

Consumer Awareness on Food Label Information and Quality Standards of Meat and Dairy Products

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Food labels serve as an important tool which provides useful information for the public to make good food choices and provision of food safety sense. This study attempted to evaluate the awareness and use of food label information when purchasing either raw or processed meat or dairy products. Pre-tested structured questionnaire was employed to collect information from 100 consumers.

Every respondent was aware about price rather than weight, brand name, ingredients, preparation guidelines, manufacturing and expiry date. Around 80%, 46% and 30% of respondents were in high awareness group with regard to SLS, ISO and HACCP quality standards for meat, respectively while it was 64%, 44% and 32 % for dairy products. Despite that utility of same information always or sometime on purchasing decision were reported as low level. Around 61% and 60% considered SLS quality standards for meat and dairy products, respectively. Relatively a small number of respondents (21% and 22%) utilized knowledge on ISO and 22.2% and 8% looked HACCP logo when purchasing meat and dairy products, respectively. A significant relationship was observed on awareness and adoption to read food label information and quality certification standards with education and marketing information sources.

In general, improved knowledge of the relationship between consumers' food selection and socio-demographic factors and consumers' preference of a specific type of information on food labels affect the usage of food label. Therefore, the findings of this study could be used as a guide in designing and implementation of food label nutrition awareness programmes toward public sub-groups to raise their food safety awareness.

Key words: Food label, label information, Quality Standards, Awareness, Adoption