

# Designing a market strategy for Alga.farm: Spirulina from photo- bioreactor to consumer

by Valerie van Elzelingen



**Author**

V. van Elzelingen

**Master thesis**

Msc. Strategic Product Design  
Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering  
Delft University of Technology

**Graduation committee**

Chair: Dr. ir. E.A. van den Hende  
Mentor: MSc. S. Bakker-Wu  
Company mentor: Dr. ir. T.R.S. van Koolwijk

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# Preface

Dear reader,

This master graduation thesis was developed for Alga.farm. The motivation to pursue this project came from my interest in seaweed, startups, and to make a positive impact on the world. In the Build Your Startup course of the Industrial Design Engineering master's studies, prior to the start of this thesis, I built a startup together with three other students. Our mission was to make the first plant-based sunscreen using seaweed that is coral friendly. Unfortunately we found out this was not as easy as we thought and we decided to stop, but the enthusiasm for seaweed and startups persisted. So, when I got in contact with the startup Alga.farm that grows algae to strive for a better world, I was sold.

Alga.farm started increasing the production capacity, to prepare for selling their algae in the commercial market. Therefore, a strategic plan was needed to market the product to consumers. This assignment seemed perfect for my graduation project, since it brings my design education and personal interest together.

I have learned a lot from various fields while graduating at Alga.farm. In the beginning of the project I helped with tasks at the workflow to better understand the company and get a feeling of working at a startup. I harvested the algae, packaged it in vacuum sealed bags, joined fairs, and searched for possible interested retailers.

Looking back, I could apply different learnings to this project gained during my study Industrial Design Engineering, particularly about product design, brand design, visual design, and strategic design.

I want to thank my supervisors, Ellis van den Hende, Sijja Bakker-Wu, and Tim van Koolwijk for their support, feedback, and trust in me.

Special thanks to my friends Roos, Joey, Ariëla, and Mike who helped me reach the project's finish line.

Enjoy reading.

# Abstract

The current food industry is inefficient and responsible for a big proportion of greenhouse gases, deforestation and environmental pollution worldwide. Alga.farm, a startup based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, wants to change this. They aim to do this by developing photobioreactors that can produce food many times more efficiently than with traditional agriculture or animal husbandry.

At the moment, Alga.farm grows *Arthrospira Platensis* (spirulina) in their own designed and assembled photobioreactors. Spirulina is a cyanobacterium, the precursor of microalgae. It is full of useful nutrients.

Currently, Alga.farm is increasing the production capacity, to prepare for selling their product in the commercial market. As the freezer where the spirulina is stored is getting full, a strategic plan is needed to market the spirulina to consumers.

In this graduation thesis, a (sandwich) spread with spirulina, called Spirucijn, has been developed for Alga.farm. The main goal of the project was to create a strong market strategy for their food harvest of spirulina in line with their values. With this Alga.farms' chance of becoming an economically sustainable business increases - ideally with a constantly sold-out spirulina freezer. An iterative design process has been done using design methods which are taught at the faculty of 'Industrieel Ontwerpen' (IO) at Delft University of Technology (TU Delft) to achieve the goal.

The project started with explored theory that resulted in a list of methods and guidelines that are used throughout this project. Secondly, the category where the spirulina food product will be marketed was chosen: spreads. followed by a 5C analysis which includes a Company, Competitor, Context, Consumer, and Collaborator analy-

sis. All the relevant insights from the analyses were listed as stakeholder requirements. After this, strategic direction could be made. The product differentiation was defined, personas were created to clarify the target segment, and a brand was developed to identify the product and differentiate the product from its competition. The brand was built using the Brand DNA model including the brand purpose, positioning, and personality, and brand core values were created. After this, practical decisions could be made concerning food design, visual brand design, packaging design and brand messaging. These practical decisions were combined into the final brand touchpoints, consisting of the final product design and communication designs. And at least, the product launch campaign was developed which helps to practically use the brand touchpoints in brand-consumer communication - to finally build customer trust and result in product purchases.

The final results are the brand touchpoints, consisting of the final product design and communication designs. The final product design is a spread for eco-conscious and -friendly people, that is nutritious, has local ingredients, and makes people feel better/healthier in their bodies and makes them feel like they take their responsibility for a healthier environment. It covers the design brief of the spread, design of the packaging and flyer, construction and a visual of the website, visuals of Instagram posts, and a product launch campaign.

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# 1. Project

This first chapter introduces the project (1.1), including the client company and the project aim: creating a strong market strategy for their food harvest of spirulina - which is explained as well. And at last, an overview of the project is given to guide you through this report (1.2).

## *1.1 Introduction*

*Alga.farm*

*Aim of the project*

## *1.2 Overview project*



# 1.1 Introduction

This thesis is the deliverable of my graduation project of the Master 'Strategic Product Design' at the TU Delft. The project is conducted in collaboration with Alga.farm.

## Alga.farm

Alga.farm is a startup in Rotterdam, the Netherlands that strives for climate neutral food. They want to change the current food industry, because it is inefficient and responsible for a big proportion of greenhouse gases, deforestation and environmental pollution worldwide. They aim to do this by developing photobioreactors that can produce food many times more efficiently than with traditional agriculture or animal husbandry.

At the moment, Alga.farm designs and assembles photobioreactors that grow *Arthrospira Platensis* (spirulina) in its most pure and fresh way. This fresh spirulina is a cyanobacterium, the precursor of microalgae. It is full of protein, containing all essential amino acids, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and polyunsaturated fatty acids. Besides being healthy and vegan, Alga.farm spirulina is also a sustainable ingredient, as it uses 99% less water and land and reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emission by 99% compared to beef or soy, which is known to be a popular vegan product (Alga.farm, n.d.). Spirulina of Alga.farm is different from the more widely available spirulina powder. This powder has a strong taste and a significant amount of nutrients are lost during the drying process because of the heat. Fresh spirulina, however, has a neutral taste and still contains all of its nutrients.

Other than the spirulina powder, Alga.farm produces spirulina in form of a paste (see Figure 1), by using a specific filter system in their bioreactor. After harvesting, Alga.farm freezes the spirulina paste, so it stays fresh for at least a year. This paste can be used as an ingredient for food or beverage products, such as yoghurt and smoothies.

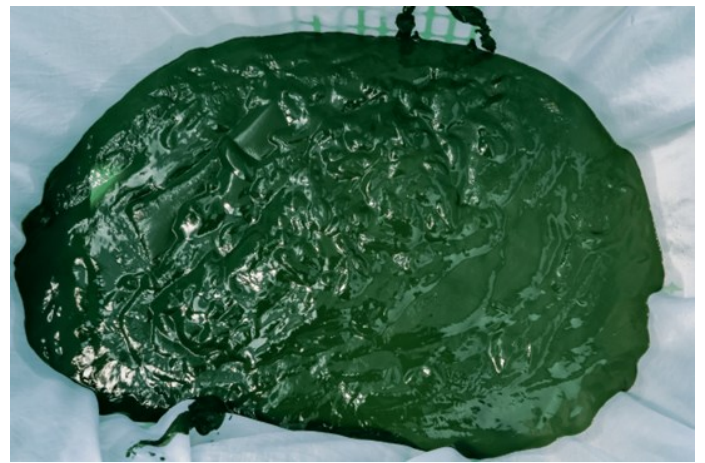


Figure 1. Fresh spirulina paste

After its founding in 2016, Alga.farm has developed the reactors and increased the efficiency of the spirulina growing process. At the moment they are selling the spirulina paste in relatively small amounts business to business (B2B) in the Netherlands and Belgium. For example to a vegan burger startup and a startup for non-alcoholic healthy shots. At the same time they are increasing the production capacity, to prepare for selling their product in the commercial market. As the freezer where the spirulina is stored is getting full, a strategic plan is needed to market the spirulina to consumers.

## The aim of the project

The aim of this project is to create a strong market strategy for Alga.farm in line with their vision and values. With this Alga.farm's chance of becoming an economically sustainable business increases - ideally with a constantly sold-out spirulina freezer.

In this project the focus is on the business to consumer (B2C) market, as Alga.farm is already active in the B2B market. Furthermore, the B2C market is an opportunity to bring more people in contact with (fresh) spirulina and educate them what spirulina is and why it is good for them and the planet. If more and more people enjoy and know about spirulina, it may become more common to consume spirulina in the future. With this increase in consumption Alga.farm is likely to become a successful company and make a big impact on the world.

## Assignment

After multiple conversations with Alga.farm about their wishes and ideas for this graduation project, the following assignment was formed:

For the Dutch market, choose and design a food product that contains spirulina as an ingredient. In addition, design a brand, packaging and marketing strategy for this product in line with the values and requirements of the stakeholders: Alga.farm, consumers, food producer, packaging company, retailers.

To come to the brand, product, packaging and strategy as stated above, the following specific outputs are needed:

- 5C analysis
- Requirements of the stakeholders
- Consumer personas that reflect the values of the target market
- A brand DNA designed based on the analyses and target market
- The design of the food product
- The design of the packaging, including a prototype, based on the brand DNA
- Product Launch campaign

## 1.2 Project overview

To recap 1.1, this project aims to result in a market strategy in line with Alga.farm's values.

Figure 2 shows an overview of the project process. Although a linear process flow is shown the individual parts intertwined, which is typical for any design process.

The process applies design methods used to tackle the challenges of market introduction which are taught at the faculty of 'Industriële Ontwerpen' (IO) at Delft University of Technology (TU Delft).

Firstly, the theory is explored (chapter 2) to get a deeper understanding of the methods and approaches that are possible to fulfill the assignment. This forms a basis for the project at hand and answers the following questions: how is each method supposed to be used, what are their goals and how are they interconnected? This first

chapter is concluded by a list of methods and guidelines which form the subsequent chapters of this report.

Secondly, a fundamental choice is made: the category where the spirulina food product will be marketed in. Selecting the category ensures that the design process becomes detailed and tailored to this specific product category. In agreement with Alga.farm (chapter 3) the category chosen is a spread.

The next chapter entails the first design process: the 5C analysis (chapter 4). This analysis is needed to understand the company and form a thorough context for the market strategy including competitors, trends, market, consumer, and collaborators. This method aims to find a way to differentiate the company from competitors, to find consumer needs and to define target segments. All the relevant insights from the analyses are listed as stakeholder requirements. Chapter 5 converts all of these insights into the strategic direction, including the product differentiation, personas to clarify the target segments, brand DNA and brand core values. This strategy is the basis of the subsequent chapters, consisting of more practical decisions: food design (chapter 6), visual brand design (chapter 7), packaging design (chapter 8) and brand messaging (chapter 9). These practical decisions are combined into the final brand touchpoints (chapter 10), consisting of the final product design and communication designs. Following this, chapter 11 covers the product launch campaign, which helps to practically use the brand touchpoints in brand-consumer communication - to finally build customer trust and result in product purchases. The Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action (AIDA) model is used to effectively communicate the launch campaign and to clarify the purchasing process.

For Alga.farm to achieve customer loyalty and on-going sales, additional steps have to be taken. Therefore, chapter 12 shows an overview of the outcomes of the market strategy designed in this project together with recommendations for future steps.

Finally, this report ends with a personal reflection and the limitations of this project (chapter 13) as well as recommendations for other designers (chapter 14).

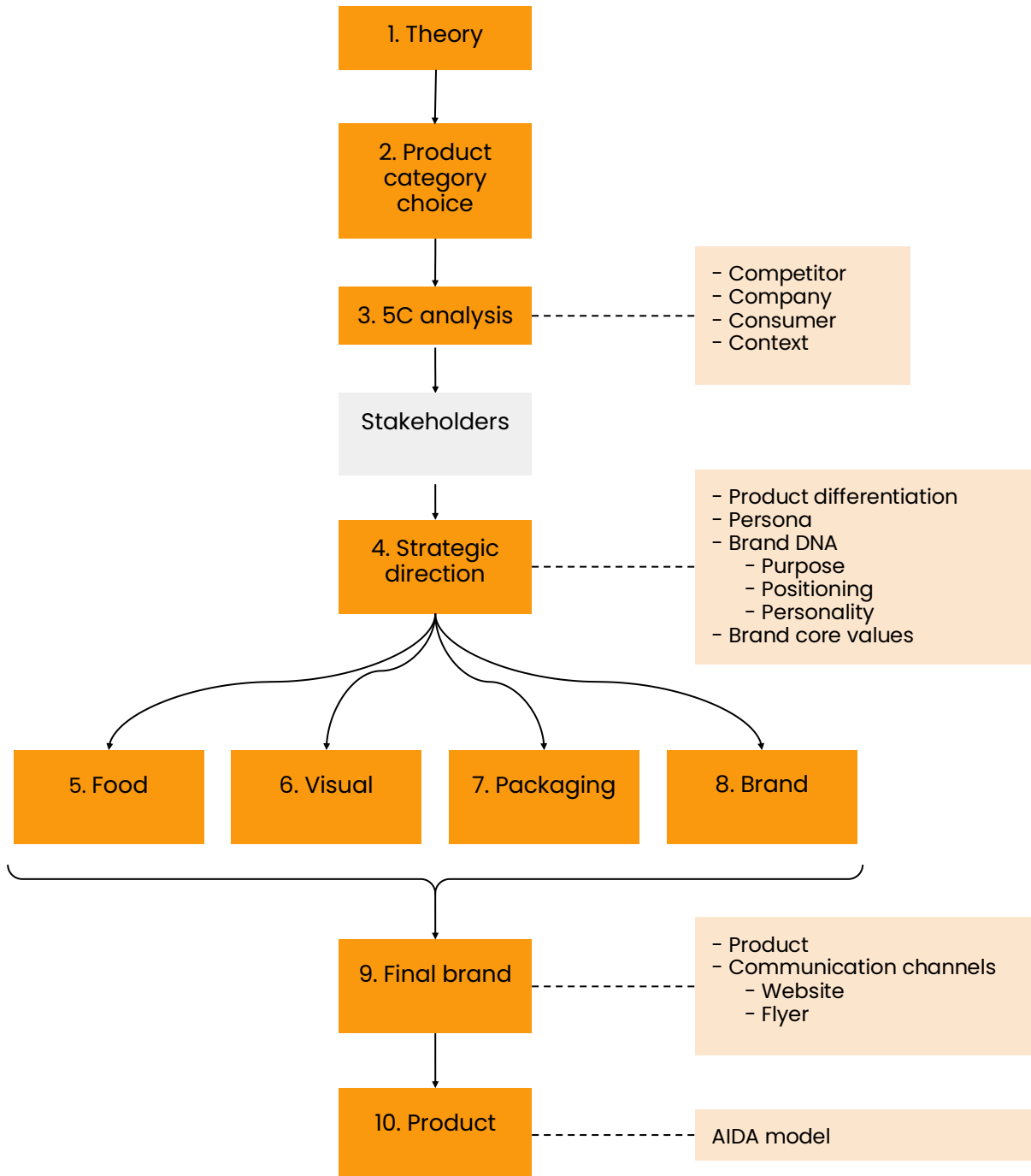


Figure 2. An overview of the project

# 2. Theory

After chapter 1 introduced the project, this chapter explores the relevant theory to guide the design process. Relevant literature and TU Delft educational sources are reviewed about product market launch, brand design, market competition and more.

From this theory, different methods and approaches are found on how to tackle the challenge of market introduction. At the end of this chapter, a list of methods and guidelines is presented that are used throughout this project. These form the basis of the following chapters.

## Product differentiation

The aim of the project is to create a strong market strategy for Alga.farm. How can a startup increase its chances of product launch success? The important challenge is to acquire customers. There are a lot of products on the market and customers are constantly comparing these products with each other. To stand out, a company should differentiate their product from the products of the competitors. Product positioning is the way a product shapes its position in the mind of the target group in comparison with the competition (Camilleri, 2018). This positioning should define the products' unique attributes, features and value propositions to differentiate themselves from other competitors in the marketplace (Camilleri, 2018).

## 5C analysis

To develop a product positioning in the market a 4C analysis can be done (Prof. dr. E. J. Hulthink of the course Brand and Product Commercialisation at the TU Delft). A 4C analysis consists of 4 analyses: A competitor, company, consumer, and context analysis. These analyses help to find how to differentiate from competitors, to find the needs of the consumer, and to define target segments. In addition, the requirements of the stakeholders can be found. In this project the collaborator analysis is added because it is an additional stakeholder with unique requirements. Hence, instead of a 4C analysis, this project will work with a 5C analysis to find the requirements of all the stakeholders. See figure 3 how the 5C analysis is constructed.

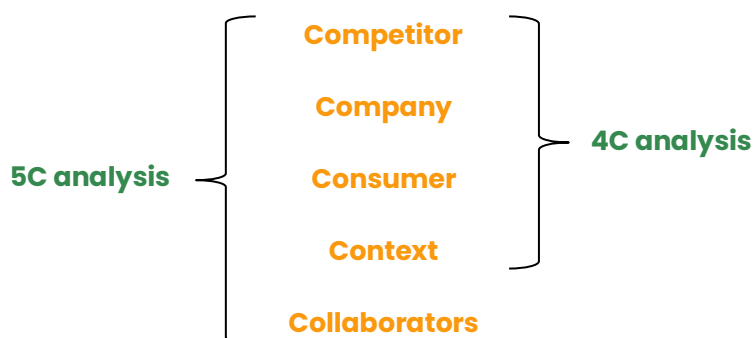


Figure 3. Construction 5C analysis

## Persona

A persona can be made to provide more detail into the defined target segments. It contains consumer profiles that can be used for the design process (Beverland, 2018).

## Brand

According to the American Marketing Association (2017) a brand intends to identify and differentiate a product from its competition. Therefore, a brand can help to express the positioning of the product to the consumer. A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of these (the American Marketing Association, 2017). According to Johansson & Carlson (2014), an established brand should have a clear brand identity, brand image and a brand personality.

- *Brand identity* entails what the brand promises and should be based on the vision of the company behind the brand. Easily said, brand identity is what the brand is. (Johansson & Carlson, 2014).
- *Brand image* entails how the consumer sees the brand. It is based on their beliefs and their associations. It can reflect product characteristics, benefits and attitudes (Keller, 1993).
- *Brand personality* is defined by Aaker (1997) as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand." It is symbolic or self-expressive (Keller 1993) instead of functional. The personality of a brand is a strategic decision and can be used to enhance consumer-brand bonds (Beverland, 2018). Herskovitz & Crystal (2010) propose to base this personality on the internal brand values, industry developments and the target group.

## Developing a brand

To develop a brand, the Brand DNA model (Van der Vorst, 2021) can be used, see figure 4. The Brand DNA model consists of three parts: purpose, positioning, and personality. These three parts explain the why, what, and how of the brand. The purpose is the brand's belief (why), the positioning tells what the brand offers to whom (what), and the personality describes how the brand behaves (how).

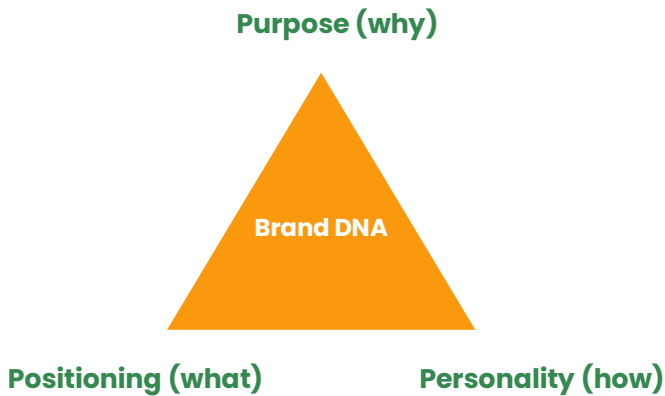


Figure 4. The Brand DNA model (van der Vorst, 2021).

According to Straker (2019), designing a brand should start with understanding the purpose (the why) before focusing on the outcome (the what). When a company has a clear and convincing purpose (why), customers and employees can be motivated to connect for the long term, because they will resonate on a deeper, emotional level (Straker, 2019). Straker (2019) argues that a clear 'why' and a corresponding value proposition are important to make a successful brand.

For example, the brand DNA model of the brand Nike could look like this:

- Purpose (why): Power to the people through technology
- Positioning (what): For serious athletes, Nike offers sports apparel that is technologically advanced, delivers great performance and gives people the confidence to be a hero
- Personality (how): Rugged, exciting

## Brand personality scale

A brand personality can be examined and designed using the brand personality scale (Aaker, 1997). It contains the five dimensions of a brand personality:

1. Sincerity (down-to-earth, honest, wholesome, and cheerful)
2. Excitement (daring, spirited, imaginative, and up-to-date)
3. Competence (reliable, intelligent, and successful)
4. Sophistication (upper class and charming)
5. Ruggedness (outdoorsy and tough)

## Brand core values

According to Urde (2003), core values are guiding factors and represent a direction for product development, behaviour and communication processes. Therefore, it is helpful to define the brand core values to have extra guidelines during the design process in this project. Urde states that the core values that the brand stands for should be added values that the consumer experiences as useful and unique.

## Brand's communication

After the company has created a brand DNA, the brand can be communicated externally. With this communication it is important that the customer experience (and brand image) matches the internally developed brand positioning (Beverland, 2018).

## Brand touchpoints

The knowledge that the customer has of the brand is formed by their experiences with brand touchpoints (Aoki et al, 2019). Duncan (2005) describes brand-customer touchpoints as: "any situation in which a customer comes into contact with a brand or company." Touchpoints could be marketing communications (such as advertising, blogs, brochures, store decoration), or the interactions between the brand and consumer during the process of buying or using it (such as package, service personnel), but also communications about the brand that the com-

pany has no control over (such as word of mouth).

## Product launch campaign

According to E. J. Hultink et al (1997) a product launch strategy involves decisions and activities that are necessary to present a product to its target market and start to generate income from sales of the new product. G. H. Berghuis (2021) states that a product launch campaign answers to the following question: “What message and call to action do we communicate to which target groups through which channels in which format and design at what time, and why?”

All these elements together make the product launch campaign. It consists of two parts:

“what am I going to tell?” (the message)

“how am I going to get the message across?” (which channel and format)

## The AIDA model

The AIDA model can be used to effectively communicate with the target market. This widely used and respected communication model (Montazeribarforoushi, 2017) is an acronym for the 4 phases a consumer goes through in the purchasing process: Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action (AIDA). Because it clarifies the purchasing process, it can support the businesses by guiding the consumer through this process (Montazeribarforoushi, 2017). The four stages of the AIDA model are described in table 1.

