

# Consumer preference for local, low greenhouse emission, organic and low fat meat



## The Challenge

Labelling food products as healthy, local or ethical has been found to be an effective strategy to differentiate them from conventional products and increasing consumption. This work investigated whether consumers trade off different food attributes (e.g. imported versus local). This is important because firms that differentiate products are interested in identifying attractive attributes and evaluating conflicts/complements between them.

## Policy Implication

In-line with other EU countries, UK consumers were revealed to be willing to pay a price premium for sustainable, healthier and local beef mince. When trying to maximise sale price of beef mince, some combinations of these attributes will add additional value. However labelling meat as low GHG emission alongside other attributes does not add value, indicating that consumers likely view organic or local as inherently low GHG produce types.

## Research

Researchers conducted a survey on a representative sample of 1,211 UK shoppers during the summer of 2016.

Respondents were presented with a series of nine choice sets, each consisting of four beef mince alternatives described in terms of five attributes:

1. Level of GHG emissions
2. Type of production (organic/non-organic)
3. Origin (local, national, imported)
4. Fat content (low, moderate and high)
5. Price per 500g (£1.50, £3.00, £4.50 and £6.00).



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## Results

UK consumers were willing to pay a price premium for beef mince produced with a lower fat content (£1.54), locally (£0.74), with low GHG emissions (£0.40) and organically (£30). Some combinations of these attributes added an additional price to what consumers were willing to pay: “organic & local”, “organic & low fat” and “local & low fat” added an additional 17%, 7% and 9%, respectively. Beef mince labelled as low GHG emissions did not attract an additional price premium when labelled with other variables.

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## About

The Land Economy, Environment and Society (LEES) Research Group is one of the largest groupings of economists and social scientists working in the rural, agricultural and land based sectors in the UK. Our vision is to be recognised as one of the leading centres for agricultural and wider rural economic and social research globally, benefiting the land use sector, the environment and rural communities.

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