

LIVING LAB AS SUPPORT FOR THE PROCESSING OF POLISH BERRY FRUITS



Poland is one of the leading producers of berry fruits in Europe, on the other hand market potential of species such as **chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*)** and **haskap (*Lonicera caerulea*)** remains underexploited. Despite their exceptional nutritional profiles and well-documented health benefits, their consumption is limited due to low consumer awareness, lack of habitual use, and a distinct, intense sensory character that poses challenges for processors.

As part of the **HortiFoodTrends** project, a survey among producers and processors helped identify key market and technological barriers. The findings emphasize the need to develop products that meet both consumer expectations and processing capabilities.

To address these challenges, the project applies a modern **Living Lab** approach – a collaborative innovation model that brings together producers, processors, scientists, and consumers. Using qualitative research (focus groups) conducted in France, the project explored sensory preferences, functional expectations, and product formats most likely to increase acceptance of chokeberry and haskap. These insights form the basis for developing new prototypes with high sensory and market potential.

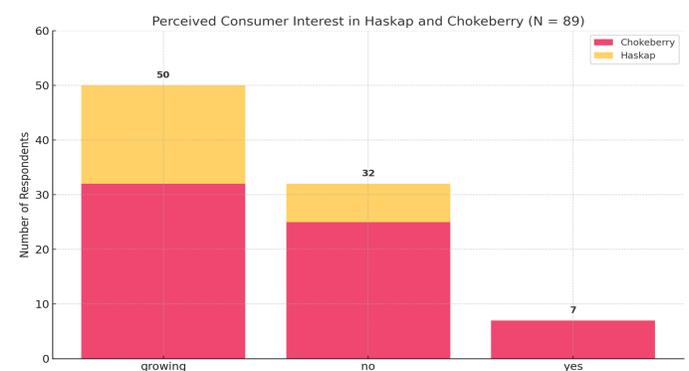
The aim of the HortiFoodTrends project was to identify the key barriers limiting the market potential of chokeberry and haskap products and to develop innovative product concepts that reflect consumer expectations and processing capabilities.

The project focused on:

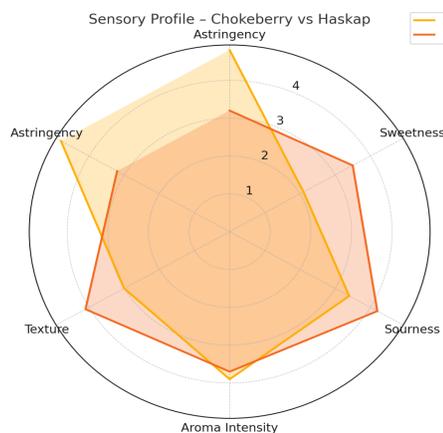
Implementation of a collaborative model that brings together producers, processors, scientists, and consumers to jointly design berry-based products with high market, sensory, and technological potential. The adjacent **word cloud illustrates key challenges** identified by stakeholders, such as bitterness, low consumer awareness, limited availability, and inconvenient product formats – all of which support the need for co-creation in product development.



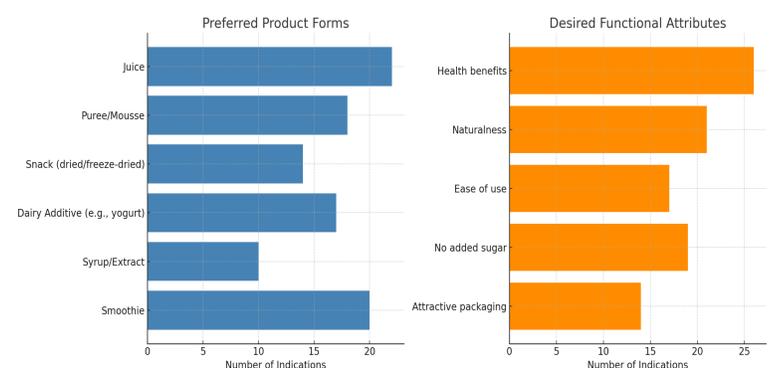
Analyzing consumer perception – assessing the level of awareness, associations with consumption, and psychological or sensory barriers that hinder acceptance of chokeberry and haskap.



Identifying sensory preferences – determining which characteristics (e.g., taste, astringency, aroma, texture, appearance) are appreciated or disliked by consumers and how they influence willingness to purchase.



Evaluating preferred product formats and functional attributes – exploring which forms (e.g., juice, puree, snack, dairy additive) are most likely to be accepted and which functional features are most desired.



Living Lab



Innovative Collaboration

- Developing berry products
- High sensory & market potential
- Using a participatory approach

The project confirms that a consumer-inclusive approach is essential for turning underutilized berries into accepted, functional, and market-ready products. **Living Lab** collaboration bridges sensory, technological, and commercial gaps—boosting innovation and uptake.

INTRODUCTION TO LIVING LAB

