Food Safety Perceptions of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Consumers: A Case Study of Çanakkale Province

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According to the data of 2011, Turkey is at the eighth rank in the sense of export value among fresh fruit vegetable exporting countries. Again in the sense of fresh fruit and vegetable consumption of country population, it is a self-sufficient country apart from exotic products. Both sustainability of export and environment and public health issues within country make food safety a priority in this food group which interests broad consumer mass. According to the averages of 2011/2013, Çanakkale meets 2.16 % of fruit production and 2.87 % of vegetable production. Especially in the sense of specific fresh fruit and vegetable species, the city has important contributions on crop production and export value. Since the city is an important center of tourism region, fresh fruit and vegetable consumption level is important. The aim of this study is to determine the perception of fresh fruit and vegetable consumers in Çanakkale in the sense of food safety. The main material of the study is composed of primary data obtained from surveys. For this aim, face to face interviews were done with 166 consumers who were determined with proportional sampling method. The Five-Point Likert Scale was used in determination of perception of consumers. Multi-Dimensional Scaling Analysis was used in determination of perception dimensions. According to the results of analysis, common and different perceptions of consumers such as variables have an effect on fresh fruit and vegetable as physical and chemical, audit, quality, freshness, standardization and cold chain, traceability during production and marketing. It is thought that variables are important in the sense of contribution they would do in development of current production and marketing policies and practices about them.

Keywords: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable, Food Safety, Consumer Perception, Multi-Dimensional Scaling