# Territory, Typical products, and consumer preferences: the case of the *Capicollo Azze Anca Grecanico Presidio* Slow Food of Calabria

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## Abstract

This study examines the consumption of the Capicollo Azze Grecanico Slow Food from the province of Reggio Calabria. The research considers the main characteristics of the consumer of Capicollo Azze Anca Slow Food, a typical local product of the grecanic area. To examine the characteristics of the sample of consumers was used the method of multiple correspondence analysis (MCA). In addition, it applied a logit regression for each of the four factors identified to evaluate the relationship between individual motivations and socio-economic characteristics and behavior that most affect the decision making of consumers to purchase a local product. The results show a strong propensity of consumers to the link between territory and product quality and the importance attached to food security.

**Keywords**
typical products, consumer behaviour, short supply chain, MCA, Logit regression

## Introduction

In the context of Italian typicality and quality, those productions that refer to the Slow Food association play a particularly prominent role. These *Presidia*[1] are the instrument through which the Slow Food Association supports endangered small-scale traditional and excellent productions. Such products are representative of a territory and its culture, and are made using technologies that respect the local biodiversity and sustainability.
*Slow Food works around the world to protect food biodiversity, build links between producers and consumers, and raise awareness of some of the most pressing issues affecting our food system* (slow food website). In recent years we have seen an increased interest of consumers in products adhering to the requirements of social, environmental and economic sustainability. Changes in consumption and the tendency to behave in a responsible, moral and socially active manner orientate consumers to a different qualitative

[1] The Slow Food Italian presìdi number 230, and involve more than 1,600 small producers: farmers, fishermen, butchers, herders, cheesemakers, bakers, and pastry chefs. The “Slow Food” mark appears on product labels to better identify them on the market. Slow Food operates all over the world, has collected 1,400 traditional products at risk of extinction in the Ark of Taste, and has initiated over 400 practical projects for the protection of sustainable food production worldwide (slow food website).

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value (Rozin, 2006; Mintel, 2009; Idda, Madau, Pulina, 2008). Recently,the Italian consumer has shown a greater autonomy in their choices and purchases, trying to optimise the price-quality ratio of products, whilst also taking into account the place of origin and typicality [2] (Chang, 2002, Fabris, 2003). Moreover, in many cases the consumer is tending more and more to organise their buying habits critically and ethically, and to prefer products that meet certain quality standards whilst promoting the defence of the common good, environmental sustainability, and human dignity(Zamagni,2010; Migliore et altri,2013; Pascucci, 2010). If on the one hand, consumers are likely to explore the link between the territory and product quality (in terms of differentiated products and high cultural-historical value), in many cases also choosing the point of sale in which to make the purchase, on the other hand, rural communities are reorganising themselves in an effort to increase the value of their production by developing a network system and alternative food community (Presidio Slow Food/Fish, GAS, short supply chains, e-commerce, biological products, PDO, PGI, etc.). New structures of *governance*, organisations, and institutions are emerging which focus on the innovation and on the enhancement of the agri-food sector. This phenomenon is still developing, and is increasingly gaining the interest of scholars, both from a theoretical point of view, and from those approaches based on case studies and on methodologies of innovative research (Cembalo and others, 2015).

The search for an environmentally aware consumer involves broad aspects of social life, and the desired quality in agricultural food production has taken on different and wider connotations. Buying a product, in short, involves not only simple economic considerations, such as the quality to price ratio, but also an ever growing concern amongst consumers about the social conditions under which certain goods are produced. Spurred on by this strong pressure from consumers regarding ethics, ecology, and respect for "social norms", many companies are modifying their behaviour, and can no longer expect to implement policies that are contrary to these principles that hold a central role in the choice of purchasing of food product, without seeing a reaction from consumers, or at least some of them. Experience shows that it is possible to introduce positive behaviour in companies, such as their adoption of codes of conduct or of union agreements to protect workers in terms of a general revaluation of the quality of life, to protect the environment, to care for social relations, and to defend the common good.

The producer allies itself strongly with the consumer who orient the market, and has itself become the key expert and image for the diffusion of the concept of quality.

The direct relationship that develops between producers and consumers is aimed at reassuring the origin, quality, and control of food products, and is based on a rigorous system of traceability, reliability, and seriousness of the brands, supply alternative networks and network marketing (Renting *et al.*, 2003; Aguglia *et al.*, 2008; Bougherara *et al.*, 2009).

