# Sustainable food from a consumer policy perspective

**Lisbon, Responder workshop, 26 January**

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# Structure of the presentation

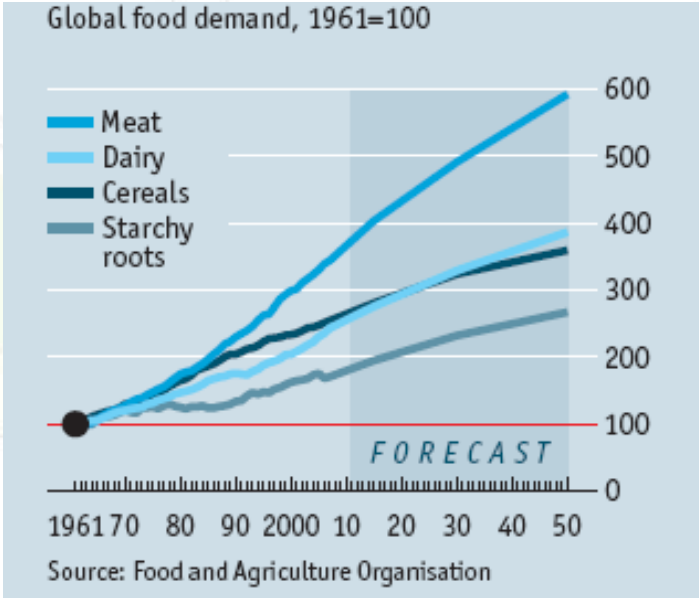
- Global and European context
- Challenges, opportunities, needs, facts and figures :
  - Consumer information and labelling
  - Working with food chain partners:
    - Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table
  - Food waste
  - Meat market study

# Global and EU context

- Political context
  - Europe 2020 strategy on smart, inclusive and sustainable growth
  - Resource-efficiency Roadmap (Sept 2011)
  - CAP and CFP proposals under discussion
  - Initiatives in preparation: SCP review (2012); Consumer Agenda (2012); Sustainable Food Communication (2013)
  - Overarching sustainable food strategy?
- Food key area of environmental impact, together with housing and transport

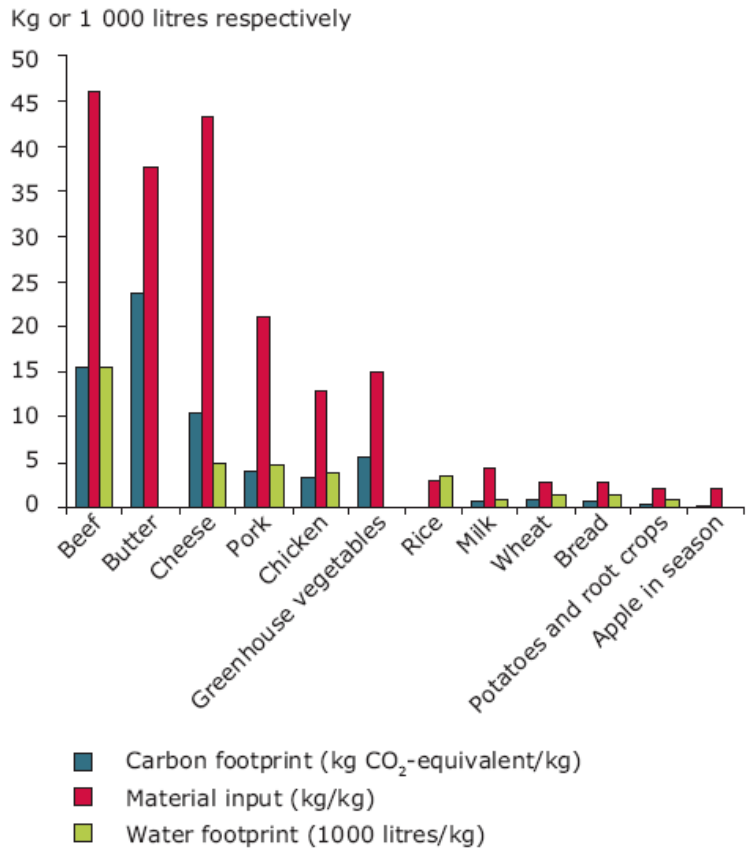
# Global food demand

- on the rise:
  - By 2050 the world's population will reach 9.1 billion, 34 percent higher than today
  - Nearly all of this population increase will occur in developing countries
- Changing dietary patterns



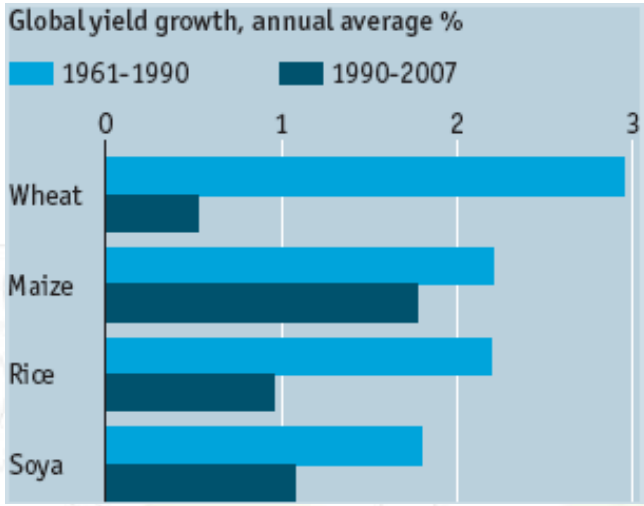
# Different environmental impacts

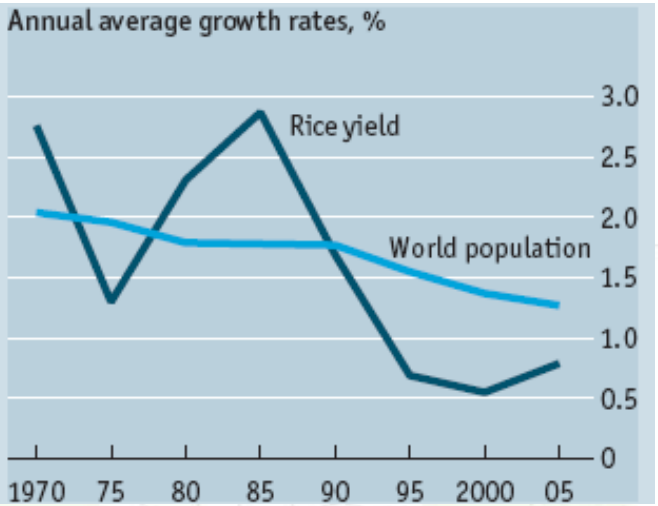
- for different types of food and drink categories
- Also variation according to place and type of production
- Kg vs nutrional value?

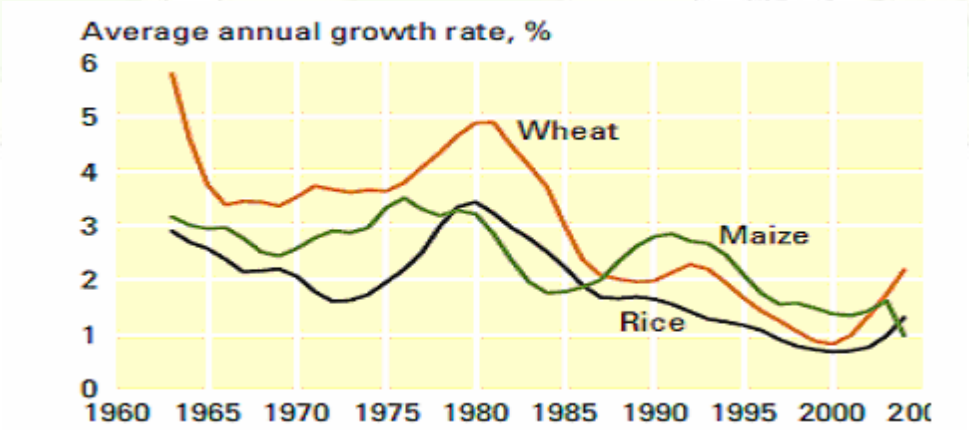



Source: EEA (2010)

