

Consumer preference and consumption of fish in the North Central Province of Sri Lanka

A.M.A.U.K. Abeykoon^{1,2} and C.S. Ranadheera^{1*}

¹*Department of Agricultural Systems, Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Pulliyankulama, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.*

²*Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka, Dehiattakandiya, Sri Lanka.*

North Central Province is the largest province in Sri Lanka which represents the highest inland water area in the country. Objectives of this research were to evaluate the consumer preference for inland and marine fish consumption in the North Central Province, Sri Lanka and to evaluate the factors affecting the fish consumption. A sample of 100 consumers were drawn randomly from polling divisions of two main districts of the North Central Province, namely Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. The consumers were interviewed on their preferred type of fish (marine or inland) and reasons for the choice of particular type of fish, by means of a structured questionnaire. Information on a number of sociological characters such as income, age, gender and educational level were also collected. Most of the consumers from Anuradhapura district preferred inland fish (67.14%) compared to marine fish (24.28%) while 8.57% of the respondents indicated that they do not like to consume any type of fish. Similar trend was observed in the Polonnaruwa district where 66.66% of the consumers preferred inland fish over marine fish (26.66%) while 6.66% of the respondents were non fish eaters. Generally, consumers with a high income consumed more marine fish while consumers with a less income consumed more inland fish. There was no significant relationship between the gender and the fish consumption ($p>0.05$) and it was found that the majority of people living in the North Central Province preferred inland fish over marine fish ($p<0.05$) mainly due to the low cost, availability and the freshness of inland fish.

Keywords: marine fish, inland fish, consumer preference

*Corresponding author e-mail: senakar@email.com