

# Beyond a food container:

## Enhancing the relationship between ultra-processed sustainable food products and consumers through multisensory packaging experience

Explore multisensory packaging design's possibility in future trends

Consumers encounter many food choices in the supermarket, including ultra-processed food. Observing in the context and reflecting on the daily interactions, these products often present with product identities visually, and the food does not transparently show on the packaging. Consumers can see images of dishes, contextual visuals, labels, product claims, rendering pictures, ingredient depictions, and various product representations in many styles on the packaging of different ultra-processed food. The lack of transparency reduces the intuitive communication of the food's authentic attributes. More challenges are shown in the context, including consumers' habitual decision-making, bias brought by labels and product claims, and market trends of relying on visual representations. These are insights revealed from literature research, observations, and context analysis.

In the spectrum of ultra-processed food products, sustainable food is relatively new, with large growth potential compared to other well-established ultra-processed food categories. The mentioned challenges add potential obstacles to sustainable food in effectively communicating its unique food identities and values. Recognizing these challenges, the project focuses on ultra-processed sustainable food, as this category faces less effectiveness in communicating food attributes and values and can improve on establishing a stronger connection with consumers.

To foster the relationship between consumers and ultra-processed sustainable food, the project leverages multisensory packaging design as an opportunity to enhance the experience in a future context. The project developed the idea through multiple design exploration sections combining multisensory design and traditional design methods to implement the vision. During the explorations, the concept development is based on deconstructed food-related messages (e.g., food textures, tastes, associations, and values), transforming them into design elements (e.g., packaging materials, patterns, structures, and shapes) that can be effectively conveyed through sensory stimulations. Interactions are involved along the process to ensure the harmonies, intuitiveness, and other main qualities for the holistic experience. The final results of the multisensory packaging design apply to a meat alternative and a dairy alternative product. The innovation transformations in the packaging design empower consumers to uncover food messages through various sensory modalities. Furthermore, the concept showcases the distinct values of sustainable food. The final concept demonstrates a multisensory packaging experience that utilizes design elements in message delivery in a cohesive, meaningful, and immersive way.



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