

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Farmers' market: consumer trends, taste, preferences, and characteristics towards buying value added products directly from producer

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ABSTRACT

Farmers Markets gaining momentum these days, consumers are turning to food festivals, Farmers Market and agritourism expecting to get fresh foods other than regular market. Today these platforms help farmer's particularly organic farmers who aim to add value to the produce and directly sell to the consumer. This paper is to attempt the consumer trends, preferences and characteristics towards buying value additions directly from producer. Sample of 360 respondents were collected from consumer through random sampling method and results show that availability of fresh products and satisfaction of buying directly from buyers are some of the influencers for consumers, Organic Rice products, Millets, oil and Dairy products are some of the products which have good reception among consumers in Farmers market.

Keywords: Food festival, farmers market, organic farming , traditional rice , direct selling , farm fresh.

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INTRODUCTION

India is predominantly a farming nation. The success of agriculture influence expansion of Indian economy. One of the largest portions of our nation's national GDP comes from agriculture. In agriculture, marketing is essential for determining a product's value in terms of Price, Quality, and Quantity and delivering it to the final consumer. The majority of farmers sell their food through a variety of outlets, including street vendors, Mandies, fairs, and village-level marketplaces. Instead of farmers and customers, middlemen profit most from the current marketing structure (Lavanya et al., 2020)

In 1999, Anna Nagar in Madurai became the first farmers market in Tamil Nadu. Recognising the success of the programme, the government increased the number of these markets, which now total 179 and are spread out across the state in urban and semiurban areas. In comparison to open market rates, farmers receive 15% more money, and consumers pay 20% less for the same produce, creating a win-win situation for both parties. In contrast to intermediaries and market commission agents, the direct marketing strategy places more emphasis on the direct interactions between farmers and consumers. The idea for

Farmers' Market was born in Kal Ghaj, Russia. The Farmers Market Scheme was developed by the Tamil Nadu government (Lavanya et al., 2020)

According to the study, most shoppers originally stepped markets out of curiosity, however some went especially to purchase fresh, healthful items. The vast majority of participants stated that they preferred food that was cultivated organically and without the use of genetic modification. Organic foods are typically thought to be more flavorful and healthier. The importance of quality and freshness in the choice of produce while purchasing fresh foods was mentioned by interviewees (Trobe, 2001).

Through Agritourism consumers are more interested in learning how their food is produced and would like to meet and converse with farmers. Children who visit farms frequently do not get to pluck a mango off a tree or witness a live duck or pig. The term "recreational farms" is frequently used to describe this type of agricultural tourism. These farms serve the big-your-own crowd by providing not just conventional farm products but also your own crops for eating, open-pen animals, train rides and transportation options (Balakrishnan et al., 2018)

People began to understand how critical a healthy diet is for boosting immunity. Many people began to trust in traditional medicines, cures, etc. and began to place a higher premium on including fresh traditional/local foods in their menus. The research aims to investigate the changes in eating habits, particularly the acceptability of purchasing farm fresh native foods directly from the farmers, which is a chance for the farmers to increase their income (Vinuchakravarthi and Srinivasan, 2022)

A modification to the product's physical characteristics, such as when flour is made from wheat or jam is made from strawberries. The process of making a product that increases its worth, as shown by a business plan (Morarji and Ganesamurthy, 2020). Therefore, this study was conducted with the following objectives:

- To Study the Consumers preference of buying patter in Farmers market.
- To understand the choice of product and experience
- To Rate the satisfaction of Consumers with regards to farmers market.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A survey was conducted from July through August, 2023. The purpose of the study was to gather information about consumers' attributes, preferences, and socio-economic characteristics. Five hundred surveys were distributed at farmers' markets, food festivals and food exhibitions located near Chennai. 368 questionnaires were received. However, 8 were not included in the analysis due to unanswered questions. The number of usable surveys was 360.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Table No.1 infers that Costumers had rated availability of Varieties is an important character that farmers shops possess followed by quality of products and Price is a factor which attracts costumers as it ranked third followed by convenience of Location at fourth followed by Availability of Facilities, Cleanliness and Attitude of Vendors.

Onianwa in their study found that Freshness is the first priority that costumers are looking at farmers produce followed by the following factors in order as the important characters of farmers market appearance of produce, variety and selection,

availability of locally grown produce , price and store are the important characters of the Farmers market (Onianwa et al., 2006).

According to the solanki study's findings, in Cluster 1, around 80% of consumers preferred to shop at the farmers' market over a neighbouring retail location or supermarket. Consumers who prioritise value for money made up Cluster 2, while those who valued cleanliness and customer service at the market made up Cluster 3. According to the findings of this study, customers are satisfied with the way local farmers' markets are run (Solanki and Inumula, 2021).

