

Practice abstract #5.3

The oat food value chain in Belgium



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CHALLENGE

Oats have various applications both for food and feed, and some notable products can be beverages, bakery products, or even as breakfast cereals and granola bars. However, the supply of oats is marginal and interest in handling oats seems to dwindle in the country.

SOLUTION

Understanding oats from farm to fork can provide insights in optimizing their cultivation, particularly through perspectives from stakeholders on challenges and potential mitigation strategies for the crop.

OUTCOME

Oats often are not as competitive with other mainstream crops in Belgium especially on yield and crop quality. Farmers also have concerns on raw input material qualities. There are also issues of pricing and raw material standardization among processors aside from the need to identify product innovations and novel means of marketing oat-based food.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

It is essential to stabilize promotion and communication lines between seed suppliers and potential buyers (farmers) so that quality expectations can be agreed upon. Investments in new product development can be done to leverage on the growing popularity of oats as a cereal or plant-based beverage.

PRACTICAL TESTING/FARMERS' EXPERIENCES

Belgian consumers are more familiar with oats and oat products as farmers and processors currently offer an assortment of these goods in retail. They are in practice often marketed as healthy and nutrient-rich food.



FURTHER INFORMATION

The following links provide more data on the oat food value chain in Belgium:

<https://www.biojournaal.nl/articel/9238887/onze-volgende-ambitie-is-biologische-haver-uit-belgie/>

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1044392/organic-oats-farmland-in-belgium/>

Photos: (1) FAO (2) Liebherr (3) Tetrapak

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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