From Global to Local?
The Power of Domestic Markets.

Carolin Claudia Seitz[1], Jutta Roosen[2]

[1] PhD Student, TUM School of Management, Technische Universität München, Germany
✉ carolin.seitz@tum.de
[1] Professor, TUM School of Management, Technische Universität München, Germany

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Abstract
Food markets have become more and more globalized. In parallel, the interest in locally grown food products has evolved rapidly. The question arises as to what market potential domestic food products can develop in a regional market relative to export markets. We examine the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism, product image and product involvement regarding locally grown food products. Additionally, the concept of Aaker's brand personality has been applied. There exists a positive relation between consumer ethnocentrism and the attitude towards domestic food products. Different brand personalities were uncovered to create a strong marketing identity for a region and its food.
Keywords: Brand Personality; Consumer Ethnocentrism; Product Image; Product Involvement

Introduction

"Think global, consume local." (Feagan, 2007). Over the last few decades, food markets around the world have become more and more globalized. That means many international companies developed global approach strategies to position their products on a global basis (Steenkamp and de Jong, 2010). In a countermovement, the interest in locally grown food products has evolved rapidly. While in the past local products quite often had to fight against prejudice, like lower quality and inelegance they are seen nowadays more original and better connected to their own culture (Strizhakova and Coulter, 2015). In addition to trade liberalization in the context of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), undertakings such as TTIP challenge consumers' desire to trace the origin of their food products, to identify with producers and to see the food chain engrained in their region. Even though there is an extensive amount of literature on this subject mixed findings regarding foreign versus domestic product evaluation exists and somehow the knowledge is still limited. Additionally increased competition amongst marketers makes it necessary to further investigate the influences that determine consumers' choices regarding domestic versus foreign products. In this context, the question arises as to what market potential domestic food products can develop in a regional market relative to export markets. To what extend are people enthusiastic about locally produced and sold food? To answer this question, knowledge about consumers' perception and behaviour towards their region and especially towards locally grown food is necessary in order to see whether there exists the aforementioned marketing potential.

The focus of this study is hence twofold. First, we examine the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism, product image and product involvement regarding locally grown food products and sociodemographic variables. The knowledge about this relationship is important to grasp consumers' preferences for and acceptance of traditional, homegrown products and consequently their potential on the domestic market. In a second step, we apply the concept of Aaker's brand personality (Aaker, 1997) to assess the salient dimensions of one country and of the food produced in this country. The insights should be an integral part of a marketing strategy creating a brand image of one's region and its food. This will help to promote locally grown food successfully (e.g. by labelling with GI labels), not only within but also outside the country. Brand personality can be a useful tool to connect the emotional benefits of a brand with self-expressive benefits and thus builds the basis for the relationship between a consumer and a brand (Aacker, 1996). Brand personality characteristics people associate with certain regions and its food can be a distinctive communication feature to have in mind when creating future marketing strategies for regional food products. d'Astous and Boujbel (2007) emphasize that country personality "should be considered as a complement rather than as a substitute to existing country image measuring instruments" (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007, p.239).

This paper proceeds with a theoretical background on consumer ethnocentrism, product image, product involvement and brand personality. Following that, the methodology is briefly described. After presenting the results, the paper concludes with a discussion of the main findings and recommendations for marketers.

Theoretical Background

Consumer Ethnocentrism

With growing international trade activities studies about consumer ethnocentrism increase. The construct of consumer ethnocentrism can serve as a useful tool for a better understanding of consumer behavior especially in an international context. Originally, the concept of consumer ethnocentrism was introduced by Shimp and Sharma (1987). They define consumer ethnocentrism as "the beliefs held by (American) consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign made products." (Shimp & Sharma, 1987, p. 280). In turn, the general concept of ethnocentrism goes back to the social psychologists William G. Sumner (1906). The basic idea of this concept is that ethnocentric people have strong tendencies to

judge their own group or their own culture superior compared to others. In other words, the own group represents the center in comparison to everything else and others are scaled and rated related to that center (Sumner, 1906). Therefore, people with strong ethnocentric tendencies will always rate familiar cultures and objects higher than cultures and objects, which are dissimilar from their own (Liu, Murphy, Li, & Liu, 2006).

Based on Kaynak and Kara (1998) human behavior or certain attitudes in various cultures can be explained through an ethnocentric attitude of people. Therefore, some evidence exists that consumers from developed countries prefer domestic products against foreign made products (Sharma, Shimp, & Shin, 1995). Nevertheless, most research streams regarding consumer ethnocentrism deal on a national level rather than on a regional level (Siemieniako, Kubacki, Glinska, & Krot, 2011).

