

## Consumer Awareness and Perception of Organic Vegetables in Baguio City and La Trinidad, Benguet, Northern Philippines

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### Abstract

Food consumption patterns are changing as a result of health and environmental issues, especially in the Cordillera Region which is known as producer and supplier of conventionally produced vegetables. The study aimed to determine the awareness and perception of consumers regarding organic vegetables and determine the factors affecting purchase/consumption of organic products. The data for the study was gathered through a survey of 200 household respondents from the selected *barangays* (villages) in Baguio City and La Trinidad, Benguet. Result shows that 70% of the household respondents were aware about organic products. Among these, 68% are moderately aware, 28% have high awareness, and only 4% have low awareness on organic vegetables. The awareness of consumers is not a guarantee that they are consumers of organic vegetables. Out of the 141 respondents who are aware, only 115 are consumers. Perception about organic products is based on the information they acquired from their friends, neighbors, relatives, officemates, radio and TV programs, seminars, programs, and the internet. Factors affecting the purchase/ consumption of organic vegetables are price, income, health benefits, nutrient contents, and safety of the product. Respondents perceived that organic vegetables are more nutritious, healthier, safe, clean, naturally grown, and free from poisonous chemicals. In order to create awareness and greater demand for organic products, there should be a massive information dissemination about organic products, the health benefits derived from consumption, and the benefit of organic production to the environment. This could be done through seminars, mothers' classes in the *barangay*, and the use of media, flyers, and brochures.