Consumer willingness to pay for additional improvement of Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) food products: A case study at Helabojun outlets

N.D.S.L. Senevirathne¹, K.P. Samarasinghe¹ and L.H.P. Gunaratne²

Abstract

BFN, an initiative, known widely by its abbreviation, embraces a broad vision of increased utilization of global diversity of crop achieving human well-being. These crops contribute to enrich the diversity of the food basket, but most of them were largely ignored until recent times. In this study, a study was undertaken to investigate the potentials and constraints of these underutilized crops at the Helabojun outlets that are operated by the Department of Agriculture. The study was conducted at three Helabojun outlets in the district: Galaha junction, Gannoruwa and Kandy City Centre. Seventy-seven customers were interviewed on the Willingness to Pay (WTP) for five improved food crops of BFN crops. Data were analyzed using binary logistic regression and the relationship of WTP for additional food quality improvement with consumer age, sex and gender were studied. It was found that the additional WTP of the customers ranged between 5% -100% for five quality attribute improvements, namely healthiness and cleanliness, traditional nature, safe packaging and certification. Customers WTP for the food products that are made out of BFN ranges from LKR 3 - 11 per servings for the crop ingredients of finger millet, fox-tail millet, horse gram, sesbania and gotukola. The customers WTP for traditional foods and certified foods had significant effect with the consumer income and the there was a positive correlation. Age also had a significant impact on the WTP for certified foods which is negatively correlated, implying that the likelihood for WTP for certified foods reduce as increase of age. This is obvious because of the trend of preferences of youth towards the certified foods. The WTP for other food quality improvement: for more nutritious foods, for more healthy and clean foods, for attractive packaging and significant relationship with the income, age and gender. Overall the study indicated that the Helabojun system could be effectively utilized to promote BFN crops and there is a potential for scaling-up.

Keywords: Biodiversity for food and Nutrition-BFN, Helabojun, Traditional food, willingness to pay