



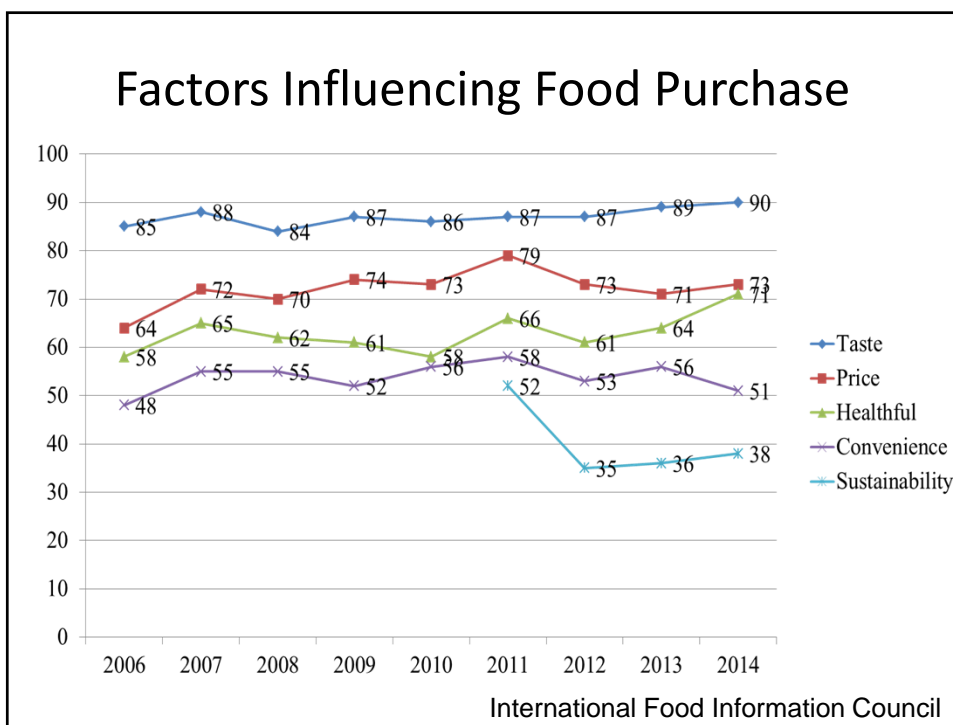
**USDA Specialty Crops Project:**  
"Increasing Consumption of Specialty Crops by  
Enhancing their Quality & Safety"

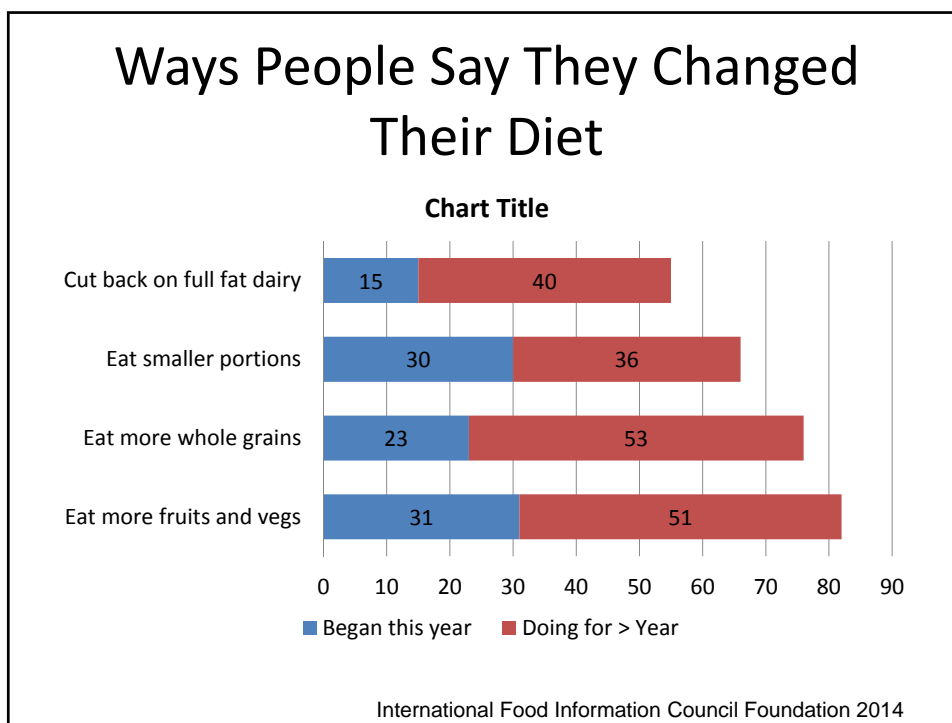
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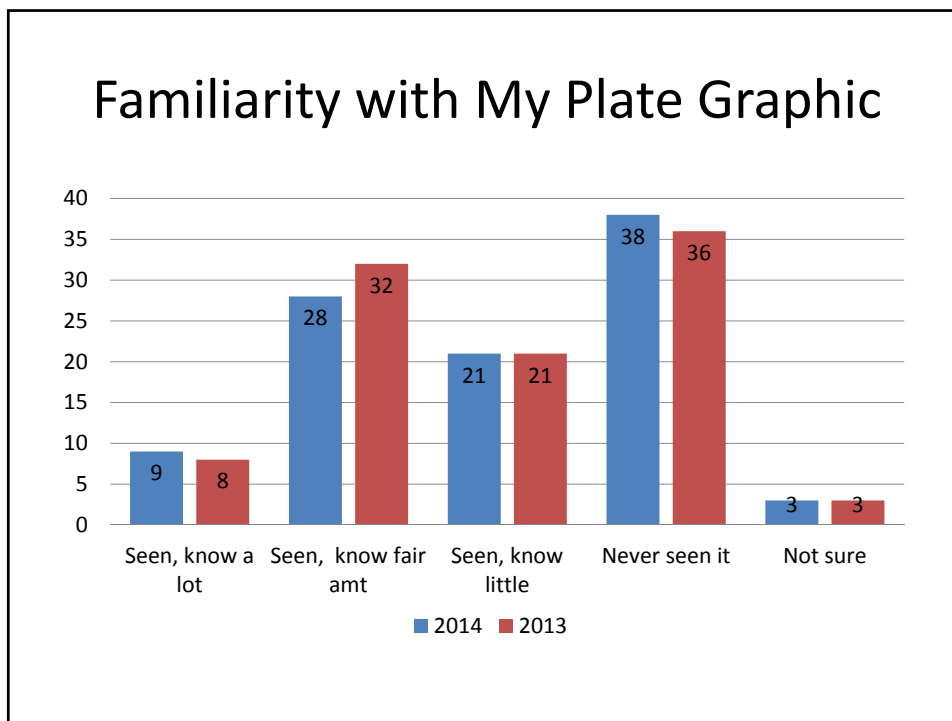
# Consumer Preferences Trends

