



Élelmiszertudományi Kar

**UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST CORVINUS
LANDSCAPE BUILDING AND DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS
DOCTORAL ACADEMY**

THESES OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

**Primery Survey of traditonal Hungarian products
in gardening and food industrial sphere,
with special regard to the South Hungarian Plain Region (Dél-
Alföld)**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Raise of the Topic

In the developed Western European countries, from the end of the 1980s the process has increased while the consumer demand has grown for products of multiple generation, manufactured in a traditional way, in good quality and mark particular regions. I hope that more and more people will recognise the importance of safekeeping of the traditions in the course of this world globalisation. It especially pertains to special goods of good quality and of national worth; these can be regarded as “presents of nations and regions to the world”.

Hungary has to lay more stress on the traditional branches than it did so far in the course of the developing of the agricultural structure, the Hungarian experts of which have internationally recognised technical competence and that manufacture goods in excellent quality. The spectrum of the traditionally produced Hungarian goods, the Hungaricums, in the gardening is still a widely debated question today among the specialists. The traditionally made Hungarian product, i.e. the Hungaricum, as a terminology is not defined yet, however, hearing the terms of the spice paprika of Szeged, the apricot of Kecskemét, the slivovitz of Békés, everybody thinks of the same: traditionally and individually grown and manufactured product that belongs to the country, to certain determined regions of it.

The chosen topic of the current thesis is being justified by several facts.

- Since the middle of the nineties – observing the implemented processes in the European Union and in the other developed regions of the world – we can experience that the emotional and moral approach of the food quality has been increasing. The consumer evaluates not only the per cent points or the measure of mg/kg but he also demands that the product shall give the same pleasure according to his experience since generations. Tradition, landscape, culture are attached to the food quality.
- Specialities differing from the other ones, high-toned products representing an area are being suggested to offer along with proper/relevant marketing ways.
- Systems are being elaborated in the EU that help the satisfaction of the market demand of foods being in connection with the tradition, landscape, culture area and they support thereby people manufacturing such products who often work in underdeveloped regions, without sufficient capital and marketing activity.

What can and what should be done in the forthcoming period of time with these special products? This thesis will include the answer on this question.

1.2. Objective

During my work, I drew up the following objectives:

- I accomplish secondary researches in the categories of country genesis, of consumer department for food, of region marketing, because in this theoretical approach, the traditionally made Hungarian product, the Hungaricum, shows a special case of distinction in the sense of country genesis that refers to the given country;
- I introduce the diversity of the notion of Hungaricum, and I make a suggestion to determine this definition;
- I frame questionnaires for the research of the local consumer evaluation aiming the topic of Hungaricum in the sphere of products in the gardening and food industry, in those of which, I have the following hypotheses:
 - Hp. 1. The ethnocentrism depends on the sex, the marital status, the school education and the age.
 - Hp. 2. The consumers are able to associate with messages bound up with characteristic, regional products.
 - Hp. 3. In the decision-making process, in connection with the purchase and consumption of the consumer, the knowledge of the source of supply is an influential factor.
 - Hp. 4. The product character of the Hungaricum gives the chance to the consumer to acknowledge the excellent and individual feature of the product in a higher price, consequently, the higher price will be less influential factor in their decision-making process of the purchase.
 - Hp. 5. Consumer, with brand loyalty, is ready to pay more for a quality bound with the certain mark and labelling.
- I make profound interviews with professionals, who grow and produce Hungaricum products in the South Region of the Hungarian Lowland i.e. Dél-Alföld. The interviews give basis for the completion of SWOT Analysis of gardening and food industrial products made in this region as well as for checking in connection with and image profile and also in question of the economy;
- I analyse how the production of gardening Hungaricums secures the livelihood on domestic level;
- My aim is to utilize and to convert the results in the practice, in the higher education and in the sphere of technical advice. I endeavour in my tutorial work that the rising generation shall be acquainted with the traditional gardening and food industrial

products that belong to the national heritage, with the history thereof and also with the special way of their production. They shall know what products belong to Hungaricum and also, they shall recognise the real value of them.

2. LITERARY SURVEY

2.1. Survey of antecedents in connection with the definition Hungaricum

One of the main governing principles of the EU in connection with town and country planning and agricultural policy is to deepen and support special product culture evolved in the Regions, emphasizing therewith the population retaining role of the regions and the countries. This has been regulated by decrees:

- Protection of the designation of origin and the geographical designation on the basis of strict criteria (2081/92 EEC Decree);
- Evidence of traditional, particular feature (2082/92 EEC Decree);
- Euroterroirs Program (Rácz et al., 2003) that serves for the groupage of descriptions of traditional, countryside food (with less strict conditions than in the decrees).

2.1.1. Marketing effects of the term Hungaricum

In interpretation of Mr. Andrásfalvy (2003): *the term Hungaricum can be considered as an animal, a plant or a certain product that is made out of them, which is connected to the Hungarian growing culture, the knowledge, the traditions evolved since generations of the locally living population (including ethnic groups merged in the standing living Hungarian people, and that of which the people of Hungary - but at least the people of a smaller countryside - accept it as Hungarian, typical Hungarian and well-known one and also, the people abroad recognise it as a Hungarian peculiarity).*

The inaccurate definition of the subject could imply the appearance of an unlimited number of Hungaricums. However, this can cause devaluation of the title. In the EU, there is a fierce competition in the category of quality goods, therefore the competitiveness can only be maintained in case of special goods that don't resemble any other goods in the marketplace. For the Hungarian economy, Hungaricum can be a point of difference in the European market. Consequently, it is understandable that producers try to obtain this title for their products (Biacs, 2003).