Table 1. The four stages of the AIDA model.

	Awareness	Interest	Desire	Action
<b>Goal</b>	Make them curious and create brand awareness	Give them information, to let them trust you	Make them want to own the product	Stimulate them to do something (purchase)
<b>How to reach goal</b> (Bui, 2022)	<p>Create awareness of the product by touching the customer's problem</p> <p>Communicate the brand message to the public.</p> <p>Convey the content vividly, visually, in the form of stories</p>	<p>Give customers useful value: provide content that addresses the pain or difficulties of customers.</p> <p>Give characteristics, benefits of the product.</p> <p>Answering questions to make the customers feel important</p>	<p>Build a solid trust in the brand and the product/ service</p> <p>Show proof that your product gives the promised value.</p> <p>Sharing content or experiences of customers who have used the product/ service.</p> <p>Let experts talk about your product.</p>	<p>Content that drives action</p> <p>Strong sentences, calls for purchase action.</p> <p>Call-to-action should be highlighted by color, font size, and font.</p> <p>Integrate gift programs and promotions to promote buying behavior.</p>
<b>Content</b> (Bui, 2022)	Creative, engaging content	Friendly, easy to understand content	Aggregated, statistical, proven content	Strong words, trendy titles or rhymes

What	Why?
<b>Product differentiation</b>	To find a way to stand out from the products of the competitors.
<b>5C analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Company analysis</li> <li>- Competitor analysis</li> <li>- Context analysis</li> <li>- Consumer analysis</li> <li>- Collaborator analysis</li> </ul>	To find the consumer needs and how to differentiate from competitors, and to define target segments (J. Hulthink, 2021). Also for defining the requirements of all stakeholders for the design process.
<b>Personas</b>	To develop consumer profiles of each segment that can be used for the design process (Beverland, 2018)
<b>Brand DNA</b>	A tool to develop a brand (Van der Vorst, 2021)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand purpose</li> </ul>	So customers and employees connect for the long term, because they will resonate on a deeper, emotional level with the brand (Straker, 2019).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand positioning</li> </ul>	To differentiate from competitors and resonate with the consumer (Camilleri, 2018).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand personality</li> </ul>	To enhance consumer-brand bonds (Beverland, 2018).
<b>Brand core values</b>	To guide and represent a direction for product development, behaviour and communication processes (Urde, 2003)
<b>Brand touchpoints</b>	To create a brand experience that communicates the brand's positioning (Aoki et al, 2019) (Beverland, 2018).
<b>Product launch campaign</b>	To make decisions and activities that are necessary to present a product to its target market and start to generate income from sales of the new product. (Hultink et al, 1997)

Table 2. Overview insights theory



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## **Project approach based on the theory**

**From the theory explored in this chapter, a list of methods and guidelines is formed on how to tackle the challenge of market introduction. Table 2 shows which of these approaches are chosen to use for this project.**

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# 3. Product category choice

The previous chapter concludes with a list of methods and guidelines that are used in this project to tackle the challenge of market introduction. These form the basis for chapter 4 to 11. However, before starting this design process, a fundamental choice needs to be made in agreement with Alga.farm: the category in which the spirulina food product will be marketed. This ensures that the design process is detailed and specific. First a requirement list is set up (3.1), which is then used to make this choice (3.2). The following chapter entails the start of the design process.

*3.1 Requirements and wishes*

*3.2 Choosing product category*

## 3.1 Requirements and wishes

In conversation with Van Koolwijk, managing director of Alga.farm, the requirements and wishes for the food product are defined and presented hereafter.

### Requirements:

- The product should have fresh spirulina as an ingredient, not less than 10%.
- The structure of spirulina should fit well with the structure of the food product, so the combined food will have a structure that the consumer likes.
- The product should be vegan to not harm animals.
- The product should be locally cultivated and produced.
- The product should be nutritious.
- The product should be possible to be consumed during the whole year. Hence, it should be independent of the seasons..
- The product should not be similar to the product that Alga.farm sells to a webshop: frozen fresh spirulina cubes

### Wishes:

- Optimally, the food product should keep as many nutrients as possible. In the best case, no nutrients of spirulina are lost during and after producing the product. This means, for example, no baked or dried food products.
- Optimally, the product should be as environmentally friendly as possible.

## 3.2 Choosing a product category

Next to the requirements and wishes of Alga.farm, there is a need for more information about the market to make the fundamental decision on the product category. This includes information about Alga.farm's current collaborators and research around market introduction of spirulina: relevant market trends, possible consumer segments and needs, and potential competitors (see appendix A).

The main insight of this research: there is no direct competition in the market of foods containing spirulina. Spirulina can be bought as an ingredient, but not in a food that is ready to eat. Apart from this, there are plenty of food and beverage companies that responded to the trend of healthy consumption. This can be viewed as indirect but major competition, as the health aspect is one of the core values of Alga.farm. Therefore, the aim is to find a food or beverage product category for Alga.farm's spirulina that is not yet oversaturated with health-focussed competition.

A list of possible product categories can be found below::

- Grains (for example oats, rice, bread, pasta)
- Pasta sauces
- Snacks (chocolate, bars, cakes, chips)
- Dressings (for salads for example)
- Dairy products (milk, butter, yogurt, cream)
- Ice creams
- Spreads (dips)
- Smoothie (frozen smoothie packages)
- Lemonades
- Juices
- Mayonaise
- Desserts

For each of these categories, the pros and cons were explored. The full research and pros and cons list can be found in Appendix B. Based on this, the product category *spreads* is chosen because of following reasons:

- The majority of the widely available spreads are not health-focussed. Therefore the competition is less direct than for other categories.
- There are plenty of possibilities to make a spread healthy - which is different from categories like deserts, snacks, etc.
- Dutch people eat an average of 3.5 slices of bread per day (Voedingscentrum, n.d.). This is an opportunity for Alga.farm to tap into with a new spread.
- A spread can be used for different purposes: to use as a bread topping, as a dip for finger food or as an ingredient in other recipes.
- In grocery stores, spreads are usually kept in a refrigerated area. This is essential to keep the spirulina fresh and resonates well with Alga.farms goal of selling fresh spirulina.

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**Based on Alga.farm's requirements and wishes and some research around market introduction of spirulina, a list of pros and cons was set up for multiple food product categories. From this analysis, spreads are chosen as the category. With this in mind, the design process is initiated in the next chapter.**

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# 4. 5C analysis

After the food product category of spreads was chosen in the previous chapter, the design process is initiated by first thoroughly assessing the situational context of Alga.farm in this chapter.

To research the current situation, this chapter encloses different analyses, which are combined in the 5C analysis. Firstly, a company examination is done to explore Alga.farm's internal motivation in terms of mission and values (4.1). Secondly and of high importance a competitor analysis is conducted (4.2). This forms the basis of coming up with the differentiation tactic. Thirdly, a context analysis is done to discover interesting trends and markets (4.3). Fourthly, consumer research is done to be able to decide on a consumer market and explore their beliefs and needs (4.4). Finally, an investigation into possible collaborators is done (4.5). At the end of the chapter, all important insights are combined into a practical list to take on to the next section; the requirements (4.6).

*4.1 Company analysis*

*4.2 Competitor analysis*

*4.3 Context analysis*

*Trend analysis*

*Market analysis*

*4.4 Consumer research*

*4.5 Collaborator analysis*

*4.6 Requirements stakeholders*

## 4.1 Company analysis

This section explores Alga.farm’s strengths and challenges. This includes the benefits that can potentially be transferred to the consumer through the product and communicated through the brand. This company knowledge is used later on to decide on the target segments (section 5.2).

### Alga.farm

Tim van Koolwijk is the founder of Alga.farm. He came in contact with spirulina during his graduation project at the TU Delft in Indonesia. Since he saw how much potential this organism has in terms of health benefits and as a sustainable protein source, he started Spireaux, which is now called Alga.farm. In 2016 he moved with Alga.farm to *BlueCity*. This is a circular initiative in an old swimming pool in Rotterdam called *Tropicana*. As more innovative and fast-growing sustainable startups are located in this complex (such as Rotterzwam), it was a big step towards Tim's dream; growing Alga.farm into a successful venture. In the basement of this old swimming pool Alga.farm has grown from a small-scale

student room project into what it is now. The team designs photobioreactors that grow highly nutritious biomass using a fraction of the amount of land and water required by traditional methods, such as agriculture (Alga.farm, 2022). Currently, Alga.farm is harvesting around 50 kilos of spirulina per week and is planning to scale up in the near future.

### Purpose, vision, and mission

As pointed out in chapter 2, a strong approach to build a brand is from the inside out (according to Straker, 2019). Therefore the purpose, vision and mission should be thoroughly assessed. This was done through a interview with Van Koolwijk about spirulina in general and his passion to start Alga.farm. The outcomes can be found in table 3.

<b>Purpose</b> Why does it exist and what impact does it want to make?	<b>Vision</b> What does fulfilling our purpose look like at a designated time in the future?	<b>Mission</b> What does it do and how?
We strive for climate neutral and nutrient rich food.  We want to change the current food industry, because it is very inefficient and responsible for a huge proportion of greenhouse gases, deforestation and environmental pollution worldwide.	Feeding the growing world population in a responsible way, so the people and the planet will be healthier.	We produce food in a more sustainable way.  We develop photobioreactors that can produce food many times more efficiently than with traditional agriculture or animal husbandry.

Table 3. The purpose, vision, and mission of Alga.farm

## Employees

At the moment, Alga.farm consists of 1 person. Van Koolwijk is the founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Besides him, there are two interns and myself. One of them conducts research on how to optimize the cultivation parameters and also maintains, harvests and packages the spirulina. Another intern is working on improving the reactor and helping with the sales process. Lastly, there is me. I am doing my graduation project in collaboration with Alga.farm and also help with sales one day a week.

## Strengths and challenges

Alga.farm as a company has various strengths and challenges. An interview is conducted with van Koolwijk as he is the only one who knows all about Alga.farm's ins and outs. From this conversation the strengths and challenges as shown in table 4 are gathered.

## Company-brand relation

In consultation with van Koolwijk, it is decided that the parent brand Alga.farm will be partly detached from the 'standalone' child brand (brand of the spread). The spread will have its own brand and its own name. The brand of the spread should be in line with the vision of Alga.farm, but can have a different brand DNA. Nevertheless, the brand of the spread will communicate that the ingredient spirulina comes from Alga.farm to leverage the brand equity and reputation of Alga.farm. Making the spread a daughter brand of Alga.farm, will lower the risk of damaging the image of Alga.farm in case something negative happens to the brand of the spread. Besides, the spread can target a different group or consumers than the target group of Alga.farm.

## STRENGTHS

This fresh spirulina paste has a neutral taste, so it can be used in existing food products without influencing the taste. This is a big advantage for Alga.farm as competitors (spirulina powder) have no neutral taste.

Fresh spirulina is also called a superfood as it is full of protein, containing all essential amino acids, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and polyunsaturated fatty acids. Dried spirulina on the other hand lost a lot of good nutrients. (REFX 16 Agustini, Winarni, et al., 2015)

Alga.farm spirulina is a sustainable ingredient. It uses 99% less water, uses 99% less land, and reduces CO2 emission by 99% compared to beef or even a soybean, which is known as a popular vegan protein source.

Alga.farm designs and makes their own photobioreactors that grow spirulina so they are not dependent on other stakeholders.

By conducting various experiments on how to grow spirulina, the company has found an efficient way to do so and keeps improving it.

Growing the spirulina in the photobioreactors makes it possible to produce locally. Basically, it could be grown wherever there is electricity and space for a reactor.

Alga.farm does not use bad chemicals or pesticides to grow spirulina in the reactors. Which makes it not harmful to nature.

Alga.farm is the only company in the Netherlands that grows spirulina.

Table 4. Strengths and challenges of Alga.farm



## CHALLENGES

Alga.farm is still a startup, so they produce on a small scale. As a result, the manufacturing price is relatively high and so is the selling price.

Shelf life. In the freezer fresh spirulina stays good for a long time, at least a year. However, it does not last long in the fridge, just up to a couple of days. Furthermore, the taste of the paste changes when stored in the refrigerator, nevertheless it will still be safe to eat.

Not everyone knows what spirulina is and what benefits it has. It is a challenge to make people aware of this. Even people that know about spirulina use dried spirulina because it is already sold in stores. They often do not know that fresh spirulina exists and that it has a lot more nutrients.

Fresh spirulina is basic, the cells will get stressed in conditions where the pH is low (sour), especially when a big change in pH happens suddenly. It is important to keep this in mind when mixing it with other ingredients.

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# Insights

## company analysis

**Alga.farm is a startup that efficiently grows spirulina in the center of Rotterdam. They strive for climate neutral and nutrient rich food to make the people and the planet healthier. The target segment should feel connected with this.**

**Since Alga.farm is a startup and does not have many employees, there are a lot of tasks and not many hands. This means there will be not much time left for tasks related to the spread, for example marketing tasks. This needs to be taken into account when designing the touchpoints and product launch campaign.**

**Alga.farm's spirulina is a nutrient rich and sustainable ingredient of high quality that has a neutral taste. Consumers with a healthy and conscious or sustainable lifestyle can benefit from this.**

**Some challenges that need to be faced are: the relatively high price and the short shelf life of the spirulina, the cells of spirulina do not like sour conditions. Also, people might not know yet about fresh spirulina and its benefits in comparison with the in store sold dried spirulina. It could be that people have a bad association with spirulina, since dried spirulina has a distinct taste.**

**The brand of the spread should be a 'standalone' child brand of Alga.farm, with its own brand DNA and brand name.**

**These insights will be translated into the requirements of Alga.farm in section 4.6.**

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## 4.2 Competitor analysis

This section aims to specify the competitors and to find a way to differentiate from them. Different levels of competition are looked at to get a complete overview. According to Kotler (2001) there are four levels: product form, product category, generic need, and budget competition. They are discussed one by one in the next paragraphs.

### **Product form competition:**

#### **healthy spreads**

This level contains direct competition, products that have similar features with similar values, and also the same price-quality ratio (Kotler, 2001). Researching the offer of Dutch grocery stores showed that no spreads are found with spirulina as an ingredient. Also no spreads are found that communicate that they are healthy and sustainable. On the Dutch market there are some spreads that can be seen as healthy. These spreads have vegetables, legumes, or peas in it. Even though, if you take a look into the ingredients they are not as healthy as people may think. They have for example quite some (added) sugar, salt, and saturated fatty acids. See appendix C for an overview of these “healthy” spreads with their nutrients. The healthiest spread found during the research is the vegan natural Hummus of Albert Heijn.

### **Product category competition:**

#### **spreads**

This level contains products that have the same product category. The product category is *spreads*. Examples of spreads are peanut butter, marmalade, egg salad, sandwich spread.

### **Generic competition:**

#### **sandwich toppings**

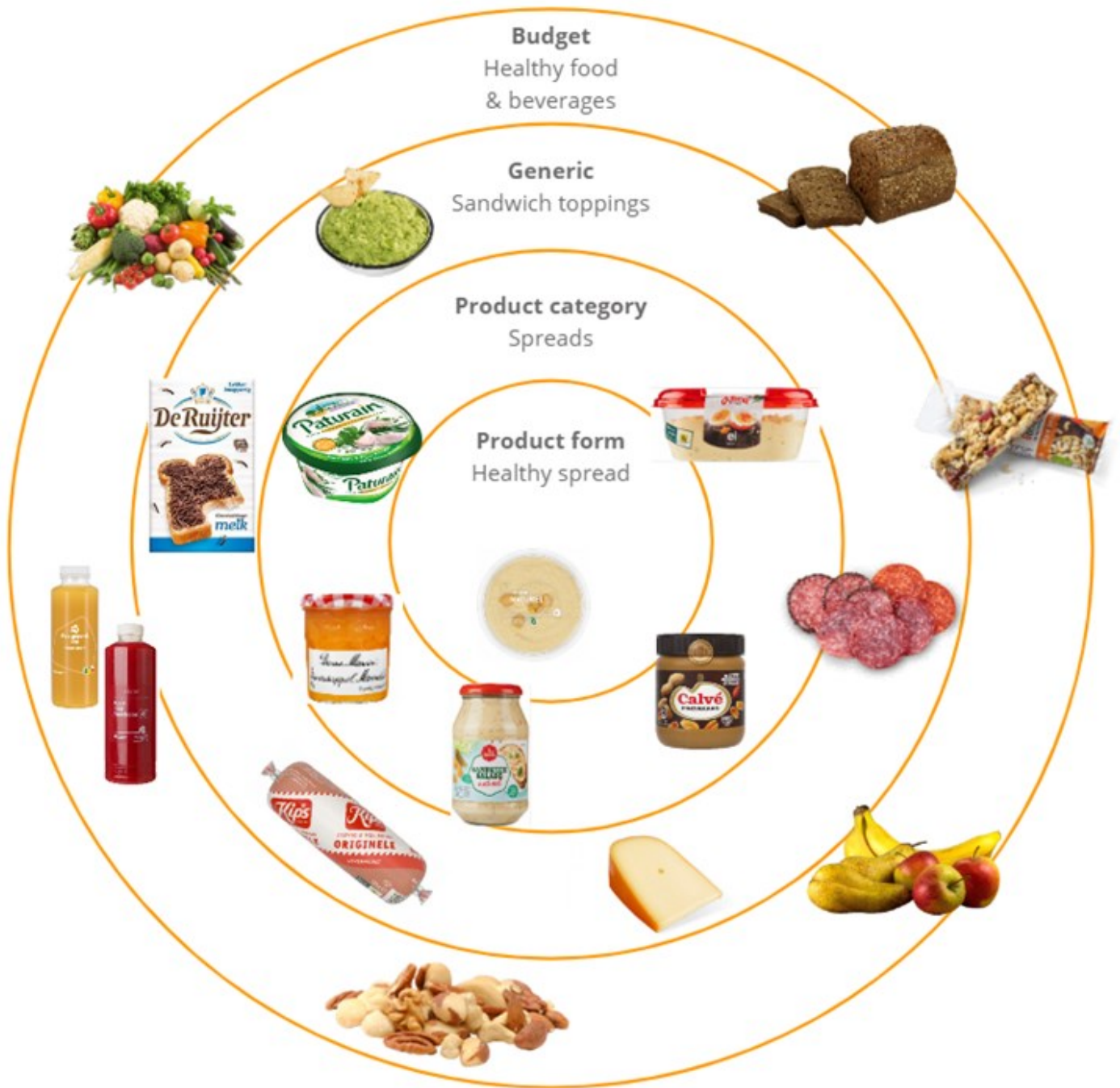
This level of competition are products that fulfill the same need. The need that should be fulfilled is to have something to put on a sandwich. Examples are chocolate sprinkles, guacamole, cheese, herb butter, and salami.

### **Budget competition:**

#### **healthy food & beverages**

This level contains products with the same amount of money that form a more indirect competition. In this case these are healthy food and beverage products with a budget around €3,00, assuming the spread will be around that price. Some examples of healthy food and beverages around this price are juices, fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, whole-wheat products, supplements, nuts bars, banana bread.

Figure 5. Levels of competition



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## Insights

### competitor analysis

The brand does not have direct competition since no spreads exist with spirulina in it. It will need to face competition from other brands that sell spreads or other toppings for sandwiches. The level of sustainability and health will play a role in the differentiation of the brand. In section 5.1 the differentiation is further defined.

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## 4.3 Context analysis

This section contains two parts: the trend analysis and market analysis. The aim of the trend analysis is to understand the context thoroughly and the aim of the market analysis is to identify market areas for the spirulina spread. The trends analysis is more specific and the market analysis is more focussed on two bigger streams on the market: a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.

### Trend analysis

To understand the context, we should take a look at food-trends in the Netherlands to find opportunities and threats for Alga.farm. The approach of the trend research is to find trends that are related to the purpose of Alga.farm. As found in the company analysis (section 4.1), Alga.farm strives for climate neutral and nutrient rich food to make the people and the planet healthier. The trends that are found in this analysis can help to achieve this.

#### *Climate friendly food*

More and more people are becoming vegan or vegetarian, because of animal suffering and environmental reasons. However, meat is not the only factor of global warming. Deforestation is another factor. A lot of trees are taken down for production of soy, used as animal feed or plant-based food for people. More and more people are realizing this and are searching for alternatives (RefX 8 H. Kranstauber, 2022). The diet which keeps the negative impact on the planet as small as possible is called "*reducitarisme*" in Dutch. People with this diet eat less meat, eggs and dairy, but they also choose products that are local and they keep an eye on zero waste packaging. This diet is about conscious choices and creating a better world with the food you eat. (Bedrock, 2022). That people are eating more and more sustainably can be declared by the fact that Dutch grocery stores are selling more and more sustainable food (CBS, 2021).

#### *Plant-based protein*

People need to eat protein to stay healthy. A lot of the protein is taken from dairy, meat and fish. Because the world population is getting bigger and people are getting wealthier the demand for proteins is increasing. To prevent scarcity and to be more sustainable, we should eat less animal and more vegetable proteins according to Aeres (2019).

Nowadays the Netherlands imports most plant-based protein from other parts of the world. The Dutch government is working on a strategy to produce more plant-based protein in the Netherlands (REFX 20. Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit, 2021).

#### *Local food*

Because of climate change, more and more crops can be produced in the Netherlands. For example bananas, their origin is the Tropes, but since this year they have also been grown in the Netherlands in Ede. Also soy grows in the Netherlands nowadays. Since the global temperatures are predicted to increase further more and more foods can be locally produced. (RefX 8 H. Kranstauber, 2022)

In the Netherlands, more people have an interest in regional agriculture, regional products, buying directly from the farmer and urban farming (REFX 21. Voedingscentrum, n.d.)

#### *Healthy and nutritious eating*

Healthy and nutritious eating has gained interest during the pandemic in 2020. Likewise, a trend healthy snacking and immune-boosting food and beverage products started. (REFX 3 Mordor Intelligence, 2021). This includes also consuming sugar-free food and beverages or products with healthier sugar substitutes. (Njam!, 2022)

#### *Brands with a mission*

More and more food brands are opting for a mission-driven approach. They show what great missions are possible and how we can all work hard to improve the world's food. (H. Kranstauber, 2022)



## Market analysis

In the company analysis (section 4.1) it is found that consumers with a healthy and conscious or sustainable lifestyle can benefit from Alga.farm's fresh spirulina. As a second step, it is determined what the Dutch market thinks about being healthy and sustainable. The insights are presented in the following sections. This helps to finally identify the market areas.

