

Putting sustainable nutrition in the catering sector forward – Insights from the project NAHGAST

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Abstract (session theme and focus):

- Indicators and limits for sustainable out-of-home meal
- Managing sustainable business models in the hospitality sector with the help of a mission statement
- Relevant information to guide consumers towards sustainable nutrition out of home – the perspective of caterer vs. guests
- Displaying sustainability related information on meals – The role of design and information depth

To reach sustainable development food consumption and production patterns have to change. In this regard, lifestyles (e.g. symbolized by eating out-of-home) and diets (following trends) are only two but indeed two important aspects that have to be considered (see e.g. FAO 2016). An increasing share of food is consumed in out-of-home settings compared to in-home consumption (European Commission, 2011; Gracia & Albisu, 2001). Eating out has become a common everyday practice for many consumers, and it represents now a noteworthy part of the food sector. For example, in Germany the food service sector is with about 11.16 billion visitors in 2013 and a market value of about 73.6 billion euros in 2015 an important economic field and therewith a key area for sustainable transformation (BVE, 2016). But, so far, sustainability is not that anchored and noticeable in the very diverse¹ out of home consumption market. Furthermore, the food service and procurement sector is less regulated with respect to sustainability aspects than other fields. Hence, to realize a transition towards sustainable food consumption and nutrition, the above-described situation makes obvious that the out-of-home consumption is a fundamental field of action.

¹ The out-of-home market can be differentiated in individual, collective catering and other food services. The individual gastronomy comprises restaurants in the fast and small food sector as well as hotels and catering in planes and trains. The collective catering includes the segments business (company catering), education (school meals) and care (catering in hospitals, nursing homes and care facilities) (Scheiper et al. 2016). This categorization illustrates that the out-of-home market is characterized by a complex and heterogeneous distribution of different operating segments, which differ with respect to their main focus, their guest structure, and their public welfare orientation.

This session aims to provide a starting point for a discussion and research of this interesting and relevant business and consumption-production field by highlighting four important aspects:

First, the question how to **measure sustainability** in the hospitality sector will be approached by discussing **indicator sets and targets for sustainable out-of-home meals**.

Second, the question how to **manage sustainable business models** in the hospitality sector will be approached. Here, the mission statement “sustainable food systems” developed within the project NAHGAST will be presented and its feasibility to guide companies will be discussed. The mission statement was created to give the branch a holistic, systematic concept to integrate sustainability topics into their business. Whether the mission statement has to be further developed into a management concept will be discussed with the audience. Besides, this part of the session will show how we can translate the more or less abstract and normative sustainability goals (e.g. SDGs) via guiding principles and relevant indicators towards the out-of-home catering.

The **information appropriate to guide consumers towards sustainable nutritional choices** is in the focus of the third talk. Here, the perspective of consumers is compared to the opinion of caterers.

In the fourth talk the focus lies on **label design and information depth** since sustainable conduct often is communicated via labels and the aspects addressed in this talk are often not in the spotlight of the analysis.

This session aims to deepen four of the crucial issues needed to address in order to push the catering sector in the direction of sustainable business. By providing insights into the findings of the project NAHGAST new research ideas can be created. Since only a few studies are available so far and many methodological questions are still not answered an intensive discussion of the addressed points will be facilitated by the four complementing talks. Presenters, discussant and moderator pay attention to broaden the perspective along the food value chain and across continents.

Target Audience

The target audience are all those interested to bring the out-of-home consumption sector forward towards sustainable business. Hence, researchers, NGO and business representatives are invited to enrich the session with their valuable insights.