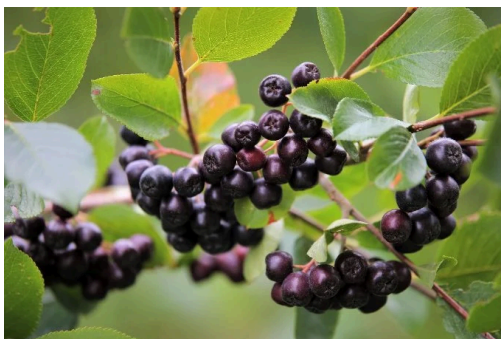




Consumer research : Involving chefs and end-users in product design and orientation

In the HortiFoodTrends project, both consumers and chefs are used all along the innovation process. Jauniau *et al.* (2026) combined qualitative and quantitative consumer studies with chefs' creativity to design innovative and pleasurable new food products.

Chokeberries and haskap berries are increasingly available in Poland but they are unknown in several countries, such as in France.



Chokeberry



Haskap berry

To enhance their appeal and widespread use, the project leverages culinary innovation, sensory evaluation tools, and consumer research conducted in real-consumption situation.

First, a qualitative study aimed to generate food ideas with consumers. Berry ingredients were presented to consumers with the objective of imagining possible pairing with other ingredients in some typical well appreciated French recipes. This phase led to the co-creation of 8 food concepts.

Second, the culinary experts from Lyfe Institute selected 4 promising food concepts and fine-tuned the recipes including chokeberry and haskap berry.

Savory – Concept 1

Mushroom soup



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Mushroom velouté, mushrooms in pieces, haskap berry, cream siphon, fresh chives, parmesan crumble topping

Savory – Concept 2

Empanadas



© Institut Lyfe

Empanadas of fermented cabbage and caramelized onions with a creamy smoked tofu-chokeberry sauce with chickpeas purée

Sweet – Concept 3

Cheesecake



© Institut Lyfe

A creamy, lightly caramelized Basque cheesecake with a chokeberry puree lemon coulis and apple chips topping

Sweet – Concept 4

Chou pastry



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A chou pastry with craquelin filled with a mousseline cream made from haskap berry purée and crunchy caramelized hazelnuts

Third, consumers's qualitative feedbacks were collected in focus groups to select a favorite concept - the cheese cake - and identify its strengths and weaknesses, leading to a culinary rework by the chef to address consumers' comments.



Forth, a quantitative in-situ consumer test with 70 new participants compared two final variants of the cheesecake, with a content of 8% or 20 % of chokeberry. No

significant difference was observed between the variants, allowing to choose on or the other for further market development.

Consumers and chefs played complementary and essential roles in designing well-appreciated products. Consumers provided insights into preferences, eating habits while chefs translated these insights into concrete recipes. Culinary experts were particularly valuable in creating dishes that not only matched French consumers' general taste but were also technically and economically feasible. By combining cooking expertise, ingredient knowledge, and market understanding, chefs contributed a highly valuable savoir-faire that increased the likelihood that the final products would meet consumer expectations and succeed in real-consumption contexts.

 Jauniau A., Siarkowski S., Wieloch D., Mieszczakowska-Frąc M., Piecko J., Zdulski J., Natalizio M., Giboreau A. (2026) *Innovation driven by consumer ideation and validated in real-meal situation: an application to Polish berries unknown in France*. ICCAS International Conference on Culinary Arts and Science. Québec. June 2026

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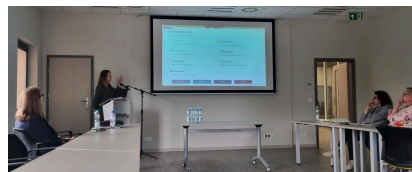
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