EVALUATION OF THE DEMAND FOR FRUITS WITH FOOD SAFETY CERTIFICATION THROUGH THE BRAZILIAN RETAIL


Food-borne illnesses can be caused by contaminated fruits. Due to the greater consumers’ concern about food safety, retailers require food safety certification from its suppliers. The domestic market is the main destination of Brazilian fruits, so it is important to comprehend the scenario of fruit certification in the national food retail sector. Thus, this study aimed to compare Brazilian and European retailers’ perception and requisites about certified fruits. Thereby, a research with retailers’ agents was carried out in order to verify their interest in requisite food safety certification. The questionnaire was sent to retailers throughout Brazil, and 29 were filled out properly. Among the 20 largest food retailers in Brazil, 45% participated as respondents. As results, it was observed that certified fruits are little commercialized in small retail chains, once only 25% of them acquire fruits with food safety certification. As for the large retail chains, 91% already buy such products more often, especially with their own certification. Agents in Europe confirmed that large retailers demand certified fruits, especially for foreign products. But according to a statement from a trader on the continent, it is still necessary for growers in Brazil to have more information about the importance of certification. As for final considerations, for security and quality of fruits, the certification may alleviate the information asymmetry, and consequently the risk of food-borne illnesses. But Brazilian producers still have to be familiar and involved to this increasingly common requirement in order to offer safer fruits for consumers.