

Title A survey of consumer preference between organic and conventionally produced fruits and vegetables

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Abstract

Organic food was one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. food industry through the 1990s. It is estimated that by 2005 the retail sales of organic foods will reach \$20 billion assuming steady 20% annual growth rate. Fruit and vegetables accounted for over 40% of the organic food sales in 2000. Consumer preferences for fruits and vegetables are complex. What product attributes do consumers perceive to be most important? In-person and Internet surveys using conjoint methodology for consumer preferences on various product attributes were conducted. Studies were conducted on specialty tomatoes, and tropical and subtropical fruits. Among the various studies: price, nutrition, and production method were measured. Consistently, price emerged as the most important product attribute with >50% of the consumer's preference based on price. Nutrition emerged as the second most important attribute, with production method (organic or conventional) as relatively unimportant products attribute.