

Effect of Packaging Attributes on Consumer Liking of Pressurized Low Salted Cooked Ham

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The conjoint analysis is a useful tool used in consumer research for investigating the relative importance of factors that influence the individual choice behavior, being suitable in product changes definition or in the new products developing process. The objective of this study was to investigate the influence of packaging attributes on consumer liking for pressurized cooked ham. The samples were processed by varying the technology (pressurized: HHP and control: non pressurized) and the level of salt (normal and reduced) yielding four experimental samples: control (normal and reduced) and pressurized (normal and reduced). Samples of cooked ham were evaluated by 102 consumers performed in two conditions: *expected* (looking at the label), and *informed* (tasting the product along with the label). Samples were presented to consumers coded with three digit numbers, and evaluated using structured nine-point hedonic scales ranging from 1: dislike extremely to 9: liked extremely. The data were analyzed for consumer segmentation based on similarity of responses to preference based on the Ward criteria and Euclidean distance. Following this model, the individual part-worth for each consumer was calculated. Results indicated that the salt reduction was well accepted by consumers mainly in the expected condition, where all the segments considered positive the contribution of reduced salt on the expected liking for ham. In the informed condition only the biggest consumer segment liked the pressurized ham with reduced salt content indicating that several participants had difficulty to accept the two proposed innovations.

Keywords: conjoint analysis, high hydrostatic pressure, reduced salt, consumer.

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