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Over 80% of consumers want to know more about using insects as feed

Consumers are calling for more information on the potential use of insects as a protein source in animal feed, according to the results of a European survey.

Data from a survey conducted by the EU-funded PROteINSECT project was presented at the international 'Insects to Feed the World Conference' in Ede (The Netherlands) today. The survey, which was promoted across the UK, Europe and the Far East from October 2013 to March 2014, aimed to discover whether people would be accepting of using insects for animal feed and food – and if not, what objections they raised.

Of over 1300 respondents across 71 countries, the overwhelming majority (88.2%) believed that more information should be available on the use of insects as a food source for both animals and humans. Whilst 66% said that the larvae of flies are a suitable source of protein for use in animal feed, more than half (52.4%) would be put off eating fish, chicken or pork fed on a diet containing insect protein because they don't know enough about the topic.

Addressing the assembled audience of key stakeholders, agricultural scientists and industry representatives Rhonda Smith of PROteINSECT said, "The results suggest that people are more accepting of the idea of insects in food and feed than we might have predicted. But there is a clear desire for more information on this topic to be made available– and we need continued public engagement to increase awareness."

PROteINSECT is co-ordinated by the UK Food & Environment Research Agency (FERA) and is examining safety, quality, sustainability, legislation and consumer acceptance around the potential use of insects as a sustainable protein source for the future. The team will conduct a second consumer-information gathering exercise to track public perception on this issue in early 2015.

Find out more about the project at www.proteinsect.eu

ENDS/ Contacts & Notes follow

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Notes for Editors:

1. PROteINSECT survey on production and use of insect protein for animal feed can be accessed here <http://www.proteinsect.eu/index.php?id=2>
2. PROteINSECT's summary report on current European legislation concerning insect protein and animal feed is available to view and download from the project website <http://www.proteinsect.eu/index.php?id=3>
3. Partners in the PROteINSECT project are:
 - FERA - Food & Environment Research Agency, UK Tel +44-1904-462564
Dr. Elaine FITCHES - Coordinator, expertise in entomology and food safety
 - CAB International UK - Expertise in entomology
 - Nutrition Sciences NV Belgium -Global producer of feed concepts and functional feed ingredients (FFIs)
 - Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Belgium - Expertise in Life Cycle Analysis (LCA)
 - Minerva Communications Ltd, UK - Expertise in Food Policy and Science Communication
 - Eutema Technology Management GmbH & Co KG Austria - Expertise in Science Communication
 - Grantbait Ltd UK - Maggot Farmer
 - Guangdong Entomology Institute China -Expertise in Entomology, especially rearing of insects
 - Huazhong Agricultural University China -Expertise in Entomology, expertise in fly rearing and prepupae collection
 - Fish for Africa - Ghana Limited by Guarantee Ghana -NGO promoting sustainable Aquaculture in Africa
 - Institut D'Economie Rurale Mali - Expertise in sustainable Agriculture in Africa
 - The University of Stirling UK - Expertise in Entomology and Fish feeding trials

Notes/end

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