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RESEARCH & INNOVATION CENTRE

Industry and Consumer Perspectives on Food for Health

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Vineland

- A results-based, independent not-for-profit organization focused on horticultural science and innovation



Research areas

Horticultural Production
Systems



Applied Genomics



Consumer Insights



Expenditure on fruit and veg

- During an average shopping trip, how much do you spend on fresh whole vegetables and fruit per week?

Amount spent (\$)	% of consumers (n=455)
\$0-\$10	4
\$11-\$20	28
\$21-\$30	28
More than \$30	40

60% spend less than \$30 per week on fruits and vegetables

65% of consumers shop an average 1-2 times per week

Consumers

Thoughts on fruits and vegetables

- Healthy
 - Should eat more
 - Expensive
 - Inconvenient
 - Seasonal
 - Safety
 - Confidence in science
-
- Only **40%** of Canadians consumed 5+ servings of fruit and vegetable
 - Stats Canada, 2011



Consumers

Psychometric Scales

General Health Interest

I always follow a healthy and balanced diet.

The healthiness of food has little impact on my food choices

Natural Product Interest

I would like to eat only organically grown vegetables.

In my opinion, organically grown foods are no better for my health than those grown conventionally

Interest Level	General Health Interest	Natural Product Interest
High	38%	35%
Medium	45%	42%
Low	17%	23%

Purchase drivers

- Purchase intent is hard to predict
 - consumption is usually the best prediction tool
- For **24%** of consumers, production practices is the most important feature when selecting fruits and vegetables
 - 20% = price
 - 56% = combination of features



New pear

Likelihood to purchase

You are grocery shopping and notice a new variety of pear, how likely are you to try this pear?

Very likely =30%

This new pear variety is uniquely Canadian; it was developed through an Ontario pear breeding program and grown in Ontario.

Very likely =46%

This new pear variety requires less sprays and pesticides due to natural disease resistance.

Very likely =66%



Local, Organic, Sustainable

Consumer definitions

- Local = decreased mile to transport
- Organic = food produced without the use of synthetic pesticides
- Sustainable = produced in an environmentally friendly way

Local = Organic = Sustainable



Consumer Confusion

Local = Organic = Sustainable

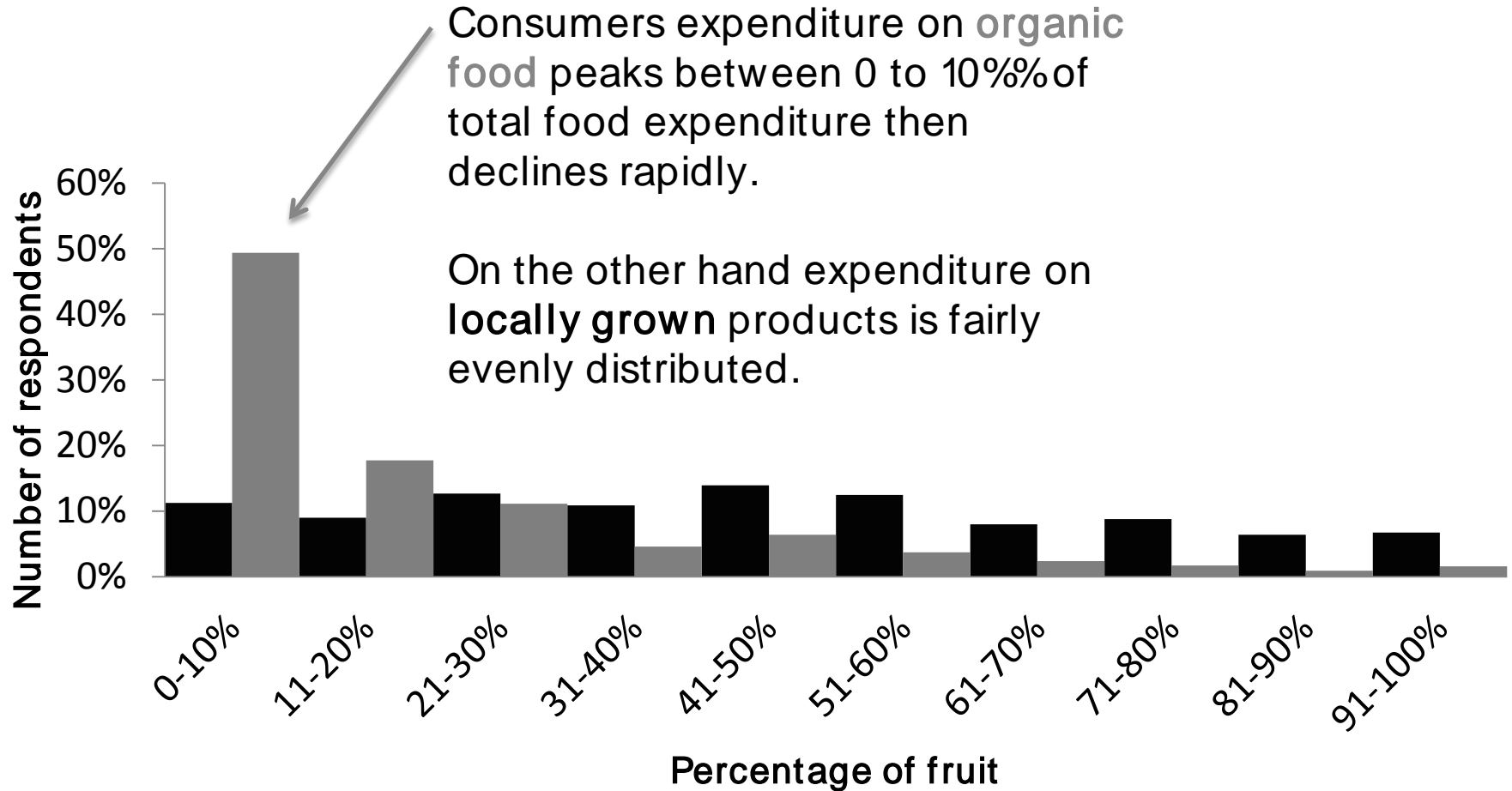
Locally produced foods are those...

