

**Ainoa Morillas-España, Silvia Villaró, Tomas Lafarga, Francisco Gabriel Acien-Fernández, Cynthia V. González-López**  
*Department of Chemical Engineering, Engineering Higher School, Universidad de Almería, E04120 Almería (Spain); ame778@ual.es*

## INTRODUCTION

Currently we do not know the perception of microalgae in the Spanish population. This information can be very useful and would allow us to establish market strategies to be able to include microalgae in different foods.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

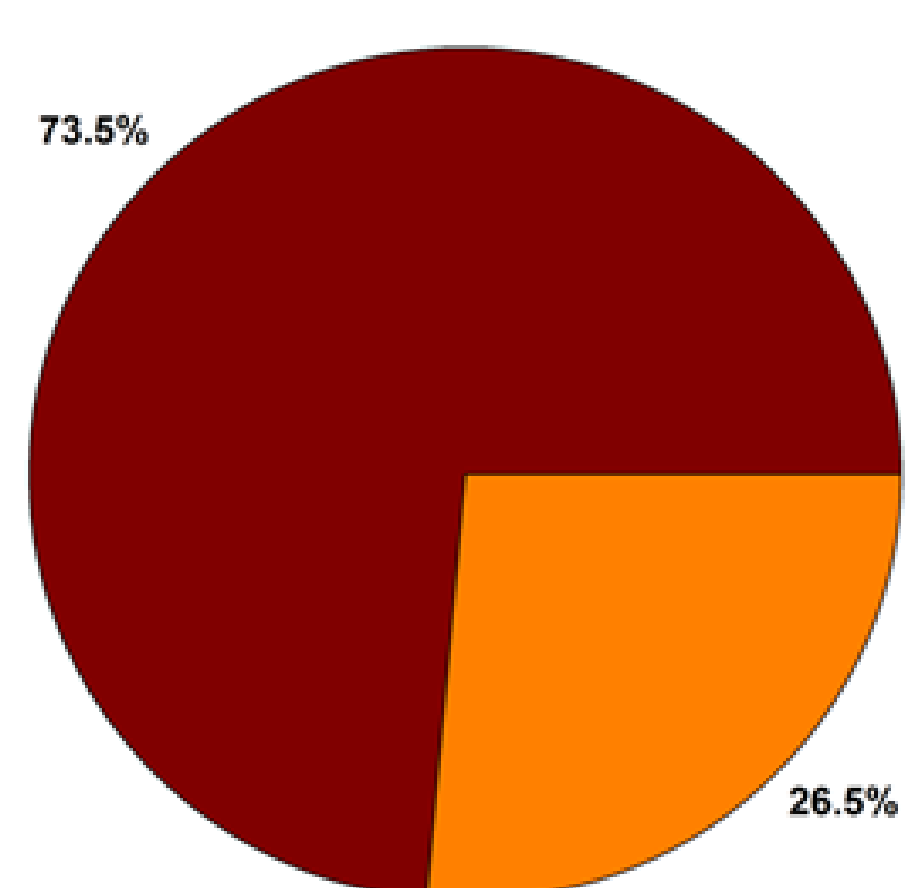
Spanish consumers' knowledge and attitudes towards microalgae as food were assessed using a specific questionnaire a total of 3,084 Spanish consumers over 18 years old were considered in the current study.

The questionnaire, composed by 36 close-ended questions, revealed that there is a huge lack of knowledge on basic aspects of microalgae, especially within the youngest respondents (18-24 years old) and for those aged over 65 years old ( $p < 0.001$ ).

