

LIVING LABS IN TÜRKİYE · FACTSHEET

How do alternative proteins reach *the table*?

Findings from four living lab iterations in İzmir, 2024–2025

224+

participants

4

iterations

7

sessions

6

venues

What we did

As part of Like-A-Pro, Zeytince ran living labs in İzmir where producers, chefs, students, academics and consumers discussed, tasted and tested alternative proteins together. Each iteration built on what the previous one taught us.

Four iterations



May 2024

Iteration 1 · Perceptions and choice editing

DEU Faculty of Gastronomy · 64 people



Oct–Nov 2024

Iteration 2 · Tasting menus

Rast Urla · 2 rounds · 17+ people



March 2025

Iteration 3 · Shelves, menus and labels

Rast Urla, Kirkmerdiven · 2 rounds · 27 people



May–June 2025

Iteration 4 · Messaging, advertising and education

Olive Academy, Ege Univ., Kültürpark · 116 people

Considering reducing meat intake

It. 1 · DEU Gastronomy		34%
It. 3 · Rast Urla		73%
It. 3 · Kirkmerdiven		64%
It. 4 · Olive Academy		77%
It. 4 · Ege Univ. canteen		62%
It. 4 · Kültürpark market		46%

Each session involved a different group of participants; shares show each group's tendency, not change over time.



Key findings

01

Knowledge is very limited

Most participants, including gastronomy students, were hearing about alternative proteins in detail for the first time. Fermentation- and algae-based products were almost unknown.

03

Price and access decide

A clear price gap with conventional products discourages choice. Variety in İzmir is limited, mostly soy-based. Plastic packaging was criticised.

05

Labels are not enough

The best-known labels were EU Organic, Nutri-Score and V-Label. Participants want QR codes with environmental impact, protein content, fair production and food safety information.

02

Tasting changes minds

At tasting-menu gatherings the products were highly rated for taste, aroma and appearance; recipes and familiar pairings made acceptance easier.

04

Awareness, not bans

Participants prefer visibility and awareness over taxes and bans — yet many also stressed that, given the urgency of the climate crisis, education alone is too slow and strong policy is needed.

06

Trust and positive language

Trust in advertising is low and fear-based messages are disliked. Messages that stress flavour and familiarity, with real food images, resonated more.

How the method evolved

- 1 No tasting in the first round; participants asked for tastings and recipes → Iteration 2 was built around tasting menus.
- 2 From abstract discussion to experience → Iteration 3 used mock supermarket shelves and restaurant menus.
- 3 From large, homogeneous groups to small, mixed groups in everyday places: café, canteen, market.

Recommendations

- 1 Make alternative proteins visible on restaurant and café menus; introduce them through tastings and recipes.
- 2 Incentives to narrow the price gap, and more local product variety.
- 3 Clear, QR-coded labels: environmental impact, protein content, production conditions.
- 4 Hands-on “Food and Climate” education in schools and universities.
- 5 Positive, flavour-led and culturally familiar communication.

What participants said

“I love the taste of meat.”

most frequent barrier · 16 times

“Not a full replacement, but it can be an alternative.”

attitude · 16 times

“Prices should be affordable, and it should be promoted.”

access and price · 10 times

“Its health effects should be shown by science.”

trust · 10 times

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From Iteration 1 participant cards; anonymised and paraphrased.
Method note: Findings are compiled from Like-A-Pro living lab reporting templates, facilitator notes and participant cards. All data are anonymised; demographic information is reported only in aggregate. The report of Iteration 2, round 2 (21 November 2024) is not included in this note.



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