

WWF BASKET APPENDIX: DIETS – BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

THE PROTEIN TRANSITION: CONSUMER

BEHAVIOUR, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION AND GOAL

This document was drawn up with help and advice from various behavioural experts: Marleen Onwezen, Muriel Verain, Ellen van Kleef (Wageningen University), Liesbeth Velema and Joost Knüppe (Voedingscentrum [Netherlands Nutrition Centre])

One of the goals of the 'WWF Basket' project is the protein transition: a shift to 40% animal and 60% plant-based protein by 2030. This move requires a change in consumer behaviour both in shops and at home.

With the help of behavioural experts, WWF-NL has devised an action plan (Blueprint for Action) for a 60/40 protein transition in the supermarket environment.

It describes a range of interventions needed to achieve this goal. If the option of 'doing nothing' is taken, it means

that the protein transition will stagnate at its current level and it will be impossible to halve the footprint. Nudging and educating without further action, for example, will not achieve our goal either; experts emphasize the need to choose a set of interventions that fit together and reinforce each other.

INTERVENTIONS CLASSIFIED BY LEVEL OF IMPACT

Below is an overview created with the help of behavioural experts, listing interventions with a classification, based on the intervention ladder (figure 1).

[Read more about Greater levels of intervention](#)



1. Provide information: inform and educate customers¹

- Specify whether a product is vegetarian or vegan on the label.
- State the amount of plant-based and animal-based protein in a product in the nutritional value chart on the label.
- Educate to dispel the myths: 'meat is necessary'; 'meat substitutes also have a high environmental impact'; 'you need a lot of protein to exercise,' etc.
- Publish interesting information and interviews in

journals, supermarket magazines (such as Allerhande) and on social media.

- Refer to clear, transparent and reliable sources: 'Voedingscentrum advisees...'
- Add environmental labelling or the Eco-score to products.

2. Enable choice: enable customers to change their behaviours

- Green shelf tags for plant-based/vegan products.

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- b. Improve placement: give plant-based products more prominence on shelves for better visibility; more shelf space (facing) at eye level and following the shop route; plant-based options based next to the animal options rather than on a separate shelf (which conveys that it is 'different').
- c. Improve the variety of the range (e.g. multiple options of vegetarian minced meat or an extensive line of healthy, affordable plant-based ready-made meals. Ensure that a plant-based option is available in each category (vegan ice creams, for instance).
- d. Ensure that there are always sufficient stocks of plant-based products.
- e. Use digital nudging: ask customers a question, for example: 'aren't you forgetting something?'; add a special sound to your hand scanner when a customer chooses a vegetarian option; show previously purchased plant-based options in an app or your web shop. Other examples: recommend switching non-plant-based products for a plant-based option or show interested customers a more personalized, more plant-based range first.
- f. Show the environmental impact of products on the receipt.
- g. A half-empty shelf suggests that a product is sold a lot and can trigger a social norm or scarcity.
- h. Offer a larger choice of plant-based than animal-based.
- i. Participate in campaigns such as the 'Week without Meat and Dairy'.
- j. Set up theme weeks for things like legumes or nuts.
- k. Motivate customers using their own values: 'if you think the environment is important, what would you choose?'; stimulate thinking by asking questions: 'do you think animal welfare is important?'
- l. Tell stories about products (storytelling).
- m. Work with role models, peers and influencers.
- n. Make a commitment to choice: 'recommended by...'
- o. Train shop staff: they can serve as ambassadors on the shop floor.
- p. Support product development and innovation in plant-based meals and meat substitutes, fish substitutes and dairy substitutes.
- q. Make meat substitutes healthier (less salt, etc.) which ties in with the motivation to eat healthier.
- r. Social norm: in the web shop, say things like 'others also chose...'; 'others think this is the right choice...'

'more people choose...'

- s. Ask the customer in advance what they value most (animal welfare, environment, health) and tailor the offers accordingly.

3. Guide choice through changing the default: make plant-based choices the default option

- a. Publish more vegetarian recipes than recipes featuring meat in your supermarket magazine, as the standard on recipe cards in shops and on fresh food packages; adapt popular recipes to vegetarian versions; combine this strategy with nudges highlighting vegetarian options as 'cheaper/affordable.'
- b. Introduce promotions such as 'green Thursday' where only vegan options are in the spotlight (or on offer).
- c. Make sure that the vast majority of the sources of protein you promote as dinner options are plant-based.

If your supermarket has a food service:

- d. Plant-based dairy substitutes should be the standard option in coffee if customers do not explicitly ask for dairy.
- e. If customers order burgers or pizza, the default option should be plant-based. If they want a beef burger or pizza with salami or ham, they must explicitly express that preference.

