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Food Security Management of Consumers in Surat Thani Province, Thailand

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Abstract

Food is the most important factor in life and human survival. Thus, food security is of primary importance in human life. Food crisis and malnutrition affect human security and vulnerability in society. Consumption behaviours, both in rural and urban areas have changed considerably from the past according to economic, environmental and social changes. Proper food consumption behaviour and food security management will lead to self-reliance and social justice. Therefore, the purposes of this research were (i) to study inspiration and behaviour on food security management of consumers in Muang district, Surat Thani province, (ii) to investigate factors influencing food security management behaviour of consumers, and (iii) to investigate the relationship of consumers' inspiration and behaviour on food security management. The population was 171,712 people in Surat Thani province, Thailand. A total of 400 consumers in Muang district were identified by simple random sampling technique for a survey done in 2014. The data collection tool was a closed-ended questionnaire. The frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, One-Way-ANOVA and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation were used to analyse the data.

The results revealed that: 1) the consumers' inspiration and behaviour on food security management was at a good level. The King Bhumibol is an inspirational role model for Thai people and his projects motivate them on food security management. Communication efforts and the provision of information influenced them to be involved with sustainable food chains. The consumers were much concerned about food safety, cleanliness, and nutritious meals. Their food derived predominantly from own production and natural food sources; 2) the level of education, age and marital status influenced the different levels of behaviour on food security management ($p < 0.01$); and 3) the inspiration in food security management of consumers were significantly correlated with behaviour on food security management ($p < 0.01$).

High motivation and inspiration, better knowledge, good attitude and awareness about food security and safety will lead to positive change in behaviour. Therefore, the self-sufficiency principle should be promoted and integrated into every learning subject. Moreover, concerned organisations and communities should set goals and develop plans to manage the food security and safety comprehensively.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, food safety, food security management