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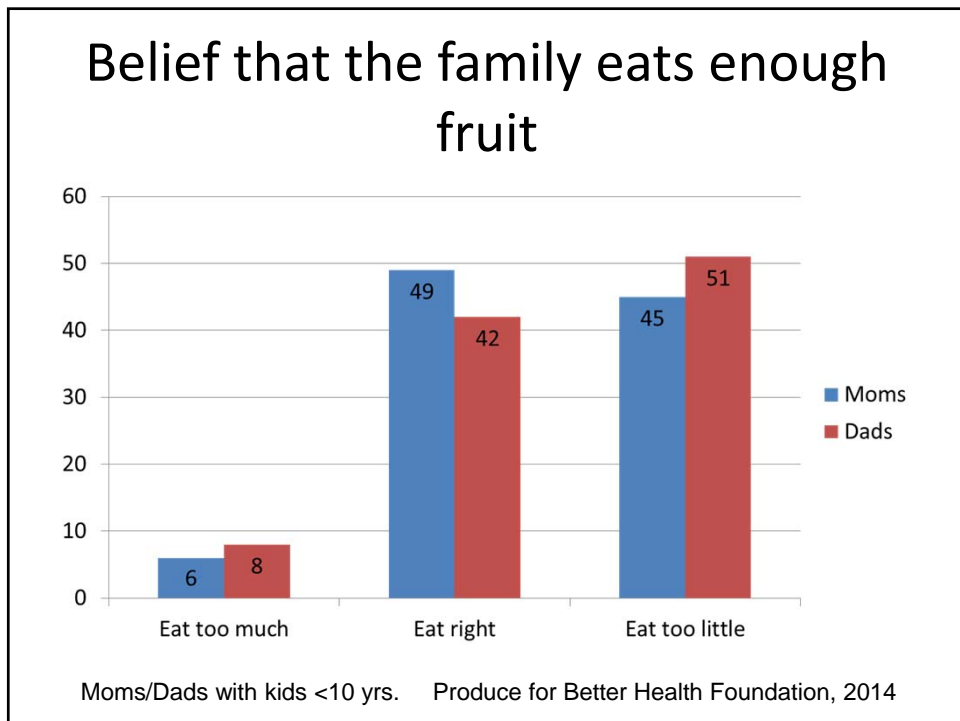
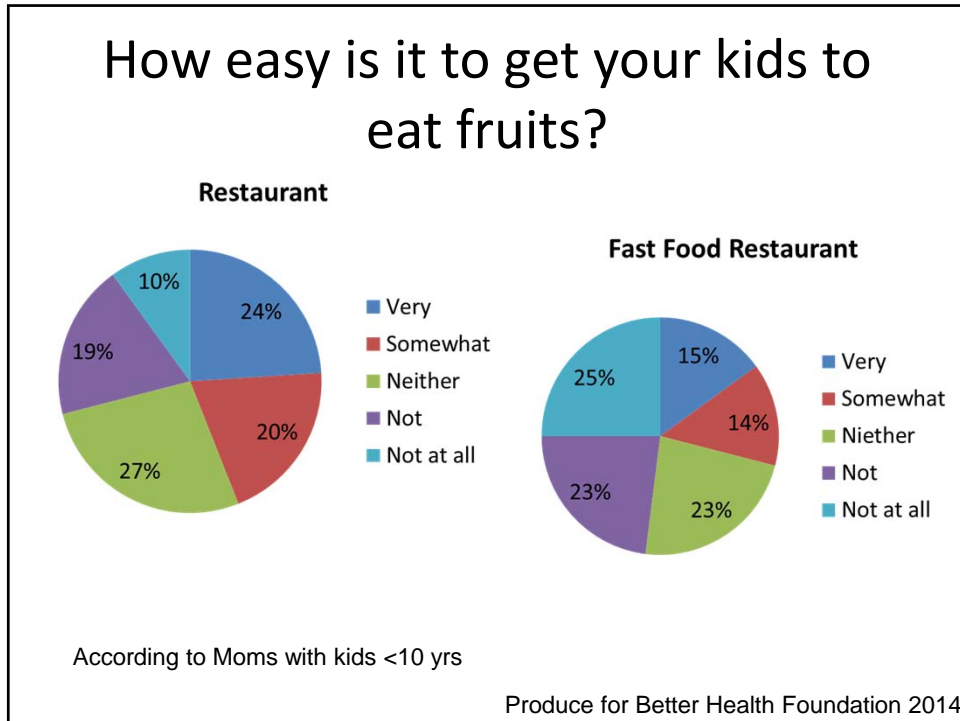


### Top Sellers

Consumers report buying the item in past year

• Bananas	88%	Tomatoes	79%
• Apples	83%	Potatoes	78%
• Grapes	75%	Onions	75%
• Strawberries	72%	Carrots	74%
• Watermelon	67%	Bell Peppers	67%
• Oranges	64%	Lettuce	63%
• Cantaloupe	57%	Broccoli	63%
• Peaches	56%	Celery	61%
• Lemons	52%	Corn	61%
• Blueberries	52%	Salad Mix	61%
• Cherries	48%	Cucumbers	60%
• Avocados	45%	Garlic	52%
• Pears	44%	Cabbage	51%
• Pineapple	43%	Sweet Potatoes	49%

The Packer Fresh Trends 2012



## Primary obstacles to including fruit in meals and snacks

- 57% Family has different preferences
- 52% Need new ideas/ways to prepare fruit
- 50% Fruit is too expensive
- 48% Fruit goes bad before I can eat it

Moms with kids <10 yrs.

Produce for Better Health Foundation 2014

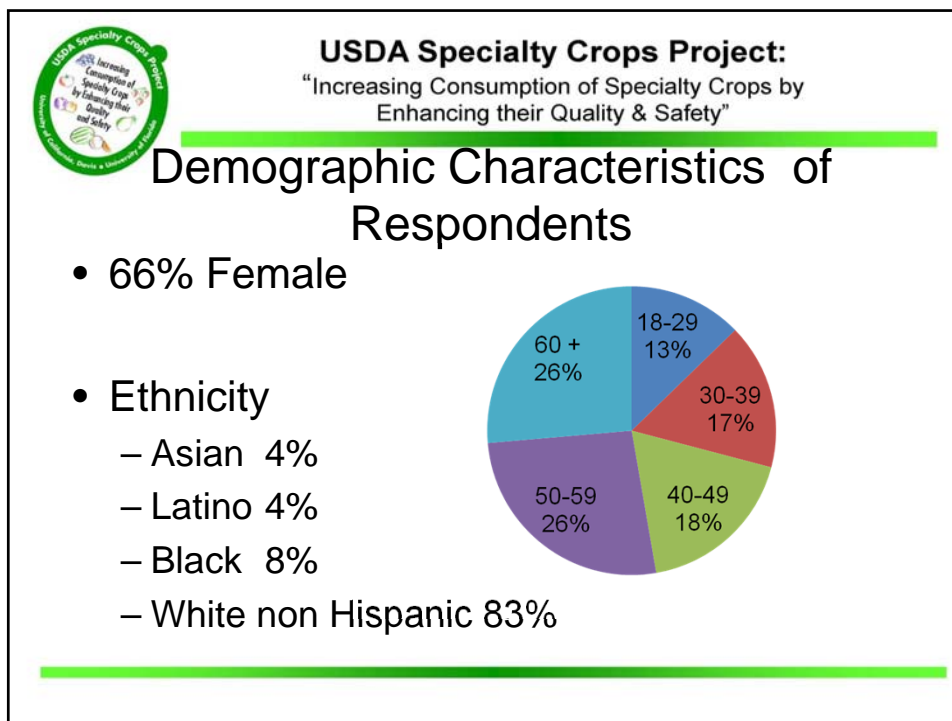


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## Consumer Attitude Research

- Qualitative research: Focus Groups completed in Florida (5) & California (6)
  - Quantitative Research: internet-based survey in Florida and California
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## What we found: Overall

If not satisfied with current quality

- Will go to farmers markets, or roadside stands or chose a different product
- Will switch supermarkets for better quality

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- **Consumer Selection Criteria**
    - Characteristic odor
    - Color
    - Firm fruit (but not hard), depending on item
    - No clue for melons, try different approaches
  - **Consumer Storage**
    - Some store correctly by habit
    - Some storage practices will reduce quality
- 