As a measurement tool for the construct of consumer ethnocentrism, Shimp and Sharma (1987) developed the CETSCALE (consumer ethnocentrism tendencies scale). Beside the original scale, which consists of 17 attitudinal statements, measured on a seven point Likert scale, a shorter version with only ten items exists (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Regarding the interpretation of the scores one could say the higher the mean score on this scale, the higher the ethnocentrism tendencies. Construct validity and reliability of the scale (the full and the shortened version) was confirmed in many studies based on samples from several countries, e.g., France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the US, but also Asian countries like Japan, China, India, or Malaysia (see also Netemeyer, Durvasula, & Lichtenstein, 1991; Hult, Keillor, & Lafferty, 1999; Luque-Martinez, Ibanz-Zapata, & Barrio-Garcia, 2000; Bawa, 2004; Ramayah, Mohamad, Young, & Lo, 2011).

Many previous studies on consumer ethnocentrism are dealing with the relationship of socio-demographic variables (age, gender, education, and income) and consumer ethnocentrism with more or less similar results depending on the variables. While for some variables results are quite consistent (Good & Huddleston, 1995) e.g., age and education for others they are not e.g., gender and income (see also Good & Huddleston, 1995; Shankarmahesh, 2006; Alsughayir, 2013).

Product (Country) Image
Increased globalisation leads to the fact that consumers are faced more and more with an ever expanding choice of foreign as well as domestic products. With the help of stereotyped images about certain countries, consumers can judge and evaluate products from different countries differently (Lotz & Hu, 2001). Consequently, marketers can use the country of origin information and thus country images to ideally increase the value of their products and create a unique selling proposition (USP) (Baker & Ballington, 2002). In fact, the information on the country of origin can be a valuable cue for marketers depending on the country image.

Country image or the product image of a certain country can have different definitions. For example, Nagashima (1970) describes country image as "the picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumers attach to products of a specific country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history, and traditions" (Nagashima, 1970, p. 68). Furthermore, Roth and Romeo (1992) provide a different, a more marketing oriented definition of country image: "country image is the overall perception consumers form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country's production and marketing strengths and weaknesses" (Roth & Romeo, 1992, p. 480). Papadopoulos and Heslop (2000) use the term product-country image, which provides in their point of view a broader and more accurate description than country of origin or "made in (name of the country)". For them it defines the image of the country and the associations such images trigger in consumers' minds (Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2000). Previous studies show that Product Country Image can be viewed in two different ways. Either one can look at it on a more general level, that means all

products from one specific country are analyzed and assessed or one could look on a certain product category coming from one specific country. This study focuses on the product category level rather than on country level generally.

Product Involvement
Product involvement originally goes back to the discipline of social psychology. It was pioneered by Sherif and Cantril (Bian & Moutinho, 2011). They claim that product involvement can theoretically be compared with the concept of ego-involvement. They talk of ego involvement when "an issue or object is related to the unique set of attitudes and values that comprise an individual's self-concept" (Warrington & Shim, 2000, p. 763). This approach especially is used to explain attitude and attitude changes (Michaelidou & Dibb, 2008). Generally, it can be differentiated between situational and enduring product involvement, depending on the persistence. While the first mentioned really depends more on a specific situation with a specific product the second mentioned is related to a person's needs, values and interests more generally and to any kind of purchase situation of a certain product category (Warrington & Shim, 2000). Beside the other aforementioned constructs, product involvement also represents a very important concept in marketing and consumer research, which has been well established for many years now (Quester & Lim, 2008). Many studies use product involvement as an explanatory variable when explaining consumer behavior (Bian & Moutinho, 2011). There exists a direct relationship between product involvement and the consumer choice process with regard to cognitive and behavioral processes (depth, complexity and extensiveness) (Chakravarti & Janiszewski, 2003). Based on Chakravarti and Janiszewski (2003) product involvement is one of the most important constructs for explaining consumer decision-making behavior but also for the communications associated with the relevant products. Depending on the degree of involvement, consumers can be differentiated between low, moderate and high involvement groups. This can especially help marketers for segmentation the market into certain groups and therefore formulate specific marketing strategies. The construct of product involvement has been also studied especially in the context of consumer behavior to differentiate between product groups depending on their level of involvement (Michaelidou & Dibb, 2008).

