

Consumers' Reactions to Imperfect Fruits and Vegetables: a Multi-Faceted Phenomenon

Ada Maria Barone

Aarhus University

Simona Romani

Luiss University

Silvia Grappi

Department of Communication and Economics - University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Richard Bagozzi

University of Michigan

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Abstract

Retailers' belief that consumers would not be willing to buy aesthetically imperfect products leads to large amounts of edible produce being wasted every year. Indeed, prior studies suggest that consumers have a negative attitude toward imperfect fruits and vegetables. However, a broad and clear understanding of consumers' reactions toward these products and their antecedents is still lacking. We conduct a qualitative and quantitative study that show that consumers' reactions to imperfect products can range from extremely negative to extremely positive and we provide a broad overview of both emotional and cognitive responses associated with these products. This work adds both to literature on imperfect food and provides relevant entry points for the development of successful interventions aimed at promoting consumption of imperfect products and reducing food waste.

Keywords: *food waste; imperfection; consumer behavior*

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