



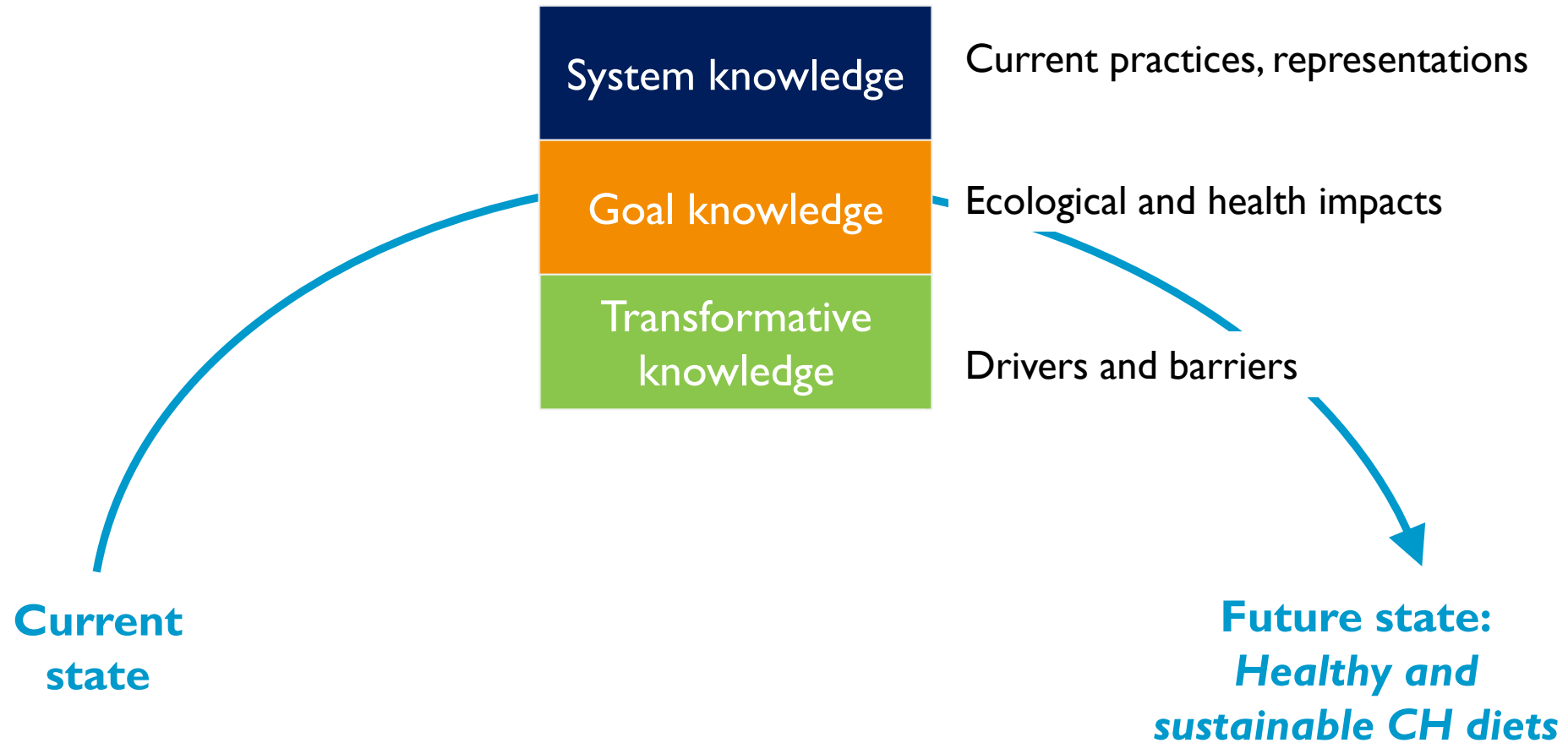
# Prescriptions et pratiques alimentaires: Vers des régimes sains et durables en Suisse

Laurence Godin et Marlyne Sahakian

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# Project overview

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Source: after Binder 2004

# 3 work packages

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## **WPI (UNIL/UNIGE)**

**Prescriptions, representation and practices:** what are existing guidelines around healthy and sustainable diets? How do consumers understand them? How do they enact them?

## **WP2 (Quantis)**

**Impacts:** through enhanced life cycle assessments, what are the health, nutrition and environmental impacts of particular diets? What are the trade-offs?

## **WP3 (EPFL)**

**Transitions:** what are the drivers and barriers to transitions towards more healthy and sustainable diets?


# Goals of the project

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- ▶ **Uncover “tipping points”** to healthy and sustainable CH diets, including barriers and opportunities, points of tension, knowledge gaps & long/short-term priorities.
- ▶ Deliver **perspectives** for future healthy and sustainable CH diets, through 1) scientific publications; and **transdisciplinary** efforts: 2) a consumer-oriented report and 3) a policy-driven executive summary.