The timeliness of the subject can be explained by the interest of various economic groups in the food and agricultural industry:

- *Producers' interest*: a product labelled as Hungaricum contains significant added value, which assists in protecting and strengthening the market position and boosting revenue. The application of modern marketing tools enables the differentiation of a given product from similar products and shows its uniqueness.
- *Consumers' interest*: information is given of the origin of the product, and the outstanding quality is guaranteed.
- *Social interest*: supports rural development through conserving local, traditional methods, increases the cohesion of local communities and enhances the awareness of the region (Zobor, 2007).

2.2. Country and product awareness

Research being contacted on the country and product awareness show the picture that the buyers recall when they receive information of the origin of the product. The country awareness does not pertain directly to the product but we draw the conclusion indirectly regarding the article in point. Consequently, the process can be comprehended as awareness-transfer. According to this, the country awareness influences the product origin awareness in the country, which is a part of the general picture of the product. Obviously, the awareness-transfer also affects backwards (Horváth, 2007). The country origin may be the indicator of the quality (Elliot et al., 1994).

2.3. Region marketing

The contradiction of the present time is the “global-local paradox”. While global competition is intensifying, more and more companies have been concentrating in one region, where the local environment provides appropriate conditions for production. The reason of that is that among the advantages of the association, the advantages coming from a local environment secure increasing revenue levels (Porter, et.al., 1998).

In the Region of Dél-Alföld, the image was created in a way that it reflects the characteristics of the countryside, the atmosphere of the land, values of local people and history and traditions of the region. The region possesses a number of good quality agricultural products that have great prospects for the future. The positive image of the regions enhances the identity of local communities that assist them in finding their interest locally (Totth, 2005).

2.4. Food consuming compartment

The new trends seem to gain strength in the future that do not show the direction of material components but more of collecting information and trust factors (manufacturer, origin, special technology) (Bruhn, 2008).

According to the view of Mr. Hofmeister-Tóth (2003) the underlying fact is that how the consumer is affected emotionally or sensibly in the process. When making decisions, consumers tend to choose products based on emotional factors rather than rational considerations.

3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

3.1. Material

In the years 2005-2006 I conducted primary research on agricultural and food manufacturers that produce Hungaricums. I aimed to create a representative sample.

Prior to producing a survey on the attitude of Hungaricum consumers, I compiled a sampling plan that corresponds to the sampling methods of 2005-2006 database of Central Statistics Office including appropriate classification and weighting of data. I have compiled and distributed 550 surveys. In the database, I used 472 of them. I set conditions to SPSS software (select variable). This enabled me to filter the data in an appropriate manner.

During my study trips abroad, I had the opportunity to survey people of various nationalities. Of the 228 surveyed nationalities, I had the following numbers among them: German 90, French 31, Spanish 28, Portugal 9, Slovakian 13, Croatian 8, Dutch 21, Lithuanian 20 and Polish 8.

I conducted deep interviews among small and middle size agricultural and food producing businesses in the Dél-Alföld Region that produce Hungaricums.

3.2. Method applied in the research

One of the special types of market research interviews is the deep interview. The necessity of its application in my work was that I wanted to obtain such information that requires an intimate, face-to-face atmosphere in the interview.

The primary research was done by using surveys. In my research, I applied the Likert scale, semantic differential scale, Stapel scale. With SWOT analysis, I analysed the marketing setting of the Hungaricum products.

To analyse the survey data, I have used SPSS 10.0 for Windows and LISREL 8.30. I have used the following methodology: *Confidence-interval calculation, a variable structure test with factor analysis, a variable structure test with cluster analysis, multi dimensional scaling and correspondence analysis.*

In my work, we modelled such self-sustaining family farms in the Dél-Alföld Region that base their Hungaricum horticultural production on their own labour. In the model, I have examined how big of a land a 4-member family that consists of 3 units of work force, can cultivate from the given vegetable culture or rather how big size of field secures the minimal income necessary to the subsistence of the family.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Primary tests for the attitude of consumers expending agricultural and food industrial products.

4.1.1. Tests of consumer ethnocentrism in the selection of Hungaricum products

Tests in Hungary have shown several times that the sense of national pride and identity is strong in the population. Recent social studies confirm the growing importance of economic nationalism.

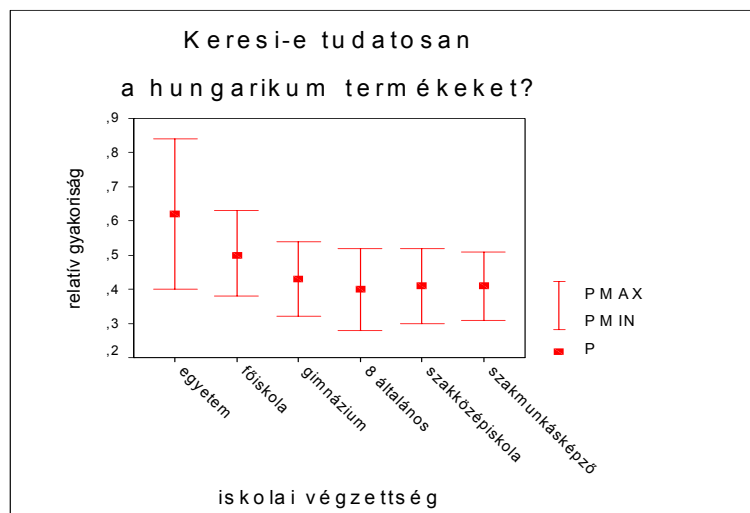


Figure 1: Distribution of conscious Hungaricum consumers by level of education

As it is shown on Figure 1, consumers having higher education tend to buy Hungaricum products consciously. Finding of my study does not prove the original hypothesis. My

hypothesis was that highly educated consumers purchase Hungaricums because they prefer emotional to economic considerations.

