

## Media release

Zurich/Geneva, 25 August 2021

### **Sustainable food: People in Switzerland want a wider range of products and an understandable and standardised declaration**

Sustainable nutrition is important to people in Switzerland and, according to a Deloitte survey, a large majority would like a wider range of sustainable food choices. Alongside food producers, the 1,500 survey respondents felt that responsibility lies with themselves, and above all they want to eat more sustainably for the sake of the environment. They would also like more information about the impact on the environment of the food they eat has on the environment and many feel the need for uniform and understandable labelling. The survey results suggest that there are opportunities for manufacturing and processing companies, as well as for the retail trade.

Sustainable nutrition is very important to people in Switzerland. According to the survey "[Sustainable food: What Swiss consumers expect from companies and the government](#)", 30% of respondents (almost twice as many as in the EU) indicated that sustainability issues have a major impact on their eating habits. The study, conducted by consulting firm Deloitte, also found that ecological concerns are greater than social and economic considerations. When it comes to sustainable food, more people are concerned primarily about environmental pollution (57%) than with a living income (30%) or their health (24%).

Given the [28% share of food in consumption-related environmental pollution](#), the great business potential becomes apparent. "Food consumes a lot of energy and resources, from agricultural production through industrial processing and packaging to transport and consumption and finally disposal. Our study shows that consumers in Switzerland have understood that there is great leverage in food to reduce environmental pollution quickly and without extensive investments", explains Marcel Meyer, Partner and Head of Sustainability at Deloitte.

#### **Primary responsibility lies with production and consumption**

In the view of 39% of the survey respondents, food manufacturers have the primary responsibility for sustainable food and nutrition (39%), but not far behind, at 31%, are consumers – that is to say, the survey participants themselves. Fewer people thought that responsibility lies with the retail and wholesale trade (16%) or the government (12%). (Figure 1.)

In addition to high prices (52%), a lack of information prevents consumers from eating more sustainably. There is insufficient information about sustainable nutrition (32%) and food labelling does not cover sustainability (30%). "The food industry should quickly agree on consistent and easy-to-understand sustainability information on food labels to boost sales of sustainable products. Customers must neither be patronised nor overwhelmed; the information should be developed based on sound, independent and transparent scientific knowledge and be used as widely as possible", explains Marcel Meyer.

In your opinion, who has the main responsibility when it comes to sustainable food?

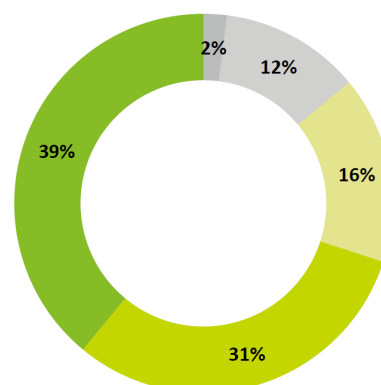


Figure 1: Responsibility for sustainable food and ways of eating

#### **Great potential in food waste**

Another major concern is food waste in private households. People in Switzerland on average generate [almost two kilograms of food waste per week](#). In the Deloitte survey, consumers were very self-critical and acknowledged that the main causes of food waste lay with themselves (Figure 2). They lose track of items in the refrigerator and in storage cupboards (23%), buy too much

food (19%) and allow leftovers to spoil instead of eating them (18%). However, the survey participants were optimistic: 44% expect that fundamental progress will be made with food waste in Switzerland by 2030.

“Smartphone apps can help consumers to buy the right amount of groceries and manage their supplies. Digital applications also help restaurants and takeaways to sell meals at reduced prices before they spoil. The potential of digital technologies is great in agriculture and food production in general. For example, the spread of smartphones and drones around the world is improving farmers' access to relevant weather information or to new sales markets and is helping them to cut costs”, explains Karine Szegedi, Partner and Head of the Consumer Goods Industry department at Deloitte.

What is the main reason for food waste in your household?

