



PROCESSING DECREASES THE PERCEIVED HEALTHINESS OF FRUIT

Consumer attitudes towards the processing of fruit were explored in a focus group study in Finland, the Netherlands and France.

The recommendations to eat half a kilo or five portions of fruit or vegetables daily were well known. In addition to their healthiness, fruit are eaten since they are convenient and tasting snacks and for many eating fruit is a habit which was learned in childhood.

Naturalness was an important factor affecting the perceived healthiness of fruit. Raw fruit as such was perceived as being wholesome, but processing of fruit decreased healthiness. Even though basically fruit were perceived as healthy, the healthiness of original fruit in fruit-based products was considered to be diluted in the processing. Processing was considered to decrease the content of health-beneficial nutrients in fruit. Additionally, it was suggested that the addition of other less beneficial components, like sugar, additives or artificial colours decreased the healthiness of processed fruit-based products.

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