

## **PhD project - KFC vs. Locally grown healthy food? Shifting consumers to a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.**

### **Name and contact first and second supervisor:**

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### **Description of the project:**

Nowadays, consumers are constantly reminded of the benefits of a healthy diet, for themselves *and* for the planet. The combination of healthiness and sustainability is portrayed as the ultimate ideal for consumers. It has, for instance, become quite common to advertise the sustainable character of healthy products next to, or instead of, the nutritional value of the food (e.g. 'no pesticides'). In a similar vein, sustainable lifestyles—such as plant-based diets—often emphasize the health benefits that come with it. Marketing healthy products as sustainable, and vice versa, has blurred the line between eating healthy and eating sustainably. Intuitively, it would be easy to assume that this is a good thing, and that highlighting the sustainable aspect of healthy food (or the reverse) increases the attractiveness of such foods, ideally resulting in the well-being of consumers. However, the current obesity epidemic, as well as pressing environmental issues, indicates that a lot of work still needs to be done and that research is needed to further explore which factors foster healthy and/or sustainable eating (e.g. Goukens & Klesse 2022).

**This research specifically aims to shift consumers towards a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle without compromising on consumer wellbeing.** In the past, media and research often focused on the restrictive side of eating healthy and sustainably. However, research that is more recent suggests that these restrictions may be counterproductive and often cause more harm than good. With this research we aim to answer the call from the academia to take a more positive approach towards eating healthily (Vosgerau, Scopelliti, & Huh 2020; Petersen & de Boer 2021). In this research, we use behavioral insights from domains such as self-control (Geyskens et al. 2008) and beliefs (Haws, Rezek, & Sample 2017) to promote a healthy and sustainable lifestyle while maximizing consumer wellbeing. In this way, our findings will offer insights of particular interest to consumers, health care, and policy makers. Ultimately, the research will unveil strategies to enhance healthy eating in a sustainable way; creating a win-win situation for society as a whole.

### **Good to know:**

All researchers involved have experience in the domain of healthy eating and sustainability. Preliminary data on this topic are present. Resources and infrastructure to execute experimental and field studies are available. Techniques used for this research are experiments, surveys, and field experiments.

### **Features of a good candidate:**

- A good knowledge of English to read, write, and present academic work is necessary.
- A background in economics, psychology, social sciences, or any related domain is required.

- A strong interest for healthy and/or sustainable consumption.
- A strong understanding of experimental designs and how to implement them.

**References:**

Geyskens, K., Dewitte, S., Pandelaere, M., & Warlop, L. (2008). Tempt me just a little bit more: The effect of prior food temptation actionability on goal activation and consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(4), 600-610.

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Haws, K. L., Reczek, R. W., & Sample, K. L. (2017). Healthy diets make empty wallets: The healthy=expensive intuition. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43(6), 992-1007.

Petersen, F. E., & Boer, C. D. (2021). How Food Experience through Ambiance and Food Design Can Promote the Well-Being of Consumers. In *Design Thinking for Food Well-Being* (pp. 99-114). Springer, Cham.

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