- Leftovers are not eaten afterwards.
- Buying more than is actually needed.
- The best-before date leads to food being discarded.
- The manufacturers' packages are too large.
- Losing track/overview of food items (e.g., in the fridge).

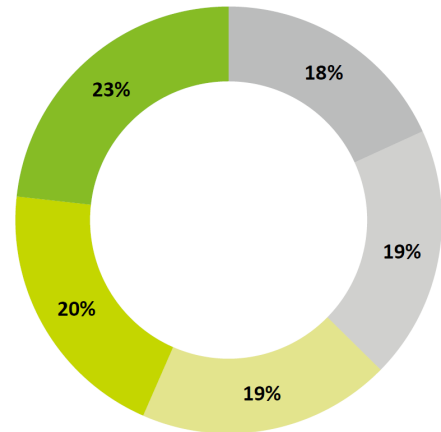


Figure 2: Reasons for food waste by private households

### Bigger range and lower prices

According to the Deloitte survey, almost two-thirds (64%) of people in Switzerland would like more comprehensive offerings of sustainable food from the retail trade. “Manufacturers and retailers should try to use the high demand for sustainable products to achieve productivity increases and innovations, but also for targeted price reductions, to meet the demand for an expanded range”, suggests Karine Szegedi.

“Sustainable nutrition is also possible without major additional costs. Many people are not aware of this, although according to our survey a majority would like to eat more sustainably”, explains Karine Szegedi. 45% of those surveyed would be willing to replace meat with GM-free plant-based alternatives, such as beans, lentils, or mushrooms. In terms of nutritional value, these vegetable proteins hardly differ from meat, so consumers can save money and protect the climate at the same time. “To effectively reduce its ecological footprint in the long term, Switzerland must focus more on plant-based food production and become more open to meat-substitute products, either from the laboratory or based on insects”, says Karine Szegedi.

### About the study

The study “[Sustainable food: What Swiss consumers expect from companies and the government](#)” is based on two online surveys of approximately 1,500 people living in Switzerland. The two surveys were carried out from the end of April to the beginning of May and are representative in terms of age, gender, and region. Some of the questions were based on the study “One bite at a time: Consumers and the transition to sustainable food” conducted by the European Consumer Association, so that the Swiss data could be compared with those from the EU. In addition, personal interviews were conducted with experts from the following companies and organisations: Bio Suisse, Emmi, Haco Group, Mirai Foods, ORIOR, Too Good To Go Switzerland.

Contact: Michael Wiget  
 Head of External Communications  
 Phone: +41 58 279 70 50  
 Email: [mwiget@deloitte.ch](mailto:mwiget@deloitte.ch)

Contact: Adrian Zebib  
 External Communications Specialist  
 Phone: +41 58 279 61 42  
 Email: [azebib@deloitte.ch](mailto:azebib@deloitte.ch)

### Deloitte Switzerland

Deloitte is a leading accounting and consulting company in Switzerland and provides industry-specific services in the area of Audit & Assurance, Consulting, Financial Advisory, Risk Advisory and Tax & Legal. With around 2,000 employees at six locations in Basel, Berne, Geneva, Lausanne, Lugano and Zurich (headquarters), Deloitte serves companies and organisations of all legal forms and sizes in all industry sectors.

Deloitte AG is an affiliate of Deloitte North South Europe (NSE), a member firm of the global network of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (DTTL) comprising around 330,000 employees in more than 150 countries.

### Note to editors

In this press release, Deloitte refers to Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited ("DTTL"), a UK private company limited by guarantee, and its network of member firms, each of which is a legally separate and independent entity. Please see [www.deloitte.com/ch/about](http://www.deloitte.com/ch/about) to learn more about the legal structure of DTTL and its affiliates.

Deloitte AG is a subsidiary of Deloitte LLP, the UK member firm of DTTL. Deloitte AG is an audit firm recognised and supervised by the Federal Audit Oversight Authority (FAOA) and the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority (FINMA).  
The information in this press release was correct at the time it was released.

