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ENGAGING YOUNG CONSUMERS TO PROMOTE UNDERUTILIZED CROPS



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CHALLENGE
Underutilized crops like oats, buckwheat, faba beans, and barley offer high nutritional value and environmental benefits. However, their presence in young consumers' diets (aged 18–25) remains low. This is largely due to limited awareness, low visibility in the market, unfamiliarity with preparation methods, doubts about taste, and a lack of knowledge about their health benefits. Established preferences and convenience expectations further limit their appeal.

SOLUTION
Focus group discussions with young adults were used to explore their perceptions, habits, and motivations related to these crops. This interactive method helped uncover key decision factors such as convenience of purchase and preparation, sensory expectations, health considerations, and perceived barriers to consumption.

OUTCOME
The findings show that while young consumers are open to diversifying their diets, they need more information, better product visibility, and easier options. Their food choices are shaped strongly by digital content and peer influence, making targeted communication essential.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Promote underutilized crops through online campaigns that highlight health benefits, taste, and simple recipes. Collaborate with influencers, chefs, and bloggers to build trust and interest. Improve product availability in supermarkets and online, and develop convenient ready-to-eat formats that suit young lifestyles.

About CROPDIVA

CROPDIVA wants to put 6 underused arable crops back in the fields: oats, hull-less barley for human consumption, triticale, buckwheat, faba beans and lupins. 27 European partners are joining forces to enhance agrobiodiversity in Europe. They will achieve this by focusing on crop diversity and creating local value chains. The project is running from September 2021 to August 2025.

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Angažovanje mladih potrošača u promociji nedovoljno iskorišćenih kultura

IZAZOV

Nedovoljno iskorišćene kulture poput ovsa, heljde, boba i ječma imaju visok nutritivni kvalitet i doprinose očuvanju životne sredine. Ipak, njihova upotreba među mladima (uzrasta 18–25 godina), koji imaju značajan uticaj na formiranje prehrambenih trendova, i dalje je veoma ograničena. Glavne prepreke su nedovoljna informisanost, slaba zastupljenost na tržištu, nepoznavanje načina pripreme, sumnje u ukus i nedostatak svesti o zdravstvenim prednostima. Pored toga, navike i očekivanja vezana za praktičnost hrane dodatno utiču na nizak nivo konzumacije.

REŠENJE

Fokus grupe sa mladim potrošačima korišćene su kao metod za bolje razumevanje njihovih stavova, navika i očekivanja u vezi sa ovim proizvodima. Diskusije su obuhvatile teme poput jednostavnosti kupovine i pripreme, ukusa, zdravlja, kao i prepreka koje utiču na manju zastupljenost ovih kultura u svakodnevnoj ishrani.

REZULTAT

Mladi su otvoreni za promene u ishrani, ali im je potrebna bolja informisanost, veća dostupnost proizvoda i ponuda koja odgovara njihovom načinu života. Digitalni sadržaji i preporuke vršnjaka imaju jak uticaj na njihove izbore, što ukazuje na potrebu za ciljanim pristupom komunikaciji i promociji.

PRAKTIČNE PREPORUKE

Promovisati prednosti ovih kultura putem kampanja na društvenim mrežama, uz jednostavne recepte i informacije o zdravstvenim benefitima. Uključiti influensere, kuvare i blogere kako bi se povećala vidljivost i izgradilo poverenje. Povećati dostupnost proizvoda u maloprodaji i online kanalima, i razvijati praktična, gotova jela koja odgovaraju potrebama mladih potrošača.

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