4. Guide choice through incentives: use financial and other incentives to guide customers (and producers and suppliers) to pursue certain activities

- a. Put more plant-based options on offer in supermarkets in general.
- b. Put plant-based products on offer in the personal bonus or comparable schemes.
- c. Offer a 10% discount on plant-based products for premium customers (just like with organic).
- d. Join the Postcode Lottery campaign, which issues gift cards for vegetarian products.
- e. Arrange free tastings, workshops, cooking demonstrations.
- f. Set up a loyalty system for plant-based products (scratch cards).
- g. Make plant-based cheaper than animal versions as a standard, preferably with a 20% price difference and communicate the price difference so that people who do not look at the prices are made aware of it.

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- h. Advertise plant-based products more often.

Intervention with other stakeholders:

- i. Advocate zero percent VAT on vegetables and fruit.

5. Guide choice through disincentives: use financial or other disincentives to influence customers (and producers and suppliers) to not pursue certain activities

- a. Do not offer stack discounts on animal products (1 + 1 free) any more.
- b. Do not offer price promotions on animal products any more.
- c. Do not market or advertise animal products any more.
- d. Add deterrent and alarming images – images of distressed animals – to packaging, with warnings ('this product can lead to deforestation').
- e. Hide meat in your shop: low down, at the back, in a special, neglected corner.

Intervention with other stakeholders:

- f. Introduce a meat tax, true pricing for animal products.
- g. Make agreements with other supermarkets (CBL) to stop certain promotions or products (equal level playing field).

6. Restrict choice: regulate to restrict the options available for customers

- a. Remove certain products with a high environmental impact from your range, such as lamb from New Zealand, Irish beef, etc.
- b. Do not purchase any more products from producers who are not transparent about their environmental impact.
- c. Do not sell any more chicken or pork that does not come from circular companies (for example only Kipster).
- d. Do not sell any more fresh packages ('verspakketten') to which meat must be added.
- e. Do not sell any more fish that is not green according to the Fish Guide.
- f. Do not sell any more imported dairy or dairy from cows that are fed with soy.
- g. Reformulate products by offering smaller portions of meat in ready-made and frozen products, for example.

7. Eliminate choice: regulate to eliminate choice entirely

- a. Do not sell any more red meat.
- b. Do not sell any more meat that is not organic or Better Life *** (Beter Leven).
- c. Do not sell any more wild fish.
- d. Do not sell any more non-organic dairy (see Plus example).
- e. Start a plant-based supermarket/branch.

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Substantiation

The food environment offers some starting points for changing consumers' food choices. The RIVM (National Institute for Public Health and the Environment) has a page with possible interventions and policy measures, which stakeholders can use to make the food environment healthier (and more sustainable), working on the assumption that a healthier food environment should not stand in the way of sustainable food choices. The list of interventions and policy measures is based on a literature review and the page contains the references to research that substantiates the intervention.

The page discusses the following aspects of the food environment (in line with the intervention ladder):

- The supply of food (availability, accessibility, abundance)
- The design of food sales points
- Marketing and advertising
- Prices and subsidies

[Mogelijkheden voor interventies en beleid](#)
[| Gezonde Leefomgeving](#)

PRIORITIES IN THE BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

According to the behavioural experts at the Netherlands Nutrition Centre, supermarkets should focus on bringing about the following:

1. As a rule, plant-based options should be cheaper than animal-based options.
2. No more animal products on offer.
3. Less shelf space for animal products than plant-based products.
4. A change in corporate culture and purchasing goals: employee and category manager training, so that the transition has wide support.
5. Marketing insights should be shared with researchers.

THE BEHAVIOUR CHANGE WHEEL: COMBINING INTERVENTIONS

The experts emphasize that it is always important to combine various interventions. The Behaviour Change Wheel, which is a system to help classify and bring about behavioural change (Michie et al, 2011), can be used to select combinations.

