A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO DEVELOP NEW PRODUCTS THAT PROMOTE SOCIAL VALORIZATION OF AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS

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• Agroforestry systems are multifunctional systems which integrate trees, crops, pastures and different livestock species.
• These systems are characterized by the mixed handling of natural resources, where the woodland (trees, shrubs, etc.) is used together with pasturelands, crops or livestock.
• Depending on the predominance of each element, an array of various systems can be originated with more or less agricultural or livestock farming vocation (Mosquera-Losada et al., 2009).
• The dehesa (rangelands located in the South-West of the Iberian Peninsula) is one of the best examples of such systems in the Iberian Peninsula, where it occupies more than 5 million ha in Spain and Portugal.
Introduction
Introduction

• The characteristics of dehesas are related to the environment: strong constraints both regarding soils and climate

• Although dehesas generate a large number of commercial and environmental services, due to these limitations they cannot be competitive with more intensified systems.

• All this leads to the need to diversify their productions in order to guarantee their conservation as well as their provision of environmental, social and cultural services.
Material and methods

- These complex productive framework made the research team to consider Qualitative research as the appropriate approach.
  - To study citizens’ perception of new products that could be provided by dehesa systems.

- Research was developed using Focus groups, which is one of the qualitative techniques most frequently used at the preliminary stages of a research

- It is based on group dynamics, in which a moderator leads a discussion which is stimulated by the exchange of opinions among the participants.
Material and methods

• In this study, the general purpose was to use focus groups to find out the products with commercial-value that derive from the dehesa, analysing also those additional attributes that may improve the acceptance of those products.

• Four focus groups were developed in the cities of Badajoz and Caceres (Spain) in May-June 2015.

• The discussions involved 35 consumers, and a balanced distribution of age and sex within each group was sought. The number of participants per focus group ranged from 6 to 11 with the main criterion for the selection of the participants being their willingness to participate in the study.
Material and methods
## Results

Table 1: Consolidated commercial-value products obtained from *dehesas*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>No. of times identified</th>
<th>Non-food</th>
<th>No. of times identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pig: meat and by-products</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Agritourism</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Bird watching</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting bull meat</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Active tourism, e.g. hiking, horseback routes, touristic cycling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep: meat, milk and by-products</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Hunting tourism</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat: meat, milk and by-products</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Firewood and by-products (oak coal)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry production</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey and by-products</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Cork and by-products</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game meat</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Acorn (fruit)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish products (e.g. tench)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wool and furs</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Pasture</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

• The dehesa agroforestry system is mainly identified as a service supplier.

• The most frequently identified role is in the food supply (especially of animal origin) and raw materials (forestry).

• Participants stated that many of these food products are not commodities, but added-value food due to their quality.

• Dehesas also provide a great variety of recreational services, mainly linked to agritourism.

• Agritourism can be the optimum way of maximising dehesas’ recreational use and ensuring its economic sustainability.
### Results

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>No. of times identified</th>
<th>Non-food</th>
<th>No. of times identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms and fungi</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Medicinal plants and cosmetics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Aromatic plants (thyme, oregano)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acorn liqueur</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Herbs and herbal tea</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acorn beer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Crafts (cork, timber, etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acorn flour and other food by-products</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hydraulic resource</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

• Participants stated that they were willing to try novel products
  
  **Acorn gin?**

  ...but not to buy the on a regular basis

• Food products produced in sustainable ways, in extensive systems, using autochthonous breeds **are highly valued BUT**

• There is a poor assessment by consumers to the attribute "production system",

  it was often mentioned that price and origin were by far more important at the time of purchase.
Results

- Participants noted that a key point for the enhancement of agroforestry products is the change of this purchasing profile. Production system must become a key factor in the shaping of consumers’ preferences.
- Quality brands are positively considered, although they are not associated with sustainable production or with benefits for the environment.
- “Dehesa” quality brand is not generally accepted, although it might provide simplification.
- The term agroforestry within this brand is not attractive.
- Public policies promoting social education must be developed, along with better advertising for agroforestry systems’ productions.
Thanks for your attention!