### Being sustainable

*Het Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS, 2021)* did research on the attitudes and behaviors of Dutch people towards climate change. 3648 persons of 18 years or older participated. Below outcomes of this research that are related to this project are listed.

- Many people are concerned about climate change.  
Many people (76%) are concerned about the impact of climate change on future generations: 31% are very concerned about this and 45% are somewhat concerned. This shows that around a third of the Dutch market is very concerned about climate change. These people could be potential consumers.
- Most people think their own behavior influences climate change.  
16% think that their own influence on climate change is so limited that it makes no difference what they do or don't do. However, most (58%) believe that their behavior has an effect on climate change. Next to that, 58% of the people think that they should live more climate-consciously. It is interesting to see that so many people are conscious about their behavior toward climate change and that they want to improve that behavior. These people could be interested in a "climate-friendly spread".
- Most people still eat meat, but 1/3 started to eat less meat.  
The vast majority of the population (95%) still eats meat, but it is by no means always a daily fare. More than 1 in 3 has started to eat less meat in the past year. Not only the number of days that meat is eaten, but also the amount of meat that is eaten per day is important for insight into the conscious approach to food. However, this could also be the result of increased meat prices.

## Eating healthy

A research of Albert Heijn, done by Blauw Research (2020) looked into how Dutch people think about eating healthier. 579 Dutch people participated, 319 of them have kids. Below the outcomes of this research that are related to this project are stated.

- Most people pursue healthy/healthier eating. For no less than 80% (the pursuit of) healthy/healthier eating is the order of the day. These people could be interested in a “healthy spread”. Unfortunately it is not known how much of them actually knows what healthy eating exactly is and if they really buy and eat healthy food.
- People want to feel better, lose weight and have more energy.  
The biggest reason why people want to eat healthy/healthier is to feel better/healthier in their bodies (31%). A quarter indicate that they want to lose weight and 18% say they want to have more energy/become fitter. Some have more concrete goals, such as snacking less and/or (bad) snacking, eating less salt, drinking more water or maintaining/not gaining weight.
- The term 'healthier food' is understood to mean (in general):
  - Plenty of fruits and vegetables
  - Less sugar by eating fewer products with sugar, such as cookies and snacks, but also by preparing fewer dishes from packages and bags.
  - Fewer unhealthy snacks, more responsible snacks
  - Drink more water
  - Less meat
  - Eating regularly
  - Macros under control and in balance (carbohydrates, fats, sugars)
  - Low-calorie drinks (alcohol or soft drinks)
  - Consciously enjoy, also tasty (less healthy) things and schedule cheat moments / dishes

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# Insights

## context analysis

### › Trend analysis

**More and more people are getting conscious about eating more climate friendly food. People become vegetarian, vegan and buy more local food. Even the Dutch government is working on a strategy to produce more plant-based protein in the Netherlands. Next to that, healthy and nutritious eating has gained interest during the pandemic. These trends are beneficial since this is exactly what Alga.farm stands for and their spirulina fits perfectly with the climate friendly, local and nutritious aspects. Also found was that more and more brands are opting for a mission-driven approach to show how we can together improve the world's food.**

### › Market analysis

**Research about how the Dutch market thinks about being healthy and sustainable showed that a big part of the Dutch people are aware of climate change and understand they can do something about it. These people could be interested in a “climate-friendly spread”. However, this does not mean all these people also act like it. It can be interesting to find a way to convince these people to buy the product to really make an impact, because more sales means a bigger positive impact on the world.**

**Most people (80%) pursue healthy(er) eating, because they want to feel better, lose weight or have more energy. It is interesting to see that so many Dutch people are mindful about healthy eating. They could be interested in a “healthy spread”. This still does not mean that they are all actually eating healthy(er). Because do people really know what is healthy for them? For example, a vegetable spread sounds healthy, but if you look into the nutritional value it may say it contains a lot of sugar. An interesting aspect could be to educate people how to eat healthier. In this way they can be convinced to choose our spread over others.**

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## 4.4 Consumer analysis

Up until this point in the design process, all research focuses on the Dutch population as the market. But as a target market, this is too broad. Therefore this section aims to specify this market and define specific needs to design for.

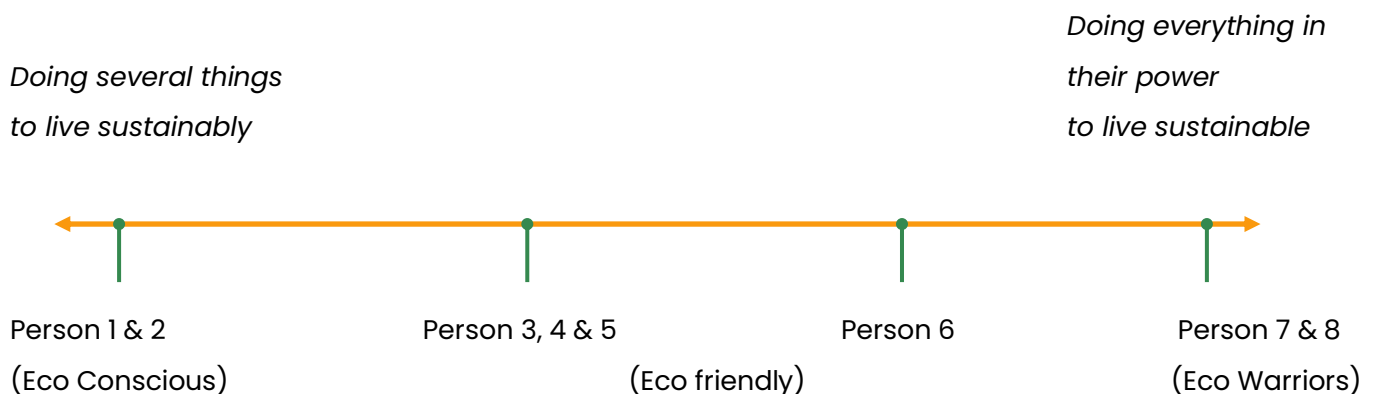
To make a brand that fits with the target group it is essential to understand this target group and find their needs. In order to achieve this understanding qualitative research is done in the form of an interview. The questions are divided into 4 themes: sustainability, packaging design, brand strategy, and general information. See appendix D for an overview of the questions and an explanation of their purpose.

### Participants

8 people were interviewed that take sustainability into their lifestyle. To judge whether they incorporate sustainability in a way that fits this research they explained what sustainability means to them and how they implement it in their lives. Between the participants there was a difference in how their interest in sustainability affects their acts/life/daily decisions. Some are more driven/active than others. In the interviews the following scale was used to get an idea of their efforts to live sustainably. The scale reaches from doing several things to live sustainably to doing everything to live sustainably:

Person 1 and 2 try to eat as less meat as they can and buy second hand clothes or clothes with better quality. Person 3, 4 and 5 are vegetarian, two of which are even vegan. They try to buy everything second hand, as new sustainable products are mostly too expensive. In addition, fairtrade is very important for them. Person 6 is slightly older than the other participants and earns on average more money. Person 6's highest priority when buying a product is its sustainability. However, the sparse choice of sustainable products makes it difficult. Person 7 and 8 want to live as sustainable as possible and put time into it to make it happen. They go to ecological markets or the farmers instead of the grocery stores to avoid packaging waste and to make the product-to-consumer chain smaller to reduce CO2 emission. They also make food recipes themselves, to avoid eating produced food. For example, they will make their own hummus instead of buying it in the grocery store.

It was decided not to include persons 7 and 8 - the eco warriors - into the target group, since they will not buy a spread in the grocery store. The target group selected for this research includes the eco-conscious and -friendly people that are mindful about sustainability and want to be more sustainable. They mentioned that it is not always clear when and if food is sustainable and that they are open to trying out new things.





## Insights interviews

All the answers of the interviews were put together and clustered. Of these clusters a summary is made which you can find in Appendix E. From this summary insights could be concluded. I selected the insights that were mentioned most frequently, have value for my project, fits with Alga.farm, fits with a campagne, and is feasible.

### > Sustainability is important to the participants, because they feel responsible to do something good for the world and the future

The participants think sustainability is not only about our behavior towards the environment and animals, but also our attitude towards humans. Sustainability is seen as how people treat the environment and animals, but also each other as people. They have compassion for nature, animals and other people and want all of this to be treated with respect.

“Sustainable is that you are aware that we all live on this planet and that we are willing to give something up or change something.”

Female, Eco-friendly, 25 years old

The aforementioned aspects about which conscious choices can be made to make a positive impact are: eating less, eating plant-based food, eating no meat, wasting as little food as possible, eating seasonal fruit and vegetables. They also look at the origin of the product or the nutrients, especially in fruit and vegetables. A short food chain is desirable, preferably food from a country near the Netherlands. As a result, the food kilometers will be less and there will be less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from transport. Water consumption was also mentioned. Someone deliberately mentioned eating less avocados because they use a lot of water during cultivation.

### > It is hard for the participants to determine if something is sustainable (unclear)

#### – The participants states that there are a lot of aspects for sustainability

The participants found it difficult to say what information they need to assess whether a product is sustainable, because there are many aspects of sustainability. One solution is to do your shopping at Gimsel or Ekoplaza, for example, because they have already researched what is sustainable and to prevent as much waste as possible.

Nobody could really say that he/she lives sustainably, because it can always be better. Some even feel a little guilty if they make a less sustainable choice. Sustainability is therefore better seen as something relative than something black and white. Because sustainability can always be improved, consumers think it is good if a brand is at least involved with positive impact, and makes conscious choices.

#### – There is too little information available for the participants to determine if something is sustainable

There is not enough information available to determine whether a product is sustainable and it takes a lot of time to figure out what is truly sustainable. In addition, there is not always a lot of choice, so it is difficult to find something sustainable that also appeals to the taste of the consumer. If they do not like the taste of the product, they will not buy it again.

#### – It is not always clear to the participants if claims that brands use are part of green-washing or not, so the consumer wants that the message on the food packaging should be clear with no false/empty claims.

People who eat vegetarian or plant-based pay attention to the green check mark on the products in the grocery store, so that they know that it is vegetarian or vegan.

In the grocery store the consumer chooses a product by comparing it with the other products in the grocery store. It must therefore look good and there must be no empty claims on the packaging. The claims must be mea-

asurable, understandable and distinguishable. Using plastic is okay if it is recycled. It is nice if it is mentioned that the (plastic) packaging is sustainable, because two of the interviewers did not know that plastic is not necessarily the worst choice. They did not know glass can be less durable than plastic. Someone mentioned that it would be useful to have a CO2 impact stamp for all food, to be able to compare it with each other.

### **The participants like brands that have a mission to make a positive impact on the world**

The trend research has already shown that a brand with a mission is a trend. This also emerged during the interviews. In addition, they want the brand to really propagate what they do with regard to positive impact, for example on the website. If they are enthusiastic about the brand or product they like to pass on this information on to other people, such as friends. In addition, almost everyone mentioned that they think transparency is very important. The brand must clearly explain why they have chosen certain choices and provide proof, for example, why it is more sustainable. Consumers also want information about how the raw materials are obtained, how the production process is, how people are looked at (whether it is fair trade, for example), how important things are taken into account.

It was also mentioned that they think it is important that the brand is honest about things that can be improved.

### **The participants think sustainable products are (too) expensive.**

Some of the participants mentioned that they have no money for new sustainable brands, since it is much more expensive than not sustainable brands.

### **The most used digital media of the participants is Instagram**

Instagram is the platform where most of the time is spent. In addition, newsletters (by e-mail) from the ASN bank and health insurers provide tips about sustainable living once in a while.

### **5 participants noted that they pay attention to eat healthy**

The other 3 participants were not asked about their diet. The participants live consciously. They do not only feel responsible for the health of the environment, but also about their own health.

### **Favourite brands of the participants have the brand personally excitement**

The favourite brands of the participants are Good On You, Miss Morrison, Gimsel Rotterdam, Vindet, Fairphone, Wakuli, Holie, Oatly, Tony's Chocolonely, and Happy Earth.

These brands are examined to find out what kind of brand personality the consumer likes.

This is done with the brand personality scale (Aaker, 1997) as discussed in the theory (chapter 2).

As you can see in table 5, most brands express the personality excitement. Figure 6 below shows these brands.

Brand	Brand personality dimension
<b>Good On You</b>	Excitement: daring, trending, cool, young, contemporary, independent Sophistication: good-looking, charming, smooth
<b>Miss Morrison</b>	Sincerity: Down-to-earth, small town, honest, real, friendly, sentimental
<b>Gimsel Rotterdam</b>	Sincerity: Familyoriented, honest, real, friendly
<b>Vindet</b>	Sincerity: Down-to-earth, real, friendly, cheerful
<b>Fairphone</b>	Excitement: Daring, trendy, young, unique
<b>Wakuli</b>	Excitement: Daring, trendy, cool, unique
<b>Holie</b>	Excitement: Daring, trendy, young, unique, spirited
<b>Oatly</b>	Excitement: Daring, trendy, spirited, cool, young, unique, contemporary
<b>Tony's Chocolonely</b>	Excitement: Daring, trendy, spirited, cool, young, unique, contemporary
<b>Happy Earth</b>	Sincerity: Familyoriented, honest, original, cheerful, friendly Excitement: spirited, young, unique

Table 5. Overview brands with their brand personality dimension



Figure 6. Brands with a excitement personality

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# Insights consumer analysis

Target segments that were found: Eco Conscious, Eco friendly, and Eco Warriors. During the consumer research it became clear that the eco warrior is not a promising segment since they make spreads themselves instead buying it in the grocery store.

The participants that fit into the potential consumer segment (the eco-conscious and eco-friendly consumer) are curious to try out new things. This is positive for the brand, because the product can be a spread that does not exist yet.

Sustainability is important to the participants, because they feel responsible to do something good for the world and the future. Therefore they like to buy products that have a positive impact on the world. But it is hard for the participants to determine if a product is sustainable. Since there are a lot of aspects for sustainability, there is too little information available, and it is not always clear to the participants if claims that brands use are part of greenwashing or not. This also makes it time consuming to figure out if a product is (really) sustainable.

There lies an opportunity for the brand to fulfill this need of clarity. The brand should build trust by explaining clearly why it is sustainable with facts and also where there is still room for improvements.

The participants are aware that sustainable products can be more expensive, and they are willing to pay more. But they also mentioned that sustainable products can be too expensive. This should be taken into account during the food and packaging design process.

The participants do not only feel responsible for the health of the environment, but also about their own health.

The favourite brands of the participants have mostly the brand personality dimension excitement. This personality dimension will also be used for the brand personality of the spread that will be discussed in section 5.3.

These insights will be translated into the consumer requirements in section 4.6 and will be used for designing the personas (section 5.2) and brand DNA (section 5.3).

## 4.5 Collaborator analysis

This section aims to find the requirements of the food producer, packaging company and retailers, which are used later during the strategic direction (chapter 5).

### Spread producer & packaging company

An enthusiastic spread producer was found that is located in Zeeland, a province in the south of the Netherlands. After a phone call they got enthusiastic and after our first meeting, it was clear we are going to work together. They are called "the spread producer" hereafter.

This spread producer stands for conscious eating and quality. They develop fresh bread and toast spreads, hummus, tapenades and (dip) sauces with organic ingredients where possible and without additives. They make sure it still has a minimum shelf life of 21 days.

The spread producer is innovative, they like to challenge themselves and search for all possibilities to optimize their products. Sustainability is important to them. To further minimize their ecological footprint, for example, energy consumption is closely monitored and most of the energy is generated by means of solar panels.

Since spirulina is a new ingredient, it first needs to be tested if the ingredient stays stable and how it contributes to the shelf-life. After this, different samples can be made to develop a tasty spread.

This spread producer does not only develop and produce spreads, they also do the packaging, sales and distribution. After the meeting with the spread producer requirements are defined, in section 4.6.

### Retailers

The spread producer supplies to wholesalers and large grocery stores in the Netherlands and also Belgium. Their products that are available on the Dutch market are, for example: Marqt, Ekoplaza, and Odin. The spread producer knows the requirements of the retailer and will make sure the spread meets them. For example, a quality test and shelf life test will be done.

In a conversation with the company manager of Ekoplaza Delft and Rotterdam Hillegersberg, it became clear that the grocery stores add 30 to 35% profit on spreads. The manager also mentioned the product should be organic if it is sold in Ekoplaza.

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## Insights collaborator analysis

**A spread producer was found that fits with Alga.farm. They stand for innovation and sustainability and want to work together to develop a spread with the new ingredient spirulina. Since the spread producer is a recognized spread supplier, it will be a good strategy to let them do the sales of the bigger retailers that they are already connected with.**

**Grocery stores add 30 to 35 % profit on spreads, this can be used to calculate the product price as it will be in the grocery store. These insights can be used for the list of requirements of the stakeholders (section 4.6).**

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## 4.6 Stakeholders requirements

The assignment of the project is to design a brand, food product, and market strategy in line with the values and requirements of the stakeholders. In this chapter, the 5C analysis was done to find these requirements. These requirements are used as base for the design stages of the project. In the tables below the listed requirements per stakeholder can be found. See for elaboration of the requirements appendix F.

Requirements Alga.farm
The spread should be a 'standalone' child brand of Alga.farm, with its own brand DNA and own brand name
The brand should contribute to a more sustainable world
The product should have fresh spirulina as an ingredient, not less than 10%.
The product should be vegan to not harm animals
The product should be locally cultivated and produced.
The product should be nutritious
The product should be developed, produced, launched in a budget-proof way
Marketing should not be much work

Requirements consumer
The spread product should be tasty
It should be clear that the product is sustainable
There should be enough information available for the consumer to determine for themselves if the product is sustainable
It should not take too much time to figure out if the product is sustainable
The brand should not use false/empty claims
The brand should have a mission to make a positive impact on the world
The brand should propagate what they do with regard to positive impact
The brand should explain why they have made certain decisions
The brand should provide proof for what it says
The brand should be honest about things that can be improved
There should be a green check mark on the packaging that says it is vegan or vegetarian
The spread should not be too expensive in comparison with other spreads. The ingredients of the spread should be relatively cheap, so adding spirulina would not make it too expensive.
The online communication channel should be Instagram

**Requirements spread producer** (includes food producer, packaging company, retailers)

The minimum shelf-life after production should be about 28 days.

Prefer plastic over glass packaging.

There are a number of packaging from which to choose, for the choice of a different packaging a mold must be made and that is expensive.

The product must be able to be processed in such a way that the cell walls remain intact and the spirulina does not fall apart.

Ideally, the spread producer will store and process frozen spirulina. If fresh, they will have to receive fresh spirulina every week.

The minimum quantity to be produced is 50kg end product (spread)

The spirulina must be able to be supplied with consistency (always when needed)

The less moisture the spirulina contains, the better for the production process.

No added E numbers

Using organic ingredients.

The spread producer will do the sales, unless clearly discussed with Alga.farm

# 5. Strategic direction

After the previous chapter concluded with relevant contextual insights and stakeholder requirements, this chapter converts these into the strategic direction, including the product differentiation (5.1), personas to clarify the target segments (5.2), brand DNA (5.3) and brand core values (5.4). This strategy is the basis of the next chapters which consist of more practical decisions.

**5.1 Product differentiation**

**5.2 Persona**

**5.3 Brand DNA**

*purpose*

*positioning*

*personality*

**5.4 Brand core values**

**5.5 Conclusion**



# 5.1 Product differentiation

## Differentiating from the competition

The core elements and unique selling point (USP) of spirulina is that it is a sustainable and nutritious food. During this research it was found that at this moment no other similar spread exists in the current Dutch market, that focussed on being sustainable and healthy at the same time (see section 3.2). From consumer research, sustainability was found to be a broad and confusing subject. Therefore it is beneficial to better understand which parts of sustainability are most important for consumers.

According to Keller (2003), personal value and meaning that the consumers associate with the brand's product attributes are called benefits. These benefits can be functional, emotional or social. Functional benefits are benefits through product attributes, emotional benefits are benefits that convey a feeling to the consumer, and social benefits correspond to self-identity or self-image of the consumer (Keller, 2003).

An emotional benefit of sustainability that was found in consumer research is feeling responsible. The consumer is conscious about the world's problems and they feel responsible to do something about it.

Sustainability as a topic of a benefit can be tricky because of greenwashing. Companies are falsely claiming that they are more environmentally friendly than they actually are. Consumers are aware of this and can be skeptical. Therefore, the sustainability benefits of the spread should be perceived as clear and true by the consumer.

Besides this, an emotional benefit of eating healthy that was found during the market analysis is to feel better/healthier in their bodies.

These emotional benefits are very general, because many sustainable and healthy products tap into these emotional benefits. As was found in the consumer research, the consumer wants to know *why* a brand is sustainable and not that it is sustainable. It is not easy for consumers to trust a (new) brand since companies use green-washed claims. Since sustainability and eating healthy is popular at the moment, a lot of companies claim they are sustainable or healthy even though they are not or they make false or empty claims.

To stand out, the brand should clearly say *how* they are a healthy and sustainable product. From the consumer research it became apparent that the consumer needs proof. The *how's* are the functional benefits and can be used as the core message of the brand. The emotional benefits should be communicated more in the end, to "seal the deal".

## Functional benefits

### – Local food

Spirulina is being harvested in Rotterdam. Producing locally is an important aspect for Alga.farm. They designed their relatively small photoreactors to grow food efficiently, so it could grow food anywhere in the world, even in cities. This is a big difference with the current traditional agriculture where food is mostly grown in big fields outside of the city. In this way, Alga.farm can bring the food closer to the people. To design a spread that has ingredients that are all grown in Rotterdam is not realistic, since the food industry is not yet developed to do so. It is however realistic to use ingredients that are only grown in the Netherlands, which is still local for the Dutch market. This is a clear message to the consumer that the spirulina spread is locally produced. As found in consumer research the potential target group understands that locally made products provide less CO2 emissions because of the shorter transport distance. In addition, an important aspect of sustainability is that humans are treated well. Using local food products contributes to this, since in the Netherlands there is a strict policy on good working conditions.

– *Nutritious food*

To make people feel better/healthier in their bodies, they should eat food that is nutritious. Nutritious food consists of nutrients that your body needs to function well. What these nutrients are, will be discussed later on in the report.

Spirulina is a nutrient-dense food, it should be combined with other nutrient rich ingredients to make a spread with a high nutritional value.