# **Tipping points toward healthy and sustainable Swiss diets:**

## **Assessing prescriptions, practices and impacts**



Conceptual frameworks



Social practices and tipping points

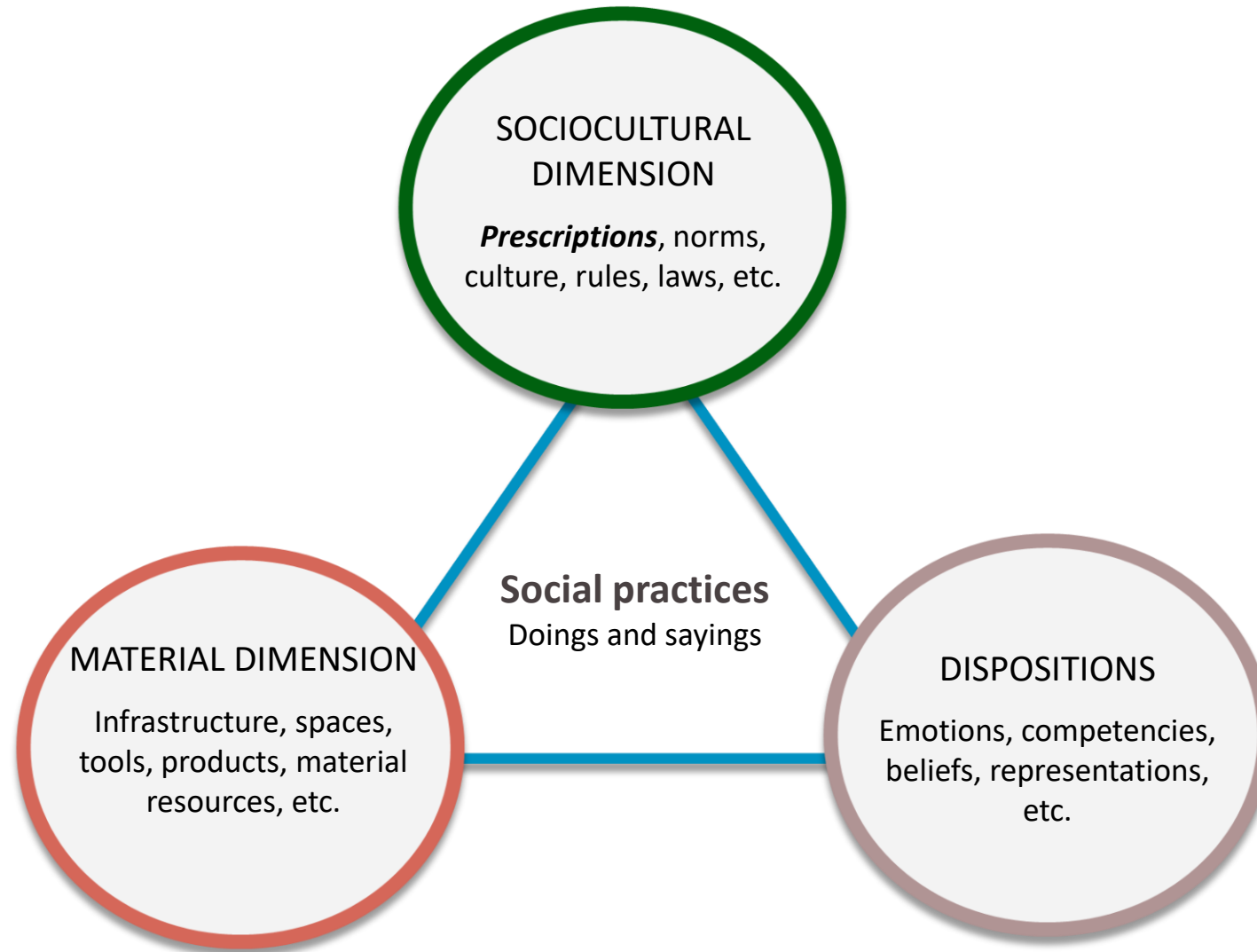
# Why study social practices?

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- ▶ **How we understand consumption:** beyond individual actions based on rational choices
- ▶ **What we study:** looking at what people do, not what they want or believe (value-action gap)
- ▶ **How we understand change:** acting on the context, not the people; including a material dimensions of consumption and social norms about how things *ought or should be*

# Social practices

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# **Tipping points toward healthy and sustainable Swiss diets:**

