

ABSTRACT

The world's human population is rapidly growing and is expected to reach 9 billion by 2050, leading to increased demand for food. One of the major global challenges is the lack of high-quality proteins. The consumption of edible insects, known as entomophagy, is a promising solution to this problem, providing a new source of proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals. This alternative may be more environmentally friendly than traditional food production methods, contributing to meeting the growing needs of the population. The aim of this bachelor's thesis was to assess the attitudes and approach of Czech consumers towards edible insects, as well as to determine the availability of edible insect products in the Czech market.

Within this research, it was found that a significant part of respondents had prior experience with consuming edible insects. Almost 90% of respondents in this evaluation had tried edible insects, with the majority willing to repeat insect consumption. Consumers generally preferred hidden forms of edible insects, followed by culinarily prepared visible forms of insects. An important finding was that none of the surveyed respondents had encountered edible insect products in brick-and-mortar stores, a fact confirmed by market research indicating the absence of these products in regular retail outlets. Currently, online sales are the primary channel for purchasing edible insect products in the Czech Republic.

This research highlights a growing interest and openness among the public towards the concept of consuming edible insects as an alternative food source for the future. However, increasing the availability of edible insect products in brick-and-mortar stores remains a key challenge to promote wider awareness and acceptance of this new food source in the future.

Keywords: entomophagy, sustainability, alternative protein source, food neophobia, novel foods.