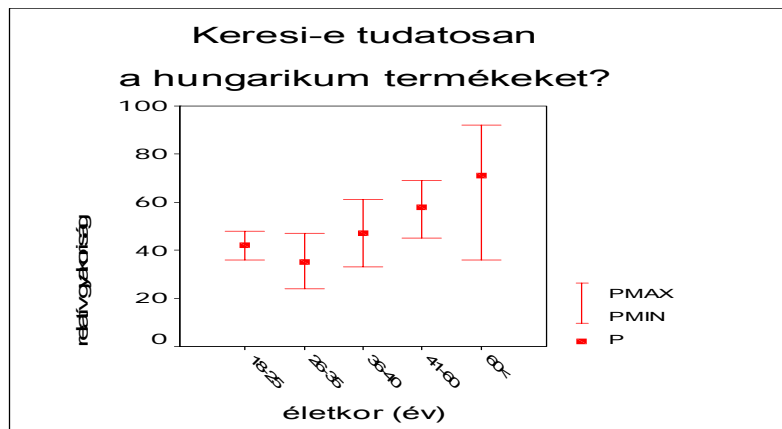


Figure 2: Distribution of conscious Hungaricum consumers by level of age

As it is shown on Figure 2, in my research, the ethnocentrism is the greatest in the Hungarian population above the age 60. This result proves my hypothesis. The reason of that can be that the ethnocentrism of different levels develops at later age, i.e. the national identification, national preference.

4.1.2. Determination of the products in the context of nature of Hungaricum

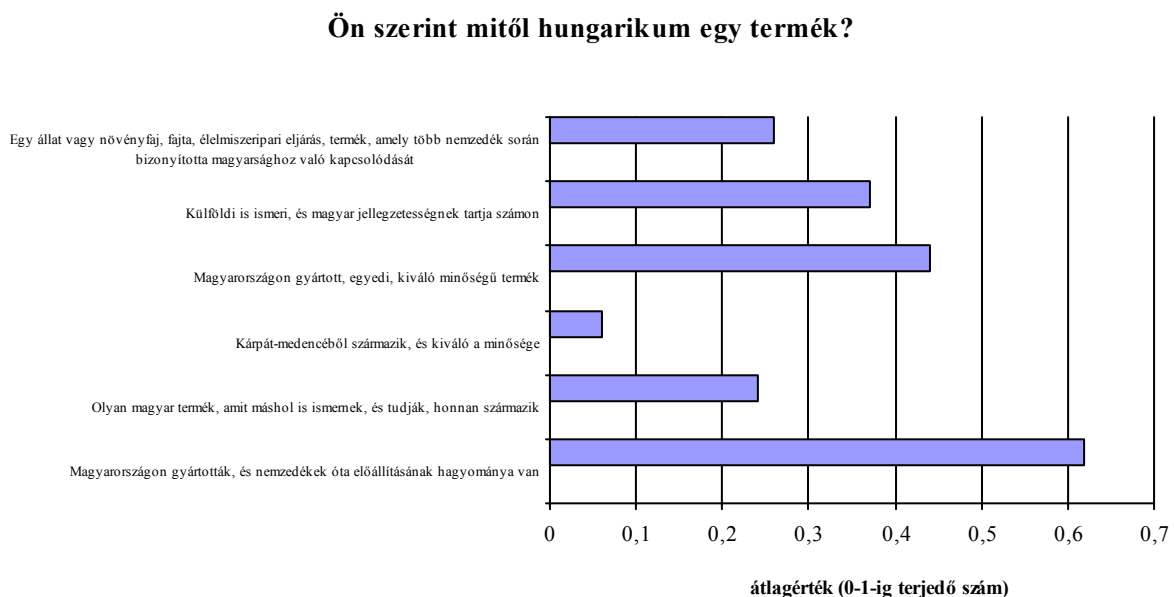


Figure 3: Determination of the products in the context of nature of Hungaricum

It is shown on the Figure 3, that the majority of respondents is acquainted with the subject, however, it also emerges that the respondents rate only products generated on territory of the present Hungarian state (Figure 3). Lots of respondents were uncertain to decide whether they should expand the concept of Hungaricum to the whole Carpathian basin. In our own Hungaricum concept, we also have taken the territorial extension as a restraint into consideration.

4.1.3. Factors of popularity of Hungaricum products

Hypothesis: the consumers are able to associate with messages attached to characteristic regional products.