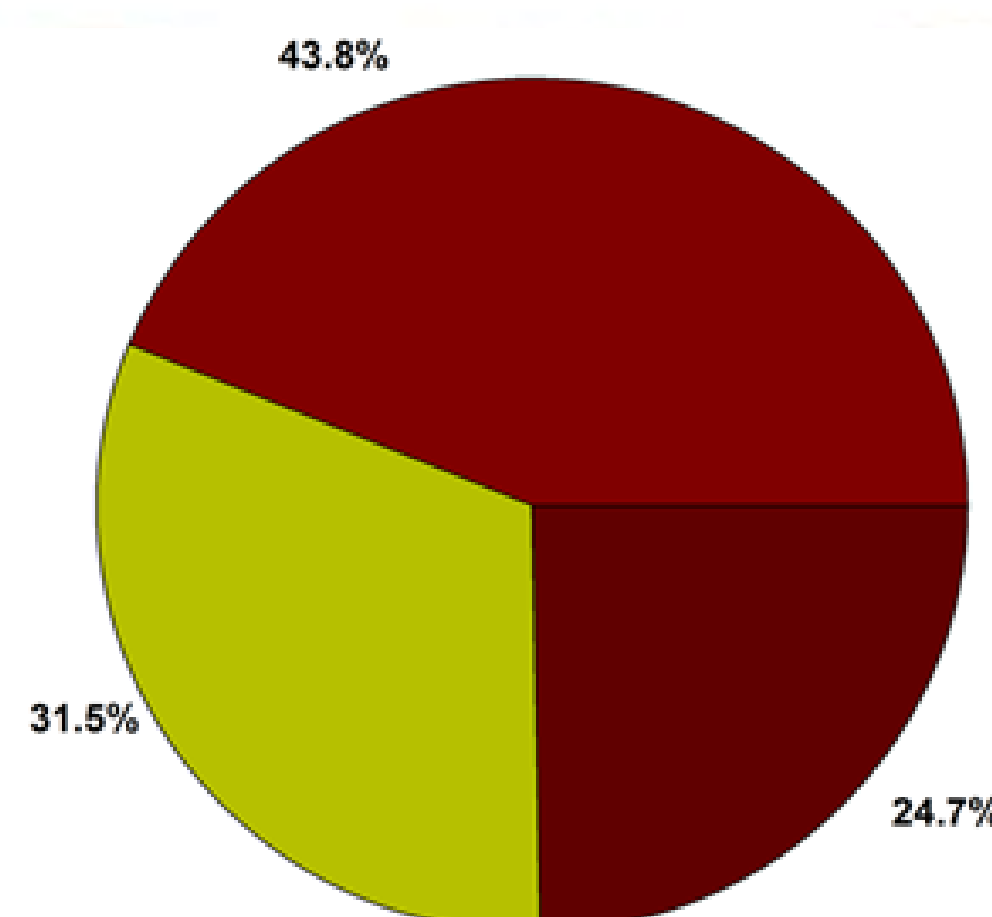


## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

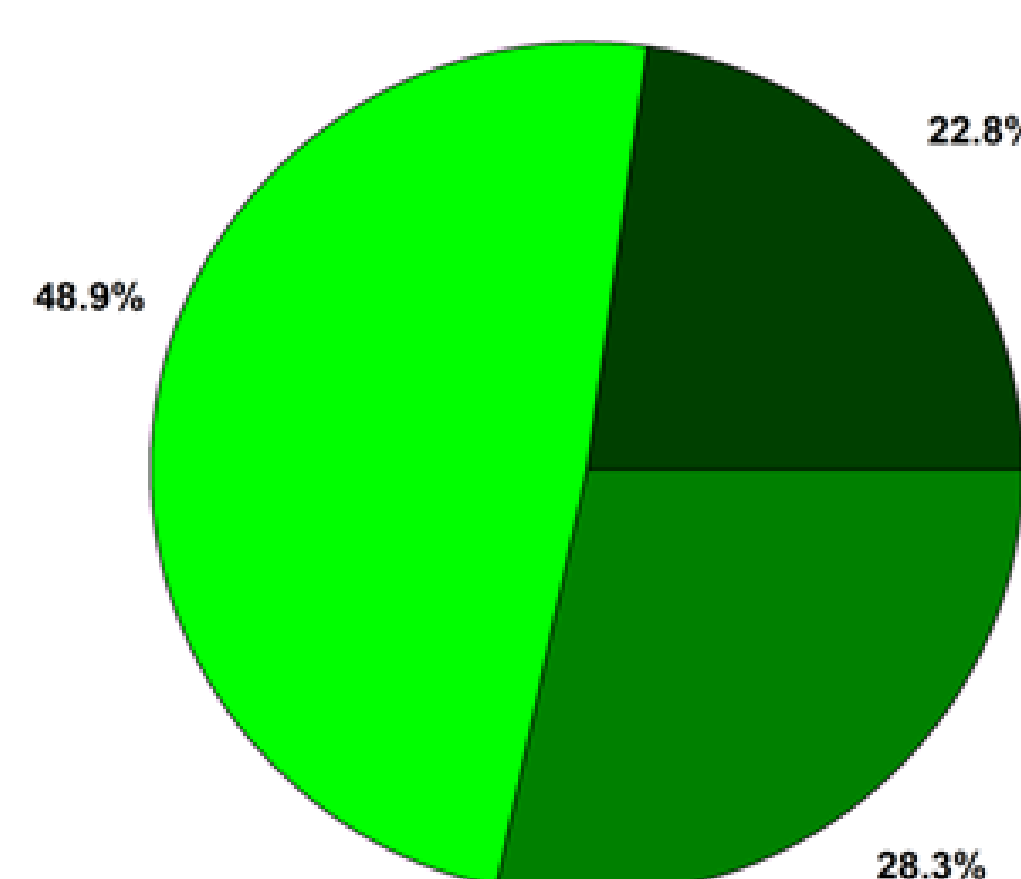
Have you ever heard about microalgae?