Food Community Networks (FCN) are growing worldwide (Lombardi *et al.*, 2012), and define those systems and organisational models that provide a direct seller/purchaser relationship

[2] The Italian shopping cart is becoming ever more "socially engaged", with those who bought products from socially responsible companies increasing by 12% compared to the previous year. 45% said they were willing to spend more on services or products originating from companies that follow social responsibility programs, and 53% expressed a preference for working in a company that has a positive social and environmental impact (Nielsen, 2014).

between producers and consumers, resulting in clear benefits for consumers, for the producers, and for the community at large. They concern the relationship of trust that is established between the consumer and the producer to guarantee the product being purchased, to the point that a formalised certification may not be necessary (Aguglia, 2009; Cicatiello and Sotte, 2008; Pascucci, 2007) .

Moreover, reductions in transactional costs are achieved by reducing the number of intermediaries (Van der Ploeg, 2006; Cicatiello and Sotte, 2008). Companies can increase their market power by selling even small quantities of product. The community benefits from the reduction in energy costs of transport and product packaging (Bougherara, *et al.*, 2009), the territory benefits from the development and the enhancement of the production areas, it favours the defence of the local varieties and the traditional transformation processes of the territory (Battershill and Gilg, 1998).

*The Production and Marketing of cold cuts.* In Europe, 30-50% of the member states' total volume of butchered meat is used as an ingredient for processed food products (primarily in minced meat, meat based preparations, and meat based products). In total it is estimated that approximately 70% of the production volume of processed meats is constituted by pig meat, followed by poultry (18%), beef (10%), and other types of meat (2%). The EU meat processing industry involves more than 13,000 companies, employs around 350,000 people, and represents a market of 85 billion Euros (European Commission, 2013). The meat processing sector in the EU is characterised by a low level of concentration, with a preponderance for highly specialised small and medium-sized enterprises (approximately 90% of production). Furthermore, the supply chain of pork used as an ingredient is very long and complex, and comprises various production and marketing phases for the end products that function independently and with little vertical integration.

## Methodology

The analysis takes into account the characteristics of sustainable development (environmental, social, and economic), such as those of the preservation of native breeds at risk of extinction, the recovery of traditional processing techniques and their transmission to future generations, and the market reference and type of marketing approach. We have therefore identified and interviewed producers who adhere to the Presìdio, and who maintain real micro-chains within the territory.

Central to the study is the consumers, seen as independent experts, who are analysed in terms of the economic, sociological, cultural, and psychological factors that determine variations in their purchasing behaviour in time and space. The decision to study and analyse a specific and quality product came from the observation of the current trend towards buying typical foods, and the propensity of consumers to explore the links between territory and quality in terms of differentiated products that have a high historical-cultural value on one hand, and the promotional policies for products with a careful examination of the economic space in which the examined product grows and develops, on the other.

With reference to the market for the consumption of the Capicollo Azze Anca Grecanico, a survey was conducted through the formulation and administration of a semi-structured questionnaire, comprising free and/or pre-formulated responses, to a panel of 220 consumers intercepted and interviewed in the Grecanic area of the province of Reggio Calabria. For the administration of the questionnaires, in order to intercept consumers of different types and purchasing capacity, two retail outlets, a point of retail sale, a local market, and four local food events were selected. The questionnaires were administered in larger gatherings. The face to face interviews were carried out between May and December 2014. The valid and controlled questionnaires which were subjected to processing numbered 201. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first focused on the respondents' knowledge of the marks of protection, consumption, availability and frequency of purchase of cold cuts/capicollo and the Capicollo Azze Anca Grecanico in particular, the motivations of the consumer, and the price. The second part of the questionnaire included questions that identified the type of consumer and their socio-demographic characteristics (habits of consumption and purchasing, food tastes, age, gender, and educational level). These have also helped to identify homogeneous groups of buyers, and thus different segments of consumers in terms of expectations and buying behaviours.

The database of collected data was processed, Analysed, and initially interpreted through descriptive analysis to highlight the principal characteristics and then making use of multiple correspondence ACM Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) and the logit model. They have been applied to identify and analyze the main explanatory variables and in particular to highlight the distinctive attributes that most influence the decision making of consumers to purchase a traditional product. For a discussion of the methodology, see Idda L., Madau FA, Pulina P. (2008). A description of the xi variables referred to each interviewed consumer is reported in Scheme 1.

