

# **Consumption Patterns and Preferences of Households for National and Local Brands of Yoghurt and Curd: A Study in Anuradhapura District**

**D.W.K.S. Diwuldeniya<sup>a</sup> and P. Weligamage<sup>b</sup>**

*<sup>a</sup> Temporary Demonstrator, Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of  
Sri Lanka*

*kumududil.shanika@yahoo.com*

*<sup>b</sup> Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya  
parakw@pdn.ac.lk*

## **INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROBLEM**

According to household income and expenditure survey 2012 milk and milk products are a major component of the food basket of the Sri Lankan population. Average household expenditure on dairy products is Rs.1,444 per month. It is all round food stuff and helps give a balance diet as milk supplies high quality protein, mineral, and vitamins. Promoting local milk production is a strategy by the Government of Sri Lanka to reduce dependency of the nation on imports. Yoghurt and curd industries primarily depend on local production of milk and involve a diverse set of industry participants. Even though yoghurt and curd are popular among households, there is no data devoted to consumption of yoghurt and curd. There are small scale producers, farmers, and large scale companies which engage in the yoghurt and curd production. There is large number of pioneer and follower brands of yoghurt and curd available. At the same time Sri Lankan government encourage small scale producers of dairy products such as yoghurt and curd, also motivating consumers to purchase more local dairy products by reducing the price.

According to past studies consumption of yoghurt depends on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of households. Therefore, this research attempts to find out what the effects of socio-economic and demographic factors are on consumption and preferences of yoghurt among households. The general objective of the study is to identify the consumption patterns of dairy products among households in the Anuradhapura District. The specific objectives of the study are to study the socio economic condition of the consumers towards yoghurt products, identify which brand of yoghurt and curd was consumed most, and to identify factors considered by yoghurt consumers when selecting brand.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Primary data was collected using primary survey method. In this study the target population was defined as the residents of the Anuradhapura District. Because Anuradhapura is a second largest milk producing district in Sri Lanka. Households were selected as a sampling unit. Ninety households were interviewed to represent the target population. Stratified sampling method was used to select the sample among the target population. Stratification of the households was based on the rural, urban and semi-urban sector in the Anuradhapura District. On this basis 30 household sample from each rural, urban and semi-urban sector were selected. Sampling framework was the electorate registry. In that 30 urban households were randomly sampled from Yasasiripura Grama Niladari Division, 30 rural households from Kadiyangalla Grama Niladari Division. And 30 semi-urban households were randomly sampled from Kurundankulama Grama Niladari Division. Consumption data were based on seven-day recall of food purchase and consumption. Data on socio-demographics and availability of brands in the locality were also collected. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics to understand consumption patterns. Determinants of consumption quantity were identified using multiple regression analysis.

## **RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

Results reveal that 96 percent and 93 percent of households consume yoghurt and curd respectively. Weather conditions affect the consumption of yoghurt and curd. 64 percent of households reduce consumption due to rainy conditions. The nearby grocery is the preferred place to buy yoghurt, and large groceries and distributors are the most preferred place or buying curd.

Linear regression model suggests that household size and per capita consumption of curd and ice-cream negatively affect the per-capita consumption of yoghurt, while presence of children less than ten years old and well being index positively affect it. The effect of mother's education on yoghurt consumption is positive and significant.

98 percent of the households prefer national brands to local brands in yoghurt buying while only 45 percent of households prefer national brands of curd over local brands. Also Most of the households like to buy branded yoghurt and curd due to availability, taste, texture, nutrient content and they do not consider the design of the packaging. Household's locations had impact of brand preferences. Because availability of the different brands.

## **CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE**

This study suggests that as household size decreases per capita consumption of yoghurt decreases as well. Relatively greater scarcity is faced by the individuals in large families. Also per capita consumption of curd and ice-cream decrease the per capita consumption of yoghurt. Therefore curd and ice-cream act as substitutes to yoghurt.

With the increase in the number of children less than ten years old per capita consumption of yoghurt of the households were increased. Households with children consume more yoghurt, as do households with educated mothers. The educational level of the mother influences the per capita consumption of yoghurt.

Wellbeing index of households indicates the wealth conditions of the household. This study suggests that with the improvement in the wellbeing index per capita consumption of yoghurt was increased.

This result suggests that yoghurt producers should target households having high well being index, an educated mother, and children less than ten years old. Interventions should target those households in their promotional campaigns to increase sales. Local producers would gain more by value addition of their milk through curd instead of competing with national brands for yoghurt.

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