## **Assessing prescriptions, practices and impacts**



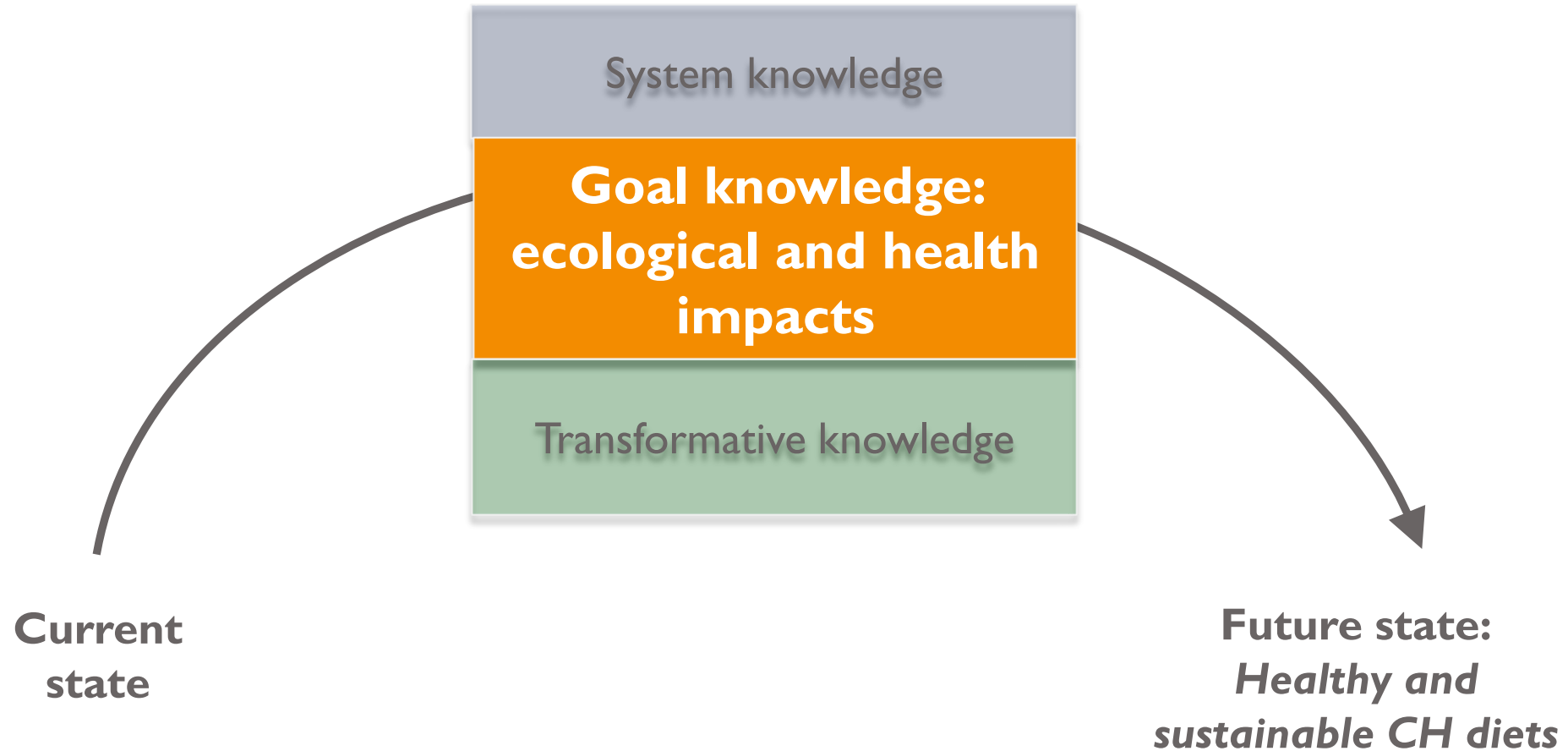
Key project findings

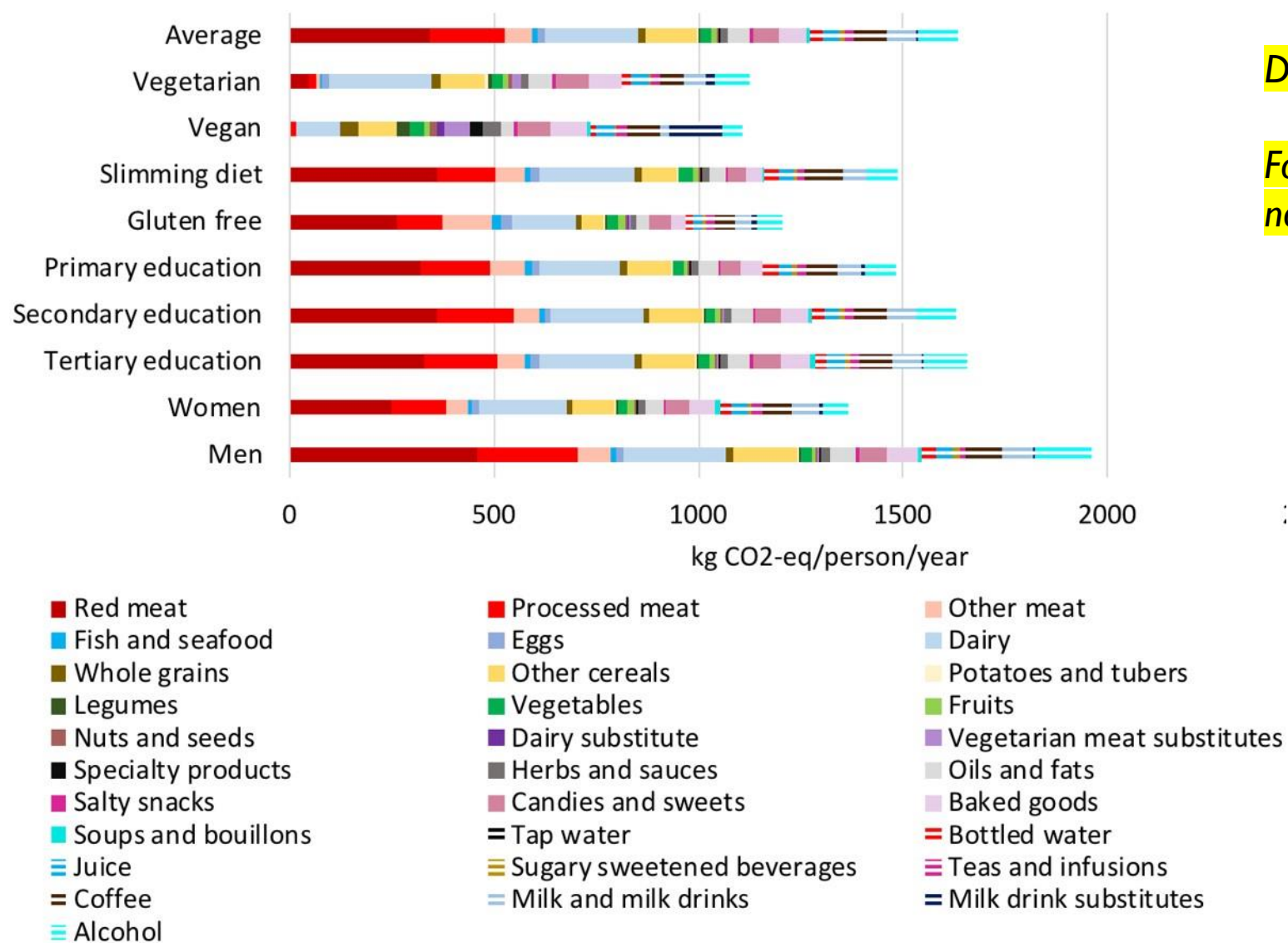




