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Influencing Factors on Consumers’ Perceptions and Awareness of Food Health and Organic Food in Iran

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Abstract

Food health concerns and environmental matters are the most important motives for consumers to learn more about healthy foods and especially organic foods and being aware of them. In Iran due to the lack of permanent organic markets, fewer consumers have been informed about organic foods. The objective of this study was to present some insights on Iranian consumers’ attitudes toward food health and organic food and the factors which have some effects on their awareness about these products. Thus, this study has focused on consumer’s awareness and perceptions of organically produced foods in Iran regarding their state of knowledge about organic products. Demographic characteristics, knowledge about organic production, and resources of their information about this kind of foods have been analysed to show differences between consumer’s awareness on organic food products and finally a regression model has been used to ascertain the factors affecting consumer’s awareness and differences between people who are aware and not aware about organic foods. The method of this study was survey method, by applying quantitative approach and data gathering has been done among Iranian consumers of city markets. In the present research, 454 respondents from six provinces of Iran have been asked by a questionnaire. Results indicate that people who are aware of organic food products are more educated, have more incomes and live-in big cities and mass media is the most important channel of informing people about organic products. According to the results, in response to the question whether the authorities and institutions in Iran are careful about proper using of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, the opinion of two group respondents (aware and not aware of organic products) were significantly different. Furthermore, the high prices of organic certified products and too few accesses to them in city markets are the main obstacles to purchase them in big cities in Iran.

Keywords: Food Health Concerns, Organic Food Consumers, organic Food Products