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Analysis of Consumer Behaviour on Cowpea Quality Attributes in Gombe State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study analysed consumer behaviour on cowpea quality attributes in Gombe State, Nigeria. Two hundred and sixty seven (267) respondents were randomly selected for the study while data were collected using structured questionnaire. The results were analysed using descriptive statistics and hedonic regression models. Finding from the result shows that majority of cowpea consumers fell within the age bracket of 36–60 years and 1–5 persons in their household. Based on cowpea preference farmers (53.85 %) and household consumers (50.42 %) preferred medium size cowpea, processors (42.11 %) preferred small seeded size while retailers (100 %) claimed that they traded all the three sizes of cowpea. With regard to consumers' reasons for consumption farmers (55.45 %), household consumers (50.45 %) and processors (55.70 %) showed that they consumed cowpea because of its nutritive. Based on skin texture more than half of processors (52.63 %) preferred smooth texture over rough texture presumably due to good swelling capacity while household consumers prefer rough texture over smooth texture because of taste and ease of cooking respectively. The findings further revealed that seed size, colour, skin texture, grain colour mixes and grain size mixes are the significant variables affecting cowpea consumers in the area. It is concluded that consumers in the study area have different levels and forms of preference for cowpeas. The characteristics and socio-economic features of consumers also have influence on the level of preference. It is recommended that efforts to improve upon grain size, grain colour, skin texture by crop breeders and good grain standardisation by cowpea traders will be worthwhile in the area as consumers seems to be interested in large seeded cowpea, white skin colour, rough skin textured cowpea as well as cowpea without grain size and grain colour mixes. There should also be more research into the disliking intrinsic characteristics of cowpea by crop breeder

Keywords: Consumer, cowpea, preference, quality, texture