

# Bio-based products

What do you know about your consumer?



Consumers have difficulty understanding bio-based. The quotes in the sidebar, from recent research, indicate this clearly. In business and government, there is much talk about the desirability and opportunities for a bio-based economy and bio-based products. Your product and product development can perfectly match this social trend, but the consumer may not have seen this yet. LEI Wageningen UR can assist you in improving your product development and marketing, so you can profile your bio-based products better to the consumer. We do this by answering questions such as:

- How do consumers think about my product?
- How do consumers talk about my product?
- When do consumers buy my product?
- Why do consumers buy my product?

Why consumer research about bio-based?

National and international governments want to stimulate the market for bio-based products and related bio-based economy because of the positive effects on our planet. An important precondition is the acceptance and purchase of bio-based products by consumers. LEI as a partner of the European Project Open Bio, conducted qualitative and quantitative consumer research among nearly 6.500 consumers. It shows that consumers are still not familiar with bio-based products and the bio-based concept. There are many questions surrounding this concept, resulting in mixed feelings about bio-based products. These feelings, the perception of the consumer, are very different for each product category and country. Bio-based foot cream, for instance, triggers other questions and associations than a bio-based carrier bag. Foot cream is positively associated with nature and health. The bio-based bag owes its positive associations to its supposed biodegradability.

*"Bio-based .. No clue. I thought based on biological ... a biological fuel that's biodegradable, based on a biological element."*

*"It is a negative group where they only care about the price. I thought of discount supermarkets. And bio-based got in that group because it [bio-based] is a silly word, because everything is bio-based. I mean we live in this world and everything is bio-based. I think the term is silly and wants to hide something."*

*"The word is cheating, because somehow it is something based on something else. It might as well be full of all kinds of stuff we don't know what it is. 'Bio' is a good and positive word, but the word 'based' is not entirely positive."*

---

## Consumer-oriented approach

As consumers' perceptions differ widely, it is very important to work from a consumer-oriented approach. The expectations, images and associations of consumers are the central starting point. By combining the technical possibilities of the bio-based economy with relevant consumer insights, we offer companies the opportunity to bring new bio-based products more successfully onto the market, giving you more revenue on your product development.

How can we help you?

We give insight into:

- the perception of the consumer of the bio-based product (compared to the conventional product)
- the key areas of consideration when buying bio-based products (compared to the conventional product)
- possible (different) target groups with various requirements and (therefore) a different approach
- demands of consumers regarding the information, labels and other forms of communication.

With these insights you can, possibly in cooperation with LEI:

- capitalise on motivations and barriers experienced by consumers regarding the bio-based product
- develop the product-business model
- choose a particular target group approach
- develop products that meet the market
- develop your communication path.

We combine our insights into consumers, chains, bio-based economy and social acceptance with a newly developed toolbox, which is internationally applicable. In this way, we offer you practical information backed up by scientific evidence.

We explore the market, explain the insights, offer enhancements and uncover the earning potential.

Want to know how a consumer oriented approach can be applied in your case? Please contact Marieke Meeusen (+31(0)70-3358340) or Siet Sijtsema (+31 (0)317-484791).

*"For me that [bio-based] is in the middle of environment friendly because I feel that it can mean a lot and for me that could be a biological resource and that is then processed chemically or mechanically in such a way that it isn't purely organic anymore. It is still bio-based, which is better than nothing, but it isn't purely organic anymore."*

*"I'm thinking of products; bio-based is less than biological. So biological is 100% and bio-based is 50%, that's the feeling I've got, but I don't have a clue."*

*I think that it [bio-based] might mean that it has no mineral oil and is not made of any basic resources."*



---

### Contact

LEI Wageningen UR  
Postbus 29703  
2502 LS Den Haag  
[www.wageningenUR.nl/en/lei](http://www.wageningenUR.nl/en/lei)

Marieke Meeusen  
T +31 (0)70 3358 340  
E [marieke.meeusen@wur.nl](mailto:marieke.meeusen@wur.nl)

Siet Sijtsema  
T +31 (0)31 7484 791  
E [siet.sijtsema@wur.nl](mailto:siet.sijtsema@wur.nl)

[WageningenUR.nl/lei/bio-based](http://WageningenUR.nl/lei/bio-based)

---