# Key findings part 1: Goal knowledge

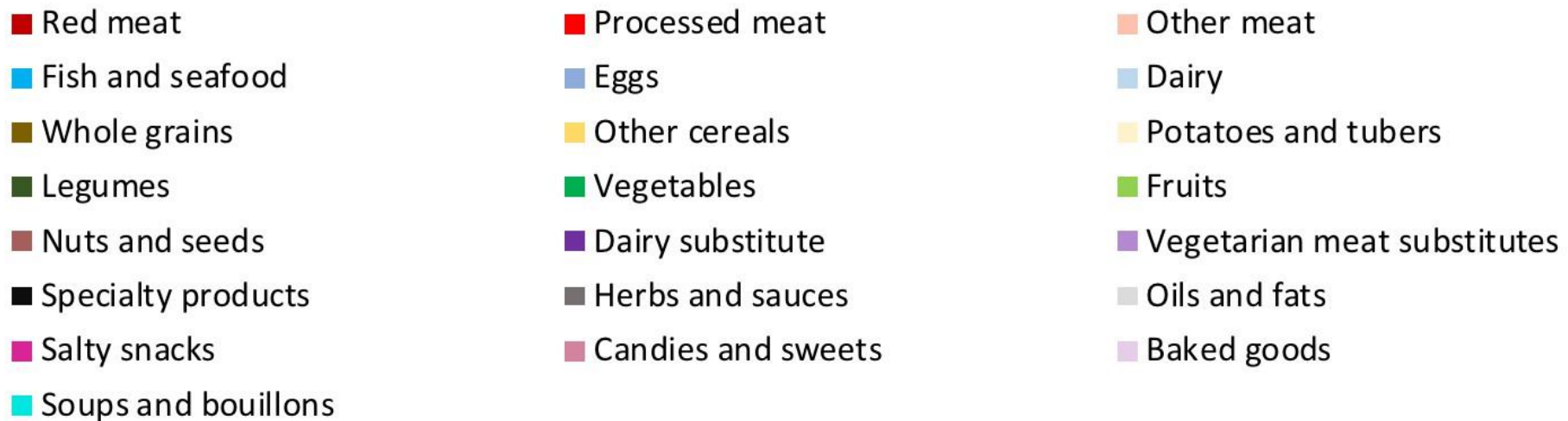
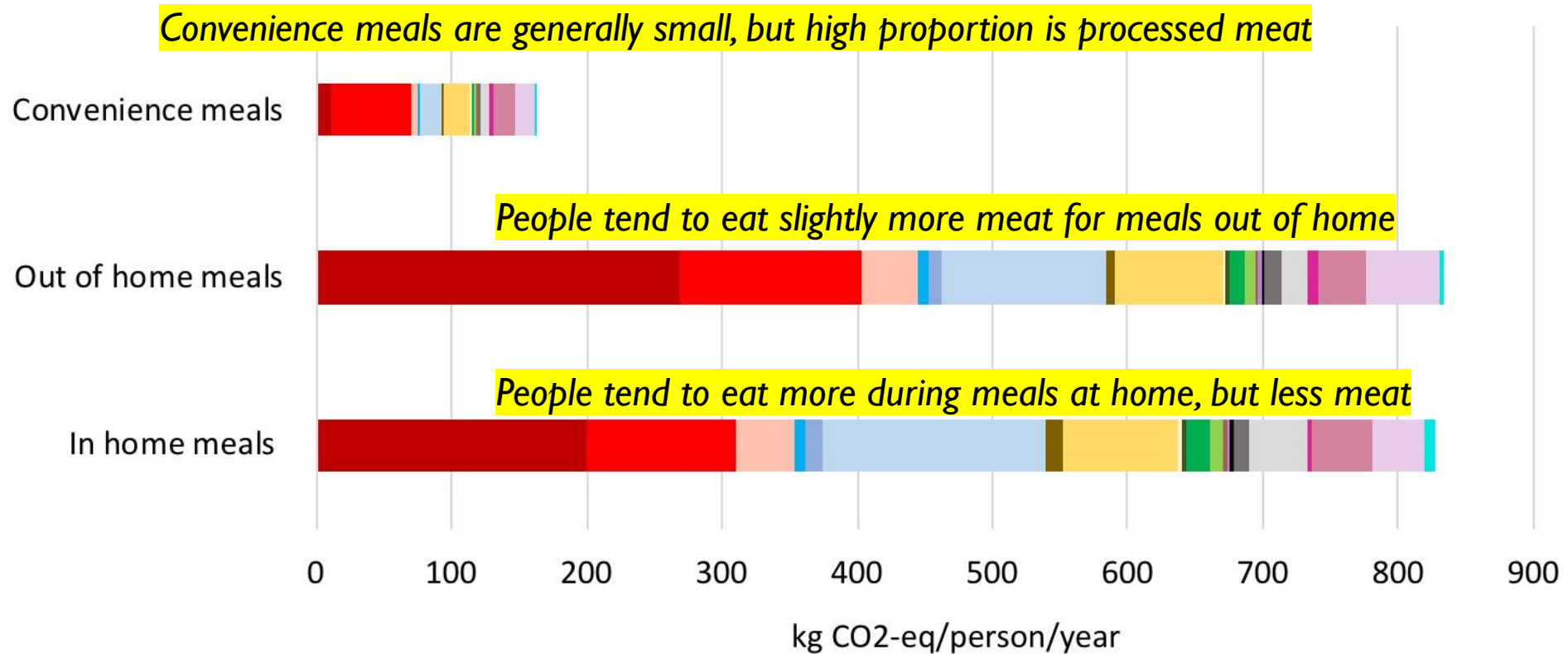
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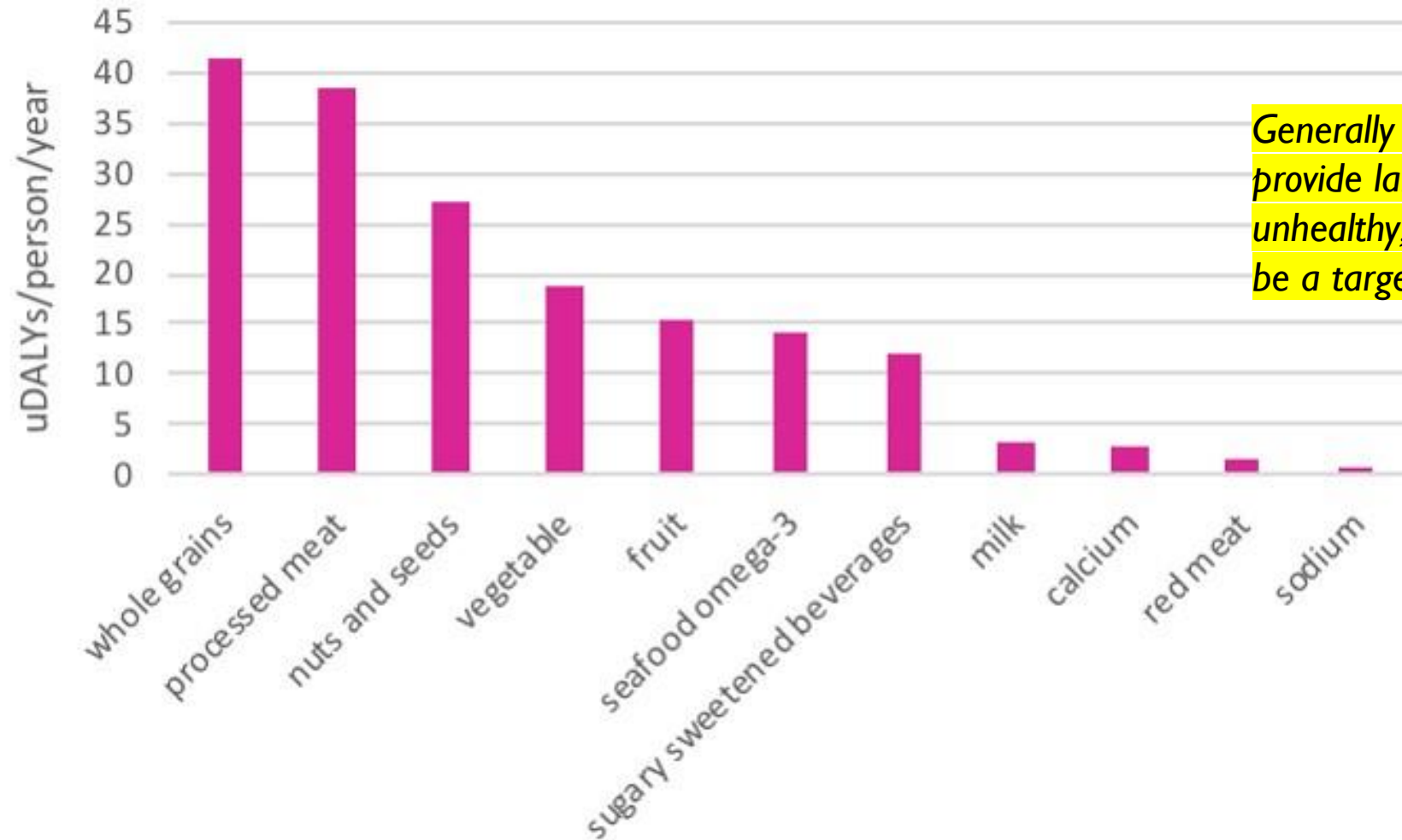