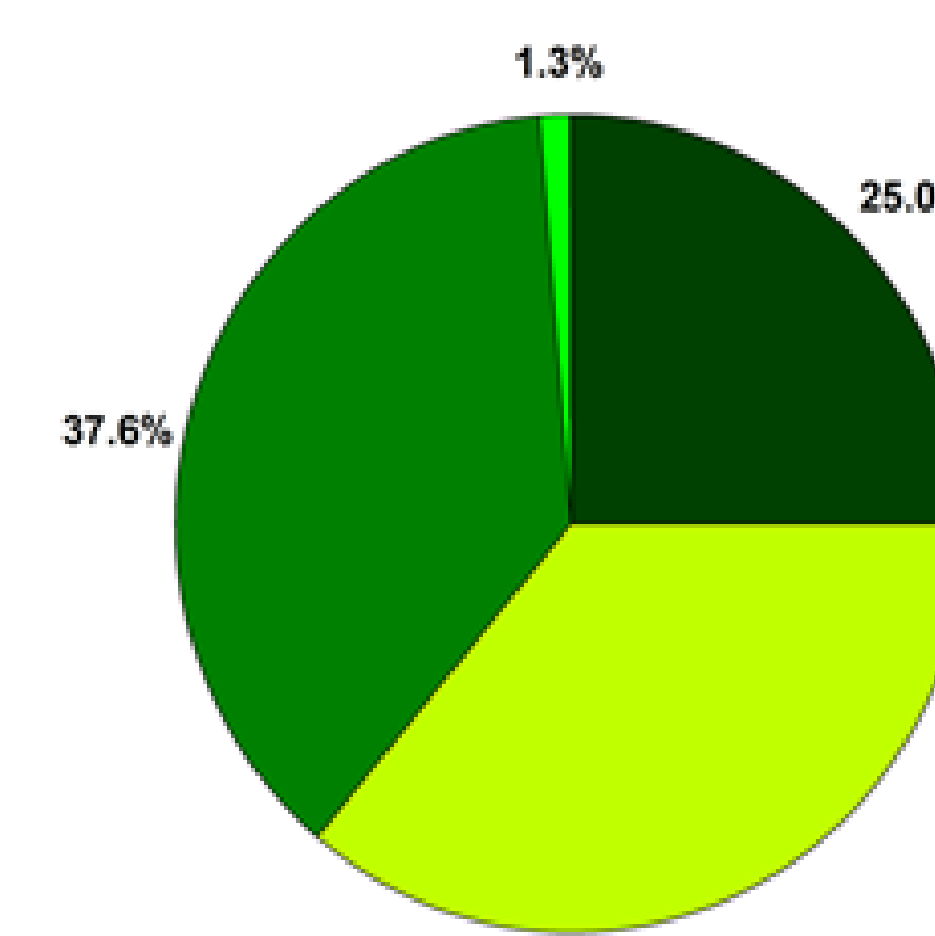
Do you know what they are?