Table No. 1: Demographic variable Analysis

Particulars	Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	264	73.3
	Female	96	26.7
Age	21-30	64	17.8
	31-40	260	72.2
	41-50	20	5.6
	51-60	13	3.6
	Above 60	3	0.8
	Educational Qualification	School Level	100
Under graduate		79	21.9
Post graduate		87	24.2
Professional		94	26.1
Occupation	Private employee	66	18.3
	Government employ	68	18.9
	Business	63	17.5
	Professionals	91	25.3
	House wives	72	20.0
Monthly salary(in Rupees)	Less than 25000	63	17.5
	25000-50000	87	24.2
	50001-75000	76	21.1
	75001-100000	63	17.5
	More than 100000	71	19.7

Table No. 2: Classification of Respondents opinion towards Farmers Market Characteristics

Particular	Very Good	Good	Moderate	Fair	Poor	Mean Value	Rank
Quality of Products	171 (47.5)	103 (28.6)	73 (20.3)	10 (2.8)	3 (0.8)	4.00	2
Availability of Facilities	204 (56.7)	53 (14.7)	63 (17.5)	40 (11.1)	0	3.75	5
Convenience of Location	168 (46.7)	83 (23.1)	80 (22.2)	20 (5.6)	9 (2.5)	3.82	4
Attitude of Vendors	146 (40.6)	71 (19.7)	87 (24.2)	46 (12.8)	10 (2.8)	3.62	7
Cleanliness	144 (40.0)	96 (26.7)	67 (18.6)	33 (9.2)	20 (5.6)	3.73	6
Availability of Varieties	97 (26.9)	196 (54.4)	38 (10.6)	22 (6.1)	7 (1.9)	4.26	1
Price	173 (48.1)	86 (23.9)	61 (16.9)	34 (9.4)	6 (1.7)	3.83	3

THE PERCENT POSITION AND GARRET VALUE

The Garret ranks were calculated by using appropriate Garret Ranking formula. The Garret table value is calculated on the basis of the Garret table value is presented. The preference and ranking for important factors influencing the consumer buying behaviour by the Value Additions in Farmers Market are shown in Table No 3.

Table No. 3: Respondents ranking of preferred value added products

Value Added Products	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	Total Score	Mean Weight	Rank
Rice Products	19680	2856	540	742	2303	0	0	0	26121	72.56	1
Millet Products	2640	10200	3600	3498	799	680	132	260	21809	60.58	3
Honey	1680	2584	8940	1696	3290	960	561	180	19891	55.25	4
Cooking Oil	1040	4420	1860	7314	1833	1200	462	600	18729	52.03	5
Vegetables and Fruits	2480	2380	2220	1802	4841	2880	825	460	17888	49.69	6
Ghee	1280	2244	720	742	2820	8440	462	7200	23908	66.41	2
Pickles	640	68	240	1590	235	5200	3003	1820	12796	35.54	8
Herbal Products	2240	544	1440	1537	1692	2080	2805	1960	14298	39.72	7

Through the Table No. 3, it is understood that Rice Products being the most preferred products that they are looking in farmers market followed by Ghee as it get the second rank. Millet products being the third preferred product followed by Honey and Cooking oil. Vegetables and fruits , herbal products and pickles follows the ranking.

Paul study reveals that processed bean product offers consumers great utility by improving nutrition quality, shortening the cooking time, and saving water and fuel. The desire for convenience and cost savings, which are shown in the readiness to pay more for it, are what drive demand for processed beans. The sex, education, bean consumption rates, geography, and sufficiency of the respondents' own bean supply all contribute to the explanation of attribute demand heterogeneity (Rana and Paul, 2012)

Table No. 4: Change in consumption pattern and inclination towards buying from farmers market

Particulars	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean value	Rank
My Visit started to Fammers Market has Increased	65 (18.1)	230 (63.9)	47 (13.1)	12 (3.3)	6 (1.7)	4.39	1
My Monthly expenses have increased for fresh products	195 (54.2)	84 (23.3)	68 (18.9)	10 (2.8)	3 (0.8)	3.96	3
My Menu started to have more organic products in recent times	171 (47.5)	103 (28.6)	73 (20.3)	10 (2.8)	3 (0.8)	4.00	2
I did not worry about the product when I buy it from farmers market	204 (56.7)	53 (14.7)	63 (17.5)	40 (11.1)	0	3.75	5
I will happy if I purchase the product from direct field	168 (46.7)	83 (23.1)	80 (22.2)	20 (5.6)	9 (2.5)	3.82	4

The Table No. 4 explains that Customers Visit to farmers market has increased and started to have more organic products in menu. Third opinion is that they also started to spend on fresh products and they also prefer to buy products from farm directly and they have full confidence in the products available in farmers market.