In figure 7 an overview is given of the emotional and functional benefits that the spread should meet based on the insights described above.

As discussed in the previous section, the differentiation of the spread can be based on the fact that it contains local ingredients with high nutritional value. The brand and its competitors have been mapped on two axes to visualize the distinctive positioning see figure 8. In appendix G you can find background information about the competing brands.

In Figure 8, the brand is positioned in the right upper corner which is an area of opportunity. No other brands are found that sell spreads with local ingredients that together have a high nutritional value. Brands in the left lower area of the map do not use local ingredients and use ingredients with a low nutritional value. These brands, for example *Heinz* and *Kips*, position themselves as authentic quality brands. Above these brands an area can be found with brands that have organic ingredients. Organic food can be perceived by the consumer as higher nutritional value because no chemicals are used for its color, smell and taste. In the top left corner, brands can be found that state that their spreads have around 60% vegetables, but do not use local ingredients. In the right middle of the map brands are positioned that sell food that is locally harvested and produced. These brands can also be perceived by the consumer as having a higher nutritional value because the food products are fresh from the farm. Nevertheless, the spreads they sell are mostly marmalades that contain a lot of sugar.

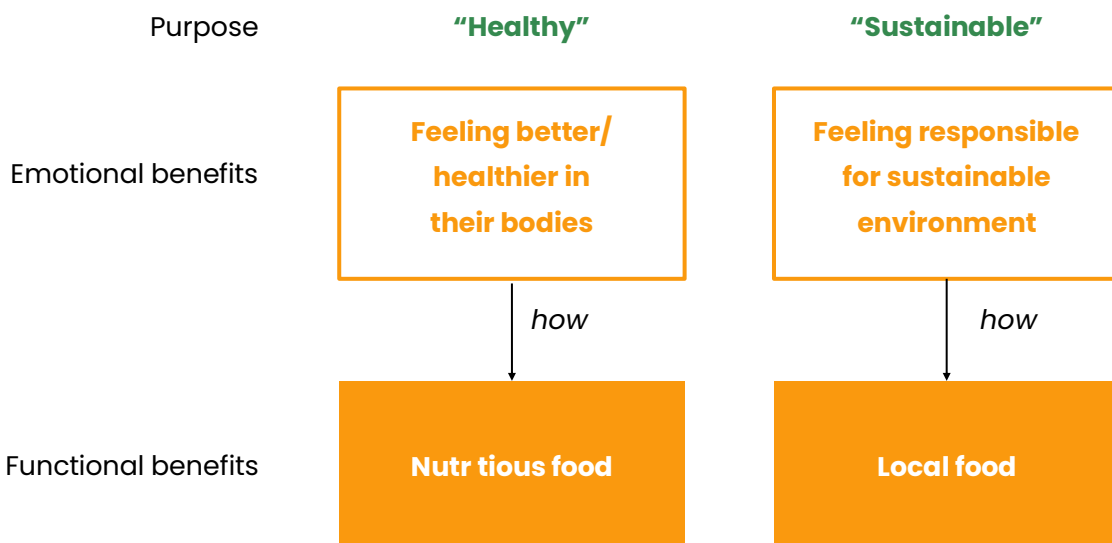


Figure 7. Overview of the emotional and functional benefits



Figure 8. Brand positioning map

**To conclude, the brand could strongly differentiate itself from the competitors by positioning itself as a brand that uses local ingredients that have a high nutritious value. In the next section personas will be created based on this brand positioning. The positioning will be further developed in section 5.3 with the brand DNA model.**

## 5.2 Persona

This section aims to clarify the target segments. Personas are created to develop customer profiles of each segment that can be used for the design process (Beverland, 2018). The personas could be created based on the insights of the consumer research of the previous chapter and on how the product is differentiated. The brand could successfully target two market segments: the eco-conscious and eco-friendly people. These people are conscious about climate change and their own health and they believe they can do something about it.

### Persona 1: Eco conscious



Leon, 30 years old.

Since a year now, he is conscious about climate change and understands things have to change. He tries to eat less meat, because he knows that is a big factor of the problem. He also tries to buy more clothes of brands with better quality, instead of clothes from the fast-fashion stores. He finds these brands on a website that tells about sustainable brands.

It is not always clear for him when and if something is sustainable. He is open to learning about sustainability, but will not actively search for papers about sustainability. He is also open to trying out new things. He mostly does groceries at Albert Heijn.

Personality: down to earth, friendly, flexible

Brands: Miss Morrison, Good On You

Values: transparency, convenience, information to understand why something is sustainable.

## Persona 2: Eco friendly



Lisa, 27 years old.

She is vegetarian and she tries to eat vegan as much as possible.

She feels responsible for the future of the world, because people are a major contributor to climate change. She does her best to keep her part in it as small as possible. She buys second-hand clothes and also tries to buy her stuff second-hand. It is not always easy to live sustainably, sustainability has many aspects. That is why she now and then reads something about sustainability to gain more knowledge little by little in order to live more and more sustainably. She sometimes feels a little guilty knowing she's making a less sustainable choice. She enjoys buying stuff and food from brands that want to make a positive impact on the world, because it makes her feel like she's doing something good. When she sees a new sustainable product or brand, she reads about it on the internet. If it fits in her bud-

get, she's eager to try it out. And if she likes the product, she tells her friends about it. She also tries to live a healthy life: eat enough fruit and vegetables, use the bicycle where possible (so no CO2 emissions), and eat enough protein because she does not eat meat. She prefers to use natural products for her body and hair care and for household cleaning supplies. Human rights are important to her, so she prefers to buy fair trade chocolate and coffee. She likes to do groceries at Ekoplaza.

Personality: Curious, enthusiastic, compassionate

Brands: Oatly, HAPPY EARTH, Holie foods, Ekoplaza

Values: Transparency, detailed information to determine if something is sustainable, innovativeness (in field of sustainability)

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**To conclude, the eco-conscious and eco-friendly people are two promising market segments that the brand can target. They are both conscious about climate change and their own health and they believe they can do something about it.**

**The brand could first focus on the eco-friendly market segment, because they are more likely to buy the product since they are more driven to make a positive impact on the world. Later on, to make a bigger impact, the eco-conscious people can be targeted as well.**

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## 5.3 Brand DNA

To develop the base of the brand we use the Brand DNA model (van der Vorst 2021) as described in the theory (chapter 2).

### Purpose

Van der Vorst (2021) states that a brand purpose is a deep belief that is embedded in a societal and cultural context. It is a story, not a sentence. He explains the structure should be like: "We see this ..., and therefore we believe this ..."

The brand's purpose:

We strive for a climate-neutral and nutrient-rich spread.

Nowadays ingredients travel over the whole world to arrive on your plate, which causes significant gas emissions that are a negative impact for the environment.

We want to change this! We believe that delicious and healthy food exists that does not have to travel such a big distance.

### Positioning

The positioning of a brand explains what it offers to whom. It should contain the target audience, product category, product attributes, functional benefits, emotional benefits, and self-expressive benefits (Van der Vorst, 2021).

The following positioning was constructed:

For eco-conscious and -friendly people, we offer a nutritious spread with local ingredients, which makes people feel better/healthier in their bodies and makes them feel like they take their responsibility for a healthier environment.

### Personality

The brand personality was defined in section 4.2 after examining favorite brands of people of the target segment. The brand personalities is of the dimension excitement:

Daring, young, spirited

---

To conclude, a visual overview of the Brand DNA is shown below in figure 9.

**We strive for climate-neutral and nutrient-rich food.**

**Nowadays food travels over the whole world to arrive on your plate, which causes a lot of gas emissions that are bad for the environment.**

**We want to change this! We believe delicious and healthy food exists that does not have to travel such a big distance.**

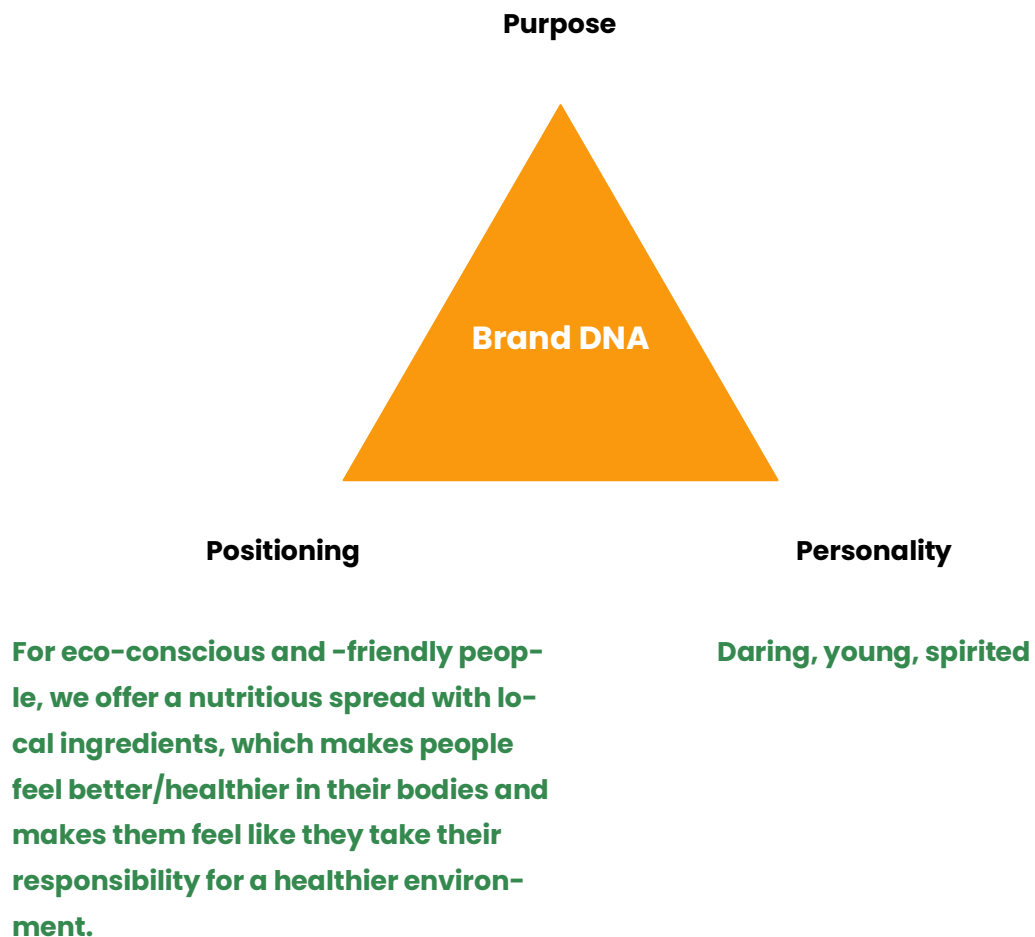


Figure 9. Brand DNA

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## 5.4 Brand core values

This section aims to define the brand core values that guiding factors for the food design (chapter 6), visual brand design (chapter 7), packaging design (chapter 8), brand messaging (chapter 9), final product and communication (chapter 10).

According to Urde (2003) core values that the brand stands for should be added values for the consumer. Therefore, the brand core values are constructed by the company beliefs and the needs of the consumer (see chapter 4).

### Purposeful

- We are a spread with a purpose to strive for climate-neutral and nutrient-rich food.
- We can only make an impact together, so the consumer has to help to spread the green!

### Inspiring

- With our spread we want to show that food can be delicious, sustainable and healthy all at the same time. We hope that other manufacturers will follow us.
- We can not push other people to change, but we can inspire them!

### Transparent

- We are clear and honest about what, how and why we do things.
- We honestly say what still can be improved.

### Factual

- The information we give is factual and without false claims.
- Information we give is to educate the consumer to be better for the world and themselves.

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**To conclude, the brand core values are purposeful, inspiring, transparent, and factual. These values will be used as guiding factors in the design processes of the product and communication of the rest of the project.**

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## 5.5 Conclusion

### strategic direction

This chapter converted the 5C analysis and all the requirements of the stakeholders into the strategic direction.

The brand can strongly differentiate itself from the competitors by positioning itself as a brand that uses local ingredients that have a high nutritious value.

A brand DNA was made, with its purpose, positioning and personality. The brand's purpose is defined as:

“We strive for a climate neutral and nutrient rich spread. Nowadays ingredients travel over the whole world to arrive on your plate, which causes significant gas emissions that are a negative impact for the environment. We want to change this! We believe that delicious and healthy food exists that does not have to travel such a big distance.”.

The target segments eco-conscious and eco-friendly can resonate with this purpose, because they also want to make a positive impact on the environment and their health. The purpose states clearly how to achieve this.

The brand's positioning is:

“For eco-conscious and -friendly people, we offer a nutritious spread with local ingredients, which makes people feel better/healthier in their bodies and makes them feel like they take their responsibility for a healthier environment.”

The positioning makes clear how it differs from competitors and how the product gives value to the consumer. This positioning will serve as a basis for all of the upcoming chapters.

A personality is chosen based on the personalities of the favourite brand of the target segment. These brands were found in the consumer analysis in chapter 3.5. The brand personality is: Daring, young, and spirited. This personality will be used for designing the touchpoints to enhance consumer-brand bonds.

The brand core values are purposeful, inspiring, transparent, and factual. These values will be used as guiding factors for the food design (chapter 6), visual brand design (chapter 7), packaging design (chapter 8), brand messaging (chapter 9), final product and communication (chapter 10).

# 6. Food design

*After the previous chapter focused on market strategy, this and the following chapters entail more practical decisions. This chapter covers the design process of the spread recipe with spirulina as an ingredient. To do that, research is done on what healthy (6.1) and sustainable (6.2) food is to find guidelines to design a spread that fits the brand. After these findings are derived, research is done to find ingredients for the spread that combine well. Also, some recipe tests are done which result in a concept recipe (6.3). Finally, a project brief is made for a chef (of the spread production company) to optimize the recipe for industrial scale and make it a delicious production-ready spread (6.4).*

*6.1 Healthy food*

*6.2 Sustainable food*

*6.3 Research ingredients*

*6.4 Design brief spread*

*6.5 Conclusion*

# 6.1 Healthy food

As one of the core goals of the brand is to offer a spread that contains a high nutritious value, this section aims to understand what nutrients are and what they do for the body.

## Nutrients

Around 50 nutrients are needed for all processes in our body, like building and repairing the body, supplying energy and controlling all processes that take place in the body (Voedingscentrum, n.d.). In table 6 below an overview is made of these different kinds of nutrients and their function.

Protein, fats, sugars, and starch give energy to the body. The best would be when your body is in energy balance. This happens when the energy that comes in the body, also gets used. When the body gets more energy than it uses, your body weight will increase. And the other way around, you will lose body weight.

The amount of energy is expressed in calories (cal). The needed calories to be in energy balance is different for every person. On average, Voedingscentrum (n.d.) assumes 2,000 kilocalories (kcal) for women and 2,500 kcal for men.

Nutrient	Function	
<b>Water</b>	"Water has numerous roles in the human body. It acts as a building material; as a solvent, reaction medium and reactant; as a carrier for nutrients and waste products; in thermoregulation; and as a lubricant and shock absorber." (Jéquier &	
<b>Protein (amino acids)</b>	Proteins are a fuel for the body, and are needed for the construction and maintenance of muscles, organs, nervous system, hormones, enzymes and blood.	
<b>Fats</b>	Fats are a fuel for the body. There are unsaturated and saturated fats. It is better to use unsaturated fats instead of saturated fats because it lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease. Because of the same reason it is better to avoid trans fat. (REFX	
<b>Carbohydrates</b> - <i>sugars</i> - <i>starch</i> - <i>dietary fibers</i>	Sugars and starch are a fuel for the body. The Health Council indicates that starch is a healthier source of carbohydrates than sugars. The advice is not to eat too many products with added sugar. (Voedingscentrum, n.d.)	Dietary fibers (fibers) contribute to good digestion, a feeling of fullness after eating and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and colon cancer. Because there are many different types of fiber, each with their own good properties, it is important to eat fiber from different types of foods. (Voedingscentrum, n.d.)
<b>Vitamins &amp; Minerals</b>	Vitamins and minerals do not provide energy but are needed to release the energy from the macronutrients and the amino acids from protein. They are also important for the proper functioning of many processes in the body.	

Table 6. Overview nutrients and their function

## Nutrition claims

A food product can have nutrition claims on its labels and advertising that indicate that the product has certain properties (NVWA, n.d.). A food must meet the requirements of a claim to be allowed to carry it. A nutrition claim may only be used if it is on the European list of approved claims. The nutrition claim says something positive about the composition of a product.

(Voedingscentrum, n.d.) The claims 'light' or 'rich in fiber' are examples of this. These claims can help as a tool to find the right balance between the macros of the spread. See a list of all the nutrition claims in appendix H.

## Nutri-Score

The Dutch government (Rijksoverheid) considers it important that consumers can quickly and easily opt for healthy(er) food (Rijksoverheid, n.b.). The food choice logo Nutri-Score can help with this. It was developed in France by doing independent and sound research (Consumentenbond, 2019). Nutri-Score helps consumers to compare products easily and quickly. In this way they can make healthier choices in the grocery store (Rijksoverheid, n.b.).

The logo gives a score about the product with colors and letters. A product gets plus points for protein, fiber, fruit, vegetable, legumes, nuts. A product gets minus points for energy content (kcal), sugars, saturated fat, and salt.

Based on the total score, a product is assigned an A, B, C, D or E. A dark green A stands for the healthiest composition within the product group. Products with the least healthy composition receive a red E (Rijksoverheid, n.b.). See figure 10.



Figure 10. The difference for the different nutri-scores.

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**To conclude, around 50 nutrients are needed for all processes in our body to function well. These nutrients have different functions and are needed in different proportions. A nutrition claim is a claim that says something positive about the nutrition composition of a food product. These claims can be used on the packaging to inform the consumer about a positive nutritional value. In consumer research (chapter 3.5) it was found that the consumer does not want false or empty claims of brands, these nutrition claims are factual and support why the spread is nutritious. They also can help as a tool to find the right balance between the nutrients of the spread. The right ingredients should be found in a good ratio to meet these claims. To emphasize the spread is nutritious, as many nutrition claims as possible should be fulfilled. Also, the Nutri-Score logo can help to inform the consumer that the product has a positive nutritional value. Nutri-score A stands for the healthiest composition within the product group. Another way of emphasizing that the spread is nutritious is when it has the logo of Nutri-Score A on the packaging.**

---

## 6.2 Sustainable food

Many companies apply the tactic to make their packaging more sustainable, not the products themselves. They, for example, use recycled material or material that can be easily recycled after use. This section explores how food itself can be sustainable.

During an expert workshop (RIVM, 2013) effect categories were selected that are considered relevant for determining the environmental impact of food products. These categories are climate change, land use, acidification, eutrophication (marine and salt water), water consumption and soil degradation (see table 7).

Effect category	Explanation
<b>Climate change</b> (kg CO <sub>2</sub> equivalent)	<p>Dutch meat consumption annually contributes 12 megatons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents to the environmental aspect of climate change, followed by dairy products (including cheese) with 7 megatons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents.</p> <p>The total Dutch food consumption is responsible for the annual emission of 35 megatons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents. For comparison: greenhouse gas emissions in the Netherlands in 2014 are estimated at 187 megatons<sup>4</sup>. Greenhouse gas emissions for the other product groups are many orders of magnitude lower.</p>
<b>Land use</b> (m <sup>2</sup> * year)	<p>Land use is relatively high for the product groups meat and dairy and cheese (respectively 1.2 * 10<sup>10</sup> m<sup>2</sup> per year and 4.5 * 10<sup>9</sup> m<sup>2</sup> per year out of a total of 3.2 * 10<sup>10</sup> m<sup>2</sup> per year). This is caused by the land area needed for raising livestock and producing animal feed.</p>
<b>Acidification</b> (kg SO <sub>2</sub> equivalent)	<p>Acidification is expressed in kg SO<sub>2</sub> equivalents. The emission of this by Dutch meat consumption is 2.6 * 10<sup>8</sup> kg SO<sub>2</sub> equivalents per year and by Dutch dairy consumption (including cheese) 1.4 * 10<sup>8</sup> in kg SO<sub>2</sub> equivalents per year. Emissions from manure are largely responsible for this. The other product groups score significantly lower.</p>
<b>Eutrophication:</b> <b>marine</b> (kg N equivalent) <b>salt water</b> (kg P equivalent)	<p>For the effects of eutrophication on the freshwater environment (expressed in kg P equivalents) and the marine environment (expressed in kg N equivalents), livestock farming for Dutch consumption causes the greatest environmental impact: meat consumption is responsible for 2.1 * 10<sup>6</sup> kg P equivalents and 1.1 * 10<sup>8</sup> kg N equivalents per year and the dairy sector for 8.6 * 10<sup>5</sup> kg P equivalents and 5.7 * 10<sup>7</sup> kg N equivalents per year.</p>
<b>Water consumption</b> (m <sup>3</sup> )	<p>For the aspect of water consumption, after meat (with 1.7 * 10<sup>8</sup> m<sup>3</sup> per year), fruit is the largest consumer with 9.2 * 10<sup>7</sup> m<sup>3</sup> per year. The irrigation of exotic fruits, such as kiwi, mandarin, orange and peach, is largely responsible for</p>
<b>Soil degradation</b> (kg P/ha/year)	<p>No quantitative measure is available for the aspect of soil degradation (in this case phosphorus depletion from soils). However, on the basis of the type of product and country of origin, an estimate can be made of whether or not soil degradation occurs due to the cultivation of that crop in that location.</p>

Table 7. Effect categories of for determining the environmental impact of food products, information obtained from RIVM (2013)

## 6.3 Research

### ingredients

This section aims to find ingredients that are suitable for the spread to make a concept recipe. This recipe is used in the design brief of the spread in section 6.4, so the chef of the spread company can optimize it. Ingredients should be found that are both nutritious and have a low environmental impact. The search is started by looking for spreads that are already quite nutritious to see if these ingredients are harvested in the Netherlands. Hummus is found to be the most nutritious one, since it is made of chickpeas. Chickpeas are nutritious since they contain protein, fibers, vitamins and minerals. Nevertheless, most hummus on the Dutch market does not have a high chickpea percentage and has a lot of oil in it (Consumentenbond, 2021).

