

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE IN SHORT FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS (SFCS)

Introduction [5 mins]

Thank you for choosing to help us with our work.

My name is As you know we are from the department of at the University of We are in your area to survey the attitudes, preferences and purchasing behavior of you regarding certain fruit and vegetable (F&V) within common markets, so that the various actors can best respond to the market needs. We intend to investigate your preferences by focusing on your orientation towards quality and sustainable products as well as your willingness to pay for these attributes toward related standards. People have their own likes & dislikes and feelings about eating F&V and that sometimes people cannot get the F&V they like.

We want to hear about all of this and care about what you have to say. This information will help us find ways to make a difference in helping you and your families to enjoy eating more F&V.

We really need your ideas!

There are no right or wrong answers; we just want you to tell us what you really think. We will have your names stored separate from the surveys. Therefore, it is important to answer the questions honestly.

** Before we get started, please read the “Participant Personal Information & Consent Form”. If you agree to take part in the study, please fill in and sign the form.*

Participating in the discussion of this survey should take about 90 minutes.

Thank you again for your time!

We would like to ask your opinions on the following aspects related to purchasing and consumption in SHORT SUPPLY CHAINS:

1. Dietary habits [15 mins]

1.1. Which F&V do you prefer to consume/eat? Which one do not you consume/eat? (please name them).

a) Your favorite fruits are Your favorite fruits are not

b) Your favorite vegetables are Your favorite vegetables are not

1.2. How important is it to you to eat F&V as part of your daily meal consumption?

a) not important, b) slightly important, c) moderately important, d) important, e) very important,

1.3. *Continuation of the previous question* - how often do you eat F&V [every day, week, frequently]?

1.4. *Continuation of the previous question* - can you mention the benefits of eating F&V? ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

1.5. *Continuation of the previous question* - which benefits are most important to you? (please name the top two from previous answers).

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1.6. When (during the year) do you mostly eat your favorite F&V products? (Considering to the concept of seasonality, they can mention to the seasons/month of the year).

1.7. *Continuation of the previous question* - why do you choose that season/month? ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

2. Preferences towards F&V consumption: [15 mins]

2.1. What characteristics do you look for in choosing F&V? discussion on quality factors-intrinsic (or natural factors)/extrinsic (or external factors) /safety ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

2.2. *Continuation of the previous question* - if you had to pick max three characteristics that are most important to you, what would these be (would encourage you to eat more F&V)?

3. Access /Purchasing behaviors [15 mins]

3.1. Where do you buy/eat F&V? Please rank the 3 options provided below from the most frequent to the least frequent one.

- a) from local F&V producers (e.g. on farm, in farmers' markets/shops, local food festivals or fairs, allotment gardens, etc.)
- b) in supermarkets or local grocery stores/shops, supermarkets, on-line shopping,
- c) in collective catering facilities (e.g. school or university canteens, company canteens, hospital, or commercial canteens)

3.2. What type of F&V products do you usually buy?

- a) local products, b) imported products c) both local and imported d) do not know,

3.3. *Continuation of the previous question* - why do you choose those products (confirmation/disappointment with preferences **section 2**)? ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

3.4. *Continuation of the question 3.2* - how much do you usually pay for your favorite F&V?

Product 1 _____ price _____ €/kg

Product 2 _____ price _____ €/kg

Product 3 _____ price _____ €/kg

3.5 how do you judge the prices of these products?

- a) not at all satisfied, b) slightly satisfied, c) moderately satisfied, d) very satisfied, e) extremely satisfied

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4. F&V sustainability and certifications/standards: [30 mins]

4.1. Are there any certifications or quality assurance standards that you look for when buy F&V? (Yes-No)

4.2. What F&V certifications/standards do you rely on/ do you seek for when buying F&V? (Please name them). ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

4.3. What information are you looking for in F&V certifications? ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

4.4. Are you familiar with **sustainability** certification/perception? For example, following the previous question, which information is related to the concept of sustainability? (Assessing awareness of the participants to the concept of sustainability).

4.5. Please tell us about the “**socio-economic certifications**”, first images, associations, thoughts, feelings that came to your mind.

- a) very negative, b) negative, c) neutral, d) positive, e) very positive,
- f) I am not familiar with this certificate (do not ask the next two questions).