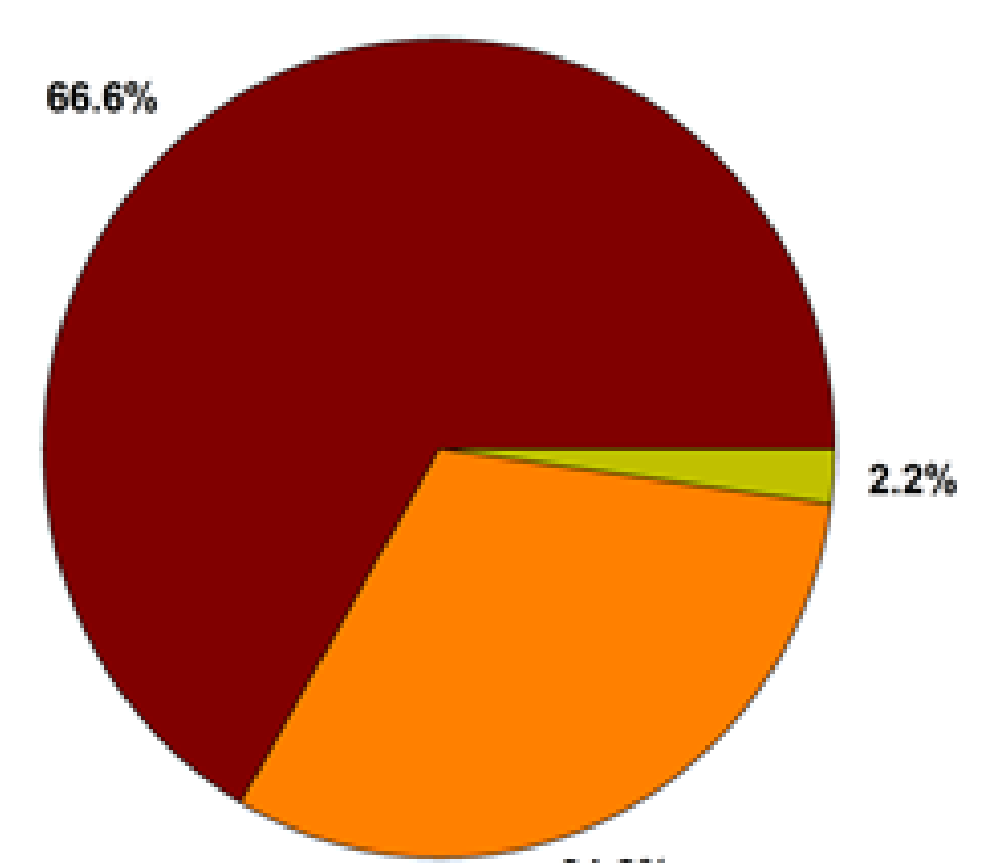
Do you know how they are produced?



Have you heard about Spirulina or Chlorella?

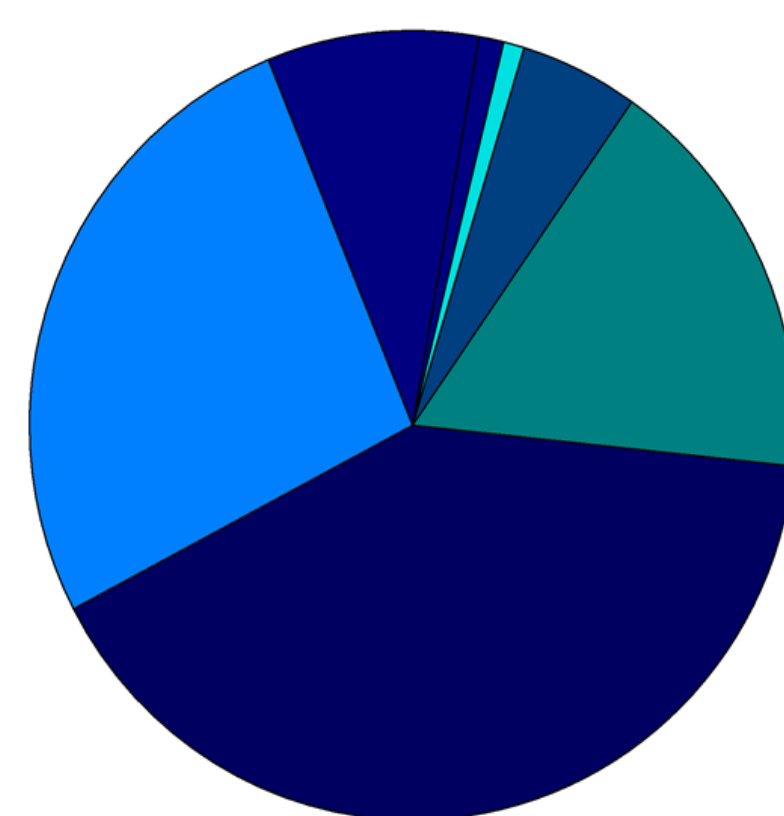


If you have, did you know that Spirulina and Chlorella are microalgae?