Brand Personality
Brand Personality is formally defined by Aacker (1997, p. 347) as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand". Based on Aaker (1997) consumers quite often associate certain brands with human characteristics. She illustrates this with the example of Absolut vodka which people describe as a cool 25 years old hipster. The more consumers identify themselves with the characteristics of a brand the more likely they will purchase this brand (Sirgy, 1985; Malhotra, 1988). The brand management literature talks in this context about "added values", as these personal characteristics add meaning to a brand and help to differentiate one brand from another which can serve as a very strategic marketing tool (Supphellen & Grønhaug, 2003). Historically two types of brand personality scales have been used. While on the one side ad hoc scales were quite popular others used on the other side scales that are exclusively based on human personality scales. However the first mentioned ad hoc scales quite often contain traits which are very arbitrary and based on gut feel. Nevertheless, the validity of the human personality scales (second mentioned) in the context of brands has been questioned a lot (Bellenger, Steinberg, & Stanton, 1976; Aacker, 1997). Resulting from that, Aacker (1997) developed, based on three different sources –a) personality scales used by psychologists, b) personality scales used by marketers and c) personality traits associated with a lot of different brands which have been figured out through qualitative research measures- a very specific brand personality scale. Figure 1 shows the final scale consisting of five generic but different dimensions which are comprised of 15 different facets

and 42 personality traits (not mentioned in the figure). Each facet is comprised of two or three personality traits.
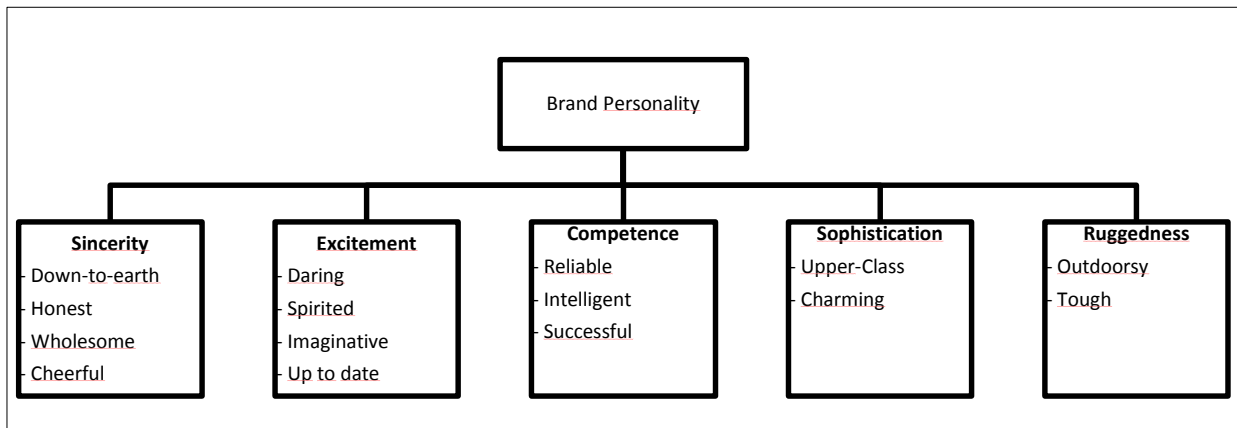

Figure 1
The Aacker Brand Personality Scale (Aacker, 1997).

Most often the brand personality scale has been applied to certain products or as the name already says to certain brands. It has been replicated quite a lot across different product categories as well as across different cultures (Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal, 2006). Only recently researchers start applying the personality construct to other areas e.g., to countries and/or tourism destinations (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007). Despite the growing body of literature on place/country branding no literature exists to the authors' knowledge exploring a country's personality traits and which factors influence these traits and how these insights can help to promote locally produced food.

Methodology
By means of structured interviews with 363 consumers (51.4 % male, 48.6 female), consumer ethnocentrism, brand personality, country of origin attitude and product involvement regarding regional food products were queried in a region in Southern Germany. The construct measures used in this research were taken from existing literature. For example, consumer ethnocentrism tendency was measured with a 10-item subset of the 17 question CETSCALE (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). The Brand Personality Scale (BPS) developed by Aaker (1997) was used to determine the different brand personality characteristics of the above-mentioned region. The scale consists of five dimensions: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. A revised form of the country of origin product image scale developed by Klein, Ettenson, and Morris (1998) was used. This scale originally consists of six, seven-point Likert-type statements, to measure consumers' quality related attitude towards certain products produced in a specific country. The adapted version consists of four statements to have a better fit to the product category (food) we were asking. To assess the general involvement of consumers with food, a scale that is composed of five, five-point Likert-type statements, developed by Cho (2001), was used.
Questions on socio-demographic characteristics completed the questionnaire.
The questionnaire is available from the authors upon request.