*Dietary shift key intervention but more needed.*

*Focusing across animal products, especially those non-Swiss could be a key area of intervention.*



# Health benefits if average diet shifts to minimum risk values



Generally promotion of healthy foods can provide larger benefit than demotion of unhealthy; however processed meat could be a target intervention area.

Global targets help define sustainability goals for food systems as a daily diet

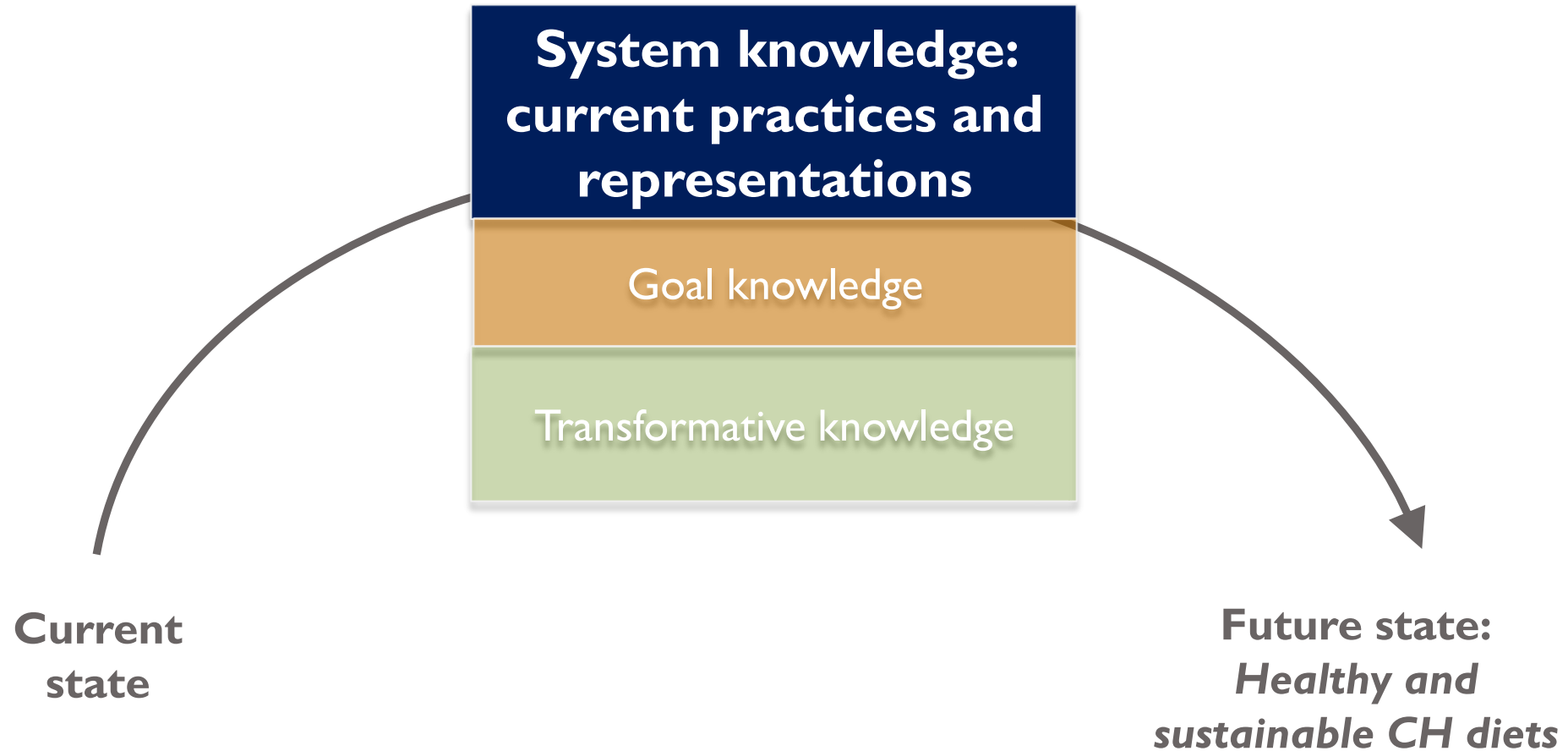
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*In CH whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds even for vegetarians are too low!*