Mufeeth study reveals that the socioeconomic factors that had a major impact on the consumer's preference for value addition were their level of education and consideration of their health. (Mufeeth and Thariq, 2019)

Paul study reveals that The findings show that demographic characteristics such as availability, health, and education have a beneficial influence on consumers' attitudes towards purchasing organic food. The overall satisfaction of consumers with organic food is higher than that of consumers with inorganic food, however the level of satisfaction varies owing to several factors.(Rana and Paul, 2017)

According to Sriwaranun analysis, respondents are willing to spend more if they have previously purchased organic goods, are in good health, have strong ethical and environmental concerns, believe that organic goods are of higher quality and offer more health benefits, and live in a city. However, those who have children are less willing to pay more for organic goods. The analysis also shows that the price premium makes purchases more difficult (Sriwaranun et al., 2015)

Table No. 5: Classification of the respondents according to the expectation of Value Added Products

Particulars	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean value	Rank
It should be easy to cook	173 (48.1)	86 (23.9)	61 (16.9)	34 (9.4)	6 (1.7)	3.83	1
More than tradition it should also adopt to a modern cuisine	151 (41.9)	85 (23.6)	100 (27.8)	18 (5.0)	6 (1.7)	3.81	3.5
It should have attractive packing	173 (48.1)	74 (20.6)	87 (24.2)	22 (6.1)	4 (1.1)	3.81	3.5
Adding Certification and Farm details interest more	159 (44.2)	75 (20.8)	80 (22.8)	36 (10.0)	10 (2.8)	3.70	5
Reputation of the brand is important	148 (41.1)	99 (27.5)	68 (18.9)	39 (10.8)	6 (1.7)	3.82	2

The Table No. 5 reveals that Easy cooking is expected in Value added products and Reputation of the brand also plays a significant role in the customers Expectation towards value added products.

Tu Vo Hong study reveals that Most research related to willingness to pay for sustainable food attributes suggests the value of labeling. There is a great deal of evidence that “eco-labeling” is effective as a means of conveying specific contextual information to consumers (Tu et al. 2021)

Loureiro study suggest consumer prefer local, organic, and GMO-free potatoes in order to find their potential niche markets. Also pinpoint socio demographic traits that have an impact on consumer preferences and contrast how these factors affect consumers' willingness to pay. According to the findings, consumers are more prepared to pay for the attribute "Colorado grown" than for organic or GMO-free products.(Loureiro and Hine, 2015)

Table No. 6: List of Innovative Value-added Products consumed recently by consumer

Products	Factors
Herbal Ghee	F1
Red Rice Ice Cream	F2
Raw jack fruit powder	F3
Cashew Butter	F4
Panjakavya Herbal Products	F5
Millet Rava	F6
Beetroot Sugar	F7
Red Rice vermicelli	F8
Probiotic Milk	F9
Coconut coir products	F10

Table No. 7: Garret Ranking based on their opinion towards priority of consumption of Value added products.

Factors	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	Total Score	Mean Weight	Rank
F1	12956	2240	1134	696	5044	192	0	185	588	234	23269	64.64	1
F2	1148	8540	3150	464	3120	1296	1680	814	336	90	20638	57.33	3
F3	2296	2240	5544	3712	1352	1536	1176	1739	140	180	19915	55.32	4
F4	2788	1820	819	3132	1768	2496	1386	1221	840	918	17188	47.74	6
F5	6806	3080	1827	3016	3120	912	798	481	532	396	20968	58.24	2
F6	328	3290	3402	2900	936	4032	2226	333	784	234	18465	51.29	5
F7	2788	1540	2457	580	1976	720	1596	1924	1792	864	16237	45.10	7
F8	0	980	3087	3016	884	624	2310	1961	1540	936	15338	42.61	8
F9	328	1120	1260	1160	2288	2832	1722	2812	728	972	15222	42.28	9
F10	1394	350	567	2668	0	2064	2058	1813	2688	828	14430	40.08	10

The Table No. 7 shows rated Herbal Ghee as a innovative value added product followed by Panjakavya Herbal Cosmetics in second. Red Rice Ice cream has third ranking followed by Cashew Butter. Millet Rava and Betroot Sugar follows the ranking.

Charalampia has done a research with the goal of the study was to look into current and potential uses of manufactured values as food preservatives, quality improvers, and prebiotics in food items. A potentially effective alternative for the valorization of solid by-product steams of pomegranate juice is the biorefinery strategy leading to sequential synthesis of multiple valuables (Charalampia, and Koutelidakis. 2017)

Soumati study offers an overview of the whey valorization technologies with a focus on cutting-edge methods, goods, and viewpoints. It aims to promote innovation and research in this crucial area, supporting the growth of a more circular and sustainable dairy business (Soumati et al. 2023)

CONCLUSION

Customer are ready to move from the retail Stores, Super markets etc and reach farmers directly to get good food, Farmers Market, Food Festival, FPC and stalls are some of the options customers have out of which Farmers market remains the easy place. Customers are expecting Variety and quality to Farmers market. Growing health Conscious has increase the Market for

green products and they need innovative products like herbal ghee, Beetroot sugar etc and easy to cook is the important expectation for the customers. So the farmers and Coordinators should work in these areas. Innovation is the key to success in current market and exploring new products will help the growth of this segment.


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