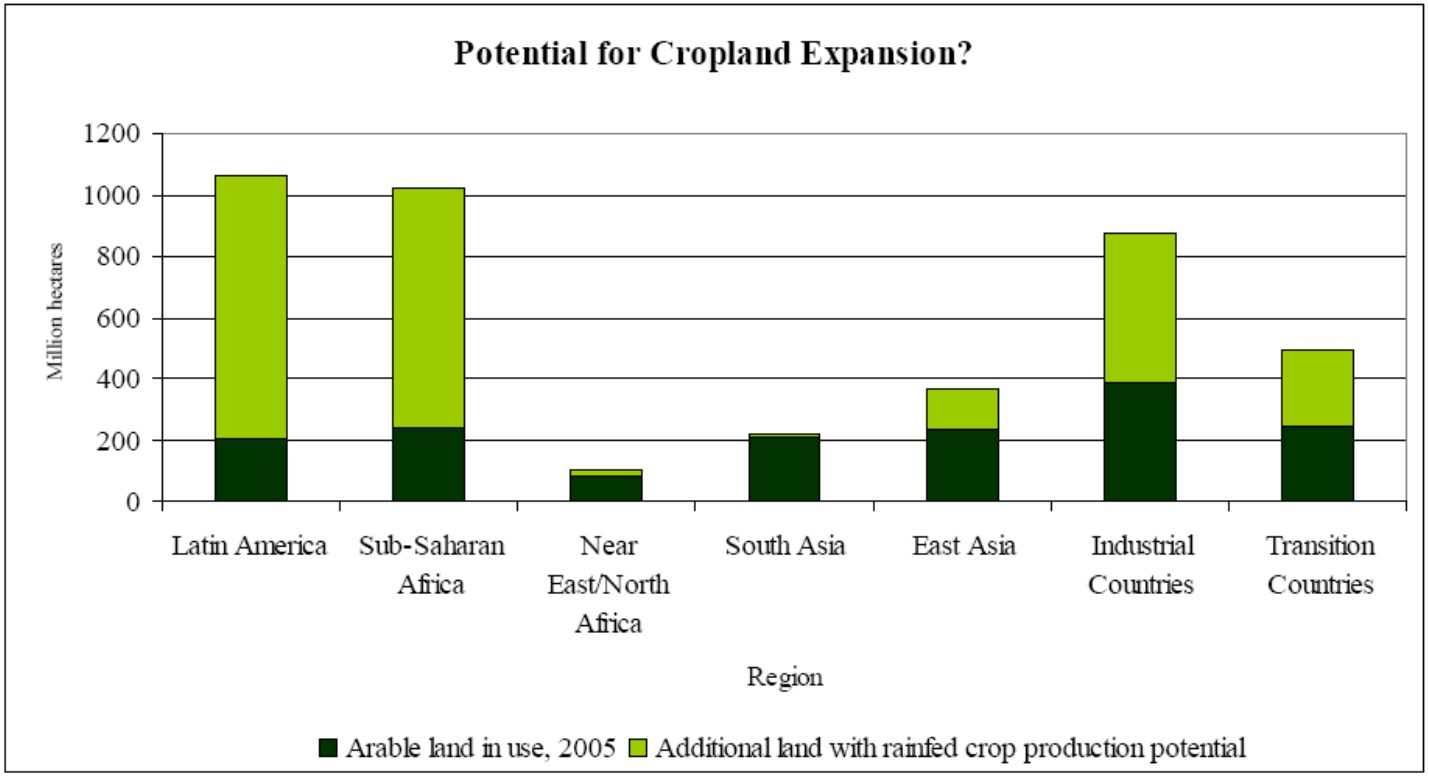
# Yield growth rates



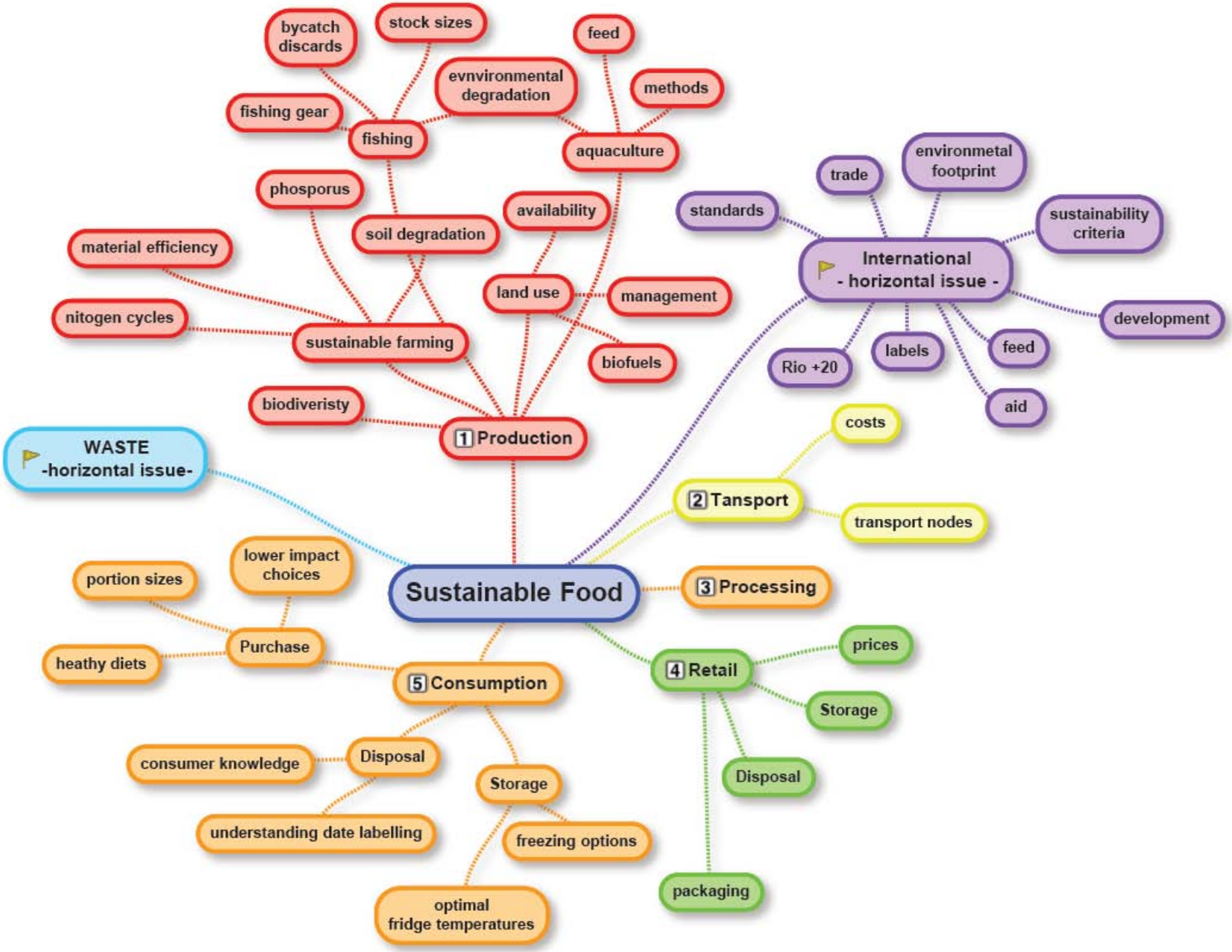



# Potential for cropland expansion?




Source: Bruinsma (2009).


Sustainable Food
1 Production
bycatch discards
stock sizes
evnvironmental degradation
fishing gear
fishing
feed
methods
aquaculture
phosporus
soil degradation
availability
material efficiency
nitogen cycles
sustainable farming
land use
management
biofuels
biodiveristy
WASTE
-horizontal issue-
International
- horizontal issue -
trade
environmetal footprint
standards
sustainability criteria
development
Rio +20
labels
feed
aid
2 Tansport
costs
transport nodes
3 Processing
4 Retail
prices
Storage
Disposal
packaging
5 Consumption
lower impact choices
portion sizes
Purchase
heathy diets
Disposal
consumer knowledge
understanding date labelling
Storage
freezing options
optimal fridge temperatures

# Consumer information and labelling

# Communicating environmental performance for food = important

- Driver of global resource use
- Environmental pressures further increase
- Consumers aware of challenges?
- Encourage consumers and producers – fostering more sustainable choices

# Current challenges concerning communicating environmental performance

- New and complex area of information, in particular for food
- Information overload and proliferation of labels
- Reliability of information
- No “meta-label” covering all sustainability aspects
- Only information not enough!