## Key findings part 2: System knowledge

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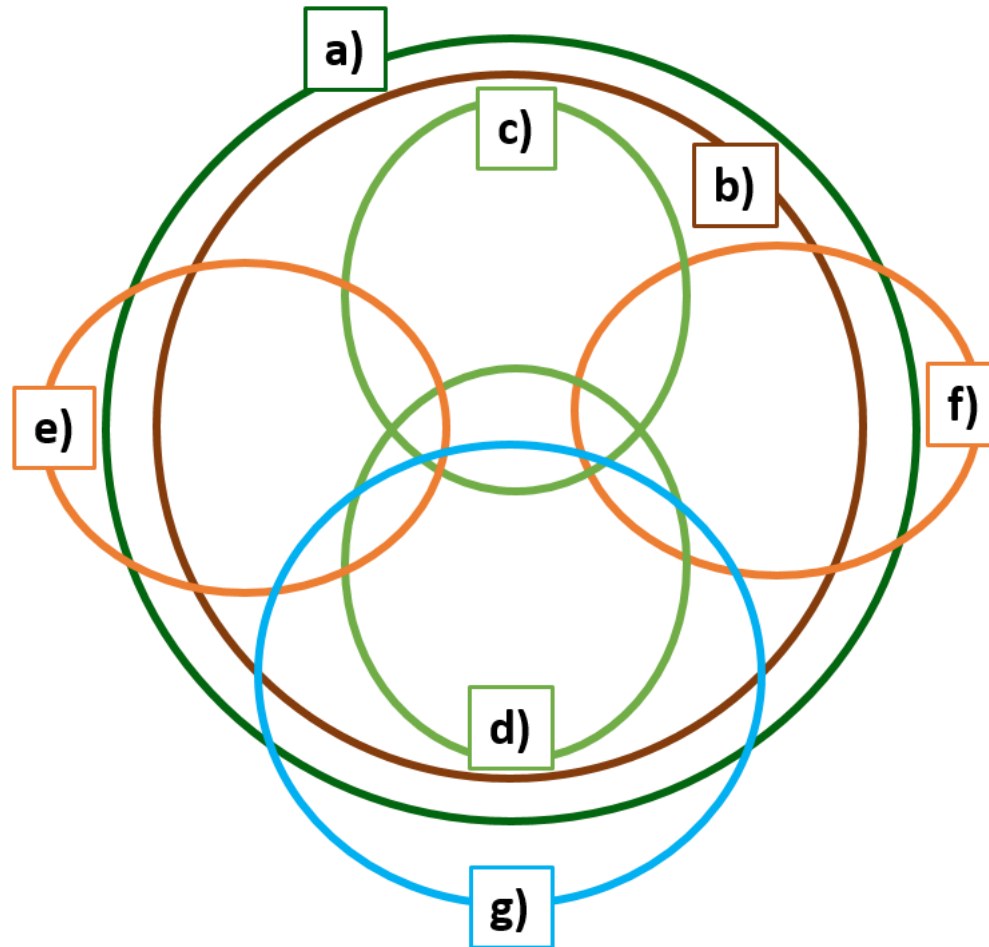
# Methods for uncovering prescriptions and practices

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- ▶ Interviews with professionals working in food health/sustainability (4x)
- ▶ Media analysis (3 mos. French and German)
- ▶ Institutional mapping (90 actors)
- ▶ Participant observation at food-related events
- ▶ Consumer interviews, in-depth, in homes (10 people)
- ▶ Focus groups (5 groups, French and German)
- ▶ Photo elicitation methods
- ▶ In store observations

# Conflicting prescriptions related to health and sustainability

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- a) *Eating as a pleasure, conviviality*
- b) *Balanced diet (Swiss Food Pyramid)*
- c) *Natural and organic diets*
- d) *Local and seasonal diets*
- e) *Less of better meat consumption*
- f) *Vegetarian and vegan diets*
- g) *Slimming diets*

Godin and Sahakian 2018 (*Appetite*)



