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Norway missed opportunity on salmon branding, say researchers

Published - November 03, 2004

Aslak Berge Bergen, Norway: That Norway hasn't built up brands on Norwegian salmon with the aid of so-called "co-branding", is a missed opportunity. That is the conclusion of two students from the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration, James Hosea and Brynjolfur Eyjolfsson, in their post-graduate thesis.

While Scottish salmon generally fetches better prices than its competitors in the French market, Norway does not achieve a price reward in relation to a country such as Chile with for example trout in Japan. This despite the fact that Norway as a country enjoys a far better reputation in Japan. This was the basis for the post-graduate thesis that has been written by a Scot - James Hosea and an Icelander - Brynjolfur Eyjolfsson, both students at the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration. Market studies the two students have carried out in Japan, France and Sweden reveal that particularly the first 2 countries associate Norway with salmon. This speaks well for brand-building based on country of origin, on a par with products such as Champagne and Parma ham. Brands can guarantee food safety, protect against imitation and influence customers' impressions. Brand-building is a major drain on capital, but this barrier can be avoided through so-called "co-branding". These are products that can be marketed with two brands, such as Braun and Oral B for electronic toothbrushes or Intel and Dell or Compaq for computers. These two have noticed that the supermarket chain Rema 1000 sells Peruvian mountain trout. At the same time Norway has a significantly more attractive image than Peru," they claim. The studies show, among other things, that the Japanese market is extremely quality-conscious, and Japanese consumers are not so much concerned about where the fish is from, in contrast to markets such as Sweden and France. The same study reveals that as a country Chile does not inspire particularly advantageous associations in the markets of Japan, France and Sweden. "Made in Chile should only be written in small letters on the back of the packaging," James Hosea told IntraFish. "It would appear that Norwegian salmon has a competitive advantage in some markets, but fails to create value based on this," concluded Hosea.

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