  → green choice should be easy and affordable choice

# Green labels

*One of the biggest weaknesses of the existing proliferation of private labels is the non–standardised methodologies and therefore non comparable results rendering (some of ) the resulting information and labelling little more than "information green washing"*

*The proliferation of labels is confusing to consumers and businesses alike and may ultimately undermine consumer confidence and diminish the value of green claims*

*The introduction at national level of "green" product labels should be avoided, as this risks fragmenting the market*

*Some manufacturers argue that the* ***green consumer doesn't really exist*** *due to the difference between willingness to pay and real consumptions habits. However, some researches show that this is probably closely related to the scepticism that exists about misleading and unverified environmental claims. Accurate ecolabels can create trust in environmental claims, improve information symmetry between producer and consumer, and ultimately elevate actual payment levels to meet stated willingness-to-pay*

# Consumer information needs

- Clear, reliable and comparable information
- Work on methodology to assess environmental impacts
- Further consumer research
- Exchange of best practices/guidance from multi-stakeholder platforms

# Ongoing project: Environmental footprint

- **WHAT** to communicate to final consumers with regards to the environmental footprint
  - How many different indicators an average consumer can realistically manage? (3, 4, 5, more?)
- **HOW** to communicate to final consumers the environmental footprint of a product?
  - Figures
  - Grades
  - Best in class
  - (Other?)
- **WHERE** to communicate?
  - Shelf-tag
  - Package
  - Bar code
  - (Other ?)
- **WTO** implications of the above mentioned options
- **Surveys:** pilot groups, survey: 1500 respondents (IT, SE, PL)

# Working with food chain partners: Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table

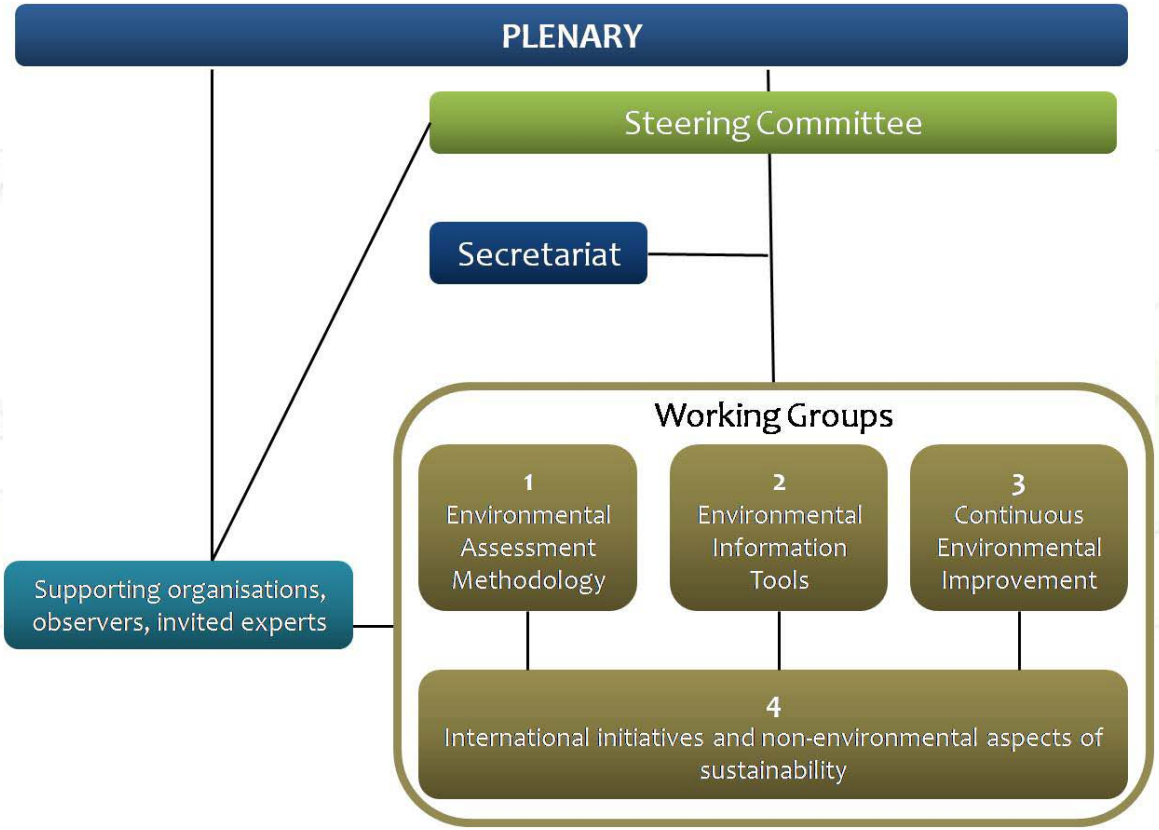
# Key characteristics

| | |
|---|---|
| **Official launch:** | May 2009 in Brussels |
| **Vision:** | Promote science-based, coherent approach to SCP in the food sector, consider interactions across the entire food chain |
| **Working areas:** | Methodology, communication, continuous improvement |
| **Scope:** | Food and drink products across the whole life-cycle (11 "constituencies") |
| **Food actors:** | 24 European food chain organisations |
| **Co-chairs:** | European Commission (DGs ENV, SANCO, JRC, ENTR) and food chain partners |
| **Support:** | UNEP, European Environment Agency |
| **Observers:** | 16 observers (National governments, Eurogroup for Animals, WWF, UN FAO, UNDP, Spanish Consumers Union (OCU)) |
| **Participation:** | EU level organisations subject to expertise and commitment |

# Three Key Objectives:

1. Establish scientifically reliable and uniform **environmental assessment methodologies** for food and drinks
2. Identify suitable **tools and guidance for voluntary environmental communication** to consumers and other stakeholders
3. Promote **continuous environmental improvement** measures along the entire food supply chain;

# Governance Structure




**Plenary Session 8th of December 2011, Brussels**

# Mandate and Progress per working group

## WG1 (Environment assessment) and WG2 (Environmental information)

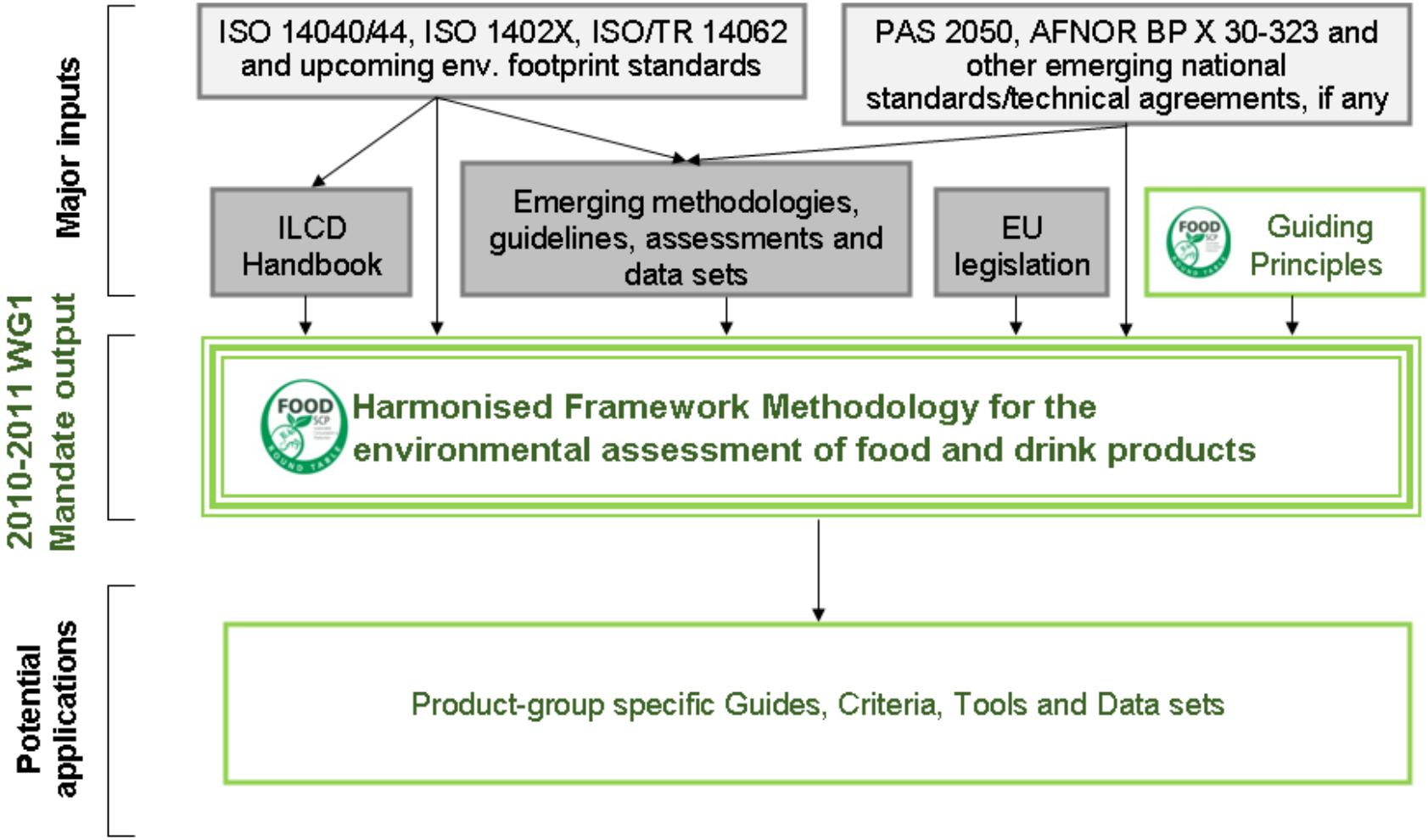
### Guiding Principles

- Environmental assessment and communication of environmental information along the food chain
- Lead Principle: "*Environmental information communicated along the food chain, including to consumers, shall be scientifically reliable and consistent, understandable and not misleading, so as to support informed choice*."
- Formally adopted at Plenary Session July 2010
- Supported by 10 Guiding principles
- Starting point for further work

