found in their qualitative study that some consumers consider their food purchase behavior as “an evolution from organic to local in response to the increasing commercialization of organic foods and farming practices” steamed from distrust of corporations that have taken control over organic food production.

Food marketing research widely discusses the issue of the lack of a clear definition of “local” foods for consumers and official regulations for producers (Darby et al., 2008; Durham et al., 2009; Lang et al., 2014; Zepeda & Leviten-Reid, 2004). Primary definitions, explored in a food marketing literature, include various elements, such as travel distance (from 10 to as high as 117 miles - Adams & Adams, 2011; Khan & Prior, 2010; Lang et al., 2014) or time/driving hours (e.g. maximum limit of six to seven hours – Zepeda & Leviten-Reid, 2004); political boundaries (e.g. states, regions, countries – Morris & Buller, 2003; Conner et al., 2009; Harris et al., 2000); emotional and social relations to the food origin (e.g. homegrown, produced by neighbor - Feldman & Hamm, 2015).

According to the Oxford American Dictionary (2007), locavore is “a person, whose diet consists only or principally of locally grown or produced food”². This definition has been adapted to a food marketing context, and identified locavores as consumers that buy locally produced foods in the supermarkets designated for local foods, from farmers markets, or produce their own food (Stanton et al., 2012). Locavores tend to have larger households, higher income, and consider themselves knowledgeable about food quality and more likely to read ingredients list. Locavores consider themselves to eat healthy, spend more on both conventional and organic fruit and vegetables, and shop at more distribution channels (Stanton et al., 2012). The motivations to buy local foods include manifold of reasons including the broader domains of social and economic justice, food quality and human health, and sustainability (Born & Purcell, 2006; Feldman & Hamm, 2015). Consumers often assume that buying local foods helps to support local economy, farmers, and community (Adams & Adams, 2011; Brown, 2003; Darby et al., 2008; Stephenson & Lev, 2004). This also gives them a feeling of belonging to a community as to a family (Zepeda & Deal, 2009). Positive attitudes toward agriculture, local farmers, and foods also increases likelihood of “going local” (Cranfield et al., 2012). There is also evidence that consumers consider local foods to be of a better quality (Cranfield et al., 2012), freshness, wholesomeness, and taste (Zepeda & Leviten-Reid, 2004; Dentoni et al., 2009), as well as higher safety and traceability (Seyfang, 2006). Preference for local over organic foods is often fueled by the general anti-corporate mood in general, and distrust in corporation taking over the organic food production in particular (Zepeda & Deal, 2009). Among altruistic reasons consumer cite ecological concerns over wasted fuel and environmental friendliness of the production method (Adams & Adams, 2011; Zepeda & Leviten-Reid, 2004), better conditions for farm workers (Zepeda & Deal, 2009), and fair animal treatment (Onozaka & Mc Fadden, 2011).

The authenticity trend differs from the health and sustainability trends in that products positioned in terms of authenticity seem to be much less likely to invoke trade-offs. On the contrary: products that are perceived as authentic are also viewed as healthier, tastier and more sustainable. The development of products that consumers will view as authentic may therefore be the key to develop products that encompass all three trends and that will lead not only to consumer satisfaction, but also to positive affect and ultimately well-being.

² <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/locavore>

Conclusion

In this paper, we have presented a new way of framing the well-known consumer trends towards healthy, sustainable, and authentic food. Drawing on the quality of life literature, we use the term well-being to analyze consumers' relationship to food products. The concept of well-being has a cognitive and an affective component: a food products' contribution to a person's well-being entails both the consumer's judgement on how satisfied s/he is with the product's taste, healthfulness, sustainability, and authenticity, and the felt positive affect that the product elicits in the consumer. The health, sustainability, and authenticity trends open up for many new product opportunities in the food sector, but we believe that many of these invite the consumer to think of them in terms of trade-offs between health, sustainability, authenticity and sensory properties and convenience. Such products may lead to partial satisfaction on the consumer side, but they will not lead to a feeling of positive affect. We think that the spontaneous positive affect elicited by a product should play a much larger role in new product development, and that especially the authenticity concept can play a big role in developing such products that elicit positive affect. As the positive affect is the joint result of the physical product, its packaging, its distribution, and its communication, developing such products will require congruence between the physical product itself and the story that can be told about the origin of the product, the materials used, and the way it has been processed and distributed.

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