

Consumer Perception vs Actual Consumption of Farmed Fishes: A Pilot Study

Introduction

The average increment of fish consumption in Malaysia is at about 1.6% yearly since year 2000¹ but actual annual fishery landings in Malaysia do not observe a similar growth trend². On average, 85% of fishery products in Malaysia consist of wild-caught marine fishes while only 15% are from aquaculture farm³. The fish supply and demand equilibrium can be achieved by promoting aquaculture activities. Prior to that, it is important that consumers' perceptions of farmed fish are fully understood since most research in Malaysia focus on the advancement of aquaculture technology.

Objectives

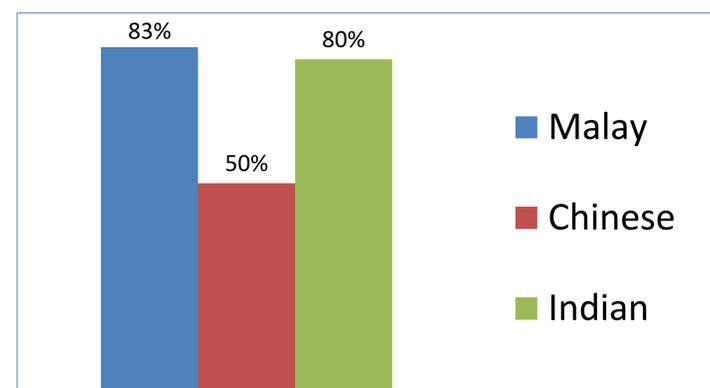
- To estimate farmed fish consumption
- To assess perception of farmed vs wild fish
- To assess preference of farmed vs wild fish
- To compare frequency of farmed fish consumption against its perception and preference

Methods

Sixty respondents from Klang valley were approached from Oct – Dec 2014 via street intercept and were asked to complete one self-administered anonymous questionnaire. All respondents were the main responsible person for food purchasing within their household. Each interview took about 15 – 30 minutes.

Results

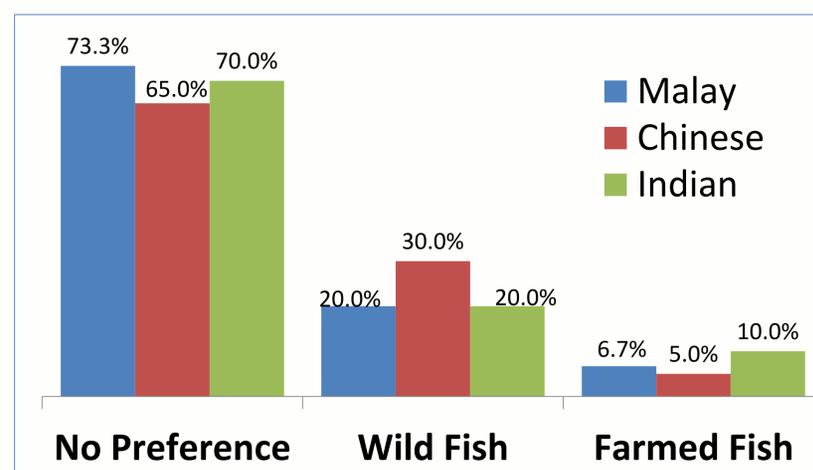
% of Respondents Being Habitual Consumers of Farmed Fishes (at least once a week)



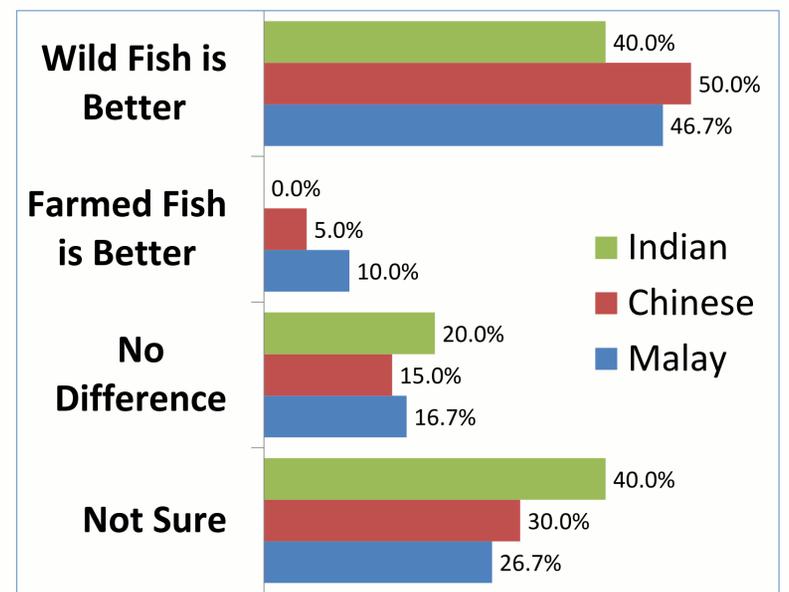
≈70%

of habitual farmed fish consumers didn't know they were consuming farmed fish

Consumer's Self-Reported Preference for Fish



Consumer's Quality Perception of Wild Fish vs Farmed Fish



Conclusion

1. Habitual consumers' negative perception towards farmed fishes did not correlate with their actual consumption suggesting low degree of awareness and knowledge in the origin of the fish and prejudice against farmed fish. Further investigation on determinants of fish purchase is needed.
2. Significant ethnic differences in frequency of farmed fish consumption and wild fish preference warrant further investigation

References

1. Abu Bakar I, Ayob MK, Abdullah Sani N. (2013). Fresh water aquaculture fish consumption in Malaysia and heavy metals risk exposure to consumers. Meeting future food demands: security and sustainability.
2. Department of Statistics Malaysia. Selected Agricultural Indicators, Malaysia. 2012. Available through: http://www.statistics.gov.my/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1834%3Afree-download&catid=61&Itemid=111&lang=en [Accessed 2 October 2013].
3. Department of Fisheries Malaysia (1992-2010). Data of annual fishery landing published by Department of Fisheries Malaysia were consolidated and calculated to produce the total sum and average of 19 years data (1992-2010).