Results
Data was analyzed using multiple regression analyses and principal component analysis. Before analyzing the construct measurements Table 1 summarizes the profile of the respondents. Overall, there were 363 respondents. As demonstrated in Table 1 there were slightly more male (51.4 %) than female (48.6 %) respondents and the average age is $M = 40.01$

($SD = 17.80$). The average household size within the sample is $M = 2.60$ ($SD = 1.24$). The sample is fairly well educated as more than 49 % have a high education level, which means that they do have at least a Master's Degree. Respondents are overall also fairly wealthy with more than 23 % having an average net monthly household income of at least 2600 Euro. Finally the majority of respondents were born in the surveyed country/region (78.2 %).

Table 1
Description of the sample.

	Total n=363
Age (years)*	40.01 (17.80)
Gender (%)	
Female	48.6
Male	51.4
Household size*	2.60 (1.24)
Education (%)	
Low Education	16.9
Medium Education	28.5
High Education	49.4
Not Specified	5.2
Income (%)	
Low Income	22.4
Medium Income	20.7
High Income	23.8
Not Specified	33.1
Born in the country (%)	78.2

* Mean (Std. Dev. are given in parenthesis)

Results for consumer ethnocentrism measured with the CETSCALE can be found in Table 2. The overall mean score of consumer ethnocentrism was obtained as the average of the scores on the ten-item scale. It is found to be $M = 3.56$ ($SD = 1.35$). That means the surveyed sample has an attitude, which is slightly ethnocentric. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale is with $\alpha = .884$ within the acceptable range (>.70) as indicated by Nunnally (1978).

Table 2
Statistics for the 10 item modified CETSCALE[a] (n = 363).

Items	M	SD	Cronbach's α
Consumer Ethnocentrism			
1. Only those products that are unavailable in the **U.S.** should be imported	4.91	1.94	
2. **American** products first, last and foremost.	4.59	1.99	
3. Purchasing foreign made products is un-**American**.	2.74	2.02	
4. It is not right to purchase foreign products, because it puts **Americans** out of jobs.	2.71	1.90	
5. A real **American** should always buy **American**-made products.	3.03	2.13	
6. We should purchase products manufactured in **America** instead of letting other countries get rich of us.	2.84	1.89	
7. **Americans** should not buy foreign products, because it hurts **American** business and causes unemployment.	2.71	1.78	
8. It may cost me in the long run but I prefer to support **American** products.	5.02	1.76	
9. We should buy from foreign countries only those products that we cannot obtain within our own country.	4.60	2.05	
10. **American** consumers who purchase products made in other countries are responsible for putting their fellow **Americans** out of work.	2.51	1.78	
Average (for all 10 items)[b]	3.56	1.35	
Reliability			.884

Note. The words in bold have been adapted to each country (Bulgaria, Romania and Russia).
[a]Respondents had to answer on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). [b]The fit measure Cronbach's alpha (.884) indicates a good reliability of the scale.

Results for product involvement can be found in Table 3. The overall mean score of product involvement was obtained as the average of the scores on the five-item scale. It is found to be $M = 3.77$ ($SD = 0.98$). That means the surveyed sample is rather involved with the products for which they were interviewed. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale is with $\alpha = .869$ within the acceptable range ($>.70$) as indicated by Nunnally (1978).

Table 3
Statistics for the Involvement Scale[a] (n=363).

Items	M	SD	Cronbach's α
Product Involvement			
1. I am interested _____ in general.	4.25	1.02	
2. _____ are important to me.	3.82	1.17	

3. I get involved with what _____ I use.	3.66	1.22	
4. _____ are relevant to my life.	3.13	1.34	
5. I am going to purchase _____ in the next six months.	3.96	1.29	
Average (for all 5 items)[b]	3.77	0.98	
Reliability			.869

Note. The name of the country of interest has to be placed in the blanks (Bavaria).
[a]Respondents had to answer on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). [b]The fit measure Cronbach's alpha (.869) indicates a good reliability of the scale.

Results for country of origin product image can be found in Table 4. The overall mean score of country of origin product image was obtained as the average of the scores on the four-item scale. It is found to be $M = 5.29$ ($SD = 1.14$). The Cronbach's alpha of the scale is with $\alpha = .743$ still within the acceptable range (>.70) as indicated by Nunnally (1978). This result means that there exists a positive country of origin effect in the surveyed sample. Furthermore, one could also already see the existing potential for using this positive country of origin effect to promote domestic products in the local market.

Table 4
Statistics for the adapted Country of Origin Product Image Scale[a] (n=363).

