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**For immediate use**

## **YOUNG MEN MOST LIKELY TO EAT INSECTS, STUDY REVEALS**

**A European study has revealed that young men are likely to be the ‘trendsetters’ in adopting insects into the Western diet.**

The paper “Profiling consumers who are ready to adopt insects as a meat substitute in a Western society”, [already published online by Science Direct](#) and scheduled for publication in the Food Quality and Preference Journal in January 2015, revealed several trends around Western consumer acceptance of insects as a natural source of protein.

The study found that one in five meat consumers is ready to adopt insects as food, with men being 2.17 times more likely than women to do so. Consumers trying to reduce their meat intake are 4.51 times more likely to introduce insects into their diet. The study also showed that the ‘trendsetters’ in adopting insects as food will be younger males who are interested in the environmental impact of their food choices and open to trying novel foods.

“With low levels of neophobia (fear of new foods) the likelihood that this type of person is ready to adopt insects as a meat substitute is more than 75%, so they would be the logical target market for insect products and acceptance,” explains study author Wim Verbeke from Ghent University. “This was a localised study involving over 400 participants based in Belgium but it is probable that consumer surveys in other Western countries would reveal similar findings, as the study demonstrates the most relevant determinants of consumer acceptance transferable to other regions and populations.”

“The study also shows that despite some interest in eating insects, Western consumers are still strongly attached to their meat consumption habits, which underscores the relevance of investigating and encouraging the adoption of protein from sustainable sources such as insects into animal feed,” Verbeke adds.

PROteINSECT, an EC-funded project investigating the use of insects in animal feed, completed its own consumer acceptance survey earlier this year, which revealed that over 70% of respondents would be happy to eat chicken, fish or pork from animals reared on insect protein. Introducing insects at this early stage of the food chain could be an important first step towards consumer acceptance.

**ENDS/ Contacts & Notes follow**

Verbeke, W., Profiling consumers who are ready to adopt insects as a meat substitute in a Western society, *Food Quality and Preference* (2015), 39, 147-155. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2014.07.008>

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[press@proteinsect.eu](mailto:press@proteinsect.eu) Interviews available with study author Wim Verbeke and Elaine Fitches, PROteINSECT Co-ordinator/FERA.

### 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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