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Graduate Research Survey

Committee Report, November, 2019

Consumer Food Choice Information Sourcing, Selection, Needs and Wants

Some Indiana citizens may not be aware of how their food is grown, processed, and transported, which can lead to unhealthy diets, poor spending and an overall lack of information and trusted sources. Improving agricultural education programs in the future and continuing to educate Hoosiers from any background will help improve science literacy, healthy diets, Hoosier's budgets and even Hoosier farmsteads. A study of attendees' food choice beliefs at the 2019 Indiana State Fair was undertaken to provide a baseline understanding.

The procedures for this project were relatively simple. Attendees of the 2019 Indiana State Fair who visited Normandy Barn were asked complete a voluntary survey on an iPad. There were twenty-one questions to complete, including ten demographic questions. The survey was administered with Microsoft Forms and data will be analyzed through Excel.

The results of survey will be used to improve educational programs at the State Fair and potentially create new programs to be used by extension programs around the state. The potential immediate impact is a tool to identify the needs and wants of adult learners who have a desire to learn more about agriculture, particularly those living in an urban area. The overall, long term impact will be forming new and improved educational programs in the future that are based off of the wants and needs of the learners themselves.

While analyzing my data, I have compiled several graphs. I have pie graphs made with Google Forms that show direct responses to each question on the survey. (Attached in email)

Three example analyses of follow to show participant responses to:

- **How often do you choose to purchase local foods?**
- **If you would like to learn more about your food choices, what methods would be best for you to learn more?**
- **What type of food do you prefer to consume?**

Graph 1: Location and Local Foods

Question #6 "How often do you choose to purchase local foods?"

Question # 17 "Do you live in an urban or rural area?"

Of the 100 participants, 41 indicated they live in urban areas and 59 indicated living in rural areas.

17% participants from both categories indicated they “frequently” try to buy local foods.

22% participants who live in a rural area indicated they “occasionally” try to buy local

37% participants who live in an urban area “occasionally” try to buy local foods.

2% participants who live in a rural background indicated they “rarely” try to buy local

5% participants who live in an urban area “rarely” try to buy local foods.



Count of Do you live in a rural or urban area?	Column Labels		
Row Labels	Rural	Urban	Grand Total
Frequently	17	17	34
Occasionally	22	37	59
Rarely	2	5	7
Grand Total	41	59	100

Graph 2

Question #4 “If you would like to learn more about your food choices, what methods would be best for you to learn more?”

Question #21 “Age”

Of the 20 participants who indicated they lived in a rural area, were above the age of 61 and wanted to learn more about their nutritional choices

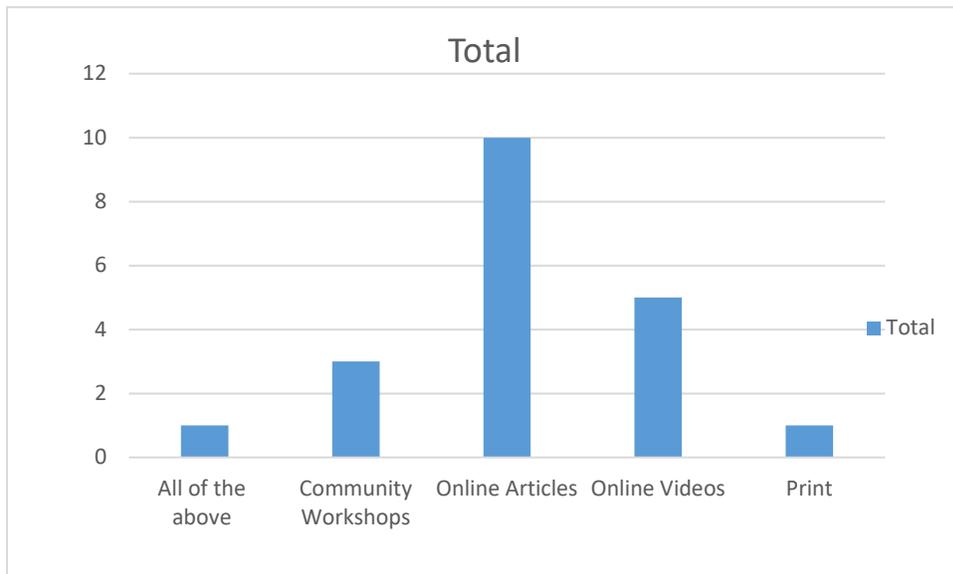
10% of them indicated that online articles were the best method to use to learn more.