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- **Awareness of nutritional benefits**
    - Highest for tomatoes, strawberries, and blueberries
    - Few are knowledgeable about other fruit
    - Know that fruit is good – adds color to your plate
    - Few know how many servings a person should eat
  - **Want high quality fruit so children will eat it**
  - **A high quality fruit is like "a rare gem"**
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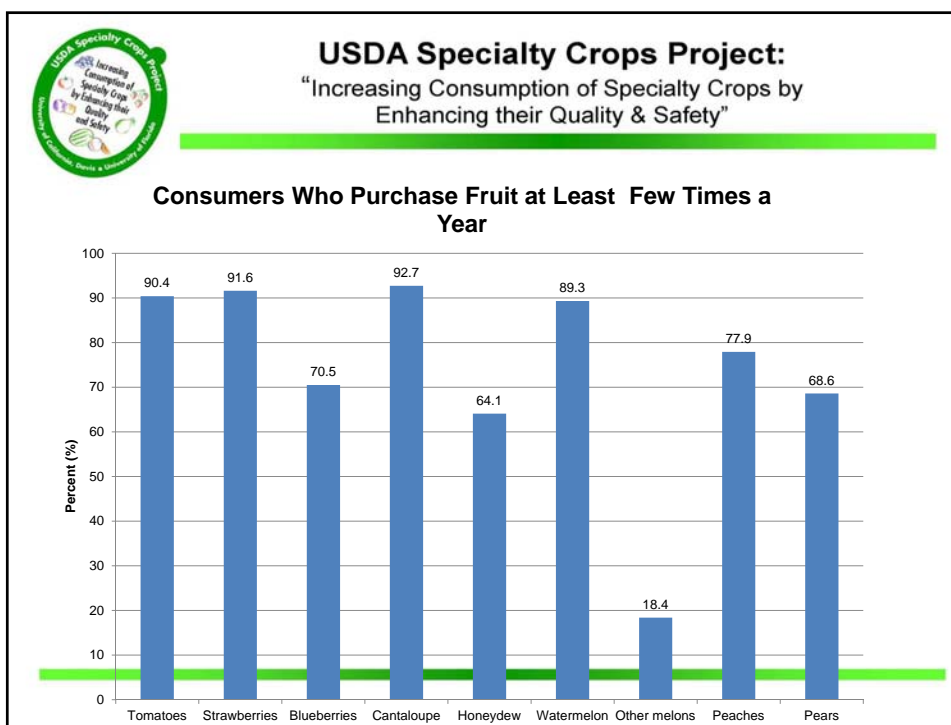
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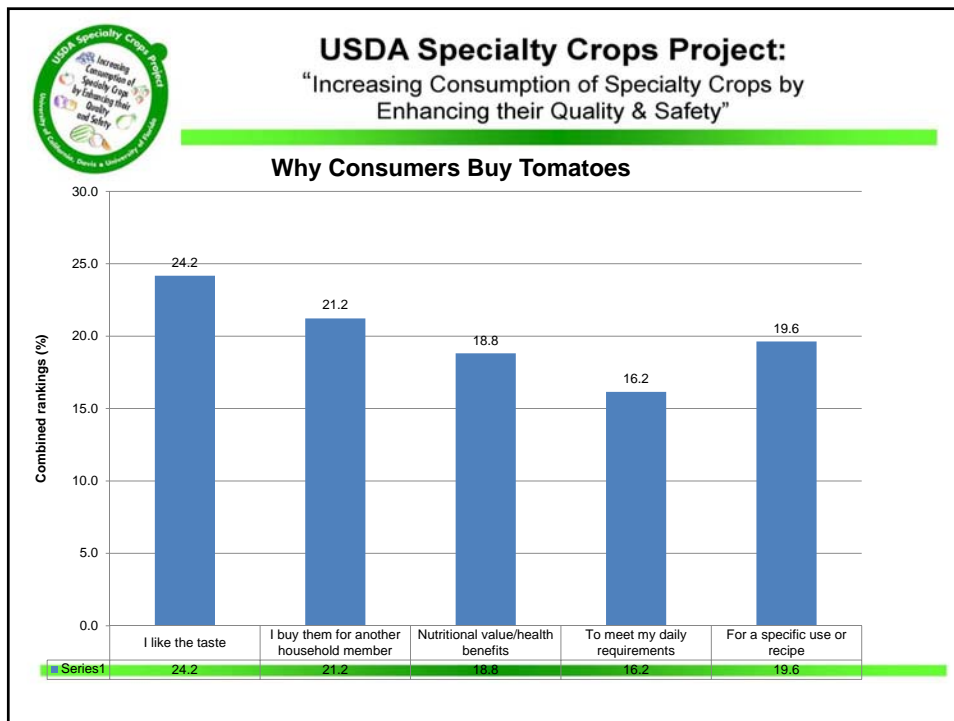
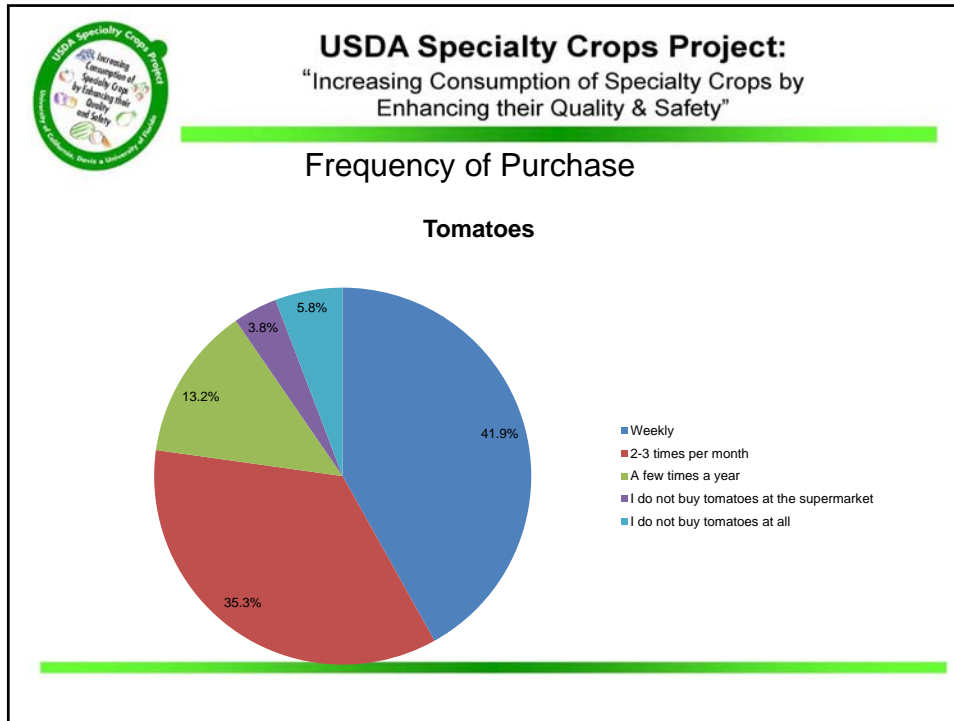
## Key Findings

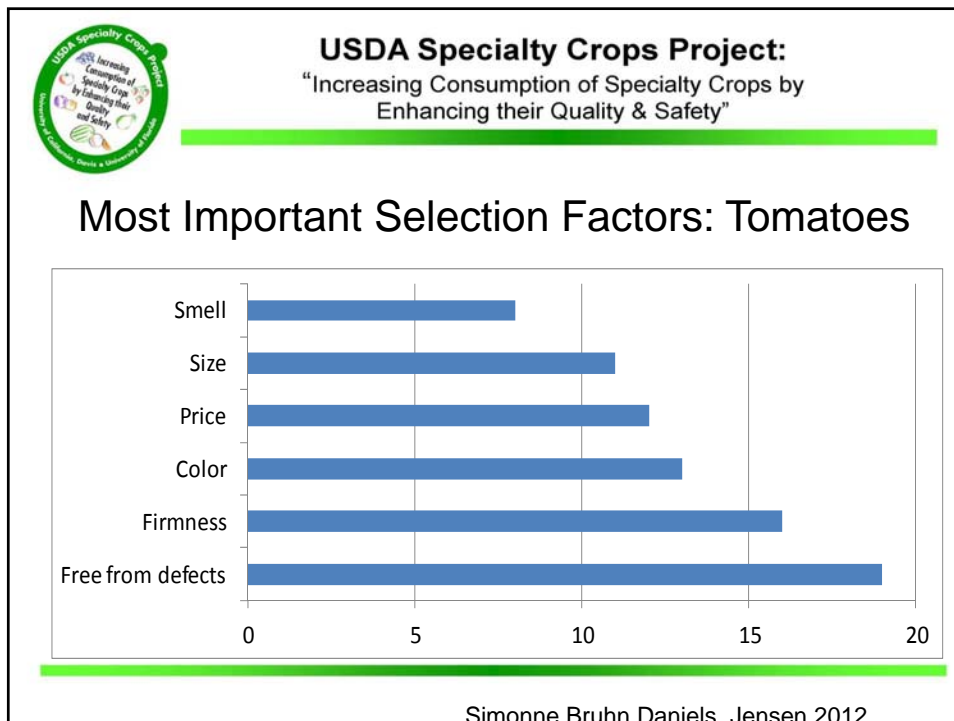
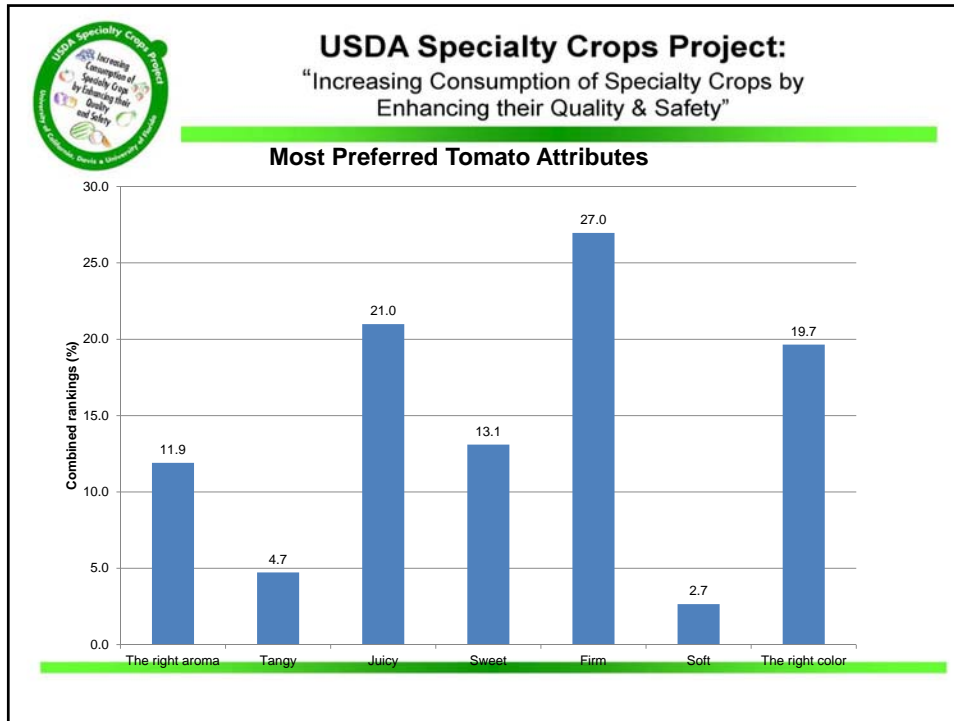
- Disconnect between appearance & flavor
  - Looks good, poor taste
- Produce goes from under-ripe at purchase to rotting too quickly
- Consumers want to control when product is ripe
- People are seeking trustworthy advice