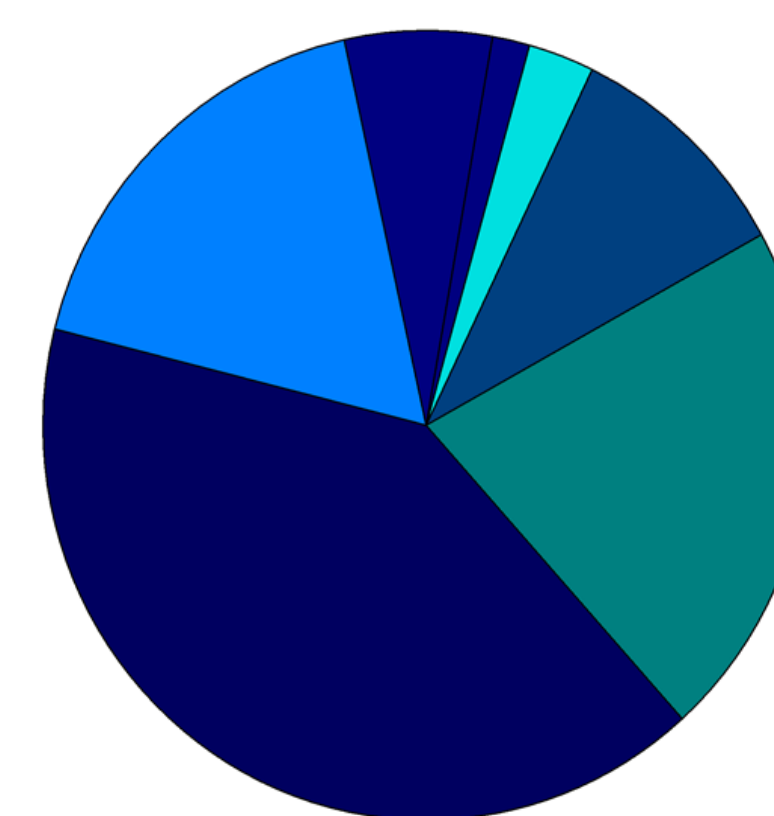


What extra price would you pay for a microalgae-containing product

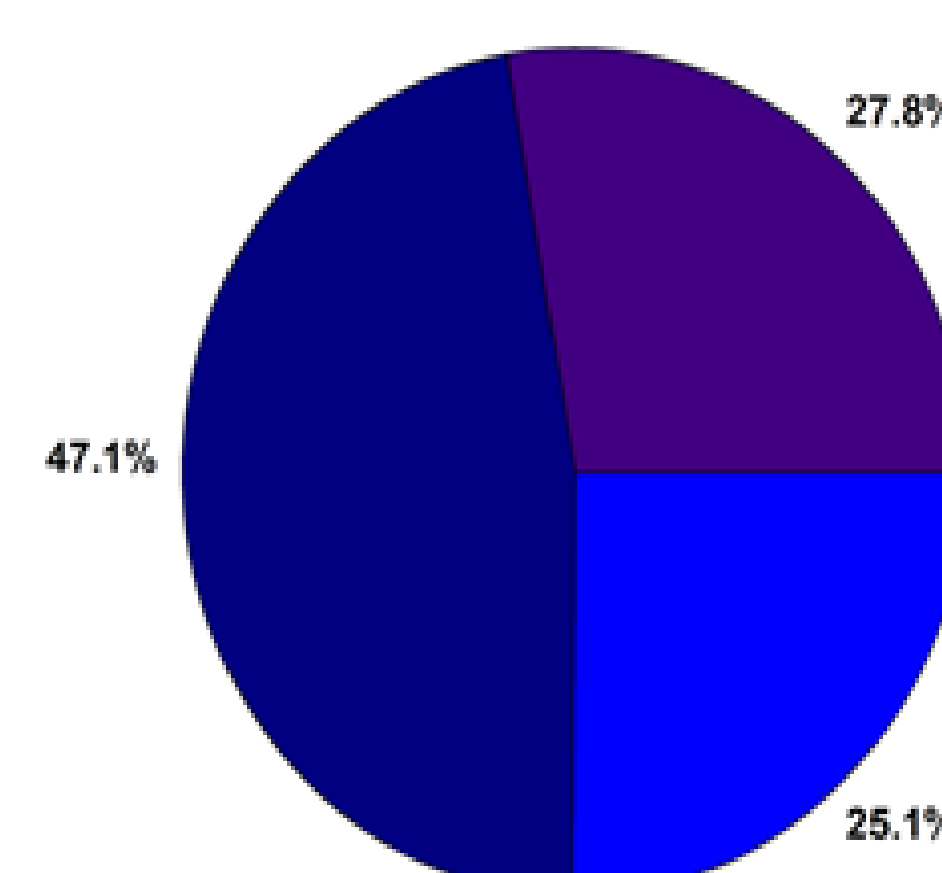
BEFORE READING THE TEXT



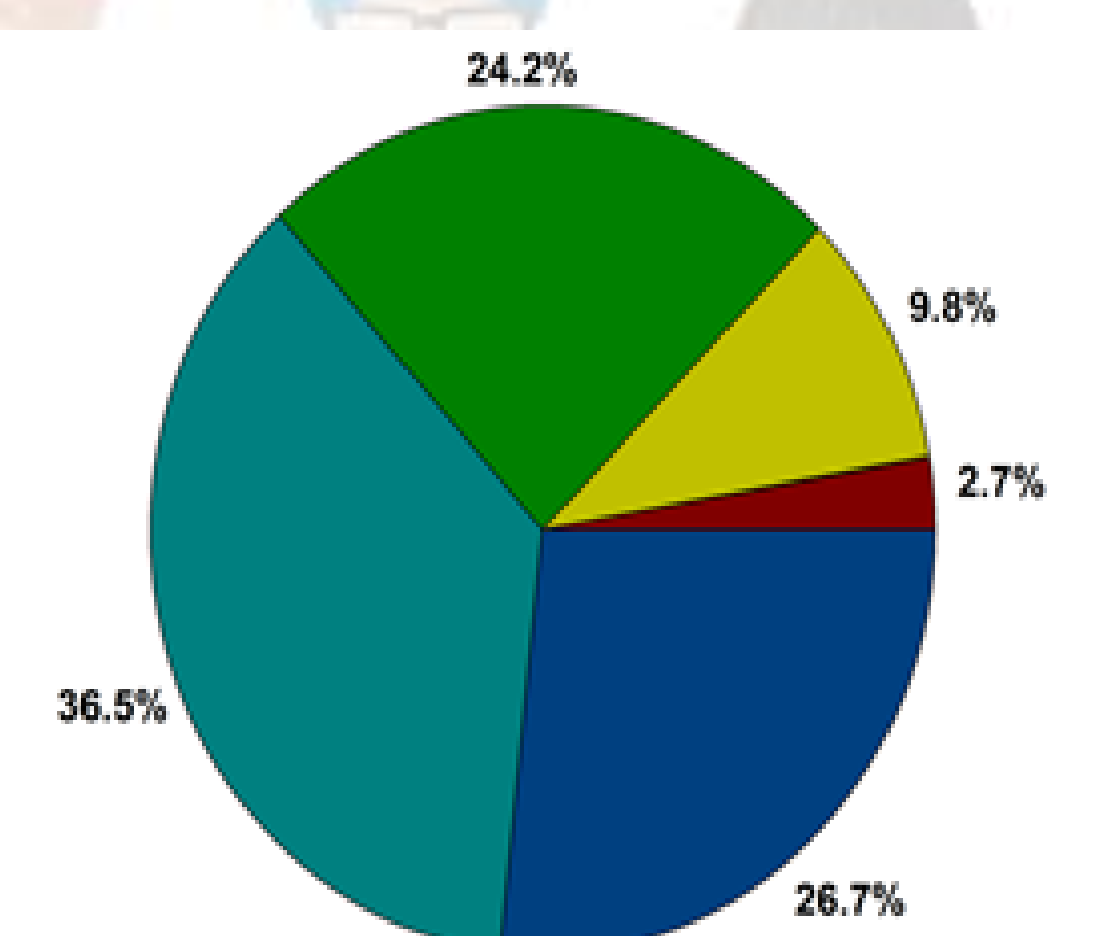
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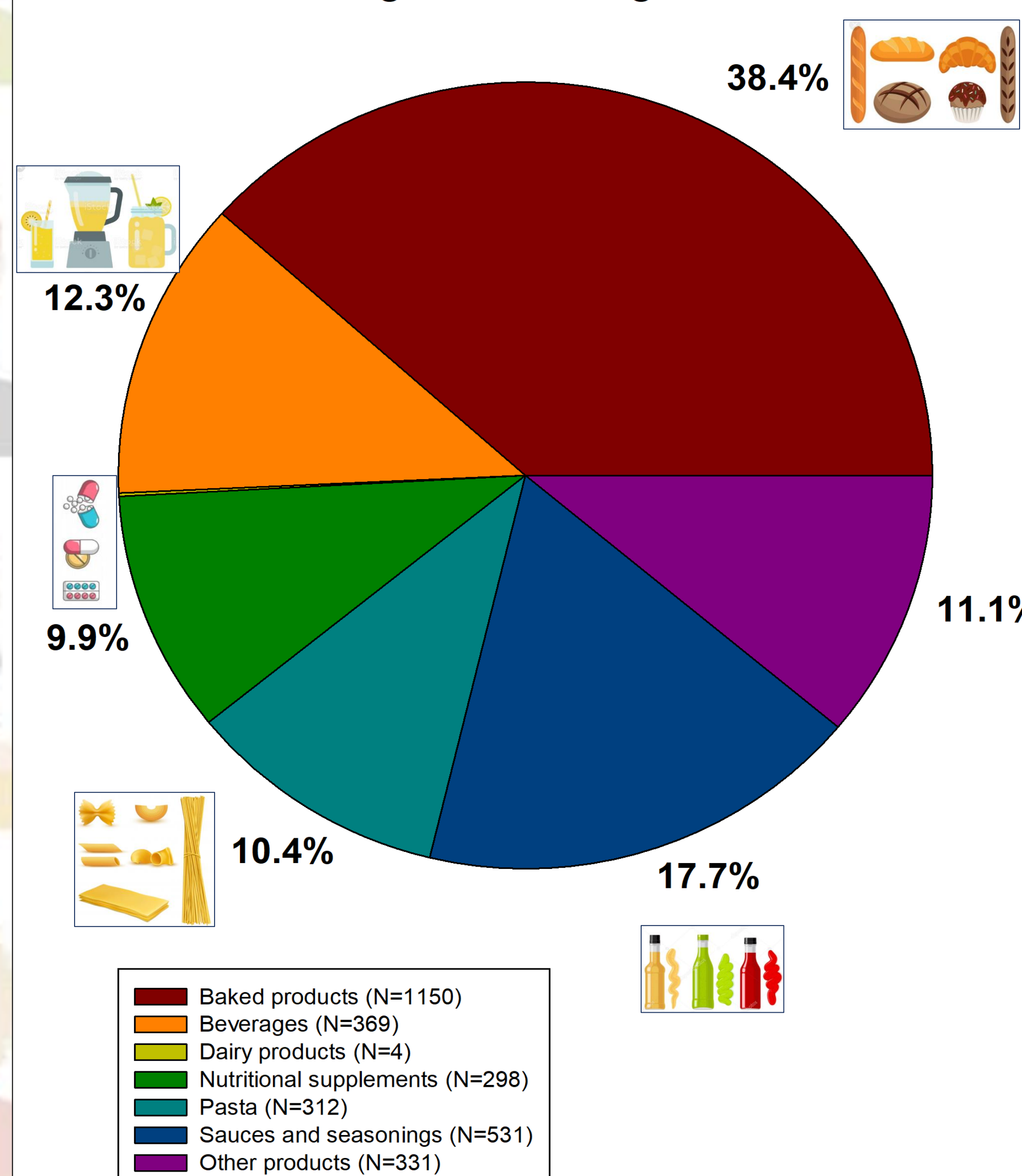
Do you know the health benefits of consuming microalgae?



Have you ever eaten microalgae or a microalgae-derived ingredient?



In what food group(s) would you prefer to include microalgae as an ingredient?



## CONCLUSIONS

- ✓ Approximately 85% of all respondents scored the statement "There is a big lack of information about microalgae" with either 4 or 5 (using a 5-point hedonic scale), demonstrating that microalgae and their potential applications are unknown to the majority of the Spanish population
- ✓ Spanish consumers consider microalgae as: (i) sustainable and environmentally friendly, (ii) nutritious and healthy, and (iii) safe, which is of key importance for acceptance of microalgae-based products.
- ✓ Results revealed that consumers from all the different age groups and educational levels preferred microalgae as an ingredient in baked goods, such as bread or biscuits, except for those aged over 65 years old, who would prefer microalgae to be introduced into soups or sauces, and those with no regulated studies, who preferred microalgae as an ingredient in pasta products ( $p < 0.01$ ).

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