### Sustainable legumes

Bouwman, the project leader of protein crops in the Netherlands, was interviewed and mentioned that chickpeas do not grow in the Netherlands. However, according to him, farming legumes is very sustainable in different ways. First of all, it is good for biodiversity because the plant has flowers and the flowers are pollinated by bees. Secondly, they are better for the soil since they grow above the ground, ground crops are much more intense for the soil. Thirdly, they can extract nitrogen from the air, so less fertilizer is needed. This nitrogen is used by the plant to grow. They also improve soil quality because they loosen the soil, fix nitrogen and release nutrients into the soil. To give an example: if you grow leguminous plants for 2 years on depleted soil, the soil will then have enough nutrients to grow other crops for 3 years.

### Dutch harvested legumes

After more research it is that not only chickpeas, but also legumes in general are nutritious. They contain protein, a lot of fibers, iron, and other nutrients (Voedingscentrum, n.d.). For this reason and because they are also sustainable legumes that are grown in the Netherlands are considered:

White beans



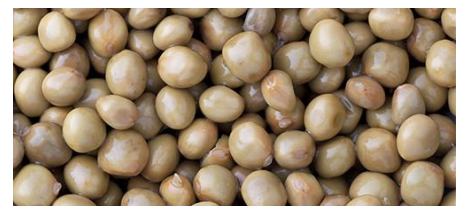
Brown beans



Lupine beans



Capuchins



Green peas





## Testing basis of spread

As found in consumer research, the spread should taste well, otherwise the consumer would not buy the spread again. To find out which legumes are tasty for the base of the spread, a taste test was done. The goal of the test was to find out which legume or legume mix has the best taste and structure. 7 people participated in the test and almost all of them scored the capuchins base the best on taste and mouthfeel.

## Adding flavour

For the rest of the ingredients the recipe of Hummus is used. Since a lot of Hummus is being sold in the Dutch grocery stores (Business Insider, 2014), a lot of Dutch people are familiar with it. For each ingredient, we checked whether it can be grown in the Netherlands. If this was not the case, an alternative was sought. Table 8 gives an overview of the ingredients of hummus recipes with its alternatives that were found.

## Adding Spirulina

To make a concept recipe, it must be determined how much spirulina to add. This is however only an indication, as the chef of the spread company may apply changes. Therefore a small test was done to examine the desired amount of added spirulina. One of Alga.farm's requirements is that the product should have at least 10% fresh spirulina in it. For the test a hummus was made with capuchins and different amounts of spirulina was added. Five different ratios were used: 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, and 50% spirulina. Also a hummus without spirulina was prepared as reference. Nine (ex-)employees of Alga.farm participated in the test. They all ate every spread on a piece of bread in a random order. After this, they were asked which hummus they preferred. The spread with 20% spirulina was the most desired, because, according to the participants, it had the nicest mouthfeel.

Ingredients Hummus	Local/more nutrition rich alternatives
Chickpeas	Dutch capuchins
Water	Water
Tahin	Pumpkin seed paste from dutch pumpkins
Garlic	Dutch garlic
Lemon juice	Spain is the closest country where lemons are grown. Lemon juice is important for the shelf life of the spread. This is for now the best option.
(Oil, in Dutch recipes)	No use of oil
Spices: Salt Cumin powder Paprika powder	For now we do not use Dutch spices

Table 8. Ingredients of hummus recipes with its alternatives



## 6.4 Design brief spread

As said before, the taste of the spread is important. As taste is subjective, a third party was asked to contribute. A design brief was made for the chef of the spread production company, so he can start developing different samples.

### Assignment

Design a tasty spread with 20% fresh spirulina in it, that has local ingredients, and that has a high nutritional value.

---

**It was found that legumes are sustainable and nutritious ingredients. From the legumes that are harvested in the Netherlands a test was done which ones are the most tasty to use for the spread. Capuchins were found to be the most tasteful. Other dutch ingredients were found to give more flavour to the spread. Lemons can not be harvested in the Netherlands, although it is an important ingredient since it is not only used for the taste but also as a (natural) preservative for the spread. Since a requirement of the spread producer is to not use E-numbers, lemon juice from Spain is for now the best option. Spain is the closest country to the Netherlands where lemons are harvested.**

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Explanation of the words:

- Tasty: nice mouthfeel and taste, which the spread producer is expert in as they already produce multiple spreads. They have good expertise in what Dutch people find tasty.
- Local ingredients: the main ingredients should be from the Netherlands. The rest of the ingredients should be as close to the Netherlands as possible. No ingredients from outside Europe, herbs excepted.
- High nutritional value: Rich in important nutrients that are needed for your body to live and grow. With not too much saturated fat and sodium, no added sugars.



Claim	Requirement of claim
<b>Protein rich</b> ( <i>Eiwitrijk</i> )	At least 20% of the energy in the food consists of proteins.
<b>Fiber rich</b> ( <i>Vezelrijk</i> )	The fiber content of the product is at least 6 grams/100 grams or 3 grams/100 kcal.
<b>Sugarfree</b> ( <i>Suikervrij</i> )	The sugar content of the product is a maximum of 0.5 grams/100 grams or 0.5 grams/100 milliliters.
<b>Low in saturated fats</b>	If the saturated fatty acids and the trans fatty acids in the product together do not exceed 1.5 grams/100 grams and 0.75 grams/100 milliliters.
<b>Rich in unsaturated fats</b> ( <i>Rijk aan onverzadigde vetten</i> )	At least 70% of the fatty acids present come from unsaturated fats. The unsaturated fats provide more than 20% of the product's energy.
<b>Source of [vitamin/mineral]</b> ( <i>Bron van</i> )	The product contains a minimum amount, as laid down in European regulations.
<b>Rich in [vitamin/mineral]</b>	The product contains at least twice the amount referred to under 'source of [vitamin/mineral]'.
<b>Contains [name of substance]</b> ( <i>Bevat</i> )	The product contains a certain substance that has a beneficial effect. For minerals and vitamins, it must at least be a source of.

Source: Voedingscentrum

## Nutrition claims

There are nutrition claims that can explain the high nutritional value of the spread to the consumer. The spread should comply with these claims:

Ingredient	Amount (% of total weight)
<b>Dried capuchins</b>	29,5
<b>Water</b>	35
<b>Spirulina</b> (10% dry weight)	20
<b>Pumpkin seed paste</b>	13,5
<b>Citric acid</b>	0,5
<b>Garlic</b>	0,5
<b>Herbs</b> salt cumin powder paprika powder	1

Concept recipe

## Basic recipe

A basic recipe for a spread is made that comply with above named nutrition claims. Feel free to play around with it and add or replace ingredients, just make sure the claims do still apply.

Instructions:

- Place the dry capuchins in the water and let them soak for 8 hours or overnight.
- Boil the capuchins in the water till they are soft, this will take around an hour.
- Put the pumpkin seed paste and lemon juice (citric acid) together and mix it for a minute.
- Now you can add the capuchins with the water, the garlic and herbs.
- At the end, add the spirulina and stir it carefully through the spread.



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## 6.5 Conclusion

Concluding, this chapter covers the design of the spread. The design is based on the positioning of the brand, which states that the spread is nutritious and has local ingredients. Two ways are found to inform the consumer that the spread is nutritious: the use of nutrition claims and the Nutri-score A logo. These can be used on the packaging, but also on other touchpoints. Since it was found in consumer research that consumers are aware of greenwashing, these are good ways of proving the spread is truly nutritious.

The aim of using local ingredients for the spread is because the brand has the purpose to strive for climate neutral food to make a positive impact on the world. To make the story of the brand complete, not only should it be looked at if the ingredients are local, but also if the ingredients are overall sustainable. It was found that effect categories that are considered relevant for determining the environmental impact of food products are: climate change, land use, acidification, eutrophication (marine and salt water), water consumption and soil degradation. When choosing ingredients for the spread these effect categories should be taken into account for minimizing the negative environmental impact.

After exploring what is nutritious and what are foods that are harvested in the Netherlands, legumes were found that can make the spread nutritious with local (Dutch) ingredients. Two tests were done to come to a concept spread recipe. The first test was done to find the base of the recipe. Different Dutch harvest legumes were used and capuchins were nominated as the most preferred. The second test was done to examine the amount of spirulina that should be added. The spread with 20% spirulina was desired most, because it has the best mouthfeel.

With all this information a design brief could be made for the chef of the spread production company, so he can start developing different tasty spread samples.

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# 7. Visual brand design

The previous chapter covers the first of the practical decisions based on the strategic direction: the food design. This chapter dives into the second output of the strategy, which is visual brand design. A visual design is needed for the brand to communicate itself externally (Beverland, 2018). All the brand touchpoints should stick to this visual brand style to give an overall matching experience to the consumer. In this chapter the used visual brand design elements are explained: brand name (7.1), logo (7.2), colors (7.3) and typography (7.4).

*7.1 Brand name*

*7.2 Logo*

*7.3 Colors*

*7.4 Typography*

*7.5 Conclusion*

## 7.1 Brand name

A brainstorm is done to find a brand name. The final name of the brand is *Spirucijn*. It comes from the words spirulina and kapucijner (Dutch for capuchins). Spirulina is an important ingredient in the spread, therefore it is chosen to be part of the name. In addition, this word does not yet exist, so the product has an available URL and social media name. Using a non-existing word also fits with the brand personality "daring".

## 7.2 Logo

### Inspiration

For inspiration, logos of food brands with the "excitement personality" that the target group liked were studied. These are Tony's Chocolonely, Oatly, Happy Earth and Holie, see the logos below.

Some similarities that can be found are:

- The use of capitals in the typeface;
- Bold font;
- Playful font;
- Organic font;
- They all have a (creative) element: the leaf, the three, the yellow smile, the certification mark



Figure 11. Logos of different brands with the excitement personality



Figure 12. The logo of Spirucijn and fresh spirulina under the microscope

### Logo Spirucijn

The logo is chosen to contain a brand name and a graphic element. The name is written in capitals, the font is playful, bold, and organic. The font is further explained in this chapter.

The graphic element is a wave that refers to the form of fresh spirulina, see figure 12. This element can be used playfully in the visual design of the touchpoints.



Figure 13. Brand logos in different colors

## 7.3 Colors

The colors are chosen based on the brand personality. Bright colors fit with the *excitement personality*, because they are daring, young, and spirited. The main colors are chosen to be orange and green, black and white is only used for paragraph text. With help of an online color palette generator Coolers (n.b.), nice looking color combinations are made.



Orange #FA990E



Green #35894F

Orange is a mixture of red and yellow, and is therefore associated with energy (red) and with happiness (yellow). Besides this, orange is associated with joy, enthusiasm, creativity, encouragement, change, health, fun, enjoyment, and expression. It can as well create hunger (Bourn, 2011). Orange is also the color of the Dutch Royal Family, which connects with the local ingredients.

The color green refers to the spirulina. It also stands for life, nature, energy, freshness, safety, and environment. It is youthful and brings a sense of hope, health, adventure, renewal, and compassion (Bourn, 2011).

## 7.4 Typography

### Logo & titel font

Marty Two is an informal hand-drawn slab serif typeface with a playful children's themed font (Rentafont, n.d.). The serifs (strokes at the end of the letters) are squared off, which gives it a sturdy look (My Fonts, n.d.). Some natures or behaviors that are connected with the font that fit the brand personality are informal, man-made, alive, notable, expressive, funny, healthy, farmer, cheerful, friendly, kind, playful, fresh, delicious, happy, original, distinctive, interesting, cool, creative, nice (Rentafont, n.d.)

> Marty Two

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**

**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**

**. , ! ? : ; ' " [ ] { } ( ) / \ |**

**Cronut knausgaard letterpress portland gochujang wayfarers distillery unicorn farm-to-table waistcoat pour-over. Copper mug paleo sriracha plaid, actually fashion axe intelligentsia chicharrones photo booth. Occupy pop-up waistcoat, pour-over organic listicle**

### Paragraph font

Recommended paragraph pairs with the font Marty Two are (Rentafont, n.d.):

> Stolz! Text Book

Cronut knausgaard letterpress portland gochujang wayfarers, distillery unicorn farm-to-table waistcoat pour-over. Copper mug paleo sriracha plaid, actually fashion axe intelligentsia chicharrones photo booth. Occupy pop-up waistcoat, pour-over organic listicle

> Mazzard H Regular

Cronut knausgaard letterpress portland gochujang wayfarers, distillery unicorn farm-to-table waistcoat pour-over. Copper mug paleo sriracha plaid, actually fashion axe intelligentsia chicharrones photo booth. Occupy pop-up waistcoat, pour-over organic listicle

### > Sans Rounded Light

Cronut knausgaard letterpress portland gochujang wayfarers, distillery unicorn farm-to-table waistcoat pour-over. Copper mug paleo sriracha plaid, actually fashion axe intelligentsia chicharrones photo booth. Occupy pop-up waistcoat, pour-over organic listicle portland godard PBR&B kombucha tilde. Wayfarers vinyl fanny pack

The font Glacial Indifference is found to be a mixture of these recommended fonts, and can be freely used. Glacial Indifference font is a geometric sans serif typeface with a clean, symmetrical, and balanced texture. Glacial Indifference is defined by its clean, sharp edges with modern touches. Designed for optimum clarity (Fontswan, n.d.). This modern and clean design has a contrast with the playful logo. This modern and symmetrical font refers to the innovative spread that works towards a better future. Its cleanliness refers to the transparency and clarity that the brand wants to express to the consumer.

### > Glacial Indifference

Cronut knausgaard letterpress portland gochujang wayfarers distillery unicorn farm-to-table waistcoat pour-over. Copper mug paleo sriracha plaid, actually fashion axe intelligentsia chicharrones photo booth. Occupy pop-up waistcoat, pour-over organic listicle

---

## 7.5 Conclusion

**In this chapter a visual design of the brand was made to communicate itself externally.**

**Firstly a brainstorm was done to find the name of the brand: Spirucijn. It comes from the words spirulina and kapucijner (Dutch for capuchin). After analysing the logos of the target group's favorite brands that have the same brand personality of Spirucijn, a logo was developed. The logo consists of the brand name and a graphic element. This element can be playfully used in the visual design of the brand touch points. The brand colors are orange and green, and are based on the brand personality and proposition.**

**All the brand touchpoints should stick to this visual brand design to give an overall matching experience to the consumer.**

---

# 8. Packaging design

The previous two chapters cover the first practical decisions based on the strategic direction.

This chapter dives into the third output of the strategy, which is packaging design. This was also part of the assignment.

Firstly, a competition analysis is done focusing on packaging opportunities (8.1). Secondly, consumer research is done to understand the context of a spread packaging (8.2). Extra research is done on sustainable packaging (8.3). Based on the research, a packaging is chosen that fits the brand (8.4).

*8.1 Spread packaging: competition analysis*

*8.2 Consumer research*

*8.3 Sustainable packaging*

*8.4 Choosing packaging*

*8.5 Conclusion*



## 8.1 Spread packaging: competition analysis

This section aims to specify the packaging of the spread competitors and to find a way to differentiate from them. The packaging of the spread is important, because that is what the consumer will see when doing groceries. The consumer should choose Spirucijn above the spreads of the competitors. The packaging consists of the container and the label. In this chapter focus lies on the container part, the visual design of the label is designed later in the report (section 10.2).

The spread department of two grocery stores were analysed. These grocery stores are Albert Heijn and Ekoplaza, and are grocery stores where the target groups do their groceries. See the pictures below of the spread departments of the two different grocery stores.

Some outcomes of the analysis are:

### Plastic containers are used for refrigerated spreads

Spreads in these grocery stores are either standing on a refrigerated shelf or a normal shelf. The spread for this project will be standing on a refrigerated shelf. The non-refrigerated spreads have a much longer shelf life than the fresh spreads. It is noticeable that the spreads on the normal shelf have a glass packaging and the spreads on the refrigerated shelf have a plastic packaging. That is probably because the spread in the glass containers keeps its taste, aroma and flavor longer than the plastic container.

### Spreads in the Ekoplaza look more organic and sustainable, because the use of paper

The packaging of the spread differs from the two supermarkets. The Albert Heijn is a more general grocery store with a house brand and premium brands, the Ekoplaza is a grocery store that sells only organic products "that contribute to a healthy and better world" (Ekoplaza, n.d.). There-

fore, the two grocery stores sell other brands. This difference in the stores can be seen in the way the packaging of the spreads looks. The spread brands in the Ekoplaza use paper in the packaging, while brands in the Albert Heijn only use plastic. This gives the spreads in the Ekoplaza a more organic and sustainable look, than the spreads in the Albert Heijn.

### Spread brands of the Ekoplaza and Albert Heijn use light and neutral colors

The graphic design of the spread packaging is visible on paper wraps, stickers or printed on the packaging. The latter is only seen in Albert Heijn. The colors that are used are mainly light and neutral. Albert Heijn sells a spread brand that is vegan, which has a more notable green lid.

Ekoplaza:



Albert Heijn:



Sandwich spreads Albert Heijn



"Borrel" (snack) department Albert Heijn

## 8.2 Consumer research

To design the packaging of the spread it is important to understand the consumer needs related to the packaging. Therefore, consumer research is done to understand the contexts of spreads. The goal of the research is to find out how the consumer eats spreads, what spreads they eat, when they eat them and how they use spread packaging. Five people were interviewed. Three of them also participated in the consumer research during the analysis part of the project (chapter 3). Two new people from the target group were found. All of them are eco-conscious or eco-friendly.

### **The participants like the spread Hummus**

All of the participants mentioned buying the spread Hummus. Some of them like to try different tastes of Hummus, for example the natural one, or with paprika, or sun dried tomatoes from the Albert Heijn brand. Also the brand Maza was mentioned. One person mentioned she felt like the Hummus of that brand stays well for a longer time period, so she would buy it in times she will not use it much.

*"Normally I choose the normal Hummus of Albert Heijn, or the one with paprika or sun dried tomatoes. Sometimes I buy Hummus from the brand Maza."*

### **The participants put spread on bread or scooping it**

All of them eat spread on their bread. Someone said using it also on (rice) crackers. Three out of four mentioned also scooping the spread. One person said a spread is part of a platter next to evening drinks. Another person mentioned eating it as a dip as a healthy replacement for chips while watching a movie. This person and another person mentioned scooping the spread with bread, vegetables or crackers.

*"In the evening when I am on the couch and I don't want to eat unhealthy chips, I scoop the spread with pieces of cucumber or with nice small Italian crackers."*

### **The participants eats spreads during lunch or in the evening with dinner evening snack**

The participants eat spreads on different moments of the day. They eat it during lunch on a sandwich, with dinner next to their dish, or somewhere in between scooping the spread with their healthy snack. Someone mentioned to put the spread on the bread at home and bring it with her for lunch. Someone else said to bring it to work, so she could put it on the bread just before she would eat it. If she would already make it at home, by the time it is lunchtime the spread would have been all absorbed in the bread.

*"Sometimes I take a container spread to work and put it in the fridge. So I always have something to eat on bread."*

### **The participants likes to transfer the spread into a bowl because that looks nicer**

Three of the participants mentioned putting the spread into a nice bowl to make it look nice. One of them mentioned only doing that when other people come over. The second one mentioned doing that when space and time is available, otherwise she will just put the spread on the table in its original packaging. The last one mentioned to always transfer it in a nice bowl because he bought nice tableware for it. Two of these three participants mentioned the packaging is not important to have on the table. They said they would tell others about food they are enthusiastic about, they do not need the packaging for that. They also like to tell the story of the brand. One of them mentioned that he loved that the spread has a deep green color, he said he probably has to explain to other people anyways about the spread because they do not know about it. He does not need the packaging for explaining it.

*"I transfer the spread into another container with a snack or vegetable on the side, because it looks nicer."*

## 8.3 Sustainable packaging

For making packaging raw materials and energy are needed, which has an impact on the environment. But on the other hand, packaging is useful since they prevent food from spoiling and products from damage.

According to the Consumentenbond (2021) packaging is sustainable when it makes sure that the product can be used as good as possible and that it contains information on how to throw it away into which garbage so it can be recycled optimally. If the packaging is well designed it can even prevent food waste. This is important, because (food) waste has a much greater negative impact on the environment than packaging. On average, packaging is 10% of the milieu impact, food waste 15%, and the largest part 75% is the production and transport of the product (Milieu Centraal, n.b.).

### Sustainable material comparison

Different materials can be used for the packaging. It is hard to say which material is more sustainable because it contains a lot of aspects. Also a lot of times there is not enough information to make a good comparison (Milieu Centraal, n.b.). For some different materials Milieu Centraal (n.b.) made some comparisons for making an environmentally friendly choice in packaging.

### Paper vs. plastic

Paper seems to be a more environmentally friendly packaging material than plastic, since it produces less greenhouse gases per kilo than plastic. Nevertheless, for paper you need production forests that take a lot of space. But because paper is made from a renewable raw material, namely wood, it causes less climate change than plastic. The production of plastic requires petroleum, a finite resource.

Both plastic and paper can be recycled well. Recycled paper is better than new paper, because that decreases the environmental impact. It requires less water to make than new paper, but it uses the same amount of energy. Recycled paper also requires less wood. There are different quality marks for paper. Some set requirements for sustainable management of the production forest, others set requirements for the kind of recycled paper or de-inking and bleaching during production.

An recycled plastic that has been used a lot is rPET. The bad side of plastic is if it ends up in the sea it contributes to the 'plastic soup'.

### Glass vs. plastic vs. cans

Recycling glass and cans requires a lot of energy, much more than the production of plastic, whether recycled or new. A plastic PET bottle is better for the climate if the bottle is at least 6 times lighter than glass. This turns out to be the case in most cases.



## 8.4 Choosing packaging

The food producer that wants to work together with Alga.farm has a couple different packages that they use for the spreads they already produce. It is also possible to choose a packaging yourself, but then special molds have to be made for the spread filling and label machines. These molds are expensive: a couple of thousands euros. Since Alga.farm has no money to invest in this, a packaging should be chosen that the spread producer already uses. The spread producer is actively searching for sustainable solu-

tions, so there are some good options. Their “basic” spread container is made of recycled plastic and they even have a recyclable packaging developed on the basis of chalk.

The different available spread containers are analysed. In table 9 you can find an overview of this analysis with the pros and cons of all of them.

