Urban Consumers Preferences for Fresh Forest Fruit Packaging Type

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SUMMARY

In Romania, fresh forest fruit are sold mainly without packaging in farmers’ markets and along the national roads, therefore the aim of the present study is to determine what kind of packaging would prefer Romanian urban consumers and if there are differences depending on the socio-economic segments as age, gender, education or income level. Convenience sampling was used and data was analysed with the program SPSS 16.0. The questionnaire was pretested in May 2009 (Man, 2009) and it was applied on 243 forest fruit consumers with ages between 18-65 years from Cluj Napoca city, Romania, in October 2009. For data analysis 226 (93%) questionnaires could be used. The consumers were asked to classify three types of packaging for fresh forest fruits in order of their preference. The suggested types of packaging were transparent plastic package with cover, carton package without cover and no packaging (bulk display). The most preferred packaging for the Romanian urban consumers is the plastic (53.1%), while the least preferred is the carton (22.6%), even if paper is easier to recycle (Kushner, 2004). With respect to the socio-economic segments some differences resulted. For females and households with medium income ranging between 2001-3000 lei the least preferred are the fruits without packaging. Also respondents younger than 29 years and older than 50 years have the same preference. The segmentation based on the education level (middle and university) did not revealed any preference change over the entire sample. In conclusion, the farmers or other fresh forest fruit retailers should take into account the consumers’ preference for packaging. As well packaging offers advantages for the retailers too, permitting to market the products more efficiently (Bacon, 1988). However further research is needed to evaluate package size preferences in order to meet the needs of different socio-economic segments.

Keywords: fresh forest fruit, packaging, urban consumers, socio-economic segments

REFERENCES