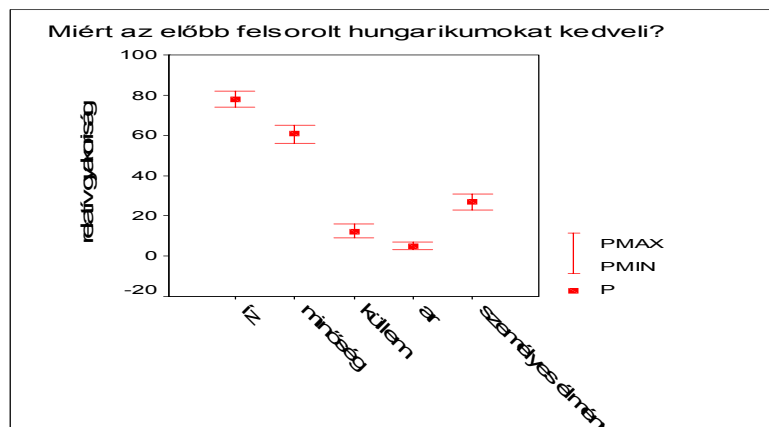


Figure 4: Factors of popularity of Hungaricum products

The Figure 4 shows, on which base the consumers select Hungaricum products.

The taste and the quality are outstanding in the line. It can easily be brought to light that the consumers select product not even on the basis of its price, appearance but rather on the basis of its particular taste and the excellent quality. We also asked foreign respondents what the reason was why they are fond of Hungaricums. They graded the given assertion according to the following.

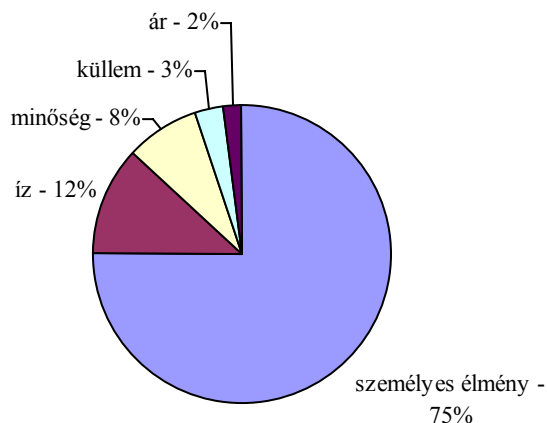


Figure 5: Factors of popularity of Hungaricum products on the basis of respondents' answers

They have decisively labelled the personal, pleasant experience as against the Hungarian respondents (Figure 5). This motive was either attached to the product (it was purchased on their abode and judged opportunely) or during staying in our country, the discretion was based on favourable experience. The country origin has larger effect on judgement of the product or on purchase intention, if the consumer has experience, even if it is joyful of the given country and its products.

4.1.4. Survey of feature of the Hungaricum products with different mathematical and statistical methods

4.1.4.1. Survey of feature of the Hungaricum products with Correspondence analysis

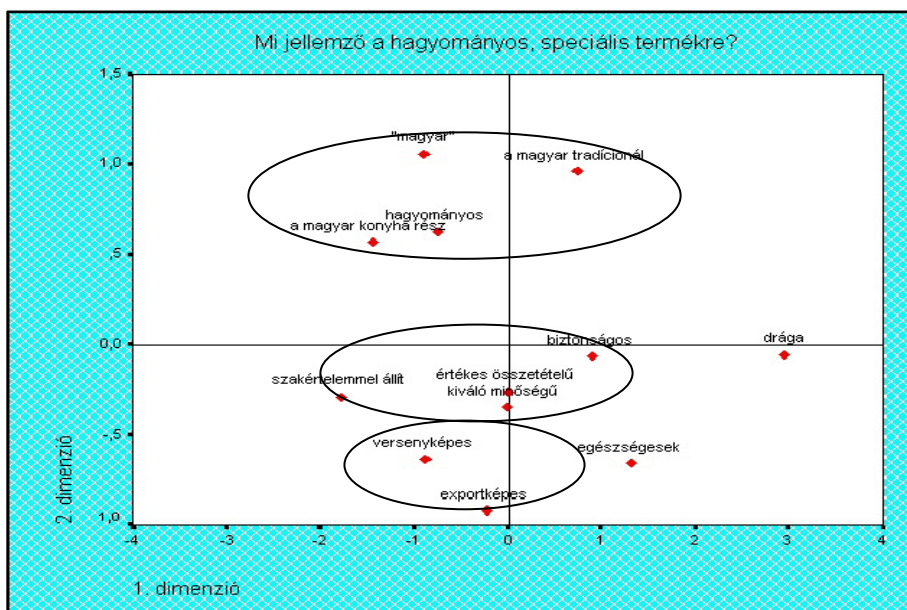


Figure 6: Characteristics of the Hungaricum products

On the Figure 6, on the observation map, we represented answers, those of which the respondents gave on the traditional, special Hungarian products as a characteristic feature. The consumers regard - beside the perceptible attributes – the Hungarian provenance, place of origin (the given region) and the traditional feature as an important aspect. The traditional determination also includes the demand that the product should be for several decades in the run, which indicates the significant role of the time factor. The Hungarian origin emphasizes now the importance of the dimension of place.

4.1.4.2. Survey of feature of the *Hungaricum* products with factor analysis

We surveyed the feature of the *Hungaricum* products with factor analysis on the basis of the answers of the respondent. In the oblong, the original questions of the questionnaire are represented, abridged (Figure 7).