Table 9. Analysis of the different available spread containers

Packaging	Details	Pros +	Cons -
“Basic” packaging - small	Material: recycled PET Volume: 120 gram Volume spread:		Looks similar to existing spread packaging.
“Basic” packaging - big	Material: recycled PET Volume: 250 gram Volume spread:		Same as above, plus it is too big: the product will be too expensive and the spread will go bad before it is finished.
Packing based on chalk - small	Material: based on chalk Volume: 120 gram Volume spread:	Looks different from existing spread packaging	Harder to see what is in the container, because the container is not see through. Less fitting with the value transparency of the brand. Also, the producer said the grocery stores put the container on its side to see inside the container, which makes the spread move against the lid, which does not look tasty.
Packing based on chalk - big	Material: based on chalk Volume: 250 gram Volume spread:		Same as above, plus it is too big: the product will be too expensive and the spread will go bad before it is finished.
Packaging with re-adhesive foil and paper wrap	Material: recycled PET and recycled paper Volume: Volume spread:	Less use of plastic, because no plastic lid.  Looks different from existing spread packaging, so it can stand out. No sticker labels needed for top and bottom of the packaging. Easy to separate paper and plastic to throw away for recycling.	When paper wrap has been thrown away after opening the packaging for use, the branding is gone.

The packaging of the production company that fits the best with the brand is the packaging with the re-adhesive foil and paper wrap. See figure 14 for an example

This is a sustainable option, since a plastic lid is replaced by a paper wrap made of recycled paper. Also, as found in the competitor analysis (section 8.1), this packaging may have a more sustainable appearance because it consists of paper.

The disadvantage of this packaging is that the visual brand design will be on the paper wrap. There is a possibility that the consumer will throw away the paper wrap when the package is opened for the first use. The visual expression of the brand will be gone, and spreading the brand awareness among other people, such as room-mates, dinner or lunch guests, and colleagues will be lost.

However, I do not think this will have a big influence on brand awareness. Consumer analysis (section 4.4) and consumer research (8.2) showed that participants would tell others about food they are enthusiastic about, therefore the website with background information would probably be more important than the label of the packaging.



.Figure 14. The chosen packaging: packaging with re-adhesive foil and paper wrap

## 8.5 Conclusion

The packaging of the spread consists of the container and the label. This chapter reports the process of choosing the container part, the label part is designed later in the report.

A competition analysis was done to specify the packaging of the spread competitors and to find a way to differentiate from them. It was found that spreads are either packaged in plastic or glass containers. Section 8.3 will further explore what is a more sustainable option. Spreads can look more organic and sustainable if they use paper in the packaging. Applying this to the packaging of Spirucijn can help to express the product aspect of sustainability.

In this way, Spirucijn can differentiate itself from the other brands in the Albert Heijn, because they do not use paper in their packaging. Next to that, Spirucijn's brand color combination green and orange will stand out in comparison with the more neutral colors of the competitors in both grocery stores.

Consumer research was done to understand the context in which the consumer eats the spread. The goal of the research was to find out how the consumer eats spreads, what spreads they eat, when they eat them and how they use spread packaging.

It was found that the participants like to eat the spread *Hummus*. This is beneficial because Spirucijn is based on the recipe of Hummus. The participants use spreads either to spread on something or to scoop it with something. They eat spreads during lunch on sandwiches, in the evening next to dinner, and as an evening snack scooped with vegetables or crackers. This can be used when making social media posts about the spread. The spread can be shown on bread or as a healthy snack with ve-

getables. Also it was found that some participants like to transfer the spread into a bowl because that looks nicer on the table. This means the branding on the packaging will not be shown to the possible visitors which is a missed opportunity to "spread the word". However, they mentioned they will tell their visitors about the spread because they probably would not know it yet and they like to tell the story behind it. This is in line with the created eco-friendly persona (chapter 4.2).

Since Spirucijn wants to make a positive impact on the world, it was looked into how packaging can be sustainable. It was found that a sustainable packaging should make sure that the product can be used as good as possible to avoid food waste and contain information on how to throw it away into which garbage so it can be recycled optimally. The latter should be taken into account during the label design.

It is hard to say which material is more sustainable because it contains a lot of aspects. Overall it could be said; Plastic is more sustainable than glass and cans. The comparison between plastic and paper is more difficult. Recycled paper and recycled plastic are both quite good options. These insights helped with choosing the kind of packaging for the spread.

The spread producer has different packages to choose from. A choice could be made after writing down all the pros and cons. The sustainability factor was also taken into account. The packaging that fits the best with the brand is a packaging with a re-adhesive foil and paper wrap. This is a sustainable option, since a plastic lid is replaced by a paper wrap made of recycled paper. Also, as found in the competitor analysis (section 8.1), this packaging may have a more sustainable appearance because it consists of paper.

# 9. Brand messaging

The previous three chapters cover the first practical decisions based on the strategic direction. This chapter dives into the fourth output of the strategy, which is brand messaging. First a brand messaging concept is made (9.1) to test and find out if it is clear to consumers and if they feel connected to it (9.2). This was a feedback moment that shows if things need to change, replaced, added or removed.

*9.1 Brand messaging*

*9.2 Consumer research*

*9.3 Conclusion*



# 9.1 Brand messaging

Now that the brand is positioned and redefined, everything that the brand should communicate can be written out. In this section the brand messaging can be found and on which insight it is based. The text is divided into different paragraphs:

Not all paragraphs are fully written out. See appendix I for the full text.

Paragraph	Elaboration
Spirucijn - Spread the green!	Explains Spirucijn's mission. The consumer likes a brand with a mission.
Sustainable - Positive impact on the world	To clarify why Spirucijn is sustainable.
Nutritious - Positive impact on your body	To clarify why Spirucijn is nutritious
Nutrients your body needs	Explains what nutrient are for people who do not know so they will understand (and believe) that Spirucijn is a healthy choice
Nutritional Claims of Spirucin	To give a proof to the consumer that Spirucijn is nutritious
The ingredients	Explaining per ingredient why it is a healthy and sustainable choice. This is also an opportunity to clarify what spirulina is and its benefits are
Sustainable packaging	Declares not only that the spread is sustainable, but also that everything else has been thought of



## Spirucijn – Spread the green!

Text	Insight
<p>Our nature is having a hard time and the current food industry is largely responsible for this.</p> <p>A huge portion of global greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation and environmental pollution is a direct result of our drive to have more and more imported food available all year round.</p>	<p><b>Trend (1)</b></p>
<p>We think it is necessary that something is done about this! That is why we set to work to make the healthiest, most sustainable and tastiest spread in the Netherlands. With this we show that things can be done differently and we hope that other manufacturers will follow us in this.</p>	<p><b>Purpose, vision, mission brand.</b></p> <p><b>Trend (1, 2, 3, 4),</b>  <b>Market (1, 2, 4),</b>  <b>Competition (2),</b>  <b>Consumer R. (3)</b></p>
<p>After a long search for the best ingredients from Dutch soil, we proudly present: Spirucijn, the greenest spread in the Netherlands!</p> <p>Spirucijn consists of Dutch capuchins, fresh spirulina and pumpkin seed paste. This combination means that the spread has a positive impact on your body, because it is naturally high in fiber, high in protein, sugar-free and rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids. And by using our own fresh spirulina, Spirucijn is also packed with vitamins and minerals.</p>	<p><b>Brand positioning</b></p>
<p>Of course our spread is 100% vegan.</p>	<p><b>Trend (2)</b></p>
<p>Do you have any tips or ideas to make the spread even tastier, more sustainable or healthier? Let us know! We are always open to suggestions to make our spread even better. We can only make an impact together, so let's spread the green!</p>	<p><b>Consumer R. (5)</b></p>

## Sustainable – Positive impact on the world

Text	Insight
Sustainability is a difficult concept, because when is something actually sustainable? There are many aspects related to sustainability and there is always room for improvement and more sustainability.	<b>Consumer R. (2)</b>
We see sustainability as something relative and try to be the most sustainable possible and in any case more sustainable than the rest.	<b>Consumer R. (2, 3)</b>
We do not only look at the packaging, but also at the ingredients we use. We try to use as many local ingredients as possible, as close to home as possible.	<b>Brand positioning, Trend (3),</b>
We also look at how our ingredients are grown, produced, stored and transported. Think of CO2 emissions, water use, land use and soil depletion.	<b>Consumer R. (2b, 2c)</b>
Sustainability is not only about how we treat the environment, but also how we treat each other and ourselves. Just as we should not exhaust the earth, we should not exhaust man either. That's why the people involved in our	<b>Consumer R. (1)</b>
And that's how we want to treat you fairly. We try to inform you as clearly as possible with factual information. No false claims, no greenwashing, no bullshit.	<b>Consumer R. (2c, 4)</b>

## Nutritious – Positive impact on your body

Text		Based on what?																																																																													
To give you an idea of how Spirulina scores on nutritional values, we have put the nutritional values of spirucine next to Albert Heijn Hummus below.		<b>Consumer R. (2c)</b>																																																																													
This Hummus is the spread with the most positive impact on your body from Albert Heijn that we could find.		<b>Consumer R. (4)</b>																																																																													
By this we mean fewest calories, fewest (unsaturated) fats, most dietary fibres, fewest sugars, most proteins and least salt. If you compare those nutritional values with those of Spirucin, you will see that Spirucin scores even better on this. Spirucin also contains beta-carotene and is a source of vitamin K and iron.		<b>Consumer R. (2c, 4)</b>																																																																													
<p><b>Spirucijn</b></p>  <p>Voedingswaarden</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Soort</th> <th>Per 100 gram</th> <th>RI*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Energie</td> <td>762 kJ (182 kcal)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vet</td> <td>7.2 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  waarvan verzadigd</td> <td>1.4 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  waarvan onverzadigd</td> <td>5.3 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Koolhydraten</td> <td>14.8 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  waarvan suikers</td> <td>0.1 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Voedingsvezels</td> <td>7.3 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eiwitten</td> <td>10.6 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zout</td> <td>0.5 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bèta-caroteen (Provitamine A)</td> <td>5.5 mg</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamine K</td> <td>30 µg</td> <td>41%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ijzer</td> <td>2.5 mg</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Soort	Per 100 gram	RI*	Energie	762 kJ (182 kcal)		Vet	7.2 g		waarvan verzadigd	1.4 g		waarvan onverzadigd	5.3 g		Koolhydraten	14.8 g		waarvan suikers	0.1 g		Voedingsvezels	7.3 g		Eiwitten	10.6 g		Zout	0.5 g		Bèta-caroteen (Provitamine A)	5.5 mg		Vitamine K	30 µg	41%	Ijzer	2.5 mg	18%	<p><b>Hummus naturel Albert Heijn</b></p>  <p>Voedingswaarden</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Soort</th> <th>Per 100 gram</th> <th>RI*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Energie</td> <td>988 kJ (239 kcal)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vet</td> <td>18 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  waarvan verzadigd</td> <td>2.4 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  waarvan onverzadigd</td> <td>15 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Koolhydraten</td> <td>5.5 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  waarvan suikers</td> <td>0.5 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Voedingsvezels</td> <td>12 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eiwitten</td> <td>7.8 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zout</td> <td>1.08 g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bèta-caroteen (Provitamine A)</td> <td>0 mg</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamine K</td> <td>0 µg</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ijzer</td> <td>0 mg</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Soort	Per 100 gram	RI*	Energie	988 kJ (239 kcal)		Vet	18 g		waarvan verzadigd	2.4 g		waarvan onverzadigd	15 g		Koolhydraten	5.5 g		waarvan suikers	0.5 g		Voedingsvezels	12 g		Eiwitten	7.8 g		Zout	1.08 g		Bèta-caroteen (Provitamine A)	0 mg		Vitamine K	0 µg	0%	Ijzer	0 mg	0%
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## Nutrients your body needs

Text	Based on what?
<i>This paragraph explains which nutrients our body needs. For each nutrient it is explained how it is nutritious for our body and how the spread is linked to it.</i>	<b>Consumer R. (4)</b>

## Nutritional Claims of Spirucin

Text	Based on what?
<i>This paragraph talks about nutrition claims. It explains what it is and which claims the spread meets and why it meets them.</i>	<b>Consumer R. (2c, 4)</b>

## The ingredients

Text	Based on what?
<i>For each ingredient, the following is explained:</i>	
<i>Introduction ingredient. Why is this ingredient chosen?</i>	<b>Consumer R (4)</b>
<i>What is it?</i>	<b>Internal (3a)</b>
<i>Why is it healthy?</i>	<b>Consumer R. (2c, 4), Internal (3a)</b>
<i>Why is it sustainable?</i>	<b>Consumer R. (2a, 2b, 2c, 4), Internal (3a)</b>

## Sustainable packaging

Text	Based on what?
Not only have the ingredients been consciously selected, the packaging has also been thought through. Glass packaging seemed like a conscious choice at first, but glass is relatively heavy and there are more CO2 emissions during transport. Recycling glass is also not ideal. When glass is brought to the glass bank, it is then melted down and that takes a lot of energy. This takes much more energy than melting down plastic. Focus on the environment melt: "PET is in many cases better for the climate than glass. Whether that is the case depends on the difference in weight between the packages: a PET bottle is better for the climate if the bottle is at least 6 times lighter than glass. That turns out to be the case in many cases." The Spirucijn container, which is made of recycled PET plastic, weighs about 3 grams and a glass jar for the same content weighs about 130 grams. This shows that a PET container is better for the climate.	<b>Consumer R. (2, 4)</b>
We are so honest and clear about how Spirucin makes a positive impact on both the world and your body, so that you know why Spirucin is a conscious choice. Because we are truly green, from ingredients to production.	<b>Consumer R. (4)</b>

## 9.2 Consumer research

To find out if the brand message resonates well with the target group, it is needed to test if the brand message is clear and if the consumer feels connected with it.

Qualitative research was done with the same five people of the consumer research of the product design part. The complete textual brand message was sent to them. After they had read the document, an interview was done. The goal of the research was to find out if the brand message is clear, which information is relevant and important for them, which information can be removed, if information is missing, and if they are convinced/interested in buying the product. The outcomes of the interviews can be found in appendix J. The answers of the participants were clustered, and insights could be formulated.

### **According to the consumer the core message is: A healthy & sustainable spread**

It was asked to explain the message in one or two sentences (core message). All the participants mentioned that it is about a healthy and sustainable spread. Two out of five mentioned the word local. Two people mentioned that the spread tries to be as sustainable as possible. One person mentioned efficient raw materials, another person healthy nutrients.

*"You have made a spread in the most sustainable way possible that is not only good for yourself but also for the world."*

### **The brand message is clear to the consumer and they are curious to try it**

The message was clear to all of the participants. All of them mentioned that they are curious and want to try it out. One of the participants mentioned that she is at the moment working on eating healthier, sustainable and local food so this product "hits all the right spots". Another person mentioned that the text is very clearly written, so it reads very nicely and easily.

*"The message is convincing, I would buy it. I am also very curious about a spread with capuchins."*

### **The important parts of the brand message: local, explanation choices, nutrition claims**

All the participants think the explanation why the brand is sustainable is important. Three people mention that the local aspect is important. Also three people mentioned that the explanation of choices is important. Two people mentioned the nutrition claims. Also mentioned was: why the spread is healthy, the ingredients, protein rich, explanation nutrients, mission, how the spread looks.

*"Everything that is substantiated makes it stronger, such as nutritional claims, for example."*

### **Interesting for the consumer is: explanation choices, information ingredients, information spirulina**

All of the consumers think it is interesting to know why decisions are made. Three of the participants think the information of the ingredients are interesting, how they contribute to the nutrition claims and the sustainable part. They learned new things about sustainability. Also the information about spirulina was mentioned by three people. Comparing the spread with the hummus of the Albert Heijn was mentioned and the information of nutrients.

*"Nice to see how much protein is in spirulina compared to other protein sources. Because I pay attention to getting enough protein in my diet, this would be the reason for me to buy the spread."*

**Less important part of the consumer are: comparing glass with plastic packaging, naming sunflower seed paste as option that was not chosen, naming chlorophyll**

One person mentioned that the part about comparing the sustainability of plastic and glass packaging is less important. She did understand why it was mentioned, because it shows you have thought about it and why you chose plastic. But it would be better for her to just say PET is the most sustainable, because it is only compared with glass and not with other materials.

Another person was confused when sunflower seeds were named. Now she wanted to know more about sunflower seed paste and its sustainability. So better tell more about it or just mention that you compared different alternatives and finally choose pumpkin seed paste.

Another participant said he did not like the part that much about chlorophyll, because it is "too real". too many details that gave more questions.

Someone mentioned that the information about the nutrients distract from the main story of the product. She mentioned not to remove the text, but for example put it on the website under a link if you want more information. That information is not interesting to everyone.

**Missing: taste description, price, where to buy, CO2 emission, information about the farmers, the other ingredients of the spread.**

three participants mentioned they could not imagine how the spread taste, so they would like to get a taste description. Two people mentioned that they want to know the price and where to buy it. Two people mentioned they would like to see a comparison in CO2 emissions with other products.

Also mentioned were:

- A dark green check mark (vegan)
- Verified dietitian who confirms that the information is correct (optional)
- Serving suggestions
- Picture of spirulina
- Picture packaging

*"I would like to know which other companies you cooperate with. Do you buy the beans from HAK or do you work together with farmers?"*

## 9.3 Conclusion

Everything that the brand should communicate was written out, based on the insights of the analyse phase of the project.

To find out if the brand messaging resonates well with the target group, interviews were done with five people of the target group. It was found that the brand message is clear to the participants, all the information that is given matters to them, and all of the participants are curious about the spread and want to try it. This means, the brand should communicate all the information through its touchpoints. But not all information can be communicated through all touchpoints, because the label for example has limited space. Therefore, decisions have to be made about what information should be communicated via which touchpoints.

The whole message can be told on the website, but since the whole message is quite long, the textual hierarchy should be taken into account to not lose the core message of the brand.

Some information was not new information to the participants. They mentioned that it is still important information for people that do not know it. This information should therefore not be taken away, but should be available for people that want more information. These parts are the information about what nutrients are and what nutrition claims are. They could be hidden, for example, on the website and only shown if you click for more information.

Some parts are too specifically said, for example what chlorophyll does with your body and that we did not choose sunflower paste as an ingredient. This makes more questions arise to the consumer. These parts will be taken away to keep the story clear.

Through the interviews it was found which information can be added to better resonate with the consumer:

What to add?	Why should it be added?
Picture of the packaging	So the consumer knows how it looks like and can recognize it in the store
The other ingredients of the spread	To understand the taste better and for allergies
Description of the taste	At the moment it is hard to know the taste because it is a new product
Where to buy the spread	So the consumer can buy the spread
The price	So the consumer can see if it fits in their budget
CO2 emission	To show/prove that it makes a positive impact on the world, this is optional
Information about the farmers	So the consumer feels more personally connected
A dark green check mark that indicates the spread is vegan	So the consumer can easily see the spread is vegan. They search for this checkmark when they buy things in the grocery store
Serving suggestions	So the consumer sees how the spread can be eaten
Picture of fresh spirulina	So the consumer gets a better understanding what fresh spirulina is
Verified dietitian who confirms that the information is correct (optional)	Letting a professional approve what you tell, would make the story even more trustworthy.



**With the insights of the consumer research a list could be made of all parts of information that should be communicated through the touchpoints:**

<b>Info needed for consumer</b>
Mission of the brand
The values that the spread has to offer to the consumer: Eating sustainably → <b>Local ingredients</b> Eating healthy → <b>Nutrition claims, Nutri-score</b>
All ingredients of the spread
Nutritional values per 100 gram
Explanation nutrients
Explanation nutrition claims
Comparing nutritional value with other spreads
Information ingredients: why sustainable and healthy
100% vegan, vegan check mark
How we are sustainable: packaging, ingredients, people
Do you have any tips or ideas to make the spread even tastier, more sustainable or healthier? Let us know!
Picture of the packaging
Description of the taste
Where to buy the spread
Information about the farmers
Serving suggestions

**The next chapter will discuss which touchpoints will be used to communicate the brand messaging.**

# 10. Final brand touchpoints

The previous four chapters cover the first practical decisions based on the strategic direction: food design, visual brand design, packaging design and brand messaging. This chapter combines these 4 outputs into the final brand touchpoints, consisting of the final product design and communication designs.

First the brand touchpoints are researched and chosen (10.1) and elaborated per focus: product-focused touchpoints (10.2) (which are product and label) and communication-focused touchpoints (10.3) (which are a website and flyer design, and Instagram). These touchpoints are essential for the product launch campaign which is set up in the next chapter.

*10.1 Overview brand touchpoints*

*10.2 Product-focused touchpoints*

*10.3 Communication-focused touchpoints*

*10.4 Conclusion*

# 10.1 Overview brand touchpoints

Touchpoints create a brand experience that communicates the brand's positioning (Aoki et al, 2019) (Beverland, 2018). The design of the touchpoints must meet all requirements of the stakeholders (chapter 4.6).

Two requirements of Alga.farm should be taken into account by choosing the brand touchpoints:

- The product should be developed, produced, launched in a budget-proof way.
- Marketing should not be much work.

Alga.farm has a minimum budget and time for marketing, so touchpoints are chosen that are budget and time proof for marketing purposes.

The first touchpoint is the product. The consumer will be in contact with the product in the grocery store or any other time when they are using the product. The second touchpoint is the website. This is the place where all the information about the product and brand can be found. Because

people do not yet know about Spirucijn, two other touchpoints are designed to create brand awareness. One of them is offline and the other online. The online touchpoint is Instagram, since all participants of the consumer research (section 4.4) mentioned using Instagram. A wide audience can be reached with Instagram advertisements in a budget friendly way. The offline touchpoint is a flyer that can be easily brought to fairs that Alga.farm will be participating in and it can be put at places where the target group comes. People get a lot of information at a fair. When giving a flyer to people they can look back at it at a later moment. They will have the brand and product information together with the contact information so they will remember what it was about - instead of just giving a contact (business) card.

I will design the product label, website, flyer and Instagram content myself to keep the costs low. Van Koolwijk and I can build the websites ourselves which will save money.

The design of the touchpoints is guided by the Brand DNA (chapter 5.3) and the core values of the brand (chapter 5.4). An overview of the touchpoints can be found in the table on the next page with the goal of the touchpoints and what it communicates. In the next paragraphs the touchpoints will be further elaborated.

