

Pattern of Consumption of Pulses: A Case in Colombo District

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Pulses are an important source of protein, dietary fibre and complex carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. Due to the high prevalence of dietary disorders and malnutrition in Sri Lanka, it is essential to assess food consumption patterns. Hence, the objectives of the study were to investigate the consumption pattern and buying behaviour of pulses, to identify the factors influencing pulses consumption and to identify the motives and barriers to the consumption of pulses. Data were collected from 200 households using a structured questionnaire, supplemented by secondary data from the 2019 Household Income and Expenditure Survey. Descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression models were employed as analysis methods. According to the findings, the major pulse varieties preferred to be consumed among the households were dhal, green gram, cowpeas and chickpeas. The results of multiple linear regression analysis indicated that gender, marital status, highest educational level, number of children, monthly household income, and amount of willingness to pay for pulses per month have a positive relationship with the consumption of pulses. The price of pulses negatively impacts on consumption of pulses. Motives such as the nutritional value of pulses, nutritional value awareness, health concerns and nutritional intake of children also depicted a positive relationship with the consumption of pulses. Barriers identified by the study included the reluctance of family members to eat pulses, lack of time to prepare pulses and unwillingness to change consumers' regular food habits. Overall, consumers have given less consideration to pulse consumption at the household level. Strategies to monitor food consumption patterns and programs to improve the nutritional intake of pulses by utilizing the identified motives could be recommended.

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