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Editorial: Exploring consumers' willingness to adopt climate-friendly diets

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Editorial on the Research Topic

Exploring consumers' willingness to adopt climate-friendly diets

The urgency to mitigate climate change has propelled dietary shifts to the forefront of global sustainability efforts. Climate-friendly diets, characterized by reduced meat consumption, increased plant-based foods, and sustainable agricultural practices, present a significant opportunity for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This Research Topic, "Exploring consumers' willingness to adopt climate-friendly diets," aggregates a diverse range of studies that collectively advance our understanding of the factors influencing consumer behaviors toward sustainable food consumption. By examining these various dimensions, the contributing articles offer valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of dietary transitions and their broader implications.

The scoping review by [Srinivasan et al.](#), on the factors that facilitate consumer uptake of sustainable dietary patterns in Western countries provides a comprehensive overview of the existing literature. This foundational piece identifies key motivators and barriers, such as environmental awareness, health benefits, and socio-economic influences. The review underscores the complexity of dietary behavior change, highlighting that a confluence of individual, social, and structural factors is essential to promote sustainable consumption effectively.

In examining the intersection of economic variables and dietary habits, several studies shed light on how broader economic contexts influence consumer behavior. The simulation study focusing on Ukraine by [Shpak et al.](#), evaluate the impact of production and export changes on national food security. This analysis reveals how macroeconomic factors and policy decisions can either support or hinder sustainable dietary practices. Similarly, the investigation into the global economic crisis's impact on organic food consumption in the Czech Republic by [Majerova and Cizkova](#), illustrate the vulnerability of sustainable food markets to economic downturns, stressing the need for resilient food systems.

Cultural narratives and social movements play pivotal roles in shaping consumer attitudes toward climate-friendly diets. The historical exploration of the Meatless Monday movement by [Semba et al.](#), trace its origins and growth, demonstrating how grassroots initiatives can galvanize public interest and participation in sustainable eating practices. This cultural shift is further exemplified in the study from China by [Chen et al.](#), which

identify drivers of consumers' intentions to adopt sustainable healthy dietary patterns, revealing the influence of cultural norms and government policies.

Effective communication strategies are critical for fostering dietary shifts toward sustainability. The cross-national study on communicating dietary shifts associated with a 1.5°C climate scenario for Brazil, China, Sweden, and the UK by [Lee et al.](#) underscore the importance of tailored messages that resonate with diverse cultural contexts. Furthermore, the exploration of perceived determinants of food purchasing behavior by [Pšurný et al.](#) highlight the potential for targeted behavioral change interventions to promote sustainable consumption.

Consumer perceptions significantly impact the adoption of climate-friendly diets. The study on food producer labels by [Zhu and Jin](#) investigate whether food produced by farmers is perceived as healthier and more natural, and its influence on consumer choices. These findings suggest that labeling can play a crucial role in guiding consumer preferences toward sustainable options. Similarly, the research on the ambivalence and willingness to pay for suboptimal fruits and vegetables among organic consumers in Germany by [Puteri et al.](#) address the potential for reducing food waste through informed consumer decisions.

Innovative approaches to promoting sustainable diets are explored in several contributions. The study on adherence to the Mediterranean Diet through a bio-psycho-social and sociotype approach by [Donini and Berry](#) present an integrative model that incorporates psychological and social factors, offering a holistic perspective on dietary adherence. The investigation into vegetarian and vegan private label products in Slovakia by [Košíčiarová et al.](#) identify emerging trends and challenges in sustainable food consumption, reflecting shifting consumer preferences.

Emerging technologies and novel food sources also feature prominently in this Research Topic. The study on cultured proteins in Nordic countries by [Klöckner et al.](#) examine consumer attitudes toward lab-grown meat, milk, and fish, highlighting the attributes that could make these products attractive to different demographic groups. This research underscores the potential of alternative proteins to contribute to sustainable food systems.

The influence of retail environments on consumer behavior is explored in the study on supermarket consumers' intentions toward climate-friendly food consumption by [Emberger-Klein et al.](#) This research emphasizes the role of supermarkets in shaping consumer choices through product availability, marketing, and normative influences. The findings suggest that supermarkets can act as critical nodes.

Collectively, the articles in this Research Topic provide a nuanced understanding of the various factors influencing the adoption of climate-friendly diets. They highlight the

interplay between individual choices, economic conditions, cultural narratives, and structural enablers. The insights gained from these studies are invaluable for policymakers, marketers, and advocates aiming to promote sustainable dietary practices.

In a broader context, these findings align with global sustainability goals, such as those outlined in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). By fostering a deeper understanding of the drivers and barriers to sustainable food consumption, this research contributes to the development of effective strategies for achieving these goals.

The transition to climate-friendly diets is a complex but necessary endeavor for addressing the global climate crisis. The diverse perspectives and insights presented in this Research Topic underscore the importance of a multi-faceted approach that considers economic, cultural, social, and psychological dimensions. As we continue to explore and understand the factors influencing consumer behavior, we can better design interventions and policies that support sustainable dietary transitions and ultimately contribute to a more sustainable and resilient food system.

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