

The Chancellor of Ghent University has the honour of inviting you to attend the public defence of the doctoral dissertation of

ir. Fien Minnens

Title of the doctoral dissertation:

*Communication on food integrity and seafood consumption:
stakeholder and consumer reactions*

The public defence will take place on the 28th of January 2025 at 16:00 in the Academieraadzaal (Hall of the Academic Board), room A 0.030 at Campus Coupure, Coupure Links 653, 9000 Ghent.

There will be a contiguous reception to which you are heartily invited.
Please confirm your attendance before 22nd of January through this form:
<https://forms.gle/iEpBAX8GLibjVFT8>

Dissertation supervisors

Prof. dr. ir. Wim Verbeke
Faculty of Bioscience
Engineering, Ghent University

Prof. dr. Hans De Steur
Faculty of Bioscience
Engineering, Ghent University

Board of examiners

Prof. dr. ir. Frank Devlieghere
Chair
Faculty of Bioscience
Engineering,
Ghent University

Prof. dr. ir. Liesbeth Jacxsens
Faculty of Bioscience
Engineering,
Ghent University

Prof. dr. Xavier Gellynck
Faculty of Bioscience
Engineering,
Ghent University

Prof. dr. ir. Liesbet Vranken
Department of Earth and
Environmental Sciences
KU Leuven, Belgium

Dr. António Marques
Portuguese Institute for the Sea
and Atmosphere, Portugal

Abstract of the doctoral research

In the food sector, extensive measures are implemented to ensure the safety and quality of food products. Despite these efforts, there are situations in which the system falls short, highlighting the need to communicate about complex, difficult, or negative information to consumers.

This doctoral thesis studies two distinct cases that address communication challenges within the food sector and investigates how tools can improve communication. The first case focuses on issues with food integrity, when the standards set up by the food system are not met, due to intentional or unintentional actions.

The second case investigates consumption guidelines about seafood and the role of communication tools in informing consumers about the health benefits and risks, environmental and social sustainability of seafood.

This dissertation contributes to the understanding of communication processes and effects in the context of food products. It investigates both consumer reactions and stakeholder responses.

Brief Curriculum Vitae

Fien Minnens is a doctoral researcher and academic assistant within the Department of Agricultural Economics of Ghent University (Belgium). She holds a Master's degree of Ghent University in Bioscience Engineering, with a specialization in Agricultural Sciences, and a Teaching Diploma.

After three years working on a development education project for the NGO Vétérinaires Sans Frontières – Dierenartsen Zonder Grenzen, she started an academic career at Ghent University. As an academic assistant, she is involved in several courses regarding economics, marketing and consumer behaviour and has tutored students for bachelor projects and master theses.

Her research interests are consumer behaviour regarding food, marketing and risk communication. During her doctoral studies, Fien was involved in several research projects: ECsafeSEAFOOD (EU FP7), FOODINTEGRITY (EU FP7), CRISPR-B (FWO), RASCS (EFSA). She is (co)-author of several peer-reviewed articles and has presented her research at international scientific conferences.