*Scheme 1- Socio-demographic sample characterization*

| Variable | | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Motivation | P | it assumes a value equal to 2 in case of positive answer to the question, and 1 otherwise |
| Importance of origin area | $X_1$ | it reflects the question: It considers is important to the origin area of the CAA? 1 = Yes 2 = No 3 = I don't know |
| Knowledge Slow food | $X_2$ | 1= Yes 2=No |
| Experience | $X_4$ | it reflects the question:Why do you buy CAA? 1 = I usually buy it; 2 = I purchase it on advice of others; 3 = I buy it because it is safe; 4 =I purchase it for curiosity |
| Gender | $X_6$ | 1 if male, 2 if female |
| Education | $X_7$ | 1 = primary school; 2=intermediate school;<br>3 = high school; 4 = graduate college (or post-graduate education) |
| Age | $X_8$ | 1 = 18-29 years old; 2 = 30-39 years old;<br>3 = 40-49 years old; 4 = 50-59 years old;<br>5 = 60-69 years old; 6 = more than 70 years old |

The objective of this analysis was linked to the necessity to focus on fields in which to operate in order to prepare interventions in line with the expectations and with the needs of consumers and producers, also through the interaction of agribusiness marketing and territorial plans (Antonelli, 2005).

*Logit model*. Logit is a regression model commonly used in settings where the dependent variable is binary (29). Generally, in analyses carried out from surveys, dependent variable is a yes/no answer to the administrated question and the dependent variable reflects probability of observing a positive answer. Therefore, the empirical specification of the binary yes/no choice can be formulated in this terms:

(1a) $P(Yes|x_i)=F\_(Z_i)=F(\alpha + \beta x_i)=\frac{1}{1+e-zi}$

where Pi is the probability of observing a positive answer; $F_\eta$ is the value of logistic cumulative density function associated with each possible value of the underlying index Zi; Xi is a vector of independent explanatory variables; α is the intercept; ß is a vector of unknown parameters, and:

(1b) $Zi=\log(\frac{Pi-Pi}{1})=\alpha+\beta_1x_1+\beta_2x+\ldots\beta_nx_n+\varepsilon$

In the light of (1), the developed model was described as follows: (2) Motivation $(Yes|x_i)=\alpha+\beta_1$ Importance of origine area$+\beta_2$Knowledge$+\beta_3$Experience$+\beta_4$Gender$+\beta_5$Education$+\beta_6$Age

## Results

*Consumer habits in a sample area*

In this part of the research work, the results of a market survey carried out in the area of investigation are reported in order to verify the strength and image of the brand, and to measure the degree of acceptance and the importance it has for consumers as a local product that is strongly anchored to the local and regional food traditions and that, at the same time, fulfils the requirements for social, environmental and ethical sustainability, etc. (Noone, 2002; Best *et al.*, 2013; Pascucci, 2010) in line with the new food trends that highlight the importance of disintermediation, ethics, responsibility of consumption, the report, and of the experience (Federici, 2012). The consumers of capicollo interviewed in the survey have a medium-high cultural level (58.2%) are graduates), are more or less equally divided between men and women, and for the most part consume capicollo regularly (88.6%). Of the 201 respondents, most fall within the 30-39 age group (29.9%)and between 18-29 (22.4% of the sample). They have a very good knowledge of organic products (93%), PDO (83.6%) and GPO (65.7%). 37,8% of respondents know the Slow food mark for products, and 35.3% the "Libera Terra" mark for products originating from land confiscated from the mafia (Tab.1, 2, e 3). From an initial examination of the answers given by the respondents, it emerges that almost all (98.6%) consume cold cuts regularly (88.6%) or occasionally (10%).

The Capicollo Azze Anca branded Slow Food, specifically, is known to 37.8% of respondents, and 29% know that it is made with meat from the black Apulo Calabrese pig. 75.6 % considered the ease of sourcing the product as medium, and 52% attach importance to the Calabrian origin of the raw material and production. However, the interviews show that only

20.5% are habitual consumers of Capicollo Azze Anca Grecanico branded Slow Food. This is probably because the product, strongly anchored to the traditions and consumed regularly, is bought on impulse without regard to the brand. Moreover, we must reiterate and underline the widespread custom of the domestic rearing and the consequent family production of cold meats (18% at the household level produces sausages, brawn, capicolli, bacon, etc.).The majority of respondents were also the ones responsible for purchasing food (60.5%) and the place of purchase was primarily the large distributors (77%) due to the diversity of brands and the consumer's preference for a single location for their food shopping. However, 17.5% went to smaller locations, such as town markets (8.5%), local producers (5%), and retailers (5.5%).

*Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents*

| | % | | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Sex* | | *Level of education* | |
| Female | 49.8 | Secondary school | 58.2 |
| Male | 50.2 | Degree | 33.3 |
| | | Secondary/ Elementary school | 8.5 |
| *Age* | | *Place of food purchase* | |
| 18-29 | 22.4 | Supermarket/Ipermarket | 72.1 |
| 30-39 | 29.9 | Retailer | 6.5 |
| 40-49 | 22.4 | Town market | 10.0 |
| >50 | 25.4 | Local producer and doorstop selling | 11.5 |
| *Knowledge of protection mark* | | *Food purchaser* | |
| Biological mark | 93.0 | Interviewed | 62.2 |
| POD Mark | 83.6 | Head of Household | 30.3 |
| GPO Mark | 65.7 | Other | 7.5 |
| Slow Food Mark | 37.8 | | |
| Libera Terra Mark | 35.3 | *Family production of meats* | 17.9 |

*Source:own elaboration*

Among the reasons given for the purchase and consumption, the highest rated parameters of choice are: the craftsmanship of the product and the safety of the meat (97.5%), followed by the quality, authenticity, and long shelf life (76.1%), and different occasions for consumption (the question concerning opportunities for consumption in 61.5% of cases was divided between two or more responses). Other aspects which were particularly appreciated were the taste and the versatility of the product, because it was liked by everyone in the family, characterised the table, and was suitable to accompany the wine (57.7%).

The price is not considered relevant by 41.8% of respondents, who purchased primarily based on the quality, and neglect other attributes such as price.

The need to maintain local food habits is confirmed by the frequency of purchases and the average quantity purchased. For the majority of respondents, the consumption of cold meats has remained constant (77%) and the purchase is frequent (86% several times a month, while 11.5% buy the products at least once a month).

*Table 2. Consuption opportunities, variation in time and judgment of the price of sausages*

| | % | | Frequency % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Consuption of sausages* | | *Variation in time of consumption of sausages* | |
| Yes, occasionally | 10.0 | Decreased | 19.9 |
| Yes , regularly | 88.6 | Remained costant | 75.6 |
| No | 1.5 | Increased | 4.5 |
| *Consuption opportunities of sausages* | | *Frequency of purchase of sausages* | |
| On particular occasion | 4.5 | Several times a month | 82.6 |
| Occasionally for lunch | 1.5 | Once a month | 13.9 |
| Occasionally for dinner | 24.4 | Once every 2/3 months | 1.5 |
| As a snack | 8.5 | Once a year | 0 |
| Two or more responses | 61.2 | Never | 2.0 |

*Source:own elaboration*

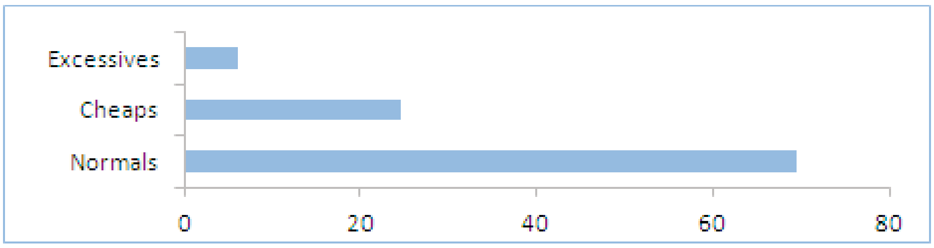
*Table 3. Reasons for buying Capicollo Azze anca*

| Reason | Strong % | Weak/Not at all % |
|---|---|---|
| ST "Safety and Tradition":Meat safe, handcrafted, it is storable traditional product of my area | 97.5 | 2.5 |
| TQ "Tasty and Quality": It is tasty, it is genuine, it is storable and reliability of the product | 76.1 | 23.9 |
| P "Price" | 58.2 | 41.8 |
| TDO "Togetherness/Different occasions": Enjoy and use on different occasions | 57.7 | 42.3 |

Source:*own elaboration*

With regard to the judgment of the pricing, the majority considered the price normal (69.5%) while 24.5% considered it low (Fig. 1). In view of these findings related to cold cuts in general, approximately 75% of respondents rarely buy "Capicollo Azze Anca Grecanico", and consequently fail to give information regarding the price per Kg. The quantities purchased were primarily between 300 grams and one Kilogram.

