Paper/Poster Title	Society, health, price or taste? How consumers differ in their motivations to purchase food.

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Abstract	*200 words max*

In the light of continuously changing consumer needs and demands related to food, it is important to gain insights on the motives and preferences that distinguish different consumer groups. We applied a best-worst scaling approach and a count-based analysis to elicit the relative importance of eleven food values. Based on that we conducted a latent class cluster analysis and were able to identify four consumer segments which especially differ in the extent to which they consider society, health, price, and taste in food choices. The analysis is based on data from an online survey among 1020 respondents in Bavaria, Germany, in November 2020. Overall, the food value taste was rated most important in our study, which is different from previous research that identified safety as the most important value. However, considering the four segments, our findings show that taste is only of minor importance in the society-centered and the price-sensitive segment as compared to the health-concerned and self-centered segment. Such findings suggest that target-specific policy and communication measures are needed to cater for consumers' heterogeneous needs and demands.

Keywords	Food values, consumer segmentation, latent class cluster analysis
JEL Code	D12 see: www.aeaweb.org/jel/guide/jel.php?class=Q)

Introduction	*100 – 250 words*

Consumers' needs as well as demands regarding their food choices and consumption are very heterogeneous and subject to continuous change. The amount and type of food that people choose does not only have an impact on their health but also on the environment and the climate. Hence, it is important to understand what drives consumers' choices and to monitor the development of these drivers to inform policy makers as well as marketers. Lusk and Briggeman (2009) proposed a set of eleven values that specifically relate to consumers' food choices, which can be classified into self-centered and society-centered values. Following the initial publication by Lusk and Briggeman in 2009, many researchers have applied the food values in multiple ways, e.g. considering different products or product categories, comparing consumers in different national contexts, adapting the list of food values according to a specific research topic, or using them for segmentation. Our contribution adds to existing research in that it investigates the food values in a new national context with a larger sample than that used by Lusk and Briggeman (2009). Furthermore, we can show that different groups of consumers exist, regarding the

importance attached to specific food values, and as such can be attributed to particular needs and demands (e.g. a stronger demand for organic and local food in the society-centered segment). These findings are relevant for marketers to develop target-specific measures and for policy makers to understand the heterogeneous characteristics of consumers when developing and implementing policy measures.

Methodology	100 – 250 words

We applied a BWS approach to elicit the relative importance attached to the eleven food values by Lusk and Briggeman (2009). BWS belongs to the conjoint analysis techniques and can be attributed to the same random utility framework like discrete choice experiments. We used a balanced incomplete block design (BIBD), yielding eleven choice-sets each including six food values. We applied a count-based procedure to analyze the data. The resulting best-worst scores were used for the latent class cluster analysis, which was carried out in Stata 16. The main reason for using a latent class approach, as opposed to standard cluster analysis techniques (such as k-means), is the fact that it is a model-based clustering approach that takes uncertainty concerning the probability of class membership for each object into account. Marginal means were computed to describe the main differences between clusters regarding the relative importance of food values. Respondents were allocated to clusters based on their marginal predicted probabilities for each of our four latent classes. In addition, we asked consumers for their likelihood to purchase organic as well as local food, using a single item each and measuring it on a 5-point rating scale. Data for this study was collected via an online access panel from November 9th to November 19th, 2020, in Bavaria, Germany. Quotas were specified for gender, age, education, employment status and household size to obtain a sample that is as close to the general population as possible. The final sample consisted of 1020 respondents.

Results	100 – 250 words

The count-based analysis revealed that taste is on average considered as the most important food value, while safety and naturalness follow by far on the second and third place. Appearance, tradition, and convenience are the three food values that were regarded as least important. The latent class cluster analysis resulted in four consumer segments. The first segment comprises consumers, whose members place relatively high importance on the society-centered values origin, naturalness, environmental impact, and fairness and is therefore called the society-centered cluster. The second group consists of health-concerned consumers, as nutrition, safety, and naturalness are rated as relatively important. Group 3 comprises the price-sensitive consumers, who perceive price by far as the most important value and group 4 is the self-centered segment, whose members rate taste as most important, closely followed by price. Although taste is the overall most important food value in our study, it is only of minor importance in the society-centered and the price-sensitive segment as compared to the health-concerned and self-centered segments. While the health-concerned and the price-sensitive consumers also rate most of the self-centered values as comparatively important, the respondents belonging to the self-centered segment are additionally characterized by the very low importance the place on the society-centered values. Therefore, they are in stark contrast to the society-centered segment. Members of both, the society-centered segment as well as the health-concerned segment, are more likely to purchase organic and local food than the other two segments.

Discussion and Conclusion	*100 – 250 words*

While we expected that taste would be rated as one of the most important food values in our study, we did not expect to see such a clear first place, because safety was perceived as most important by consumers in previous studies (e.g. Bazzani et al., 2018). While the relative importance of food values in the entire sample allows for a good overview and an easy comparison with results from other studies, the interpretation of segments enables deeper insights. The segmentation shows that there is a fairly large group of consumers, who care about society-centered food values. However, the society-centered values play only a very minor role in the other three segments. Especially worrying is the finding that fairness and environmental impact are only important to this particular consumer group, leading us to the conclusion that even more awareness needs to be raised concerning the impact of food production and consumption on the environment as well as social inequity. The largest segment in our study is the group of health-concerned consumers, who are concerned about safety, nutrition and naturalness. This finding implies that there is a strong demand for healthy and natural food that needs to be taken into account by marketers. The strong preferences of society-centered and health-concerned consumers for organic and local food indicate that organic as well as local food is perceived as more natural, environmentally friendly and fair on the one hand, but also as healthier and safer than conventional food products on the other hand.

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