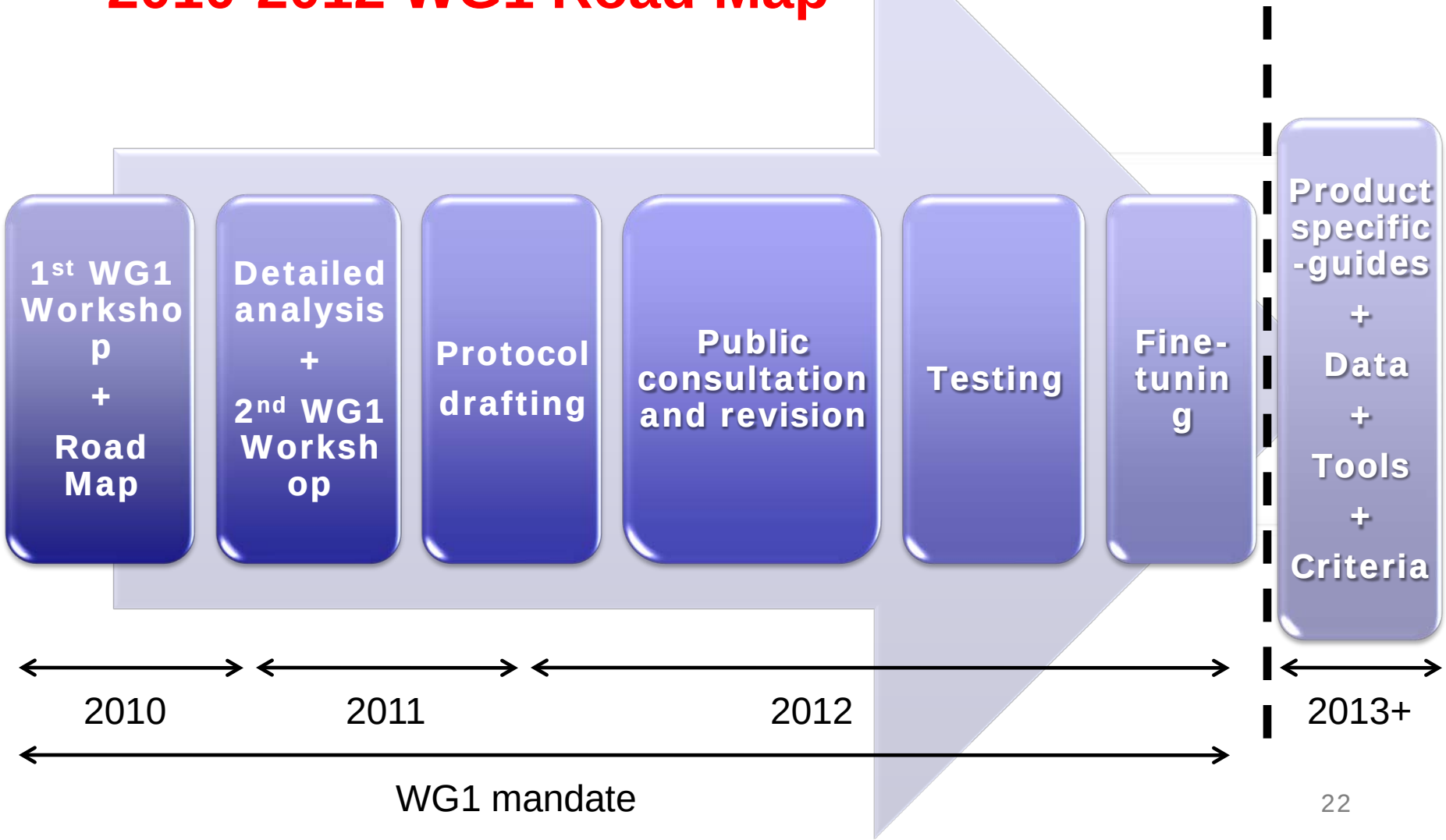
# Working Group 1

- Objective:  Establishment of Harmonised Framework Methodology
- Crucial Working Group
- Co-chairs: JRC and Food & drink industry
- The Harmonised Framework Methodology (HFM) will be a set of common rules to assess the environmental issues associated with food and drink products along their supply chains.
- In particular, this will support:
  1. environmental assessments conducted in the context of business-to-business as well as business-to-consumer communication (focus of WG2)
  2. the identification of environmental improvement options (focus of WG3)

# Inputs and outputs of the HFM



# 2010-2012 WG1 Road Map



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## Working Group 2 Environmental Information Tools

Co-chairs: DG SANCO and Copa-Cogeca (European Farmers)

# Report "Communicating environmental performance along the food chain"

**Fact and figures:**

- **More than 1 year**
- **12 meetings (working group + drafting group)**
- **Intensive discussions**
- **Public consultation**
- **11 communication tools on env performance**
- **11 access points of information**
- **Identified 84 strengths & 98 challenges**
- **Adopted by the Plenary in December 2011**
- **Available at** http://www.food-scp.eu

## Report "Communicating environmental performance along the food chain"

# Structure

- **Setting the context**
  - Life cycle approach
  - Why is communicating env performance important?
  - What, how and when to communicate
- **Detailed analysis with strengths and challenges of communication tools**
- **Recommendations and conclusions**

# Recommendations

- Based on the analysis in the report
- Criteria for recommendations and conditions
  - Scientific reliability
  - Supporting informed choice
  - Avoiding disproportionate burden
  - Motivating environmental improvement along the food chain

# Recommendations

## Horizontal recommendations

- The methodology, scope, limitations and uncertainties are **clearly explained and stated**.
- **Communication is relevant and valid** for multi-supply and multi-destination products, including any post-consumption phase information e.g. on how to dispose of the used packaging.
- **Vague or non-specific terms** such as "green", "environmentally friendly", "sustainable", "ecological", "eco", "nature's friend" "non-polluting", "environmentally safe" etc. **are avoided**.
  European and national **guidance documents on environmental claims** should be followed.
- **Negative trade-offs** between environmental impacts are **not hidden**.
- **Reliable, easy-to-understand and comparable environmental information** that is clear in scope and meaning is provided to enable consumers to make informed purchasing decisions.


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## Recommendations depending on the access point of information (1)

including identification of conditions to support informed choice and to avoid disproportionate burden

### Recommendations depending on the access point of information

- Recommended for on-pack-communication:

  - information concerning consumption and post-consumption phase
  - certification schemes
  - ISO type II labels that are clear, accurate and substantiated
  - cause-related marketing

Footnote: While the majority of European Food Sustainable and Consumption Round Table members agreed with this conclusion, some members wanted to see 'ISO type 1 labels' and 'environmental footprints with context' recommended on pack given the strengths identified earlier in this report (plus review clause when more information available)

# Recommendations (2)

- Recommended for communication on-shelf:

  - certification schemes

  On-shelf communication is of particular relevance for products that are sold without packaging.

- Recommended for price terminal with barcode / 2D code / tag + decoding device

  - certification schemes

  These tools depend much on technology development.