*Fig. 1 - Opinion of the sausages compared to Capicollo Azze Anca's price*




Source:*own elaboration*

The responses on possible substitutes for the Capicollo Azze Anca show a prevalence of consumers who consider Capicollo Azze anca as irreplaceable (40.8%), the other responses regarding substitutes by other cold cuts such as, for example, pancetta (11.9%), bresaola (14.9%), and Filetto (14.9%). (Tab. 4)

*Table 4. Ease of finding and buying Capicollo Azze anca*

| | % | | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Ease of finding Capicollo Azze anca* | | *Quantity of Capicollo Azze anca purchased* | |
| Poor | 25.4 | Up to 300 gr | 8.5 |
| Average | 72.6 | From 300 gr. to 1 kg | 14.4 |
| High | 2.0 | I rarely purchase | 77.1 |
| *Purchase price per kg of Capicollo Azze anca* | | *Possible substitute for Capicollo* | |
| Less than 18 Euros per kg | 0.5 | Not substitutable | 40.8 |
| Between 18-21 Euros per kg | 14.4 | Bresaola | 14.9 |
| Over 21 Euros per kg | 0.5 | Filetto | 14.9 |
| I don't remember | 9.0 | Pancetta/Coppa | 11.9 |
| I rarely purchase and I don't remember | 75.6 | Other sausages | 7.0 |
| | | I don't know | 10.4 |

*Source: own elaboration*

*Main results and discussion Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) and Logit model*

MCA results show how much is difficult to classify consumers by the reasons driving the demand. The sum of the eigenvalues of the two dimensions is 0.64.Let us take a look at Figure 2 during their discussion. In the first quadrant we can see positive values for both dimensions, what means to identify regular as well as Safety/Tradition sensitive (ST2) consumers and versatility of the product (TDO2). The profile of these consumers can be summarized as "consumers of traditional products, safe and versatile" they account for 41% of consumers. In the fourth quadrant (positive for dimension 1 and negative for dimension 2 we found consumers willin to buy the product considered product of quality and linked to the local tradition (P2 and TQ2). The profile is summarized in "consumers with a special bond with the territory"("link with the territory. "). In this case, the consumer preferences are tied to the requirement for historical-cultural content, and relate to the place of origin and the typicality of the product (23% of respondents ). The four consumer profiles designed above can be analyzed in depth by the support of stepwise logit models where the relationships between Capicollo Azze Anca Grecanico purchasing reasons and socio-demographic-behavioural variables are detected.
Table 5 summarizes the obtained results. Let us discuss the most important among them. The p-values associated to the Hosmer-Lemeshow index (with _ = 0.05) suggests that all the six models should be well calibrated to the data[3].

[3] This statistic examines the difference between the observed frequency and the expected frequency for deciles of data. The value is compared to a _2 distribution with g-2 degrees of freedom (g is equal to the number of deciles).

