

High Nature Value - a Consumer Perspective

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Markets are created

- Supply and norms create demand – consumers buy products that are available in stores and that are socially acceptable.
- Habits institutionalise demand.
- In order to increase the return on HNV products, producers and retailers must focus on visibility and knowledge concerning HNV products vis à vis consumers.

Consumer behaviour research

- Products are used for their functions (e.g. nutritional value) but also for what they signify (the symbolic value).
- The symbolic value of products is used in the human process of communicating our identity.
- The symbolic value of products is, to a great extent, produced by commercial messages on the market.

Understanding sustainable consumer behaviour

- Consumers are worried about environmental issues but there exist a large attitude-behaviour inconsistency.
- In-store consumer behaviour is guided by time, habits and financial resources as no norms exist regarding eco-/ fairtrade labelled products.

Understanding sustainable consumer behaviour

- Information, on the packages and in the stores, about the benefits/meaning of sustainable products (motivating the higher price) is rare.
- Consumers perceive sustainable products as meaningful if they see a clear and concrete relation between the products and their well-being.

The norm-activation model (Schwartz, 1975)

Two conditions must be fulfilled in order for our personal norms to be activated;

- c. we must be aware that our potential acts have consequences for the welfare of others,
- d. we must feel responsible for our actions and their consequences.

Implications for HNV farming

- Consumers are willing to pay the price that reflects the benefits (functional and symbolic) of products.
- The return of HNV products can be increased only if consumers perceive them as meaningful.
- The value of HNV products is created by means of knowledge (about consequences) and emotions.

How can the meaning of HNV be described? 1

To some extent the same conditions apply to HNV products as for any other product. The market for HNV products must be created through;

- in-store availability and visibility (price is an important visibility factor).
- advertising

How can the meaning of HNV be described? 2

In some respects, HNV products differs from any other products as the consequences of buying/not buying them affects the well-being of the inhabitants of the eco-system now and in the future. Thus the format and the message of advertising and product information should focus on;

- describing in a concrete manner how specific products affect the conditions of life for relevant members in the eco-system.

How can the meaning of HNV be described? 3

Discussion topics;

- * How can norms be created?
- Are negative messages successful?
- Can we expect the consumers to make take the responsibility for HNV farming?