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Food Consumption Pattern and Purchasing Decision of Agricultural Products of Households in Burundi

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Abstract

Based on a multi-stage sample survey of 426 households from 11 provinces of Burundi, household food consumption pattern and their preferences for agricultural products were evaluated. This study also investigated the effect of quality attributes on purchasing decisions and willingness to pay for agricultural products. The results show that about half of the total crop production was used for household consumption. Food was the main cost of total expenditures in the household. The per capita consumption of staple foods, such as roots and tubers and cereals was higher than other food groups. The total calorie intake per capita was lower than 1500 Kcal. However, this value depends on numerous factors such as age, sex, metabolism, and level of physical activity, etc. The consumption of animal and plant proteins was very low and can lead to protein deficiency in the country. Food availability index showed very high food inadequate for all Inter-Provincial Units (UIPs). Food consumption patterns and levels differ between UIP mainly due to differences in income levels, food availability, and social backgrounds while reduce frequency of consumption was used as main coping strategy during food shortage. Apart from significant undernourished problem, over-nutrition problem seems to be increased. Although the respondents were expected/hypothesised to rate healthiness, consumer's decisions to purchase crop and livestock products are more often based on sensory factors as well as marketing factors such as availability, price, and quantity. Nutrition labelling did not play a prominent/key role on their purchasing decision and willingness to pay. This result is related to personal knowledge and is a consequence of consumers' poor access to, and low levels of information about nutrition labelling.

Keywords: Agricultural production, Burundi, consumer preferences, food security, malnutrition