Items	*M*	*SD*	*Cronbach's α*
Country of Origin Product Image			
1. Food products made in _____ are carefully produced and have fine workmanship.	4.75	1.56	
2. Food products made in _____ generally of a lower quality than similar products available from other countries (r).	6.17	1.42	
3. Food products made in _____ are usually quite reliable and seem to last the desired length of time.	5.10	1.58	
4. Food products made in _____ are usually a good value for the money.	5.13	1.49	
Average (for all 4 items)[b]	5.29	1.14	
Reliability			.743

Note. The name of the country of interest has to be placed in the blanks (Bavaria).
[a]Respondents had to answer on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). [b]The fit measure Cronbach's alpha (.743) indicates still an acceptable reliability of the scale.

After the descriptive overview on the results of the different variables, multiple regression analysis is performed using the different dependent variables. Independent variables are consumer ethnocentrism, age, sex, household size, education, income and place of birth, and dependent variables are product involvement and country of origin product image. Table 5 reports the results of the multiple regression analysis.

Table 5
Influencing factors of product involvement and country of origin product image (n=363).

	Dependent Variable	
	Product Involvement	CoO Product Image

Independent Variable	Model 1 Coeff.	Model 2 Coeff.
CE	.235***(.039)	.211***(.049)
Age	.006*(.003)	.001 (.004)
Gender[a]	-.130 (.100)	-.064 (.124)
Houshold Size	.017 (.043)	.039 (.053)
Education[b]		
Med Edu.	-.067 (.147)	-.191 (.182)
High Edu.	.086 (.140)	-.164 (.173)
Income[c]		
Med. Income	.229*(.127)	.066 (.157)
High Income	.236*(.123)	-.149 (.153)
Place of Birth[d]		
Born in the surveyed region	.342**(.119)	.126 (.148)
Constant	2.35***(.271)	4.52***(.335)
R^2	.185	.09

Note. Standard errors are in parenthesis. Multicollinearity amongst the independent variables can be excluded. The calculation of the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) confirmed these results.
[a]Dummy coded with reference category "Female". [b]Dummy coded with the reference category "Low Education". [c]Dummy coded with the reference category "Low Income". [d]Dummy coded with the reference category "Not born in the surveyed region".
*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

Results of Model 1 show that the impact of consumer ethnocentrism on product involvement is positive and significant ($\beta = .235$, $p < .01$). That means the more ethnocentric people get the more involved they are getting with the product category. It can be also shown that age as well as income has a positive and significant influence on product involvement. This said means that the older people get as well as the more money they earn the more they are getting involved with the product category. The results also show that people who are born in the surveyed country are significantly more involved then the ones who are not born in the surveyed country. However, there is no relationship between, gender, household size, education and product involvement.

The results for Model 2 with the dependent variable country of origin product image show that there is also a positive and significant effect of consumer ethnocentrism on the country of origin product image variable ($\beta = .211$, $p < .01$). In this context it means that more ethnocentric consumers evaluate their own product's country image more favorable compared to non-

ethnocentric consumers. Regarding the impact of the other socio-demographic variables on the product's country image, no effect was found for the variables age, gender, household size, education, income and place of birth. Despite the lack of a direct relation between the variable born in the surveyed region (respectively how many years the surveyed live in that region) and the product image, a mediation test based on PROCESS by Hayes (2013) confirmed that the impact of the variable born in the surveyed region on the product image is fully mediated by the variable consumer ethnocentrism. This means that people who live longer in the surveyed region have a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism, which at the same time correlates with a more positive attitude towards the product image of that region. Figure 2 illustrates the mediation effect.
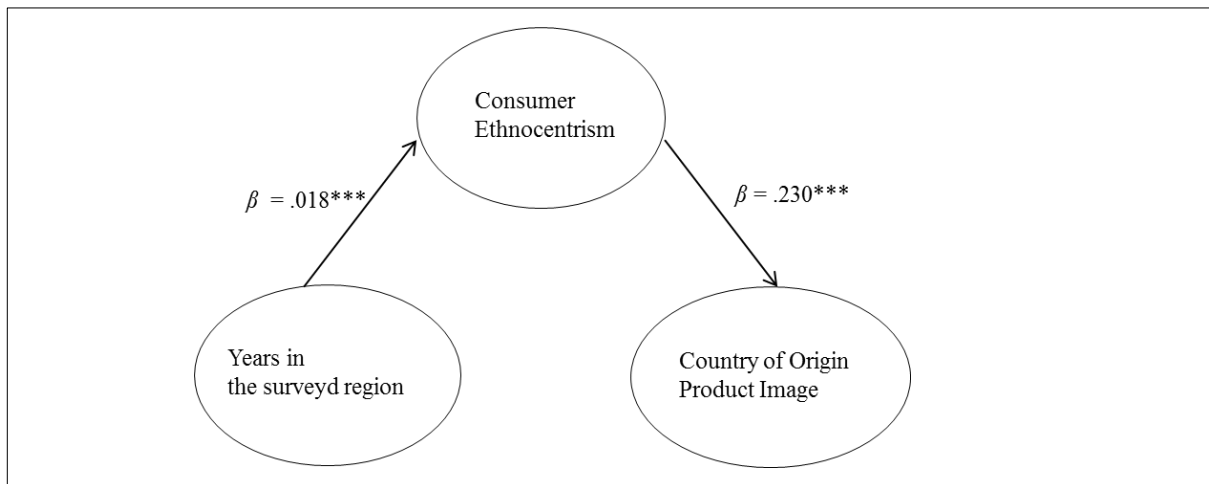

