

Similarities and differences in meat consumption patterns in Asia and Pacific-Rim countries

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Abstract:

This study investigated consumer behavior towards meat across Asia and Pacific-Rim countries. Mail surveys were undertaken in 1994 and 1995. Data was obtained from 6197 households in Japan, the USA (mainland and Japanese-Americans in Hawaii), Australia, Thailand, Korea, Taiwan and China. The data were mainly analyzed using cluster analysis to determine the distance between each country and to classify countries into groups. Japanese respondents purchased beef more frequently than respondents from other countries. The average amount purchased on each occasion was far more for Australian respondents than for respondents from other countries, while Japanese purchased far less. Respondents in Japan, Korea, China and Australia thought beef was the most expensive meat, whereas lamb was thought to be the most expensive in the remaining countries. Chinese respondents indicated the highest consciousness of price indexes. The level of uneasiness about eating meat indicated by Asian respondents was relatively strong compared with respondents in Hawaii, the USA and Australia. Average ratings (semantic differential scale) on plans for future meat consumption were higher for beef than for other meats in Korea and China, whereas chicken was rated higher in the other countries. From the dendrogram, surveyed countries were classified into three groups: Japan, Taiwan and Korea; Thailand and China; and the USA, Japanese-Americans and Australia. Among them, the first and second clusters merged into a larger cluster, the 'Asian' group.

Keywords: cluster analysis; consumer behavior; meat; meat consumption pattern; multiregional study

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