

Comparison of Consumer preferences for Imported Organic Food Products in a Developed and Developing Economy

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Abstract

This paper investigates consumer preferences for imported organic food in a developing and a developed economy and the underlying reasons. In developed economies domestic products are usually preferred, while consumers in developing economies have been found to prefer both domestic and imported products. It is under-researched whether this is the case for organic imports as well among consumers in developing economies. In-store interviews (NC= 79, NG= 255), focus groups (NC= 2, NG= 6) and an online survey (N \approx 1000 per country) were conducted in China and Germany. A domestic country bias existed among consumers in both countries, but to a much lesser extent in China. Chinese consumers place higher trust in the organic standards of more developed countries than in their own country with food quality and safety as the primary reasons. German consumers prefer products from countries that are geographically close due to transportation distances and trust in standards. Results suggest that economically developed countries have a competitive advantage on the organic world market as long as low consumer trust in domestic products pertains in developing countries.

Keywords: *Consumer preferences; Country-of-origin; Imported organic food*

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