

Comparison of Consumer Preference on Meat from Broiler and Village Chicken and Processed Chicken Meat Products in Batticaloa District of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT. The demand for chicken meat is increases in Batticaloa district as the chicken is the major protein source next to fish in this district. However, the availability of chicken meat is lower and the prices for meat have also increased. The major sources of chicken meat in the market are village chicken, broiler chicken, cross-bred chicken and processed products. Consumers believe that meat form village chicken is healthier. This poses a particular challenge for the organization of safe marketing chains. Consumer preferences affect the production and marketing systems for poultry products, therefore knowledge and understanding of these preferences is required for the design of appropriate new interventions. In this context, a survey based study was carried out during December, 2009 to May 2010. Two hundred respondents were randomly selected to gather information on the availability of meat and meat products, consumer preference and consumption pattern. The sample was comprised of equal numbers of male and female respondents having education from primary level to graduation in Batticaloa district. The results of the study revealed that the availability of broiler meat was significantly higher ($P>0.05$) in urban areas (66%) while in rural areas the availability of village chicken meat (88%) was significantly higher ($P>0.05$) than broiler, cross-bred and chicken meat products. Consumers showed significantly higher ($P>0.05$) preference for village chicken meat (68%) while lowest preference was for processed products (13%). Among processed meat products the consumers showed significantly higher ($P>0.05$) preference for meat balls (58%). Furthermore, the majority of respondents (73%) liked to purchase meat upto 1kg weekly. Around 76% of the respondents consume meat once a week. Sixty two percent of the consumers were willing consume fish as the substituted for chicken meat and meat products than other substitutes (mutton, beef, pork and crustacean). Farmshed was the major sales point for meat (67%). The respondents were asked to express consumption of meat in case of increased prices and 64% of the respondents had positive response and rest showed negative response to this aspect. From the study it was concluded that the consumer preference of chicken meat and meat products showed the positive trend. However, low purchasing power resulted weaker purchasing frequency in rural areas. Government organizations should take efforts for enhance the production and marketing according to the farmers' perception. Results will be much useful in planning the location specific and species based poultry farming and will be beneficial to policy makers also.

Key words: Village Chicken, Broiler, Consumer Preference.

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