- Recommended for barcode or 2D code with cell phone (smart phone)

  - for all types of environmental information since there are virtually no technical barriers to conveying information using smart phones under minimum requirements listed in the report

- General recommendations for close to the point of sale communication (for leaflets, front of receipts, representatives in shops)

- General recommendations for communication beyond the point of sale (for marketing campaigns / advertising / public relations, internet / social media)


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## Conclusions

- Communicating environmental information to the consumer on the basis of a product-specific lifecycle approach is particularly challenging for food and drink
  -> requires a high degree of precision on how the information is generated and how the results need to be interpreted
- In order to fully assess the best means of environmental communication to the consumer the methodological questions of environmental footprinting and lifecycle assessments are key.
- Communicating environmental information is best done by using a multi-pronged approach
- Need for consumer research as consumers need to be enabled to make informed choices
- The third party use of environmental information has to be further analysed.
- The **food chain partners play an important role** in enabling consumers to act on complex product-specific information and to make informed choices, supported by awareness raising and a broader public education strategy


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## Working Group 3 „Continuous improvement“

- Cochairs: JRC and Suppliers to agriculture (Fertilizers Europe)
- Draft Report “on Continuous Environmental Improvement” was in public consultation in autumn
- Extensive report (160 p) with chapters following the different “constituencies” (suppliers, agriculture, trade, food and drink industry, retailer, consumer, consumer waste, transport & logistics).
- Environmental challenges, actions, obstacles and recommendations (policy, research)
- Expected to be finalised March 2012 (implementation onwards)

## Working Group 4 „international and non-environmental aspects”

- Co-chairs ENTR and Agricultural Trade (CELCAA)
- Report “Non-environmental aspects of sustainability” available

# Time schedule

- **Guiding Principles** on environmental assessment and voluntary communication of environmental information on F&D products:
  - **Adopted by Plenary 13th July 2010**
- **Harmonised framework assessment methodology** for F&D products:
  - Scientific workshop 5th-6th July 2011 at EU Commission Joint Research Centre;
  - Draft Protocol in preparation
  - Pilot testing: 2012
- **Guidance on the use of communication tools: Public consultation 15 July - 15 September 2011**, Adopted at the Plenary 8 December 2011
  - **Future work (mandate 2012 under discussion):**
- **Reporting on continuous environmental improvement** along the food chain: **Public consultation August –September 2011**
  - Implementation of the recommendations: March 2012 onwards
- **International and non-environmental aspects:**
  - Report: December 2010
- **Food waste new working group?**

# Food Waste

# Content

1. How big is the problem ?
2. Impacts
3. Causes
4. Context to act
5. Member States activities
6. EU activities

# Facts and Figures - EU

- **89 million tonnes/year in EU**
- **179 kg per capita/year**
- **By 2020: 126 million tonnes/year expected**

***Caveat: estimates***

***(Agricultural waste and fish discards not included in study)***

*Source: EU funded study « Preparatory study on food waste across EU 27 »*

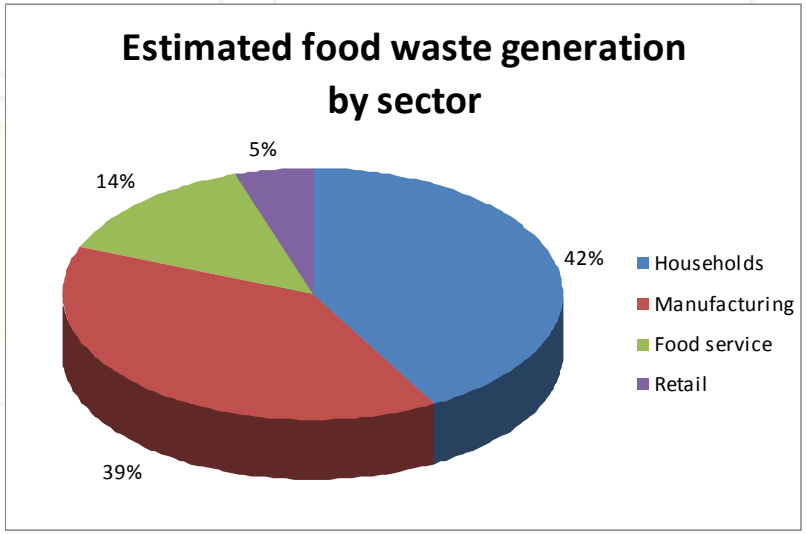

Strauss

# Who is wasting food and why?

## Food is wasted <u>at all stages</u> of the food chain

- **Primary production & manufacturing**: overproduction, misshapen products, product & packaging damage.
- **Retailers:** marketing standards, stock mismanagement, marketing strategies (two-for-one deals).
- **Caterers**: one portion size, difficulty in anticipating the right number of clients, and because taking leftovers home is not yet an accepted habit in Europe.
- **Households:** lack of awareness on quantities of food wasted, on the environmental and economical costs of food waste. Lack of knowledge on how to use food efficiently (e.g. making the most of leftovers, cooking with available ingredients), lack of shopping planning, misreading of date labels.

- **Households** produce about **42%** of the total (**76kg**/capita/year), of which **60%** would be **avoidable**
- **Manufacturing** sector at **39%,** of which most part is **unavoidable**
- **Catering** sector at **~14%**
- **Retail** at about **5,5% (possibly more)**



# Impacts

- **Environmental**: food waste generates about 170 Mt of CO2 eq. in the EU/year
- **Economic**: higher costs in waste management: transport costs, operation costs in treatment plants, separation costs, maintenance of landfills; edible food thrown away = money wasted; etc.
- **Social**: in view of current global financial crisis, rising food prices and international food shortages.

# Context

- **Global food security**: by 2050 an increased food production of 70% is needed to feed 9 billion people (FAO)
- **Hunger**: 925 million people suffer from hunger today + 1 billion affected by poor nutritional food intake or overconsumption/obesity.
- **Financial** context: economic advantage to avoid food waste

# **Activities** – Member States

**A wide range of food waste prevention initiatives – recently established, mostly small scale**

- Awareness campaigns
- Information tools: guides, brochures
- Food redistribution programmes
- Logistical improvements
- Research
- Separate food waste collection (Irish legislation)

# Activities – EU level

- **Political importance increasing**
- **Understand & analyse the issue with <u>all stakeholders</u>:** how to minimise food waste/optimise food packaging without compromising food safety?
  - Using various fora at EU level
  - FP7 research call published
- **Raising awareness via events (Green Week etc.)**
- **EU Parliament report, adopted 20 Jan 2012**
- **Sustainable Food Communication (2013)**

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Health & Consumers

# Study of the functioning of the meat market for consumers in the EU - First results

# Background

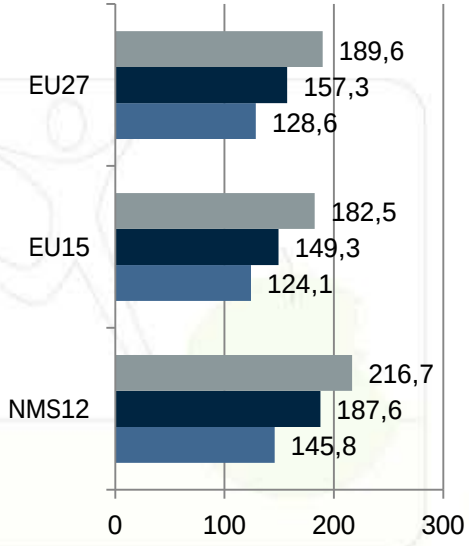
- Monitoring of consumer markets from a consumer perspective - in-depth market studies
- Weaker performance of the meat market in the Consumer Markets Scoreboard
- Ranked particularly low for trust that the retailers/suppliers are compliant with the consumer protection rules
- Market highly regulated at the EU and national levels
- 4% of the household budget

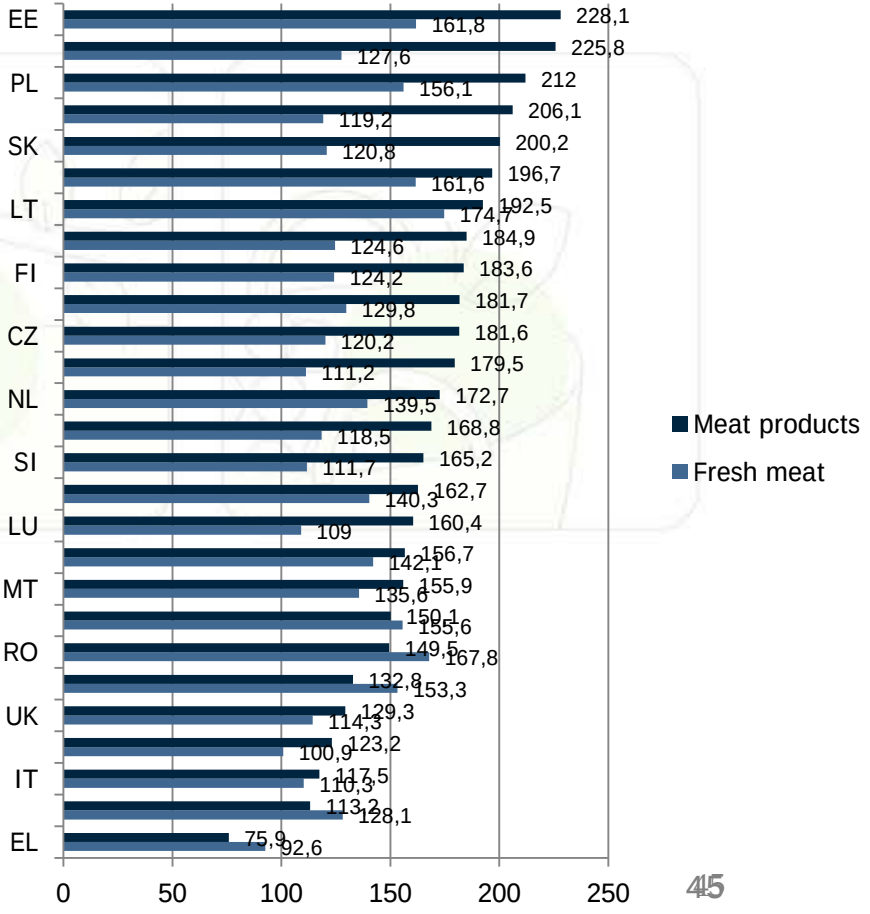
# GfK interim report

- Consumer survey
- Mystery shopping
  - Availability of products
  - Revision of  the sales channels sample
- Stakeholder surveys: EU and national
- Model for the analysis

# Meat purchases and consumption

Q4. How often does your family/household eat meat?

