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Corinne Amblard, Cécile Bord, Estelle Petit, Zerbini Laura

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# CONSUMER INSIGHTS ON VEGETABLE SUBSTITUTES TO CHEESE

Amblard, C<sup>1.</sup>, Bord, C1., Petit, E<sup>2.</sup>, Zerbini, L<sup>2.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Université Clermont Auvergne, INRAE, VetAgro Sup, UMR, F-63370, Lempdes, France

<sup>2</sup> Institut Paul Bocuse Research Center, France



## OBJECTIVES

Measure the acceptability of omnivore consumers towards vegetable substitutes for cheeses and identify the place of those substitutes on a cheese board

## CONTEXT

- Consumer's dietary behavior and food habits change due to different factors such as global environmental or food system change,
- Cheese is an emblematic product of French gastronomy
- Growth of vegetable foods : substitutes for cheese attracting new consumers. (not only lactose intolerant, vegans or vegetarians).

## METHODOLOGY

### 3 focus group




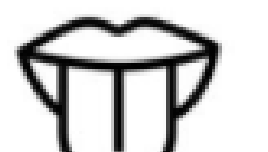
- 20 omnivore consumers (50% men, 50% women; 49 yr for all groups)
- Selected based on their consumption of traditional cheeses
- 3 hrs-group discussions.
- Tasting of 7 food products : 4 vegetable substitutes / 3 traditional cheeses



## RESULTS

Difficulty for French omnivore consumers to accept a substitute for cheese, in terms of both taste and perception.

### What can explain this attitude towards cheese substitutes ?

- Traditional cheese is an **emotional food** products and out by pleasure, organoleptic and symbolic dimensions.
- **Traditional cheese vs innovation** : an innovation is not very well accepted for traditional cheese.
- For omnivore consumers, these substitutes are more **targeted for vegans, vegetarians and lactose intolerants**. Their place are not on a cheese board.
- **Bluffing aspect**  Substitutes are assimilated to traditional cheese in terms of appearance
- **Reject of taste**  Taste and texture of substitutes are perceived differently traditional cheeses, not really appreciated by consumers.

## NEXT STEPS

- A free sorting method with naives consumers to identify a **sensory space configuration** : traditional cheeses and vegetable alternatives
- Hedonic tests to measure **acceptability of two substitutes** for cheese
- Survey about **perception and attitudes**