

**A LOCAL DISH, PLEASE: A quantitative study among current and potential guests of restaurants in Ooststellingwerf about their understanding, and factors influencing the choice for a local dish**

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this research is to explore the influence of motivational factors, food neophobia, and demographics (gender and age) on the decision to choose for a local dish in a restaurant, using Ooststellingwerf as case study. Moreover, considering the open academic debate on the definition of local food, it explores the respondents' opinion on when a food item and a dish can be called 'local'. Through a quantitative research and with help of a questionnaire among current and potential guests of restaurants in Ooststellingwerf the above mentioned research questions were answered. The questionnaire reached 162 respondents, both local people and tourists. It has been found that older people and women choose more often for a local dish than younger people and men. Between the physiological factor food neophobia and the choice for a local dish is no significant relation. However, on average, the respondents score low on the food neophobia and this means that they do not have a high aversion for unknown food. Results also show that respondents in general give to 'local' a quite strict definition pointing to the immediate surroundings of Ooststellingwerf as the geographical area where food items should be produced to be called local. A large number of respondents, moreover, expects that local dishes contain 80 to 100 percent 'local' ingredients. With help of the literature review, outcome of the questionnaire and analysis several recommendations are made for the restaurateurs.