

Assessing Consumers' Norms Regarding Food Safety Standards in Retail Chain Stores - Abstract

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Summary

Safety standards in the field of food retail have an important and increasing influence on building confidence of these companies with their suppliers and contribute in an equally decisive way to the formulation of marketing strategies they implement. Although in recent years particular emphasis has been given on reducing selling prices of foodstuff, as a direct consequence of the economic crisis, there is evidence that food safety issues are of decisive importance in the consumer selection process (FAO, 2017). For this reason, a series of controls and certifications are applied, in order to mitigate food safety degradation phenomena. All of these processes aim to control and monitor logistics centers, in an efficient and effective way, meeting required safety standards.

In order to minimize risk, associated with the production mainly of fresh agricultural products, it is necessary to implement innovative pest control monitoring systems and evaluate their efficiency. Based on similar previous surveys, there is a necessity to further strengthen their storage monitoring systems at the “dark room” of retail stores. The adoption of new technologies to enhance food safety will be used as a means of diversifying service delivery to consumers. The need to assess consumer beliefs in this particular timing, where SARS-CoV-2 virus is the catalyst for significant shifts of purchasing habits, is quite high. For this reason, this survey aims to raise all issues related to the aforementioned aspects, and cluster consumer decision making processes.

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) results verified that consumers emphasize on health and safety issues during food purchase process. More specifically, quality and safety of products is one of the most important factors building consumer loyalty. In addition, noteworthy subjective norms are the concerns related to food safety when chemical disinfection protocols are applied. More than 45% of consumers are willing to pay a premium price in order to buy food products with a label certifying disinfection protocols are chemical free. It was also verified that demographic characteristics of the respondents are closely related to food safety concerns. Based on this, consumers with high educational standards high purchasing power are those who are more interested in buying safe products and pay attention on the quality characteristics of agricultural food products they purchase.

Proceedings of HAICTA 2022, September 22–25, 2022, Athens, Greece

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CEUR Workshop Proceedings (CEUR-WS.org)

Keywords

Food safety, Food storage, Consumer behavior, Supply chain, Principal Component Analysis

Acknowledgements

This research is part of the project «Smartsoutis» (Project code: KMP6-0082293) that is co-funded by Greece and European Union by the Action «Investment Plans of Innovation» in Central Macedonia under the framework of the Operational Program «Central Macedonia 2014 2020».