- in my region
- in my country

Organic foods are produced without pesticides

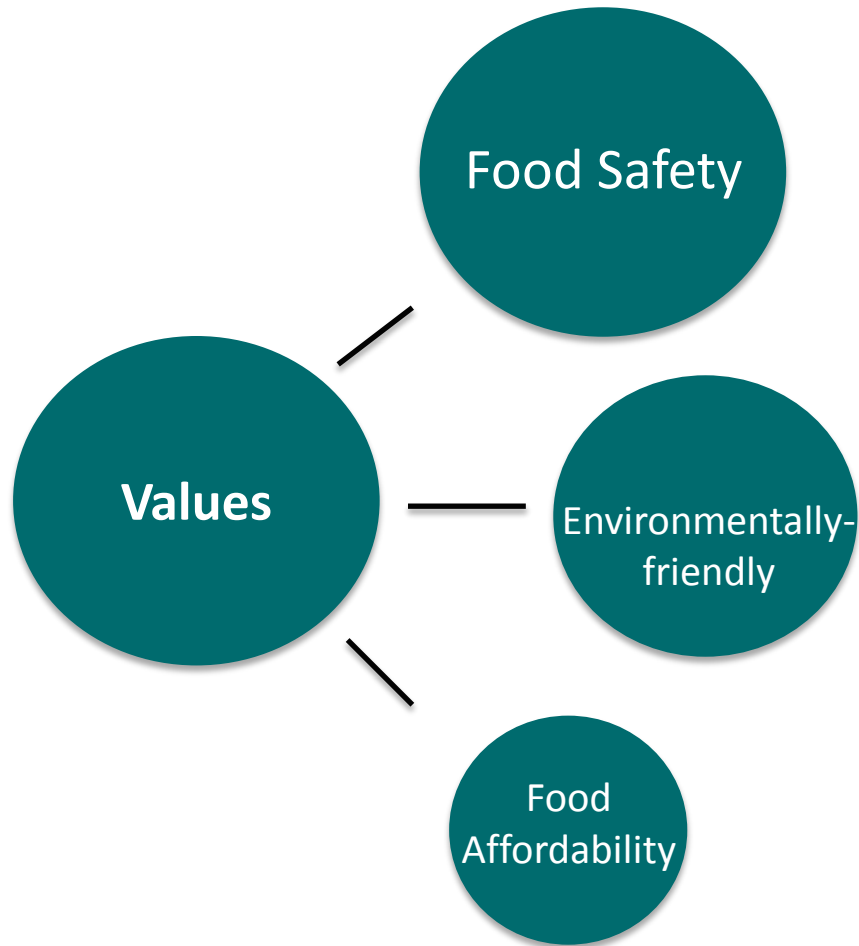
Locally produced foods are GMO free

Local or organic spending



Campbell et al., 2011

Confidence in science and technology



Food safety had the largest impact on consumer approval of biotechnologies



CONSUMER INSIGHT BITES

TOPIC

Confidence in science and technology among consumers of organic products

RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Customer Comes First: Putting Consumer Intelligence to Work for Horticulture

METHOD

414 consumers evaluated **hypothetical tomato products** said to be produced using different methods of pest control



KEY FINDINGS

Consumers with **low confidence in science and tech's** ability to solve environmental problems were most likely to be consumers who preferred **organic**

TAKEAWAY

Producers should strategize about how they communicate their approach to food production. High-tech approaches are seen as positive, but this can be a deterrent for nearly 1/4 of consumers.



Growing Forward 2
A federal-provincial-territorial initiative

Western
UNIVERSITY - CANADA



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What we know

- Consumers opinions often quite different from experts
- Consumer values have a great impact on food for health choices
 - Health interest
 - Production practices
 - Confidence
 - Safety



What we need

- Determine the best way to communicate food for health to consumers
- Better understanding of what motivates consumers to make healthy choices



Thank You

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