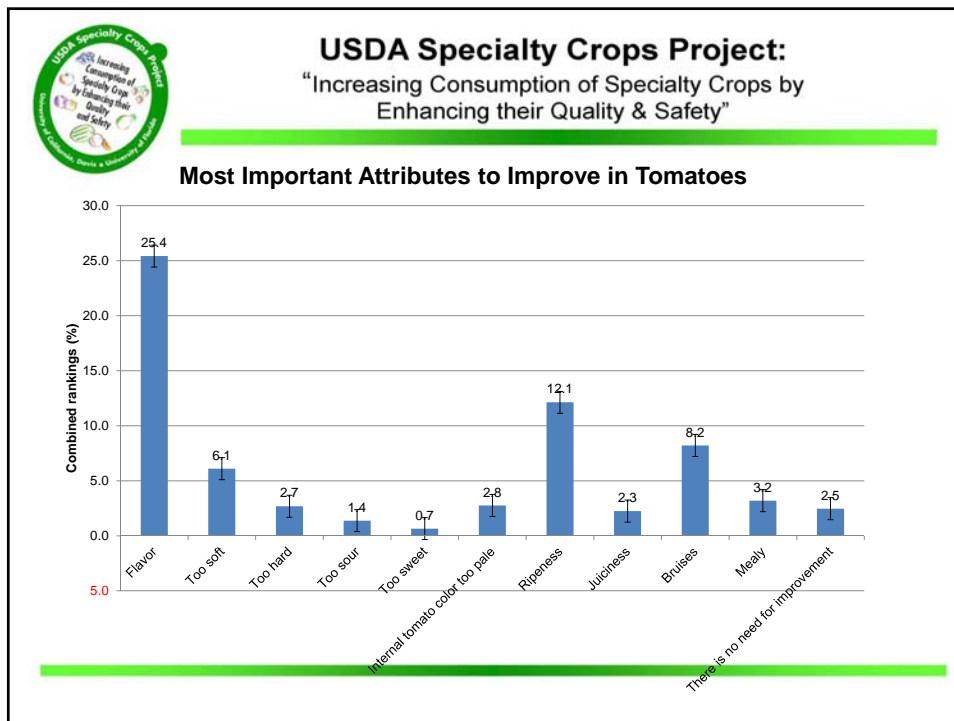
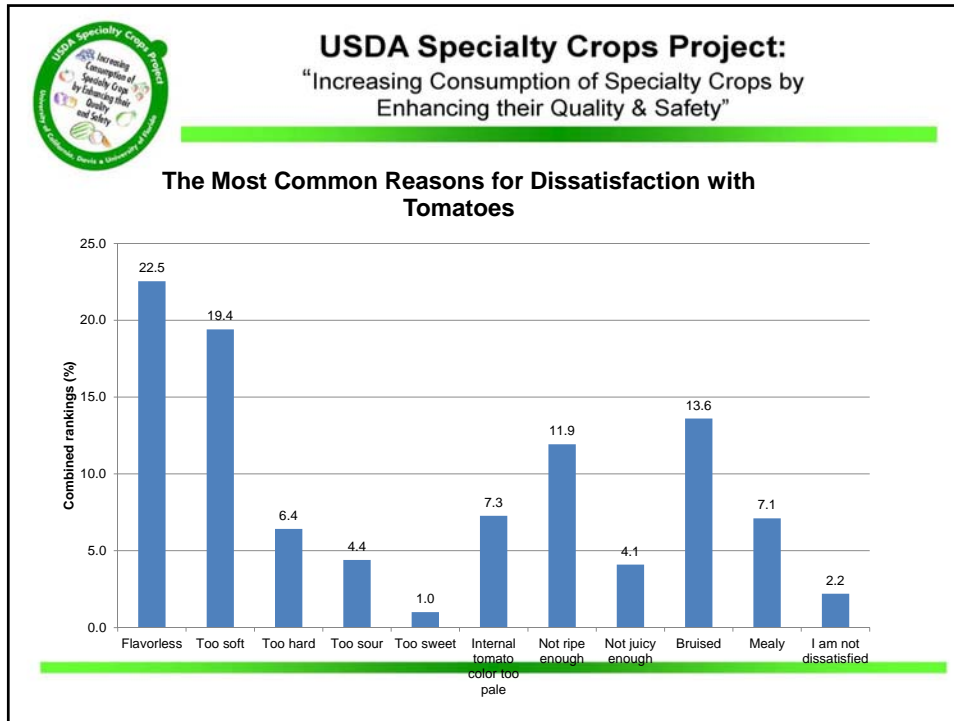
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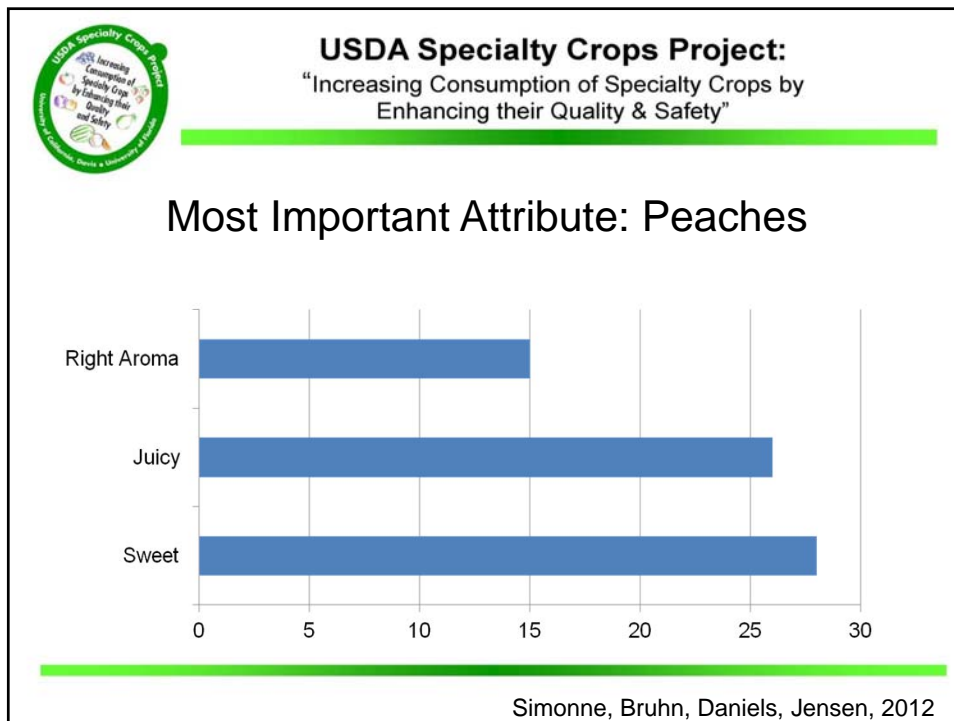
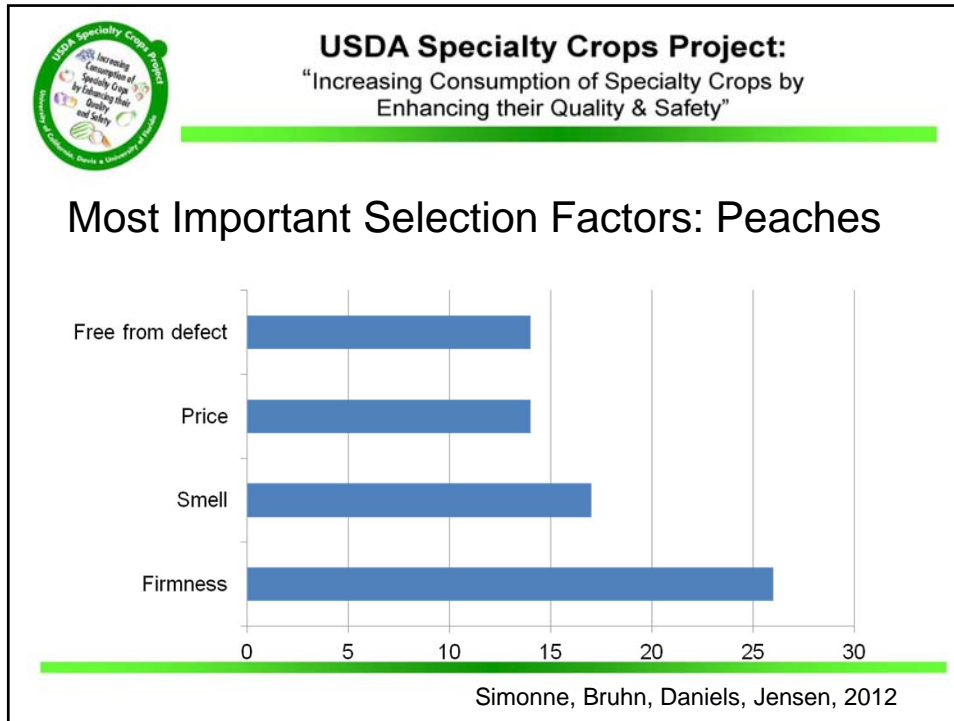