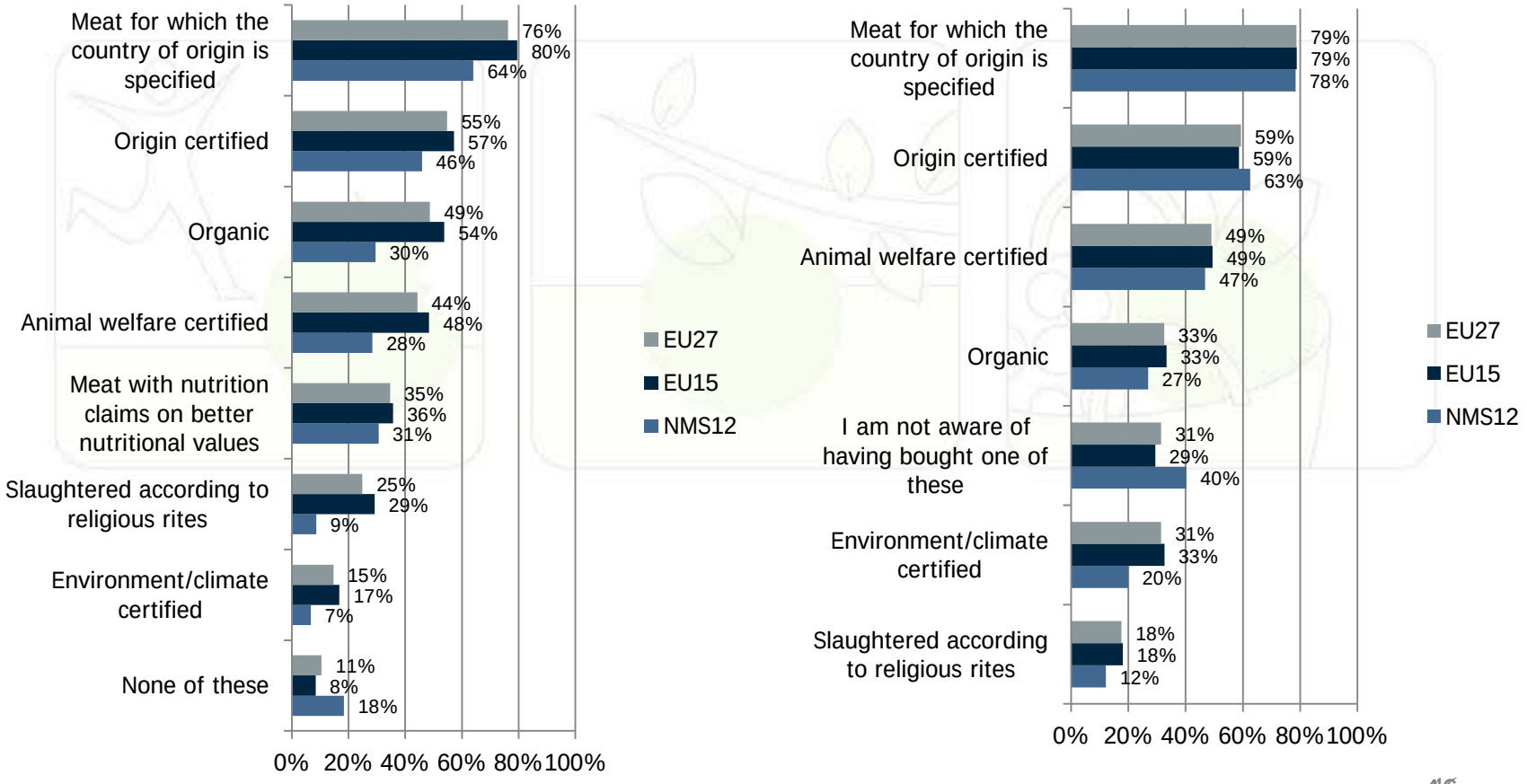



Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

# Knowledge of and purchases of different types of meat

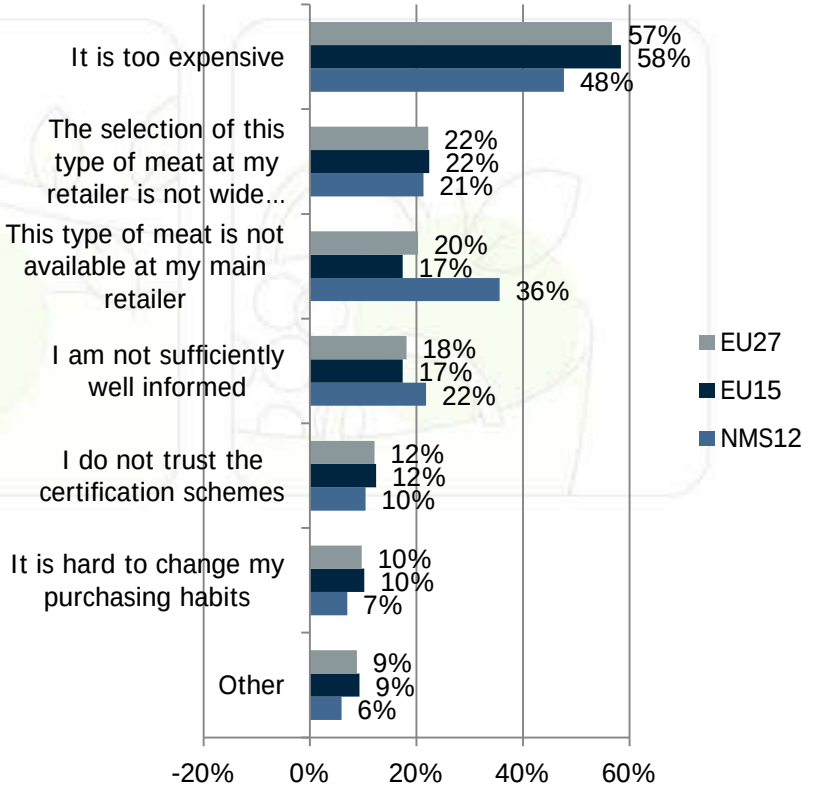
Q2/Q3. Which of the following do you know/have you purchased in the past month?




Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

# Consumer intentions

Q10A. Would you like to buy more often the following types of meat or meat products?
Q10B. (If) you indicated that you would like to buy more ORGANIC, please give the reason(s) for not doing so currently. Base: Would like to buy more often in Q10A/Organic

