

Displaying Sustainability Related Information on Meals – The Role of Design and Information Depth from a Consumer’s Perspective

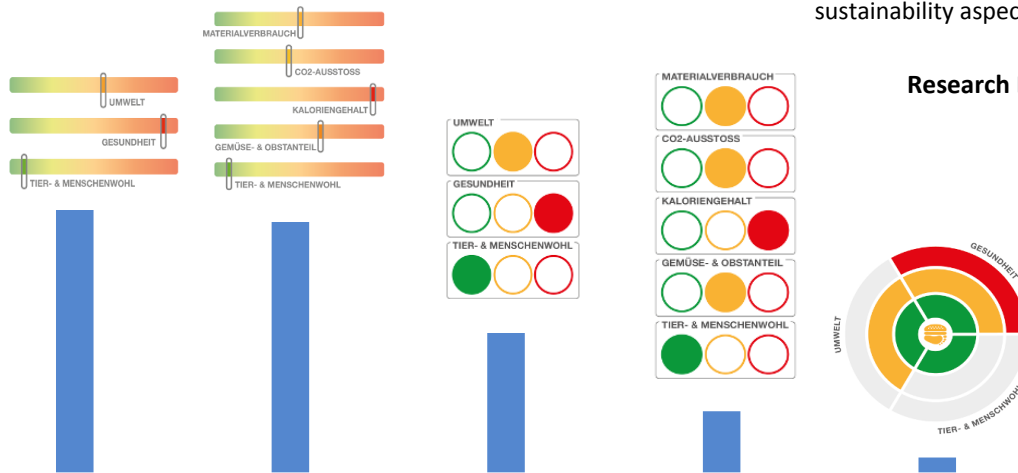
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Background & Goal Food labels are able to support consumers in making more sustainable food choices in out-of-home consumption situations.

To assess the importance of the amount of information and the design of food labels displaying sustainability aspects, we test different formats of food labels using a best-worst choice design.

Research Design Within the project NAHGAST, three different label designs (slider vs. footprint vs. traffic light) and a set of five different sustainability indicators were developed. The sustainability indicators used to display the resource use, the carbon emissions, the calorie content, the share of fruits & vegetables as well as animal and human welfare. In total, nine variations of labels were tested; the three designs presenting either one, three or five indicators (see graph). The variations were tested in a best-worst choice experiment in a university canteen (N=101). We asked to choose both, the label that is most helpful to choose a sustainable meal as well as the label that is least helpful (four labels per choice set).



Results

The graph displays the average difference between ,most helpful'-counts and ,least helpful'-counts. We identify a strong preference on labels with higher information content. All three labels displaying only one indicator ranked lowest. Respondents consider these labels as least helpful for choosing their lunch. Besides, the results indicate a clear preference for the slider-design displaying three and five indicators. This suggests that consumers consider labels with a higher information depth as more helpful in order to choose a sustainable meal.