5% of the participants said online videos were the best way to learn,

3% said community workshops were the best method,

1% said printed articles were the best method

1% indicated all of the above.



Age	61+
Do you live in a rural or urban area?	Rural

Row Labels	Count of Do you live in a rural or urban area?
All of the above	1
Community Workshops	3
Online Articles	10
Online Videos	5
Print	1
Grand Total	20

Graph 3

Question #9 “What type of food do you prefer to consume?”

Question #17 “Do you live in a rural or urban area?”

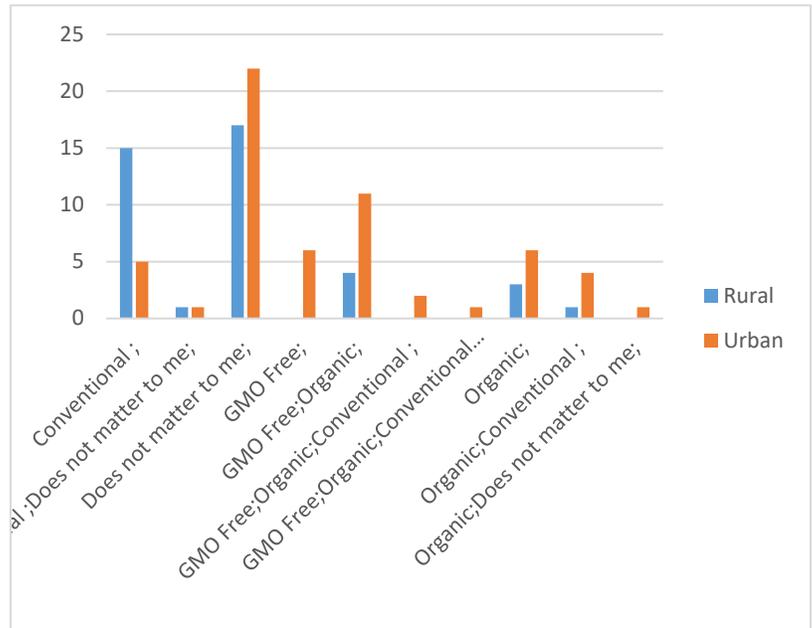
Out of 100 participants, 41 indicated they lived in a rural area and 59 indicated they live in an urban area.

When asked what types of food they prefer to consume, the data showed

39% of participants selected “Does not matter to me”.

20% of participants selecting conventional.

15% of participants selected a combination of “GMO Free” and “Organic” food.



Count of Do you live in a rural or urban area? Row Labels	Column Labels		Grand Total
	Rural	Urban	
Conventional ;	15	5	20
Conventional ;Does not matter to me;	1	1	2
Does not matter to me;	17	22	39
GMO Free;	0	6	6
GMO Free;Organic;	4	11	15
GMO Free;Organic;Conventional ;	0	2	2
GMO Free;Organic;Conventional ;Does not matter to me;	0	1	1
Organic;	3	6	9
Organic;Conventional ;	1	4	5
Organic;Does not matter to me;	0	1	1
Grand Total	41	59	100

Observations in survey construction and methodology:

- Must be much more specific and explicit in detail of questions! Question #17 “Do you live in an urban area”, was often unclear to participants.
- People are willing to discuss their choices, but not for very long. I often had participants attempt to end the survey early when they saw Question #13, “Do you have any additional comments?” Response questions seemed too time consuming for the participants.
- A much larger survey must be constructed in order to have more conclusive data.

Observations in survey responses:

- I assumed more urban participants would purchase local foods much more frequently than rural participants, but data showed no particular trend.
- I was surprised at how many people read food labels while shopping. This could support how important the label and any additional nutritional information on the packaging might be.
- I did not expect “brand” to be the third most important factor in influencing what type of food consumers choose to buy, as demonstrated in question #8. This could be an indicator to how valuable customer loyalty to a specific brand is, despite any cost changes.