

Citation

Pinto de Moura, A., Miguel Cunha, L., Miranda Azeiteiro, U. and Leal Filho, W. (2010), "Introducing "the new food choice and consumer paradigms"", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 112 No. 5. <https://doi.org/10.1108/bfj.2010.070112eaa.001>

 Download as .RIS

Publisher: Emerald Group Publishing Limited
Copyright © 2010, Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Introducing "the new food choice and consumer paradigms"

Article Type: Guest editorial **From:** *British Food Journal*, Volume 112, Issue 5

Modern consumers are increasingly demanding a wider variety of products. But no matter if it is convenience food or regular food, food products, which are perceived to be safer, are especially successful. Consumers search for products that are free from disease causing organisms, chemical residues or GMOs. Recent research on consumers from industrialised countries report widespread concerns and distrust on food products and on production methods from both the agricultural and the food industries. In these countries this has been reflected namely by an increasing demand for organic and local products, such as traditional products, which are perceived as less damaging to the environment and healthier than industrially grown/processed foods. Negative consumer attitudes towards many emerging technologies may constitute a major impediment to their application, thus representing an additional challenge for the food industry. Moreover, one must take into consideration that consumers' food choices affect not only their health, but also the state of the economy, the agricultural production, the balance of trade and employment in the food sector as well as the financial performance of many companies.

In this special issue, the main results from an International Seminar entitled: New Food Paradigms, held in Portugal in October 2008 are presented. The event was organized on behalf of the Associated Laboratory, REQUIMTE, University of Porto, Portugal.

A total of seven rigorously peer-reviewed papers stemming from the Seminar are presented.

The first paper, titled "New food processing technologies as a paradigm of safety and quality", by Delores Rodrigo, Fernando Sampedro, A. Silva, Alfredo Palop and Antonio Martinez, reports on new food technologies – High Hydrostatic Pressure and Pulsed Electric Fields – as emerging food process preservation techniques that yield safe processed foods safe while relating their natural properties.

In the second and third papers one may find contributions on how sustainability elements may be taken into account in food production. In "Sustainability as a new paradigm regarding food consumption", Karolin Schacht, Walter Leal Filho, Wolfgang Koppe, Gunvor Struksnaes and Mechthild Busch-Stockfisch use an example from aquaculture, regarding the use of alternative low-input fish diets and their impact on consumer acceptability. Nuno V. Brito, Delfina Santos, Ana P. Vale, Isabel M. Afonso, Eulália Mendes, Susana Casal and M.B.P.P. Oliveira in "Innovation with traditional products: chemical characterization of a traditional Portuguese meat sausage, aiming at PGI certification", reinforce the benefits of analysing the physicochemical characteristics of traditional food products, as a basis for certification, aiming for the enhanced commercialization of such traditional food products.

The fourth paper, "New paradigm for patterns of home packaged food intake", by M.F.F. Poças, J.C. Oliveira, H.J. Pinto, M.E. Zacarias and T. Hogg, considers the impact of the food packaging usage at household level, bearing in mind that for the majority of foods, the protection afforded by the package is an essential part of the preservation process itself. Nevertheless, one must consider that in the view of many consumers, packing is becoming an increasing environmental burden.

As Europeans live longer, the EU old people population is due to increase, elderly consumers ask for much more influence, choice and added value. Therefore, the fifth paper "Ageing and food consumption in Portugal: new or old paradigms", by Cecília de Moraes, Cláudia Afonso and M.D.V. de Almeida, deals with elderly food choice and the factors behind that choice.

The sixth paper "Public perceptions of food-related hazards: an application to Portuguese consumers", by Luís Miguel Cunha, Ana Pinto de Moura, Zulmira Lopes, Maria do Céu Santos and Isidro Silva, takes into account the widespread anxiety among consumers about the quality of food they eat, probably influenced by numerous food scares that occurred during the last decades in Europe. In this work, the psychometric paradigm was applied in order to access the Portuguese perceptions of food-related hazards, contrasting controllable hazards, such as salty and fatty foods, against non-controllable hazards, such as BSE, GMOs and food containing bacteria.

Last but not least, the seventh paper "Food consumer science post-graduate courses: comparison of face-to-face vs online delivery systems", by Ana Pinto de Moura, Luís Miguel Cunha, Ulisses Miranda Azeiteiro, Luísa Aires, Pedro Graça and Maria Daniel Vaz de Almeida, deals with learning systems on food studies courses (class-room and online courses at MSc level), enhancing that educators have an important role to play in the formation of students from food consumption sciences, giving them a broad view of the challenges and opportunities they face in the food chain as a whole.

This special issue represents a contribution towards a more sound knowledge on new patterns of food choice and consumption. It will be useful as a tool for researchers interested in food related topics, as well as for different stakeholders, helping them to make more, well informed science-based decisions regarding their future strategies.

Finally, we would like to take the opportunity of acknowledging all those who have contributed towards this special issue of *British Food Journal*. We thank the reviewers who have taken time to provide timely feedback to the authors, thereby helping the authors to improve their manuscripts. The reviewing was a double-blind reviewing process. We warmly thank all authors who submitted their manuscripts for consideration of inclusion in this special issue of the *British Food Journal*.

Ana Pinto de MouraUniversidade Aberta, Porto, Portugal**Luís Miguel Cunha**University of Porto, Vila do Conde, Portugal**Ulisses Miranda Azeiteiro**Universidade Aberta, Porto, Portugal**Walter Leal Filho**Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Hamburg, Germany