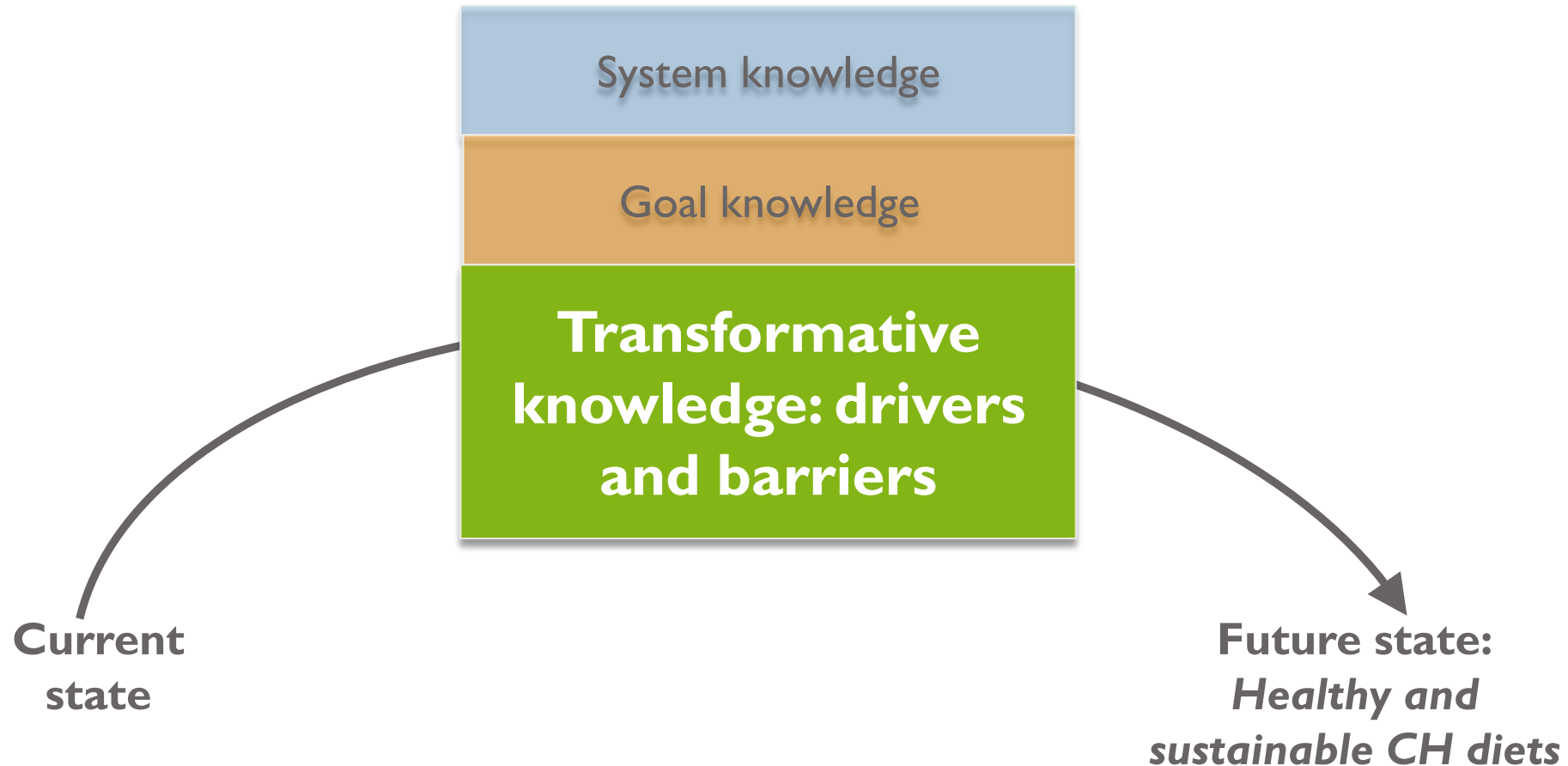
# Three practice elements to consider

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- ▶ **Time:** e.g. time available for food practices, daily schedules, but also time of the day, the week, the year
- ▶ **Space:** e.g. mobility, the spaces where people buy, cook and eat, material organisation
- ▶ **Social relations, including social norms:** e.g. norms existing in a network (and competition between networks), discovering new foods through peers, sharing meal preparation and consumption, household composition

# Key findings part 3: Transformative knowledge

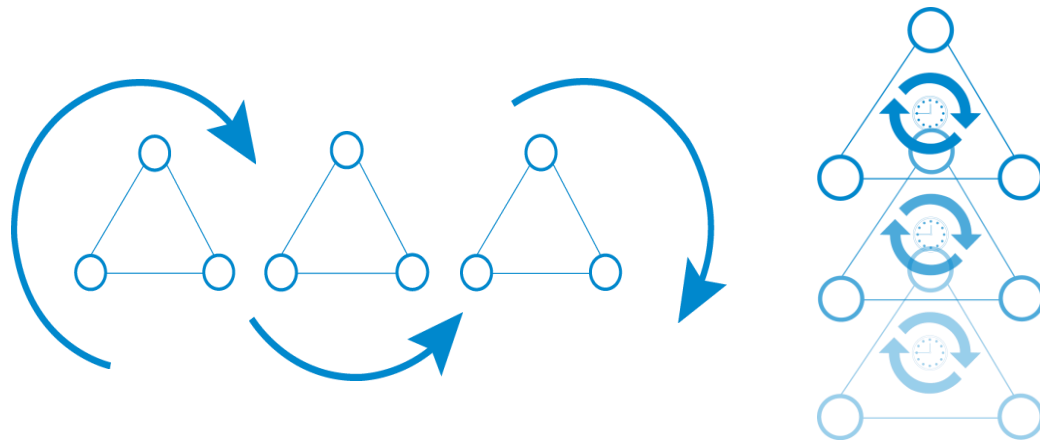
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# Relevance of inter-locking food practices

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- ▶ **Food practices are not linear** but relate to other practices and constraints of everyday life, such as work-life balance, caring for children, mobility practices, etc.
- ▶ Consider how **practices interact** (sequential or synchronized) and how they «capture» people
- ▶ Take into account the **three key elements** organizing the translation of prescriptions into practices: time, space, and social relations



# Example of interlocking practices: maximizing transit opportunities

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**Observation:** food is planned and purchased during transit, from work to school to home.

