Evaluation of the consumer profile of fruits and vegetables in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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Fruits and vegetables should be included daily in the human diet because they are sources of micronutrients, fiber and other components with functional properties. This study aimed to assess the consumers' profile of fruit and vegetables in Campos dos Goytacazes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A questionnaire containing 23 questions was applied to 180 consumers in three retailers selling vegetables. The participants presented the following profile: 77% was females; 39% aged between 21 and 30 years; 41% with high school graduates and belonging to the B2 and C1 classes (28% each). 34% of consumers said to consume more food of the group of breads, cereals, rice and pasta and 46% had indifferent attitude to fruits, consuming them predominantly in natura four to six times a day. 49% of them affirmed to like very much to greens and 21% of vegetables, consuming them at least once a day; 51% showed insecurity to buy some vegetables due to contamination by pesticides, and tomatoes and lettuce were those that caused greatest concern. Besides, 59% of the consumers reported just wash the vegetables under running water before eating, and 64% said that they throw away the residue after peeling the product. This work revealed the demand for consumer awareness campaigns about the importance of fruits and vegetables in human diet, as well as about the proper cleaning of vegetables before consumption and the use of waste vegetable after domestic consumption, as a complement of the nutritional value of the diet of consumers in the city.