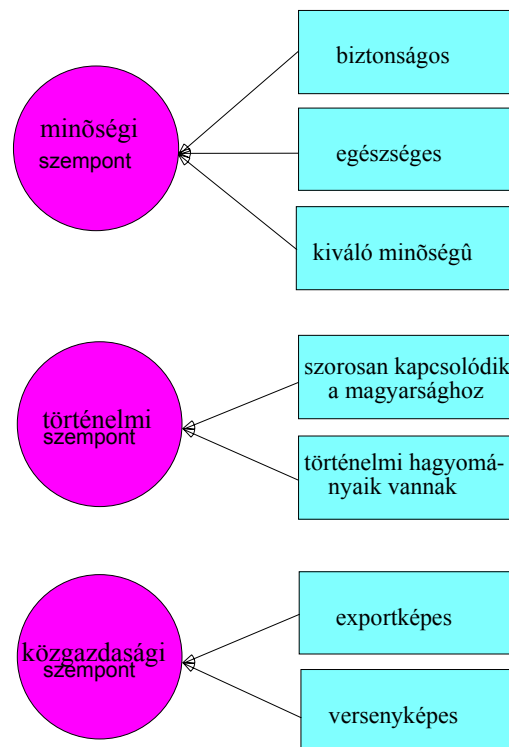


Figure 7: Judgement of the feature of traditional, Hungarian products with factor analysis

Hungaricum products are of excellent quality but these days it is essential to communicate the food assurance as well.

4.1.4.3. Survey of Hungaricum products with arbitrary factor analysis

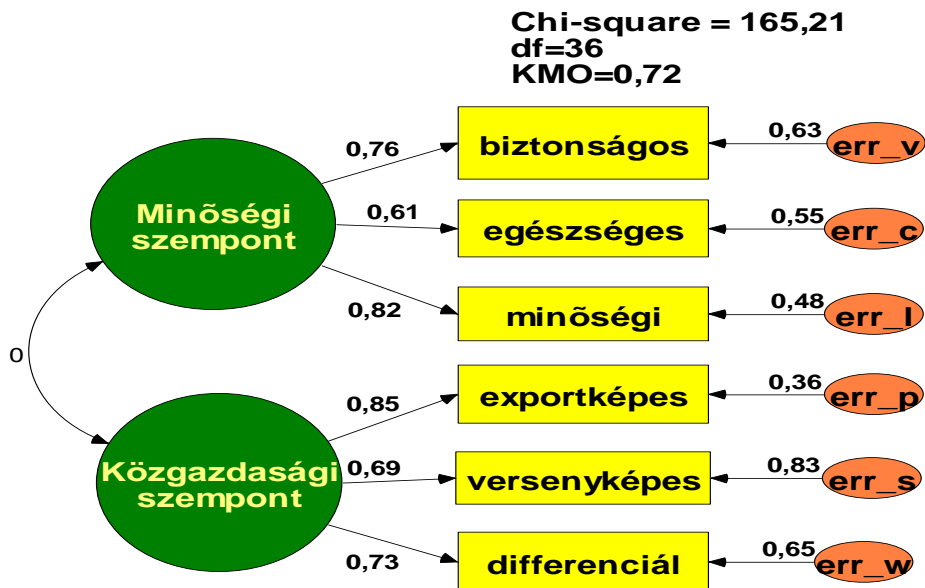


Figure 8: Hungaricum product test with arbitral factor analysis

As it can be observed in Figure 8, two independent factors can be distinguished: quality and economic factors. Within these factors, we only show those elements where the factor weighting is high.

4.1.5. Purchasing frequency of Hungaricum products

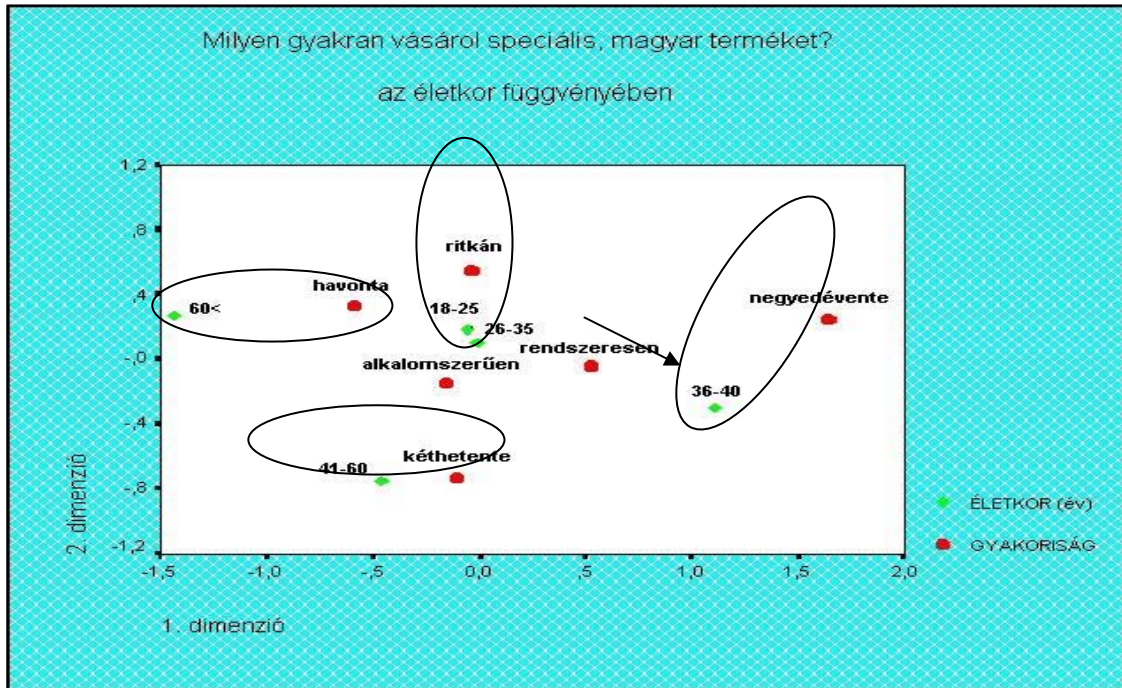


Figure 9: Purchasing frequency of special Hungarian products by age

It can be observed that the age group between 40 and 60 buy special Hungarian products most often. Younger groups are less significant factor in this measure. In our opinion, this behaviour correlates to the income levels throughout the age groups (Figure 9.).