**Insight:** opportunities for buying and transporting healthy and sustainable food should be integrated into existing mobility practices.

Seoul

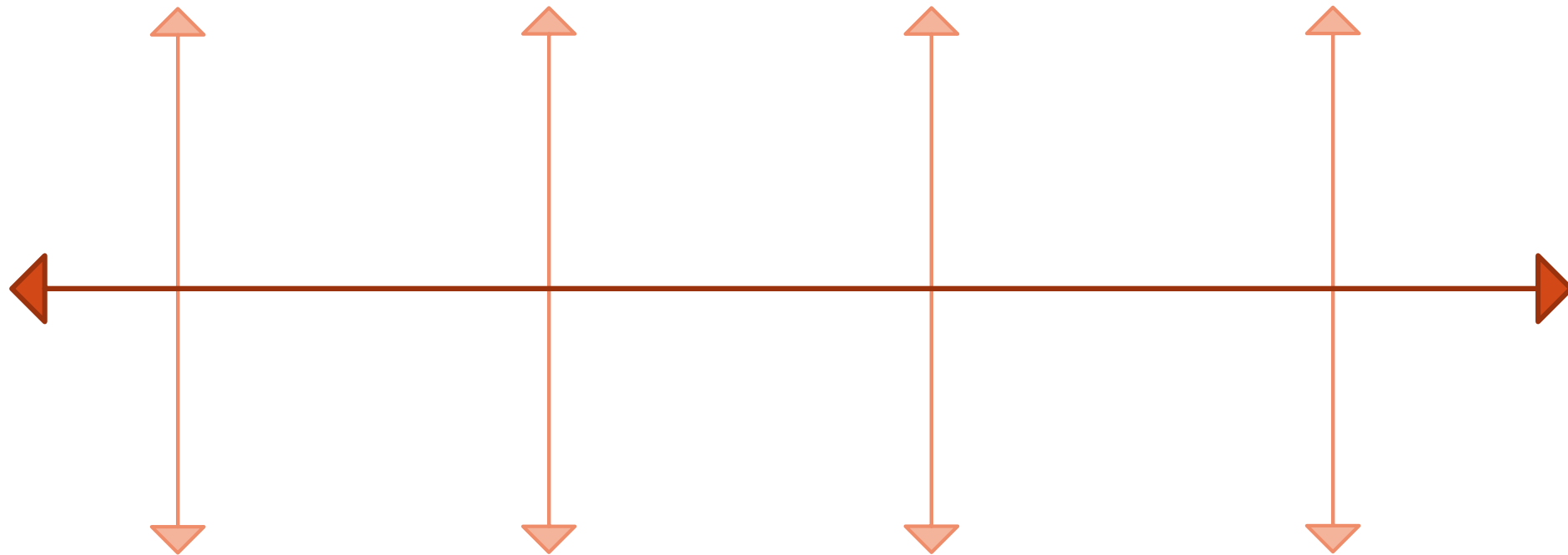


Shanghai



Consumers pick up vegetables from a vending machine selling fresh food in a local residential community. The refrigerated machine, developed by Shanghai E-Cooktimes Co, is also on show at the 3rd China (Shanghai) International Technology Fair, and is expected to be an alternative of shopping for fresh food in wet markets . — Wang Rongjiang

## Tipping points: role of life stages and events



# **Tipping points toward healthy and sustainable Swiss diets:**

## **Assessing prescriptions, practices and impacts**



Project implications for PNR69



# Preliminary findings

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## System knowledge

- Too many prescriptions; health is more significant than environmental concerns
- Time available, mobility practices, social network and household composition are the most significant factors to influence food practices

## Goal knowledge

- Meats vary in terms of environmental & health impacts
- For health, increase consumption of whole grains, nuts, decrease processed meat (not red meat)
- For environmental priorities, reduce animal products (red meat highest impacting per kilogram)

## Transformative knowledge

- Life events are a trigger for change, particularly moving
- Space and time of consumption, along with social relations, are key to implementing change

# Identified problems

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- ▶ Lack of **unified, cross-sectoral policy on food**; lack of holistic vision for healthy and sustainable food production and consumption in Switzerland.
- ▶ Emphasis on informing people and changing behavior; lack of attention to **changing the systems and habitual consumption practices**.
- ▶ Challenges associated with **accessing healthy and sustainable food** within the constraints of everyday life (work schedule, mobility and commuting, chores, etc.)



## Causes of the problems

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- ▶ **Lack of coordination** between sectors towards a unified vision and approach to food policy.
- ▶ **Rational choice and individualist paradigms** dominate approaches to consumption; more complex approaches tend to be avoided.
- ▶ **Lack of time (more than money)** for provisioning, cooking, and eating, leading to trade-offs regarding healthy and sustainable food consumption
  - ▶ e.g., eating highly-processed convenience food

# Potential solutions

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- ▶ **Engage discussions** with public and private stakeholders to define a common goal for food policies; engage with stakeholders at different scales.
- ▶ **Make practices the aim of policies**, taking their key elements into account (time, space, social relationships)
  - ▶ Use dominant prescriptions as a tool to support change towards healthier and more sustainable eating habits
- ▶ **Design systems of provision** to better suit consumer's everyday habits and routines
  - ▶ Taking the constraints of different life stages into account
  - ▶ Integrating healthy and sustainable food with multi-modal mobility practices
  - ▶ Demonstrating healthy and sustainable meals in the service sector (canteens, restaurants, etc.)



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Thank you for your attention!