

CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF OLIVE OIL IN THE SANTA MARIA CITY – RS- BRAZIL

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The increased interest of Brazilians in olive oil motivates studies on the availability of investment in olive growing in Brazil. Currently, Brazil is starting to produce olive oil in Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul States and this fact, together the consumer interest in olive oil, motivated this research. This study aimed to analyze the profile of the consumer of olive oil in the Santa Maria city, located in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul State. Were interviewed 150 people, in the supermarkets of the city, about olive oil consumption Seventy percent of respondents stated that consume olive oil against 30% that do not consume it. The benefits for health, preference for taste and eating habits were the main reasons of consumption. Extra virgin olive oil was declared the preferred by 99% of consumers. The income was an important factor in buying decision for olive oil. Eighty percent of the consumers stated that would increase their olive oil consumption if the price was lower. The high price was perceived as a demotivating factor for brand loyalty because the consumers declared to buy extra virgin olive oil with lowest price. Extra virgin olive oil was perceived as higher in quality, using fewer processing for obtaining, has lower acidity and higher benefits to health. The results showed that the extra virgin olive oil market is promising.

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