

Introducing new sustainable food products in the UK



The Challenge

Monitoring trends of new product launches is important because they provide information on retailers and manufacturers with information on what food and drink products consumers are willing to buy, and whether products available to consumers are becoming more sustainable. This study focuses on the UK food and drink market and its purpose is to explore the role of retailers and manufacturers when introducing food and drink products with sustainable claims.

Policy Implication

The sustainability message is increasingly present in the development of new products of retailers and manufacturers. However, further research is needed to verify whether the final assortment of products that is available to consumers reflects greater sustainability, and in particular whether the products actually bring greater sustainability, i.e., whether the products with sustainable attributes are purchased by consumers.

Research

Mintel's Global New Products Database (GNPD), which contains information for 78,541 new products from 18,390 different brands launched between 2000 and 2014, by 8,675 manufacturing or retailing companies were used. GNPD provides a classification of 74 claim categories. The following claims were considered within the sustainable group: carbon neutral, animal welfare product, environmentally-friendly package, environmentally-friendly product, and organic.

Results

The dynamic UK market has a continuous process of launching new food and drink products. Bakery, prepared meals, sauces and seasonings, processed fish, meat and egg products, snacks and dairy comprise over 50 per cent of the products launched during the studied period. The most popular sustainable claim was 'environmentally-friendly packaging'.

There is an increasing number of products with sustainable attributes being launched in the market, and their share is also rising. However, there are differences by category, e.g. there was a relative reduction of the importance of organic foods compared with the rest of the food introduced for the category.

Retailers own brands are important for the introduction of new products with sustainability claims. Manufacturers are to some extent also important but within specific categories, and some large manufacturers may take the lead within their category.

Introducing new sustainable food products in the UK



Funding

Scottish Government's Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services Division (RESAS)

UK Department of Food Environment of Rural Affairs (Defra)

Scottish Funding Council supported Universities Innovation Fund



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



Contact

Contact: Cesar Revoredo

Email: cesar.revoredo@sruc.ac.uk

Research group: Land Economy, Environment and Society

Address: SRUC, Peter Wilson Building, Edinburgh, EH9 3JG.

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.

Leading the way in Agriculture and Rural Research, Education and Consulting

SRUC is a charity registered in Scotland, No. SC003712