4.1.6. Factors that affect the purchase of Hungaricum products

It can be seen from the below graph, that the most influencing factors are reputation, tradition, safe ingredients and their communication to the consumers. (Figure 10).

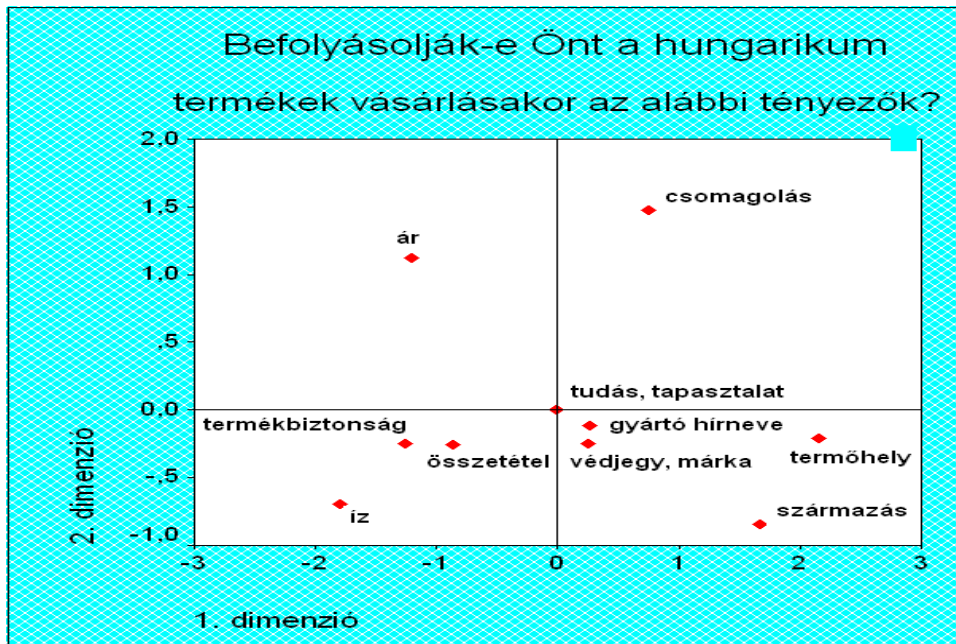


Figure 10.: Factors affecting purchase

4.1.7. Views on the price of Hungaricum products

Our primary hypothesis was that Hungaricum consumers appreciate the outstanding quality of the products; therefore they are willing to pay a premium for them (Figure 11).

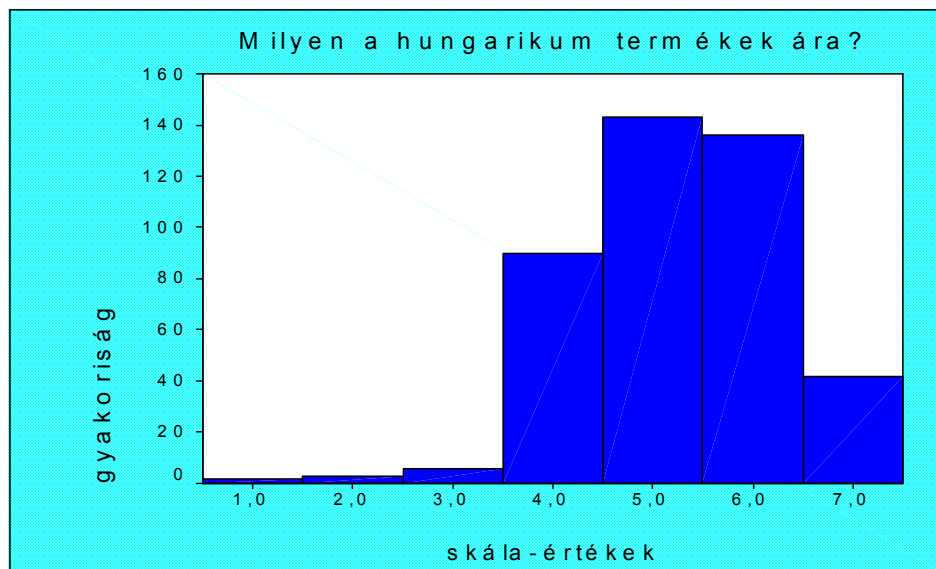


Figure 11: Consumer views on Hungaricum products

My hypothesis is supported by the results that shows that a satisfied consumer hesitates less and is more willing to purchase despite the premium on the product.

According to the research, the normally price sensitive consumers are not affected by the higher price of Hungaricum products.

