

Abstract to

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Relevant for the following topic: Consumer behaviour

Title: We need more seafood influencers!

Introduction

Despite the fact that people have become more concerned with having a healthy diet, seafood consumption has been declining for several years - especially among the young population. The health authorities recommend eating seafood for dinner two to three times a week, ie 300 to 450 grams of fish, to provide a basis for good health [1]. Norwegian statistics indicates that it is the oldest consumers who eat the most seafood, while 18 to 34-year-olds ate 46 percent less seafood from 2012 to 2017 [2]. If this trend continues, we will hardly have seafood eaters in the future.

The young adults are especially important segment for seafood producers, because they are in a phase of life where they often break with their parents' eating habits and form their own eating habits. This will in turn affect their children's diet. If the seafood industry manages to meet this target group with good measures, we may be able to turn the statistics around.

The aim of this study was to explore what motivate and prevent young adults from eating more seafood for dinner.

Method

We conducted in depth interviews with 26 Norwegian consumers, age 18-35. The participants were recruited by an advertisement on Facebook and Instagram. The ads had a link to a short questionnaire which asked for demographic information. 40 of the 86 informants were selected to give a most possible varied sample. Thus all male and participants with children were invited, while others were chosen by geography. The final sample consisted mostly of single women in their 20ties, without children and higher education level. They all were asked to photograph their dinner plates for two weeks. These were then discussed in individual interviews conducted by and recorded by the software Teams, and transcribed by a professional agency. Transcripts and documents were content analyzed by the software NVivo [3].

We also explored how many seafood recipes are found on websites and social media that the participants told us they used for inspiration for cooking, to get an impression of how present seafood actors are on such platforms.

Results

Most participants wanted to eat more seafood. The number of seafood dinners varied from once a month to six times a week. These dishes usually consisted of salmon or trout, which were rarely cooked the same way as their parents had. Dishes such as poke bowl and sushi were described as exciting dishes that digital platforms, using delicate images, had inspired them to make. This was also

reflected in the 367 photographs that were submitted. 30 percent of the photos contained seafood and over half were with salmon or trout.

Digital sources of inspiration

The participants in the study said that they often used social media and influencers on Instagram, Pinterest, Youtube, and blogs to get inspiration to try new dishes. We asked them to send us names and internet links to the sources that they knew for sure had inspired them to make new dinner dishes. A closer examination of these sources, which were 18 websites, 8 Instagram profiles and 9 blogs, showed that these contained almost 30,000 dinner recipes, of which 21 percent contained seafood - mainly with salmon.

As a rule, participants searched for recipes via Google, which often led them to various websites. It also happened that they went directly to the website because they knew they would find good recipes there. The most used website (mentioned by 14 participants) was matprat.no, which promotes eggs and meat on behalf of the Norwegian agricultural industry.

Only 3 participants had taken inspiration from godfisk.no, which is the seafood industry's marketing channel. Some had never heard of godfisk.no. Of the nine blogs we researched, four were vegetarian blogs. We could see the same trend from the eight Instagram accounts. These were often sponsored by food producers of, for example, vegetarian food products. The bloggers did not list any seafood actors as sponsors or partners.

Vegetarian trend

Several of the participants had either been vegetarians or wanted to eat more vegetarian. There were mainly two reasons why they stopped eating only vegetarian. Three of the women had recently moved together with their boyfriends and experienced that their partner wanted to eat meat. The compromise was then to have a lot of vegetables together with the meat. Another explanation was that they wanted to eat more variety by including animal foods in their diet.

Most participants wanted to cut back on red meat and eat foods that are more sustainable, such as vegetables, chickpeas and beans. They were particularly interested in eating less red meat, due to animal welfare, environmental impact and their own health. There were few who replaced meat with fish, but switched to a more vegetarian diet. Meat was something they indulged when barbequing, ate at a restaurants and bought take-away. With the exception of sushi, seafood was rarely eaten on these occasions. Wild-caught seafood such as cod was considered a sustainable alternative, and something they could eat more of.

Exciting cod dishes

Several of the participants said that they had traveled a lot and lived abroad. They were therefore inspired by the dishes and ingredients of other cultures that they had tasted on these journeys. Typical exciting dishes were inspired by Asian, Korean, Indian, Mexican or Italian food traditions, and the photographs confirmed this. For example, three had bought a pizza oven and some had prepared unusual foods such as horse meat, Jack fruit, seaweed and kelp for dinner.

There were several who said that they wanted to learn how to make more dishes with white fish and especially cod. Several was used to eat boiled cod, and they did not know how to cook cod in a more tasty and exciting way than their parents had made.

Several of the participants said that they often forgot to make seafood. When we asked if they could imagine having seafood with the vegetarian dishes, most people were positive about it. They used

blogs and influencers to learn how to make vegetarian dishes, and therefore had not considered seafood as an alternative.

Conclusion

Our findings indicate that the seafood industry can benefit from getting online - in the right channels. By collaborating with influencers and websites that inspire young adults to create new dinner dishes, especially with white fish, you can market seafood as exciting, sustainable and tasty - as part of a healthy and active lifestyle.

1. The_Norwegian_Directorate_of_Health, *In Norwegian: Dietary advice to promote public health and prevent chronic diseases*. 2011, Oslo: The Norwegian Directorate of Health.
2. Norwegian_Seafood_Council, *Fiskespiseren. En innsiktsrapport om den norske sjømatkonsumenten*. 2018, Norwegian_Seafood_Council: Tromsø. p. 77.
3. QSR_International, *Nvivo 10 qualitative data analysis software*. 2012.