

THE EFFECTS OF MANDATORY INGREDIENT AND NUTRITION LABELLING FOR WINE ON CONSUMERS – A QUALITATIVE CONSUMER STUDY

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Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine how consumers react to mandatory ingredient and nutrition labelling. How important is this information to consumers and how will it affect attitudes towards wine as a natural product and consumer demand.

Methodology

A qualitative approach with focus group discussions and an observation of back label usage was used to realistically assess consumer reaction towards this new information. Thereby bias from artificial attention to back label information was reduced compared to direct quantitative research. Three focus groups in three different cities in Germany with 21 wine involved participants were run in September 2017.

Findings

Only a third of consumers looking at the back label detected new-to-them nutrition or ingredient information. The nutritional value of wine is overestimated by most consumers. Nutritional information is not perceived as useful by consumers. Wine involved consumers first react with insecurity and confusion to ingredient information. Wine loses its image as a natural product. Even though some consumers prefer wines with shorter ingredient lists, most consumers would not exclude any wines when shopping due to labelling with nutritional values and ingredients.

Practical implications

Nutritional labelling will likely not have an impact on consumers' wine choice except for competing with space for more meaningful back label information such as food pairing and sensory descriptions. There is a niche for wine producers to offer wine with short or no ingredient lists to concerned high involved wine consumers. Average or low wine involved wine consumers are expected to be less concerned. The industry should use the time to inform consumers about typical production procedures before ingredient lists are introduced.