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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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P.1.1. Health effects and safety risks associated with edible insects: insights from Portugal and Romania

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Edible insects (EI) are consumed in many parts of the world since immemorial times, while in other regions some consumers felt some discomfort or neophobia towards insects. However, they are a good source of animal proteins of high quality and other bioactive components with potential beneficial effects for the human health.

The objective of this work was to compare the level of information of consumers in two European countries about the health effects of EI, including those beneficial and some possible hazards.

This descriptive transversal study was carried out by questionnaire survey in different countries, by online tools. For this specific study, data were collected in Portugal and Romania, only to adult citizens. Data were treated using SPSS statistical software.

The results showed significant differences between Romanian and Portuguese participants about most of the items included in the questionnaire. Specifically, it was found that the Portuguese were more informed about the existence of regulations to guarantee food safety of EI, that EI collected from the wild can be contaminated with pesticide residues, while the Romanian were more informed about the use of EI in traditional medicine and their approval in some countries as therapeutics, also about the possibility of EI being infected by pathogens or parasites, and about them being potential sources of allergens or containing aflatoxins.

This work revealed that there is a significant differences between the knowledge regarding health effects of EI, according to geographical region, even among European countries.

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