Market Survey of Traditional Rice Varieties at Great Silk Road Bazaar in Osh City, Southern Kyrgyzstan

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Abstract

Study presents the results of market survey on trade with traditional rice varieties at the Great Silk Road Bazar in Osh, which is considered as regional market hub. Despite of being rather minor product in terms of total volume consumed among Kyrgyz population, rice still holds an important position in food culture of the country. The research was focused on exploration which rice varieties are traded there, their geographical origin, estimated trade volume, stock and value. Consequently, socioeconomics and demographic background of vendors was documented as well. In July 2014, 30 vendors (out of total number 81) selling rice at market were interviewed. Data were analysed via IBM SPSS statistical programme as well as Microsoft Excel for calculation Spearman correlations between variables and other statistical characteristics. Study documented a total eight national varieties and three international varieties were identified during this research. Preliminary results showed that 15.6 % of sold rice originated from outside the Kyrgyzstan, which in below the national level (44.93 % in 2011). Based on traded volumes, the most traded national varieties were from Uzgen region (33 %), followed by those from other provinces Jalal-Abad, Batken and Osh provinces all (17.1 %). All vendors replenished stock via middlemen on average 2.7 ($\pm$1.35) times per week and a majority of them (93.3 %) had stock covering trade volumes for 4.65 days on average. Positive correlation was found between trade volume and supply frequency (α=0.586; p-value 0.001), it expresses that vendors with increasing trade volume choose more frequently option to increase supplies frequency with similar volumes instead of preservation of supplies frequency and increasing of supply volume. Furthermore, stock positively correlated with traded volume for national varieties (α=0.241; p-value 0.009) as well as for international (α=0.416, p-value 0.009). Price annually reaches the maximal value during harvest period from June to July, which causes maximal demand due to uncertainty about future harvest. Minimal price is from September to October at the time of the main rice harvest in Kyrgyzstan. Hypothesis based on the basic economic theory that price positively correlate with trade volume was not approved. It suggest that price does not play the key role in consumer's behaviour and that they put higher importance to other factors influencing their individual decisions, such as personal preferences, custom, or position of shop at market.

Keywords: Kyrgyzstan, marketing, traditional rice varieties

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