

Increasing the Sales of Suboptimal Products with Sustainability and Authenticity Marketing

Ilona de Hooge
Wageningen University
Roxanne Van Giesen
Centerdata

Cite as:

de Hooge Ilona, Van Giesen Roxanne (2023), Increasing the Sales of Suboptimal Products with Sustainability and Authenticity Marketing. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 52nd, (113946)

Paper from the 52nd Annual EMAC Conference, Odense/Denmark, May 23-26, 2023



Increasing the Sales of Suboptimal Products with Sustainability and Authenticity Marketing

Abstract

As one of the UN's SDG goals, reducing food waste appears essential in the sustainability transition. One of the largest causes of food waste is consumers' reluctance to buy and consume suboptimal (imperfect) food products. Previous research has shown it to be challenging to motivate consumers to buy such suboptimal products. The current research suggests that presenting suboptimal products with a sustainability or with an authenticity positioning can increase consumers' quality perceptions of and purchase intentions for suboptimal products. Two experiments presenting suboptimal products with sustainability, authenticity, or no positioning reveal that both positionings can increase quality perceptions and purchase intentions for suboptimal products. Moreover, two field experiments show that both types of positioning can increase the sales of suboptimal products. Together, these findings suggest that sustainability and authenticity positioning can support the fight against food waste.

Subject Areas: *Advertising, Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making, Retailing*

Track: Consumer Behaviour