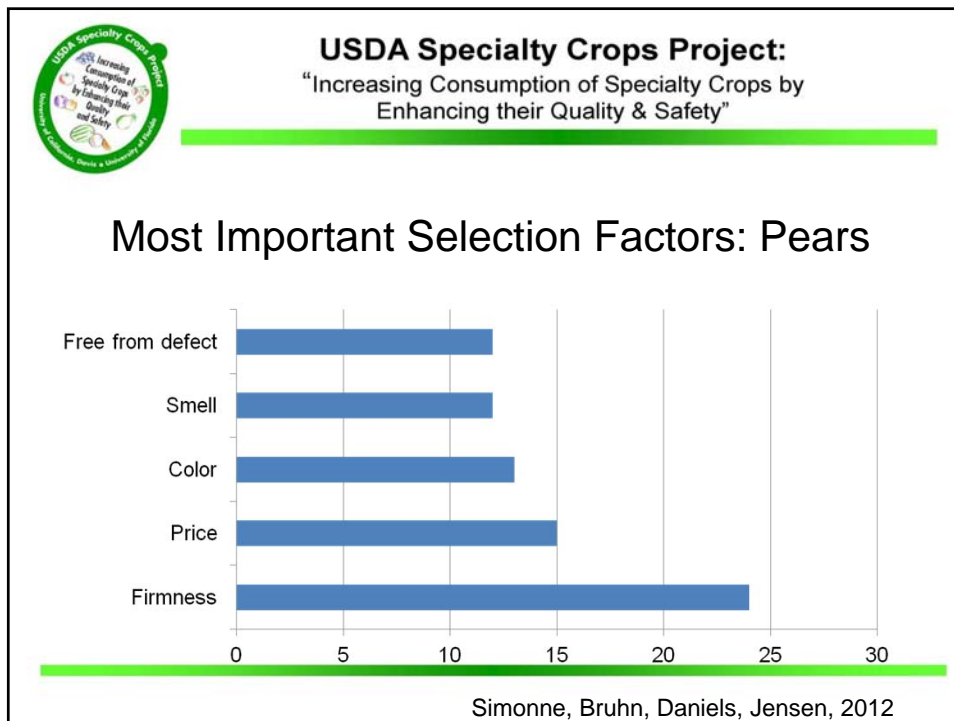
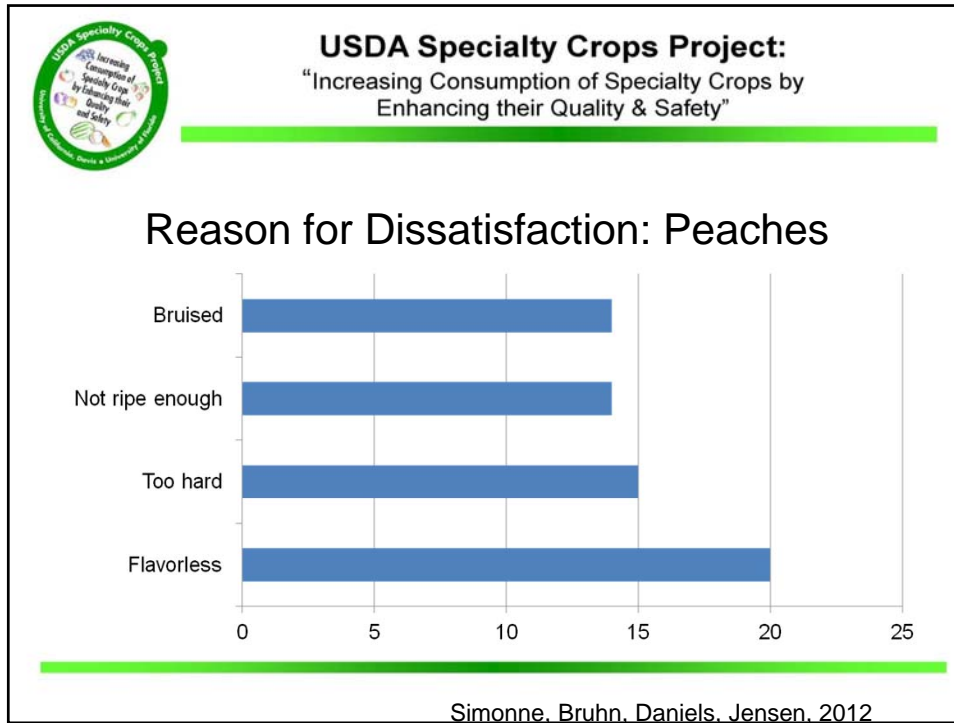


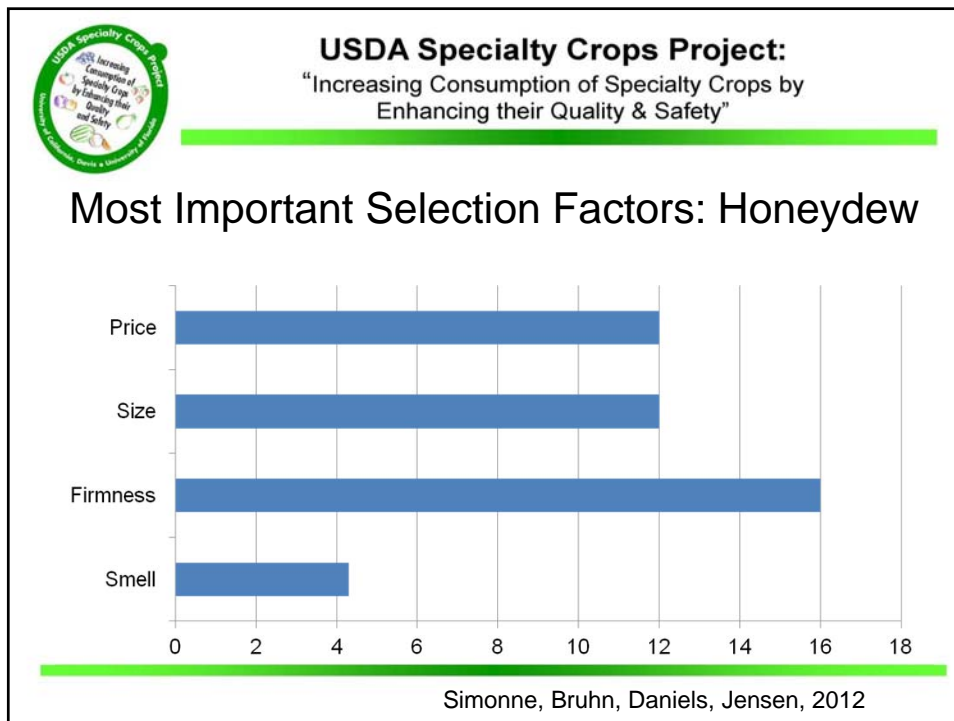
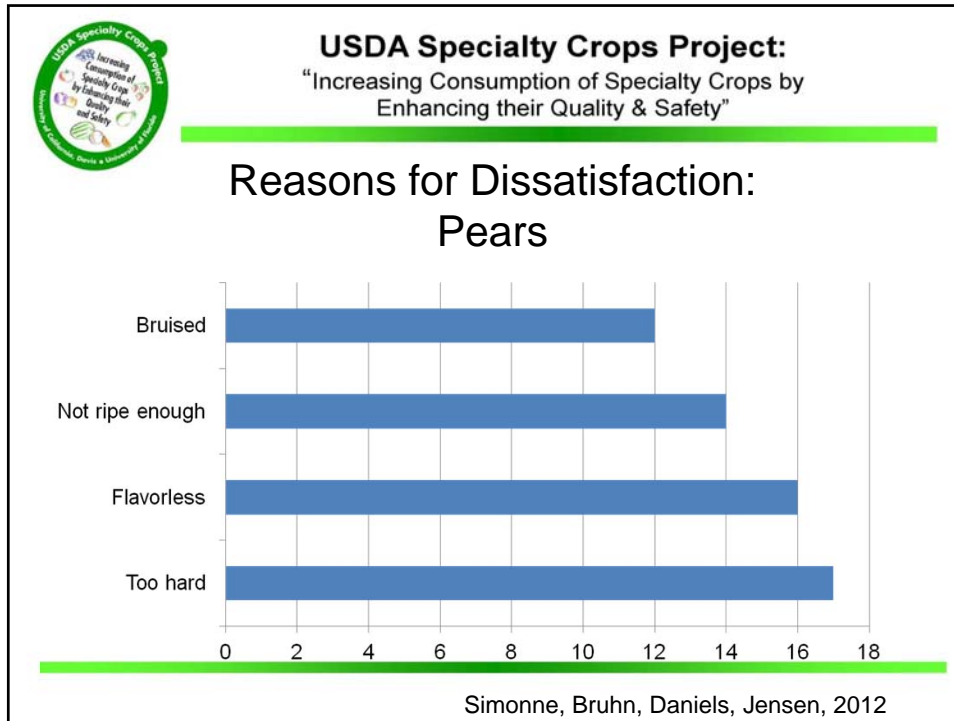


