

DOWNSTREAM: Promotion of sustainable lifestyles and healthier diets

Description

Promotion of sustainable lifestyles and healthier diets refers to retailers initiatives to market more sustainable lifestyles to customers e.g. guide customers to cut meat consumption.

Potential for positive environmental impact

Recent studies demonstrate that although for most food products the majority of environmental impacts take place upstream during the production phase, the technical abatement available today could only cut the total environmental impact from for example livestock production by about 20% (MacMillan and Durrant, 2009). Changing diets to healthier ones with only moderate adaptations in the share of meat consumption would reduce overall environmental impacts related to food consumption by around 8% (Tukker, Bausch-Goldbohm et al., 2009). According to another study, a healthier diet could reduce the Scottish food footprint by between 15 and 25% as compared with the current average Scottish diet (Frey and Barrett, 2006).

Prevalence and future potential

Axfood communicated a new Fish policy to consumers in 2008. Axfood developed a brochure with info about this and added recipes for green-listed fish. ICA Norway has advised consumers to eat more environmental friendly and to eat more fruit and vegetables and less meat.

KESKO provides customers a service called Ravintokoodi, which allows them to monitor the health effects of their diets through an online system. The Nutritioncode service at www.ravintokoodi.fi is a customer loyalty benefit, which is available at all K-citymarket, K-supermarket and K-market stores. With the help of the service, K-Plussa cardholders can compare their purchases with the recommendations of the National Nutrition Council and check if their purchases during the past three months, for example, comply with the recommendations. Furthermore, the service gives users advice on how to compose nutritionally high-quality home meals. The service does not collect or handle personal data. At the end of 2009, the service had 26,000 users (Kesko 2010). Kesko has also been testing the extension of this system to carbon footprints of purchases (Perrels et al. 2009).

COOP Denmark has produced information material to consumers on climate and food including a climate cooking book and recommendation on reduced consumption of meat and dairy (COOP 2010). Coop Denmark has also launched 'Ten Climate Advices' to promote more climate friendly lifestyles. See case study.

Better management of the demand side is needed, especially concerning environmental high impact product chains such as meat supply. Promoting more sustainable lifestyles and healthier diets is one of the most important missing areas of downstream actions (ETC/SCP 2011).

References

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