Challenges for consumers

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Consumption and Healthy Lifestyles

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Consumption and healthy lifestyles are not just isolated individual behaviours, but patterns arise from the social groups one belongs to, the physical settings in which one operates, and society at large.
Challenges for consumers.. Complex!!

- [http://debategraph.org/obesityFSM](http://debategraph.org/obesityFSM)
A little less complex

Simplified socio-ecologic model (adjusted from, Dahlgren & Whitehead, 1991)
Food choices – campaigns/interventions

Welke Eetwissel maak jij vandaag?

31 dagen groente-challenge

SHOP LOCAL

HOW TO CHOOSE SUSTAINABLE FISH?

- ORIGIN: NO OVERFISHING
- TECHNIQUE: ECO SYSTEMS SAFEGUARDED
- SPECIES: NOT THREATENED

Makes the mouth water

The brunch bunch

Light snacks

Wine yums
Individual focussed efforts not enough

Knowledge, intentions, attitudes or motivations etc. not always result in healthy/sustainable eating...
Other individual factors come into play

Individual level, i.e.,
- Competing goals with health and sustainability choices (e.g. taste, saving money for holiday).

Societal level, i.e.,
- Large socio economic (educational/income) differences in food patterns and health.
Respond automatically in a context and to cues
Our context: the food environment

- Food availability and promotion
- Social norms within the environment
Food availability – supermarket

In 2018, among 13 supermarkets in the Netherlands 71% of the promoted products were not healthy (wheel of five)

Top 3 product groups most promoted:
- Meat, Meat products and Poultry
- Alcoholic beverages
- Pastry and biscuits

Hendriksen, Jansen, Dijkstra, Huitink, Seidell & Poelman, in prep
The urban school food environment is predominantly unhealthy and may compete with the efforts of public health professionals to create a healthy school environment.

- Fast food outlets were more often in the vicinity of schools in lower SEP (28.6%) than in higher SEP areas (11.5%).

- Fried snacks/fries, hamburgers/kebab and SSB were more often promoted or advertised in lower SEP areas than in higher SEP-areas.

Online food accessibility

- Within (large) cities, individuals can source food via a meal delivery services.
- Most food types available for delivery were not considered healthy.

Poelman, Thornton, Zenk, under review EJCN.
People infer social norms

- Also indications that neighbourhood fast food environment (based on postal code and residential food outlet information) influences social norm perceptions

Van Rongen, Poelman, Thornton, Abbott, Kamphuis, Verkooijen & De Vet, in prep
How to change consumer behaviors?
Food Policy evaluation & proposing actions

Food Environment Policy Index:

- European Union
- Netherlands
- Ireland
- Germany
- Poland
- Norway

Swinburn et al 2013, obesity reviews
Conclusions

- Consumer challenges are complex!

- Individual determinants as knowledge/skills not enough to shift towards healthy and sustainable food choices.

- Multiple societal long term efforts are needed to create a healthy and sustainable system in which consumers act.

- How to engage the entire society to shift towards healthy and sustainable food choices?
Thank you!

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