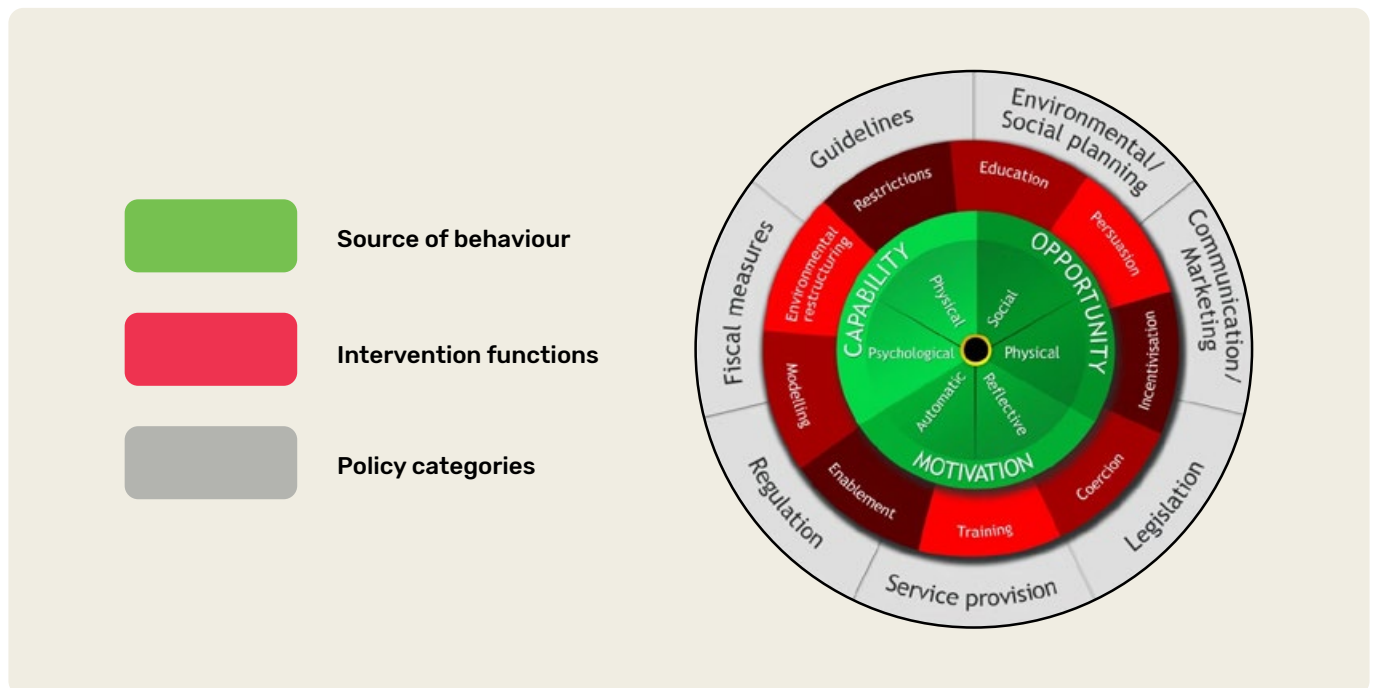
The successful implementation of evidence-based interventions depends on behavioural change. The 'behaviour change wheel' (figure 2) reveals that behavioural change is determined by the following:

- The capability (knowledge and skills) to change
- The opportunity to change
- The motivation to change

Capability is defined as the psychological and physical ability to initiate an activity, based on the right knowledge and skills. Opportunity is defined as factors outside the individual, in his/her environment, that make behaviour possible or initiate

it. Motivation is defined as the processes in the brain that initiate behavioural change.

Adapting the physical and social environment (creating opportunity and the right choice architecture) is obviously the domain of supermarkets. Although motivation and skills may initially seem be the responsibility of governments (e.g. food literacy in the school curriculum) and NGOs (e.g. working together on social norms around meat consumption), there are many examples and opportunities to that could contribute to it, such as marketing and positioning and recipe development.



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If you only focus on motivation, your reach and, consequently the effect, will probably be small. A change in behaviour is more 'sustainable'. The people you reach and who are really motivated to change their behaviour, i.e. to eat more plant-based food, will probably change their habits for the long term. According to experts, policy measures, financial measures and other laws and regulations have the most impact: they influence the behaviour of the individual but are implemented by other parties in the chain, i.e. all parties from producer to retailer.

Research on impact

It is essential that supermarkets work with WWF and experts to draw up a research plan in line with the Behavioural Change Wheel explaining how to measure a set of outcomes, before, during and after the implementation of the intervention. Part of the plan could explain how to arrange the intervention with other stores, staff and customers. Another part might explain how to set up experimental studies with experts from, for example, the WUR so that everyone can learn from it. A clear picture of the impact of the different interventions/components would be valuable.

A thorough understanding of the dos and don'ts could be enormously helpful in subsequently rolling out the most promising interventions to other supermarkets as there is still a lot of reluctance to implement changes due to the fear of resistance/loss of turnover. If more insight can be acquired during the first pilots, we could use it to convince other supermarkets to join in or, after a pilot, to apply the intervention to other branches.

