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External features of milk product packages as visual indicators of product quality, tradition and impulse to buy: Traditions versus creativity

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The perception and following choice of food products depends on various factors including external ones. We studied potential packages of selected milk products (mainly cheeses) to find out possible associations that consumers have with these products with assumption that food packaging plays an important role in attracting consumers' attention and generating expectations in the consumer that in turn affect their product perception and buying behavior (Gelici-Zeko, Lutters, Klooster, Wejzen). Our research sample consisted from modern versus classical graphical designs including designs related to historical features of agriculture, milk production, countryside, livestock or any other symbols associated with traditional way of farming on the land, showing very natural character of milk products. From our research we found out that consumers prefer traditional packages connected with Slovak customs

and traditions to more modern packages. Packages with rural and traditional motives are strongly associated with farming, home production, high quality and great taste. We can assume that properly chosen motive of the packaging can significantly influence the consumer. Secondly, graphical design of the package can show additional functions of the milk products, e.g. dietetic character, nutrition and calcium contents, protein intake, made for kids and in such a way attract different group of consumers. Additionally, at the end of the paper we identify potential graphical features useful to support the attractiveness of the milk product in certain group of customers. Also we recommend the steps for further studies, including intercultural comparative studies, cultural grounding and transfer of know-how among different regions to support small and medium milk producers in penetrating at the milk market.

Biography

Elena Horska research activities are focused on food marketing and internationalization, intercultural studies in consumer behavior, food trend perception and changes in market environment.

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