

Editorial

In this issue of *Economia agro-alimentare / Food Economy*, we feature six regular Articles and one Note, all written in English. The topics span from the analysis of consumer preference and behaviour to sensory evaluation, from local development issues to trade analysis, closing with a discussion note on an increasingly important ethical issue in food systems.

Gioacchino Pappalardo, Giuseppe Di Vita, Giovanni La Via, Severino Romano, Antonella Vastola, Mario Cozzi, Mario D'Amico in their paper "Exploring gender differences in the Italian traditional pizza consumption" evaluate gender differences in the consumption of traditional Italian pizza. Quantitative analysis by an ordered logit regression models was conducted using a sample of Sicilian consumers. The results indicate that gender differences can significantly influence the buying process of pizza. In particular, the most important differences appear to be strongly related to preferences for sensory attributes such as "smell", "appearance", "crunchiness" as well for "price": for all these attributes females assign more importance than males. The findings have useful implications for the food industry since gender differences should be taken into account in new product formulation and characterisation of this product.

The article "Celiac and non-celiac consumers' experiences when purchasing gluten-free products in Italy" by Vilma Xhakollari and Maurizio Canavari reports about a qualitative study on the perception of gluten-free products. The study involves several stakeholders and it highlights large differences in the attitude of celiac and non-celiac consumers towards gluten-free products. The interviewees agree that following a gluten-free diet is a life-changing experience, but for completely different reasons. The main concerns emerged regard the nutritional value of gluten-free products and the level of (dis)information from part of non-celiac consumers following a gluten-free diet.

Jiří Zelený, Kristína Bednářová in their paper "Reverse Osmosis Water-Based Beverages as a Product Innovation in Gastronomic Facilities: Expert

Panelists' Sensory Evaluation and Generation Y Consumers' Attitudes” analyze by 6 expert panelists possible sensory differences of three beverages (water, tea and coffee) made from filtered tap water by reverse osmosis (RO). The results indicate that the use of RO does not seem to be justified as only sporadic sensory differences between RO and no treatment beverages were found. The Author also explored consumers' attitudes towards RO water-based beverages by surveying a sample of consumers in Prague and Bratislava. The findings highlight that younger consumers appear to be more responsive to RO beverages despite their relatively low knowledge in this field. Their conviction about the positive sensory effect of RO leads to higher willingness to use it (especially for tap water as a drink), and their willingness to pay more for RO beverages in comparison with older, more informed and more sceptic consumers.

In the article “Olfactory cues and consumers' purchase behavior in food products: a category management approach”, by Kaisa Silja Sofia Sandell, the author analyses the influence of olfactory cues on consumer responses to utilitarian and hedonic food products. Data were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings of this study show that olfactory cues are among factors that influence consumer choice within a particular assortment (chocolate or candy) and have no significant cannibalisation effect on other product categories. Congruent scents can be employed to affect intra-category behaviour. Since this positive impact of a scent benefits more than damages the sales of different closely positioned categories, category managers are encouraged to use olfactory cues as a low-risk promotional tool.

In his article, “Import Demand for Dairy Products in Chile and Competition among Exporting Countries: The Case of Milk Powder and Cheese”, Rodrigo García Arancibia estimates Chilean demand for dairy products. The author used a Source Differentiated Almost Ideal Demand model (SAID) for milk powder and cheese by Chile. This article is important because dairy is such an essential product to the economy and the impact of the competition of the exporters must be considered. The author concludes that issues of large exporters such as the US have substantial impacts on neighbouring exporters such as Argentina.

It is clear that developing sustainable livelihoods in any developing country is essential to the economic growth of a country. Ellen Fitzpatrick and Sedef Akgüngör wrote specifically about this issue in their article “Evaluating the Asset Transfer Model in Facilitating Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Malawi”. The authors examined whether asset transfer and capabilities development intervention had an impact on social capital. Their research focused on the dairy industry in Malawi. Their findings suggest that there is a statistical impact of asset transfer on social capital and economic opportunity.

The issue closes with the Note “Thinking outside the box and beyond the slaughterhouse” by Massimiliano Borrello, Gianni Cicia, and Luigi Cembalo. The authors discuss ritual slaughtering and food production methods complying with the religious prescription of Jewish and Muslim communities. The authors look at Halal and Kosher food production and certification with the lenses of animal welfare requirements and considering these methods in the framework of intensive farming and industrial farm animal production. A key point is that defending animals limited to the last moments of their life is not satisfactory, and the farming environment is much more critical for the overall welfare of animals; thus an alternative approach to the dualistic view of slaughtering practices is suggested.

Volume 21 of our journal will be the last one using the traditional academic publishing model. Starting from the year 2020 the journal *Economia agro-alimentare / Food Economy* will convert to an Open Access model, based on the Italian version of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial No Derivatives 4.0 license (CC-BY-NC-ND-4.0 IT). This change implies that the users will be able to: A) reproduce and Share the Licensed Material, in whole or in part, for Non-Commercial purposes only; and B) produce and reproduce, but not Share, Adapted Material for NonCommercial purposes only. This innovation in the journal’s publishing model is aimed at adapting to the transformation of the academic publishing markets, eliminating the current barriers to free and seamless distribution of the work of our authors, and securing a broader diffusion of knowledge. We are grateful to the publisher FrancoAngeli Edizioni for its support in implementing this innovation and its availability to renovate the publication agreement with the Italian Society of Agri-Food Economics (SIEA) on these new bases.

SIEA will continue to support the journal on behalf of its members, while articles submitted by contributors who are not members of SIEA will be subject to an article-processing charge (APC) to be paid after the manuscript is accepted and before the article is published.

We also introduced some little changes in the layout of the articles; we now ask all the authors to add a short profile and their full affiliation and contact information, in compliance with the requirements of Clarivate Analytics for the application to be included in Web of Science.

With this issue, we welcome Sedef Akgüngör (Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Turkey) as a new member of the Editorial Board, in replacement of Martin K. Hingley. We are grateful for her availability to offer her expertise for the benefit of the journal and its community of readers, authors, and reviewers. We heartfully thank Martin for his service and dedication to the journal during the last years.

Like every year since 2011, we allowed a turn-over in the Scientific Advisory Board, and we substituted some of the members. We express our

warmest appreciation to those SAB members who have served until last year and now leave the Board. Their invaluable work in contributing to the development of the journal allowed us to reach important goals.

We welcome the new SAB members for the current year. The full list of the current SAB members can be found on the inside cover of the Journal as well as on the website www.economiaagroalimentare.it. The Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board look forward to working with our new Scientific Advisory Board, relying upon their expertise and commitment.

The international nature and high profile of the Scientific Advisory Board is one of the main determinants of the success of our journal, and we are working to maintain the highest standard in the journal's governing bodies also in the future.

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