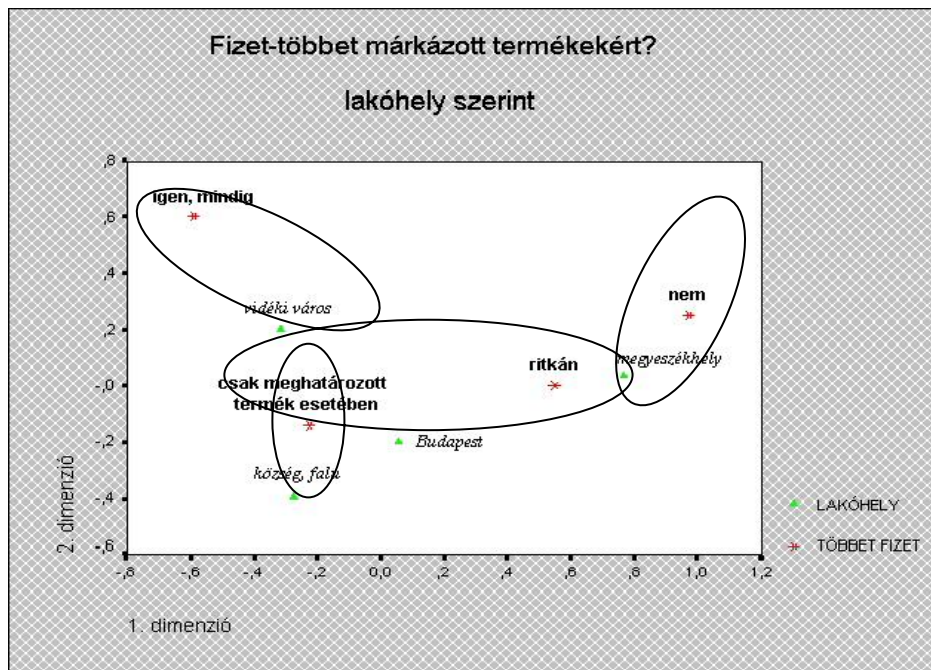


Figure 12: Correlation between home location and willingness to pay

Based on the correlation test using multiple variables, the perception map (Figure 12) shows that people living in provincial centres are the most price sensitive. There is no significant variance between country towns and villages in terms of their willingness to pay. Budapest is halfway in-between.

4.2. Analysis on horticultural Hungaricum products in the Dél-alföld Region

Figure 13 shows, the highlights of the examination of horticultural and food products from the Dél-Alföld Region. In my thesis, I present the results of SWOT analysis by products, image profile analysis and sustainability calculation.

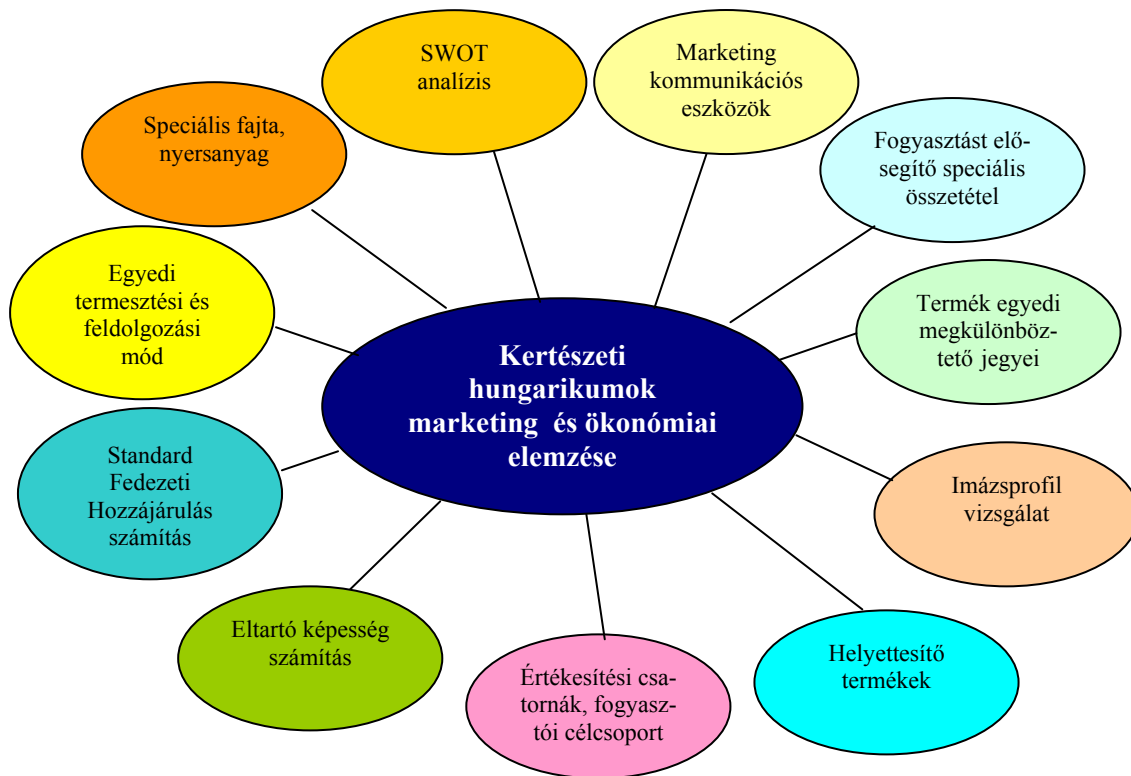


Figure 13.: Main points around the marketing analysis of horticultural Hungaricum

