

Vendor and Consumer Differences in Perceptions of Food Quality in Ghana

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Abstract

Food vendors are intermediaries between consumers and producers. To be successful, vendors must reflect consumer preferences. Consumer preferences may not be satisfied if they differ from those of vendors. This is especially so for imported food products such as poultry where intermediation by vendors may involve guessing which quality attributes consumers prefer. Consumers may also prefer poultry products from certain countries or have a preference for certain poultry brands. If information available to buyers and sellers are asymmetric, buyers may not find much value in the available products. Sellers may also be unable to take full advantage of available business opportunities by satisfying consumer demand. Such business opportunities could be substantial for poultry sellers in Ghana where most of the poultry is imported. This study assesses vendor and consumer differences in the perceptions of the quality attributes of poultry products in Ghana.

A market survey was conducted in 2011 and 2012 to elicit responses from 750 respondents in Ghana in West Africa. The survey elicited information on general food attitudes and preferences. The mean responses of consumers and poultry vendors relative to their poultry quality and country of origin preferences were compared.

Ghanaian consumers and vendors indicate that the United States (US) is the most preferred country of origin for poultry products. China was the least preferred country of origin by consumers and vendors. These results may be explained by the perception by both consumers and vendors that poultry from the US is of the highest quality. Poultry from China is perceived by both groups as having the least quality. With the exception of China, US branded poultry products do not seem to have much of an edge over those from the European Union (EU). Both poultry con-

sumers and vendors indicate that they are most likely to buy Ghanaian poultry products. Both groups were least likely to buy poultry products from China. For all countries, vendor scores are higher than those of consumers. The only exception is Ghana where consumer scores exceed vendor scores on country of origin, poultry quality, poultry brand and likelihood of purchase. Vendors are more likely to perceive imported poultry, and poultry from the US is viewed as both desirable and of high quality. Marketing US poultry products based on a combination of country of origin and branding may be a winning strategy to increase the market share for US poultry products in Ghana.

References

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