RESEARCH ON ANIMAL AGRO-ALIMENTARY PRODUCE CONSUMPTION IN THE TIMIŞ COUNTY (ROMANIA)

CERCETĂRI PRIVIND CONSUMUL DE PRODUSE AGRO-ALIMENTARE DE ORIGINE ANIMALĂ DIN JUDEȚUL TIMIŞ (ROMÂNIA)

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Abstract: *Consumption is the way humans meet their individual needs and the needs of society as a whole, with important impact on economic agents, institutions, and society, in general. But consumer behaviour is also impacted by the wish to evolve, to be trendy, which results in the purchase of goods and services that offer greater satisfaction than strictly necessary ones. The relationship between productivity, economic growth, use of labour force, and increase of technical and material resources use can be found in the increase of consumption. The possibility of choosing what to consume to meet our needs largely depends on income level. An increase of the income level generates an increase of consumption, while a decrease of the income level has negative impacts on consumption.*

Keywords*: consumption, animal produce, Timiş County*

INTRODUCTION

Food consumption has known, in time, different changes. In their attempt to characterise food consumption, specialists in nutrition underline the importance of two parameters: energetic level / person / day and mean animal protein consumption / person / day [2]. Different practices and researches in the field of nutrition have identified animal proteins as basic nutrients in humans' food; their consumption is frequent among high income populations. Low income levels generate self-consumption, with a large share of the total expenses for agro-alimentary produce. Wishing to avoid nutrition-generated diseases, and as a consequence of the high level of information and education, very many consumers choose their foods carefully; unbalance occurs when they prefer high sensory foods supplying

maximum satisfaction detrimental to balanced nutrition supply foods that are less attractive [4].

The food pyramid, a concept initiated by American nutritionists, groups the main food categories depending on several goals [1, 3]. The basis of the pyramid is represented by bread, cereals, pasta, and cereal flakes, followed by fruits and vegetables, meat and meat produce, fish, and legumes (beans, lentil), milk and dairy produce; on top of the pyramid are fats, oils, and sugar and sugar produce, recommended to be consumed in small amounts and as rarely as possible [8].Unbalance (lack of some foods and preponderance of other foods) causes nutrition-related diseases [6]. When there is unbalance between the nutrition needs of the body and nutrient supply, the body's health is affected, causing nutrition-related diseases [5].

Unbalanced nutrition is the result of increased supply of certain foods and the lack of other foods, which generates malnutrition [7]. To exemplify, food unbalance can occur when one eats mainly sugar produce detrimental to fresh fruits and vegetables, or animal fats detrimental to vegetal fats. "Primary malnutrition" can be defined as the lack of certain elements essential in a diet (vitamins, minerals, or proteins). This unbalance can generate two situations: over-feeding and under-feeding.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present scientific approach aims at establishing a diagnosis concerning the structure of animal agro-alimentary produce consumption both quantitatively and qualitatively, in the Timiş County. To do so, we applied a questionnaire. The sampling method we have chosen was random, probabilistic, starting from such well-known demographics of the target-population as age, sex, education, marital status, and profession. The size of the sample was 300 respondents, a sample considered representative for the studied area. The questionnaire was applied within a survey in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Meat and meat produce is purchased on a weekly basis by 164 respondents (54.7%); 90 respondents (30.0%) purchase meat and meat produce on a monthly basis, 25 respondents (8.3%) purchase meat and meat produce on a daily basis, and 21 respondents (7.0%) purchase meat and meat produce at intervals longer than a month (Table 1).

Table 1 Frequency of purchasing meat and meat produce

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid responses	Daily	25	8.3	8.3
	Weekly	164	54.7	54.7
	Monthly	90	30.0	30.0
	More than a month	21	7.0	7.0
	Total	**300**	**100**	**100**

Of the total respondents, 207 (69.0%) purchase milk and dairy produce on a weekly basis, 43 respondents (14.3%) purchase milk and dairy produce on a daily basis, 31 respondents (10.3%) purchase milk and dairy produce on a monthly basis, and 19 respondents (6.3%) purchase milk and dairy produce at intervals longer than a month (Table 2).

Table 2 Frequency of purchasing milk and dairy produce

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid responses	Daily	43	14.3	14.3
	Weekly	207	69.0	69.0
	Monthly	31	10.3	10.3
	More than a month	19	6.3	6.3
	Total	**300**	**100**	**100**

Eggs are purchased on a weekly basis by 107 respondents (35.7%), 106 respondents (35.3%) purchase eggs at intervals longer than a month, 86 respondents (28.7%) purchase eggs on a monthly basis, and 1 respondent (0.3%) purchases eggs on a daily basis (Table 3).

Table 3 Frequency of purchasing eggs

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid responses	Daily	1	0.3	0.3
	Weekly	107	35.7	35.7
	Monthly	86	28.7	28.7
	More than a month	106	35.3	35.3
	Total	**300**	**100**	**100**

CONCLUSIONS

The way in which consumers react while purchasing depends on certain characteristics, and sudden events or the attitude of the others have an impact on consumer behaviour. Changing some factors that influence the

purchase intention can determine consumer behaviour.As for the frequency of purchasing meat and meat products, 54.7% of the respondents purchase them on a weekly basis, 30.0% purchase them on a monthly basis, and 8.3% of the respondents purchase them on a daily basis. A lower percentage (7.0%) purchase meat and meat produce at intervals longer than a month. There is the same situation as far as milk and dairy produce are concerned. More than half of the respondents (69.0%) purchase milk and dairy produce on a weekly basis, 14.3% purchase milk and dairy produce on a monthly basis, and 10.3% purchase milk and dairy produce on a daily basis. Eggs are purchased on a weekly basis by 35.7% of the respondents, 35.3% purchase eggs at intervals longer than a month, and 28.7% of the respondents purchase eggs on a monthly basis.Meat and meat produce and eggs are basic agro-alimentary produce and, in certain cases, components of self-consumption. Monthly expenses for agro-alimentary produce are in close connection with income, and these sums are spent primarily on basic foods.

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