

# Consumers' preferences for coloured fleshed potatoes: a study exploring the benefits of targeted information

Carla Barlagne<sup>1,2</sup>, Laure Kufhuss<sup>1</sup>, Jackie Potts<sup>3</sup>, Carl-Johan Lagerkvist<sup>4</sup>

Organization(s): <sup>1</sup>The James Hutton Institute Scotland, United Kingdom; <sup>2</sup>INRAE, Guadeloupe, France; <sup>3</sup>Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland, United Kingdom; <sup>4</sup>Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden

## Abstract

Genetic diversity within commercial varieties of potatoes is relatively narrow at the global level and while potato has traditionally suffered from a bad reputation as a starchy product, its health benefits are generally overlooked by consumers. One way to mainstream agrobiodiversity and nutrition in supply chains is through market interventions and changing consumers' behaviour. Our research explores the benefits of having differentiated information about the health benefits of potatoes and targeting consumers' central or peripheral system to increase their awareness of their contribution to nutrition and biodiversity. We adopted a mixed-research methods approach to assess consumers' preferences for potatoes with a high nutritional profile. Methods include 2 focus groups, a choice experiment, and an attitudinal survey. Consumers were subject to 3 information treatments about the health benefits of coloured fleshed potatoes: a message targeting the central system, a message targeting the peripheral system while a control group received a basic message. Results showed that although the colour of the flesh remained a strong determinant of consumers' choices, their willingness to pay was affected by the type of health information they received and the system that was targeted. We elaborate recommendations in terms of information policies targeting potato consumers. Our research contributes to the green recovery by highlighting the benefits of increased biodiversity in supply chains.

**Keywords:** agrobiodiversity, choice experiment, health, information policy, mixed logit, food values