

Goal Conflict in Plant-Based Food Choice

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Abstract

Consumers increasingly consider the environmental impact of meat consumption and express a willingness to transition towards plant-based proteins. However, consumers often face goal conflict when making sustainable choices, balancing the goal of eating healthily and sustainably with the goal of enjoying food's taste. Modulating the salience of these goal frames can mitigate this internal conflict. This study investigated the impact of modifying goal salience, by varying product attribute frames, on consumer intentions to engage with a plant-based meat alternative, in scenarios involving competing and compatible active goals. We found that a hedonic attribute frame heightened behavioral intentions, especially when aligned with a taste goal. Conversely, a sustainability attribute frame in the presence of an active hedonic goal negatively impacted taste expectations, reducing behavioral intentions. These findings shed light on the dynamics of goal conflict in sustainable food choices.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Goal-Derived Categorization*

Track: Social Responsibility & Ethics