Fig.2 Results arisen form MCA

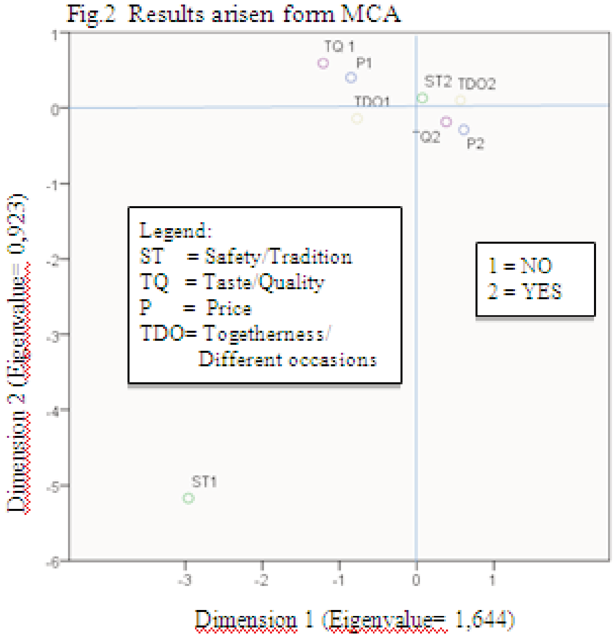



*Table 5 - Estimated parameters of the Logit models*

| variabile | ST= Safety/Tradition | | | P= Price | | | TQ= Taste/Quality | | | TDO=Togetherness | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | β | S.E. | Sig. | β | S.E. | Sig. | β | S.E. | Sig. | β | S.E. | Sig. |
| Costant | - 4.057 | 2.129 | 0.057 | -7.760 | 1.872 | 0.000 | - 2.876 | 0.945 | 0.002 | 0.375 | 0.633 | 0.554 |
| Importance of origin area | 3.070 | 0.984 | 0.002 | 0.840 | 0.451 | 0.062 | - | - | - | - 1.347 | 0.322 | 0.000 |
| Knowledge | - | - | - | 0.727 | 0.478 | 0.128 | - | | - | - | - | - |
| Experience | 1.516 | 0.988 | 0.125 | 1.195 | 0.446 | 0.007 | 1.831 | 0.506 | 0.000 | 1.532 | 0.360 | 0.000 |
| Gender | - | - | - | -0.540 | 0.366 | 0.140 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Education | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Age | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| -2 log likelihood | 34.733[a] | | | 188.363[a] | | | 196.337[a] | | | 235.905[a] | | |
| Hosmer-Lemeshow | 0.099 | | | 0.370 | | | 0.374 | | | 0.634 | | |

*.[a] =Estimation terminated at iteration number 7 as parameter estimates changed by less than ,001*

The *safety/Tradition (ST)* model confirms the impression given by MCA first quadrant observations, consumers are attentive to the safety of the meat, the craftsmanship and the importance of the production area, and is also consistent with the high percentage (97.5%) of consumers attentive to these aspects.

The Price model, offers some interesting results. First, the most significant character is related to environment. Reasons for purchasing Capicollo Azze anca is the importance of local area of production and the motivation linked to experience (buy it because is produced with safe meat, and for purchasing advice to others).

Another important aspect in the Price model is brand awareness Slow Food as those involved show a notable awareness of the quality and characteristics of the product and of the producers, and which represent the potential for the purchase of Capicollo Azze Anca Grecanico. Finally, descriptive analysis highlights that the consumer is primarily male.
Even in the TQ model, it highlights the importance of experience linked with habits of consumption. These attributes are related to the frequency of consumption and purchase decision of cold cuts connected with the taste and the intrinsic characteristics of Capicollo Azze Anca. The TDO model highlights principally the importance of production area, the consumer's attention to the local food and also the experience**.** All of these linked to**:** the products' authenticity, the fact that the Capicollo is enjoyed by the whole family, that it is a winter food, and that it is suitable with a wine. Consumers prefer this type of salami not only because it is a regular part of the family The purchasing decision by the consumer is linked then to the versatility of the product, its appreciation and consumption by the whole family, and its flexibility for a variety of consumption occasions (as a snack, appetiser, entree, dinner, or lunch).

## Conclusion

The results show a strong propensity of consumers to the link between territory and product quality and the importance attached to food security. Capicollo is considered tasty, quality, storable and lends itself to a variety of consumption occasions (snacks, appetizers, entrees, snacks, dinner, lunch). The purchase decision is connected with the traditions, habits and eating patterns of consumers surveyed.The objective of this analysis was linked to the necessity to focus on fields in which to operate in order to prepare interventions in line with the expectations and with the needs of consumers and producers, also through the interaction of agribusiness marketing and territorial plans.It's important to train a new food model and the application of the fundamental aspects of destination marketing in order to identify a strategic plan that enhances the territory through the collaboration of all stakeholders. This takes into account the competitiveness of tourist destinations, as the sum of all its attributes, that allows it to adopt a strategic and operational positioning over its competitors also in terms of internal corporate management (Kim Y. G., Eves A., 2012) (Marchioro, 2014; UNWTO, 2012). At the same time, it takes into account the capacity of a territory, with all its tourist and gastronomic characteristics and peculiarities, to attract visitors to that particular destination.

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