Chapter 7
Willingness to Pay for Certified Safer Pork and Implications for Sustainable Consumption: A Case Study of the Vietnamese Mekong Delta

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ABSTRACT
This chapter applied the approach of contingent valuation method to analyze consumers’ willingness to pay for proposed safe pork. The data was collected by face-to-face interview with 884 urban households in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta. The results revealed that the majority of consumers (about 64%) paid attention to the proposed safe pork. Their willingness to pay was about VND 176,000 ($ 7.65) per kg, nearly double compared to the market price of conventional pork. Consumers who had higher household income, the elderly and children in family, paid higher price of a conventional pork, and more knowledge on the safe pork tended to buy, while those who have more family members are less likely to pay for the proposed safe pork.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the living standard of Vietnamese has gradually improved. Average income per capita in 2014 was $ 2,028 per year, risen by 6.31% compared to 2013 (Nghia, 2015). Since then the demand for food has also increased. The International Business Monitor forecasts that Vietnamese’s food consumption in 2011–2016 grew at 5.1% per year, estimated at VND 538.4 million ($ 29.5 billion). Beside vegetables, meat is a major food in the meal of Vietnamese families, so consumption of pork products accounts for 75% of the annual demand of meat. Therefore, the domestic pig breeding industry has constantly improved and developed in order to meet the needs of domestic consumers. In the first six months of 2015, total amount of pork supplied to the market reached 2.51 million tons, approximately 3.66% increase compared to the same period in 2014 (Hieu, 2015). Although the quantity of pork supplied increases gradually, the quality of pork seriously declines because slaughtering process does not meet veterinary hygiene standards, the process of transportation and storage of the meat does not guarantee food safety (Dinh, 2015). Thus, pork is infected with bacteria and nutrition in pork is degraded. In addition, injecting water into pork to increase the weight has also occurred in recent years. Hence consumers not only buy underweight pork but also face the risk of unsafe food (Ngan & Chien, 2015; Bach, 2015). Moreover, many slaughterhouses also inject sedative (Prozil, Combitress) on pigs prior to slaughter for the purpose of easier slaughter and keeping pork softer and nicer (Ngan & Chien, 2015; Thai & Minh, 2015). Because of the extremely serious consequences of using contaminated pork, safe pork should be necessary for all consumers and in particular to meet the challenges of sustainable consumption.

However, safe pork concept is still relatively new for consumers in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta. To provide a larger picture or more information on safe products, this study applied the approach of contingent valuation method (CVM) to determine consumer demand for the proposed safe pork by analyzing the interview data of urban residents in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta. The results of the study might be useful information to suggest some implications for sustainable consumption of safe pork in the region. The chapter is designed as follows; the subsequent section reviews some relevant studies applying the CVM to estimate consumers’ willingness to pay (WTP) for safe products; the empirical approach of CVM and the way to collect primary data are described; after that, the results and some discussion on urban consumer demand for safe pork are reported; finally, some conclusions and recommendations are withdrawn from the results of the study.
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