Figure 2
Consumer ethnocentrism fully mediates the link between years in the surveyed region and the attitude towards country of origin product image. ***p <.01.

Finally, in one last step, previous results should be now combined with the results from the Brand Personality Scale. Before this is going to be reported, an overview of the results from the Brand Personality Scale will be presented in Table 6. The data is suitable for conducting a factor analysis when the "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy" (KMO) is greater than .50. The KMO can take values between 0 and 1 and is a measure of how strongly the variables under study are correlated. The KMO measure of .872 verifies the sampling adequacy for factor analysis. Additionally the results from Bartlett's test of sphericity is with $df = 105$ significant at $p < 001$ and confirms the suitability of the data for factor analysis (Williams, Brown, and Onsman, 2010).

Table 6
The Aacker Brand Personality descriptors for a certain region in South Germany: Results of principle component analysis with varimax rotation (n=363).

Dimension / Facets[a]	Factor 1 Sincerity + Naturalness	Factor 2 Competence + Sophistication	Factor 3 Liveliness (Vividness)	Factor 4 Excitement
Honest (Sincerity)	.792			
Down to earth (Sincerity)	.774			
Reliable (Competence)	.646			

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	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Wholesome (Sincerity)	.626			
Outdoorsy (Ruggedness)	.558			
Successful (Competence)		.785		
Intelligent (Competence)		.702		
Upper class (Sophistication)		.617		
Spirited (Excitement)			.752	
Cheerful (Sincerity)			.745	
Charming (Sophistication)			.502	
Up to date (Excitement)				.735
Imaginative (Excitement)				.699
Daring (Excitement)				.644
Eigenvalues	5.20	1.90	1.07	1.04
% Variance (61.33 %)	34.68	12.64	7.11	6.90

Note. The dimensions to which the facets originally belong in the Aacker scale are mentioned in brackets.

The scale was first subjected to principle component analysis via SPSS 22. This extraction method was used as the calculated factors are mutually independent, uncorrelated and explain maximum variance. As rotation method, *varimax* rotation was chosen. Based on the eigenvalue criterion we identified four factors. That means four factors obtained eigenvalues greater than 1. (The fifth factor from the original scale (ruggedness) has been excluded from further analyses, as it does not really represent a factor but more an individual attribute as it is composed of only one facet (tough).) The results differ somewhat from Aacker's results who reported a five-factor solution. In this case, the final four-factor solution is now easier to interpret and explains about 61 % of the variance. See also Table 6 for the factor (components) and loadings. For comparison, dimensions from the original Aacker scale have been added in parenthesis after each facet. The first factor that we would name sincerity and naturalness is kind of a blend of three different facets including three from the original Aaker scale. It is comprised of the items down-to earth, honest, wholesome, reliable and outdoorsy. The second factor combines facets from the competence and sophistication dimension. Successful was strongest, followed by intelligent and upper class. Again, the third factor is a blend of three different facets form the original Aacker scale. It is comprised of the facets cheerful, spirited and charming and the best name that fits these three facets is liveliness (vividness). One could think at first glance that this factor seems to be a combination of unrelated facets but taking a closer look, this combination makes a lot of sense for the country/region in question. Finally, the last factor, Factor 4, represents a shortened version of the excitement dimension from the original Aacker scale. The facet which is missing is spirited which is loading in the present study into the third factor. As already mentioned above, findings from the construct

measurements are going to be combined with the findings from the brand personality scale now. We will focus on the variable consumer ethnocentrism, as this variable is the only one, which shows significant effects on both dependent variables (product involvement and product image). As a next step, for each brand personality dimension indices were formed by building the average score of each facet per dimension. This leads to four different Brand Personality variables. Additionally the sample was split into two different groups - based on the CETSCALE scores - low and high scores (median split) (Low = 48.9 %; High = 51.1 %). The brand personality measures were than regressed against product image and product involvement. Table 7 shows the results of the effect of the different brand personality factors on both measurement constructs (product image and product involvement) split into the different ethnocentric groups.