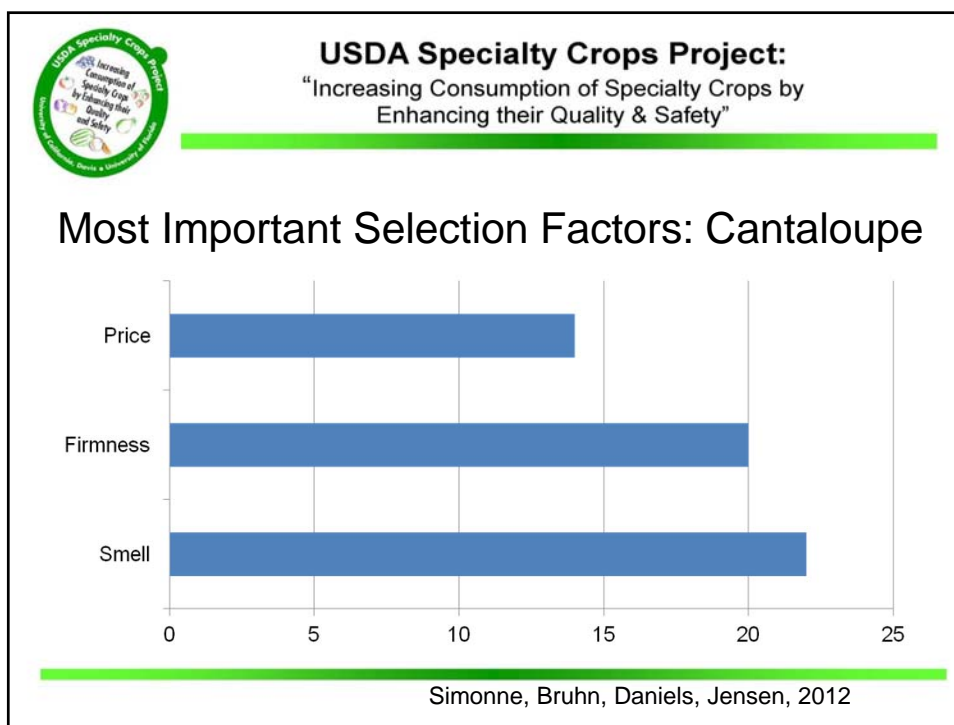
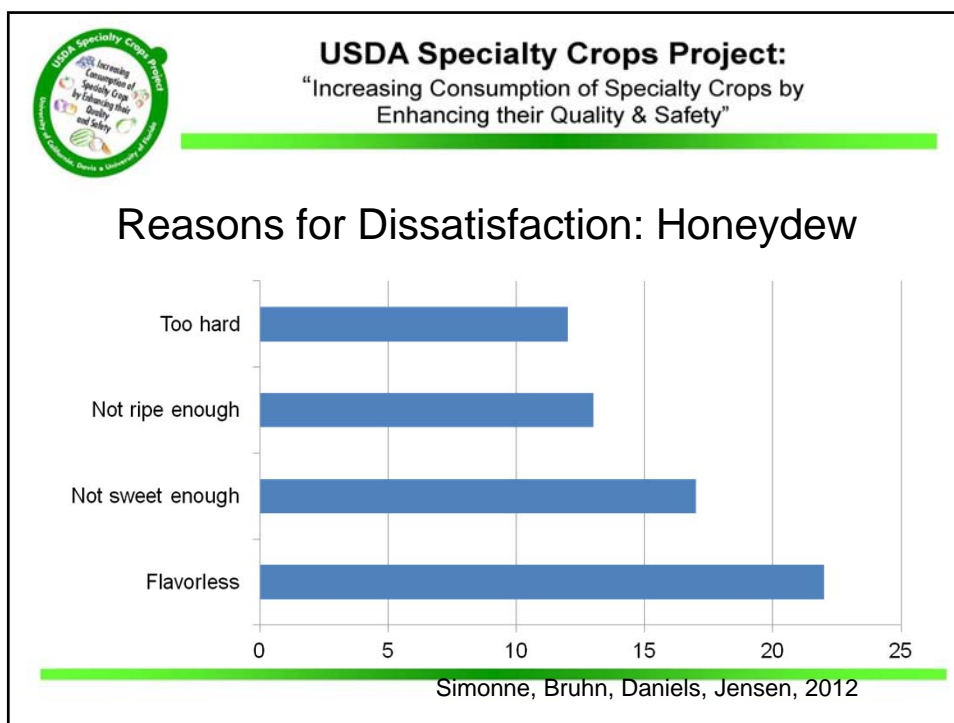


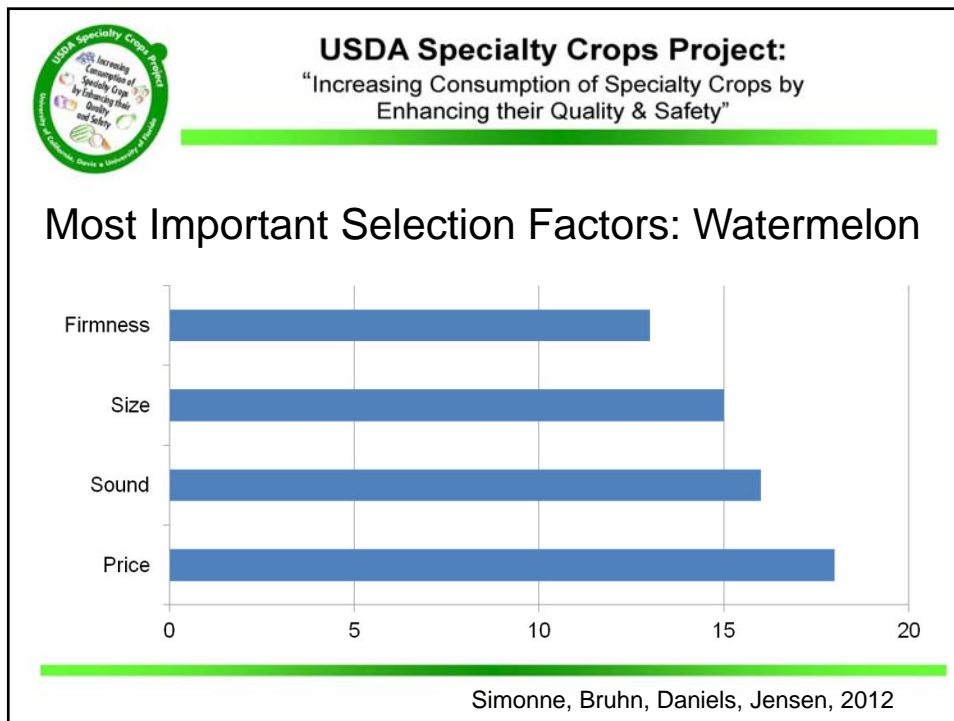
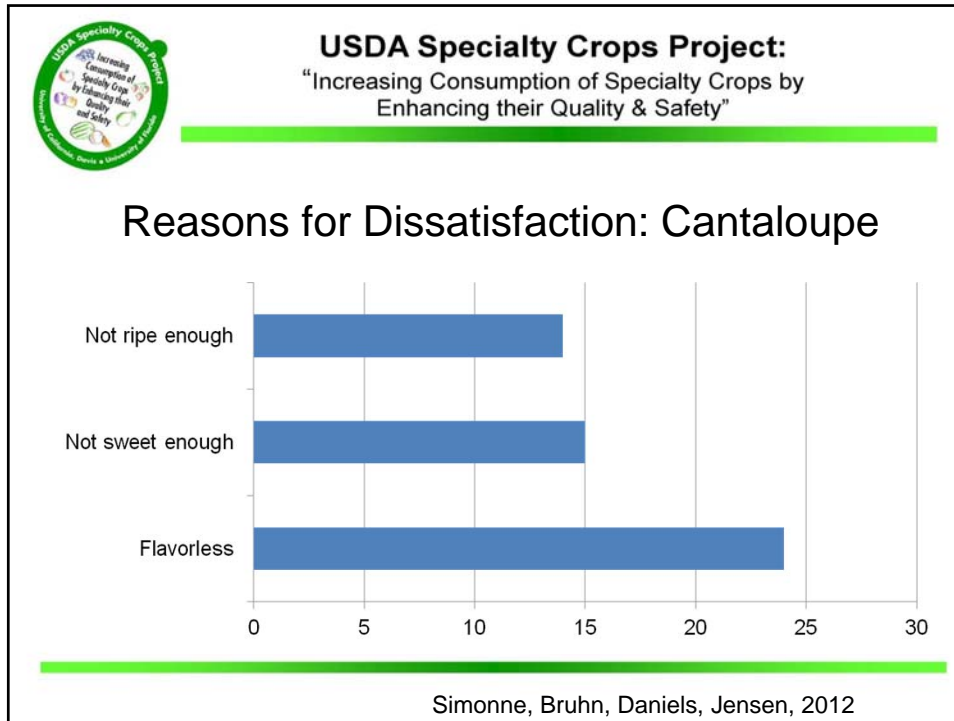




