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**CONTROL ID:** 1636369

**TITLE:** How Do Foods Affect Wellbeing? Insights from a Qualitative Consumer Study

**ABSTRACT BODY:**

**Abstract (300 word limit):** Interest in understanding how food affects consumers' perceived wellbeing has increased in the last decade due to the development of functional foods and the increasing need to encourage people to engage in healthier eating habits. Wellbeing is a broad concept that lacks a unique definition. Therefore, in order to use and measure this concept it is necessary to explore how consumers understand it, particularly in the context of food consumption. The aim of the present work was to investigate consumers' perception of the relationship between food and wellbeing, using an explorative qualitative approach. A study was carried out with 120 Uruguayan consumers. Three qualitative techniques were used to explore consumer perception of the relationship between food and wellbeing: word association, open-ended questions, and free listing. The elicited phrases and words were coded and grouped in categories. The frequency of mention of the categories was determined. When thinking of food and wellbeing, consumers' associations were mainly related to foods (mentioned by 79% of consumers); having fruits, vegetables, water, and meat as the main contributors. Other relevant associations were related to health (mentioned by 75% of the consumers), sensory characteristics, nutrients, hedonic perception, diet, and emotional terms. The effects of foods on wellbeing were strongly related to physical health, in particular to non-communicable diseases such as high cholesterol levels, hypertension, and cardiovascular diseases. However, hedonic and emotional aspects of food consumption were also salient for consumers' perceived wellbeing. Results from the present work could contribute to the development of quantitative methodologies for measuring consumer perceived wellbeing when consuming foods, which could be highly relevant for the development of functional foods and other healthy products, as well as contribute to the design of strategies to shift consumers' dietary patterns towards more healthy diets.

**PRESENTATION TYPE:** Poster

**CURRENT CATEGORY:** Sensory & Consumer Sciences

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**KEYWORDS:** wellness, consumer studies, free listing.