

Emnid Poll in Germany: Majorities Support Combined Meat Products if Adequately Labelled

Following intensifying discussions on the use of technologies and particularly those that combine meat and fish parts, PA Europe requested TNS Emnid to test the opinions of German consumers through a national representative opinion poll. The poll was held by telephone among 1003 respondents between 6-7 May 2010.

The respondents throughout all ages and genders demonstrate a remarkable level of consistency with regards to anticipating the use of technology in food and its implications for consumers. *A vast majority of respondents (91%) stated that they want for example a steak that consists of several meat parts to be clearly labelled.* This corresponds with the 91% of respondents that indicated that we should always (56%) or under certain circumstances (35%) strive to use meat parts instead of throwing them away. This figure covers virtually all respondents that indicated that they eat meat (92%).

Vast majorities, almost 80%, recognise that particularly packaged food products but also food products such as jam are always (18%), often (29%) or sometimes (30%) put together.

This is consistent with several large majorities:

- 1) As indicated above, 91% of all respondents believe that we should always (56%) or under certain circumstances (35%) strive to use meat parts instead of throwing them away;
- 2) 70% of respondents states that consumers should be able to buy products of different meat parts if they are appropriately labelled;
- 3) 65 % of all respondents states that they would like to have a choice between a cheaper ham made of meat parts and clearly labelled as such, and a more expensive ham made of one piece.

At the opposite side, a minority of 32% does not find it acceptable that different meat parts are technically put together. All others find such technical treatment less acceptable (23%), fully acceptable (13%) and acceptable only under certain conditions (31%).

The minority that finds such technical treatments unacceptable (32%) corresponds with the majority that – to the contrary – wish to have a choice between a cheaper ham made of meat parts and clearly labelled as such and a more expensive ham made of one piece (65%).

This also corresponds to the response to the question whether consumers should be able to buy such combined meat products. An even larger (an almost three quarter) majority states that consumers should be able to buy combined meat parts if clearly labelled (70%).

Choice can only be based on appropriate information. Indeed 91% of all respondents prefers labelling of meat put together. A company proposed 'Combined Meat Parts' as labelling – which subsequently was

taken up by the European Commission. In response to this proposal, all German respondents answered as follows:

- 1) 70% finds 'Combined Meat Parts' "clear" (49%) or "sufficiently clear" (21%);
- 2) 84% of all respondents believes that a company's suggestion to use this labelling on all meat or fish products consisting of meat parts is "very helpful" (37%) or "helpful" (47%).

Among those respondents who eat meat, they are always (42%), mostly (19%) or sometimes (29%) responsible for buying the meat. The opinion poll demonstrates that the majority of the polled consumers who eat meat (71%) when given a choice through appropriate labelling would appreciate to be able to buy meat that consists of combined meat parts.

Note for the editors:

PA Europe is a Brussels-based public affairs consulting firm chaired by former Belgian Prime Minister Prof. Mark Eyskens. PA Europe advises Governments, multinational enterprises, international organisations and NGOs. Among its clients in the past years are institutions such as the European Commission (DG RELEX) and Ajinomoto. Among its major fields of expertise are food safety, consumer interests and humanitarian support. Further information is available at www.pa-europe.com.

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