Appetizer

Meat consumption impacts all aspects of human life and humanity’s long-term survival prospects. Despite this knowledge, society continues to ignore the negative impact of consuming meat, which includes excessively high contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions, land and water pollution and depletion, negative impacts on human health and ethical challenges.

A way to address the health and sustainability concerns with the current food systems is to shift away from current levels of consumption of animal-sourced products, especially meat, toward an increase of plant-based foods.

Main Courses

In order to add knowledge on how to trigger these transitions, the current body of work aimed to analyze the way people perceive:

(A) the origin of meat, the animals alive, uncut, sentient

Examining how animal categorizations (e.g., mammal, pets) and pet attachment affect animal evaluations

(B) animals as meat products, not as living animals but as food

Examining the role of product familiarity and animal resemblance on meat appetite

(C) meat and alternatives to meat consumption

Testing the role of presenting meat alternatives in a meal framing vs. isolated

Study 1

Task: Evaluate meat and alternatives (meal framing vs. product isolated)

Method

Provided normative ratings for a broad set of animals that can be used by researchers from different areas.

Results

Animals as Living Beings

Cluster 1 (e.g., whole chicken)

Cluster 2 (e.g., snake, lizard)

Cluster 3 (e.g., crocodile)

Cluster 4 (e.g., fish, prawn)

Clustering defined by high familiarity evoked more positive valenced associations and higher appetite ratings than low familiar clusters

Study 2

Task: Evaluate 28 images (naturally varying in familiarity and animal resemblance) in familiarity, animal resemblance and appetite + free association task (“What is the first thing you think about when you see this image?”)

Method

Results

Cluster 1

Cluster 2

Cluster 3

Cluster 4

Both familiarity and animal resemblance were dimensions that have an independent relationship on appetite ratings. However, familiarity revealed a much larger relationship with appetite than animal resemblance.

Study 3

Task: Evaluate meats, farmed animals, predators and pests in 11 dimensions; Pet Attachment Scale

Method

Results

Pets were the most positive category, benefited the most by pet attachment

Pests were the least benefited, even as we ascribed higher capacity to fear and greater concerns for their lives, meat

Study 4

Task: Evaluate meat and alternatives (meal framing vs. product isolated)

Method

Results

MEAT ALTERNATIVES

MEAT and MEAT ALTERNATIVES

Dessert

With this body of work we aimed to develop more insights to inform audiences interested in promoting more sustainable, healthier, plant-based diets.