

Category: Sustainability

Project: Ecological Information on Fruits Displayed in the Supermarket

What was the challenge?

- How can we reduce harmful impacts on our environment caused by food production effectively by informing consumers sufficiently?
- How can we provide ecological information, which make products of different kinds comparable from an ecological perspective?
- How can we provide ecological information which is not too simple nor too complex?
- How can we inform about the most relevant ecological factors with one single approach of information design?

What was the solution?

The ecological scarcity method was developed to assess products in consideration of all relevant ecological factors: transportation, use of farmland and other resources, emissions, biodiversity loss, etc. The negative ecological impact of any product can be expressed in one single number. The data which is the basis of this design was assessed by the Institute of Environmental Engineering at ETH Zurich (Zyienbeck et al. 2016). By displaying this information hierarchically, we can make different products ecologically comparable and also inform about the specific factor which causes the impact.

What was the effect?

Seeing ecological informations at one glance and being able to compare products, consumers can take rational ecological decisions. As consumption patterns change, also producers and supermarket purchasers get increasingly aware about ecological impacts and reconsider their way of producing and the products in their assortment.

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