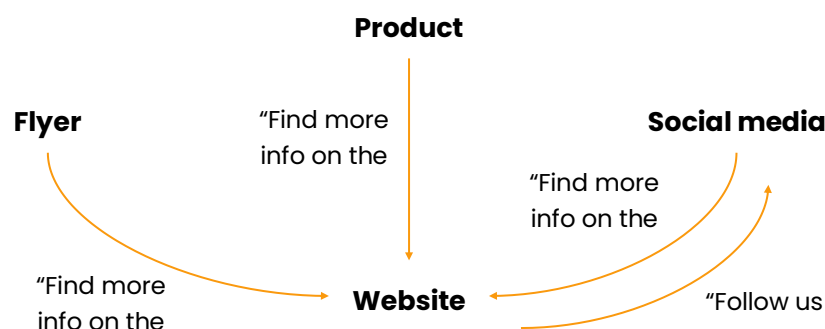


Figure 14. Overview how the touchpoints are connected

Touch-point	What is the goal?	Consumer info need	
<b>Product</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stand out from competitors</li> <li>- Looking attractive to consumer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What value(s) does the spread give me?</li> <li>- Why should I buy this spread instead of its competitors?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key message</b> Spirucijn us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Values of</li> <li>- Local ing</li> <li>- Nutrient</li> <li>- Nutri-sc</li> <li>-</li> <li>- All ingre</li> <li>- Nutrition</li> <li>- 100% veg</li> </ul>
<b>Website</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating trust from consumer</li> <li>- Convince the consumer to buy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where does the brand stand for?</li> <li>- What does the brand do to accomplish that?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key message</b> We strive fo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current</li> <li>- Values of</li> <li>- Mission</li> <li>- All ingre</li> <li>- Nutrition</li> <li>- Explanat</li> <li>- Explanat</li> <li>- Compar</li> <li>- Informat</li> <li>- 100% veg</li> <li>- How we</li> <li>- Do you h</li> <li>- Picture of</li> <li>- Descript</li> <li>- Where to</li> <li>- Informat</li> <li>- Serving</li> </ul>
<b>Flyer</b> (offline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create brand awareness</li> <li>- Get the interest of consumer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is Spirucijn? It is the first time I hear about it.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key message</b> Get to know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mission</li> <li>- Values of</li> <li>- (brief) In</li> <li>- 100% veg</li> </ul>
<b>Social media:</b> <b>Instagram</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create brand awareness</li> <li>- Get the interest of consumer</li> <li>- Creating connection with consumer</li> <li>- Creating trust of consumer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is Spirucijn and what are its benefits?</li> <li>- What is the brand about?</li> <li>- Are there other people that have tried it already?</li> <li>- Who are the people behind Spirucijn?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key message</b> Make your k</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current</li> <li>- Mission</li> <li>- Values of</li> <li>- Explanat</li> <li>- Explanat</li> <li>- Compar</li> <li>- Informat</li> <li>- 100% veg</li> <li>- How we</li> <li>- Do you h</li> <li>- Picture of</li> <li>- Descript</li> <li>- Where to</li> <li>- Informat</li> <li>- Serving</li> </ul>

## Communication

**Message:**  
Use local and nutritious ingredients!

Benefit of product:  
Ingredients  
Nutrition claims (without explanation)  
Vegan, vegan check mark

Ingredients of the spread  
Nutritional values per 100 gram  
Vegan, vegan check mark

**Message:**  
Introduce a climate neutral and nutrition rich spread!

Problem (food industry)  
Benefit of product  
Benefit of the brand  
Ingredients of the spread  
Nutritional values per 100 gram  
Nutrition nutrients  
Nutrition nutrition claims  
Comparing nutritional value with other spreads  
Nutrition ingredients: why sustainable and healthy  
Vegan, vegan check mark  
How are we sustainable: packaging, ingredients, people  
Do you have any tips or ideas to make the spread even tastier, more sustainable or healthier? Let us know!  
Benefit of the packaging  
Benefit of the taste  
How to buy the spread  
Information about the farmers  
Suggestions

**Message:**  
Introduce Spirucijn: a spread that has local and nutritious ingredients!

Benefit of the brand  
Benefit of product  
Information ingredients: why sustainable and healthy  
Vegan, vegan check mark

**Message:**  
Make your body and the planet healthier by eating local and nutritious ingredients!

Problem (food industry)  
Benefit of the brand  
Benefit of product  
Nutrition nutrients  
Nutrition nutrition claims  
Comparing nutritional value with other spreads  
Nutrition ingredients: why sustainable and healthy  
Vegan, vegan check mark  
How are we sustainable: packaging, ingredients, people  
Do you have any tips or ideas to make the spread even tastier, more sustainable or healthier? Let us know!  
Benefit of the packaging  
Benefit of the taste  
How to buy the spread  
Information about the farmers  
Suggestions

## 10.2 Product-focused touchpoints

A prototype of the spread is built and product photos are shoot, see figure 15.

### Nutri-score A

To obtain a reliable result, a tool (an excel document) of the Belgian government is used to calculate the nutri-core. The nutri-score of Spirucijn is A, this makes it a product with a healthy combination of ingredients. Nutri-score A logo is presented on the label. See appendix K for an extension of the calculation.

### Product price

After a conversation with the spread producer and the grocery store manager of the Ekoplaza the retail price could be determined. This will be around €2,45, see table 10 for a brief calculation and see the confidential appendix for the full calculation.



Figure 15. The product Spirucijn

	Price (per spread of 120 gram)
Ingredients (including spirulina)	€1,21
Packaging	€0,10
Production etc. (spread producer)	€0,50
<b>Total</b>	<b>€1,81</b>
<b>Retail price (+35%)</b>	<b>€2,45</b>

Table 10. Price calculation spread

## Places to sell

The spread producer will do the sales part. Their current sales channels and contacts are retailers that sell organic products (see figure 16). They are open to sell to no organic grocery stores such as Albert Heijn or Jumbo.



Figure 16. Current retail contacts of the spread producer

If approved by the spread producer, Alga.farm could sell the spread to smaller retailers in the Netherlands. For example, local restaurants or grocery stores around Rotterdam to emphasize the local aspect of the spread.

Possible retailer in the Netherlands include:

- **Rechtstreex.** This online shop works with the tasty local products from farmers and producers from region Rotterdam and about 50 km around it.
- **The Floating Farm.** This farm has a shop with their own milk, yogurt and cheese. They also sell products from Rotterdam.
- **Vegabond:** This shop and lunchroom is based in Amsterdam Oud-West and is a shop and lunchroom in one and offers a unique 100% vegan experience. They have a shop section with only vegan products.

## Spread & Packaging

At the moment, the spread producer is developing the recipe for the spread. The final ingredients are therefore not known yet. For now I assume the spread consists of capuchins, spirulina, pumpkin seed paste, lemon juice, garlic, cumin powder, paprika powder, salt.

The packaging consists of a container made of recycled plastic with a re-adhesive foil on top. A label of recycled paper is wrapped around the packaging that can be easily removed and recycled.

## Label packaging

The visual design of the packaging is made in line with the visual brand design (chapter 7) and the brand personality: Daring, young, spirited (chapter 5.3).

## Hierarchy information

The elements of the label should have a hierarchy on the packaging. The most important element should be read at first and therefore it should attract the most attention of the consumer. Based on the consumer research on the brand messaging (section 9.2), the informational elements of the label could be ordered in hierarchy, see table 11.



## Visual design

On this page the visual design is presented of the unwrapped label. The container with the spread is shown underneath. The elements are explained.

Order	Element
1	Brand/product name
2	Functional benefits: local & nutritious
3	Nutrition claims
4	Nutri-score & Vegan check mark
5	Taste & More info can be found on website
6	Ingredients & Nutritional value & Shelf life
7	Alga.farm & Spread producer & Country of production & Barcode

Table 11. Overview hierarchy elements on packaging



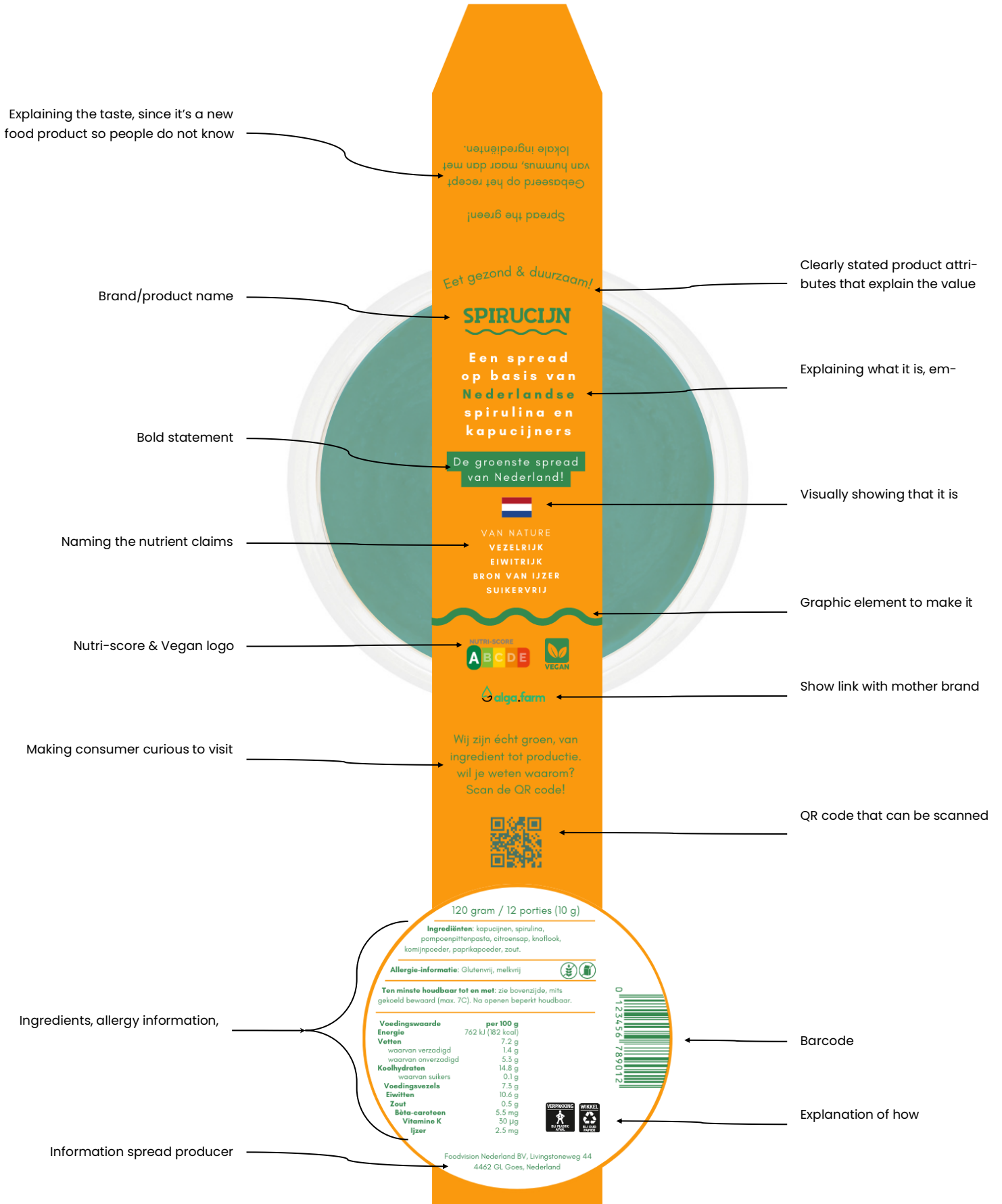


Figure 17. Visual design label

# 10.3 Communication- focused touchpoints

## Website

To make the consumer trust the company, information needs to be given about who the company is and what it does. Since there is not enough space on the packaging, all this information can be read on the website. The goal is to convince the consumer to buy the product, so it is important to explain how the products fulfill the needs of the consumer. The website should grab their interest, so they will keep reading and connecting with the brand. Insights of consumer research (chapter 8.2) showed that some information is important and other functions as background information. To make the website clear and well ordered it will look professional and read nicely.

Table 12 shows the elements of the website in hierarchy order, figure 18 shows the construction, and figure 19 shows a visual of the website.

Table 12. Hierarchy of website elements

Order	Element
1	Brand/product name
2	Brand core message
3	Product picture Nutri-score & Vegan check mark
4	<b>Values</b> - Functional benefits - Local (read more: ingredients) - Nutritious (read more: nutrition claims background info) - Taste
5	Comparison Nutritional values competition
6	Taste
7	Ingredients (what it is, why healthy, why sustainable)
8	Nutrition claims background info
9	Nutrients background info
10	Nutritional value
11	Alga.farm & Spread producer

## Home page

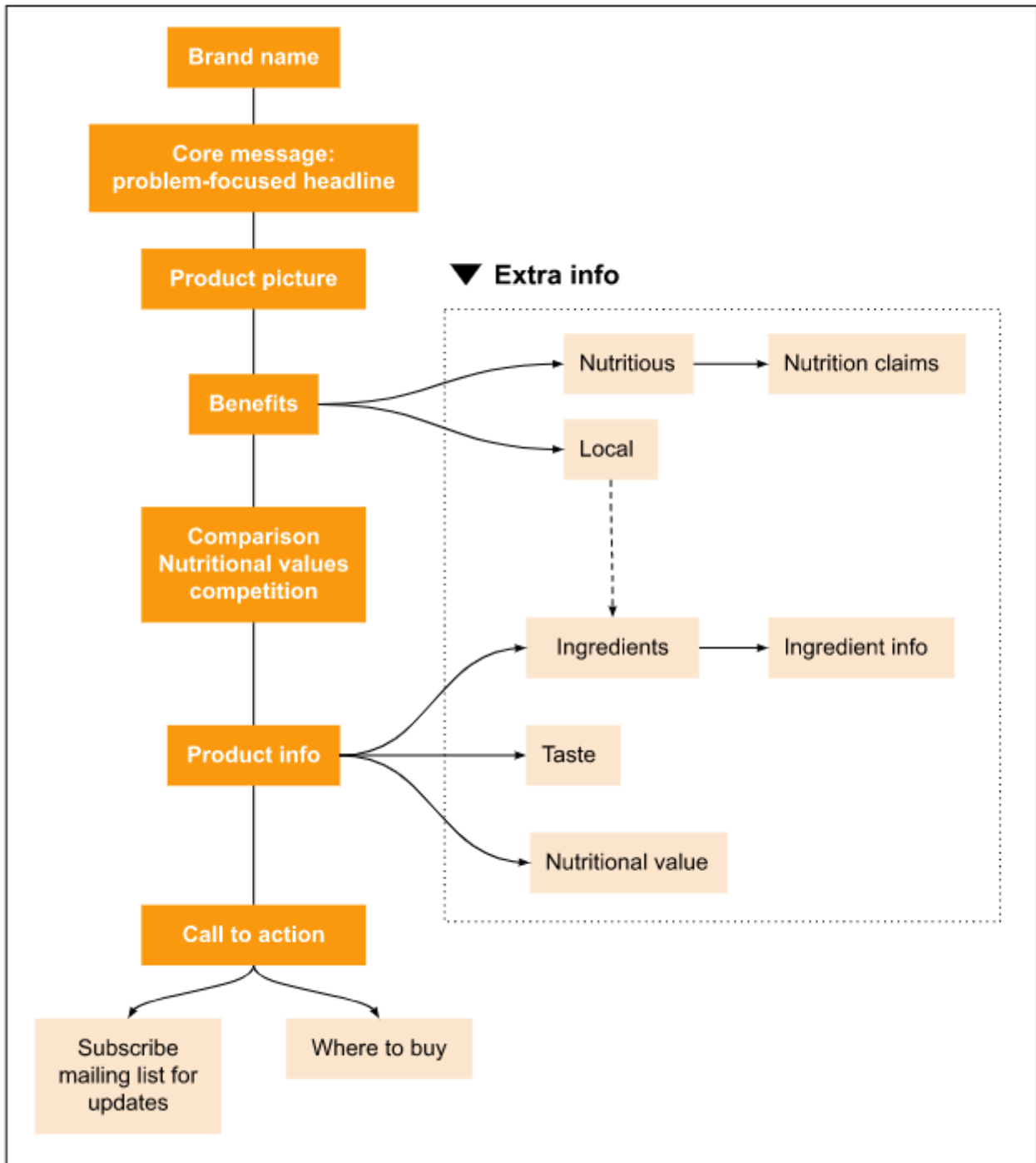


Figure 18. Construction of the website

# SPIRUCIJN

Een spread op  
basis van  
Nederlandse  
spirulina en  
kapucijners

De groenste spread  
van Nederland!

powered by  
alga.farm

VAN NATURE

VEZELRIJK | EIWIJTRIJK | SUIKERVRIJ

BOMVOL VITAMINES & MINERALEN



KAPUCIJNERS



VERSE SPIRULINA



POMPOENPITTEN



ALLE INGREDIENTEN →

## We doen het beter

Gebaseerd op het traditionele recept voor hummus, maar dan met lokale ingrediënten.  
In plaats van kikkererwten gebruiken we Nederlandse kapucijners en we gebruiken  
pompoen-pittenpasta in plaats van tahin. Door onze eigen verse spirulina toe te voegen,  
maken we deze spread nog gezonder!

	Eiwitten	Vetten	Provitamine A	Vitamine K
Spirucijn	10,6 g	7,2 g	5,5 mg	30 µg
AH Hummus	7,8 g	18 g	0 mg	0 µg

MEER INFO →

let's spread the green!

Figure 19. The website of Spirucijn, visual made by A. van Elteren.

Photo by Nicholas Barbaros on Unsplash

Onze producten herken je aan de diep groene kleur. Dit komt door de natuurlijke kleurstoffen die in spirulina zitten. Even wennen, maar wel super gezond!



Yum! Lekker gekruid

NU BESTELLEN →

te koop bij:



**Spirucijn**

by Alga.farm

Maasboulevard 100  
Rotterdam

**Over**

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[Vergelijking](#)  
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## Flyer

The flyer (see figure 20) was originally made for Gastvrij Rotterdam, a big food fair for ambitious catering professionals. It took place in Ahoy Rotterdam for three days and 16757 visitors could discover the most important developments and trends in the catering industry (Gastvrij Rotterdam, 2022). Alga.farm booked a stand to promote their spirulina and I was asked to join to promote the spread. The flyer was designed to hand out to interested people that could look at it later and visit the website for more information. The flyer was also intended to be distributed after the food fair in places where the target group comes..

The front of the flyer has the same information as the top side of the packaging. Two graphic elements are added to emphasize the young, playful personality and to show visually what the flyer is about. The first graphic element is a toast with the spread on it, the second element is a knife that spreads the spread. The backside of the flyer gives more detailed information about the spread, the functional benefits, mission of the brand, and motivates the reader to go to the website for more information.



Figure 20. The front and back side of the flyer



JN

basis  
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read  
d!

SUIKERVRIJ

MINERALEN



ga.farm

## Spirucijn

is gebaseerd op het traditionele recept voor hummus, maar dan met lokale ingrediënten. In plaats van kikkererwten gebruiken we Nederlandse kapucijners en we gebruiken pompoen-pittenpasta in plaats van tahin. Door onze eigen verse spirulina toe te voegen, maken we deze spread nog gezonder en duurzamer!



Onze producten herken je aan de diep groene kleur. Dit komt door de natuurlijke kleurstoffen die in spirulina zitten. Even wennen, maar wel super gezond!

Alleen met elkaar kunnen we een impact maken, dus

**let's spread the green!**

## Spirulina

behoort tot de oudste en meest voedingsrijke organismen op aarde. Het bevat alle essentiële aminozuren, vitaminen, mineralen en meervoudig onverzadigde vetzuren. Daarnaast kweken wij onze spirulina super duurzaam in Rotterdam. We besparen ruim 99% van land en water in vergelijking met traditionele landbouw en zetten CO2 om in zuurstof tijdens het kweekproces.

Wij zijn écht groen, van ingrediënten tot productie. Wil je weten hoe en waarom? Scan onderstaande QR code, dan leggen we het uit!



spread.alga.farm  
info@alga.farm  
Maasboulevard 100,  
Rotterdam

## Social media: Instagram

As found in consumer research, the most used social media of the consumer is Instagram.

Through Instagram the brand can create brand awareness, get the interest of consumers, create connection with consumers, and create trust of consumers. See table 13 how this will be done and figure 21 for some visual examples of Instagram posts.

Through paid advertisements unknown users can easily be reached that are in your target group, since Instagram has data available of its users. The target group that will see the advertisement can be chosen. You can select a range of age, gender, city, and even interests like 'yoga', 'healthy lifestyle', 'food', etc. Also advertising through Instagram can be done with a low budget, since you can determine the advertising costs yourself. On average, the costs for 1000 views are between €1.25 and €6.30 (Goemans, n.b.). This fits with a budget proof marketing plan.

Goal	How to reach goal
Create brand awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Quotes that fit with the Brand purpose, vision, and mission</li> <li>– Facts</li> <li>– Pictures of product</li> </ul>
Get the interest of consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Information about ingredients (sustainability, health), the farmers, nutrients</li> <li>– Give serving tips</li> </ul>
Create connection with consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– interactive post or story, for example Q&amp;A</li> <li>– Show "behind the scene" footage</li> </ul>
Create trust of consumers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Do all above</li> <li>– Show reviews from other consumers, influencers or experts</li> </ul>
Call to action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promotions/ special offers</li> <li>– Where to buy</li> <li>– Go to website for more information</li> </ul>



Figure 21. Visuals of Instagram post of Spirucijn

Table 13. Overview Instagram goals and how to reach them



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## 10.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the brand story and strategy was translated into brand touchpoints. Alga.farm has a small budget for marketing, so touchpoints were chosen with this in mind. The touchpoints of the brand are the product, website, flyer, and Instagram.

All the touchpoints together communicate the whole story of the brand. The product is the touchpoint that the consumer will see in the store. The label of the packaging was designed so the product stands out from the competitors.

On the website all the information about the product and brand can be found. Transparent content is given to create trust from the consumer, such as (design) decisions that are made and things that still can be improved. To create brand awareness and interest of the consumer online and offline touchpoints are made. The online touchpoint is an Instagram account where content will be shared that creates trust of and connection with the consumer. Instagram advertisement posts and videos can be used to reach out to new people in a budget proof way. The offline touchpoint is a flyer that Alga.farm can use during fairs they will attend. These flyers can also be distributed around at places that the target group comes.

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# 11. Product launch campaign

The previous chapter consisted of the final product design and communication designs. These are essential for the product launch campaign as set up in this chapter (11.1). This campaign uses the brand touchpoints practically in brand-consumer communication to finally build customer trust and result in purchases. Customer journeys clarify the different purchasing processes (11.2).