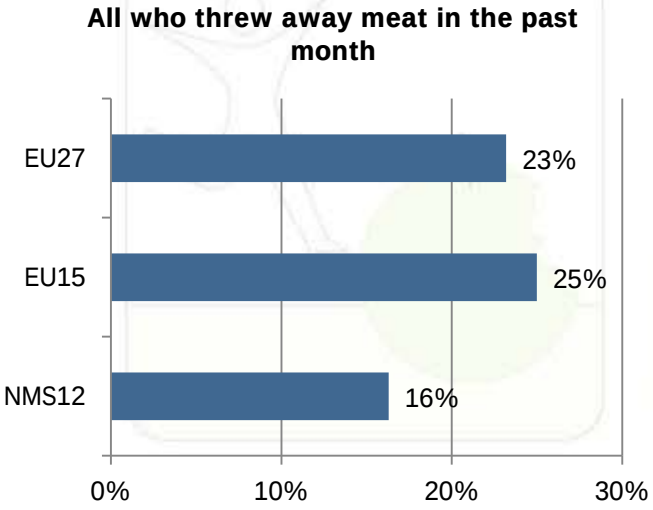



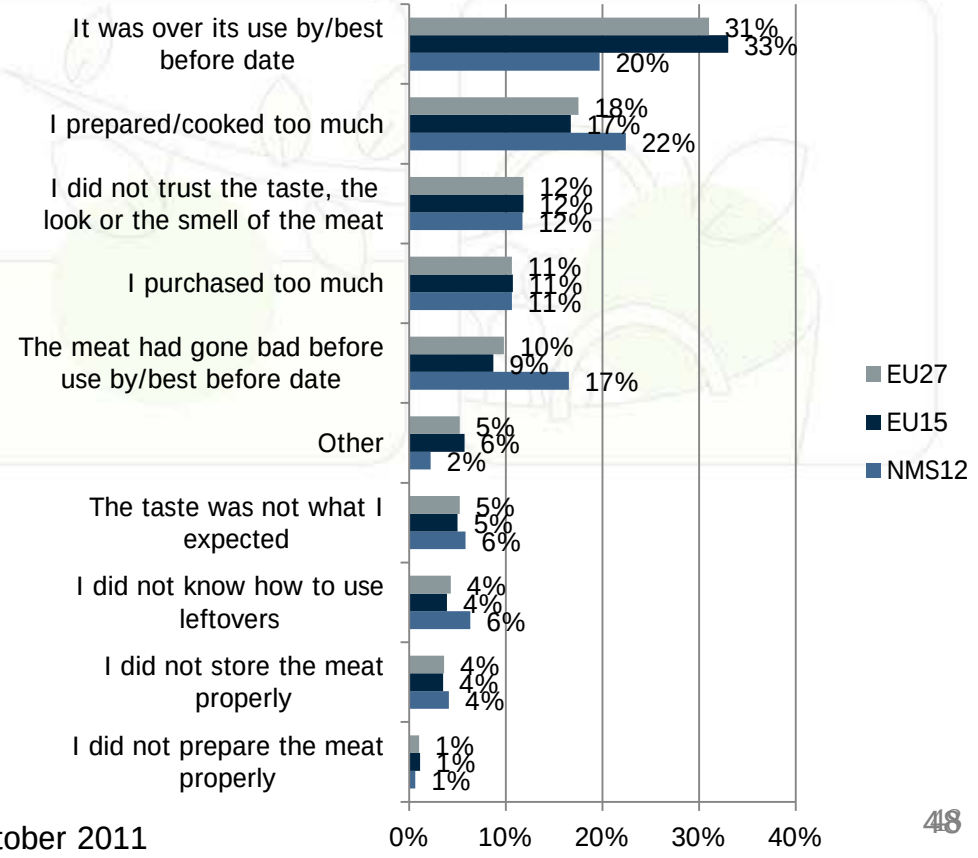

Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

# Meat study: Food waste

Q7. In the past month, how many times did you throw away edible parts of meat or meat products?

Q8A. In the past month, what was the MOST FREQUENT reason for you to throw away meat or meat products?

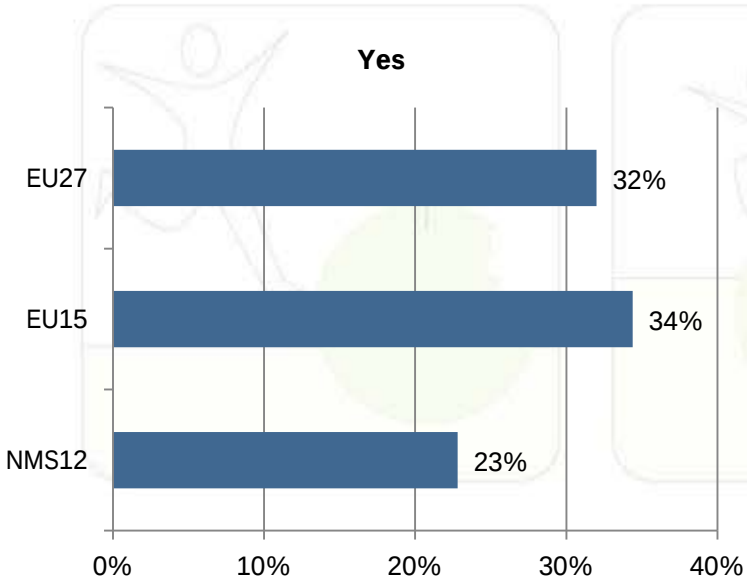


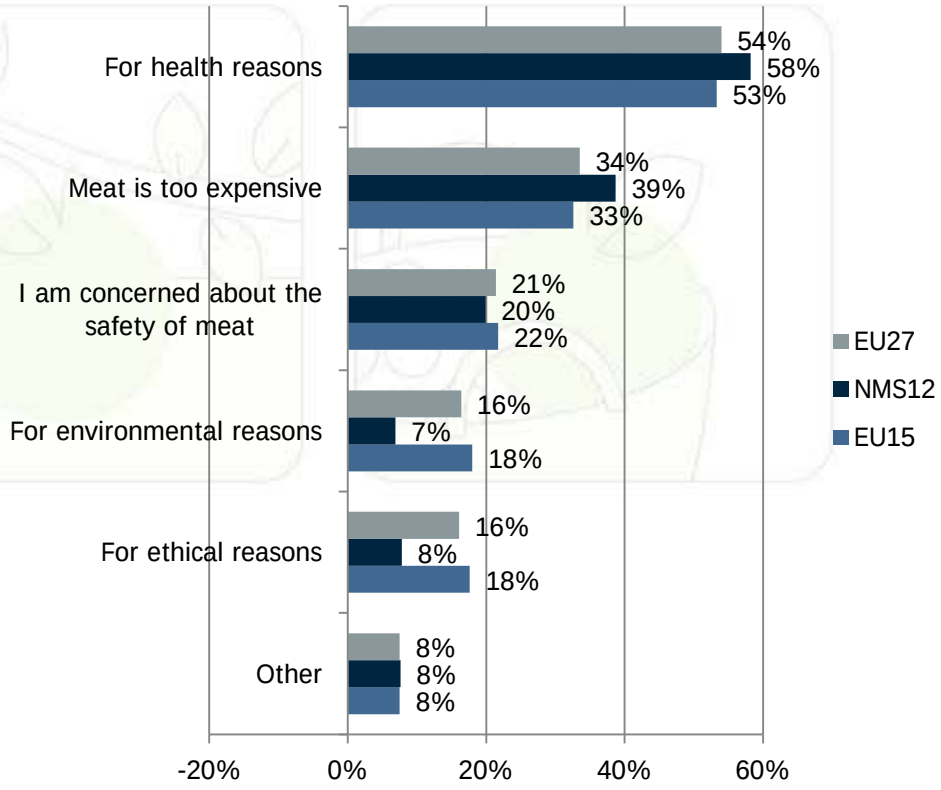




Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

# Consumer intentions on purchase

Q10C. And in general would you like to buy meat or meat products less often?
Q10D. (If) you indicated that you would like to buy meat less often, please give the reason(s) why you would like to reduce your meat consumption.

