

→ Rob Lawson and John Williams



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Title: Promoting fruit and vegetable consumption for improved health

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Abstract:

The purpose of the study reported here is to examine the motivational factors that influence consumption behaviour of fruit and vegetables and develop appropriate ideas for public policy initiatives to improve health by increasing consumption amongst target groups. Measures of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were included in a major survey of over 8000

New Zealanders supported by the Cancer Society of New Zealand.

Cluster analysis techniques were used to identify four clearly different groups. Differences were based upon the groups hedonic motivations towards consuming fruit and vegetables and their feelings regarding external pressures to consume fruit and vegetables. A further item that distinguishes all four groups is their belief about health risks associated with failure to consume fruit and vegetables.

These segments were found to be excellent predictors of both (self-reported) consumption behaviour and (self-reported) ability to modify behaviour in the future. Segment membership is also related to demographic profiles; for example females are disproportionately represented in the high-consumption behaviour segment, while males are over-represented in the low-consumption groups.

The findings suggest different routes for encouraging fruit and vegetable consumption for different sectors of the population including further education regarding health benefits, acceptable social norms and usage of fruit and vegetables.