

Country Image and Consumer Evaluation of an Imported Organic Food Product

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Abstract

This paper tests the general validity of a hierarchical model of country image across countries that differ in socio-economic development and distance to the exporting country. Representative consumer samples from Germany, France, China and Thailand ($N \approx 1000$ per country) completed an online survey on three levels of country image regarding Denmark and attitudes towards buying an organic food product from Denmark. Data were analysed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. The hierarchical country image model fitted the data well in the European countries, but not in the Asian countries. It appears that the hierarchical relationships proposed by the model requires a high level of familiarity with and knowledge of the origin country and the product type. It is confirmed that consumer perception of imported products is affected by their image of the exporting country, but the country image may be more or less elaborate and differentiated.

Keywords: *Country image; organic food; structural equation modelling*

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