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**Exploring the motives for small & medium-scale fruit & vegetable processors in Sri Lanka to adopt a system of HACCP at the firm level**

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There is a widespread consensus amongst food technologists, economists, and policy makers that the most effective and economically efficient approach to enhance the quality and safety of food products is to adopt a quality metasystem such as Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP) at the firm level. In light of this, the entrepreneurs from agri-food processing sector in Sri Lanka are faced with the challenge of putting it into practice. This study was aimed to identify and quantify the factors that motivate agro entrepreneurs from the small and medium-scale fruit and vegetable processing firms in Sri Lanka to act in this respect. With a support of a structured questionnaire, a series of in-depth personnel interviews were conducted with quality assurance personnel from 27 enterprises from July to August 2006 to collect data, where the majority of firms were from the Western and North Western provinces. Using both the descriptive (e.g. Mean Importance Scores) and inferential statistical techniques (e.g. Factor Analysis based on Principal Component Analysis), those individual incentives identified were broadly categorized into four groups, namely: (1) external requirements and expectations, (2) regulations, (3) reputation and goodwill, and (4) internal efficiency. The outcome of cluster analysis, conducted subsequently, suggested that majority of these firms were motivated to implement HACCP by government regulation. As Sri Lanka does not yet impose any mandatory government regulation on implementing HACCP for any sort of industry, care must be taken to in such an attempt to motivate firms with appropriate market-based incentives too, for example tax relief, input subsidies, technical know-how, and effective educational programs so that such attempts would be fruitful by minimizing the plant and product exits and saving the tax-payers money involved with direct regulation.