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Consumer Preferences and Attitudes to Pay for Cassava and Banana-based Products in Burundi

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Abstract

A potentially effective mechanism for increasing African employment is through their engagement in agriculture and agribusiness enterprises. To sustain such efforts, the small and medium scale producers need to be connected to markets and respond to market demands. We examined the characteristics of Burundian consumers with regard to their attitude towards the quality attributes of products with the objective of seeking ways to increase market opportunities and ensure the sustainability of such initiatives. A survey was conducted in three interprovincial units of Burundi. Their preferences, related to products based on cassava and banana produced were evaluated and the factors influencing their purchasing decision and attitudes to paying were also investigated. The results showed that respondents who ever purchased the products referred to healthiness (28 %) and high price with high quality (25 %) as their main preferences. In addition, 89 % were willing to pay slightly more for a better quality. Cluster analyses results revealed that nutrition and sensory attributes were the most important intrinsic quality attributes associated with the purchasing decision for all products. Healthiness and safety were identified as the most important extrinsic attributes that influenced consumers' preferences and attitudes to paying, while origin and belief did not play a significant role. Logistic regression showed that household income and education were a significant and positive determinant of both purchasing decisions and attitude to paying. The respondents with smaller household size were more willing to pay for both cassava and banana products. This finding will help small and medium scale producers to alter existing products to match the needs of consumers as well as to develop products for different consumer segments.

Keywords: Attitude to pay, consumer choice, Processed products, Quality attributes