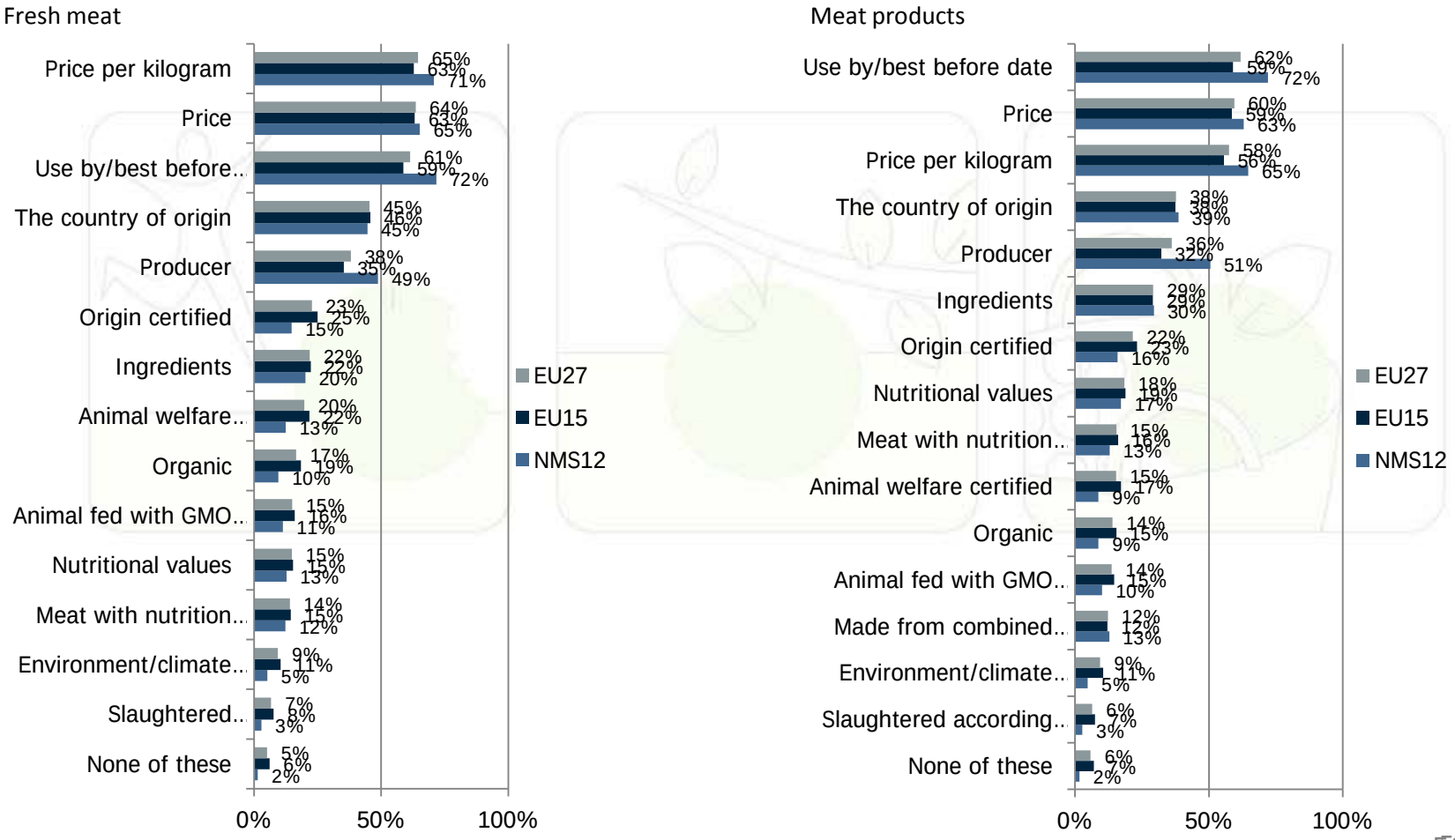



Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

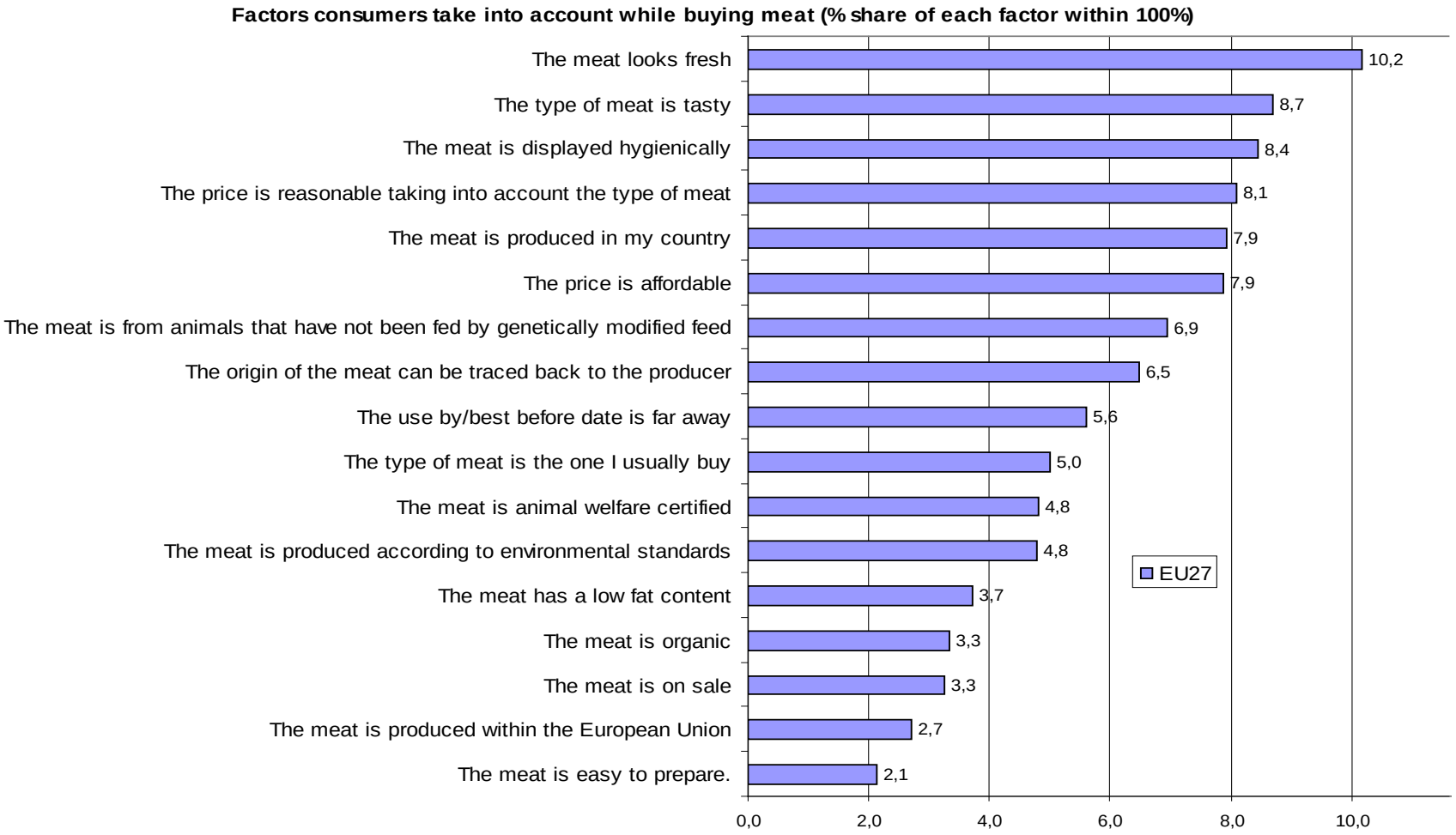
# Information – sources and aspects

Q12. Which of the following aspects do you look for when you buy...?




Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

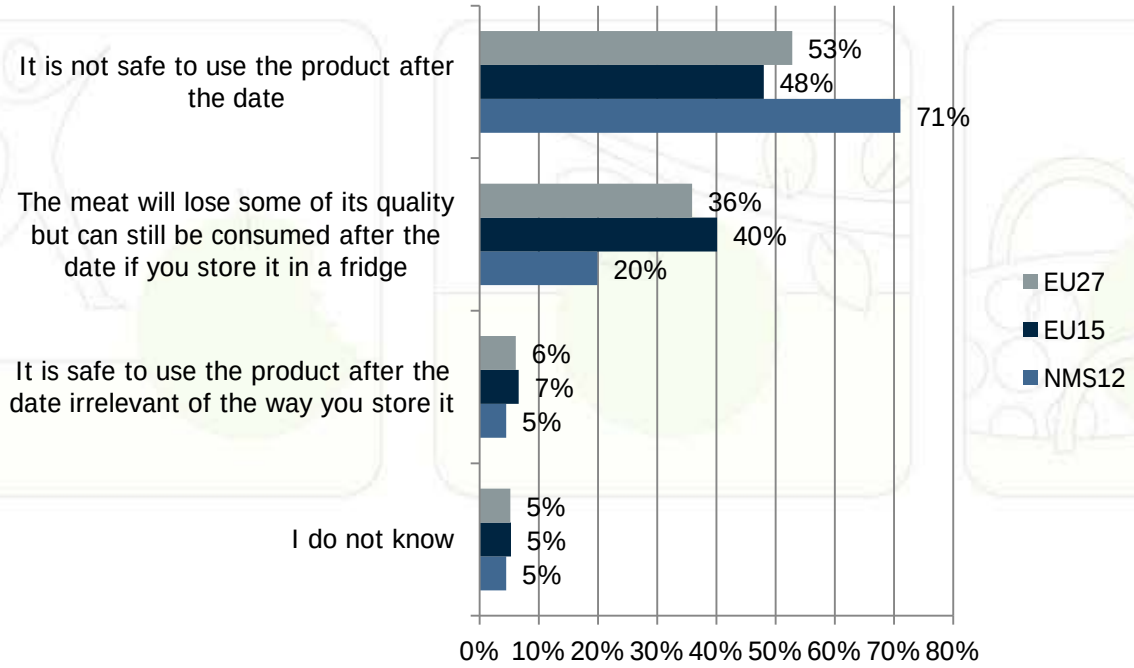
# Importance of particular aspects




Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

# Understanding of some aspects

Q17. A sealed pack of dry sausage that you have purchased has a best before date on its label. What does it mean?




Source: GfK Interim report, Meat market study, October 2011

# Meat study timeline

- Interim report was submitted in the end of October 2011
- Draft final report has been submitted recently
- Contract ends in March 2012
- Recommendations?

# Overview initiatives

- CAP + CFP proposals
- Consumer Agenda (2012) + Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan (2012)
  - New measures to facilitate sustainable consumption
  - Public consultation ongoing
  - Environmental footprint testing
- Sustainable food communication (2013)
- Studies:
  - Meat market
  - Behavioural Climate Change Mitigation options including food, FP7 projects
  - Feasibility study EU Ecolabel extension food
  - ....

# Thank you!

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