The Market of Eggs, Consumption, and Consumer Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Eggs are a traditional food with a high consumption per head even in economically developed countries with high living standard. Due to “cholesterol phobia” efforts were made to decrease the cholesterol content in the egg, but without success. Thus began research to improve the nutritional quality of eggs, reposition them in safety and healthy food products. Today in markets there are organic eggs, vegetarian, nutrient enhanced eggs (omega-3, vitamin enhanced), for what is in order to expected increase of consumption. Consumption of eggs depends on various factors such as economic, cultural, religious, habits of feed and so on. Knowledge of these factors, as well as the opinions, views, preferences of consumers regarding eggs, nutritional values, will help in development of the relevant marketing programs, that would be successful and profitable. Kosovo has less than two million inhabitants, with an egg consumption per capita of 180 eggs per year. This paper will treat consumer behavior at the Kosovo market of eggs, based on data collected from the field research

Keywords: Chi-Square Test, Cholesterol Phobia, Consumer Behavior, Differentiated Eggs, Organic Eggs, Table Eggs

INTRODUCTION

Food remains a worldwide problem. Eggs are an important food product, but is also thought that they are often the food of poor countries and excessive harmful to health. However eggs are a traditional food with a higher consumption per head even in economically developed countries with high living standard. 30% of egg sales goes to the production of processed egg products (liquid, frozen, powder) which are used as an integral part of food products. Besides use as a food source, eggs are also used for medical purposes, to produce numerous vaccines, based on biotechnology and medicines to fight cancer and other diseases.

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During 2011 year the world consumption of eggs per capita was 173 eggs (or 1,195 billion eggs worldwide) while in 2000 it was 157 eggs per capita (or 963 billion eggs). This is an increase of consumption with a higher rate in all regions of the world. Consumption of eggs in each country has been in relationship with the conditions of the economy namely GDP per capita (Best Peter, 2011). China dominates the egg industry with 36% of the general global production, while the other major producer is Mexico with a 34% of total production. These two countries have the highest consumption of eggs (Dreyer Jerry, 2011).

The US is regarded as the world’s largest exporter of eggs and it is estimated that in 2014, 256 eggs will be produced for each member of the population - the highest rate of production in the past 8 years (American Egg Board, 2014).

The most consumption and production of eggs occurs in intensely populated region of Asia, where this protein serves as a great food. In this region there is a great variety in terms of production, processing and the price of eggs and egg products. This region consists of 16 countries and each country differs from each other in terms of culture, religion, welfare, feeding habits and so on. Another distinction of these countries is the level of industrial activity (Japan has the highest rate of processing eggs in powder and liquid, while Thailand has almost no processing and relies heavily on imports. It is clear that there are significant differences in egg prices across the region as a result of on feed, production methods, efficiency in production, domestic consumption or imports.

Singapore faces high costs due to the dependence of the import of eggs where the bulk is coming from Malaysia but also from Europe, India and USA. Japan is one of the largest importer of egg products in the world. Prices in Vietnam are higher due to the consumption and egg production system. It is interesting that in China the prices are low, despite the very high consumption of eggs in the country, where 90% of egg is consumed inside China, consuming 300 eggs per capita per year. However, there is no over-capacity in the market. Over 80% of Chinese egg production occurs in small scale production in the type of household or house yard. In India egg production costs are the lowest in the region due to the low food costs. Egg consumption in India is the lowest in the region only 50 per head per year.

Eggs and egg products are traded internationally. The price of eggs has an impact on sales. In the U.S. market price in 2011 was less favorable than the price in 2010 and in The EU egg price was the lowest in recent years (Best Peter, 2011). There is a high level of egg trade within the EU countries. It is interesting to note that there is a significant amount of eggs and egg products from Asia to western countries. This is in large part due to the low level of industrialization, control and processing contemporary. For this reason commercial parts mainly occur within Asian countries.

Japan, Korea, the Philippines and Hong Kong import from the US, EU and India frozen liquid egg and egg powder products, while Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia imports only from these countries egg powder. It makes more sense for liquid egg products to be produced domestically or imported from neighboring countries (in Asia). But the problem is price competition. US and EU eggs producers have lower prices compared to the most Asian countries. It is interesting that the US and EU prices are at the same level (low) as prices in India (so it will be very difficult for Malaeasia, for example to compete with its products which are for 65 cents per kg higher than the prices of the same products in the EU and US).

Fulfillment of international standards (banning the use of antibiotics, pesticides and other harmful agents) is a necessity to be able to export and to sell them to companies that operate in international markets. It is a difficult job to keep track of farms producing small scale production.
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