4.6. If the **socio-economic** aspects of the certifications matter to you, could you please specify what aspects are most important to you? ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

4.7. Continuation of the previous question, which factor is more important to you? Please name the top two.

4.8. Please tell us about the “**environmental certifications**”, first images, associations, thoughts, feelings that came to your mind.

- a) very negative, b) negative, c) neutral, d) positive, e) very positive,
- f) I am not familiar with this certificate (do not ask the next two questions).

4.9. If the **environmental** aspects of the certifications are matter to you, please name what aspects? ► [See the cards provided at the end of the file.](#)

4.10. Continuation of the previous question, which factor is more important to you? Please name the top two.

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5. Willingness to pay for F&V certifications: [5 mins]

Please now consider again the prices you pay for the F&V that you usually buy/consume (question 3.4) and the related marketing channels/certifications, please answer to the following questions:

5.1. Are you willing to pay more for the certifications that provide information on environmental aspects? (Yes-No).

5.2. *Continuation of the previous question* - if yes, how much? (it can be a percentage of the F&V prices)?

Product 1 _____ price premium _____ %

Product 2 _____ price premium _____ %

Product 3 _____ price premium _____ %

5.3. Are you willing to pay more for the certifications that provide information on socio-economic aspects? (Yes-No).

5.4. *Continuation of the previous question* - if yes, how much? (it can be a percentage of the F&V prices)?

Product 1 _____ price premium _____ %

Product 2 _____ price premium _____ %

Product 3 _____ price premium _____ %

Wrap up / Conclusion [5 mins]:

We want to thank you for taking the time to help us out with the work we are doing. You have shared with us valuable and important information, it will really help our work and we hope benefit you.

Have we missed anything? Do you want to add anything as wrap up or conclusion?

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Thanks again.

FOCUS GROUP CARDS

The information provided in the following cards is to guide the respondents to start the discussion. After asking the relevant questions in the questionnaire form, please present the following information to the respondents (the number of each card corresponds to the question number provided in the questionnaire form).

1. Dietary habits in fruits and vegetables (F&V):

1.4. Benefits of F&V are:

- a) Giving more vitamins and minerals.
- b) Helping to cut down calories.
- c) Helping to improve body's digestive system.
- d) Reducing the risk of getting cancer.
- e) Helping to look better in appearance (e.g. skin condition).
- f) Other (to be specified)...

1.7. The reason for choosing fruits or vegetables in a particular season:

- a) Availability of desired fruits and vegetables.
- b) Reasonable or even cheaper price F&V in that season.
- c) Fruits and vegetables (F&V) grown and picked in season are typically freshness, full of flavor and nutrients.
- d) Seasonal F&V will often appear much brighter and plump than non-seasonal.
- e) Seasonal F&V are more Environmentally-Friendly (eating seasonally reduces the demand for out of season produce which further supports more local produce and supports local farming in your area which means less transportation, less refrigeration, less hot houses and less irradiation of produce).
- f) Other (to be specified)...

2. Preferences towards F&V consumption:

2.1: Characteristics (quality factors) that consumers usually look for when choosing F&V:

Intrinsic (or natural) quality factors:

- a) Freshness (*Fresh F&V means F&V that have not been processed in any manner or means raw, uncut fruits and vegetables*)
- b) Seasonality,
- c) Nutritional contents,
- d) The taste and flavor,
- e) Convenience (need to wash ready-to-eat F&V, shelf life),
- f) The color and appearance / normally shape,

Extrinsic (or external) quality factors:

- g) Packaging (it provides protection from chemical, biological and physical alterations),
- h) Brand (a concept that helps people identify a particular company, product, or individual),
- i) Claims/information about health, place of origin seasonality, carbon footprint, etc.,

Food safety factors:

- j) Food poisoning (sometimes raw F&V may cause food poisoning from harmful germs),
- k) Residues of pesticides/other chemicals used during crop growth or production,
- l) Chemicals released from packaging of F&V,

- m) Additives like colorants, flavourings, preservatives etc.,
- n) Genetic Modified F&V (changing in plant genes through genetic engineering).
- o) Other (to be specified)...

