

Title Understanding consumers preferences for fresh table-ripe papaya using survey and conjoint methods of analyses

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Abstract

In today's dynamic market, firms in the supply chain must determine with precision the attributes consumers look for in a product when making purchase decisions so that they can deliver what is really valued. A usual consumer survey and a conjoint method of analyses were used to determine the relevant attributes considered by consumers in buying fresh table-ripe papaya. The survey results showed that the top four papaya attributes considered by consumers in their purchase decisions are sweetness, overall quality (external and internal qualities), color and price. These attributes were used to construct the design for conjoint analysis. The level of importance consumers attached to the papaya attributes exhibited similar pattern in both the survey and conjoint analysis methods. The order of importance of the attributes is: 1) absence of decay/damage, 2) sweetness, 3) maturity and 4) price. Two market segments were also identified from the conjoint analysis data using the cluster analysis: one is the aesthetic-conscious, who gives premium to blemishedfree peel; and two is the taste-sensitive group who desires sweet tasting papaya. The two clusters prefer best papaya quality (no decay/damage, very sweet and full yellow), however the taste-sensitive group indicated willingness to pay for a higher price. Results of the 2 survey methods can be a sound basis for firms in identifying and implementing quality improvements so that the country's papaya industry will remain competitive and viable.