

# Engagement with Fungi-Based Food

## Recovery and Valorization of Resources for Food

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## Abstract

There has been an increasing demand for more sustainable food and ways of encouraging individuals to lead more sustainable lives. This thesis seeks to contribute to understanding human engagement with fungi-based food in a multidisciplinary manner by complementing resource recovery with an occupational perspective that sheds light on aspects that encourage or discourage individuals from engaging with this food. This thesis encompasses five papers. The research described in these papers focused on reviewing aspects that affect tasting studies of emerging food; studying how a valorized bread-based fungi burger patty was perceived; investigating aspects that affect food choice in daily life as well as drivers and barriers to engagement with fungi-based food; exploring glocal and ecoethical perceptions of engagement with fungi-based food; and assessing household fermentation of leftover bread to nutritious food. Personal reflections about the consequences of engaging in activities and with resources and products can be expected to constitute an essential part of ecoethics and elicit reasons and motives that encourage engagement. Acting in ways that are based on reasons and motives to engage with fungi-based food is expected to require that the engagement is consistent with an individual's ideals and the belief that one's actions can contribute to achieving goals. The findings show that several motives may affect engagement with fungi-based food, including sustainability, environmental benefits, resource use, personal choices, individual interests, finances, sensory characteristics, social implications, and health. That resources can be valorized when producing fungi-based food as well as that this can contribute to overcoming challenges related to providing nutritious, affordable, and sustainable food to the growing global population, encourage engagement with this food. These findings are promising given the resource depletion of the status quo of food production, the amount of food lost and wasted, and the negative consequences associated with this loss and waste. They can be built on in research and policy efforts that aim to encourage individuals to engage with foods that efficiently use natural resources, lessen the impact of food systems on the planet, and ensure food security and nutrition.

**Keywords:** sustainable lifestyles, fungi, resource recovery, sustainable food, food waste reduction