

**Title** Consumer evaluation of fish quality as basis for fish market segmentation  
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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on consumer evaluation of fish quality and its association with fish consumption, risk and benefit beliefs and information processing variables. Cross-sectional data were collected from a sample of 429 consumers in March 2003 in Belgium. Two dimensions shape fish quality evaluation: personal relevance attached to fish quality and self-confidence in fish quality evaluation, which allow segmenting the market in four fish consumer segments. The segments are typified as Uninvolved, Uncertain, Self-confident and Connoisseurs, and have distinctive behavioural, attitudinal and socio-demographic profiles. The Uninvolved are mainly young males, have the lowest fish consumption level, weakest belief in health benefits from eating fish, and lowest interest in both search and credence information cues. Uncertain fish consumers are mainly females, with a tendency of lower education and urban residence, who feel not confident to evaluate fish quality, although they find quality very important. They display a strong interest in a fish quality label. The most relevant findings about Self-confident consumers, whose socio-demographic profile matches best with the overall sample, are their high fish consumption level, and their relatively low interest in a fish quality label. Connoisseurs are mainly females in the age category 55+, who are strongly involved with food in general and most convinced of the association between food and health. They have the highest fish consumption and show a strong interest in both search and credence cues, as well as in a fish quality label. The segments do not differ with respect to risk perception about fish.