Table 7
Effects of Brand Personalities on product image and product involvement

	CoO Product Image		Product Involvement	
	Consumer Ethnocentrism		Consumer Ethnocentrism	
	Low	High	Low	High
Brand Personality Dimensions				
1 Sincerity and Naturalness	.574***(.117)	.540***(.115)	.537***(.110)	.476***(.090)
2 Competence and Sophistication	.168 (.111)	.097 (.125)	- .208* (.108)	.027 (.099)
3 Liveliness	.211** (.102)	.039 (.115)	.072 (.098)	.067 (.091)
4 Excitement	-.159 (.115)	.062 (.102)	.040 (.111)	-.004 (.080)
Constant	2.06***(.412)	2.72***(.435)	1.85***(.401)	1.82***(.346)
R^2	.271	.203	.153	.212

*$p< .10$. **$p< .05$.***$p< .01$.

When comparing the results for the low and high scores there only few differences regarding the brand personality dimensions occur. For the low ethnocentric group the dimension liveliness has an effect on the product image ($\beta = .211$, $p < .05$) on the one hand and on the other hand the dimension competence and sophistication has a negative effect on the product involvement ($\beta = -.208$, $p < .05$). The dimension sincerity and naturalness is the dimension, which has an effect on product image and product involvement regardless of any ethnocentric tendencies. Thus, this is the dimension which describes on the one had best the region but has also the highest potential when using in communication strategies to highly involve people in the food products from this country. Additionally this dimension has the most effect on the country of origin product image.

Discussion
The increasing interest in selling food with geographical indications not only into export markets but also into domestic markets requires more knowledge about consumers' perception and behaviour towards their region and especially towards locally grown food. Additionally effective marketing strategies can help to promote domestic food products successfully in the

domestic market. In this study, the interaction effects of consumer ethnocentrism, socio-demographic variables and product involvement and country of origin product image were investigated. Additionally, a German translation of Aacker's brand personality scale was used to uncover the personality traits of a certain region, which can be a useful information to better promote the region and the products thereof.

Analysis results show that there is a high potential for marketing domestic food products in the region generally. This is especially supported by the results from the consumer ethnocentrism scale, the product involvement with domestic products scale and the country of origin product image scale. All three constructs were rated in favor of domestic food products. Looking furthermore on the interaction effects of these three constructs, our study implies that consumer ethnocentrism is a very strong predictor for product involvement and country of origin product image. Regarding consumer ethnocentrism, our results confirm existing theories that this construct is a useful tool not only for researchers but also for practitioners when predicting consumer behavior (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; James & Eroglu, 1990). The results of the regression analysis also showed that the variable "born in the surveyed region" plays a significant role in the involvement process of domestic products. The longer people live in a region the more they are getting involved with the products from that region. The ones who were born and raised in that region show the highest involvement with these products. Additionally consumer ethnocentrism positively moderates the relationship between the years people live in a region and the attitude of county of origin product image. This means that people who live longer in the surveyed region have a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism, which at the same time correlates with a more positive attitude towards county of origin product image. Again, consumer ethnocentrism acts as an important construct in the evaluation process of domestic products. The results underpin existing theories that consumer ethnocentrism serves as a predictor for consumer behavior (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; James & Eroglu, 1990). Orth and Firbasová (2002) already stated previously that consumer ethnocentrism can help marketers to segment the market into the different groups and built up their strategies based on these segments but can also help retailers to successfully penetrate the domestic market.

Furthermore, this study can also show a small positive but significant relationship between age and product involvement as well as between income and product involvement. That means the older people are the more they are getting involved with domestic food products and also the more money they earn the more they get involved with local food. No direct relationships could be shown between any socio-demographic variable and country of origin product image. These non-significant results are in line with existing studies that found no or conflicting results with respect to demographic variables (Eastwood, Brooker, & Gray, 1999; Wolf, Spittler, & Ahern, 2005; Zepeda & Li, 2006). These results provide already some valuable responses to our first question if and to what extent there is a potential for homegrown products in the domestic market.