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

- It is typical all over the world that food consumption will soon reach the limit of biological saturation. In this case, the higher value added, more special and unique products can be a point of difference. In terms of utilising the value stemming from the land, producing higher value added products and creating jobs, small and medium size enterprises are of high importance. These can be successful if:
 - they are able to exploit the local potential (e.g. the “re-discovery” of traditional products and production techniques),
 - they can find those products that cannot be produced viably by large companies due to economies of scale (e.g. manufacturing of special products),
 - they are able to make higher value added products,
 - they can provide an outstanding customer service for their products

- The community (agricultural) marketing must match the country image, the agricultural policy; moreover it should support the building of the country image as well as the preferences determined by the agricultural policy (77/2008. VI.13. Parliament resolution). In order to meet the objectives set by the Parliament, it is necessary to:
 - Officially and lawfully recognise the concept of Hungaricum and protect its value;
 - Clearly distinguish the Hungaricum programme from HÍR programme and the Outstanding Hungarian Product label, because these may be misleading in relation to Hungaricums for producers and consumers;
 - produce of a clear and visible graphical signage;
 - determine the criteria for admission to Hungaricum product group, because this has been designed for a small and exclusive group which will enable to maintain its uniqueness;
 - organise a strict and consistent supervision system;
 - develop special product support for Hungaricums;

- The application of a well chosen marketing tool can support the development the region and country image. Hungaricum products are not to sell on their own but together with the representation of historical and cultural background. In this case, the consumer does not only buy a product that can be purchased everywhere but tastes, flavours and tradition.

NEW SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

- Because of the divers interpretation of the concept and scope of the Hungaricum gardening and food industrial products, I developed my own determination:

I consider gardening and food industrial Hungaricum those special products that are generated in agrarian-ecological, soil scientific, microbiological and climatical circumstances, that are existing only in Hungary, and to the production of which unequalled, peculiar technology, knowledge, experience and tradition are connected. The connection, among the geographical environment, the basic material and product, appear in outstanding quality, in speciality, in peculiar feature and also in respect of food security.

- I surveyed the popularity factor of the gardening and food industrial Hungaricum products concerning the Hungarian and foreign buyers and ascertained:
 - For the Hungarian buyers, the taste and the quality are the most important aspect, in their buying decisions, the price does not play significant role;
 - The foreign respondents stated that in their decisions that the personal experience is determined. The more they know the products of the given country the more advantageous they judge them. The product origin has greater effect on the adjudication of the product or on the purchase intention if the consumer has experience, even it is joyful, about the country in point as well as about their products, especially, it was verified at peculiar products of a region.

- I surveyed the flavours of the Hungaricum products with such mathematical and statistical methods that have not yet applied *before* for any analysis of present category. I surveyed the feature of the Hungaricum products
 - with Correspondence analysis,
 - with factor analysis,
 - with arbitrary factor analysis.

I have arrived with all the three methods at the similar result. I could group the attributes according to three aspects: I established historical, quality and economic categories.

- For the Dél-Alföld Region, I made the economic calculations for the survey of Hungaricum gardening products with a method that was elaborated in the European Union. With this method, I first determined the optimal plant measure of some important Hungaricum products and the potential income-producing capacity.

- In my dissertation, I analysed such self-sustaining subsistence farms that basically produce Hungaricum gardening products and that are supported on their own labour force in the Dél-Alföld region. With help of objective function, I *first* determined that field measure that taken the live labour costs of seasonally employed workers into consideration also secures the keep of the family. The method worked out for gardening Hungaricum products can also be adapted to products of other regions.

PUBLICATIONS ON THE TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION

1.1. Publikáció folyóiratban

Nem IF-es folyóiratcikk, idegen nyelven

Ssz	Szerző	Cím
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2.	Nótári, M – Hajdu I-né (2004):	The assessment of the unique products grown in the south of the Great Plain in Hungary. Acta Agraria Kaposváriensis. Kaposvári Egyetem Állattudományi Kar, Kaposvár, Volume 8 No I. 69-75.p. ISSN: 1418-1789
3.	Nótári, M. (2005):	Evaluation of some hungarian unique products. Enviro Nitra. Acta Horticultural et Regiotecturae Vol. 8. p. 38-41. ISSN: 1335-2563
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5.	Nótári M.-Hajdu I-né (2006):	Marketing communication of hungaricum products. Manegement Agricol Timisoara. Vol. VIII. (1) p. 367-374.p. ISSN: 1453-1410
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10.	Nótári, M.-Hajdu I-né (2007):	Connection of region marketing and hungaricums. Lucrari Stiintifice. Editura Agroprint Timisoara. No. I. Vol. IX(1). 101-108.p.
11.	Ferencz, Á.-Nótári, M. (2006):	Work organization and economic analysis of the postharvest of an unique Hungarian product. International Journal of Horticultural Science. Vol.12. No.IV. 11-15.p.
12.	Ferencz, Á.-Nótári, M. (2007):	Economical and marketing analysis of processed hungaricum type food industrial products. Acta Agraria Kaposváriensis. Kaposváris Egyetem Állattudományi Kar, Kaposvár, Volume 11. No 4. 83-96.p.

13. Hajdu I-né-Nótári M (2007) How the costumers judge the food safety of traditional horticultural products? Hungarian agricultural research. Jornal of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Vol. 16. No 3. 21-23.p.
14. Nótári, M. (2008): Economical and marketing analysis of processed hungaricum products in Hungary. Anals of the Faculty of Engineering Hunedora. 2008. Vol.7. No. IV. 101-105.p.
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Nem IF-es folyóiratcikk, magyarul

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