*11.1 Product launch campaign*

*11.2 Customer journeys*

# 11.1 Product launch campaign

The product launch campaign is developed to present the product to its target market and to make sales. The AIDA model (chapter 2) is used to effectively communicate the launch campaign and to clarify the purchasing process. The campaign explains what messages and calls to action will be sent through which channels in which content. The channels that are used are the communication-focused touchpoints of the previous chapter.

As discussed in theory, the AIDA model contains the 4 phases a consumer goes through in the purchasing process: Awareness, Interest, Desire, and Action. Every phase has its one goal and therefore also its own message. The messages are created with the brand personality (daring, young, spirited) in mind. They are slightly exaggerated to make them more distinct.

## Awareness

The first phase aims to create awareness amongst the existence of spirulina and Spirucijn. This can be done, for example, by handing out spreads so people can taste it, placing flyers in vegetarian restaurants so the target group will see them, and sharing teasing content about spirulina on instagram. The content should be vivid and visual.

## Interest

The second phase aims to create interest by giving valuable content about for example the benefits of spirulina and Spirucijn, information about nutritious food, local food, sustainable food, and the collaborating farms. This content should let the consumer trust the brand. Questions of consumers should be answered and shared on instagram to make the consumer feel important.

## Desire

The third phase (desire) aims to make the consumer want to own the product. This can be done by sharing customer experiences, collaborations with influencers, and news or magazine articles that Spirucijn appears in. This will build a solid trust in the brand and the product.

## Action

The final phase aims to stimulate the consumer to do something. This can be done, for example, by putting a QR-code on the packaging to forward the consumer to the website. promoting a 10% discount code when subscribing to the mailing list, and putting a striking button on the website that says "follow us now on Instagram".

On the next page, table 14 provides an overview of the product launch campaign that is developed using the AIDA model.

	Awareness	Interest	Desire	Action
<b>Goal</b>	Make them curious and create brand	Give them information, to let them trust you	Make them want to own the product	Stimulate them to do something (purchase)
<b>Message</b>	<p><i>Ken jij spirulina al? Dit donkergroene wonderpul is goed voor jou en de planeet.</i></p> <p><i>Eigenlijk gek dat het nu pas te koop is.</i></p>	<p><i>Spirulina, het Wonderspul. Wist je namelijk dat...</i></p> <p><i>...al het leven mogelijk is door algen?</i></p> <p><i>...het bomvoller zit met vitamines en eiwitten en alle andere voedselbronnen?</i></p> <p><i>...je dit wonderdje overal kan groeien? Zelfs in ons kikkerlandje.</i></p>	<p><i>Wij zijn het zat, al die bedrijven die zeggen dat ze groen zijn. Hoe dan? Ik zie het niet en ik weet niet wie ik moet geloven.</i></p> <p><i>Wij zijn echt groen. Donkergroen!</i></p>	<p><i>Probeer nu zelf! Word jij ook donkergroen?</i></p>
<b>Content per touch-point</b>	<p><b>Packaging</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hand out to taste</li> <li>- Differentiating label design</li> </ul> <p><b>Flyer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explains what is spirulina and Spirucijn</li> </ul> <p><b>Instagram</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problem current food industry, CO2 emission</li> <li>- Purpose, vision, mission brand</li> <li>- Voedselrevolution</li> <li>- Spirucijn, de groenste spread van Nederland!</li> <li>- Sustainable ingredients ?!</li> <li>- 100% vegan AND Dutch</li> <li>- Do you know where your food comes from?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Packaging</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nutrition claims</li> <li>- Nutri-score A</li> </ul> <p><b>Flyer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nutrition claims</li> <li>- Nutri-score A</li> <li>- Explains some decisions</li> </ul> <p><b>Instagram</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Serving tips</li> <li>- Benefits spirulina</li> <li>- Introducing ingredients</li> <li>- Spirucijn in comparison with other spreads</li> <li>- What are sustainable ingredients</li> <li>- Who are our farmers</li> <li>- Nutrients info</li> <li>- Nutrient claims info</li> <li>- Share answers on questions of customer</li> </ul> <p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Background info about spirulina, brand, rest of the ingredients, sustainability product</li> </ul>	<p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Add customer experiences, reviews</li> </ul> <p><b>Instagram</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share customer experiences, reviews</li> <li>- Collaboration influencers with sustainable &amp; healthy lifestyle</li> <li>- Share news/magazine articles</li> </ul>	<p><b>Packaging &amp; flyer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- QR-code that forwards the consumer to the website</li> </ul> <p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10% discount code when subscribing to the mailing list</li> <li>- A striking button on the website that says "follow us now on Instagram"</li> </ul> <p><b>Instagram</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10% discount code when subscribing to the mailing list</li> </ul>

Table 14. Overview of the product launch campaign

## 11.2 Customer journeys

Different purchase - and other action - processes are possible with the launch campaign. To clarify them and how the touchpoints play a role in it, different customer journeys are created.

These journeys are presented in table 15.

Table 15. Different possible customer journeys

	Awareness	Interest	Desire	Action
<b>Customer journey 1</b>	<b>Packaging</b> Sees spread in grocery store, the packaging looks different then the others	<b>Packaging</b> Start to read what is on the packaging label.	<b>Packaging</b> Reads nutrition claims and sees it is made in the Netherlands. Is getting curious about the taste.	<b>Packaging</b> Buys Spirucijn instead of Hummus to try it out.
<b>Customer journey 2</b>	<b>Packaging</b> Sees spread in grocery store. Packaging looks different then the others.	<b>Packaging</b> Start to read what is on the packaging. Reads nutrition claims and sees it is made in the Netherlands.		<b>Packaging</b> Wonders if the brand is trustful and scans the QR code for more information.
<b>Customer journey 3</b>	<b>Instagram</b> Sees spread on an Instagram advertisement. Get curious about the brand because has never seen it before.	<b>Website</b> Looks at the Instagram post and goes to website for more information.	<b>Website</b> After reading all the information on the website, she feels like the brand represents her vision.	<b>Website</b> Signs up for the e-mail list to get a 10% discount code and buys the spread via the online grocery store Crips
<b>Customer journey 4</b>	<b>Flyer</b> Sees the flyer in favourite coffee bar.  <i>Action!</i> Scans QR-code to go to the website	<b>Website</b> Reads more information on the website.	<b>Website</b> Wants to buy it next time she goes to the supermarket because it sounds promising	<b>Website</b> <b>Instagram</b> Sees on the website that Spirucijn has a Instagram account, so starts following them
<b>Customer journey 5</b>	<b>Instagram</b> Sees a post of Spirucijn that is shared in someone's story	<b>Instagram</b> Goes to the post to read the caption and looks at other post of Spirucijn. Decided to follow their Instagram because it looks like an interesting brand.	<b>Instagram</b> Days later, sees a post that the spread is now also available in the grocery store nearby.	<b>Instagram</b> Decides to go to the grocery store to buy it.

**To conclude, a product launch campaign is developed to strategically use the touchpoints that present the brand to its target market. The goal is to make the consumer feel connected with the brand in the long term so the consumer will (repeatedly) buy the product. Different customer journeys are created to clarify the action processes and how the touchpoints play a role in it.**

# 12. Overview outcomes & implementation plan

Chapter 5 to 11 outlined the needed parts of Alga.farm's market strategy: the strategic direction, food design, visual brand design, packaging design, brand messaging, final brand touchpoints and product launch campaign. Although this is the end point of this graduation project, logically more steps have to be taken by Alga.farm to practically result in customer loyalty and sales. Therefore this chapter shows an overview of the outcomes together with recommendations for Alga.farm in the next phase .

Table 16 below shows the final designs and recommendations for Alga.farm on how to use them in the next phase.

Table 16. Final designs and recommendations

Final designs	Recommended implementation steps for Alga.farm
<p><b>Strategic direction:</b></p> <p><b>Product differentiation</b> The brand could strongly differentiate itself from the competitors by clearly expressing their use of local ingredients that have a high nutritious value. (For elaboration, see section 5.1)</p> <p><b>Personas</b> Personas are made of the target groups to make them real and clear. The two personas that are developed are the eco-conscious and eco-friendly people (for elaboration, see section 5.2). They are used for the design process.</p> <p><b>Brand DNA</b> A brand DNA was developed with the purpose, position and personality of the brand.</p> <p>The brand's purpose is: "We strive for a climate neutral and nutrient rich spread. Nowadays ingredients travel over the whole world to arrive on your plate, which causes significant gas emissions that are a negative impact for the environment. We want to change this! We believe that delicious and healthy food exists that does not have to travel such a big distance."</p> <p>The brand's positioning is: "For eco-conscious and -friendly people, we offer a spread that is nutritious, has local ingredients, and makes people feel better/healthier in their bodies and makes them feel like they take their responsibility for a healthier environment."</p> <p>The brand personality is: Daring, young, and spirited.</p> <p>This is the base of the brand and will be used to make any content of the brand. (For elaboration, see section 5.3)</p> <p><b>Brand core values</b> The core values of the brand are: purposeful, inspiring, transparent, and factual. (For elaboration, see section 5.4) These values are used as guiding factors for the food design (chapter 6), visual brand design (chapter 7), packaging design (chapter 8), brand messaging (chapter 9), final product and communication (chapter 10).</p>	<p><b>Strategic direction:</b></p> <p><b>Product differentiation</b> When the spread recipe will be adjusted by the spread producer, Alga.farm should make sure the ingredients are local and have a nutritious value.</p> <p><b>Personas</b> After the product launch the personas can be evaluated to see if the people who are buying the product do fit with the personas. If not, the personas should be adjusted. Alga.farm can use the personas when designing content for the brand.</p> <p><b>Brand DNA</b> Do consumer research to find out whether the consumer sees the brand matches with the brand personality as stated in the brand DNA.</p> <p><b>Brand core values</b> When designing content for the brand, the brand core values should be used as guiding factors.</p>

## Final designs

## Recommended implementation steps for Alga.farm

### Food design

Research was done on what nutritious and sustainable food is to find guidelines to design the spread.

It was found that a nutritious spread has the right balance between nutrients. Nutrition claims can help to describe a certain nutrition property, for example, "sugar-free" or "protein rich". Claims can only be used if they are on the European list of approved claims. These claims can be used on the packaging to inform the consumer about a positive nutritional value. (For elaboration, see section 5.1).

Dutch ingredients were found that together meet the requirements of different nutrition claims. Capuchines were tested as the most tasty spread base and were used for a first concept of the recipe.

A design brief was created for the spread producer so a final spread can be developed. The recipe and design brief can be found in section 5.4.

### Visual brand design

The visual design of the brand is created to communicate itself externally. The name, logo, colors, and fonts of the brand are defined.

the name of the brand: Spirucijn. It comes from the words spirulina and kapucijner (Dutch for capuchin). The logo consists of the brand name and a graphic element. This element can be playfully used in the visual design of the brand touchpoints. The brand colors are orange and green, and are based on the brand personality and proposition. (For elaboration, see chapter 7).

### Food design

The spread producer is going to make samples of the design of the spread to develop a tasty spread that meets the requirements of retailers. As found in consumer research, the consumer will not buy a spread again that was not tasty to them. Therefore, the taste is an important aspect of the spread to make it a promising and successful product. It is recommended to keep highly involved in the development of the spread and organize different tasting moments and, if possible, reach out to different chefs for feedback.

Next to that it is recommended to get a biologic certification mark for their spirulina so the spread can be sold in stores with only biological products, such as Ekoplaza. It will be easier to sell the spread via these retailers, because the spread producer is already in contact with them.

### Visual brand design

Alga.farm should use this visual brand guide for all the next company outputs, as all the brand touchpoints should stick to this visual brand design to give an overall matching experience to the consumer.

Possibly, this visual design style can be optimized further to match the brand personality even better. A creative session with designers and/or target consumers can be held to adjust the visual design.



## Final designs

## Recommended implementation steps for Alga.farm

### Packaging design

The spread producer has different packages to choose from. The packaging that fits the best with the brand is a packaging with a re-adhesive foil and paper wrap. This is a sustainable option, since a plastic lid is replaced by a paper wrap made of recycled paper. Also, as found in the competitor analysis (section 8.1), this packaging may have a more sustainable appearance because it consists of paper. (For elaboration, see chapter

### Packaging design

Consumer research on the usage of the packaging can be done to find out if the right packaging is chosen and if it can be improved.

As sustainable packaging development is going quickly nowadays, Alga.farm should stay up-to-date with these developments and improve it to be even more sustainable when possible (of course, if economically viable).

### Brand messaging

Based on the insights of the analysis phase of the project (chapter 4) the brand messaging was written out (see appendix I).

To find out if the brand messaging resonates well with the target group, interviews were done with people of the target group (section 9.2).

It was found that the brand message is clear to the participants, all the information that is given matters to them, and all of the participants are curious about the spread and want to try it. Some feedback was given on what could be added to the messaging.

With the insights of the consumer research a list was made including all information that should be communicated through the touchpoints. The list can be found in section 9.3.

### Brand messaging

The tone of voice of the brand messaging could be improved. For example, a content writer could apply the right tone of voice based on the brand personality. This tone of voice should be used for all the brands content.

Goes further on next page >>

**Brand touchpoints:**

Brand touchpoints were researched and chosen (section 10.1). All the touchpoints together communicate the whole story of the brand and are low budget which is a requirement of Alga.farm.

**Product-focused touchpoints (10.2)****Product**

The consumer will be in contact with the product in the grocery store. The spread will cost around €2,45.

**Label**

A label was designed with the visual design style of the brand that stands out from other spread products. It communicates the product's benefits to the consumer, such as local ingredients, nutrition claims, and nutri-score.

**Communication-focused touchpoints (10.3)****Website**

This is the place where all the information about the product and brand can be found. Transparent content is given to create trust from the consumer, such as (design) decisions that are made and things that still can be improved.

**Flyer**

The flyer explains to the reader what spirulina and Spirucijn is. It can be easily brought to fairs that Alga.farm is participating in and it can be put at places that are regularly visited by the target group. It is an offline communication channel that creates brand awareness and interest of the consumer.

**Social media: Instagram**

Instagram is used as a communication channel since all participants of the consumer research (section 4.4) mentioned using Instagram. Content is shared that creates trust of and connection with the consumer. Also, a wide audience can be reached with Instagram advertisements in a budget friendly way that can be used to create brand awareness.

**Brand touchpoints:****Product-focused touchpoints****Product**

When the final spread is developed and the final packaging defined, the spread company will take care of the sales, since they already have a network of big retailers. It is recommended to contact - in agreement with the spread producer - smaller retailers in the Netherlands to sell the spread to. For example, local restaurants or grocery stores around Rotterdam to emphasize the local aspect of the spread.

**Label**

If the visual brand style is optimized further, the packaging design should be adjusted too. Also, further consumer tests can be done to find out if the packaging stands out from the grocery store shelves in a positive and unique way.

**Communication-focused touchpoints****Website**

The website can be built with help of the designed website construction and visual (chapter 9.3).

**Flyer**

The flyers should be spread at different places where the target group comes and they should be handed out during fairs Alga.farm is attending.

**Social media: Instagram**

Social media content needs to be created and posted. It is recommended to hire a marketing intern or employee with social media expertise for this work as it is especially important to grow the business in the next phase.

## Final designs

## Recommended implementation steps for Alga.farm

### Product launch campaign

The product launch campaign was developed to present the product to its target market and to make sales.

The AIDA model was used to effectively communicate the launch campaign. The campaign explains what messages and calls to action will be sent through which channels in which content.

The first phase aims to create awareness amongst the existence of spirulina and Spirucijn and its benefits. The second phase aims to create interest by giving valuable content about for example spirulina, nutritious food, local food, sustainable food, and information about the collaborating farms. The third phase aims to make the consumer want to own the product. This can be done by sharing customer experiences, collaborations with influencers, and news or magazine articles that Spirucijn appears in. The final phase aims to stimulate the consumer to do something, for example purchasing the product, subscribing for the mailing list, or following Spirucijn on Instagram. (For elaboration and the complete product launch campaign see section 11.1).

Different customer journeys were made to clarify the purchasing process. (For elaboration and the complete product launch campaign see section 11.2).

### Product launch campaign

Since time is essential in a campaign (Berghuis, 2021), a timeline should be made with which content should be communicated through which touchpoint in which time span.

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**Concluding, this chapter laid out the recommendations for Alga.farm's next implementation steps and how they relate to the final design outputs of this project.**

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# 13. Personal reflection & limitations

**This chapter contains a personal reflection on the process of this project. As I am a graduate student, this final project was the biggest independent output of my studies where I had the chance to combine the knowledge I have gained over my study years. Now that this graduation project has come to an end, I can clearly see that I have learned many more lessons in this process. This chapter includes the biggest challenges I have experienced, the most interesting lessons I have learned and the limitations of my process – about the assignment, research part, used methods & tools and designs.**

## Assignment

In my experience, one of the biggest challenges of this project was the freedom. Since the only fixed elements of the assignment were the client company Alga.farm and the ingredient spirulina, I was especially enthusiastic at the start. In my opinion, this assignment had great potential and I was honored with Alga.farm's trust and the freedom they allowed me. This freedom only quickly started to shift from a benefit to a challenge as I started to feel overwhelmed by so much freedom. But after crossing that hurdle and starting to choose the target group and product category, it quickly became more manageable again. I believe, if I would do a similar project again in the future and with my experience from this project I would start with more confidence and not let the overwhelming feelings take over.

## Research

The same people were asked to participate in the different stages of the design process which helped to save time during different parts, as it was not necessary to search for new people. Using the same people in the entire process had positive effects on the project and the way of working with the people. Since they were part of multiple stages they felt involved and valued for the design process and therefore did want to make time for the interviews and were enthusiastic to help further in the process. However, asking the same people to participate can also be seen as a limitation. The participants are only a few people of the target group, so it can not be concluded that these few people are an accurate representation of the target group.

## Used methods and tools

To come to the brand, product, packaging and strategy, the following specific methods and tools were used: 5C analysis, personas, Brand DNA to eventually lead to the design of the spread and packaging and a product launch campaign. These are evaluated in the next paragraphs.

### *5C analysis of the company Alga.farm*

As discussed in the theory (chapter 2) a fifth C was added to the 4C-analysis. Instead of only analyzing the company, competitors, context, and consumer, I added a fifth C: collaborators, because Alga.farm and my coaches already clearly foresaw this would influence the project greatly. After doing the 5C analysis, I learned that this was indeed a helpful element to research so early in the process. Early on in the project I contacted spread producers to find who wanted to collaborate and to find what their needs are. By this time I only had a concept of the idea: a spread that is sustainable and nutritious. Because I had early contact with a producer I found out on time that the producer already had packages to choose from which would be a low-priced option that fitted with Alga.farm requirements. If I would have found out later, I would have lost time by designing a packaging that could not be used. I also recommend other startups that want to launch a product to analyze the collaborators in the beginning, as they can be of greater influence than imagined beforehand. Especially because startups normally have a low budget they should use the resources of the collaborators that are already available to save money.

### *Consumer personas that reflect the values of the target market*

Personas were made based on consumer research. The personas were kept in mind during the design process to match the desirability of the product with the desires of the consumer. The personas can be helpful for Alga.farm for example when making content for social media. After the product launch the personas can be examined to see if the people who are buying the product do fit with the personas. If not, the personas should be adjusted.

### *A brand DNA designed based on the analyses and target market*

The brand DNA model consists of the purpose, proposition and personality of the brand. To define the brand personality it is recommended to examine the brands that the target group likes. In this project these brands were found during con-

sumer research and could be examined with the brand personality scale of Aaker (1997).

### *The design of the spread*

The spread producer is going to finalize the design (in this case, recipe) of the spread. This is beneficial for the feasibility, because this partner has significantly more knowledge and experience about designing market ready-spreads than me or Alga.farm. As an independent startup, it is difficult to get a product into the grocery store. Therefore it is recommended for startups to look at the opportunities of producers that have more experience with grocery store sales.

### *The design of the packaging based on the brand DNA*

I could have approached a graphic designer to translate the brand DNA into a visual design for more creative ideas. Since it is a creative process, it would have been interesting to at least get more inputs from different designers.

### *Product Launching campaign*

Alga.farm's low budget has been taken into account to ensure the viability of the design. A strategy was made to build a strong brand for the longer term through brand awareness and building trust. This strategy can be used as inspiration for other startups with a small budget.

An interesting lesson I have learned in this project is how all the elements and stakeholders closely connect and influence each other. For example, I could have never imagined, at the beginning of this project, that the producer of the spread would have as much influence on the design as it did. While it started as just a partner to outsource activities to, it evolved into a collaboration which had great consequences for the spread recipe, packaging design and even sales management (as they also already had clients and they were open to involve them as well). Now when I look back, what seemed the most important was to find the producer to work together with. He had a big influence on the rest of the project, because it was not just a stakeholder,

but a key stakeholder. This stakeholder firstly was seen as an outsource that produces the spread, but actually it evolved into a collaboration. This had consequences for the packaging design, since only packaging had to be chosen (not be designed) and a label design had to be made. Also they could further develop the spread and do sales with their already existing clients.

## **Designs**

The designs were logically made within the boundaries of the available time, knowledge and skills. This of course limits the success potential which could have been reached with more time, people and money. Although academically done and based on research, they should be tested and developed more before entering the consumer market. For example by:

- Doing more consumer research with larger number of people
- Improving and testing the communication means (messaging, textual)
- Improving the visual branding, by testing more versions and including more graphic designers
- Improving and testing the advertising strategy with an expert



# 14. Recommendations for other designers

After finishing the design outputs for Alga.farm and evaluating the process, this chapter lays out recommendations for other designers based on my experiences.



Other designers wanting to design a strong market strategy for a startup can use the methods applied in this project, including the reflections, as inspiration for their own projects.

More specifically, this project can be helpful for startups that want to develop a brand for a food product that contains a new ingredient. To them, I have some more specific recommendations:

- In my experience, the three most important and influential elements are the benefits of the ingredient, the values of the startup and the consumer needs. I recommend them to thoroughly dive into these three elements before doing anything else.
- After these three elements, it is recommended to research partners (in this case producers) early on in the process as they can be of great influence too. Startups should go on board with a producer at an early stage in the process to oversee their options and reduce the time to market of their product.
- In the case of a sustainable ingredient, the most risky challenge in my experience is to gain consumer trust, since greenwashing of other food brands has caused trust damages. Trust can be built through developing a brand with touchpoints that communicate the brand's story in a clear and transparent way. Factual information can be used to support the brand story.

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