

WP4- Link between OLP and Consumers and Citizens  
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Theme: Marketing recommendations

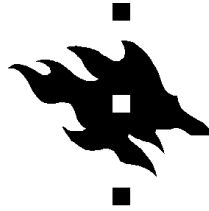
### **Informational Needs Concerning OLPs**

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The OLP regulation pursues three objectives of which one is to guarantee reliable consumer information regarding specific quality expectations. In the following some of these quality characteristics are discussed and we also describe how consumers expectations are met. The focus here is what informational needs concerning OLPs may appear.

In our working group these informational needs emerged from many perspectives. Most important of all, as was pointed out in the synthesis report (Tregear 2001), was that overall awareness and knowledge of official designations of origin is very low among European consumers. To add the value of official designation in the food system a campaign to promote OLPs in general is needed.

Usually quality characteristics of the OLPs refer to the geographical environment of origin such as climate, soil quality or local know-how. What quality expectations consumers have regarding to OLPs? It appeared that for consumers a link between the origin and OLPs seems to be very complex and ambiguous.



Some of these symbolic values that consumer mentioned may even be diverged. For example safety as a quality characteristic may be closely linked to the origin and this value can be contradictory to traditional or organic production methods. There is also contradiction between modern approaches and tradition in production process. Another example could be the concept of a quality product in terms of animal welfare or environmental issues.

As regards to these quality properties other than origin the informational needs increase enormously. Usually OLPs are produced by small and medium size enterprises; therefore it is difficult to establish a common marketing conception covering all these concepts of quality.

Very interesting discussion was also made in our working group how awareness of the quality characteristics differs inside or outside of the region. The consumers' perception of quality may differ subject to whether a consumer lives inside or outside the region and how much she/he actually knows about the productions process. Again there may arise an information gap between consumers and producers, and, consequently, different marketing strategies should be adopted and applied in an efficient way.

#### Marketing recommendations in a nutshell

- The OLP system in general needs to be promoted overall in European countries
- Consumers' quality expectations are diverse and inconsistent => highly intensive information systems would be needed, if these expectations were really to be met
- Different marketing strategies could be adopted depending on whether OLPs are marketed inside or outside the region