

Key Purchase Determinants and Consumer Attitudes Towards Organic Food Products; Case Study Among Families of Undergraduate Students in Sri Lanka

07 Nov.

BE47

W. N. K. Weragala^{1(*)}, K. G. A. I. Rasanjali², R. P. D. N. Kumara², C. S. de Silva²

¹*Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka,*

²*Department of Agricultural and Plantation Engineering, Faculty of Engineering technology, Open University of Sri Lanka*

(*) E.mail: nadeeshani.wnk@gmail.com

There is an increasing demand for organic food products all over the world as a result of rising health and environmental concerns associated with inorganic farming. Yet, the current organic food market of Sri Lanka is not operating at its full potential. An understanding about consumer behavior and motives related to organic food purchase is helpful for expansion of the organic food market of the country. This study was carried out to identify the key purchase determinants and consumer attitudes about organic food products among families of undergraduates of Sri Lanka. Data was gathered through a pretested questionnaire from 08 universities in Sri Lanka. 50 undergraduates were randomly selected from each university, representing various fields of study. Results revealed that 54.2% of families consume organic foods, while 45.8% never or rarely purchase organic foods. ANOVA and Chi square test were used to assess the impact of different socio economic factors (income, education level and settlement (Rural/urban) on purchase decisions. Income, education level and settlement were not significantly associated with organic purchase decisions. Fresh vegetables and fruits are among the organic foods in highest demand, followed by spices. Majority get their organic food from home gardens, supermarkets or directly from farmers. More than half of the respondents (62.5%) prefer to look for organic certification during purchase. Organic product consumption is mainly motivated by health concerns, followed by quality and environmental concerns, while high price, insufficient availability in the market and uncertainty about the organic status act as limiting factors.

Keywords: Consumer attitudes, organic food, purchase determinants, undergraduates