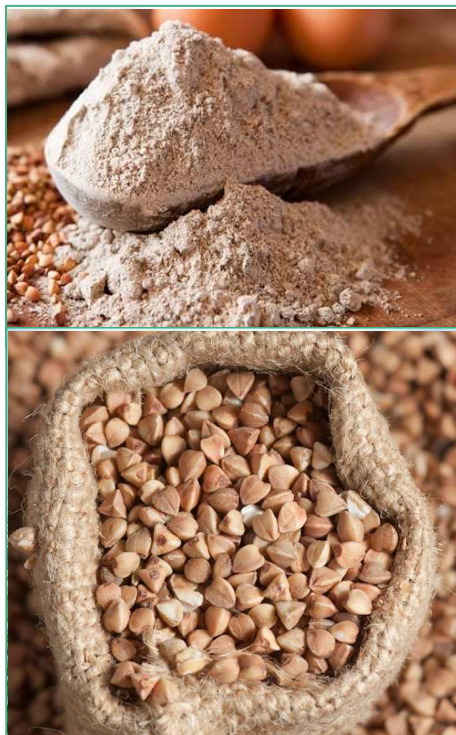


Practice abstract #5.1

The buckwheat food value chain in Belgium



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CHALLENGE

Cultivation of buckwheat in Belgium remains sparse and crop utilization is often relegated to animal feed. Despite this, there is immense potential for developing buckwheat products to cater to consumers with preferences for organic food and “old grain” food.

SOLUTION

By scoping the current food value chains of buckwheat in Belgium, potential strategies can be defined to optimize its cultivation. A thorough identification of the barriers, levers, and existing practices affecting the chain can help propel production in the long run.

OUTCOME

Seed suppliers for buckwheat often encounter low-yielding varieties which are not attractive to farmers. In turn, farmers also struggle with getting organic certifications for these products, thus negatively affecting the yields. Buckwheat flour processors then have fewer access to suppliers, and are faced with the challenge of maintaining consumer interests.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Investing in R&D can be beneficial in determining local and condition resistant varieties with high yields. Capacity building and educational programs for farmers and processors can also help align the marketing of buckwheat from farm to fork.

PRACTICAL TESTING/FARMERS' EXPERIENCES

In practice, buckwheat cultivation until consumption is heavily dependent on international trade, as there are importers of buckwheat actively supplying products to retailers and further processors. However, there is an unfortunate low economic potential for buckwheat as it is now in the Belgian market.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The following websites and links provide more data on the buckwheat food value chain in Belgium:

www.oec.world/en/profile/bilateral-product/buckwheat/reporter/bel

www.fliagri.be/plan-de-developpement-cereales-alimentaires

www.vlaanderen.be/vlam/press/nieuw-bloed-voor-oude-tradities

Photos: (1) NDTV Food (2) Alimentaryum (3) Sunset Magazing

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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