

The study of consumer issues II

Results from the second consumer study show that when respondents had *direct experience with products* (a taste experiment with two products) they preferred the enzyme product to the non-enzyme product in all three countries (different products were tested in the three countries: bread in Finland, margarine in Germany and yoghurt in Italy). For all three products respondents showed a significant higher level of buying intention for the enzyme product.

Results also show that *attitudes to enzymes and gene technology* are at a similar level in all three countries. However, compared to the results from the first study the level of acceptance is higher on both issues. This can be a result of a situation where attitudes to gene technology tend to improve when respondents have participated in a product trial. This replicates a finding from an earlier study in a Nordic project, which showed that attitudes towards the use of genetic modification in food production became more positive after respondents had tasted a cheese with desirable sensory properties and which was labelled as produced using a genetically modified starter culture (Grunert et al., 2004).

Consumers prefer the non-GM enzyme production methods in all three countries, which is in line with results from the first consumer study.

We therefore conclude that direct product experience does affect the level of consumer acceptance of enzymes and gene technology in general but preferences for the specific enzyme production method are not affected.

NOTE: The second CROSSENZ consumer study is based on computer aided personal interviews with 810 respondents in Finland, Germany and Italy.