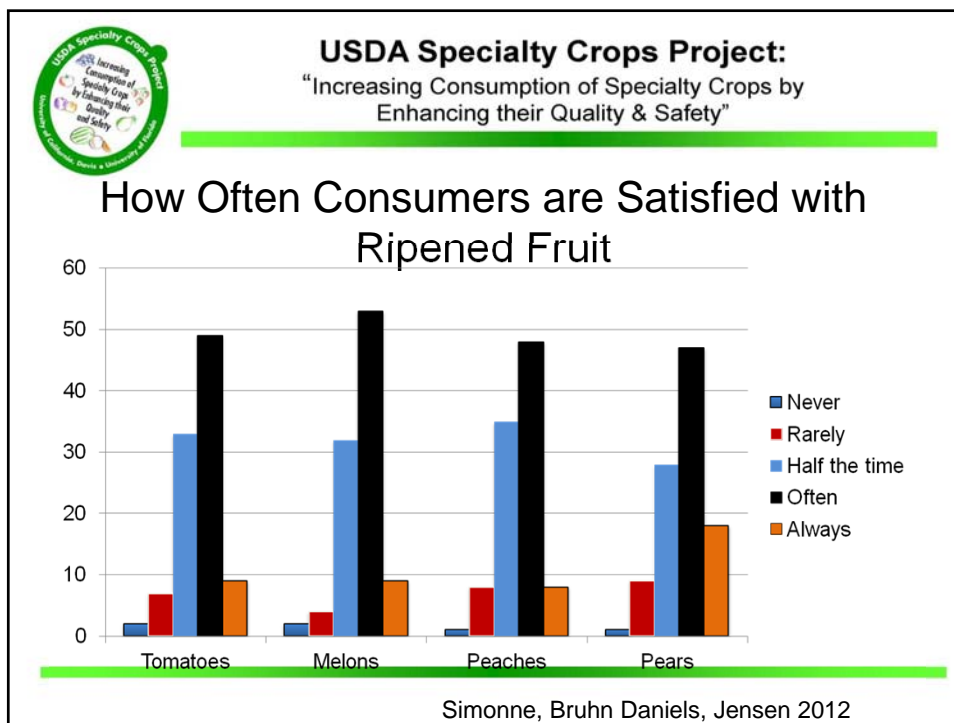
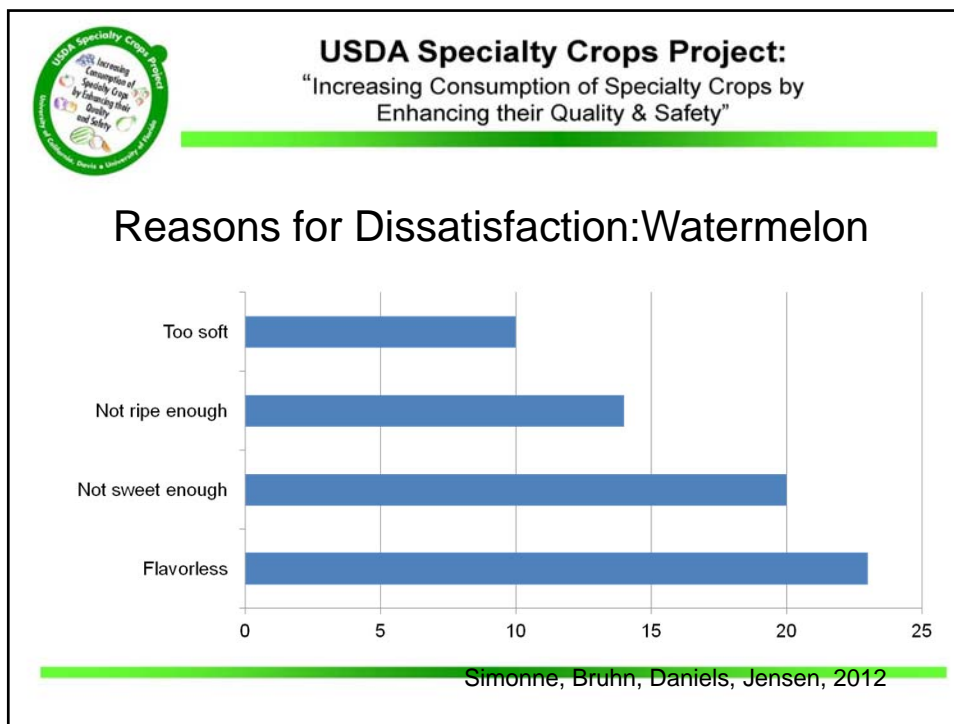


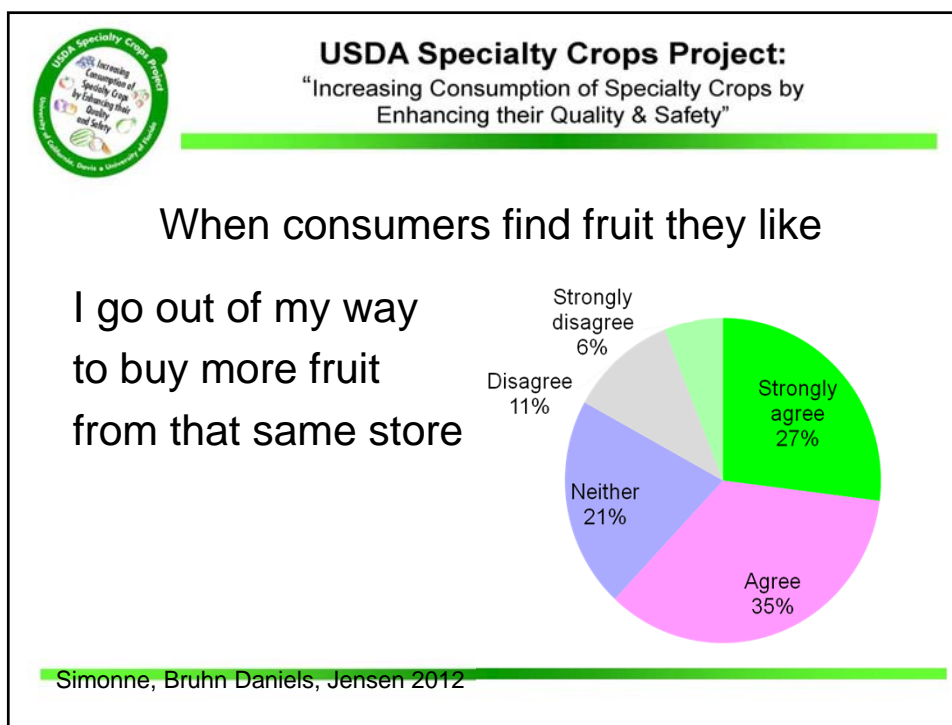
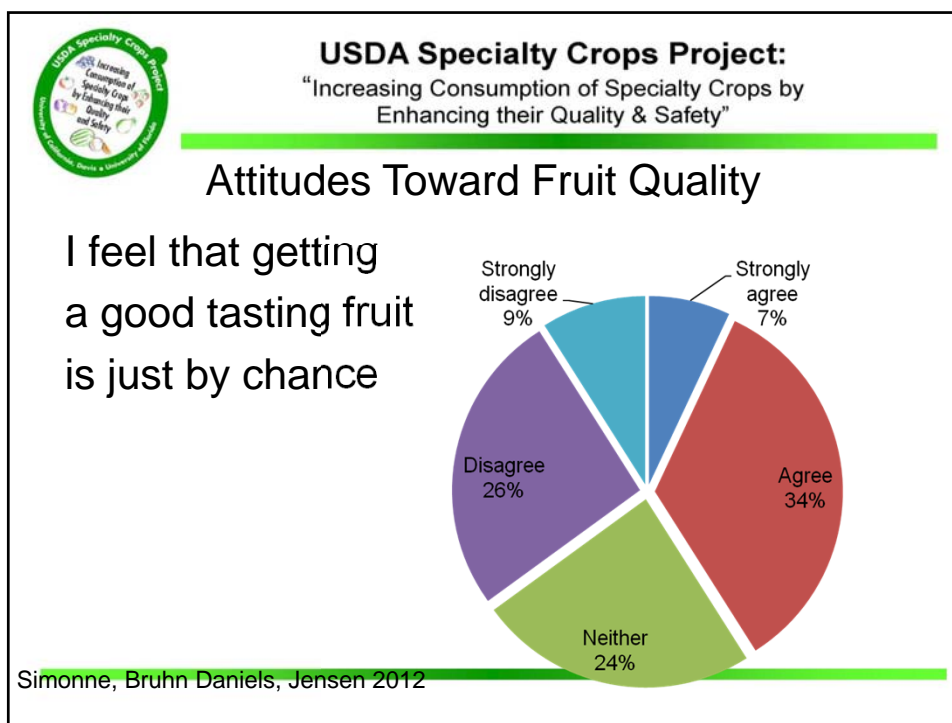