In a second step a German translation of the Aacker Brand Personality Scale was used to see if this construct can be applied also to regions and not only to brands and if so which brand personalities are connected with the region. The outcome should help to create a successful brand image of the surveyed region which than can be used to promote the region but more important the food from that region. To the authors' knowledge, this scale was used for a German region for the first time. Contrary to Aacker's finding with the American sample and American brands, only four dimensions of brand personality for the surveyed region arose in the German sample. However, the content of the four dimensions showed some similarities to Aacker's scale. The first factor, which was named Sincerity and Naturalness (down-to earth, honest, wholesome, reliable, outdoorsy), consists of facets from three different dimension from the original scale. As it seems confusing at first glance, these facets are a perfect fit to the surveyed country and provide the best description when taking a closer look. The first factor summarizes facets typically associated with a traditional, landscape based and more

conservative region. It perfectly reflects the characteristics of a prosperous and native region contemporaneous. Murphy, Moscardo, and Benckendorf (2007) identified inter alia the same factor for a region in Australia, which obviously shows similar characteristics as the region surveyed in this study. The results show that this combination of traits seems to be not surprising for brand personalities for a region. Factor 2 and Factor 4 are more similar to the original Aacker's factors. While Factor 2 comprises facets from the dimension competence and sophistication, Factor 4 consists of facets from the dimension excitement only. As one facet is missing – spirited - we can see it as a subset of the original dimension. The facet that is missing is loading into the third factor. The third factor, which is a mix of three different facets, was named Liveliness. It is a perfect supplement to the other factors, and matches very well with the surveyed region. This "new" factor seems to imply that respondents perceive the surveyed region as somebody who is omitted and has temperament combined with a lot of charm.

In a last step, it should be figured out if consumer ethnocentrism has any influence on the effect of the different brand personalities towards country of origin product image or product involvement. Regarding the first dimension there is obviously no difference between the two groups. Regardless if people are low or high ethnocentric scorers the first dimension positively influences the country of origin product image and the product involvement. This means based on this dimension a strong brand personality for the surveyed region could be very successful for a broad consumer group. As this dimension leads to a positive effect regarding country of origin product image and regarding product involvement. As part of a communication strategy, this dimension could be very successful for a relatively large amount of consumers. For a low ethnocentric target group the dimension liveliness would be also a feasible communication strategy. As high ethnocentric consumers anyway already show a positive attitude towards the product image of domestic products, it would be possible to target even more consumers with the right strategy. In this case, it means that including the dimension liveliness in the communication strategy, low-ethnocentric scorers would be attracted as well as their product image of domestic food products will be positively influenced.

To sum up and to come back to the initial questions the following implications for marketers of domestic food products arise. It has been shown that consumer ethnocentrism has a strong positive effect on product involvement and country of origin product image. From a marketing standpoint, this group seems to be a very promising one regarding local food products, as they are positively involved with this product group on the one hand and on the other hand show a positive attitude towards the products' country image. Within the high ethnocentric group, there is a very high potential for domestic food products. Another very promising group for domestic food products are the ones who were actually born in the surveyed region or lived there already for quite a while. The results in fact could show that the number of years living in this region are positively related with product involvement for the food products from that region. Another promising approach also could be to target consumer groups based on their income and probably based on their age. Both variables also show a small but even though significant effect on the product involvement. The German version of the brand Personality Scale in the context of consumer ethnocentrism, country of origin product image and product involvement also provides useful insights. It can be shown that the importance and effect of each dimension varies a lot for the surveyed region. The very significant positive effect of the first dimension on country of origin product image and product involvement shows, that this dimension would be the perfect communication strategy to target a big group of consumers as it is independent from ethnocentric tendencies. Nevertheless the third dimension (liveliness) should be incorporated as well as these facets seem to work for low ethnocentric scorers a lot. That means ideally the low ethnocentric consumers could be attracted by a communication strategy including the liveliness dimension and as a consequences, the attitude towards product image of homegrown products would become more positive. In turn, the focus should not be laid so

much on the second dimension (competence and sophistication) as this would lead to a negative effect for the low scorers and they would get less involved with the product category.

All in all this information can help marketers to develop appropriate marketing strategies on a local level and furthermore, to create a strong marketing identity for a certain region and its food. New branding strategies for local food can help to compete successfully against products from other regions.

Limitations and Future Research

Beside the very promising results regarding the relationship of consumer ethnocentrism and product involvement and country of origin product image, the results also show that the original brand personality scale developed by Aaker cannot be translated directly to a country's image respectively to the products thereof. That means in this area further research is needed to develop an appropriate brand personality model that is more suitable, valid and reliable for the subjects mentioned above. One possible explanation might be that this study was only done in a single region in one country. Further studies could replicate the results with other target regions similar to each other to confirm results. Especially for the results of the factor analysis, the fact of having just one region for the analysis might be a problem. Furthermore, results should be substantiated by more complete sampling as this study has made use of a convenience sample that may not be representative for the population under study. That means, before drawing final conclusions, the work needs to be substantiated with a larger sample. Finally, researchers could also think to include other constructs, e.g. consumers trust in homegrown products but also ethical aspects like food miles/the carbon footprint, in future research studies on country of origin effect.

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