

Applying the S.A.V.E. Marketing Approach in the Functional Dairy Foods Industry

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Abstract

The contribution of functional foods is particularly important in the context of sustainable development for agriculturist cooperatives. However, perceived economic and environmental recognition remains low. The lack of an explicit and effective marketing strategy for functional foods tailored to the needs of prospective consumers may lead to restricted market access and undervaluation of these products. This study aimed to identify the components of a marketing mix that could strengthen local dairy cooperatives to invest in the development of functional foods, presenting an analysis based on the S.A.V.E. approach.

This study contributes to the existing literature by examining consumer groups of functional foods to develop a customer-centric value proposition for Greek agriculturist cooperatives. Findings indicate that successful marketing of functional foods requires not only product and market knowledge but also an understanding of the specific needs of agriculturist cooperatives and how these needs can be met by the attributes of functional foods. Few Greek agriculturist cooperatives have attempted to develop these products as a promising new market. We propose promoting functional foods as products with a distinct local identity, linking them to regional "culture economies" as part of their marketing strategy.

Finally, we argue that a customer-centric marketing mix for functional foods should focus on consumer needs, preferences, and resources as the foundation of the planning process. This approach requires deeper integration and synergy creation across the entire value chain beyond simple product personalization. By leveraging strategic partnerships, facilitating consumer education, and fostering direct connections between consumers and producers rooted in sustainable agricultural practices, this marketing approach can enhance engagement while supporting the economic resilience of agricultural cooperatives.

Keywords

Sustainable marketing, Eco-innovation, Business strategy, functional foods.