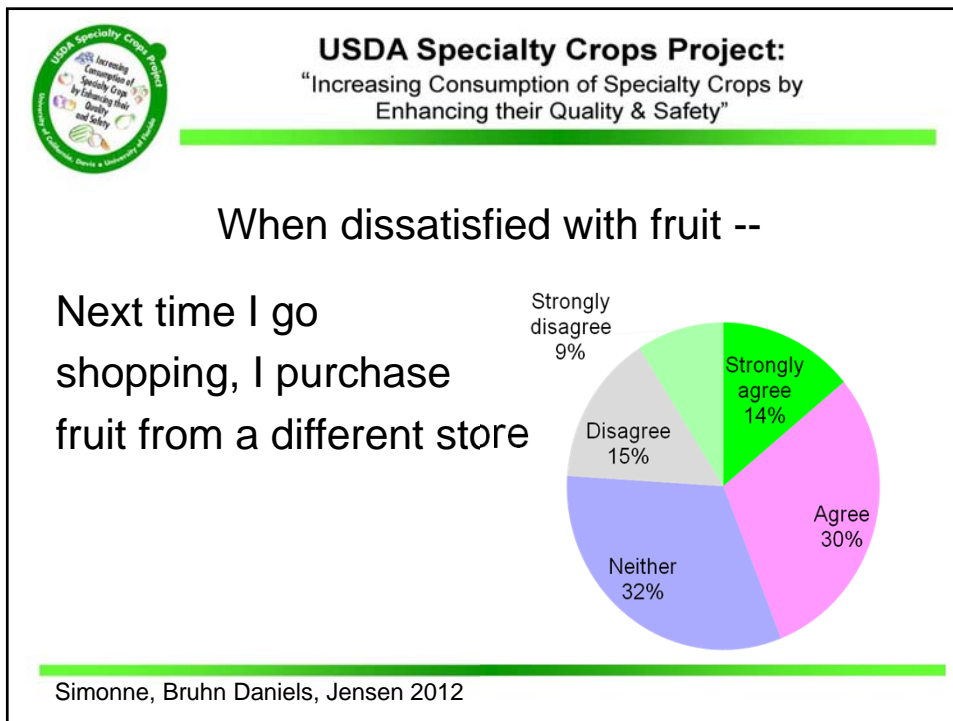
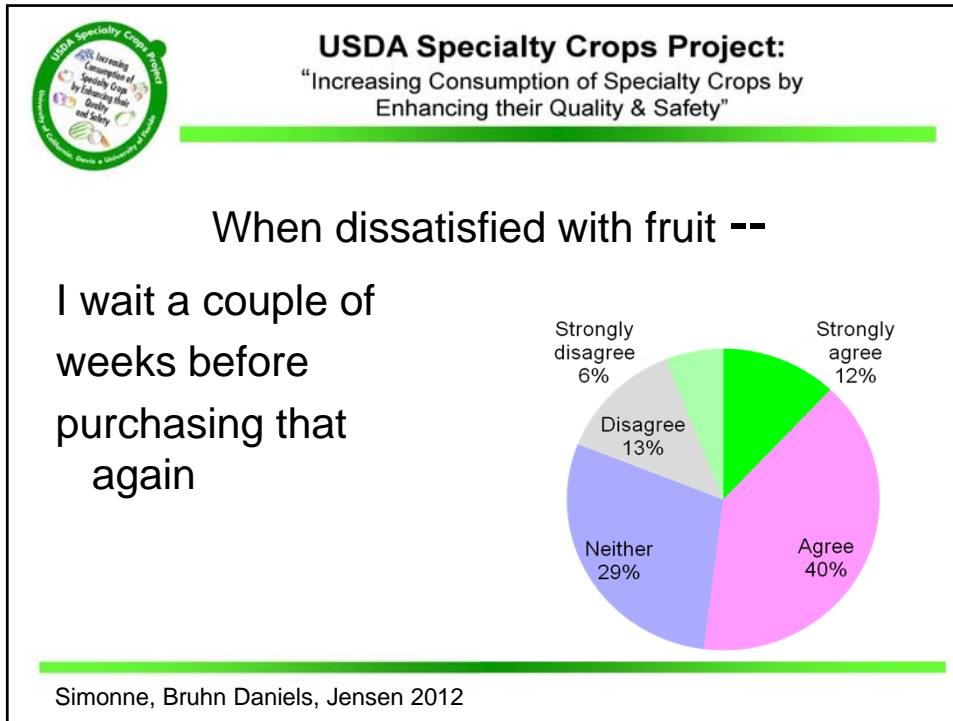














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### Selection and Storage

*I think so far the only one that I've not been lucky with is the melon, because you can't see the fruit itself, you only see the outside. To me it's a 50:50, you either got it or you don't...luck of the draw. FL*

*I don't know a lot about selecting honeydew so I don't usually do it myself I get the produce person to pick it because I apparently don't know what I am looking for with honeydews, they are always rock hard when I get them. CA*

*Will it ripen on me if I leave it out once I buy it? Or is it too late? FL*

*When I buy really unripe fruit I will leave it in my car because it gets hotter than my house and I usually leave it there 24 hours and the next day bring it in. CA*

## Foodborne Outbreak Attribution

42% Land Animals

7% Beef, 10% Poultry

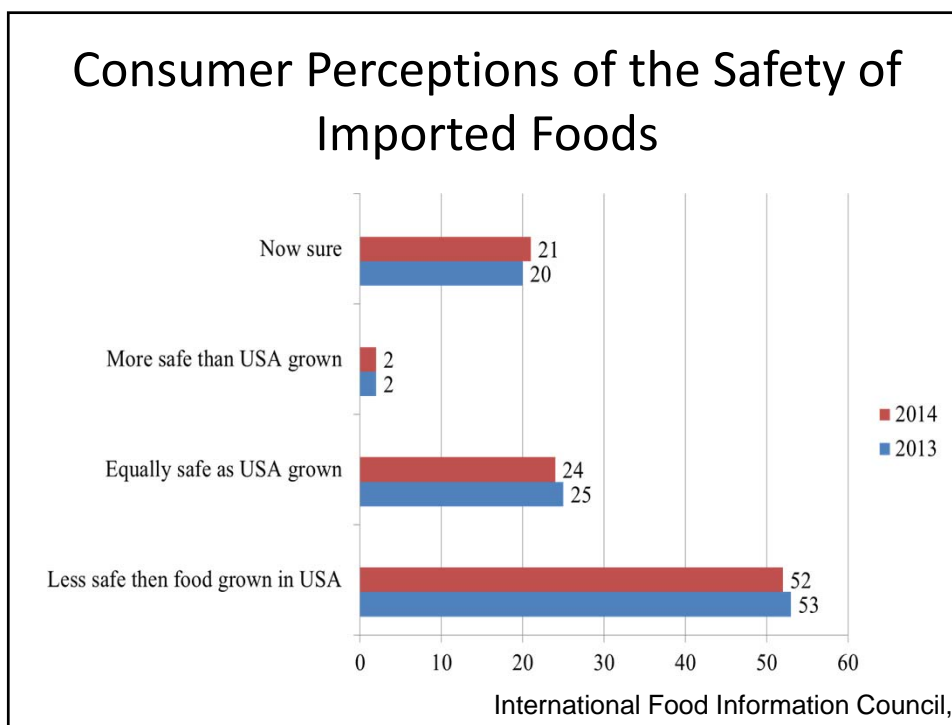
46% Produce

12% Fruits and Nuts

22% Leafy Vegetables

8% Vine-stalk Vegetables

Painter JA, et al. Attribution of foodborne illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths to food commodities by using outbreak data, United States, 1998–2008. *Emerg Infect Dis* [Internet]. 2013 Mar . <http://dx.doi.org/10.3201/eid1903.111866>



# Challenges

Deliver flavorful produce

Tell people how to select

Describe which fruit can be ripened and HOW to do it

Describe how to store produce for best quality and safety