4. F&V certifications/standards:

4.2. Existing F&V certifications/standards:

- **Environmental standards** (Environmental standards emphasize to the process in which farmers'/producers and other supply chain actors implement production processes and management systems that avoids or reduces the harm on environment and improving eco-efficiency, such as reducing waste and the use of resources):
 - EU Organic, GLOBAL GAP or Global Grasp (Egypt, France, Morocco, Italy), USDA Organic, Label Rouge (France), Nature et Progrès (France), Bio-Maroc, Ecolabel RBA (Morocco), JAS, Haute Valuer Environnementale (France), ISO 14001 (France), EMAS (France), International Environmental Declaration (EPD) (Greece), ISO 14000 (Greece), Agriculture biologique (France), Ecolabel, LEAF (Morocco), ECOLABEL RBA (Morocco).
- **Socio-economic standards** (a number of socio-economic standards to emphasis in supply chain operations, Such as fair-trade and the origin of a product in a specific place, region or country, whose given quality, reputation or other characteristic are particularly attribute to its geographical origin):
 - Fairtrade international (Egypt, France, Greece, Italy and Morocco), Fair for life (Morocco), SMETA Sedex (Morocco), L'appellation d'origine (Morocco), Terroir du Maroc, SPG Morocco, AOC (France, Morocco), Saveur du Maroc (Morocco)
- **Food safety standards** (category of standards related to food quality and safety):
 - HACCP, ISO (e.g., ISO 22000, ISO 9001), Halal Maroc, ONSSA (Morocco), We Do Local, Cash & Carry (Italy), IFS Food (Morocco), BRC food (Morocco), FOODEX (Morocco).
- **Ethical standards** (refers to the moral consequences of food choices, both those made by humans and animals):
 - Economy of Love (EOL) (Eqypt), Fairtrade, Ethical, Animal welfare approved.
- **Geographical standards:**
 - Protected Geographic Indication (PGI), Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) (France, Italy, Greece and Morocco), Controlled Designation of Origin (AOC) (France), Protected Designation of Origin (AOP) (France), Guaranteed Traditional Specialty (TSG) (Italy), Indication Géographique (Morocco), Territoire du Maroc (Morocco).

4.3. Information that usually consumers looking for in F&V certifications:

- a) Ingredients list (nutrition or vitamin facts),
- b) Date of durability / best before date,
- c) Geographical origin,
- d) Shelf life,
- e) Presence of the organic logo (certifies that no chemical inputs or ingredients from genetically modified organisms have been used during the production process),
- f) Health logo/symbol (such as “Good for you” or the Sunflower “Eat Well” logo)- It is the official insignia of a public health service,
- g) Allergy information (foods that account for the large majority of severe food allergic reaction).
- h) Presence of integrated pest management information,
- i) Presence of environmental friendly production information,

- j) Presence of ethical/social aspects information (refers to the moral consequences of food choices, both those made by humans and animals).
- k) Other (to be specified)

4.6. The socio-economic aspects of the certifications that usually matter to consumers:

Producers ...

- a) do not employ child labour,
- b) provide adequate working conditions and wages for workers (remuneration of employees),
- c) do not have poor treatment of animals in their production (animal welfare),
- d) observe fair trade (by purchasing these goods you are supporting a system that aims to reduce world poverty and create sustainable development),
- e) support local (my residence country) farmers, or recognize and give value to local and traditional knowledge, as well as endemic products of specific region,
- f) production process does not have any legal violations,
- g) ensure quality of products by certification and recognize for the consumer (respect to consumer rights).

4.9. The environmental aspects of the certifications that usually matter to consumers:

Producers ...

- a) production process has not led to deforestation,
- b) do not use too much of the world's natural resources for their production,
- c) do not use packaging that is not recyclable,
- d) do not emit carbon emissions caused by their production,
- e) using less energy in the transportation/ processing of them (e.g., through energy savings),
- f) promote the diversity of plants in their production environment,
- g) produce the plants in a soil-protecting process,
- h) use fewer pesticides/fertilizers in their production or use biological ones,
- i) use beneficial insects in their production,
- j) grow their plants in a peat-reduced substrate (plant soil),
- k) use water sparingly in their production and processing,